

Cliffhangers Adventures

The Approaching Swarm

By Eric Cagle



Episode One: Creepy Crawlies

The Approaching Swarm is a short adventure for four 9th-level characters. The party can consist of any mix of classes, but it should include at least one character that is good in wilderness settings, such as a druid, ranger, or barbarian, and at least one cleric. This scenario should prove a reasonable challenge for characters from 8th to 10th level. The adventure takes place in a swampland that is near a small settlement.

Adventure Background

A band of rag-tag settlers have carved out a small settlement, called Crivdall, on the edges of a great swamp that is infamous for its terrible creatures. The area is rich with resources, and the settlers have done well hunting and foraging in the swamps. Unbeknownst to them, however, an insane druid has taken notice of their transgressions and wants them to leave.

The druid, Aleretheral, is a half-orc with a curious affinity for insects and vermin. The swamp is home to numerous breeds of monstrous insects, some of which the druid has begun to breed to make them even larger and more aggressive. Through his abilities, Aleretheral has set enormous vermin onto the helpless settlers, preying on them as they venture into the swamp. With autumn rapidly coming to a close, the settlers are becoming desperate as more of their numbers are killed by hordes of marauding vermin.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs enter a swamp that has a rather large population of giant insects. The settlers who have made the swamp their home are having problems with these huge bugs, and they need some help. It is up to the characters to figure out what's going on and how to stop it before all of the settlers meet their many-legged dooms.

Maps

Print out the following maps, which come courtesy of the [Map-a-Week Archive](#):

- [The Wood Fortress map](#) (May 2001 Map-a-Week Archive)

Cliffhanger Notes

A great deal of this adventure takes place in swamplands. The characters will often be knee-deep in water, mud, and other unstable footing. This can add some unique circumstances for the characters.

Water: Characters in the water have a –1 circumstance penalty on all their attacks.

Mud: While moving through mud, anytime a character moves faster than half speed, engages in combat, or casts a spell, the DM can have him or her make a Reflex save (DC 10) to avoid slipping and falling.

- [The Swamp map](#) (January 2001 Map-a-Week Archive)

Character Hooks

Any time the characters travel into a swampy area, they have the opportunity to visit Crivdall. The villagers are unbelievably relieved to meet adventurers who might help defend their humble settlement from the insects. They offer whatever meager wealth they might have, but it still might take more for the characters to get involved. Here are some hooks the DM can use to get the characters interested:

- A sudden squall keeps the characters from leaving Crivdall. As they wait out the storm, spotters call out about vague figures moving along the swamp at the edge of the settlement. The characters might decide to wait for both the storm and the figures to leave, or they might uncover the danger that awaits those who dare leave.
- Traversing through the swamp, the characters find a young girl named Bethany who has just gotten stuck in a nasty batch of quicksand. As they work to get her out, a hunting party from Crivdall finds them and helps them the girl out. (The DM should attempt to make it a harrowing rescue with Strength checks (DC 20) and other relevant checks to pull out the girl.) The hunters then try to appeal to the characters to help them out with the vermin that are attacking the village. Alternatively, the DM could first throw a few patches of quicksand at the PCs and see if they fail to see them. Allow for Search checks (DC 30) and Wilderness Lore checks (DC 15) to see the patch, then allow for Reflex saves (DC 20) to avoid falling in. The hunters could assist in getting the PCs out of the patch they fell into and then ask for help in turn.) For more information on quicksand and other hazards, check out the [Book of Challenges](#) D&D release!
- The characters have been offered a princely sum to bring back several different species (alive, preferably) from this particular swamp. Crivdall is the only real civilization in that area and would work well as a base of operations for the characters. Of course, the patron is not aware, or does not disclose, the fact that giant insects besiege the town.

Crivdell (EL 9)

As the characters approach the settlement, read or paraphrase the following text:

A cold rain drizzles upon you, soaking your clothing and making the march through the swamp even more miserable. As you round a bend, you spot a small fort carved out of somber mangroves. Even at a quick glance, the fort looks impoverished and ragged. The walls and gate of the fort have what appear to be long scratch marks dug out of the gnarled wood. A sentry sees you approach and raises a friendly hail.

