

EVERWAY SCENARIO 4

REBELLION IN PLENTY

Plot Logistics

Names: Fat People: Swelling, Rotund, Round, Puff, Glob, Lard, Tum, Bloat, Gorge, Blub, Bubble, Belly, Plump, Bulbous, Glutton. Thin People: Slim, Stick, Rake, Beanpole, Slimshanks, Skinny, Lean, Boney, Lithe, Ribby. The realm is called Plenty.

This is a scenario where the full power of the Mist must become obvious, as well as the danger to Everway. The heroes must also learn a little about Everway and be given reasons to go there. Seems likely that one or more of the factions in Everway has sent a representative to find out what is going on in Plenty.

How is the Mist getting in to Plenty?

It can't come from Bonekeep/Sweetwater, so there must be another entrance. How about Slight's realm? That would make it close to Everway (which for Amber parallels it has to be) and allows me to toast his family and home which will give him some motivation. Problem - for true Amber parallel, Slight's realm must have a direct and well-known link to Everway.

What is the role of Mother Harvest?

She is the "glue" that bound the rather unequal society of Plenty together. In the past, it became the custom for social status to be measured by your girth and weight. The richer you were, the more you could afford to eat. In the society of Plenty, Gluttony is not looked on as a sin - indeed, to partake of the generosity of the earth is to partake of the generosity of Mother Harvest. Stoutness is seen as a sign of Mother Harvest's favour, though she loves all her children equally. Inevitably, therefore, stout people gravitated towards the supervisory roles, or those that didn't involve too much hard exercise. Thinner people, by default, worked in the fields and orchards. They also lived in smaller houses as they needed less space. The society was less unequal than it appeared because there was parity of esteem - all people were respected and recognised as important. The Festivals were essential to the maintenance of this recognition.

Several things have upset the balance -

1. The disappearance of Mother Harvest (though this is in fact a symptom rather than a cause). Since Festivals happened when she showed up, they have stopped. Festivals which haven't involved Mother Harvest have been failures - without her cornucopia there is too much effort and organisation required to prepare them, and all sense of spontaneity is lost.
2. The appearance of the Wasted Woman is seen as an omen.
3. A blight has descended on the crops (this is an effect of the Mist of Corrosion/Scorpion plague). Everyone is starving. The extra food that the fat people require is resented by starving thin people.

4. The trade in kuful and other sweets has led to a disparity in incomes, with the fat people gaining more than the thin people since they make the sweets.

The result is that the heroes arrive in the middle of a rather one-sided civil war. Bloated corpses lie in the street. Blood stains the dust. The fat people have retreated South African-style into their villas, surrounding them with vicious traps and other defences. And gangs of starving thin people armed with pitchforks, knives and staves roam the streets. (Note that this mustn't be overdone or a happy ending is impossible).

How can the Mist be defeated?

I want to give a hint as to the nature of the Mist - the image of the boy dressed in white with the cockatrice wrapped round him. The person from Everway can help with necessary magical knowledge.

How about... the Mist is actually coming up from a cave complex underneath Plenty. The leaders of the thin people's rebellion met there, and so have become its instruments. The Mist seeps up through the soil, poisoning the plants. Where is it coming through? From a magical spring, which was responsible for the unusual fruitfulness of the land (a statue of Mother Harvest at the bottom of a pool. Now has black tendrils coming off it, like ink). (Perhaps the water comes from Sweetwater??? Nice idea, but a bit too convoluted). Stopping up the spring (a huge rockfall, or freezing) will stop the Mist, at least temporarily. It also means that the land will no longer be as plentiful as it once was, at least until the Mist is stopped at source. But it should allow the return of Mother Harvest.

I like this, but need to emphasise the human problem.

The Person from Everway

Various people may have become concerned by the drying up of sweets from Plenty. It's also possible that factions of Everway have detected something sinister going on. I like the idea that Wormwood Crookstaff has been taken prisoner by the Thin Rebellion because they think that he has been casting magic to protect the fat people's homes.

Visions on which this scenario is based

1. A thin, wasted elderly black woman with drooping dugs, carrying a staff and wearing a loincloth. Her hair is thin and grey. She is standing in a field of withered crops. Her hand is outstretched towards the onlooker and her expression is suffering and pleading.

This is Mother Harvest in her Want aspect. The heroes encounter her as they leave the Gate from Deepwater.

