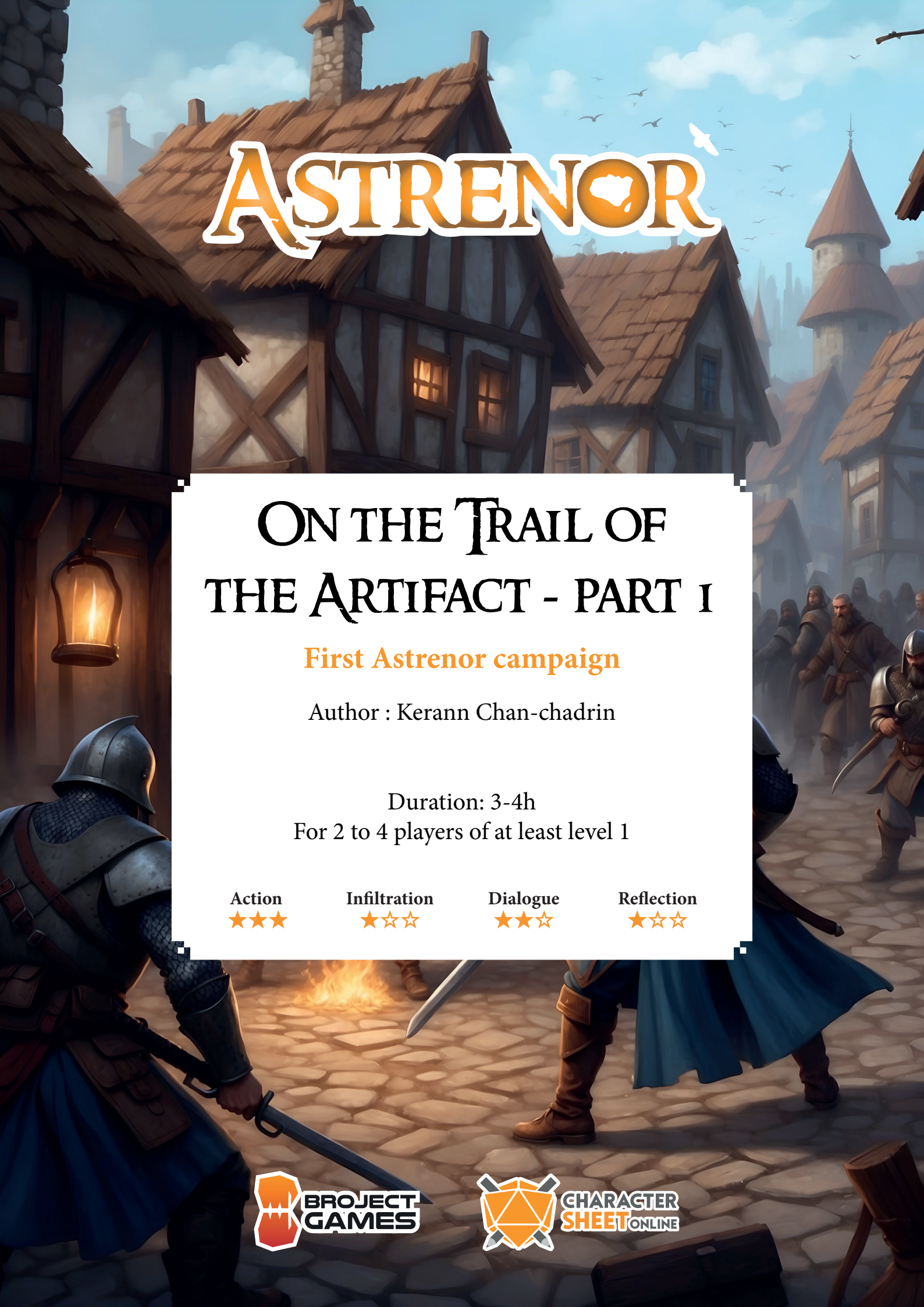

On the Trail of the Artifact - Part 1

First Astrenor campaign

Author : Kerann Chan-chadrin

Duration: 3-4h
For 2 to 4 players of at least level 1

Action	Infiltration	Dialogue	Reflection
★★★	★☆☆	★★☆	★☆☆

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Synopsis

In this scenario, the players will participate in their first battle against the troops of Asgure. Newly recruited by one of the guilds of Castle City, the player characters (PCs) are sent as reinforcements to the town of Klodenn, which has suddenly been attacked by the enemy. Their mission: protect the local population.

It is recommended to have previously played the initiation scenario to be comfortable with Astrenor's combat system.

Context

The year is 308, 15 years after the last great war between the allied forces of Rautha and the troops of Asgure.

While the world is at peace, rumors are spreading that a new war may be imminent. Indeed, one of Rautha's strongholds, the port of Kingshill Landing in the duchy of Velugian, seems to have fallen into the hands of Asgure's troops. The enemy appears to be traveling up the river that connects Klodenn to Kingshill Landing to infiltrate the lands of the Republic of Rautha, the bastion of the Alliance. If the rumors are true, President Panorius is expected to declare a state of war at any moment and order the various military and guild forces under allegiance to join the combat zones.

Kingshill Landing is a military base located in the southeast of the duchy of Velugian. Situated at the crossroads of the Sea of Blood and the Crater Ocean, its strategic location makes it a perfect surveillance post and an ideal fishing port. The Rock Stream river, which connects it to the Republic of Rautha, facilitates trade and supplies, both in men and resources. This river originates from Irdia's Cradle, a lake located at the crossroads of the four nations, in the heart of Rautha. Several small villages have been established around this lake for hundreds, even thousands, of years. One of them, named Klodenn, seems to be the next destination for Asgure's troops.

Klodenn mainly lives off trade between Kingshill Landing and Castle City. Formerly part of the Kingdom of Irdian before the formation of the Alliance, this town is now under the jurisdiction of President Panorius. It is located in one of the territories that were ceded to the Alliance at the formation of the Republic of Rautha. The inhabitants of Klodenn are very attached to their old beliefs and customs and have mostly remained loyal to the royal family of Irdian.

As war is about to be declared, the inhabitants of Castle City continue to live peacefully despite rumors of an invasion. You have recently joined one of the capital's guilds and met your superiors. You are eager for adventure and want to prove yourself within your new guild. You have an appointment at your guild's headquarters to sign your new contract and begin your life as an adventurer!

War is declared

The sun is at its zenith in Castle City as noon approaches. Our heroes arrive at their guild's headquarters, where they have an appointment with their leader. If they have just been recruited, the purpose of the meeting will be to sign their membership contract. If they are already guild members, they will come to report on their last mission.