The settlers welcome the characters into the fort and offer what little hospitality the settlers have. In short order, the villagers regale the characters with stories of giant insects lurking in the swamps.

The Attack!

Sometime in the dead of night, the characters might hear a curious sound outside the wooden walls of the settlement -- clicking and skittering. (DMs should call for Listen checks (DC 10).) Without more warning than

that, a small horde of monstrous vermin attacks the settlement from all angles. They clamber over the walls of the fort with relative ease.

Large Giant Stag Beetle (2): hp 52, 50; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Huge Monstrous Centipedes (3): hp 19, 18, 18; see *Monster Manual* page 208.

Huge Monstrous Scorpion: hp 104; see *Monster Manual* page 209.

The giant scorpion bursts through the fort's gate and starts attacking the closest person to it. If a character makes a Spellcraft check (DC 20), they realize that someone tampered with the gate by using a *warp wood* spell.

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As the characters finish repelling the insect horde, they have a chance to see (Spot check DC 25) a humanoid figure standing at the edge of the swamp and watching the attack with some interest. If the PCs take action, the figure flees into the swamp. If some of the insects remain after 5 rounds of combat, the figure lets out a piercing cry that sounds like a flurry of cicadas. The remaining vermin then withdraws back into the swamp, with the figure following closely behind.

About the Author

Eric Cagle splits his time evenly as the administrative assistant and part-time designer for the R&D department of Wizards of the Coast. In addition to numerous web articles, he has written several articles for *Dragon Magazine*, contributed to two *Star Wars* RPG products, and contributed to the *Arms and Equipment Guide* for **D&D**. A lunch hour rarely goes by where he isn't writing for, playing, or thinking about a game.

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Episode Two: Caught in the Web

The Approaching Swarm is a short adventure for four 9th-level characters. The party can consist of any mix of classes, but it should include at least one character that is good in wilderness settings, such as a druid, ranger, or barbarian, and at least one cleric. This scenario should prove a reasonable challenge for characters from 8th to 10th level. The adventure takes place in a swampland that is near a small settlement.

Adventure Background

The characters have just arrived in the small settlement of Crivdall, which is a fort on the edge of a huge, dangerous swamp. In the dead of night, a small armada of monstrous vermin attacked the characters and their hosts, and the PCs may have spied a mysterious figure that controlled their actions.

The Aftermath

After the attack, it's likely that the characters want to pursue the mysterious figure. If they try to go to where the figure was located, jump to "The Note" section below. In case they do not and want to wait until dawn, read or paraphrase the following text and adjust it as necessary:

You wait until dawn, which is when the settlers slowly start to rebuild their fort. The giant vermin had inflicted terrible damage to the wooden walls, including bursting through the gate with apparent ease. Several of the settlers were killed or injured during the fray, and the sound of weeping drifts throughout the entire settlement.

The rain has finally stopped and the muddy ground is thick with blood, debris, and footprints.

The Note

If the characters do not investigate the location where the figure (Aleretheral) was spotted, one of the townsfolk looks for himself and finds a set of footprints. A successful Spot check (DC 12) reveals a note tacked to a tree with what appears to be a giant insect claw. It is crudely written in Common and simply reads "Leave."

The Pursuit

Following the tracks is relatively easy. Anyone with the Track feat can follow them along (DC 5). If the party

does not have someone with the feat (or if they were killed or incapacitated during the last encounter), then they can follow along with a Search check (DC 15). The footprints lead deep into the swamp, where few of the settlers have ever been. Two young huntsmen from Crivdall, Menrin and Tobis, can go along as guides. If they remain with the party through any encounters that earn the party XP, they receive fewer XP due to the presence of these two NPCs.

Merin and Tobis: Male human War3; CR 0; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/x3, shortspear), or +4 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Handle Animal +2, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (local) +0, Move Silently +3; Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (shortbow).