2. A large bloated man is sprawled in the dust of an empty street. He looks the size and shape of Obelix. He is dressed in a pale blue robe covered by a multicoloured coat, now torn and muddied, that used to hang in folds from his shoulders. His head has been crushed and a stream of blood trickles to a nearby drain. A curious wheeled contraption lies nearby. In the background is a grand building with a padlocked gate.

The man is Bloat, who has been killed by the Thin Rebellion. His wife Girth tries to rescue his body as the heroes pass by.

3. A man standing in a cave lit by smoking torches. The smoky orange light casts dramatic shadows on his face, which is thin with long shaggy hair and a drooping moustache. There is a fanatical gleam in his deepset eyes. He is dressed in tunic and coat, belted at the waist - the coat is a uniform purple in colour. He carries a scythe which has a bloodied edge. Behind him are shadowy figures, all thin, carrying a variety of farm implements.

This is Rake, leader of the Thin Rebellion. A most unpleasant character. His second in command is called Beanpole.

4. A dark tiny cave. Light streams from the foreground to illuminate an old man with a white beard and a skull-cap lying on the floor. He is wearing a rich robe of intense blue and red, now tattered and stained. The man is propped up on his elbows and is staring towards the source of the light with a hopeful look in his eye.

This is Wormwood Crookstaff, a scholar of the Platinum Chamber of Everway. He has been taken prisoner by Rake.

5. An underground pool of clear water. Within the depths of the pool is a statue of a large black woman with a cheerful expression, wearing a tall, implausible hat made of fruit and carrying a cornucopia. The statue can only just be seen as clouds of blackness stream away from it, like ink in water. Tendrils of the blackness stretch out along the streams that lead from the pool.

This is the source of the troubles of Plenty. The statue is of Mother Harvest in her Plentiful aspect. The Mist of Corrosion has found a way into this land via the magic of the statue and is poisoning the water supply.

Characters

Slight: There should be no problem with use of his magic here, though he may not like the underground setting of the finale.

Rathgard: Still weak from his wound - may recognise the name "Wormwood Crookstaff" from the library at Sweet Dreams. This Wormwood is his great grandson.

Flame: How to eliminate her from this scenario?

1. Have her captured by the Thin Rebellion in an early fight. This lacks plausibility - she's the best fighter in the group! Perhaps with use of a net and overwhelming force.

2. Enchanted by the Wasted Woman - wanders off on her own to try to right the wrong and gets captured by the Thin Rebellion. The other characters are likely to resist this unless they are under the Wasted Woman's spell as well.

3. Goes off on her own before reaching Plenty - visiting a library in Waterside, for example.

4. Has an accident. Again, not likely.

5. Play her as an NPC.

6. Have her stay behind to practise her new sigil.

Walker: If Rathgard is still unwell, he can look after him.

Alternatively, get him looking after an NPC from an early fight.

Wrath: The cave complex is likely to complicate his usual battle tactics, but he should be able to work something out.

Jayson: May be the best person to find out about the poisoning of the land. Any small creature should be able to tell him.

The Realm of Plenty

Virtue: Fertility (Growth) - things grow vigorously in Plenty, and the people have grown together, despite their differences.

Flaw: Summer Rev (Exhaustion). The people of Plenty are lazy and indolent.

Fate: Autumn (Plenty/Want) - will prosperity return to Plenty, or will the people starve?

Usurper: The Merchant (Riches vs. Poverty)

The People: The Fat people dress in pastel coloured robes with multicoloured overcoats with occasional bits of jewellery and gold. Outside, they wear white hats like a cross between a cook's hat and a mortarboard. They are polite in a middle-class sort of way, and share a middle-class sort of narrow mindedness. They are convinced that the way things were before was fine and that if only Mother Harvest would return, everything would be alright.

The Thin people dress in less colourful but still well-made clothes - white undergarments with coats made of long strips of material in autumnal reds, browns, greens and golds. They too wear mortarboard-type hats with an extended point down the back to keep the sun off their necks when they are working. Most of them are utterly bewildered by the sudden disintegration of their society, but have joined the Thin Rebellion because it seemed like the right thing to do. Most are not deeply committed to its aims and are secretly horrified by the slaughter that is taking place in their name.

All the people are Caucasian in appearance but deeply tanned. Men are generally clean shaven or have walrus moustaches. Women have long hair curled up at the back (leaving it long is a sign of poverty).

Craft: The chief craft is the manufacture of kuful, a sweet ice cream-like substance. Its chief ingredient is the fruits of the kuful tree, which are peeled, mashed and combined with a number of other ingredients. The result is chilled in ice rooms.

