

## Revenge of doppelganger band

written by Marko Picek

### Introduction

Revenge of doppelganger band is adventure set in Shadowdale region. It is almost pure role-playing adventure, so if you wanted dungeon-type of game, this adventure is not for you. There is only one encounter which ends in combat. Everything else is based on player-NPC interaction, role-playing and investigation. To play this adventure, you will need only revised Forgotten Realms boxed set.

### A. Missing Lord

The best place to start this adventure is in local inn, Old Skull. Players should be familiar with Shadowdale and some important persons there if they hope to solve this riddle. Players have just woke up (it's morning) in their rooms in Old Skull inn and are heading to the tap room. Tap room is quite full. Most tables are occupied by farmers and peasants who came to have a drink or two before beginning of work. Among them there are also a few Mourngrym's man-at-arms who are off duty for today. On the bar stands Llewelyn the Loud, traveling bard who arrived in Shadowdale last night. He is wearing a white shirt, brown leather trousers and dark green coat. On his head he is wearing triangular-shaped hat with big red feather attached on it. If party ask him about rumors, he replies: "Rumors? Of course I know some interesting rumors. I am a bard, aren't I? Bards always know rumors."

Depending on how much party pays him for rumors he will talk about same events but reveal different details.

**1-8cp** "I have heard that some prisoners escaped from Cormyr. They were imprisoned in king Azourn's dungeon for some crime they have done."

**9cp-3sp** "Prisoners escaped from royal dungeon in Cormyr. They were imprisoned because they attempt to kidnap and kill a local sheriff in Waymoot. They have gone in unknown direction."

**4sp-2gp** "A small party of prisoners escaped from king's dungeon in Suzail. As far as I know there was a number of doppelganger among them. They kidnapped a local sheriff from Waymoot and doppelganger wanted to take his position. However, their attempt was discovered and they were captured and imprisoned by Azourn's War Wizards."

**3+ gp** "I see you are very generous today. So I will be too. I have heard that a band of doppelgangers escaped from royal dungeon in Suzail, Cormyr. They were captured because they were planning conspiracy against local sheriff from Waymoot. They have kidnapped poor sheriff and planned to kill him. One doppelganger replaced the sheriff but some sheriff's friends have noticed something suspicious and reported to local militia. Soon afterwards, sheriff was invited to "friendly" conversation so local War Wizard discovered the deception. The rest of the band was quickly captured before they managed to execute poor true sheriff of Waymoot. They were brought to king Azourn's court and judged to death. However, they managed to escape in the shape of soldiers of Cormyr. King Azourn IV have placed a big bounty on their head and anyone who brings them dead or alive will collect the bounty. Last thing I have heard is a rumor that a group of soldiers wearing the crests of Cormyr are heading to the north of Dalelands. I believe it will not pass too much time before doppelgangers change their shape again."

In the tavern party can have breakfast (1sp for all) or beer (2cp per beer). After the talk and breakfast, party should exit the tavern. It is a chilly morning in the Shadowdale. Farmers are going to work in a fields. Party can browse through village and go to several different places:

**Blacksmith** - Bronn, the blacksmith is here at party's service. He can do usual stuff as repair damaged weapons (repairs will last one day. Cost depends on weapon and damage), sell weapons from his stock or smith the weapons on PC's request.

**Stable** - Stable is a part of Old Skull inn. Local stablemaster and horse trader Bardag awaits there. He is offering a special goodies today: A real hippogrif, trained for riding, for only 6000gp. If party ask for normal steeds, he will offer them riding horses (for 160gp), light war horses (for 210gp), heavy war horses (for 320 gp) and mules (for 50gp). They can also buy riding equipment for standard prize.

**Store** - Weregrund the Merchant works here. He will offer party any standard non-magical item which costs no more than 200gp.

**Elminster's tower** - On the crossroads to Elminster's tower there is a sign: "Arcmage often reacts poorly when disrupted. Please consider that fact before it is too late." If party proceed they arrive to the entrance to Elminster's tower. There is a note attached to the door. Note reads: "Left collecting spell components, Elminster". If the note is examined closely, PCs will notice that it has been attached there for a long time. The doors are locked. If someone try to knock, there is no answer. Only when party knock two or more times, Lhaeo, archmage's scribe will open the door. He tells the party that Elminster is too busy to receive them now. If party is

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determined, he writes the note which will be later given to Elminster. If it is something really (I MEAN really) important, Elminster will contact party later same day.