Possessions: Leather armor, shortspear, shortbow, 20 arrows, quiver.

The Spider's Lair (EL7)

As they head into the swamp, the PCs and NPCs follow the tracks to a small cave nestled among some ancient trees. If they enter inside, read or paraphrase the following text:

The tracks lead to a small cave that juts out from between a mass of ancient mangrove trees. Moss and vines thickly cover it, but it appears to be high enough to be out of the stagnant swamp water.

If they choose to go in, read or paraphrase the following:

As you move inside the gloom of the cave, you can see that it is relatively dry, but it reeks of decay and rotting vegetation. The shuffling tracks that you followed through the swamp are abundant here, but they seem to meander. As your eyes adjust to the darkness, you notice that the walls are densely covered in what appear to be . . . webs.

The cave is home to a brood of monstrous giant spiders, which attack from the cave ceiling. They try to web the characters in place before attacking, and at least one attacks Menrin and Tobis sometime during the battle.

Huge Monstrous Spider (2): hp 60, 55; see *Monster Manual* page 210.

Medium-Size Monstrous Spider (4): hp 11, 10, 10, 9; see *Monster Manual* page 210.

Aleretheral used his trackless step ability to get out of the cave without leaving footprints. Upon searching the

spiders, the characters can find that each of them is wearing a "collar" that is made up in a primitive fetish of stones, feathers, and insect parts.

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Having no trail and at least one party member in dire straits, the party may feel compelled to return back to Crivdall. If they do head back, the party should catch glimpses of more giant insects looming in the reeds and trees of the brackish swamp. While they do not attack, they do send an indication of imminent danger. If they don't, the DM should certainly feel free to have these insects attack the PCs until the PCs head back to recover, until the PCs are dead, or until the insects all die. Aleretheral can call upon three times as many insects as you see represented thus far (minus those used in later encounters).

About the Author

Eric Cagle splits his time evenly as the administrative assistant and part-time designer for the R&D department of Wizards of the Coast. In addition to numerous web articles, he has written several articles for ***Dragon Magazine***, contributed to two *Star Wars* RPG products, and contributed to the *Arms and Equipment Guide* for **D&D**. A lunch hour rarely goes by where he isn't writing for, playing, or thinking about a game.

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Episode Three: Stalking Prey

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Adventure Background

The characters were lead into a trap -- a lair of giant spiders. With one or more of their members injured and poisoned, and the trail of their quarry now cold, the characters most likely return to Crivdall.

I Think It Was This Way...

At this point, the PCs may not have the luxury of their guides, which means that they must rely on their own skills to get them back to Crivdall. If the guide can lead them back, then it's only a matter of time before the PCs reach it. DMs can skip to "Do You Hear Something."

Those PCs who are on their own regarding getting back to Crivdall must make a check every hour for three hours to see if they get back to the settlement. Two successes gets them two hours closer to Crivdall and back onto the path leading directly to the settlement, while failure (Track DC 10 or Intuit Direction DC 15) means they get lost in the bog. If the party gets lost, they wander through the bog for ten minutes or so and eventually enter an area filled with sinkholes. Read or paraphrase the following text:

Having lost the trail back to Crivdall, you wander around the fetid bogs trying to relocate the way back. It's almost impossible to make your way through the tall reeds and pools of water. Your movement slows to a crawl as the thick mud threatens to pull your boots off of your feet.

Allow for Wilderness Lore checks (DC 15) or Search checks (DC 20) to spot a nasty patch of mud that can suck the PCs into it. If they fail to spot it, the whole party starts wandering into the patch before they realize that it's more than just normal mud. Read the boxed text below next. If they succeed in spotting the bad patch of mud, skip the next boxed text section and go to "They Grow 'Em Big in the Bayou . . ."

The stinking mud grows thicker, and there's a very good chance that you will be without your foot gear before you get out of it. However, as the mud grows thicker, it also seems to get deeper. You feel yourself sinking into the mud!