Various other sweetmeats and pastries, some based on ideas from other spheres, are also manufactured. The Thin people are mostly farmers, hunters and ice merchants, though some act as paid servants to the Fat people.

Tamed Animals: Dogs, cats and monkeys are kept as domestic pets. Hens, pigs, sheep and cows are reared for agriculture. Oxen are used to tow the carriages of the Fat people.

Deities: Mother Harvest. She is not a deity as such since she is real, but the people worship her as one. Frescoes and murals depicting her can be found in every village centre and there is usually a statue in a little alcove where offerings can be left. These are distributed to people who through illness or other misfortune do not have enough to eat.

Rule: No central rule - each town is self-governing. By tradition, the fattest member of the town acts as convenor and judge. Decisions are made at meetings held in the town square, which all can attend. There is a Guild of Bakers which ensures that exported sweetmeats are of a uniform standard.

The Land: Plenty has a warm Mediterranean-type climate. It has no seasons to speak of, and plants and trees flower and fruit all the year round. Agriculturally-aware heroes may notice that there is not nearly enough

rainfall to sustain the rich agricultural land (there is virtually no surface water). Ice comes from the mountains in the north. The trees and plants of Plenty are astonishingly varied and fertile. Despite the fact that no-one seems to do much in the way of agriculture, grapes, berries, grain, citrus and kuful are produced in rich profusion throughout the year. Plenty is separated from the realm of Tales by a two hundred mile-long strip of beach with a narrow road.

History: Very little - Plenty has been the way that it is for centuries. The only events of note are the founding of the Kuful Trading Company by Puff son of Lard and Jasmine Gold of Everway about 150 years ago to sell kuful to other spheres. This led to the founding of the Guild of Bakers. Connections: There are three Gates known to the people of Plenty - the one leading to Deepwater, the one from Tales and one to Slight's realm of Deepwood.

Names:

Fat People: Swelling, Rotund, Round, Puff, Glob, Lard, Tum, Bloat, Gorge, Blub, Bubble, Belly, Plump, Bulbous, Glutton.

Thin People: Slim, Stick, Rake, Beanpole, Slimshanks, Skinny, Lean, Boney, Lithe, Ribby.

Plot Outline

Prologue: The heroes travel from Bonekeep to Deepwater. On the way they hear about Plenty ("the land of the fat people") and the fact that the supply of kuful has dried up. The gate guards say that there are rumours of a war there, but no-one has passed through recently. If the Heroes sleep close to the gate, Jayson has a nightmare about being swallowed by a black fog.

Opening: The heroes emerge from the gate to find themselves in a field of sickly vines. Dry crusty tendrils are straggling everywhere and the grapes are black and wrinkled.

Action: The heroes have a vision of the Wasted Woman and (unless they are very careful) find that they have given her something they value. Flame may disappear at this point.

Progress: The heroes reach Grapetown, an abandoned village. Squashed grapes are everywhere. The main town house is magically trapped with a spectral hound.

Action: The heroes reach Kufultrees, where they encounter a posse of thin people just as Girth makes her sorry. If the heroes help her, she invites them into the house.

Interaction: The heroes get to meet Girth and hear about what has happened to Plenty. Girth blames the disappearance of Mother Harvest and says that the Thin Rebellion must have kidnapped her. She also knows that the leader of the Thin Rebellion is called Rake, but doesn't know where his hideout is.

Decisions: How should the heroes help Girth? Do they try to contact members of the Thin Rebellion? Do they capture one of the vigilantes?

Progress: The Heroes learn by one means or another where Rake's headquarters are. They may also learn that Rake has one (or more) prisoners. They journey to Source.

Decisions: How do the heroes attack? A full-scale commando raid? A subtle attempt at infiltration? Mediation? Something else?

Action: In one way or another, the heroes enter the complex and encounter Rake. There will probably be a (rather one-sided) fight. The heroes find

Wormwood Crookstaff and possibly Flame in a prison cell made from midianite. Wormwood and Jayson realise that there is something magical behind the troubles of Plenty.

Climax and Resolution: Possibly hunted down by survivors of Rake's rebellion, the heroes find the pool deep within the caves of Source. A good solution is for Flame to freeze the water to such an extent that it will take months for it to unfreeze. Alternatively, various destructive methods can be used - getting the statue out of the pool will stop the poisoning, but will destroy Plenty's fertility (there is also the small matter of the black slime that keeps dripping off the statue...).

