

The Steel Princess

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Introduction

A TTRPG adventure compatible with Dungeons and Dragons 5e adventure for a party of level 6+ characters.

The council of steel is responsible for providing the finest weapons and recruits into the Royal Military guard each year and this year they went big. The princess herself is travelling as part of the Iron Harvest – a caravan crew that has exclusive rights to ferry the valuable harvest of materials and recruits along the Ferrous highway.

However they carry another precious cargo, the princess of the realm also travels with the caravan and the new guard recruits first order of business is to see she is escorted safely. But when trouble arises something is amiss and where is the party? Where else – at the centre of it all.

Luistira

The City of Steel



The party had been drawn to Luistira - the city of steel to replenish their arms and armour after a few intensive battles. The steel here at the beginning of the Ferrous highway was famous. Many of the best smiths worked here and several notable blades had been created in the several forges that were established here.

However it was not the shopping that kept the party here but a request for aid.

The Iron Harvest was calling for people to escort its many wagons to the Kings Castle, a few days from Luistira, and they were asking for only the best. Either those with great repute would be hired or those who could test themselves and prove themselves worthy and it just so happened that the party was also heading in that direction.

“What makes you think you are ready to join the Iron Harvest Guard?” the guard, dressed more like a royal guard than a caravan mercenary, asked. “We have heard word of your party. Some good work but surely these tales of your exploits and endeavours have been exaggerated.” a second spoke, this time a female who was dressed as the part of a caravaner.

“Now Sal, we can’t jump to conclusions.” the man spoke looking across his broad shoulder to where she sat in the back room at the inn.

“Easy captain. Let them speak. They have a reputation for getting the job done.” Sal continued leaning towards the party.

NPC’s:

- Sal

- Captain Steve Jepowski

Encounter: Social - Sal

Creature: N/A

Map - N/A

Sal is curious about the previous exploits the party were involved in. She has some knowledge of what they have done and asks them specific questions and if she is questioned she explains that caravaners talk about the stories or the people they have encountered.

After the discussion they are let through

The Ferrous Highway



“Steady as we go boys.” The wagon driver said as they started to go down the hill into a valley. She had been talkative with the Party since they left Luistira and had been the source of many jokes and comments about the surrounding lands since leaving the city walls. “My father used to take me riding through these lands when I was younger. Said it was important to know the lands around where we live.” she continued as she looked fondly at a lake. “We caught many fish in that lake one year. I remember once he caught a pike so large that he was pulled into the lake. My Uncle called him Carp-head for many months after.”

The party had been hired by the Iron Harvest, a caravanning company that was the exclusive supplier of royal arms and guard recruits in the land. The caravan however had a special guest, which drew unwanted additional attention. The Princess of Luistira rode up ahead in her carriage as a final test to the new recruits. “What do you think of the new Guards?” Sal, the wagon driver asked the party as they watched the dozens of guards walk or ride around the princesses wagon. “They don’t look ready for the real thing yet. Hopefully they won’t have to see that for quite some time.” she added thoughtfully.

As they continued onwards the party thought they heard a distant shout to the east, but there was nothing that way except for a few farmers who stopped and waved at the caravan as it passed. A

few of the other mercenaries and guards looked over and waved as they passed by and continued on the road. It would take another two days of travel, three if they stop to rest for the full nights before they reach their destination. Then the party would escort the empty caravan back to Luistira and the majority of the guards would stay with the princess in Kowal.

But there was a strangeness in the air, something that bode poorly and as they moved along the wooded road there were infrequent signs of other travellers, creatures and even beasts that littered the surrounding woods. Something that drew the attention of the party and some scouts but it was infrequent, disjointed and some of it purely bizarre which resulted in the men and women shrugging it off as coincidence.

NPC’s:

- Sal
- Captain Steve Jepowski

Encounter: Lack of Life

Creature: N/A

Map - N/A

There are a few tracks hidden alongside the road and apart from the distant shout where the farmers were they have not seen anything since. The animals are restless and alert but they haven’t seen any game or other travellers. A boot print here and there, a predator’s footprint elsewhere but there is nothing to hunt - if the party can talk to animals they can ask the horses travelling with the party and they will explain that they can sense a predator nearby, or several, but they don’t go into detail nor know what it is. Just that there is something.

