
Title: What You Don't See...

System: Advanced Dungeons and Dragons

PC level: 46

PC types: Suggested: At least one character with dispel magic. One character of chaotic good alignment. A ranger and a female. Approximately four characters.

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Player's Introduction

Begin by reading the following to the players:

It's been a fairly quiet journey thus far and you look forward to passing through the Emerald Forest on the final leg of your trek to the trading town of Shady Glade. You've heard rumors that the village economy is booming and hope to purchase some inexpensive supplies. As you enter into the Emerald Forest, a wood known for its timeless beauty and ageless majesty, you realize that many of the plants look withered and bare. Rocks and rubble adorn the path and shrill winds whistle through the trees. You are caught by surprise when a beautiful maiden with stark green hair and wide eyes frantically rushes at you from the brush. You recognize her instantly as a dryad.

"Please," she pleads with you, "You have to help us! Our protector has been missing for weeks and now the forest is becoming corrupted. Soon all the natural creatures in the forest will perish. Please help!"

DM™ Background:

Approximately one month ago an evil wizard summoned an invisible stalker and sent it on a mission to retrieve the horn of a white unicorn guarding the Emerald Forest. The unicorn was able to evade the invisible stalker for a time, using its limited *teleport* ability. It soon realized, however, that it would need help in order to survive.

It was at this time that Galen the Dissembler, a notorious bard, happened to be passing through the forest on his way back to the neighboring village of Shady Glade. The unicorn pleaded with the bard to help her and he eagerly complied. Reasoning the invisible stalker was searching for a white unicorn, Galen *polymorphed* her into a black wolf and went on his twisted way.

Now, one month later, the invisible stalker is enraged that it cannot complete its mission (and will twist its orders to do so), the *polymorph* spell is slowly becoming permanent, and an evil black unicorn and its followers (corrupted animals such as worgs, giant spiders, etc.) are encroaching on the forest.

A Plea for Help

Dryad (1): AC 9; MV 12; HD 2; hp 11; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA charm; SD *dimension door*; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 12; INT high (13); AL N; XP 975.

The dryad is named Cricket and volunteers all of the information she possesses to the party, once she is assured they are here to help. She knows the following information:

- Galen the Dissembler, a notorious bard residing in Shady Glade, was seen in the forest close to the time of the unicorn's disappearance.

- A number of large spiders and wolves, among other creatures, have been seen in the forest recently.
- The unicorn was *teleporting* often before she disappeared.

The dryad is concerned that without the protection of the unicorn, the forest will be overrun by the evil creatures that have taken up residence in the northern portion of the woods. She is unaware of the presence of the invisible stalker (the unicorn didn't want to arouse panic) but realizes that if something isn't done soon, the entire forest will be overrun by a dark presence. She offers the party an unspecified reward, should they recover the lost unicorn and remove the evil creatures from the forest.

A Visit to Shady Glade

No matter what time of day the PCs enter the village of Shady Glade, there will be activity in the streets and patrons in the inns:

The traffic on the road leading to Shady Glade becomes dense as you approach the village. Entering the village, you hear merchants advertising their wares and the metal clink of the exchange of coins. The Sleeping Dragon Inn lies directly in front of you; merchants lie to either side.

People will talk . . .

Should the PCs inquire about Galen or his whereabouts, the people of the village discuss him freely. Those he hasn't *charmed* describe him with distaste, while his *charmed* victims speak of him as a generous and likable man. Galen is known in the village as a swindler and is not particularly well-liked among those he hasn't *charmed*. Everyone knows that he rents a cottage in the northern area of the village.

No one in the village has heard anything about the unicorn or the invisible stalker. Many have noticed that the forest has begun looking slightly darker, but no one has given the change a second thought.

The Dwelling of a Dissembler

When the PCs arrive at Galen's house (and wish to enter), read the following passage:

You knock at the bard's door and step back to await entrance. Suddenly, to your amazement, the knocker smiles and greets you. "Welcome. Answer this riddle and entrance is yours, answer incorrectly and you'll go away poor. Now, who owns this dwelling?"

The answer is "the city (or the town, village, etc.)." Galen is renting the house, a fact the PCs should have previously learned. If they answer incorrectly, each PC feels the weight of 1d10 gp magically lifted from his person. If the PCs attempt to force the door, they find it non-magically locked (a successful open doors check is required to open the door). If they answer correctly, the door swings open, allowing them entrance to the bard's home.

Galen immediately uses his *friends* spell on the party when they enter the house, regardless of their disposition. He is indifferent to how the party entered (he doesn't care if they knocked down the door). Galen is a twisted riddler who loves to toy with his guests. He speaks ambiguously throughout the encounter, using vague terms and sighing often. Galen defends himself if attacked and flees (using *invisibility* and *fly* if severely threatened).