Wormwood invites the heroes to accompany him back to Everway to report to the Platinum Chamber. If the heroes get things right, they see the Wasted Woman plant her staff. They may also get the things they gave her back.

The Journey to Plenty

The heroes have a two day journey to Stonedeep Harbour, followed by a two day sea crossing. They will have to charm someone into taking them by ship, or perhaps they have money from the Ghoul Queen's palace. The weather is rough (Rathgard can improve matters). If the heroes decide not to wait for Rathgard's and Tempest's recovery, Tempest will be unable to fly to Waterside. Perhaps the Person in White makes an appearance in a small boat...

Waterside is an archetypal port. It is is surmounted by a great square lighthouse with a lantern in the form of a giant Egyptian-style eye cut into each wall. The people are lively and red-brown in colour. Waterside is the chief port of the Hawk empire, a theocracy run by priests of He Who Died. There are several inns by the dock - Fortune card draw to determine roughness...

Rumours:

There is a Gate in the cliffs under Lighthouse Rock. It leads to Plenty, the Land of the Fat People.

Kuful and other sweetmeats are trading at a premium - the supply from Plenty has dried up.

The last merchant to come through was covered in blood. He said he was attacked by a mob of peasants.

Some say that there is a civil war happening in Plenty.

If the heroes stay overnight, Jayson has a nightmare. He dreams that he is approaching the Gate - as he does so, a thick black something with lots of tentacles? tendrils? starts to emerge from it and moves with frightening speed towards him. He turns to run, but the tendrils wrap round his feet and trip him up. The tendrils wrap round his limbs and force its way down his eyes, nose, ears and throat. The tendrils are made of cold, moist smoke...

Passing through the Gate

The cave that contains the Gate is reached via a narrow causeway that is covered at high tide. At the entrance, soldiers of the Hawk empire demand that they show their licence from the Clerestery of Trade permitting them to enter the gate. Violence or trickery can be used to get past them. The exit is in a mass of rocks at the edge of a field of vines. A well-worn trail leads to the south-east. The weather is warm and sunny. There are clear signs of viticulture - the plants are supported by cones of canes - but the vines are clearly not doing well. Tendrils are everywhere and the grapes are small, black and shrivelled. In the distance, a lush

plain dotted with groves of trees can be seen, with the sea in the far distance.

The Wasted Woman

A 1 E 6 F 1 W 8

Powers: Begging

After half a mile, the field opens out into a field of tired-looking wheat. Agriculturally-aware heroes may notice that there is wheat in all stages of its growth cycle. The ground is dusty and growth of the crops is patchy. If the heroes ask about the source of the blight on the crops, they may notice that it is magical in origin. It's as if a curse had been placed on them.

While the heroes are examining the crops, they see a figure approaching them. A thin, wasted elderly black woman with drooping dugs and sticklike limbs, carrying a staff and a begging bowl and wearing a loincloth. Her hair is thin and grey. Her hand is outstretched and her expression is suffering and pleading. A suspicious character may notice that she seems to have appeared out of thin air.

Get the heroes to write down individually how they respond to the woman. The next thing they know, they are walking down the road towards a small village in the distance. The wasted woman has vanished. So has Flame. Heroes who do not consciously offer her something find that they have given her something they value instead. Possibilities:

Jayson: One of his ferrets.

Slight: The sceptre he took from the Ghoul Queen's Palace.

Rathgard: His coat?

Wrath: One (or more, depending on his obstreperousness and a fortune card draw) of his zhi bolts.

Grapetown

A village more than a town, with a cluster of small houses around a central square. The town was abandoned some months ago. The central square contains a well, a number of vats raised on stilts with taps in the side (these have been broken with an axe) and a small undamaged roofed shrine with a statue of a jolly fat black woman with an improbable hat made of fruit. The same woman can be seen in frescoes which adorn the houses surrounding the square, where she is shown surrounded by fruits, vines and corn. In one she is leading a dance of (mostly thin) villagers. In another, she is helping to tread the grapes; juice is shown gushing from the taps.

On the ground there are bloodstains and squashed grapes everywhere.

The houses are mostly tall and thin with two stories. One however is only one storey and wide with extensive grounds. There are a number of outhouses round the back, which heroes experienced with wine manufacture may recognise as a winery. A wooden fence surrounds the grounds - iron spikes have been tacked to the top.

If the heroes attempt to penetrate the house and its grounds, they are attacked by a glowing green demon hound (A 2 E 4 F 5 W 2 Special: Fire breath, immune to non-magical weapons). The demon is summoned by magical spots on the ground - Slight may get an intuition that they are there. The black dust from the Ghoul Queen can be used to deal with it, or one of Wrath's zhi bolts. NB this creature also exists on the astral plane.