Here are the names of the various guild leaders:
Adventurers' Guild: Nylian
Explorers' Guild: Nicolaus
Mercenaries' Guild: Nurdin

Once their meeting is over, the guild leader invites the PCs to go to the headquarters hall and choose a rank D quest, intended for new recruits (ranks range from A to D). Upon arriving at the quest board, the PCs only find tedious missions: a lost cat, a noisy neighbor, an escort mission...

After a few minutes of searching for a rare gem among the rank D quests, a person appears at the guild's door. It is a messenger delivering a message from President Panorius. He is introduced with fanfare by trumpet sounds.

"Hear ye, hear ye,
Dear soldiers and adventurers, members of the Rautha Alliance.
The hour is grave. Rautha was attacked last night by Asgure's troops.
The port of Kingshill Landing is currently under enemy control. But do not fear! Our armies from the duchy of Velugian are already there and are fighting valiantly to reclaim this stronghold.
However, Asgure's troops have infiltrated the republic's lands by traveling up the Rock Stream river. Their boats have been spotted at the mouth of Irdia's Cradle.
All our forces are called to stand against the invader.
Therefore, by order of the President, all guild members of Castle City are ordered to head towards Klodenn. Their mission will be to save the civilian population on site and repel the enemy beyond the Republic of Rautha's lands.
Departure for Klodenn will take place from Castle City's North-East gate at 5 PM.
Any attempt at desertion or failure to fulfill one's duty of allegiance will be punishable by death."

The messenger's speech left no adventurer indifferent. Some are terrified, others are eager to face their longtime enemies. As the clamor grows louder in the headquarters hall, the officer with whom the PCs just had their meeting bursts into the hall, imposing silence with a strong voice. He orders everyone to prepare for war, reminding them that this is not a game and that many lives are at risk. The PCs have 5 hours to gather their belongings, equip themselves, and say goodbye to their families, if they have any.

Castle City

Capital of the Republic of Rautha, this burgeoning metropolis embodies the symbol of progress. Its modern and ingenious architecture reflects its growing power and influence since its founding. Castle City is the central headquarters of the Alliance, representing the beating heart of this powerful coalition.

Adventurers' Guild

The Adventurers' Guild is one of the oldest institutions in the Republic of Rautha. Highly prestigious, only graduates of the finest academies can apply. Members of the Adventurers' Guild are revered and their services are highly coveted. Their motto is «Honor, Valor, and Resilience.»

Explorers' Guild

The Explorers' Guild is very famous on the continent of Rautha. Its members often lead expeditions outside the continent. Their discoveries and knowledge have led to the creation of world maps. Their motto is «Mystery Alone Gives Meaning to Being.»

Mercenaries' Guild

The Mercenaries' Guild is one of Rautha's most lucrative institutions. Its members don't hesitate to offer their services, no matter what the request, as long as the reward is worth it. Their motto is «Service for Gold.»



Leroy Merlin

A man in his sixties with a long graying beard, dressed in a magnificent black and gold mage's robe. A legend in the Republic of Rautha, Leroy is a powerful wizard who has participated in many battles for the Alliance. He has decided to dedicate his later years to passing on his knowledge to the new generations by becoming the director of the Adventurers' Academy.



Gadil

A green-skinned half-orc who, despite his austere appearance, is a benevolent man willing to sacrifice himself to help others. A member of the Alliance for almost seven years, Gadil quickly rose through the ranks to become a noncommissioned officer, thanks in part to the support of Leroy Merlin, who saw potential in him.

During this time, the PCs are free to spend their money as they see fit. All items from the equipment tables in the rulebook are available in Castle City. Bandages and survival kits will be welcome for the rest of the adventure.

From 4 PM onwards, the streets of the capital become increasingly deserted. The adventurers and soldiers of the Alliance move almost religiously towards the North-East gate. By 4:30 PM, a dense crowd of several hundred people is already in place, nervously awaiting the departure for war. Dozens of carriages have been prepared for the occasion: they are just waiting for the signal to leave. At 5 PM, as the sun begins to set, the squads are nearly all formed and, just as everyone is about to depart, the legend of the Alliance, Leroy, arrives on the scene. He heads to the center of the crowd, which parts in two as he passes, and begins to speak in admiring silence.

"Dear adventurers, soldiers of the Alliance, and soon-to-be comrades-in-arms,
I imagine that the prospect of this new war must remind the veterans among you of terrible memories, and terrify the younger ones.
What awaits us there is not a game. It is war. There will be blood and tears. Many of our comrades are likely to lose their lives.
But this war also brings hope. The hope of knowing peace. The hope of seeing our friends and families continue to live happily.
Of course, it will not be easy. There will be deaths on both sides, you can be sure of that!
But if we do not go, who will?
We are the last bastion of peace. We are the members of the Alliance. We are Rautha.
And together, yes, together, we will succeed, as we always have, in repelling the threat.
So follow me, and I will lead you to victory! For Rautha!"

The members of the various guilds, galvanized by Leroy's speech, began shouting in unison "For Rautha" while brandishing their weapons and shields. Leroy, on his white horse, takes the lead of the column towards Klodenn, closely followed by the guild leaders and Alliance officers.

Meanwhile, the PCs meet Gadil, an Alliance noncommissioned officer who introduces himself as their squad leader. He invites them to board the carriage to his right, where other young recruits are seated. Once the PCs are settled, the carriage departs under Gadil's orders. It will take about 14 hours to reach Klodenn. During the journey, Gadil will explain the mission to his squad members. To avoid unnecessary losses, the new recruits, too inexperienced for the battlefield, have been assigned to protect civilians. Their objective will be to escort the inhabitants of Klodenn to the refugee camp located a few dozen kilometers from the conflict zones.

To the Aid of the Villagers

After a restless night spent in the carriage, the PCs wake up at the first light of dawn. It is about 7 a.m. when they finally catch sight of the village of Klodenn. As they approach, they can hear the sounds of fighting and see smoke rising from the houses. All the soldiers from Castle City gather at the West gate of Klodenn (right next to the stables) where they are greeted by a mysterious figure wearing a skull mask. His name is Oriel, and he is an officer of the Alliance. He seems to have spent the night there, protecting the group of villagers by his side.

As soon as the reinforcements arrive, he urges Leroy to send his best soldiers to the port of Klodenn, north of the town: Galarond, another officer of the Alliance, needs help to repel the invaders (an easy Intelligence check (5) will allow the PCs to know of Galarond's famous reputation). Several squads are sent as reinforcements, while the young recruits help the villagers get into the carriages to take them to safety.

The PCs' squad leader, Gadil, gathers his members one last time to remind them of the route they need to take to the refugee camp. He takes the opportunity to warn them about the likelihood of encountering some unscrupulous bandits who might try to seize the villagers' belongings. Unfortunately, Gadil will have to take part in the fight at the center of the town and cannot stay with his recruits.

