

# **The Strife of Manyfalls**

## **Background**

The town of Manyfalls is a quiet trading settlement along the Gurgling Channel and at the edge of the Looming Cliffs, overlooking the wide, fertile plains below. People come and go all the time, but over the years what was once a trader's hang-glider launch post grew into a vibrant, friendly, and shockingly diverse community, filled with almost every sentient race under the suns. Though hang-gliding reduces the capacity of any one trader, it is much safer, as it is nearly impossible for any bandit to intercept, so many valuable trinkets and powerful people pass through quite frequently. The town has grown to accommodate these people, with well-kept inns, multiple stores, skilled tradesmen, knowledgeable healers, and a few breweries producing many delicious beers. In fact, Manyfalls was where the term "Fallskeg beer" was coined, where beer is brewed in many small containers instead of a few large ones, giving the drink a range of flavors sure to appeal to even the most snobbish of wine-tasters. A handful of retired adventurers have even settled down here, and spend much of their time swapping stories over pints.

Recently, however, there have been reports of trouble on the paths to Manyfalls, which are typically peaceful and safe travels. After one trader stumbled in with no wagon and their partner dead in their arms, a band of ex-adventurers came together and vowed to discover what is happening and put an end to it!

...They left two weeks ago. No traders have come in this time, either, and the townspeople are becoming worried. The council begged the remaining ex-adventurers to go and try to find the first party, but all of them refused- the only ones left were either far past their prime, disabled, or under oaths of pacifism. So, in a panic, the council declared that at second sundown tonight, they would appoint a team of those they thought most capable, equip them as best they could, and send them off in the morning to rescue the first party, and hopefully discover what exactly is going on along the trade routes. If they return alive with either the first party or evidence of what became of them, they would be "rewarded handsomely", though the council members were rather vague about the actual amount of payment they would receive. The adventure begins as the party passes the gates of Manyfalls, equipped with five days of rations.

## **Part 1 – The Mystery of Southpass**

The trade route is a packed dirt path with mile and half-mile markers painted on wooden signs and hammered into the earth. There is a small settlement named Southpass a half day's walk away, and all seems normal until they reach the settlement and discover it to be empty. Though there weren't many here to begin with (population about 20), now it is completely empty. There is an inn, a general store, and a handful of houses.

The general store is empty, except for about a day's worth of food in scraps for the party. The houses are completely empty and eerily neat, as if everyone simply packed up and left.

DC 11, perception check: One of the houses has a note partially tucked under an empty vase. Hand this note directly to the player.

*Dearest Emily,  
If you find this, know that we are safe! A wolf pack has settled nearby and seems to be intent on driving us out. We are traveling to Highlake by wagon. Meet us there!*

DC 15, perception check: There are signs of a scuffle behind the inn. A small gash in the back door, perhaps made by a missed sword swing, and a few little splatters of dried blood in the dirt. The part

of the doorjamb that the deadbolt slides into looks like it has been recently been replaced with a few small wood pieces making a makeshift mortise (doorjamb hole) for the deadbolt to slide into.

DC 18, perception check: There is a large patch of what looks like recently upturned dirt near the location of the scuffle, about six feet wide and ten feet long.



If the party stays until nightfall, they will be attacked by a pack of three Dire Wolves, Styx-Corrupted [Hit points: 32 (5d10 + 5)] passing through the town just before they sleep. With two successful stealth checks each, the wolves will pass by without combat. One wolf has a subdermal metal plate that will deflect 1 piercing attack (not slashing) with a shower of sparks, dealing half damage instead of full, if the attack roll is two or less above the wolf's AC. If inspected, they will discover that the plate almost looks like it grew there, with a central blob and metal tendrils reaching out

under the skin. (Requires DC 8 survival check - if failed, take 1 slashing damage from cutting finger.)

If the party decides to leave, they will have to camp along the road. Roll for random encounter.

That night, hand a note to each player. All notes but one say "The night passes without incident". The player who inspected the metal plate, or if nobody did, the player who landed the killing blow on that wolf, gets a note that says:

*You have a strange dream where you watch your body turn to gleaming metal that shines like firelight, and you can feel immense power surge through you. You wake up in a cold sweat and the memory fades away, leaving you with just the memory of that strange power and a sense of unease. You can almost still feel it tingling at your fingertips.*

Write down which character this is. If they drop to 0 in combat, have them make a DC 12 Dexterity save. On success, they fire an Eldritch Blast at the enemy and knock them away, leaving them with one health and pushing the enemy 5 feet back.