First Signs of Trouble

The Camp

Gathering around one of the many campfires Sal laughed and drank deeply from the Tankard she had poured herself. The Princess had brought with her several vast kegs of ale and had opened them when they stopped. The guards who were not on duty were guarding the princesses wagon, which no one had seen her yet as she remained inside her wagon.

As Sal laughed and joked with the guards several of them attempted and failed to flirt with her as she gently, generally with humour, declined their

advances. A few stern looks from the caravan captains made the men move on quickly enough if they didn't get the message. As the night went on and the feasting died down the party returned to their tents and bedrolls and soon only the occasional noise from the guards could be heard.

Sometime in the early morning the party woke to complete silence. Positioned not far from the princesses wagon - and thus the guards this was an abnormality from the previous few nights. But there was a feeling of wrongness that crept through the camp and across the tent as if the air itself was trying to retreat further away from some unseen miasma.

Leaving their tent and bedrolls the party looked around the camp to find that not only the camp fires had been extinguished - many with guards passed out where they sat the night before but the torches and braziers had been too. Moving swiftly through the camp after drawing and donning their arms and armour they discovered on the other side of the wagon a bloody battlefield. Bodies lay strewn about the grass and chopped up soil. Humanoids in dark leathers and clothes littered the dead guardsmen who had died in a circle in front of the princesses wagon - which stood there with its heavy set doors ripped open.

Soon people who woke in the wake of the party moving through the camp joined them and the cries of alarm drifted through the camp. Guards raced from tents, wagons and where they fell the night before to begin lighting torches and forming a perimeter as they investigated the invaded wagon. Clothing lay strewn about the floor of the wagon where cupboards had been ripped open. A small secret compartment lay chopped into and a chest lay half full of gold and jewels lay cascading down from a padded seat.

The princess was nowhere to be found.

Search parties departed and followed the infrequent and nearly non-existent tracks left by the attackers. After searching the bodies they found a mixture of goblins and orcs had been amongst the bodies. However the injuries on the bodies of the guards were too accurate and efficient for normal goblin and orc swings.

As the party guarded the wagon Sal looked nervously around and several of the Iron Harvest guard leaders spoke to her in hushed whispers. The Wagon was filled with thousands of gold pieces worth in weapons and armour and the shock of the attacks from the night before and the mystery in how no one in the camp had heard what had happened had the camp nervous.

However as the sound of thundering hooves reached them from between the trees nearby as muffled shouts came. A horse burst from the trees only two hundred feet from where they stood and they saw that it was one of the scouts riding back. The man was barely holding onto the reins of the horse as it powered towards the camp. "We are under attack!" the man called as an arrow whizzed past him and buried itself in the dirt.

Soon the figures of hobgoblins appeared at the edge of the forest as a volley of arrows reached the back of the guard, his face contorted into a silence scream as he fell from the horse who rode past the party - stumbling from both exhausting and a few arrows that had missed the light barding of his coat.

Soon the hobgoblins were rushing forward, goblins and some orcs were amongst their ranks but it was clear that the hobgoblins were in charge and that they had orchestrated the attack last night. As the guards clashed with goblin, orc and hobgoblin the party fended off a few creatures as arrows crashed against them and the wagon. Soon the guards were falling back and a gap emerged between them and the wagon. Sal drew a blade and a small shield from next to where she sat and she joined the party. After a moment several other guards, all experienced captains, ran to aid in the defence of the wagon.

NPC's:

- Sal

- Captain Steve Jepowski

Encounter: Hobgoblin Ambush!

Creature: Wave 1

Level 6 - 8 goblins, 4 Orcs, 4 Hobgoblins

Level 7 - 12 goblins, 4 Orcs, 6 Hobgoblins

Level 8+ - 16 goblins, 6 Orcs, 8 Hobgoblins

Map - 412ThAtPrCa

After the first wave of creatures is beaten back the party have thinned an area around the wagon

where Sal was sitting. But the attacking group of hobgoblins continues to surge forwards.

