

A RULES SUPPLEMENT
COMPATIBLE WITH THE
Swords & Wizardry

RULES AND ALL EDITIONS BASED ON
THE ORIGINAL 1974 ROLEPLAYING GAME



MAJESTIC WILDERLANDS ADVENTURE/SUPPLEMENT

The Scourge of the Demon Wolf

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Scourge of the Demon Wolf

Foreword

The majority of the adventures in my Majestic Wilderlands are based around locales and focused on conflicts between different groups. The players arrive in the midst of a situation and have to use their wits and roleplaying skills to figure out the underlying problem. The resolution results in new friends and enemies for the players. In later adventures, the players in my campaign find that these friends are just as valuable as a +5 sword.

Robert S Conley – July 2012

Introduction

Three died. They were mauled beyond recognition. The Baron sent his huntsmen to kill the beasts and for a fortnight they tramped across the countryside. Between their whoring and drinking they killed twelve wolves, parading their skins through the village. They were hung on poles as trophies of victory. Then the huntsmen left, the beasts slain, the village saved... so we thought.

As the fields turned golden under the summer sun the killings began again. Four more died. Then the Baron's man, the bailiff, was killed on the high meadow in sight of Mitra's Temple. His screams could be heard well into the village. He was only identified after we reassembled the pieces.

With the priest's help I wrote a report to our liege, the Baron of Westtower. My report ended with, *There will be no harvest until the beast is slain and the killings stopped.*

The adventure that surrounds the Scourge of the Demon Wolf is not linear. Instead there are various locales, factions, NPCs, and encounters that can be combined in surprising ways depending on what the players do. The referee will have to use his best judgment in deciding how to adapt to the players' actions.

Scattered throughout the adventure are Rob's Notes. These are comments and observations from the various playtests I did for the adventure. This adventure was run several times for different groups at my home and at conventions. Their different reactions helped fine tune the adventure.

Several of the locales have been fleshed out in considerable detail in the second half of this book. Those details have not been included in the adventure as it would distract from the necessary information in the encounters. The referee is encouraged to supply added details. For example what goods the merchants at Denison's Crossing are carrying. Also the referee may find several things useful as hooks to for further adventures although they are not fleshed out. For example abandoned orc warrens in the Cloudwall Mountains.



Organization

Scourge of the Demon Wolf is both an adventure and a supplement. It is divided into two main sections; the first is the adventure proper. It has all the information to play out the Scourge of the Demon Wolf including background, motivations, locales, and statistics. Several locales, such as the Village of Kensla, are only given the details needed for the adventure. In the supplement portion of the book several of these locales are fleshed out into considerable detail. This was done so that this book remains useful to referees beyond the adventure itself. Reading the supplement half is not necessary to run the adventure.

The Adventure

Without the Majestic Wilderlands

It is easy to use this adventure without the Majestic Wilderlands. My setting uses the same assumptions as the original edition, the statistics and hit points are designed to work with an original edition campaign. The following lists the differences between the Majestic Wilderlands and the original edition rules.

- All craftsmen are zero level humans.
- Priests are considered clerics of their level.
- Thugs and burglars are considered thieves.
- All Thothian Mages are considered magic-users.
- Ritual components convert into coins or valuable lab equipment.
- Viz can be converted into gems worth 100d each or kept as valuable items usable only for the creation of magic items.

Money

Throughout the text, whenever something is given a value, the 'd' symbol is used. Historically this stands for denarius, the common silver coin of the Roman Empire. This has come down to us through the Middle Ages where it was used to denote one silver penny. For example, 1d = 1 silver piece, 10d = 10 silver pieces and so on. The Majestic Wilderlands uses a silver based standard, however in many older edition campaigns the gold piece is the most common coin. In this case, the referee may choose to interpret 1d = 1 gold coin.

In the Majestic Wilderlands 250d weighs 1 pound.

Another coin, the gold crown, is referenced. This is a one ounce coin worth 320d. Sixteen gold crowns weighs one pound. The value in d is given in parenthesis.

There is also the farthing for which the 'f' symbol is used. There are four copper farthings for every silver penny in the Majestic Wilderlands. Use copper pieces if your campaign uses the gold standard.