## **Part 2 – The Rushing River**

In the morning, the party sets out along the road again. After a few hours, the path crosses the river up ahead. They see that the bridge is destroyed (DC 12 investigation check will reveal that the bridge was intentionally destroyed), and they also see two people at the shoreline, struggling with something. If the party announces themselves, the two introduce themselves as traders. They are trying to build a raft to cross the stream. They have very few supplies, and claim most was taken from them when they were attacked. If the party stealths up to them and are spotted, one will aim a crossbow at them, but can be talked down if the party shows no hostility.

Raft needs two successful DC 11 strength checks and two successful DC 11 dexterity checks, or two DC 11 strength checks and one DC 11 dexterity check if the party has rope. If the party fails four checks before succeeding them, the raft breaks and they need to find another way across.

There is a bridge further upstream on the party's map, but it is about a day's worth of travel. The river can be swam across with strength checks, but the traders will refuse to swim unless they are convinced the party can rescue them if they are pulled under by the current (DC 15 persuasion check, or lower if the party's plan is good). The party *should* have and *should* use a grappling

hook for this purpose, but nothing is guaranteed.

- If the party refuses to help, the traders will insult them and go back to either making the raft, or if it broke, will start going to the other bridge.
- If the party kills one of the traders [Hit points: 4], the other will attempt to flee. If chased, they will dive into the river.

If they go across with the traders, the traders will tell the party that they saw something strange: A group of people traveling with a bunch of dire wolves, who attacked them, and they barely escaped. If they are interrogated/successfully intimidated, they will admit that they were bandits, and saw a trader get attacked in this way, so they hid until the group was gone then decided to head up the road. They will travel with the party for now.

### **Part 3 – Ambush!**

The party will come across the wreck of a trader's cart, and shortly after will be ambushed by two fighters [Hit points: 10] and a Ratfolk Warlock [27 (6d6 + 6)], all of which look like they're wearing some sort of metal mask over part of their face. The warlock will hang back for the first turn, and

then fire ranged spells at the party during combat. Once they get to low health or one of them goes down, they will flee off the trail and into the woods.



### **Part 4 – The Rescue**

The party will follow them to what looks like a camp, and need a DC 11 perception check to spot all the enemies. The enemies are 3 fighters [Hit points: 10], 1 Ratfolk warlock [27 (6d6 + 6)], and 2 Dire Wolves, Styx-Corrupted [Hit points: 32 (5d10 + 5)]. Note that these 6 enemies include any of the ones from the ambush who did not die and were chased into camp. All the humans have the same sort of mask looking thing, and the wolves have a metal plate like the wolf in the abandoned town. If a human is the last one left on their turn, they will beg for mercy, but if the party lets them live they will touch a necklace they are wearing and cast Invisible, and escape.

When the first attack hits, something that sounds like muffled yelling will start to come from one of the larger tents. Once the battle is over, the party will find two members of the original party tied up and gagged, with cuts and bruises all over and generally in really bad shape. If they release them, they'd thank the party, and if they ask they'll tell the party about how they were ambushed by the cultists, and have been kept as prisoners for a week now, moving between camps seemingly at random. They do not know where the other two party members went.

If they investigate the other tents they'll find 4 gold, an enchanted necklace that can cast Invisibility once per day, and a wax-sealed paper. The paper reads:

*Convert the prisoners. When they are ready, return them to Manyfalls. They will make short work of the populace. Then Manyfalls will ours.*

## Part 5 – The Return

If the party tries to keep tracking the cult, the two from the original party will protest and demand that they all go back to the town to rest, heal up, and tell everyone what they know. There are also not any further leads either and there are not many

rations left, so the party will be forced to return.

While returning, the party may talk with the original party members they rescued. They will talk about the cult, telling the party that the cultists worship a god or some other deity that has promised them boundless power in return for servitude. They would mention something about having strange dreams and seeing a metal golem, but they don't know much else. They also worried that the two missing adventurers may have been converted and may even be heading to Manyfalls right now.

When the party returns to town they can choose to meet with council and divulge all the information they have collected. The council will ask the adventures if they are willing to try to find the last 2 people, but that will be a different adventure.

## Reward

The adventure ends as the party reaches the town and are rewarded with 50 GP each for the adventure plus an additional 25 GP each if they divulge all the information to the council.

## Area Regional Map