The PCs are ordered to escort one of the carriages carrying about ten civilians to the refugee camp, which should normally be an hour away by horseback. However, the horses are somewhat exhausted from the journey, so it might take a bit longer. The route to the camp passes through several wooded areas, which are prime spots for bandit attacks. But avoiding them could exhaust the horses further.

As expected, about twenty minutes into the journey, the PCs' convoy is ambushed by a group of bandits. Each PC can make a difficult Perception check (15) to try to spot the bandits and avoid being surprised. The bandits are equal in number to the PCs.

A map of the wooded path and the bandits' stats are available in the appendix.

If the PCs succeed in their Perception check, they will attack first. If they fail, the first bandit will get a surprise attack.

During the fight, the bandits will aim to attack the carriage to steal the passengers' belongings. Stealing from a passenger is considered an action, which can be advantageous for the PCs as they will not always be the primary target.

Once the bandits are driven off, the PCs can resume their journey and escort the villagers to safety. At the refugee camp, they are greeted by a young Alliance recruit who asks them to identify themselves and show proof of their identity. Once verified, she allows the carriage to enter



Oriel

Recently appointed as an officer of the Alliance, Oriel rose through the ranks in the shadows by completing several secret missions for President Panorius. In public, Oriel never removes her skeleton mask, which gives her a metallic voice and an intimidating appearance. Few people know her true identity, despite her status within the Alliance.

The Bandit Attack

After hearing rumors about the attack on Klodenn, it didn't take long for the criminals in the region to see an opportunity to fill their pockets. These bandits hide in the woods, watching for villagers to pass by so they can ambush them and steal their belongings. They are organized into small groups and usually obey a leader.

Refugee camp

An improvised camp intended to shelter refugees from Klodenn and surrounding villages until the invasion is repelled. It is located about ten kilometers from Klodenn and is set up in an open plain. Upon the PCs' arrival, the barricades surrounding the camp have just been erected, but there is still some work to be done to make this camp a safe place for the refugees.



Orcar

A man in his sixties with a head injury. He seems reticent and distrustful of the Alliance members who have come to help. The blow to his head has likely confused his mind somewhat.

and asks the PCs to participate in the camp's activities.

The PCs can choose to:

- Treat the wounded
- Help set up tents
- Serve the soup
- Guard the perimeter

The PCs can distribute themselves among the different tasks.

Treat the Wounded

At the south end of the camp is a large tent serving as an improvised hospital. Recruits are ordered to welcome the injured and do their best to help them. The place is poorly equipped: a few beds have been set up for the worst off, and some scraps of cloth are available for the healers to make bandages.

As soon as they arrive, a recruit will ask a PC to take care of an old man groaning in pain. The man is named Orcar. He has bandages on his head and suffers from severe migraines, making him very uncommunicative. The bandages are old and dirty, covering a gaping wound at the top of his skull. If a PC chooses to use their own bandages or the spell Lay on Hands, the old man will be more cooperative. If a PC asks him what happened to him, he will say the following:

«I fear my memory is failing me. However… I have a feeling I can trust you. It's still a bit blurry, but some memories are resurfacing. I remember witnessing a strange scene just before I was knocked unconscious. While walking my dog as usual, I saw a man wearing the Alliance insignia. He was talking to one of the village guards and then… he stabbed him in cold blood. It was night, I'm not sure he saw me… But a few minutes later, I took a hard blow to the head. I woke up several hours later and managed to join a convoy that brought me here. I think one of Asgure's warriors is posing as an Alliance member. Someone needs to warn them...»

Help Set Up Tents

At the west end of the camp, young soldiers are setting up tents to shelter all the refugees until the situation calms down. Some do it cheerfully, while others complain, saying it's a menial task and they would be more useful on the battlefield alongside their idol Galarond.

If a PC tries to talk to the reluctant group and agrees with the idea of disobeying orders, they can learn that some of the soldiers on-site are preparing to return to Klodenn to prove their worth.

Serve the Soup

At the south end of the camp, cauldrons have been set up to cook meals for the hundreds of refugees. Villagers who are fit are preparing soup for the midday meal, but they need more hands for serving, and a crowd of hungry people is beginning to gather.

If one of the PCs serves the soup, they will encounter a child with tearful eyes asking for food in a trembling voice. She is accompanied by an elderly woman who seems to be her grandmother. If the PC asks the little girl why she is crying, the elderly woman will say that she lost her mother and her father has not yet arrived at the camp. At these words, the little girl will beg the PC to go look for her father.

By questioning the elderly woman further, they will learn that her name is Yolande and that she is indeed the child's grandmother. She will say that her son, Jirez (the little girl's father), stayed behind to avenge the death of his wife, who was killed by a troll during their escape. According to Yolande, this troll was trained and obeys the orders of Asgure's warriors. During their escape, her son held off the troll to allow her and her granddaughter to escape to the outskirts of the town. Since then, they have had no news of Jirez.

The little girl will insist that the PCs go rescue her father.

Guard the Perimeter

While guarding the perimeter, the PCs will not encounter anything unusual. The barricades surrounding the camp seem solid, and the surroundings are clear enough to see hundreds of meters in all directions.

At the Camp

As time passes, more and more survivors and adventurers arrive at the camp.

The PCs are increasingly visited by worried villagers asking for news of their priest, Luther. He is considered by many to be the leader of their village, and his prolonged absence is prompting the villagers to seek help from the adventurers. The priest was last seen the day before the attack, in the temple in the center of Klodenn. Since then, he has been missing. Some survivors beg the PCs to go in search of Father Luther, who they believe is still trapped there.

Despite Gadil's orders, everything pushes the PCs to return to Klodenn. After more than three hours in the camp without any danger, it will be easy to understand that the place is secure and in good hands. No guild officers or high-ranking Alliance members are present at the camp, so it will be very easy for the PCs to take a carriage back to Klodenn.



Yolande
Grandmother of little Lize and mother of Jirez, the child's missing father. Yolande shows great strength of character in recounting the tragedy she has endured, though she struggles to find the words to console her granddaughter's tears.

Back to Klodenn

Klodenn
A small town located on the shores of Irdia's Cradle, Klodenn formerly belonged to the kingdom of Irdian before the creation of the Republic of Rautha. Its few inhabitants primarily live off maritime trade. The town regularly supplies equipment and food to the Alliance troops occupying the port of Kingshill Landing.

Back in Klodenn, the PCs notice that no one is waiting for them at the West gate: the civilians have evidently been evacuated. The place is surprisingly calm. The fighting seems to have concentrated towards the north of the village, near the docks.

If the PCs decide to inspect the East gate before entering Klodenn, they will find, as old Orcar said, the body of the stabbed guard. He received a stab wound to the jugular. A difficult Intelligence check (15) will allow a PC to notice that the cut is clean and was made by a very high-quality blade, probably from the forges of Wolforge.