**Tower of Ashba** - Guards before the entrance will let the party in. Lord of Shadowdale is not currently present, but Lady of Shadowdale will hear the party. She asks party to find her lord. She says that Mournngrym left the tower yesterday with his hawk and gone hunting. He didn't return ever since. Lady is worried but she believes that lord is well and asks party to find him.

Party should now go to search for the lord. After some question of local farmers, someone will finally tell the party that have seen their lord yesterday near the castle Krag. He was riding his horse and holding his hawk in his right hand. When the party arrives to the abandoned castle they find Mournngrym and his horse whose leg is broken. Mournngrym asks PCs that they provide him with a new horse (if party has one) and as a prize he gives one of his rings to the party (ring of protection). Party gains 200XP for finding the lord and 150 XP if they give him a horse (all experience awards are given on the end of adventure). Party have spend whole day searching for lord and now is returning to tavern, tired of walking all day. Various people can be found in tap room of the inn. In one corner two merchants are sitting discussing something and drinking black wine. In the tavern there is also a number of lord's man-at-arms who have come here to refresh themselves before a night patrol. Party notices a kenku male, sitting alone in one corner of tap room. He is wearing kenku mail and armed with quarterstaff. If party tries to communicate with him, they will soon find out that he can speak through the necklace around his neck. He tells the party that he came here to sell his hippogriff. He also need more money so is willing to join any party which will pay him enough. His name is Alku (TN kenku male, F/W 2/2, 7hp).

### **B. Short sleep**

Party can now go to sleep in Old Skull inn. In some time of the night, a noise wakes up PCs. They hear a woman voice screaming: "*Fire ! Fire !*" When they go downstairs to tap room they find that all visitors of the inn gathered and ready ready to leave and help extinguish fire. They can join a group. Bartender gives every party member a bucket and group departs quickly to location of conflagration. While going, they hear someone in the group says: "*I hope we will arrive on time. It would be a pity if Vernon Hillstar's farm burns to the ground.*" Upon arriving, group mixes with rest of people there who came to help fighting against blaze. A crowd (and party members among them) formed a line from the nearby river of Ashba to stable on fire. Buckets of water were headed from hand to hand until all fire was extinguished. When the conflagration is defeated, Vernon's wife expressed her grateful to all who helped her family. People started returning to their homes and beds. Party stays alone in front of Hillstars' house (which is undamaged) and sees Vernon's wife gazing around like she was looking for something. Finally, her gaze fall upon the party and she asks them: "*Where is my Vernon ? I didn't saw him since the fire started.*" Naturally, party replies they don't know where Vernon is. Woman says: "*My name is Edlma Hillstar, and as you surely know, I am Vernon Hillstar's wife. When the fire started, my husband ran out and tried to stop the fire. I haven't seen him ever since. Could you please check around ant try to find him for me, please ?*"

### **C. Beast's lair**

All attempts to find Vernon this night are without any result. If party asks around about Vernon next day, no one knows where he can be. If the party is on street around noon, they will see a man coming from the west road. According to Edlma's description, he is her husband, Vernon Hildsar. When party asks him where was he, he responds: "*Yesterday, I went in the wood searching for mushrooms. But dark cought me in woords so I stayed near old ruins untill dawn*". If party head to the west, they will soon notice wolf track heading to the village (that's strange, isn't it ?). If they didn't met Vernon, rumors will start cycling about strange wolf tracks in the middle of village (tracks are made by boots of various tracks, magical item possessed by one doppelganger). Party should follow tracks. Tracks lead to the west woods. They pass by Ruins of Castle Grimstead and proceeds north. Party arrives to the entrance to a cave. Party may enter the cave. There is a pitch dark in cavern. When party lights the torch, a large group of bats (100), will start flying wildly to the depths of cavern, terrified by the light of the torch. There is 30% chance that some bat will extinguish the torch.

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Map 1.

Main tunnel soon splits to two passages. Left one is dead end. Right one leads to the underground lake. Both shores of lake are wet and anyone who steps on them must make dexterity check with -1 modifier or fall into lake. Water is cold, but lake is not deep (only about 1.2 m) and falling in it causes no damage but produces noise. When in lake, PC must roll another dexterity check when attempts to get out of water, but this time with +1 modifier. If party members fall into lake more than four times on left shore or more than two times on opposite one, band which is hidden deeper in cavern will hear that and come to investigate.