Inside, it is clear that the owners made a somewhat hurried exit. Children's toys lie abandoned on the floor, clothing spills from drawers, a maggot-infested lamb carcass hangs in the cellar. The blackened remains of a large pie is in the oven. From the size of the clothing, it is

possible to tell that some hugely fat people lived here (in fact, in the office are some papers showing that the name of the owner was Bulbous Son of Dough - export orders for the wine show that it went to Waterside, Storyhome in Tales and Everway, amongst other places). The house has clearly been looted since they left- various statues and objets d'art (some clearly not local - the heroes may recognise a ceramic of an ibis-headed god from Stonedeep, and Slight will recognise a wood carving from his home realm of Deep) have been broken. The winery outside is a mass of smashed glass bottles and broken casks. The heroes may be able to find one or two unbroken bottles in the cellar.

In the garden, three mounds have recently been dug. A sapling is growing on top of each one.

Kufultrees

The path from Grapetown enters a grove of trees, the like of which the heroes have never seen before. The trees have gnarled branches with long narrow leaves and bright green bulbous turnip-shaped fruits (their interiors, should the heroes cut one open, are white, soft and creamy, but infested by blood red grubs). They have been neglected for several months - long grass is growing round their bases - and are suffering from a variety of ailments including black rot, aphid infestation, and grey mould. Bright red wasps have burrowed into the fruits, which on some trees are grey green and shrivelled.

Kufultrees is a definite town with half-timbered buildings covered in golden-brown stucco. The houses, as in Grapetown, are either tall and thin or single storey and broad. All the broad houses and some of the narrow houses have gardens. A number have frescoes of the fat black woman - here as well as dancing and playing an improbable looking horn, she is ladling out dollops of a soft white substance into people's cupped hands (the people are both fat and thin). The stench of sewers indicates that the town is still inhabited, but there is no one in sight.

Encounter with Girth

As the heroes approach the central square, they see a grotesquely fat man sprawled in the dust of the street. He is dressed in a pale blue robe covered by a multicoloured coat, now torn and muddied, that used to hang in folds from his shoulders. His head has been crushed and a trail of dried blood leads to a nearby drain. A curious wheeled contraption lies nearby.

While the heroes are examining the body, there is a clang from the gate of a house. A hugely fat woman with her stomach supported by a belly wheel backs into the street, carrying a wheelbarrow. She is accompanied by her equally gross daughters.

"Mum..." says one of them.

"Shh, not a word," says the mother in a stage whisper. "They mustn't hear us!"

"But mum!" The girl points at the heroes.

The woman turns. For a moment she cowers back, then she draws herself up. "Get back inside!" she says to the girls. "Now! Lock the gate behind you!"

"But mum, you'll be killed!"

"Do what I say. Now!"

The woman waddles slowly towards the heroes, still carrying the wheelbarrow. She asks them formally to let her take back the body of her husband - "is it not bad enough that you killed him? Will you also prevent his return to the earth, as our customs demand?"

Whilst the heroes are trying to explain themselves, a dozen thin people armed with pitchforks, knives and axes emerge from a side street. "There's one - get 'er!"

[Thin people: A 2, E 3, F 3, W 2. Girth: A 3, E 5, F 1, W 2. Unless the heroes act very quickly, area attacks are as likely to hit Girth as they are to hit thin people. The thin people will assume that the heroes are on their side. One will attempt to escape to warn the others when they start losing.]

Assuming the heroes behave as expected, Girth invites them in. When the gate is closed and locked, she collapses in sobs that shake her whole body. She explains that her husband went out at night searching for food - "I told him his belly wheel was squeaking, but like a fool I didn't insist that he oil it. They must have been lying in wait and heard him coming and... and..." She bursts into tears again. Her daughters (Stout and Swelling) emerge from the front door, with Lean, their elderly maid servant, and help the heroes in, guiding them through the mantraps and magical booby traps that litter the periphery of the property (the traps consist of magical cords that wrap round the throat and strangle, fireballs that erupt out of the earth and "slice and dice" magical knives).

Girth buries her husband and prays to Mother Harvest to "bring forth plenty out of his body". She plants a sapling on top of the mound. Lean offers to make some nettle soup.

What Girth Knows

The rebellion started about six months ago. Thin people spontaneously started attacking fat people in several towns.