Galen the Dissembler, hm B10: AC 5 (*ring of protection* +2, leather armor, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 45; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*staff of command* +2); SZ M (5'8" tall); ML elite (15); AL CN; XP 8,000.

S 12, D 15, C 14, I 16, W 13, Ch 16

Thief Abilities: PP: 90%, DN: 50%, CW 50%, RL: 75%

Personality: devious, playful, glib

Special Equipment: ring of protection +2, robe of useful items, potion of extra-healing, potion of polymorph (self), staff of command +2 (useable by bards), spell scroll (invisible stalker), spell scroll (comprehend languages; tongues).

Spells (3/3/2/1): 1st - charm person, detect magic, friends; 2nd - alter self, invisibility (x2); 3rd - dispel magic, fly; 4th - polymorph other.

Galen is unwilling to enter the corrupted forest. He will, however, aid the PCs in other ways. He is willing to sell or trade his potions and scrolls to the party if the price is right. He also offers them one free item (potion or scroll) for each of the following riddles that they solve correctly (only one guess, one minute time limit).

Riddle #1:

It comes in a pack but isn't a card
And is of special interest to a bard.

A: A wolf (Galen is the interested bard)

Riddle #2:

A female bard who good does scorn
Would find great use in this magic horn.

A: The horn of a black unicorn

Riddle #3:

The phobia of their sacs runs quite high,
But who'd have thought more than four legs could fly?

A: A (flying) spider

Each of these riddles give some clue as to what to expect in the forest if they are answered correctly. If the PCs fail to answer a riddle correctly, the DM should decide whether to have Galen reveal the answer (and hence a clue) to the PCs.

Because Galen is a trickster, he does not explicitly spell out to the party what happened to the unicorn. If asked about the unicorn, he presents the PCs with the following riddle:

A unicorn as white as purest snow
Had trouble with an invisible foe.
A white unicorn was he sent to fight,
So I made the unicorn black as night.

Galen does not elaborate on this riddle.

Any assistance Galen gives the party (such as *polymorphing* a creature for them) is twisted and he expects payment from the party.

Into the Emerald Forest

A well-traveled path runs through the forest to Shady Glade. Generally, no encounters will take place as long as the PCs remain on the road. If the party strays from the road, one of two types of

encounters may occur. Special Encounters are should be run whenever the DM deems appropriate (as noted).

To determine whether a random encounter takes place, the DM should first determine whether the party is exploring the northern section of the forest (north of the road) or the southern section of the forest (south of the road). If the party is exploring the northern area of the forest, the DM should roll 2d6 every hour the party spends in the forest. If one of the results is a 1, the result of the other die is the number of the random encounter, taken from the list below. If the party is exploring the southern area of the forest, the DM should roll 1d6 every hour the party spends in the forest. If a 1 is rolled, the DM should roll another 1d6 to determine the number of the random encounter, taken from the list below.

Random Encounters:

1) Thorn-Slingers (5): AC 8; MV 0; HD 4; hp 12, 15, 18, 24, 25; THAC0 Nil; #AT 1 volley; Dmg 2-8; SA always hits; SD adhesive sap; SZ M; ML Avg (9); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 270 each.

Notes: SD – adhesive sap on leaves and central stem requires Strength 13 or more to break free from if touched. A character with Strength 13 or greater can break free in 1d4 rounds. Victim suffers 1-3 hp acid damage per round held.

2) Basilisks, Lesser (2) AC 4; MV 6; HD 6+1 ; hp 27, 33; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA gaze turns to stone; SZ M; ML steady (12); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 1,400 each.

3) Boring Beetles (3): AC 3; MV 6; HD 5; hp 19, 25, 27; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 5-20; SZ L; ML elite (14); Int Animal (1); AL N; XP 175 each.

4) Centaurs (3) AC 5; MV 18; HD 4; hp 8, 15, 16; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/by weapon; SZ L; ML elite (13); Int Average (9); AL N; XP 174 each.

Notes: These Centaurs are a family of a father, a mother and their son. They are concerned about the state of the forest.

5) Giant Harvester Termites (2 soldiers): AC 8; MV 9; HD 2+2; hp 13 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA spit; SZ T; ML elite (14); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 120 each.

Notes: SA – spit (10' range) blinds victims that do not succeed in saving throw vs. poison for 5d4 rounds. If ignited, spittle inflicts 4d4 points of damage. Spit is usable once per turn.

Giant Harvester Termites (10 workers): AC 10; MV 9; HD 1+2; hp 4, 5, 6, 6, 6, 7, 7, 7, 8, 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SZ T; ML avg (10); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 356 each.

6) Giant Black Squirrels (6): AC 6; MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA thieving; SZ T; ML unsteady (6); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 35 each.

