



RETRIEVE AND RETREAT

GET BACK WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS, OR DIE TRYING



A short adventure for players of the 4th level.

NOTE

No hero starts with his most arduous quest. Before they become legendary, all heroes are ordinary. Such was the case for Arthur, such was the case for Lancelot, and such is the case for most D&D Parties. *Retrieve and Retreat* is an adventure for those young adventurers just starting. It is an introductory or prologue adventure to our *Fallen Legends of the Roundtable* compendium. This adventure takes place before the kingdom goes dark. Mordred has yet to win, and the world's only threats are pesky ogres or trickster faeries playing pranks on the old. It's as close to a fairy tale world as it can get.

PLOT HOOK

The party is made up of young adventurers. They've grown up together, helping the village of Carthvale here and there. Now, the old half-orc blacksmith, Pietro, contacted them regarding a "special request". The orc is past his prime, and his days of adventuring are over, but since the party seems keen on getting into trouble, he thinks he's got the perfect challenge for them. He wants them to reclaim his old warhammer, which he lost while fighting with a cave troll not far from the village. Ever since he failed to defeat the troll, it has been ruling over the nearby mountain range, with everyone afraid to go and challenge it.

CHAPTER 1. MENTORSHIP

In which the party talks with Pietro about their quest.

Chapter 1.1. Younger Eyes

GM NOTE: Before starting the adventure, if this is an introductory session or a one-shot, flesh out the player characters together with them. It might not directly play into the story, but it is assumed they have grown up together (*Goonies* style). The adventure works best if the party is relatively young, maybe late teens and early twenties in human years. More specifically, they are just starting. Ask them about their relationship to the village, each other, and adventuring as a whole. Their choices will hopefully help influence their decisions while on the adventure. Once everybody has an idea of who they are, you may proceed.

Read this:

'You race each other to the billowing smoke you see in the distance, the road leading you further toward the outskirts of Carthvale. Past a few pine trees and over a creaking bridge, you make it to the noisy building that is Pietro's Blacksmithing. The smoke helped lead you thus far, but it looks like a monster of fire and ash from the front of the building. Behind the walls, you can hear the banging sound of steel on steel, interweaved with the sizzle of a piece of metal being quenched. You reckon it's not long until the old Pietro will notice your arrival, but now you are alone amongst each other.'

The party can now interact amongst themselves. Give them a few minutes to describe their appearance and build a rapport. After a few minutes, **Pietro (veteran)** will come out.

Pietro (veteran)

Information: Pietro is an old half-orc. Once upon a time, he was the village's champion, protecting them against all threats, but now he is a lonely blacksmith. He appears grumpy, but he has a heart of gold, which has slowly eroded due to loneliness. One of his tusks is missing, his beard is long and greasy, his hair is mostly gone, and he can barely walk.

Roleplaying as Pietro: Pietro is a man who is fighting his sorrows and losing. Try as he might to be kind and welcoming; his anger gets the better of him. He spends his time working and hates being bothered. Because of this, his social skills are lacking. Asking for help from these young adventurers is difficult for him. He'll mumble his way through, stating what he wants, and though he cares for the party and does not want them to get injured, he won't say it out loud.

As Pietro (**veteran**) comes out, he'll ask the party to join him behind the building. Bring the party to map 1, slowly moving them from area 1 to area 2. Also at area 2 are two **horses**, which the party will see tied up to a post on the side of the building.

Any party member in that area can make a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** or **Wisdom (Perception) check** to look for anything out of the ordinary. They'll find one large knife, tarps, ropes, and a pile of wooden weapons.

They can also make a **DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** to bond with the horses. If they do, it will grant them an advantage later in the story.

At the area, Pietro will recount his story to them.