Modifiers

Modifiers are given in two forms, a number modifying a d20 roll and a percentage. Various editions handle non-combat situations differently and this makes it easier to use the Scourge of Demon Wolf with the referee's favorite edition.

Viz

Viz is a magical substance that takes many forms. It could be a flask of pure spring water, a newly bloomed flower, or an iridescent rock. They are infused with pure magic. Viz can be used in the casting of spells, or the creation of magic items.

Viz allows a magic user to cast spells without losing it from memory. The viz is consumed in the process. One viz for a first level spell, two viz for a second level spell, and so on. One viz is worth 100d towards the creation of a magic item. The referee can use viz as treasure usable towards the creation of a magic item in place of more gold pieces.

NPCs stats

The stat blocks of various monsters and NPCs mostly follow those of Swords & Wizardry and the Monster Book. The major change for human NPCs is the addition of various ability bonuses. Majestic Wilderlands abilities grant a bonus to a d20 roll. These bonuses are in addition to what a normal character can do. For example, every character can stealth, but a burglar can do it better with the class stealth bonus. If you don't own the Majestic Wilderlands supplement then you can ignore this section of the stat block.



Starting the Adventure

There are several ways to start the player characters on the adventure. The referee should pick the one that best suits the circumstances of the campaign.

- The Baron of Westtower, Michael Mahon, gives the characters his authority to deal with the situation in the village.
- Passing through Denison's Crossing, the inn is abuzz with Kensla's troubles.
- The party is on their way to Golden House for business related to the Order of Thoth when they pass through Denison's Crossing.
- The Church of Mitra is conducting a routine review of the finances of the temple in Kensla. The characters travel through Denison's Crossing.
- Local members of the Brotherhood of the Lion, a thieves' guild in the Duchy of Dearthmead, have heard of bandit activity in Westtower. They are not getting their cut and investigating why.
- Some thieves associated with the characters or the characters themselves have a stolen item to fence. The Beggars generally have the best deals for fenced goods. They were last seen near Kensla.
- One of the characters has family in Kensla and they are travelling there to visit.

NPCs & Factions

The Baron of Westtower

Michael Mahon is the sixth Baron of Westtower. He is a tall, imposing man in his late 40's. His hair is gray and looks very much like a seasoned warrior. He inherited Westtower five years ago after his father's death. He is a pious believer in Mitra and generously supports the church with tithes. He finds being the baron overwhelming. He'd much rather lead sweeps of the foothills or hunting than stuck holding court and dealing with administrative minutiae. He has a strong sense of duty which allows him get through the paperwork his chancellor hands him every day. His mood is not pleasant when the sun is shining and he's stuck behind a table.

The Ghinorians

The people of Dearthmead, including Westtower, are of Ghinorian descent. The Ghinorians originated in the far south of the Wilderlands and believe themselves to be the chosen people of Mitra, the Goddess of Honor and Justice. Their faith and skill allowed them to build the largest empire in the history of the Majestic Wilderlands. Dearthmead was founded as a colony of that empire. A thousand years ago the Ghinorian heartland fragmented in a series of civil wars and was conquered by barbarians. The Ghinorian colonies were left to fend for themselves and established a number of small principalities and dukedoms.



The Duchy of Dearthmead was not able to retain its independence and was conquered by the Tharian Horselords over a hundred years ago. The ruler of the Horselords, the Invincible Overlord of City-State, offered generous terms for their surrender and made the Duchy a full partner in the Tharian Confederation. Despite this, the Ghinorians of Dearthmead remember their days of glory and dream of a time when Mitra's banner of the white lion can be raised again and her empire restored.

The Bandits of Westtower

The Barony of Westtower lies on the western fringe of the Duchy of Dearthmead. Several bandit gangs live in the wilderness preying on the traffic between the Duchy of Dearthmead and Twinhorn Pass to the northwest. The bandit gangs consist of peasants and freemen that have either run afoul of the law or suffered some misfortune. Now they live in the wilderness doing what they can to survive. The life span of a typical bandit gang is around five years.

One gang is led by Egric Half Nose who has seven bandits under his leadership. Egric fled into the wilderness three years ago when he killed a man in a dispute over a woman. A strong, burly individual, he used his physical skills to claim the leadership of the bandits. For the past two years he managed to eke out a living preying on caravans leaving Denison's Crossing. Currently, his gang lives in a cave in the forest along the Denison's Crossing-Kensla road. See the Bandit Cave Encounter for details.