Thief Abilities: PP 20%

Notes: SA – a squirrel attempts to pick pockets (rings, gems, and other small, loose valuables) during its first combat round and may elect to do so during any further rounds. If the squirrel successfully pick pockets, it flees.

Special Events

A) Invisible Stalker: AC 3; MV 12, fly 22 (A); HD 8; hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 4d4; SA surprise; SD invisibility; MR 30%; SZ L; ML 14; XP 3,000; MM/208.

This encounter could take place at any time, but at some point during the adventure, the PCs should encounter the invisible stalker. The DM should run the encounter whenever he feels it appropriate.

The invisible stalker's exact orders were, "Journey to the Emerald Forest, retrieve the horn of a white unicorn residing there, and return to me with the horn of the aforementioned unicorn." The

invisible stalker is frustrated that it has not yet been able to carry out its orders and will do anything possible, including twisting its orders, to complete its task as soon as possible.

If the PCs return the unicorn to its natural form without previously arranging a way of deterring the invisible stalker, the stalker will attack the unicorn without hesitation (arrives in 2d6 turns). On the other hand, the PCs may be able to help the stalker* twist its orders by covering the black unicorn with white paint, *polymorphing* some other creature into a unicorn, etc.

*Invisible stalkers can understand common but cannot speak it.

B) Ettercap: INT low (7); AL NE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 3; dmg 1d3/1d3/1d8; SA poison; SD traps; SZ M; ML 13; XP 650; MM/114.

Up ahead the forest thins out a little and eventually tapers into a clearing. The sun (moon) shines down into the thicket, illuminating a glittering object in the center of the open area. There seems to be some sort of precious gem suspended in the middle of the clearing!

The gem is actually the trigger for an elaborate trap set by an ettercap to ensnare unsuspecting (and greedy) adventurers. Should anyone come within 10' of the "gem" (actually a ball of spider web), the trap is sprung. Thin, transparent webs encircle the gem in a 10' radius and when pulled taut (by an adventurer approaching the gem) the webs pull ensnaring webs up from the ground and over the party. Anyone within 20' of the gem must save vs. paralyzation with a -2 penalty (-4 within 10') or be caught in the webs (same effect as a *web* spell, 20' radius, half strength). The web negates all Dexterity-based AC adjustments and imposes a -2 penalty on the victim's attack roll.

Accompanying the ettercap are two giant spiders and four flying spiders. All of these join in the attack on the PCs. If the ettercap is killed, the DM should impose an automatic morale check on the spiders.

Flying Spiders (4): INTL low (6); AL CE; AC 4; MV 9 fly 9 (D); HD 3+3; hp 22, 19 (x2), 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA poison (type A); SD leaping; SZ L; ML 13; XP 650; MM/326.

Giant Spiders (2): INTL low (5); AL CE; AC 4; MV 3 web 12; HD 4+4; hp 29, 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA poison (type F); SZ L; ML 13; XP 650; MM/326.

C) Black Wolf (White Unicorn) : INT low (7); AL NG; AC 6; MV 18; HD 4+4; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ M; ML 12; XP 650; MM/362.

Worgs (6): INT low (6); AL NE; AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 20, 18 (x2), 17, 16, 12; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ M; ML 11; XP 120; MM/362.

As you travel through the forest, you begin to become aware of the strange sensation that someone, or *something*, is watching you. Soon your worst suspicions are confirmed as a half dozen eyes begin to emerge from the underbrush, encircling you.

A large, black wolf appears from out of the underbrush directly in front of you. You notice a tuft of white hair on its forehead as it slowly approaches you, seeming to appraise you. It sniffs at you from a few feet away and then cautiously backs away as the rest of the pack emerge from the forest and close in on their intended prey – YOU!

The unicorn (the black wolf) is slowly becoming corrupted by the *polymorph* spell (this is reflected in the neutral good alignment, the drop in morale, and a lowered intelligence). She does not attack the party, but neither does she aid them. The worgs are pack hunters and use tactics such as teaming up on

one member of the party. Should the PCs defeat the worgs, the black wolf stays in the area long enough for the party to approach her if they wish. Unless the party makes an attempt to capture or otherwise restrain the wolf, she disappears into the forest one round after the combat is over. If the party attempts to track the wolf, they find only hoof prints.

Taris, White Unicorn: INT average (10); AL CG; AC 2; MV 24; HD 4+4; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d12; SA charge; SD *teleport*, immunity to *charm* and *hold* spells; SZ L; ML 14; XP 650; MM/353.

Notes: SA - charge requires 30' of open ground and inflicts 3d12 points of piercing damage; a unicorn cannot attack with its hooves in the same round it charges.

E) **Treant:** INT very (12); AL CG; AC 0; MV 12; HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 3d6; SA animate normal trees; SD never surprised; SZ H; ML 16; XP 5,000; MM/346.