Read this:

'You sit down behind the blacksmith and watch the sizeable half-orc gaze into the distance before he begins speaking. "When I was young, I felt untouchable. I bet you do too. You aren't, but that's... besides the point. I was the protector of our village, as you might know. I was pretty good at it up to the end. There was one beast I could never defeat - the troll of the Bonemeadow Quarry, about a day's away from here. That used to be our mining quarry. I say it used to be because we mined too deep one day, and a troll emerged from his cave. He butchered the miners... One made it out and called me for aid. So I climbed the mountain to face this troll, but I didn't have much luck. Just like the miners, he beat me up good. I survived but lost my warhammer in the process. That was ten years ago. That beast has controlled our quarry for ten years and turned it into his lair. And since it defeated me, no one dared to fight it. I'm done waiting for someone to do it. But I can't fight it without my hammer. So I thought I might give you a challenge since you're so intent on getting into trouble. Killing it is close to impossible. That's my job. Your job is to distract it long enough to get back my hammer. You go in; you get my hammer, and you come back. Ideally, you avoid it altogether. If you have to fight it, don't be brave and try not to die." The half-orc turns his eyes back to you with a stare so powerful you feel it burning in your chest.'

During the speech, the party can make a **DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check** to measure Pietro's emotions. He is disappointed in himself and has a hard time telling the story.

Pietro will offer the party 800 gold between them if they get back his hammer. He will once again mention that their job is **not dying**. Once they agree, he'll nod and begin putting on his armor. He'll then grab the two **horses** and move within his training pit (area 3).

You may proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 1.2. Preparations

Read this:

'Once in his training pit, the orc looks back at you and points you toward the wooden weapons. "Grab a weapon and come in here. Before I send you to get back my hammer, I want to see what you can do. Here's the trick: you might have to split up. Someone might have to bother the creature while someone else gets my hammer. If that's the case, I want to see your decision-making process. The better you do in this test, the more supplies I'll invest in you. Don't disappoint me!'

Once every party member has a wooden weapon, Pietro (**veteran**) will slash the two **horses** on the thigh and let go of the reigns. Roll 1d8 for each horse. Depending on the number rolled, they will rush off in that direction, starting with 1 as north and moving clockwise. Once the **horses** have rushed off, Pietro will give the party their task. To finish the encounter, they have to:

- Gather and mend both horses.
- Disarm and immobilize him.
- Get inside the blacksmith through the back entrance
- Leave no one behind.

After he's laid out their tasks, roll for initiative.

During the encounter, each round, at initiative 20 (losing initiative), roll 1d8 for each horse and move them 60 feet in that direction. While within 30 feet of a horse, a party member can make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** to get the horse to move back toward them. They have advantage on this check if they bonded with the horses earlier. Once a horse has calmed down, the party can heal it with a **DC 16 Wisdom (Medicine) check** or magical healing. A healed horse will no longer run at initiative 20.

The party can also explore the map's areas during the encounter. Once they've completed all their tasks, proceed to the next chapter.

GM NOTE: This is not an ordinary encounter because the party's job is not to merely stop their enemy but to complete a series of other tasks. Because of this, the way you play Pietro should also be different. For the encounter, he will only make non-lethal attacks (bludgeoning damage instead of piercing) and focus on grappling people, isolating them, or preventing them from doing their job. The party will have to move through the map and might need to use some of the objects around them. Encourage them to get creative and think of fun roleplay solutions. Also worth noting: exploring areas 4 and 5 will also help with finishing up the encounter.



Areas of the Blacksmith's

Area 1 - Arrival Point

This is where the party arrives.

Area 2 - Behind the Building

Tools, a tarp, and rope fill the area. A party member can search through the area with a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** or **Wisdom (Perception) check**, finding helpful ropes and tarps on a success. These can be used to immobilize Pietro.

Area 3 - The Training Pit

While in the pit, Pietro regains 1d8 hit points at the start of each turn.

Area 4 - The Well

A party member with a **passive Perception of 14 or higher** will realize they can push Pietro inside the well to immobilize him. The party can do this by making a successful shove attack against Pietro while he is within 5 feet of the well.

Area 5 - The Back Entrance

The party must enter the building through here. The door is locked, requiring either a **DC 15 Thieves' Tools check** or a **DC 17 Strength (Dexterity) check** to open. Once the door is opened, the party member who opened it must make a **DC 15 Strength saving throw**, as Pietro's **mastiff, Otto**, jumps on them and joins the encounter. On a failed save, Otto knocks them prone. Otto shares Pietro's initiative but takes his turn directly after him. The party can only get inside the house once Otto has been baited from the entrance or pushed back.

Chapter 1.3. Sent Away

Once combat has finished (either by the party completing their tasks or by Pietro defeating them), the old half-orc will shake off some sweat and thank them for the training. Then, he'll welcome them inside his home.