Once inside the town, they will need to be careful and advance stealthily, as some warriors of Asgure are hiding in the residents' houses, taking the opportunity to steal the belongings left behind. To avoid unnecessary confrontations, the PCs will need to hug the buildings and not walk down the middle of the paved streets.

If the PCs decide to enter one of the houses, make a luck roll (a d20 with no bonuses) to see if they run into one or more warriors of Asgure.
A result of 1 to 3: the PCs encounter 3 enemies
A result of 4 to 6: the PCs encounter 2 enemies
A result of 7 to 9: the PCs encounter 1 enemy
A result of 10 or higher: the house is empty

The village is small, so it won't take long for the PCs to reach the center. There, some fighting is still going on, but the most surprising thing is the presence of an immobile troll sitting right in front of the temple doors.

Among the fighters, the PCs see Gadil in the middle of a fight with two soldiers of Asgure. If they help him, he will ask them to leave: the area is too dangerous for young recruits and the situation is under control. If they choose to obey, Gadil will quickly defeat his two opponents. However, if the PCs still wish to join the fight, Gadil will have no choice but to accept their help.

The map of Klodenn's town center, the Asgure warriors' stats, and Gadil's stats are available in the appendix.

Once the fight is over, Gadil will ask the PCs what they are doing here. He will then explain that the allied forces managed to push Asgure's troops back to the docks, but some are still hiding in the houses. He doesn't understand why the troll isn't attacking, but he doesn't have time to deal with it: it's better that it stays calm.

If the PCs tell him about a potential intruder posing as an Alliance member, Gadil will promise to warn an Alliance officer.

If the PCs tell him to be wary of the Alliance officers, Gadil will assert his full trust in Oriel and Galarond, who have been fighting for years in

the service of Rautha.

Whatever happens, Gadil will ask the PCs to be careful before heading to the docks with the few standing Alliance soldiers. There, the troll and some injured soldiers remain: some from Rautha, others from Asgure.

At this point, the PCs have several options:
- Help and/or question the soldiers on-site
- Examine the surroundings
- Attempt to enter the temple

Help and/or Question the Soldiers

The soldiers of Rautha and Asgure are clearly identifiable by their attire and the emblem they wear.

If a PC decides to heal an enemy, the latter will initially be surprised but will then agree to answer a few questions. However, if the PCs choose to use force, they will get no answers: the Asgurians are proud and possess unshakable willpower.

Depending on the PCs' questions, the warriors of Asgure can provide the following information:

What is the purpose of this attack?

«I don't know, I'm just a simple soldier. Our only order was to retrieve as many valuables as possible and eliminate anyone in our way.»

Why did you follow these orders?

«I acted for the good of my people. Where I come from, living conditions are very harsh. My family relies on me. Lord and Emperor Kerozen promised to give 10 gold coins to our families if we joined his army.»

How did you manage to get here?

«We crossed the Sea of Blood on our longships to Kingshill Landing Bay. There, the gates were wide open, and we were able to reach the Rock Stream river, which led us here.»

Examine the Surroundings

The PCs can inspect the surroundings, looking for clues about the missing persons. A PC located a few meters from the well can make a standard difficulty Perception check (10). If successful, they will hear a call for help from the bottom of the well. A man seems to be alive and stuck about ten meters below.

The PCs can use a 10-meter rope or two 5-meter ropes tied together to rescue the poor man. Once out of the well, the PCs will learn that he is Jirez, Yolande's son. He will take the time to thank the adventurers who



Coat of Arms of the Alliance of Rautha

The three dragon heads represent the three kingdoms of Rautha: Irdian, Epheria, and Drukh. The red and white background symbolizes the quest for peace in the face of danger.



Coat of Arms of Asgure's Troops

The red hand represents the hand of Asgure soldiers who died in battle, symbolizing their oath of allegiance to the Emperor of Korimdor.



Jirez

A well-built man in his thirties with numerous injuries, including a nasty scar on his eye. Jirez fell into this well during his confrontation with the troll that killed his wife. He spent about half a day in the well, his cries for help drowned out by the noise of the fighting. His fall has deeply traumatized him, and he thinks only of one thing: finding his daughter.

helped him, then he will quickly leave, despite his injuries, to join his family at the refugee camp.

Enter the Temple

Access to the temple is blocked by a massive troll sitting, seemingly unwilling to move despite the situation.

On the east and west sides of the building are narrow windows about two meters off the ground. Light barely passes through the panes. They are out of the troll's line of sight, but breaking them may attract its attention. To enter the temple through these openings, the PCs will need to succeed in two standard difficulty Strength checks (10): one to climb and one to break the window. Once the window is broken, the PCs can use ropes (5 or 10 meters) to ensure passage (and not roll any dice).

At the back of the temple to the north is a small concealed door: it looks sturdy and locked. A PC with the Lockpicker Edge can attempt to open this door by succeeding in a standard difficulty Dexterity check (10). The door can also be forced open, but this requires a difficult Strength check (15). If the PCs attempt this solution, the success or failure of this action will surely attract the troll's attention. However, if the PCs manage to open it, they can take refuge in the temple and avoid an unnecessary confrontation: the door is too narrow for the troll to pass through.

If the PCs choose the hard way or fail in trying to enter discreetly, they will have to face the troll.

For the confrontation, you can use the map of Klodenn's town center and the troll's stats available in the appendix.

In Search of Father Luther

Once inside the temple, the PCs will quickly realize that no one is present. The room comprises about ten wooden benches facing a religious altar located at the back, right next to the hidden door. On the walls, religious emblems are hung, and torches are present to light the place at night.

If a PC inspects the altar, they will notice strange symbols resembling an ancient and unknown alphabet. At the base of the altar, on one of the stone slabs covering the floor, a PC may notice a bloodstain that seems to pass under the structure, likely indicating a subterranean passage. By examining the rear face of the altar, a small golden plaque catches the PCs' attention: it seems much more recent than the stone structure and even contains a phrase in the common language.

The back of the altar actually conceals a command interface that allows opening a passage if the correct code is entered.

Refer to the appendix for the altar puzzle.

To activate the altar and unlock the passage, the PCs must solve the riddle on the golden plaque. They need to understand that the plaque contains the translation of the text above it and that the upper part is actually a keyboard for entering the answer.

When a PC presses one of the keyboard keys, it lights up briefly: green if correct and red if incorrect. (Example: a PC presses «T», then «I», then «P»: the keys light up green, green, and red. The correct third letter is «M», to form «TIME».)

After three attempts, the system locks for one minute. All keys light up in red, and the keyboard becomes unresponsive. After four failed attempts, the system locks for three minutes, and on the fifth attempt, it locks permanently.

If your PCs fail to solve the riddle within 10 minutes, proceed directly to the conclusion.