When the beast attacks started, Egric took advantage by fashioning crude wolf costumes for his men to wear. With these costumes they started attacking outlying cottages around Kensla. They had to lay low when the baron's huntsmen came to Kensla, but have recently started their attacks again. They have not encountered the Demon Wolf.

The Beggars

The Tharian Horselords swept out of the west and conquered City-State one hundred years ago. Since then five Tharian Overlords have reigned including the current Overlord, Lucius III. During the conquest much of the land was divided among the clans and many Tharians became wealthy. But not all of them were fortunate and a few dishonored themselves.

Dispossessed of their horses they were forced to travel from steading to steading begging for food and shelter. Some banded together for survival and mutual support, these became known as the Beggar Clans. Over the last century they specialized in the trading of information and the smuggling of goods. Their mobility allows them to buy stolen items on one side of the Overlord's domain and sell it on the other.

Locus is chief of the Goshawks. For most of the year they wander the Duchy of Dearthmead trading and gathering information. They make contact with the various bandit gangs and the rural thieves' guilds to fence goods. In winter they head up to the Mermist Swamp where at a secluded location they join other Beggar Clans for a season long encampment.

In midsummer they stopped near Kensla to trade with the village and fence any goods that Egric's gang (see Bandit Cave Encounter, page 11) may have. Normally they only stay two weeks and move on, but the Demon Wolf caught some of the boys and killed one; Locus' son. Locus has vowed to kill the Demon Wolf and will not leave until he has his vengeance.

The Bailiff of Kensla, Sir Anson Jerol, has noticed this and has warned them twice to leave. The last time was a week ago just before he was torn apart by the Demon Wolf. Elder Anselm, and Reeve Tomas both know the Beggars remain in the area. Elder Anselm has been advocating to Tomas to do something about them as the Elder is sure that the Beggars are to blame for the attacks.

The Village of Kensla

The village of Kensla lies on the outer boundaries of the Duchy of Deathmead. Lying next to the eastern foothills of the Cloudwall Mountains, the village grows wheat and harvests wool from the flocks of sheep wandering the nearby hills. The Baron of Westtower holds much of the village's land and appoints a bailiff to administer his interests. The bailiff works with the reeve, the elected leader of the villagers. Together they make the day-to-day decisions.

The last bailiff was Sir Anson Jerol. He was killed by the Demon Wolf a week ago. This is the latest in a series of attacks that occurred after Baron Michael sent a party of his huntsmen to kill the wolves. They killed the local wolves and left. With the latest attacks Reeve Tomas feels he has no choice but to force the Baron's hand and refuse to bring in the harvest until the Demon Wolf is dealt with. He knows this is a huge risk as the law considers this rebellion and he and his co-conspirators could hang.

He is supported by a large majority of the village. He is under pressure by the local priest of Mitra, Elder Anselm, to attack the Goshawks, a clan of Beggars. Elder Anselm believes that their unholy ways has brought the curse of the Demon Wolf to the village and the only way to get rid of the curse is to get rid of the Beggars.

The Golden House

Several miles north of Kensla is a conclave of mages of the Order of Thoth. The Order of Thoth is an organization of magic-users that spans the Wilderlands. The mages of the order join into conclaves for mutual protection and support.

The mages of the Golden House are largely unaware of current events. They are content to be left alone in the foothills of the Cloudwalls, only worrying about the issues and politics of the Order of Thoth. However, they are responsible for the problem. An ambitious apprentice, Arbela, has found a forbidden tome of demonology among her master's possession. Seeking a shortcut to power she took the book, several components and other items to a rocky outcropping several miles away. There she tried to summon a wrath demon. The ritual failed, so she thought. Disgusted, Arbela took the tome, leaving the debris of her ritual behind.

The Demon Wolf

Unknown to Arbela the ritual partially succeeded. A spirit of a wrath demon was released from the Abyss. Due to Arbela's inexperience it was not bound. Below the rock, at the bottom of the cliff, a mother wolf laired with her pups. The wrath demon possessed one of the pups. Over the winter the pup grew. It started by killing its siblings, and then its mother. When spring came it emerged from its den hungry for bigger prey. It took over a wolf pack and preyed on the sheep flocks.