Inside, he'll grant the party 300 gold and 2 **potions of healing** to protect them against the troll. If they completed all tasks during the encounter, he will also give them a **rope of entanglement**. Then, he'll

recommend they stop by the lumber mill on their way to the mountains. He'll mention that a little man named Tisip might have some other tools they could use to their aid.

Then, after wishing them luck a final time, he'll send them on their way.

Proceed to the next chapter.

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MAP 1



CHAPTER 2. UP THE MOUNTAIN

In which the party searches for their foe.

Chapter 2.1. Into the Woods

Before the party goes into the woods, allow them to make any final preparations they might want. Then, they can go forth.

Read this:

'You move into the dark forest at the base of the Bonemeadow Mountains, named so after the bone-like texture of the treebark. You know this to be quite a dangerous land. Once upon a time, it was ruled by civilization, but after the troll sent them away, it became infested with gnolls, who ate up the indigenous beasts and pillaged the communities until none but the gnomes remained. Stubborn to a fault and dedicated to these woods, the gnomes are still here, splitting their time between logging and fighting the gnolls.'

As the party makes it into the woods, ask which party members would like to be the **Navigator**, **Lookout**, and **Scout** for the remainder of the journey.

- The **Navigator** will have to make a **DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check** to move through the woods and not get lost. They have advantage if they are proficient in **cartographer's tools**.

- The **Lookout** will have to make a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** to ensure they're not being followed or hunted down.

- The **Scout** must roll 1d6 for which forest encounter they'll come across.

If the **Navigator** is successful in his check, write it down. It will matter later in the story.

If the **Lookout** is successful, read this:

'As you move through the woods, you notice two giant buzzards, carrion birds, staring at you from above. They're not within range to swoop down by any means, but they're looking, almost like they're scouting for someone or something.'

Upon hearing this, any party member can make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check**. On a success, they recognize that these birds feast on bones, which most likely means they've migrated here due to the gnolls and the troll's presence. Getting their attention might be helpful in the future.

For the rest of the chapter, the party can make **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) checks** to collect bones, which can help them in the future.

Lastly, consult the table below for what the party encounters. The **Scout** will be the first to see it in the distance:

1	<i>A brown bear, playing with her cubs. If the party fails a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check or a DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, she'll begin chasing them through the woods.</i>
2	<i>A squirrel. How cute!</i>
3	<i>A bear trap. The Scout must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the trap triggers, they take 2d10 piercing damage and are restrained. They can use their action to repeat the saving throw, breaking free on a success.</i>
4	<i>A deer and a doe running away from a gnoll. If the party defeats the gnoll, they can make a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check to search it for objects, finding a still warm gnome bread sandwich, which means the gnomes are under attack. If the party chooses to speed up because of this, it will affect the next chapter.</i>
5	<i>A luckstone on the ground.</i>
6	<i>A skittish gnome merchant named Hayes, who can sell them a potion of growth for 100 gold or boots of speed for 250 gold.</i>

Once the party has finished their encounter and cruises deeper into the forest, you may proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 2.2. The Lumber Mill Attack

At the start of this chapter, check if the **Navigator** was successful on his check or if the party sped up after finding food on the **gnoll's** body. If either of these happened, the party will arrive just in time to fight the bulk of the gnoll attack. If not, they'll arrive too late, only fighting the stragglers.