Each character must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or find themselves completely stuck in the mud. To get out, a character must either be pulled out by another or be dragged out via a rope that is attached to a solid object; a Strength check (DC 19) can get the character out of the mud. However, after each PC has attempted to do something to help the situation (or abstained from doing anything), go to the next section.

They Grow 'Em Big in the Bayou . . . (EL 8)

While the characters try to extricate themselves from the mud, a horde of giant flying insects attacks them. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you struggle to get yourself out of the black mud, the air begins to hum. The noise is distant at first, but it gets louder. Suddenly the sky is filled with beating wings and the angry buzz of insects.

Giant Bees (12): hp 16, 16, 15, 15, 14, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 12, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Giant Wasps (2): hp 40, 32; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

If the characters defeat the insects or flee into the swamp, they easily find (Search DC 5) that they were very near the path to Crivdall. Go to "Do You Hear Something?" once they find the path.

Do You Hear Something? (EL 8)

If the characters find the path and slog their way through the swamp back to Crivdall, they hear a high-pitched whine fill the air as giant insects attack from all angles. The main advantage here is that the characters are not stuck in the mud while trying to fend off the assault.

Giant Bees (12): hp 16, 16, 15, 15, 14, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 12, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Giant Wasps (2): hp 40, 32; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

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If they survive the attack of the flying insects, the PCs can wearily drag themselves back to Crivdall. Almost immediately, they notice that something is horribly wrong. Smoke curls up from various buildings and some enormous beast has battered through one side of the fort. Dozens of dead giant insects are scattered all about.

Will the characters step into the fort to find out what happened?

About the Author

Eric Cagle splits his time evenly as the administrative assistant and part-time designer for the R&D department of Wizards of the Coast. In addition to numerous web articles, he has written several articles for ***Dragon Magazine***, contributed to two *Star Wars* RPG products, and contributed to the *Arms and Equipment Guide* for **D&D**. A lunch hour rarely goes by where he isn't writing for, playing, or thinking about a game.

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Episode Four: The Tree

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Adventure Background

The characters attempted to cross back through the swamp to their base of operations. Along the way, they may have got stuck in mud and probably were attacked by a variety of flying insects. They arrive just a bit too late to stop a massacre that occurred back at Crivdall -- the fort is ruined and it appears that almost everyone is dead or missing.

Aleretheral, an insane half-orc druid who has mastery of vermin and insects, attacked Crivdall with his insects. He has often infiltrated Crivdall by posing as a harmless elf hermit who lives in the wood. In reality, he wants the settlers destroyed and out of his swamp.

The Surviving Force (EL 6)

A few giant insects remain in the compound and attack the characters on sight.

Wounded Giant Praying Mantis (2): hp 17, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Wounded Giant Stag Beetle: hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Ad Hoc XP Adjustment: Since the insects are wounded, the PCs gain only half of the XP normally granted for this encounter.

A Cry for Help

As the characters investigate the ruins of Crivdall, read or paraphrase the following text:

The settlement is in complete disarray. Almost everywhere you look, you see horribly mutilated bodies of the villagers that were torn to shreds by cruel claws and fangs. Some corpses are blackened from terrible poison. Bodies of all manner of giant insects litter the courtyard: scorpions, centipedes, ants, wasps, and beetles -- some reaching enormous sizes. Several buildings are still smoldering and probably burned down due to knocked-over torches and spreading fires.

At first, it seems as if no one is left alive, but then you hear a lone, quiet voice asking for help.

If the PCs seek out the source of this voice, read the following:

While searching for the source of the voice, you find the sole survivor of Crivdall -- an elderly man who you recognize as Ulrich, the settlement's quartermaster. He is near death due to the cuts and tears in his body, and he twitches involuntarily.

Allow the PCs to make appropriate checks and cast any healing spells that they may have left. Ulrich has been poisoned by a huge monstrous scorpion; refer to the *Monster Manual* for the scorpion's poison information. Regardless of whether the PCs heal him or not, he tries to tell them what happened. When given a chance, he states the following. Be sure to interject coughs and spasms if he isn't fully healed. If he isn't healed of the poison, it runs its course and kills him. Otherwise, he should be fine:

"They came just after you left," he gasps. "As if they were waiting for you to get out in the swamp. We fought as hard as we could, but there were far too many of them. We noticed someone moving among them. He called out in some blasphemous language."