However The Demon Wolf did not have the power to defend itself when the villagers came after his pack. He fled before the attack and watched as his pack was slaughtered. He resolved that next time he would have more than enough strength. This is when he attacked and killed a child from the Beggar Clan. He then went into the foothills gathering wolves to lead. They practiced by killing the orcs that lived in the high mountains.

After two months the Demon Wolf returned to Kensla to kill.



Summary Of Encounters

Because of non-linear nature of the adventure, this section summarizes the various encounters. This section also has the map of the region. Each small hex takes about 1 hour to traverse on foot.

Demon Wolf Pack

This section details the Demon Wolf and his wolf pack, the primary antagonist of the adventure.

Westtower Keep

This section is the introduction I use to start the adventure. The Baron of Westtower summons the characters to take care of the problems plaguing the village of Kensla. There is a side encounter with the Baron's huntsmen that has information for the characters.

The Greenhaven Inn

At the turnoff to the village of Kensla is Denison's Crossing. The Greenhaven Inn can be a source of information and supplies for the characters.

The Slain Tinker

The body of a slain tinker is found with a false clue about the attacks. If this is investigated it will lead to the lair of a local bandit gang.

The Bandit Cave

This section details a keyed encounter locale for the lair of a local bandit gang. This is A on the Westtower Map

Arriving at Kensla

An overview of what the characters see when they arrive at the village.

Meeting the Reeve First

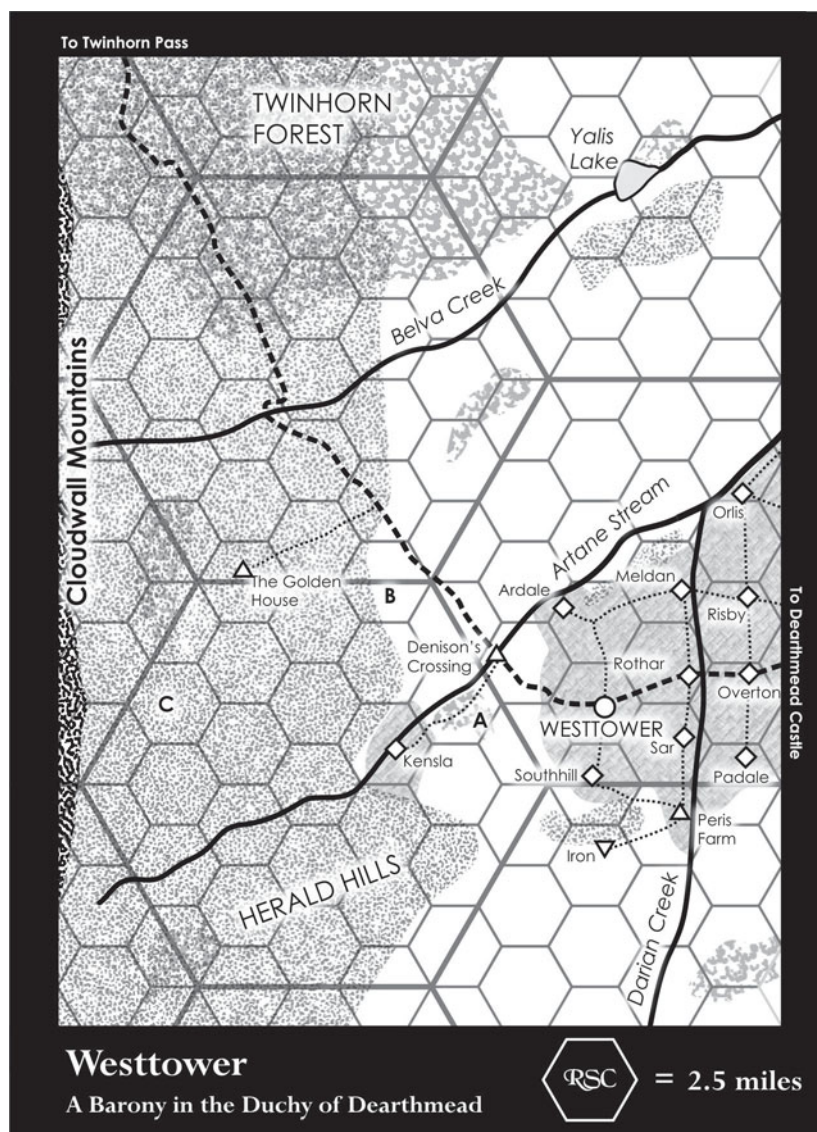
One of two likely encounters that could occur when the characters enters the village, involves going to the tavern first and meeting the village Reeve.