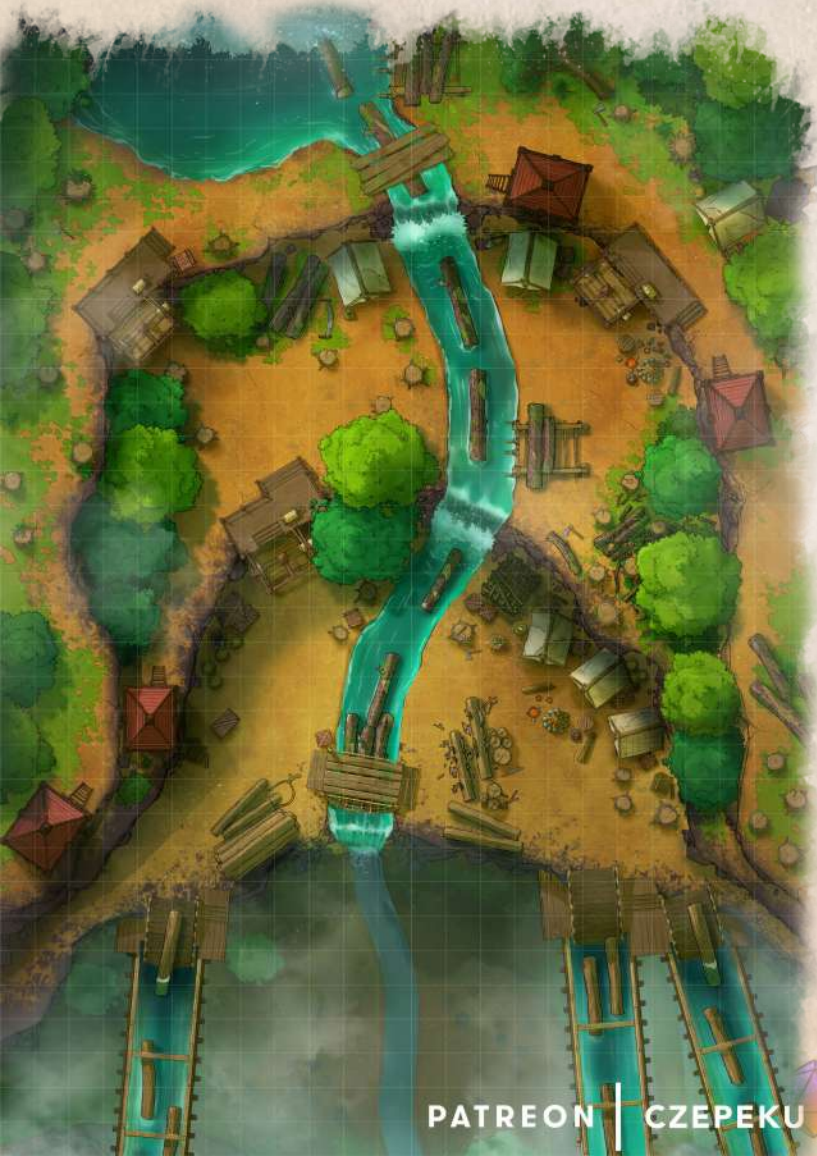
Read this:

'As you ascend atop the Bonemeadow Mountains, the stillness and calm give way to the distant sound of shuffling, fire, and laughter. In the distance, you see a plume of smoke, but whereas Pietro's workshop lets out white smoke, this is black, the sign of wood and leaves burning, of the ravages of combat. What do you do?'

The party can now either rush in the direction of the combat or ignore it and move past. If they ignore it and move past it, proceed to the next chapter. If, instead, the party moves towards it, bring them to map 2. They see a gnomish lumber mill under a gnoll assault, with the lumberjacks trying to fight back and failing.

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MAP 2



Once on map 2, if the party arrives during the main attack, they must fight **5 gnolls** and **2 hyenas**. If they only came after the main attack, they must only fight **3 gnolls** and **1 hyena**.

GM NOTE: Although the map has no explorable areas, allow the players to interact with the environment if it makes sense. What if they want to push a gnoll down an aqueduct ;)

At the end of the encounter, with all the attackers defeated, the party will be approached by a gnome named Tisip, who'll thank them for their aid. He'll give them the following items based on when they arrived:

- If they arrived during the attack, thus saving all loggers, he'll give them a **cloak of the mountebank** and a **circlet of blasting**.
- If they only arrived at the end of the attack, he'll give them a **circlet of blasting** and nothing else.

You may proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 2.3. The Lair

After a few long hours, the party has climbed high enough that there are no more trees to speak of. The surroundings turn into jagged rocks and cracked ground. This is the destruction left behind by the quarry, together with the dominating presence of the troll. As the party approaches, they notice the birds still eyeing them from above.

Read this:

'You climb up a few cliffs until you find yourself at the top of what can only be described as a decorated entrance to a cave. Long bones protrude through bits of stone like fossils, rags, and long feathers are attached all around. It is one of the oddest places you've been to, and it's empty.'