"When it was obvious that we were done for, he pulled back his cloak. It was Aleretheral! That elf that lives out in the swamp!" He points off to the north. "We trusted him . . . he traded with us many times. Find him and bring us vengeance, please. He lives in a large tree . . . in the swamp. There's a map in my cabin."

Ulrich can point out the cabin in question. The PCs can see that the cabin is not entirely damaged but it's obvious that if anything flammable is inside, it won't last for long.

A Search check (DC 13) of reveals several ledgers and maps. One of the maps is a relatively new map made by the inhabitants of the village and it reveals several landmarks they have discovered in the swamp around them. On it, they find a marking indicating a large tree with the word "elf" written next to it. There is no scale to the map. (It should take four hours to get to the tree if the characters walk.)

If the characters leave to investigate the tree, they encounter no resistance other than the slow pace of marching through the swamp. The map is very accurate and leads them directly to the tree.

The Tree (EL 8)

Located deep in the swamp is the tree of Aleretheral (use the Swamp map). Read or paraphrase the following text to the players:

After several hours, you come across an enormous mangrove tree standing alone in the water. A series of small houses nestles in its boughs, though vines and moss cover these houses to some extent. A rickety stairwell spirals up the trunk of the tree. Dim lights flicker inside several of the buildings.

If the characters approach the tree, they make it halfway across the waist-deep water before being attacked by an enormous centipede (bigger than anyone has seen before) that rises out of the water.

Colossal Monstrous Centipede: hp 136; see *Monster Manual* page 208.

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Once (and if) the characters defeat the monstrous centipede, what horrors remain inside the fortress of the mad druid Aleretheral?

About the Author

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Episode Five: The Hive Mind

Adventure Background

The adventurers have located the secret lair of Aleretheral, an insane half-orc druid with mastery over vermin. He has been breeding and training monstrous vermin to defend his territory. With the adventurers invading his home, he will do anything he can to protect it.

Inside the Lair (EL 14)

It is up to the DM to decide how Aleretheral fights the adventurers. Despite the size of the dwelling, there is relatively little inside. (Aleretheral killed off the elf that lived there before and disposed of most of his possessions aside from what treasure is listed below.) Given a choice, Aleretheral retreats to the Upper Quarters for his last stand.

Aleretheral has several monstrous insects inside his lair that he has been using for experiments. He releases them to fight the characters if hard pressed. (The DM can adjust the number of vermin, depending on how injured the PCs are.)

Large Monstrous Centipede (2): hp 9, 8; see *Monster Manual* page 208.

Small Monstrous Scorpions (4): hp 7, 6, 6, 5; see *Monster Manual* page 208.

Giant Bombardier Beetle (2): hp 13, 12, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Tactics

Aleretheral prefers to use his vermin to fight for him and remains invisible (via his potions) until they are defeated. He makes extensive use of his *staff of swarming insects*, and he casts *magic fang* on any vermin that are involved in combat.

Aleretheral: Male half-orc Drd13; CR 13; Medium-size humanoid; HD 13d8; hp 58; Init -1; Spd AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+4, *staff of swarming insects*); or +9/+4 ranged (1d6, masterwork sling); SQ a thousand faces, animal companion (none), darkvision 60 ft., nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, venom immunity, *wild shape* (Tiny, Small, Medium-size, Large, or dire animal 4/day), woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +14; Str 16, Dex 9, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 17, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Handle Animal +9, Heal +6, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Move Silently +0, Profession (herbalist) +8, Ride (horse) +1, Sense Motive +4, Swim +8, Wilderness Lore +11; Brew Potion, Iron Will, Track, Vermin Control*, Vermin Defiance*

A Thousand Faces (Su): Aleretheral can change his appearance at will, as if using the spell *alter self*.