*Encounter: Doppelgangers (2, in natural shape); Int High to Very High; AC 5; THACO 17; hp 12/16; Dmg 1d12/1d12; XP 520; Treasure: weapons (two-handed swords).*

*Brigands (3, humans); Int Average; AC 10; THACO 20; HD 1+1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d12; XP 15l Treasure: weapons (two clubs, two-handed sword).*

*Combat notes: Doppelgangers will let their companions to fight in first line. So, brigands will step forward and fight. After first brigand is killed by the party, all gang members must made morale check. Anyone who fails will flee deeper in cavern (and escape through secret passage). Make sure that at least one doppelganger escape the party. If Alku is in the party, there is 90% chance he will join the gang and fight against player characters.*

When the fight is over (and at least one doppelganger escaped), party will find campfire, several blankets and a tied man laying in one corner. When they closely examine him, they find Vernon Hillstar (true Vernon Hillstar). When searching for secret passages, one is found but the tunnel is dead end (blocked recently by large amount of stone).

## D. Back in Shadowdale

On return to Village of Shadowdale, party meets Edlma. If Vernon's presence is obvious, she will be very surprised and says: "How did you appear over here?" I've left you home five minutes ago." If Vernon's presence isn't obvious (maybe party is suspicious and thinks Vernon founded in cavern is doppelganger), Edlma will say that Vernon is acting strange since he arrived later at night. Party rushes to Hillstar farm to catch other Vernon, but when PCs arrive Vernon is gone. In the tavern, party can learn that Vernon was seen recently heading to the Tower of Ashba to request investigation of fire accident on his farm. Guards of the tower will not let anyone in. However, party can go snuffing around the tower. If so, they will hear voices coming from one cellar window on the back side of the citadel. First man: "I want that tomorrow at dawn 80 soldiers divide to groups of four and start patrolling the woods of Shadowdale. The band which escaped from Cormyr must be caught." Second man: "But, Sir! There will be only six soldiers in the tower." First man: "That is not my problem. I just follow the orders given to me by Thurbal, our Lord's Captain-of-arms." Second man: "Isn't that strange, Sir?" First man: "How dare you suspect in our Lord and his Captain!? If he decided to do such thing, it will be done. And now get back to your duty."

Party can not infiltrate in tower easily. There should be only a very slim chance to do so. However, PCs will notice a large number of soldiers exiting the tower and scating all around Shadowdale. Very soon (about 2 hours of campaign time) soldiers will return with captured doppelganger(s) (which escaped the party in the cavern). Soldiers officially acknowledged there will be a hanging in six o'clock afternoon.

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### E. Hanging

Half hour before six, villagers started to gather near the Hangman's Knoll. Just before six o'clock, man-at-arms exit the tower begin guarding hook for hanging. Soon afterwards, four guards guided by Thurbal exit with captured doppelganger(s). Villian(s) are brought to hanging hook and are ready for hanging. Before executioner hanged the prisoners, one of them screams pointing to Thurbal: "You shall pay for this, tra..." On Thurbal's sign executioner hanged the prisoners. One prisoner wanted to say "You shall pay for this, traitor." because Thurbal is doppelganger from this band who hanged his companions. He wanted to clear suspicion around him. Crowd is happy that the vilians are finally dead. Thurbal starts speaking to the crowd. Now it is the time to infiltrate the tower. There is no guards on the entrance - everyone are observe hanging. In Tower of Ashba, party finds another Thurbal in the dungeon. When they free him, He exits the tower and confront false Thurbal. However, they are both caught by the man-at-arms and thrown to dungeon, because no one can say who is a real and who is doppelganger. Lord of Shadowdale invites party to the tower and asks them to find a way of determining who is the real Thurbal.

### F. Searching for truth

Depending on where party goes, there are several ways to determine the truth:

**Temple of Lanthader** - If party inquires there, cleric offers them a service of casting *detect lies* spell for donation of 100gp (or more if DM wishes). They just have to ask both persons who they are. Doppelganger will lie.

**Temple of Tymora** - Clerics of this temple offer a potion of true seeing to the party for 200gp (or more of DM wants).

With help of potion or spell, party should determine the truth with no difficulties. When the truth is revealed, true Thurbal is freed from dungeon and doppelganger is hanged.

### G. Epilogue

Lord of Shadowdale is very grateful to the party. He offers them a free pick from his private armory (magical weapons can be found there). DM should determine the exact prize PCs won, randomly or selecting apporopriate weapon. Weapons need not to be magical, but in such case they are not more powerful than +2 weapons and do not have any special abilites. Magical scrolls can also be given as award (from Ashba's library), but it will be mostly 1-3 lvl scrolls (since higher level scrolls and spellbooks of Ashba are lost). Each party member receives 700XP for succesful completion of adventure. If DM wants, he may run encounter with Azourn's messenger in Old Skull inn, directing the party to Cormyr where they should collect bounty if they bring hides of doppelgangers.

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