Traveling through the southern area of the forest gives you a feeling of comfort. The trees loom overhead, green and strong. You almost have the feeling of protection as if someone or something is watching over you. A wind whispers through the trees, softly at first and then it begins to take on form and content as the whispers become words. Following the whispers to their source, you look up and realize that you are being addressed by an ancient treant.

The treant is aware of the presence of the black unicorn and its followers (the ettercap, spiders, and worgs). It also knows that an invisible stalker is in the area. The treant is fairly certain that the black wolf in the worg pack is not what it seems. It volunteers this information to the PCs if they mention Cricket's name or otherwise convince the treant of their good intentions.

F) **Talisman, Black Unicorn:** INT high (13-14); AL CE; AC 3; MV 24; HD 4+4; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d4/1d12; SA charge, *cause light wounds*; SD *teleport*; SZ L; ML 14; XP 975;

Notes: SA - charge requires 30' of open ground and inflicts 3d12 points of piercing damage; a unicorn cannot attack with its hooves in the same round it charges.

SA: *cause light wounds* usable three times a day; may be used in conjunction with a horn attack.

Talisman, a black unicorn, moved into the forest from the wastelands to the north after he discovered the Emerald Forest was without a protector. Talisman walks alone, but his mere presence has invited corrupted creatures into the forest. When encountered Talisman will be alone and aggressive. He has no desire to speak or bargain with the party and cannot be convinced to leave the forest.

G) **Sylph:** INT exceptional (16); AL NG; AC 9; MV 12 fly 36 (A); HD 3; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 0; SA spells as 7th-level wizard; SD *invisible at will*; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 14; XP 2,000; MM/101.

This encounter is designed to aid the PCs if they should need assistance in solving the problems in the adventure. The DM should only introduce the sylph if the PCs are having trouble with the clues already given them. She can suggest solutions, but does not directly help unless absolutely necessary.

"Hello there. You must be the heroes Cricket spoke of." You wonder at the beautiful, winged female that hangs motionless in the air not 20' from you. "I am Annabelle, a sylph, and I have been sent by Cricket to aid you. How may I be of assistance?"

The sylph should ask the party what they know and make suggestions accordingly. Although she will not enter into combat or solve problems for the party, she will assist them. She is an air kin and thus can communicate with the invisible stalker. She is also able to cast both *dispel magic* and *polymorph self* as a 7th-level wizard.

Final Thoughts

There are three major goals to accomplish in this adventure:

- 1) Defeating the black unicorn and cleansing the forest of evil (immediate solution)
- 2) Restoring the white unicorn to its natural state (temporary solution)
- 3) Removing the invisible stalker from the forest (permanent solution)

Some ideas for solving the problems:

Getting the unicorn back:

1. Get the unicorn to drink the *potion of polymorph (self)*.
2. Use *dispel magic* on the unicorn.
3. Bring the unicorn to the bard to be *polymorphed* back.

Removing the invisible stalker

1. Use *comprehend languages* or *tongues* to understand invisible stalker.
2. Ask the sylph to translate for the invisible stalker.
3. Splash white paint over the black unicorn.
4. Use the *invisible stalker* spell to send the stalker on another task (such as clearing the forest of evil creatures).
5. Have the ettercap or other evil creature *polymorphed* into a white unicorn by the bard.

- Galen the Dissembler is the major NPC in this adventure (he resides in Shady Glade) but the PCs can solve the adventure without his help. In order to complete the adventure, the PCs should return the unicorn to its natural state (though this will attract the invisible stalker), defeat the black unicorn and cleanse the forest, and either defeat the invisible stalker or help him to somehow complete his mission. Accomplishing any one of these goals will provide at least some measure of success.
- During the adventure, the PCs must learn what has become of the unicorn (the dryad knows the bard was passing through at the time of the unicorn's disappearance, so the PCs will be lead to speak with him should they choose to); find a way to change her back (*dispel magic*, have the bard *polymorph* her back); deal with the invisible stalker (kill it, allow it to complete its mission); and defeat the black unicorn and its hoards. This setup allows for a very non-linear adventure in which the players get to make many choices.
- Possible rewards include the gratitude of the unicorn, the *book of the unicorn* or *bow of the unicorn* (see Encyclopedia Magica, Volume I), and even the possible gratitude of the invisible stalker. The horn of the black unicorn could also be considered a reward (it can be used to make type N contact poison or mounted to a lance inflicts black unicorn charge damage – 3d12). Most of the XP award in this adventure should come from accomplishing story goals.

- Possible spin-off adventures could include the evil wizard who sent the invisible stalker (he is *not* supposed to be a part of this adventure), adventures with the invisible stalker in the elemental plane of air, or a quest undertaken for the unicorn.