Just after entering the word «TIME» on the altar, it begins to vibrate and move laterally, revealing access to a gloomy staircase descending several tens of meters. The PCs must find a way to light their way down, or they risk a terrible fall at the slightest misstep. The PCs can retrieve a torch from the temple and light it with a tinderbox or a fire spell. If they choose to proceed in the dark, they must succeed in a standard difficulty Perception check (10) to avoid tripping. The staircase is large: a fall will make a lot of noise and cause injuries. Roll a d6 for raw damage (damage not accounting for the target's armor) when a PC falls.

After 10 long minutes of descending the staircase, the PCs arrive at a massive corridor. In the distance, they can see a faint light several

The altar

A sacred table once used for ritual sacrifices or offerings. The altar is a huge compact stone block, covered with decorations and religious symbols. It appears to be a relic of an ancient civilization.

hundred meters away. As they approach, the PCs begin to hear the nearly inaudible voices of two individuals. The closer they get, the stronger the light becomes and the clearer the conversation between the two men.

If the PCs made noise descending the stairs or traversing the corridor, they will no longer hear the voices and will be greeted accordingly.

A few meters from the end of the tunnel, the PCs can see what seems to be the inside of a buried temple belonging to an unknown civilization. If they were discreet, they will hear the following conversation:

Man 1: "You've made me waste too much time, old man. Now speak, or I'll gut you right here!"
Man 2: "I'll tell you nothing! I'd rather die than betray my king."
Man 1: "Your king? Should I remind you that your lands are now under the Alliance's jurisdiction?"
Man 2: "There is only one sovereign I will kneel to, and he doesn't wear your insignia."
Man 1: "Tell me where the artifact is, or I'll break that defiant knee myself."
Man 2: "Do as you wish. If these are the Alliance's methods…"
Man 1: "I'll make you talk, old man. Say goodbye to your leg."

The PCs can intervene now if they wish to save the old man's life. If they have been discreet, they can see the two men in the center of the room. The first is armored, bearing the Alliance's emblem, and is heavily equipped. A difficult Intelligence check (15) may allow a PC to recognize him as Galarond, an officer and true legend of the Alliance. At his feet, another man is seated, his back pressed against a strange structure. He wears a robe and a religious symbol around his neck: Father Luther. The PCs can use their stealth to launch a surprise attack on Galarond, using the shadows of the pillars to move.

If the PCs made noise during their journey through the secret passage, they will see Father Luther, bloody and securely tied to a pillar and gagged. They will be attacked by surprise by Galarond the moment they enter the room.

The map of the buried temple and Galarond's stats are available in the appendix.



Galarond

An officer and celebrity of the Alliance. This forty-year-old elf, with a strong character and charming appearance, has many admirers on the continent. His exploits, most of which are highly romanticized, have helped build his legend. After nearly 15 long years in the service of Rautha, Galarond seems destined to become the worthy successor of Leroy Merlin as the iconic figure of the Alliance.

A TERRIBLE PLOT

Defeating Galarond

If the PCs defeat Galarond, Father Luther will be saved but severely injured. He will say to the PCs:

«Thank you, whoever you are, thank you!
This man tried every means to make me talk.
He is responsible for this massacre! He helped the troops of Asgure invade our lands! Because of him, the port of Kingshill Landing did not hold back the invasion!
I don't know if I'll recover from my wounds. So please, do me one last favor.
Go warn King Toric that his treasure is threatened.
Tell him that Galarond and probably other high-ranking individuals are trying to seize the royal family's artifact that was in Klodenn, and they are willing to do anything to get it!»

The PCs can try to interrogate Galarond, but he seems unwilling to respond. He is resigned and ready to accept his punishment.

If they ask the old man where they are, he will reply that this place belongs to the royal family of Irdian and that he has been protecting it for decades, as his father did before him. He does not know what these strange marks on the floor mean and is ignorant of the nature of the place.

An immense stele to the right of the room reveals the map of another world. Several jewels are embedded in the stele, two of which shimmer with a yellow and orange light. The priest is unaware of what this stele refers to.

Refer to the appendix for the stele map.

After a few minutes, another Alliance officer quietly enters the place. The PCs can recognize Oriel, the masked individual who came to greet them in Klodenn. As soon as she enters, Oriel exclaims, «Father Luther!» and removes her mask, revealing a feminine face with long, curly hair. She runs to his side and asks what happened. The PCs have no time to react, but they understand she did not come to harm them.

Oriel knows Father Luther well, as she grew up in Klodenn before joining the Alliance. That's why, as soon as she learned the village was threatened, she was one of the first on the scene.

She is somewhat disoriented and has difficulty understanding how Galarond, whom she has known for several years, could betray them. She will go to ask him for explanations, but he will remain impassive and prefer to remain silent.

After a few minutes of talking with everyone, she will entrust Father



Father Luther

An old wise man with graying hair and beard. Father Luther is considered by many to be the leader of the village of Klodenn. Holder of the village elders' memory and close to the royal family of Irdian, Father Luther has dedicated his life to protecting the secrets of the Irdian throne. He would rather die than betray his oath.

The stele

An immense thick granite slab depicting a map of another world. Five jewels are embedded in the stone, seemingly impossible to dislodge without damaging the stele. Two of them shine with yellow and orange light. A hole in the bottom right of the stele indicates the absence of a final jewel.



Oriel Unmasked
Under her mask hides the face of a beautiful young woman with dark skin, piercing eyes, and a lion's mane of hair.

Luther's mission to the PCs and ask them to learn more about this artifact. As for Oriel, she will go to Castle City to report on the matter and deliver Galarond to President Panorius. She arranges to meet the PCs at Carleon Castle in 48 hours. If she is absent, the PCs are ordered to go to Castle City to deliver the information they have obtained directly to the president.

Losing to Galarond

If the PCs are defeated by Galarond, they will be rescued by Oriel about ten minutes later. They will slowly wake from their lethargy and see Oriel by Father Luther's side. She no longer wears her mask and holds the father in her arms, who says a few words to her before fainting, exhausted.

If the PCs reduced Galarond's hit points below half his max hit points, they will have bought enough time, and Father Luther will not succumb to his wounds. Otherwise, Father Luther will not wake from his coma.

Oriel, in tears, will let out a cry of distress before laying Father Luther, still unconscious, on the ground, ensuring the PCs are okay. Once everyone is back on their feet, she will explain the situation:

«Galarond betrayed us. He is responsible for this invasion!
He started this war to create a diversion and steal an artifact that should have been here.

Father Luther gave me one last mission before dying.
He asked me to warn King Toric that the royal family's artifact is threatened.

The Alliance must be informed of Galarond's betrayal, and a search warrant must be issued as soon as possible. It is my duty to go warn the president.