Bring the party to map 3. They arrive at area 1. When the party comes, the **troll** will be inside his cave (area 2), sleeping. The **hammer of the ram** is inside the cave, 15 away from him. He is currently attuned to the hammer and can use its special action and weapon attacks instead of his claw attacks. The puzzle's goal is to get the hammer **without** fighting the troll.

GM NOTE: Before going any further, it bares mentioning that, should the party fight the **troll**, he'll try to use the **hammer of the ram** as much as possible. Use its special action and hit with it in place of the troll's claws. This might help even up the fight, considering the party has a few items of its own.

The party can plan ways to get in, get the hammer, and consider diversions. Whatever they come up with is a good plan. Here are a few of the things worth noting:

- To get within 30 feet of the **troll** without waking him, a party member must make a **DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check**. On a failure, the troll awakes and begins fighting the party.

- To pick up the **hammer of the ram**, a party member must make a **DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check**. On a failure, the **troll** wakes up but doesn't immediately see the party. All party members within 30 feet of him must make a **DC 17 Dexterity (Stealth) check** or be discovered. On a success, the **troll** doesn't see him but grabs the **hammer of the ram** and begins sleeping with it in his hands. A party member must make a successful **DC 18 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check** to retrieve it from his hands.

- If the party throws a pile of bones on the ground or makes a **DC 17 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check**, they can convince the vultures to swoop down. This wakes the **troll**, who will go up to area 3 to scare them away. This gives the party advantage on **Dexterity (Stealth) and (Sleight of Hand) checks** against the **troll** for 1 minute.

GM NOTE: As is often the case, you cannot prepare for everything. Parties can be unpredictable. If you prepare for them to fight the **troll** head-on, they might find a way to avoid him entirely. Because of this, this chapter's purposefully left vague. Don't be stubborn! Give the party freedom to be creative and go with the flow.

Once the party has the **hammer of the ram**, whether they've awoken the **troll** or not, proceed to the next chapter.

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MAP 3



CHAPTER 3. HAMMER TIME

In which the party runs away.

Chapter 3.1. Time to Go

Read this:

'With Pietro's hammer in your hand, you breathe a sigh of relief. Everything's fine. All that's left to do is return home as fast as you can, fearing the rest of this mountain will tear you apart. Perhaps with his hammer, he'll be strong enough to clean up this place.'



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If the **troll** has not yet been awoken or is not dead, also read this:

'Then, as you move away, you hear more and more rustling. It seems the troll who borrowed this hammer might want it back. So it's time to run as fast as you can.'

At this point in the adventure, there are three possible paths to go down:

- If the party has already killed the **troll**, they can walk away without ease. You can proceed to the next chapter.
- If the party has not yet killed the **troll** and they wish to fight it head-on, they fight it on map 3. They can either kill it or run away and stop it from chasing them.
- If the party has not yet killed the **troll**, but they wish to run away, narrate a chase scene, then bring them to map 2. By knowing the landscape better, the **troll** catches up to them there, where he'll fight them until either he dies or they do.

GM NOTE: If you want to make this portion of the adventure even more dynamic, consider adding a few obstacles as they descend the mountain. Perhaps in their rush, they trigger a rockfall. Have each party member make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 4d6 bludgeoning damage on a failure and half on a success. They could also encounter more gnolls.

Whichever path the party walks down, it will allow them to complete their quest. However, they should never forget this: their number one priority should be staying alive.

Once the party has defeated the troll or escaped the mountain, proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 3.2. Reunited

Read this:

'At the base of the mountain, you nearly fall due to exhaustion. Not only has this been difficult on your body, but pressure might have also strained your mind. Regardless, you find yourself not too far from town, with the hammer beside you. The path to Pietro's blacksmith feels longer than ever before, but you arrive and are rewarded handsomely. You've done your job.'

The End.

Hammer of the Ram

Weapon (maul), rare

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

As an action, you can thump the hammer into the ground, casting the *thunderwave* spell at 3rd level. Once you've used this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.



THANK YOU!

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW AND SUPPORT ME, WITHOUT YOU I COULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT THIS PROJECT TO LIFE.

COVER ART BY **GRAND FAILURE**, USED WITH PERMISSION.

MAPS CREATED BY [CZEPKU](#) ON PATREON.

TAKE CARE!