General Kazak Gorkai

"Surrender the princess, enough of this trickery. Give her up and spare your lives!" a lean, well armoured hobgoblin called from the front lines of the battle. As he called, several guards rushed at him, cursing and rejecting his offer. A few swift sword strokes saw those guards lose their heads with deft, deep blows.

"Sal, we need to retreat. Get on the wagon and let's get out of here." one of the guards called. Nodding but hesitant Sal climbed into her seat, the party grabbing onto the wagon as they dashed away, some guards throwing themselves at the attackers who gave chase.

"Stop that wagon!" roared the hobgoblin leader as the sounds of horns mixed with the blood chilling sound of guttural howls as the outriders of the hobgoblin army rushed forward to cut them off. The sound of crashing armour, breaking bones and howls of pain from goblins, beast and man heralded that they were not quick enough and soon worgs were circling them, waiting for the signal.

NPC's:

- Sal
- Captain Steve Jepowski

Encounter: General Kazak Gorkai

Creature: 3 Goblins, 3 Worgs, General Kazak Gorkai, 1 Hobgoblin Shade

For each level past 6 add 2 Hobgoblins that accompany Kazak.

Map - 412ThAtPrCa

General Kazak strides forward through the battle as the worg riding goblins pin down the party. His legion fights harder and more fiercely in his presence as they push back the defenders to make a path between him and the party - or so they thought. He only has eyes for Sal.

The minions try to pin and separate the party from the wagon - however Kazak speaks to Sal and calls her the princess. She draws her sword and shield and stands off against the general, separated or not and fights well - but she is slowly being beaten and

he is toying with her - not wanting to kill her but not letting her land a hit on him either.

After the battle is over (hopefully with the party victorious) Sal, Salencie Wildenhort, apologies for the deception but explains that she believes in being amongst her people. She hates being kept like something breakable and she appreciated being treated like a citizen of the lands rather than the next ruler. She thanks them for their efforts in protecting her and asks them to come to the castle where her father can provide them a proper reward (a boon).

Lore & NPCs

Sal (Salencie Wildenhort)



Princess Salencie Wildenhort grew up knowing she was royalty but her father believed that she should be amongst the people, not above them. As her father aged and her mother wanted her to be more princess-like she struck out and with the careful planning and help from her personal guard, she integrated somewhat in with society as frequently as she could.

Her father knows of her plans but he encourages her, in his own way, and has organised for her to train for combat with her guard captain from an early age.

Steve Jepowski



Captain Steve Jepowski is the captain of Sal's personal guard and her fathers oldest and most loyal friend. Steve enabled the princess to be amongst the people and watched over her - posing as different merchants bodyguards, beggars, brothers and the like over the years in an attempt to stay close and give him an excuse to follow Sal around.

However having trained Sal from a young age he is the most aware of her martial prowess and feels comfortable in knowing that she can handle herself in nearly all circumstances.

Maps

412ThAtPrCa



Monsters

Adventure Encounters

Goblin

GOBLIN

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hobgoblin

HOBGOBLIN

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 ft. of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage, or 6 (1d10 + 1) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Orc

ORC

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Worg

WORG

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Goblin, Worg

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The worg has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Hobgoblin Shade

HOBGOBLIN SHADE

Medium Humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the Hobgoblin Shade can deal an extra 3 (1d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 ft. of an ally of the Hobgoblin Shade that isn't incapacitated.

Spellcasting. The Hobgoblin Shade is a 4th-level spellcaster. It's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following Wizard spells prepared:

* Cantrips (at will): *control flames*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *mind sliver*

* 1st level (4 slots): *cause fear*, *charm person*, *colour spray*, *disguise self*, *detect magic*, *mage armour*, *ray of sickness*, *shield*

* 2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *silence*, *suggestion*

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

General Kazak Gorkai

GENERAL KAZAK GORKAI

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin - goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +6, Dex +4

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +3, Survival +4

Condition Immunities frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, Kazak can deal an extra 10 (3d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 ft. of an ally of Kazak that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kazak makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Bellowing Command (recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, Kazak can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand Kazak. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if Kazak is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

Martial Superiority. Kazak can turn aside any attack, as a reaction Kazak can add +5 to his AC for a single weapon attack that he can see.