There had been tension building up between thin people and fat people for some time. Crop yields had become very poor in the past year - "the worst that anyone can remember" - and people were starving. "Of course, we got together to divide up what food there was, but they couldn't see that of course we needed more food than they. They tried to say that the food should be divided equally."

The thin rebellion is led by a man called General Rake. His second-in-command is Colonel Beanpole. They seem to be co-ordinating the attacks on fat people in different places. No-one knows where their HQ is.

The fat people have put numerous magical defences around their homes, employing powerful wizards from Tales and Everway whom they smuggle from house to house. A lot of thin people have been killed by them. The thin rebellion kills any mages it discovers. The one who fortified Girth's house was called Spellmaker. He was caught and taken away, presumed killed.

Girth is convinced that the root of all this is the disappearance of Mother Harvest. She is the goddess depicted on the walls of the houses. Girth suspects that General Rake has captured or imprisoned her in some way, thereby precipitating the blight on the crops and the subsequent rebellion.

If asked, Girth disclaims all knowledge of the Wasted Woman. Lean, however, reports that before all the trouble started, her grandson Skinny met her out in the fields. "Gave her his hoe, he did, silly damnfool boy. As if she could lift it, let alone use it." Lean regards the Wasted Woman as a bad omen.

If asked about Source, Girth will recall that there is supposed to be a cave complex beneath it that has some connection with Mother Harvest. She thinks the name comes from "Mint Sauce" because of the sheep.

Next Steps

The heroes have to decide what to do next. Possibilities:

1. Capture a member of the Thin Rebellion and interrogate him. Fortune card to see what sort of person they get.
2. Pretend to be members of the Thin Rebellion. This is likely to work - the leader of the local battalion (a woman called Slimshanks) will believe any plausible story. The heroes will be sent on patrol, during which time they can attempt to aid Girth and her family. If the players can manage to persuade Captain Slimshanks of their bravery and dedication to the cause, she will take them as an honour guard when she goes to talk to Rake at Source.
3. Attempt to organise local resistance. A fat person called Glutton is the most bellicose of the fat people, but given their very low energy (Fire 1), it is unlikely that an effective resistance can be organised.
4. Go elsewhere for help. This will take a minimum of twenty days to organise, by which time it will be too late. All the fat people will be killed and Scorpion flags will be flying in the centre of each village.

What people in the Thin Rebellion know

Most are vague about the aims of the rebellion. General Rake has been telling them that this is not about food, it is also about "rights" of which the Fat people have been depriving them. What these rights are is not entirely clear, but there is a general feeling that thin people have not been getting "fair shares". Trade is one thing - most of the money and goods from trade with Everway and elsewhere ends up in the hands of the Fat people.

The rebellion started in Grapetown when Bulbous was seen pilfering food from the shrine of Mother Harvest. Rake, along with some other villagers, tried to stop him - a fight ensued in which Bulbous was killed.

Several mages who had been helping the Fat people have been captured. One, Spellmaker, was publicly beheaded.

General Rake's headquarters are in the cave complex at Source. He has a number of prisoners there.

Source

The area round Source has been completely denuded of vegetation, leaving it blasted and barren.

Source is an attractive mountain village that has been turned into an army camp. Hundreds of members of the Thin Rebellion are being trained in military tactics. Most are sleeping rough in the meadows around Source. Human excrement and flies are everywhere, as is blood from the sheep that have been slaughtered to feed the army. There is a large, spectacular waterfall that goes thundering into a hole in the ground just above the village. To the west of the village is a ravine, with the main entrance to the cave complex at its base. It is guarded by eight thin people armed with spears and nets. Two more guard the secret entrance by the waterfall, hidden from the village. They are dressed in oilskins and are thoroughly miserable.

Rake's Headquarters

General: Mostly well-lit by smokey torches. The smoke from the torches curls and slides along the ceiling in an ever so slightly unnatural manner. Very echoey - voices can be heard from far off. As the heroes approach the statue room, they will begin to detect the effects of the mist (Slight first). The large 20' wide passages have been smoothed

by water action - the narrow passages vary in width and Tempest will find it difficult (though in fact he can turn into a horse, but will not reveal this unless he has to). If a message can be sent to the outside, 100 troops are immediately available as backup. NB Slight will start to detect the Mist almost as soon as he enters.

Guards: A 2, E 3, F 3, W 2. Mostly armed with spears.