Animal Companion: Aleretheral may have one or more animal companions. These animals are ones that he has befriended with the spell *animal friendship*. The total Hit Dice of all animal companions at a time may not exceed 13.

Nature Sense: Aleretheral can identify plants and animals (their species and special traits) with perfect accuracy. He can determine whether water is safe to drink or dangerous.

Resist Nature's Lure: Aleretheral gains a +4 bonus on saving throws against the spell-like abilities of feys (such as dryads, nymphs, and sprites).

Trackless Step: Aleretheral leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Venom Immunity: Aleretheral gains immunity to all organic poisons, including monster poisons but not mineral poisons or poison gas.

Wild Shape (Sp): Aleretheral can change into a Tiny, Small, Medium-size, Large, or dire animal and back again 4/day. He may adopt only one form per use of this ability. When he adopts an animal form, Aleretheral regains hit points as if he has rested for a day. He does not risk the standard penalty for being disoriented while in his *wild shape*. He gains all the creature's special abilities when he does so.

Woodland Stride: Aleretheral may move through natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain at his normal speed and without suffering damage or other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are enchanted or magically manipulated to impede motion still affect him.

Druid Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/3/2/1; base DC 13 + spell level): 0 -- *cure minor wounds, detect poison, guidance, know direction, light, resistance*; 1st -- *cure light wounds, detect animals or plants, invisibility to animals, magic fang, summon nature's ally I, vermin friendship***; 2nd -- *speak with animals, speak with vermin***, *summon swarm* (3), *warp wood*; 3rd -- *cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang* (2), *poison, water breathing*; 4th -- *giant vermin* (3), *repel vermin*; 5th -- *insect plague* (3); 6th -- *antilife shell, summon nature's ally VI*; 7th -- *creeping doom*.

Possessions: *Staff of swarming insects, cloak of resistance +1, leather armor, amulet of natural armor +2, ring of protection +1, wand of cure light wounds, potion of blur, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, 2 potions of hiding, 2 potions of invisibility, 3 scrolls of summon swarm.*

* New feat; see below

** New spell; see below.

New Feats

Vermin Control [General]

You can channel the power of nature to gain mastery over vermin creatures.

Prerequisites: Vermin Defiance, ability to cast *speak with vermin* and *vermin friendship*.

Benefit: You can rebuke or command vermin as an evil cleric rebukes undead. To command an animal, you must be able to speak with it via a *speak with vermin* spell or effect, though you can issue your commands mentally if desired. The number of times per day that you can use this ability is equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier. Your highest divine caster level is the level at which you rebuke animals.

Special: Vermin you command through this ability count against the HD limit of animals you can befriend through *vermin friendship*.

Vermin Defiance [General]

You can channel the power of nature to drive off vermin.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast *detect animals or plants*.

Benefit: You can turn (but not destroy) vermin as a good cleric turns undead. The number of times per day that you can use this ability is equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier. Your highest divine caster level is the level at which you turn vermin.

New Spells

Speak with Vermin

Divination

Level: Clr 2, Drd 2, Rgr 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level

As per *speak with animals*, but it applies only to vermin. This spell does not work on animals, beasts, or magical beasts.

Vermin Friendship

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Drd 1, Rgr 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One vermin

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

As *animal friendship*, but the spell applies only to vermin.

