

River Raiders - P1

We begin with the adventurers aboard a trade vessel travelling downriver toward Rivertown. The journey takes them past the shadow of the ominous Wraith Woods and the ruined spires of Fortua, with the crew uneasy as fog gathers over the swift-moving waters. As night falls, raiders emerge from the mist in spiked canoes, using jars of fireflies to mark and confuse their approach before ramming the ship and boarding. A tense battle erupts, resolved through a dynamic countdown: if the adventurers succeed, they fight off the raiders and manage to beach the damaged ship with the help of the crew, while failure sees the raiders plunder supplies before the vessel sinks, forcing the party to swim ashore exhausted and stressed.

The Wood Wraith - P2

After surviving the raiders' ambush on the river, the party makes camp on the riverbank before venturing into the foreboding Wraith Woods. Inside, silence and mist press heavily against them as corrupted wolves emerge, twisted by vine and bark. If they overcome the threat, they escape the forest's clutches and break into the ruins of Fortua. But failure leads to a dire confrontation with the Wood Wraith, a monstrous guardian of the forest that hungers for the life-essence of trespassers.

How to read this Zine

The below boxes is how I break up and display content for this adventure. It's not a in depth adventure guide with hundreds of pages of lore, tables and numbers but should be enough to get you going weith Daggerheart.

These boxes are generally narrative - Coloured on the right to help identify what we read out to progress the narrative.

This is generally a DM prompt. A mechanic, or something we need to be aware of. The darker colour on the right hand side signifies this.

GM Guidance:

I put notes for how to enhance the scene, to set the narrative or to enhance the game play.

The important part is here in bold: Generally an explanation or prompts as to why, how, what or when.

Encounter - Reference (name)

If there are rules for the encounter I put them in a DM box.

- Success

What does success look like, what does it do. Generally paired with a narrative box too.

- Failure

What does failure look like, what is a consequence (not the only one!). Generally paired with a narrative box too.

Adversary and Environment blocks will be represented similarly most of the time. There will be subtle differences but I will have most of the information stored in a easy to read format. Additional notes may be found in a DM Box.

Adversary / Environment Name	Type / Tier
Motives: What motivates this adversary	
Difficulty: # Thresholds: x/y HP: # Stress: # ATK:++ Weapon: Range xdy+n Phy/mag	
Feature Feature description	

GM Principles:

*These are the **Principles** that I put heavy emphasis on, in order of **significance to me**. This is how I would suggest running this adventure.*

1. Ask Questions and Incorporate Answers:

- The players have just as much creative say in the worlds that we create with them, not for them. Let them have the reigns frequently and with glee.

2. Collaborate at All Times:

- This is a shared narrative of GM and Player, not adversarial. We set challenges that they will overcome and create a truly amazing narrative!

3. Begin and End with the Fiction:

- Goes hand in hand with my #1 and #2. This is a narrative style TTRPG system and this multi-act adventure sets us up for a great story.

4. Give Every Roll Impact.

- This one is interesting. Don't make them roll for things they don't need to. Make sure that you make the rolls count as it could be seen as fishing for Fear or Hope.

5. Fill the World with Life, Wonder and Danger

- This adventure has life at every turn. It also is filled to the brim with danger and chances of discovery and wonderment. Highlight this narrative to the players to help them get fully emersed.

6. Hold on Gently.

- Be flexible. If they want to try a peaceful alternative to a solution, let them and Pivot!

7. Play to Find out What Happens.

- This is something I'd encourage you to ask your players. One-shot Zines can feel very scripted but set the goal, lay the scene before them let them traverse through it. This is a mutual agreement for us to not force them into an outcome, but they also need to want be involved.

Adventure Mechanics

Any time a party takes a short or a long rest where there may be consequences of the environment they are in both the DM and the Player make a 'Watch Roll' of 1d12. The Players then decide to go with their own roll or the GMs roll. Then consult the below.