The Great Cave: A funnel-shaped cave. The floor slopes down at an angle of 10 degrees. Four guards protect the entrance to the inner passageway. They will scatter and hide in shadows, hoping to attack by surprise. There is a bell by the inner passageway to summon help. The storeroom contains food, rope, wood for making barriers, nets, barrels of water and weapons including bows and spears.

Guard Room: A dozen pallets on two levels are occupied by half a dozen of Rake's personal guards (unless they've been called away). Various clothes and effects are scattered around, including a picture of the Pyramid in Everway that has been made of small sea shells (a tacky piece clearly looted from a Fat person's villa). There are also a couple of Everwayan gold hefts (taken from Wormwood Crookstaff) and possibly one of Flame's books. The store room next door contains several weapons including fire arrows.

Beanpole's Room: The room is a small living quarters containing a large unmade bed, a desk, dozens of rolls of parchment, a cupboard and Beanpole himself. In one corner is Wormwood Crookstaff's diary.

Beanpole

He is a small man with a balding head and the look of a scribe, dressed in ill-fitting leather armour covered by a multi-coloured robe that is too big for him (it looks like it used to belong to a fat person). He is scratching at a parchment and muttering to himself "20 lambs... no, 40 lambs when Lanky's group joins them..." As a fighter he is completely pathetic (A 4 (giving commands), E 3, F 2, W 3 (sense magic)), as an organiser he is without parallel. He used to be Bulbous' steward. If surprised, he will snatch up a sword, try to hold them off with threatening words, then dive for the bolt hole which is hidden behind layers of clothing in the side cave (Beanpole seems to be a collector of colourful and tasteless clothing - there are also some copper bracelets that belong to Wormwood Crookstaff, one for each of the books that he has had accepted by Chamber Platinum). If he gets a chance to summon soliders, he will give them clear and effective orders

Rake's Room: Unless the heroes have been exceptionally clever, it is unlikely that Rake himself will be found here since he will be directing operations. The room is noticeably for its spartan state - there is a hard wooden bed, a large table covered with maps, some chairs and a wardrobe. A large map of the whole of Plenty is on the wall, with arrows drawn on it depicting the various forces. It is clear that Mootown has been a recent significant target. A timetable is next to it.

Rake

The smoky orange light casts dramatic shadows on his face, which is thin with long shaggy hair and a drooping moustache. He is in his late 30s. There is a fanatical gleam in his deepset eyes. He is dressed in tunic and coat, belted at the waist - the coat is a uniform purple in colour. He carries a scythe which has a bloodied edge.

A 4 (Inspire), E 3 (Resist Persuasion), F 5 (Scythe), W 4 (Sensing Ambush)

His voice is deep and smooth, but can rise to a crescendo when the moment demands it. He never loses his cool. Magic-sensitive heroes may spot that

he is under a spell - something black and smoky drifts in the whites of his eyes.

Given the chance, he will explain (rant is probably a more accurate description) about the lot of the thin people and the way in which they were being used by the fat people. He claims he was given his instructions by Mother Harvest herself (Rathgard will spot that this is a lie). Basically, he is a nasty piece of work, utterly fanatical and paranoid. His one great fear is of magic, which could seal him in forever. He is very smart and has thought of most of the ways in which the cave could be attacked and developed strategies against them. The Interrogation Room: This is next to the midianite outcrop and so one wall is made of honey-coloured rock. Magical effectiveness is reduced here. There are chains, a table, a brazier and branding irons (hopefully not in use).

The Prison: The end of the passageway has been mortared up, leaving space for a grilled door. Two guards are lounging outside it. Inside, light streams from the doorway to illuminate an old man with a white beard and a skull-cap lying on the floor. He is wearing a rich robe of intense blue and red, now tattered and stained. The man is propped up on his elbows has a hopeful look in his eye. Flame (and possibly Walker) will also be found here.

"Thank goodness you've come!" says the old man. "Permit me to introduce myself - I am Wormwood Crookstaff the Younger, of Everway." Wormwood Crookstaff the Younger

A 5, E 2, F 2, W 4. Powers: Detect Spells

A stereotypical scholar - short and thin with a deeply lined face and a white beard that is separated into two points by copper rings. His skin is pale bronze in colour and blotched with age. He has a medallion round his neck with a picture of a crooked staff. His bright brown eyes dart from place to place. When he looks at someone for a long time he opens them wide, giving him a surprised expression.

He is a lively and nervous speaker, always concerned with the effect that his words have on others. His manner and gestures are those of a university don, which is effectively what he is.