Continuing the Adventure

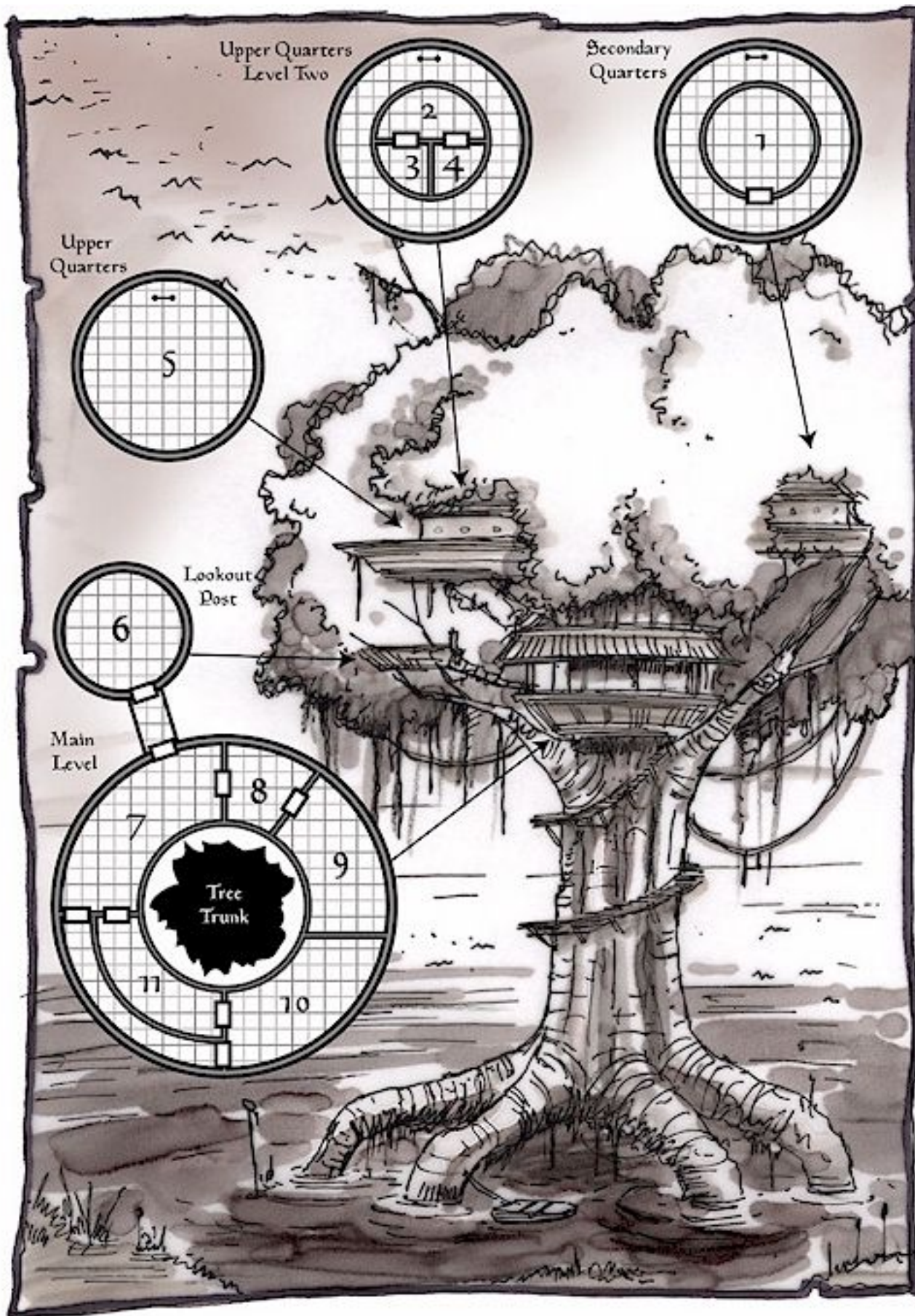
Once Aleretheral has been defeated, the characters can mop up any remaining insects and claim the tree fortress for themselves. If they search, they can discover a hidden stash that contains the following items: +3 *mighty composite longbow*, +1 *ghost touch longsword*, banded mail (Medium-size), 2 flasks of alchemist's fire, 3 flasks of holy water, *ring of swimming*, and 160 gp. In addition, the rest of the swamp remains unexplored and the map that they have used to find the tree hints to other mysterious places. . . .

About the Author

Eric Cagle splits his time evenly as the administrative assistant and part-time designer for the R&D department of Wizards of the Coast. In addition to numerous web articles, he has written several articles for ***Dragon Magazine***, contributed to two *Star Wars* RPG products, and contributed to the *Arms and Equipment Guide* for **D&D**. A lunch hour rarely goes by where he isn't writing for, playing, or thinking about a game.

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