That's why I'm entrusting this mission to you. By order of the Alliance, I command you to find the King of Irdian and deliver Father Luther's message to him. Take the opportunity to learn more about this artifact. If our enemies are seeking it, the Alliance must know what it represents.

Do not waste any time. I will come to meet you at Carleon Castle in a maximum of 48 hours, once I have made my report. If I don't return in time, go to Castle City to deliver the information you have obtained to President Panorius. He is the only one I still trust.»

Conclusion

Mission Accomplished

If everything goes well, the PCs are tasked with meeting King Toric, who is in Carleon. They must inform him that the artifact from the Klodenn temple is actively sought by individuals willing to do anything to acquire it. They are also ordered to gather information about this artifact so that the Alliance can be prepared for any eventuality. They have 48 hours to complete their mission before meeting Oriel in Carleon unless instructed otherwise.

Failing to Solve the Puzzle

If the PCs fail to decipher the puzzle at the altar, they will see a warrior in armor emerge from the secret passage as they prepare to leave. It is Galarond, covered in the priest's blood. If he encounters the PCs, he will tell them to flee as the underground is swarming with goblins and other cave creatures. He will then make his escape, leaving the PCs unable to intervene. The PCs find themselves alone in the temple again, but the passage is now open.

They can descend to the buried temple and find Father Luther at death's door. With his last breath, he entrusts the adventurers with the mission to warn King Toric that his treasure is threatened. Once they exit the temple with Luther's body, the PCs will encounter Oriel in the center of the town. Moved, she will remove her helmet and ask the PCs to fulfill the priest's last wish. She will arrange to meet them in Carleon for a debrief once the situation has calmed down.

In this scenario, Galarond is still alive and has fled. By the time the Alliance realizes that he is the instigator of this war, it will be too late.

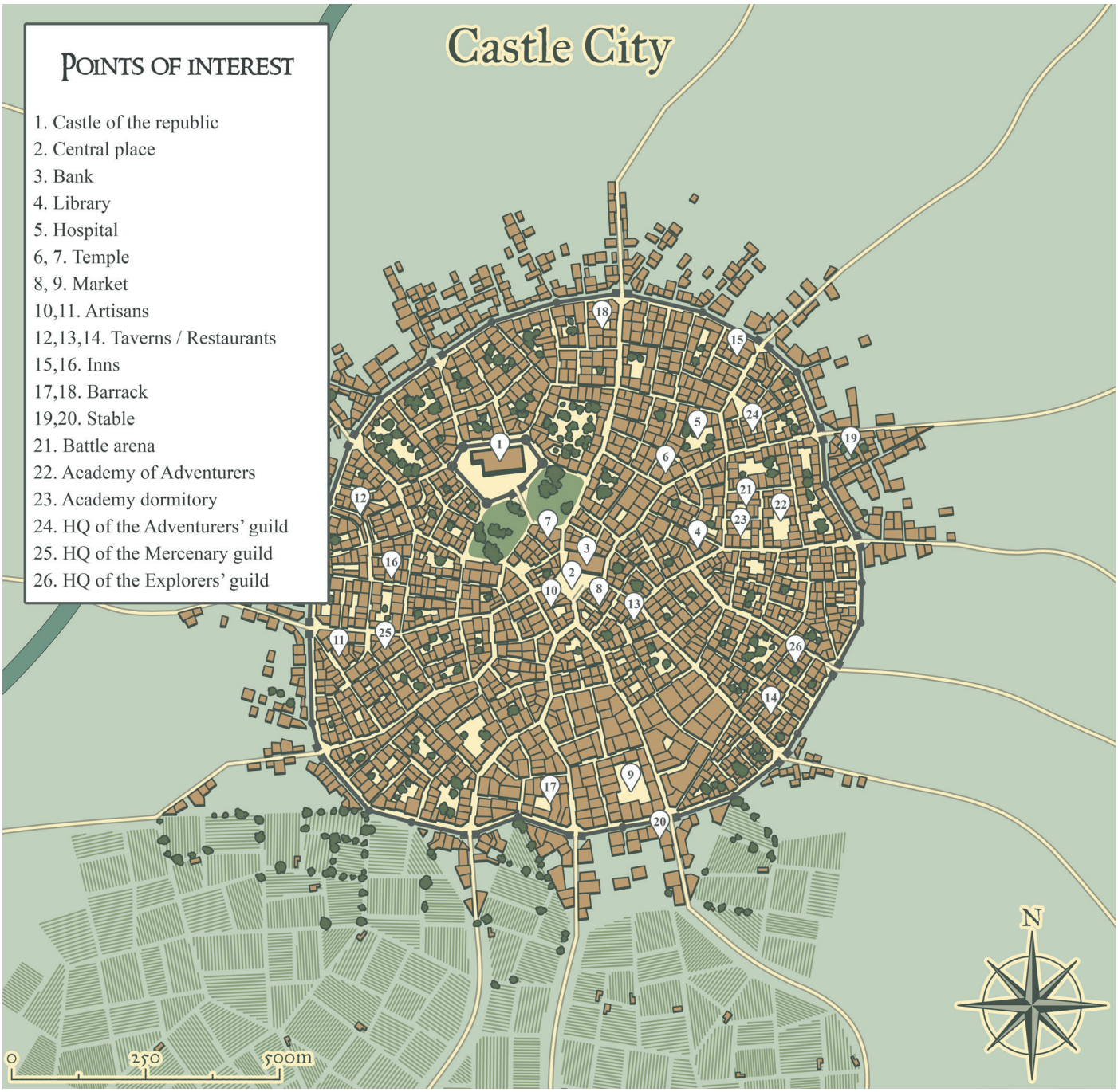
Rewards

Here is the list of end-of-scenario rewards available based on the achieved objectives:

Goals	Rewards
Defeat Galarond	200 experience points
Saving Father Luther	1 morale point and 100 gold coins per PC
Rescue Jirez from the well	1 morale point
Solve the altar puzzle	100 experience points
Defeat the bandits	70 experience points
Defeat the Troll	70 experience points
Defeat the Asgure warriors with Gadil	50 experience points
Give new bandages to old Orcar	1 morale point
Complete scenario	70 gold coins per PC