His interest is exclusively in the study of magic, which he has made his life's work. He is the author of five books that have been accepted by Chamber Platinum into the Library of All Worlds, one more than his illustrious grandfather, a fact of which he is inordinately proud (The books are: Totemic Magic amongst the Torrent Peoples of Riverland; Principia Ptolomeia (a study of magic use in the Hawk Empire); a Comparative Study of Rituals and Incantations used by the Peoples of the Windworn Isles; the Roses of the Unity Mages; and the Ice Magic of Frost Gleam . His belief is that everything is made of magic - he has no time for the gods, having spotted the fact that they are different on every sphere. His theory is that underlying everything there is a single element - magic. This is proved by the Unity Mages and their ability to draw power by working between the Elements. A logical consequence is that magic can be used to create people and gods. He is on Plenty to look for evidence of this in Mother Harvest, whom he believes was created by the people who worship her [news of this fact has leaked back to the Twelve, which may be the reason for subsequent events in Everway.

He was captured by Rake as a suspected mage, although (to his eternal frustration) Wormwood cannot actually do magic at all (though he can detect it). Rake tortured him to try to get him to confess that he was a mage, but without success. Rake is holding on to him a) in the hope of a ransom from Everway (no chance) and b) as a possible defence against magical attack. Wormwood knows one or two protective magics but cannot

actually perform them. He will also be intrigued to meet Tempest, since he knows that most dragon hybrids go mad.

Wormwood knows (but will not tell the heroes unless forced) that the cell he is in is made of midianite, the same material as the Walker's Pyramid. He can also tell that the whole area is under some sort of spell, and that the source it is through the narrow entrance on the left...

The Black Lake: The passageway beyond the main tunnel is unlit. It leads to a vast mass of water that stretches well beyond the range of torches. This water is as black as pitch, and anyone coming close to it feels weak and woozy and starts being assailed by visions. Close examination of the water reveals that it is full of swirling black particles. Drinking the water this close to the source is a really bad idea, and will reduce the Fire and Earth scores of anyone doing so to 1.

The Statue Room: Approaching this room is similar to approaching the gate in the first scenario, but not quite so debilitating. Care has to be taken to avoid the hole in the passage over the racing torrent from the waterfall. The room is dominated by a black pool, and black water trickles into the lake room beyond. Water enters the pool from a crack in the wall at about knee height mid way along the right hand wall. Within the depths of the pool is a statue of a large black woman with a cheerful expression, wearing a tall, implausible hat made of fruit and carrying a cornucopia. The statue can only just be seen as clouds of blackness stream away from it, like ink in water.

The heroes can do various things about this. The most obvious is for Wrath to loose a zhi bolt in the chamber, which will have a spectacular destructive effect. Fortune card to see how he does in escaping from the collapsing chamber. For added excitement, Rake and his minions could corner them here. There could be a very narrow crack that leads up to the surface. Alternatively, they could attempt to remove the statue from the pool. This will require getting a rope around it, which given the debilitating effects of the mist is going to require much ingenuity. Alternatively, Flame could freeze the water solid, lowering it to such a low temperature that it will take months to melt. This would be a herculean effort for her, given the size of the target and the temperature range involved.

If Wormwood is with them, he will suggest a divination spell to see what the source of the mist is. He knows a ritual which requires people with Water and Air magic. If cast, the Mist swirls up, surrounding the participants. In its midst appears the vision of a young boy dressed in white, hanging in the air with his feet pointing downwards. Wrapped around him is a loathsome cockatrice, dripping slime. The vision fades.

Conclusion

As the heroes struggle exhausted from the cave, they find that all military activity around them has stopped. People are puzzled, shaking their heads. Then someone points to a figure coming across the fields. It's the Wasted Woman, staff in one hand, begging bowl in the other. She is now wearing a scrap of cloak (or possibly Rathgard's). She stops at the outskirts of the village, in the middle of the barren and blackened land. If the heroes approach, she smiles and nods at them. Then she thrusts her staff firmly into the ground. She turns, her cloak fluttering in the breeze... and the next thing you see is that the staff has sprouted small, healthy looking buds. Hanging on it are the possessions

you gave the Wasted Woman. The onlooking crowd are silent. A skylark starts to sing.

Aftermath

Wormwood will be extremely interested in the heroes' account of their previous encounter with the black mist, but somewhat shocked at their means of dealing with it - "why didn't you come to Everway at once?" He will immediately spot that the Mist poses a threat to Everway, and will invite the heroes to come back with him to report to Chamber Platinum. Hopefully they will accept...

Mark 06 July 1999