Meeting the Elder First

One of two likely encounters that could occur when the characters enter the village, involves going to the church first and meeting the Elder (Priest) of Mitra, Goddess of Honor and Justice.

Sitting Down at the Kensla's Tavern

After the characters arrival there will be an important meeting with the villagers at the tavern. This introduces the two main factions (Reeve and Elder) of the village and their issues. Introduces information about the Beggar Clan that is located in the region along with the fact that the Elder of Mitra believes they are responsible for the attacks.



Meeting Yoluf

Yoluf is a local trapper/tracker that the Reeve will introduce to the characters. Yoluf is useful as a guide to the region.

Searching the High Meadow

The site of a recent attack, this site has accurate clues to their nature. This particular attack involves the death of the village bailiff, Sir Anson Jerol.

Searching the Elderly Couple's House

This is a site of another recent attack, this one involving the death of an elderly couple. This side has false clues about the nature of the attacks. This could lead to a confrontation with the Beggars or the Bandits (if they haven't been found yet).

Wandering the Wilderness (Day/Night)

The next section details what happens when the characters wander the local wilderness during the day. The next section does the same but about what happens at night. Both have accurate clues to the nature of the attacks.

Meeting the Beggars

At some point the characters will meet the beggars and learn what they know about the attacks. This encounter could also lead to the discovery of the bandit camp if this hasn't been found yet. This is B on the Westtower Map

The Standoff at the Beggar Camp

It is likely that the Elder of Mitra will take matters into his own hands and rouse the village to lynch the Beggars and drive them away.

Adventure Rewards

There are few traditional opportunities for treasure in Scourge of the Demon Wolf. The main treasure is the gratitude and favor of the various factions that the characters encounter. In the supplement portion the referee will see that their aggregate wealth allow for generous rewards.

The Baron of Westtower

Baron Michael will award each character 1 gold crown (320d) and his patronage. A baron's patronage is very useful if the characters are considering establishing a stronghold or another type of abode. If the referee judge that the players have done exceptionally well, Baron Michael may grant Kensla as an estate to the more worthy.

The Village of Kensla

Successfully defeating the Demon Wolf and resolving the conflict with the Beggar without bloodshed among the villagers will earn their gratitude. The Reeve Tomas will collect 320d and present it to the party along with an open invitation to return whenever they need a place to stay. If on good terms with Elder Anselm, the priest will present 100d to the party and will write a letter of recommendation they can use when they have dealing with the Church of Mitra.



The Search of the Wolf Den

During the characters search of the wilderness they may find the lair where the Demon Wolf was born at. The site has accurate clues pointing to the Golden House, a conclave of magic-users, as the source of the problem. This is a keyed encounter locale. This is C on the Westtower Map

Visiting the Golden House

After the discovery of the items at the Wolf Den, the characters may choose to visit the Golden House and questions the magic-users living there. There the characters will discovered that one of the apprentices Arbela is responsible for the origin of the Demon Wolf. The characters will see Arbela fleeing the Golden House.

The Final Confrontation

The characters return to the Wolf Den to fight Arbela and Demon Wolf, the resolution of which will bring the attacks to an end.

The Beggars

If the conflict with the villagers is resolved without bloodshed among the beggars, Chief Locus and Goshawks will be in the character's debt. They will each be given a snow white Goshawk feather that they can present to any beggar clan if they need aid or a favor. Also Locus will present 100d to the party.

The Golden House

The mages of the Golden House are highly embarrassed by Arbela's actions. If the characters keep quiet about Arbela's involvement the mages will give each character 1 gold crown (320d) along with a minor magic item of their choice. (+1 sword, +1 Ring of Protection, a dozen healing potion, etc). Those with the Lost Book of Magic they will offer each character magic items costing a total of 1,500d

The Bandits

The characters may decide not to turn the bandits in. In which case Ecgric will offer their service as henchmen of the characters.