Appendix

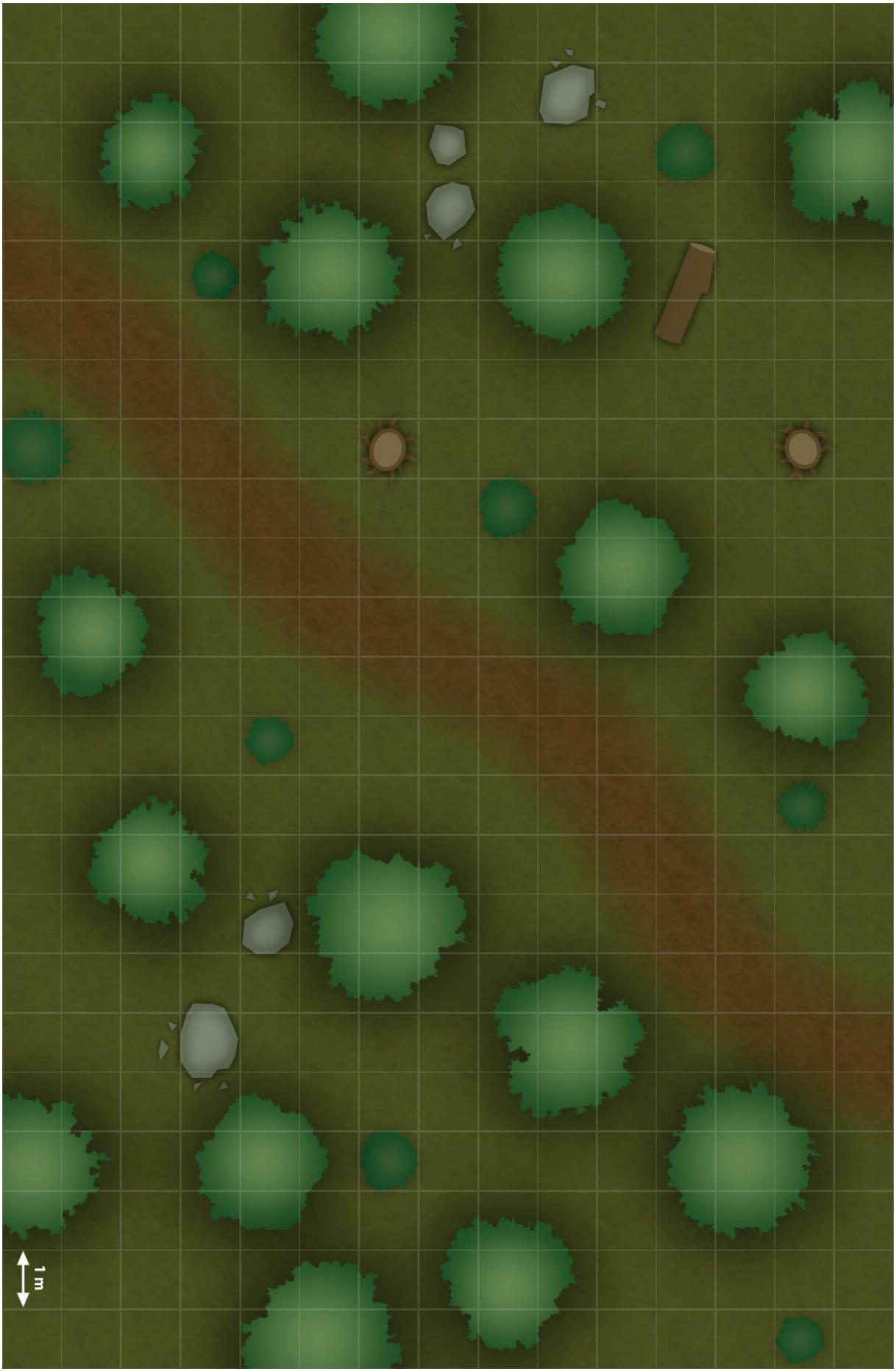
Map of Castle City



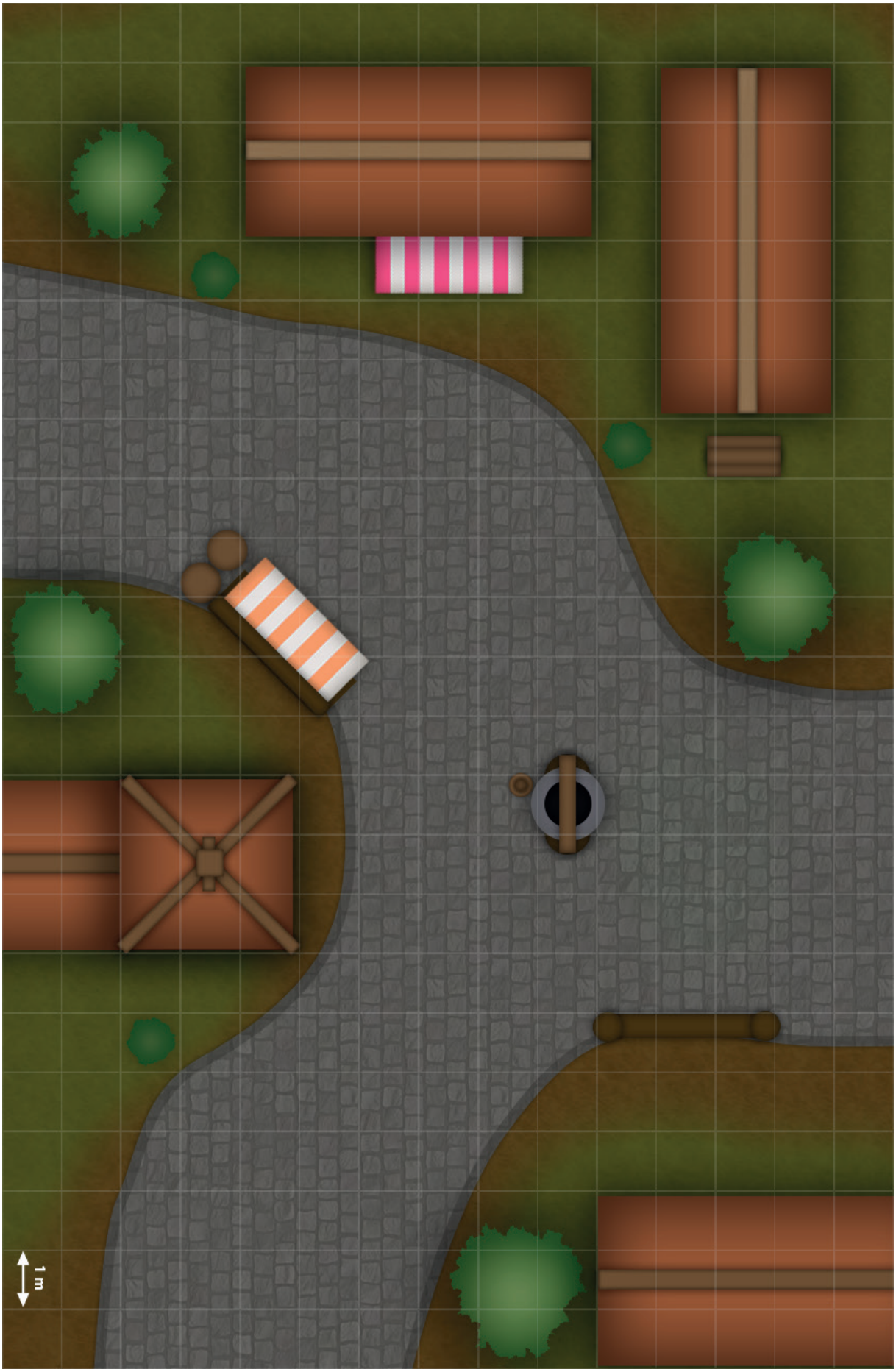
Map of Klodenn



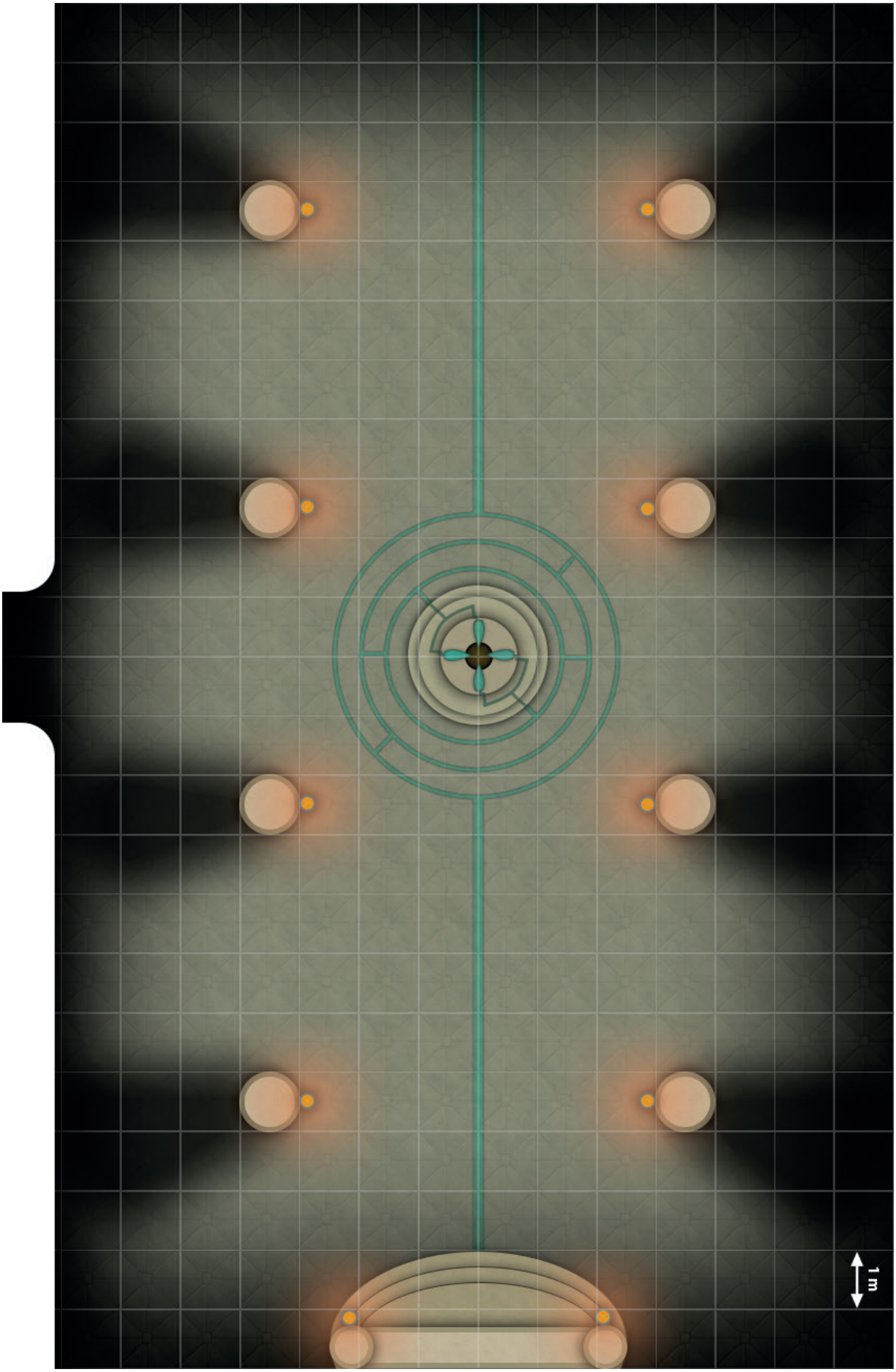
Wooded Path



KLODENN TOWN CENTER



Buried temple



Riddle of the Altar



Solution to the altar riddle



Map of the Klodenn Temple Stele



Creatures and NPCs

BANDIT

Rogue & Warrior : 1

HP : 15 EP : 10

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
-3/3	-3/3	-3/3	-3/3	-3/3	-3/3

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Common Weapon of choice			

Bandits roam in gangs and are sometimes led by thugs, veterans or mages. Not all bandits are bad. Oppression, drought, epidemics or famine can often lead honest people to a life of banditry.

Special move : Palm Strike

TROLL

HP : 25 (1) EP : 20

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
5	1	-4	5	2	-5

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Claws	Melee	1d20+2	1d4+DEX+STR

Dreaded green-skinned giants, trolls eat everything they can catch and devour. Only acid and fire can stop the regenerative properties of a troll's flesh.

Edges : Tough, Elusive, Giant

Special move : Regenerating Bite

ASGURE WARRIOR

Warrior : 2

HP : 17 EP : 10

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
3	0	-3	2	0	-2

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Common Weapon of choice			

Special moves : Fury

GADIL

Warrior & Rogue : 3

HP : 22 (2) EP : 16

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
3	3	1	1	-2	-2(-1)

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Brawling Weapon	Melee	1d20+3	2d4+STR+DEX

Armor	Require	Penalty	AP
Studded Leather Armor	None	-1 Charisma	2

Special moves : Palm Strike, Fury, Tactical Retreat, Stunning Blow

GALAROND

Warrior & Priest : 4

HP : 29 (4) EP : 16

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
3	-1(-2)	1	3	-3	3

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Enchanted Sword	Melee	1d20+4 CB	1d12+STR

Armor	Require	Penalty	AP
Half Plate	Constitution > 2	-2 Dexterity	4

Special moves : Fury, Prayer, Lay on Hands, Overturn, Blessing, Light Shield

ORIEL

Rogue & Druid : 4

HP : 24 (2) EP : 19

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
-2	3	2	0	2	1(-1)

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Fine Longbow	3 - 60m	1d20+4	1d10+DEX+PER
Dagger	Melee	1d20+4	1d8+DEX

Armor	Require	Penalty	AP
Studded Leather Armor	None	-1 Charisma	2

Special moves : Tactical Retreat, Thorn Trap, Magical Berries, Piercing Strike, Mark, Animal Form