- 1-3 - An adversary Appears (Ambush Environment)
- 4-7 The GM gains a fear.
- 8-10 The Players Gain a hope
- 11-12 the Players gain a hope, clear a stress and the GM loses a fear.

If the players elect one member to forgo one of their rest actions to take watch the players roll 2d12 and choose which they wish to keep.

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Rivertown Bound

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The Wood Wraith

Read out to the Players

After a harrowing collision with raiders on the river, you've made it to a narrow shore. The battered ship lies half-submerged, its dark silhouette barely visible with the riverbank's weeds and the fireflies that have begun to fly around its broken form.

Beyond the driftwood and firefly glow rise the Wraith Woods; dense, silent, and ancient. You can't help but remember the whispers of those you met that claimed that few enter and even fewer return from the woods. The air smells of damp moss and something that time rightly forgotten, and now the forest beckons as the only way through to your destination, Rivertown.

You gather what supplies remain, boots sinking slightly into the soft earth, and you light a fire to dry your sodden clothes, the woods loom ahead; a living wall of gloom and ancient memory.

Give the players an option, they can short rest now or press on.

If the players short rest this is a dangerous place to rest. Roll your **Watch Roll** with advantage.

Ask your players what they do to recover, what do they do to prepare for the next leg of the journey, what do they know of the Wraith Woods? Incorporate your answer into the next read out section.

Read out to the Players

You step beyond the reeds and into the shadows of the woods. Trees rise like silent sentinels, their thick trunks unmarred by dawn. Mist coils through the undergrowth, and branches seem to sift with a silent wind. The forest is alive with whispers. Echoes of your heartbeat, the crack of a twig or the call of a creature hunting or being hunted. Every footstep feels like trespass and like you're being watched.

The deeper you press into the Wraith Woods, the more oppressive the silence becomes. Mist seems to cling to your boots and cloaks, and the trees twist inward like ancient sentinels. Then, from the undergrowth, eyes glow with unnatural hunger. Wolves emerge, their bodies twisted with writhing vines and bark, snarling as though an extension of the wrath of the forest itself.

Start a Progress Countdown (6) to traverse the woods.

Pick a party member to lead by making a roll. Each other party member makes a reaction roll. Each success grants the leader +1 to their roll, each causes the leader to suffer a -1 to their roll.

GM Guidance:

- Pacing the Scene:** Use the players answers from the below questions, set a pace using narrative and focus on the success of the party members and how they contribute to the narrative.
- Ask Questions and Incorporate Answers:**
- "What keeps you moving forward through this place?"
 - "What sound from the forest makes your skin crawl?"

- Success

The players escape the woods but are chased by wolves and other creatures as they enter Fortua Ruins.

Read out to the Players

A heavier sound stirs beyond them, a bellow that is mournful, ancient and starving. The sounds of roots tearing, a tree falling and a presence that presses dread into your bones.

The wolves lunge as you're distracted but you drive them back before making a run for it. They give chase driving you forward through clawing branches that seem to twist to snare and entangle, until, at last, you break free onto broken stone. Ahead, rising in the fog and sunlight, stand the jagged ruins of Fortua. The forests sounds echo from behind you as you enter the ancient ruins, but the sense of being hunted lingers

- Failure

The party run into a section of the forest which comes alive. A Wood Wraith stirs and it attacks the party. Trigger the Feral Forest Encounter

Encounter - Feral Forest

The Wood Wraith is the encounter in the Wraith Woods. It's a strong Solo adversary that summons Corrupted vines to harass and pin in its quarry.

Read out to the Players

The wolves circle, snapping and snarling, their vine-twisted bodies driving you deeper into the trees. Branches twist unnaturally, blocking paths, and the forest itself seems determined to trap you. Then the air shifts; colder, heavier. The wolves fall silent, retreating into the mist as if terrified of the trees.

Then you hear it. Something vast and terrible takes form. Vines coil into limbs, bark splintering into jagged edges, and a skull of bleached bone stares out from within the tangle. The Wood Wraith drags itself forward, each step leaving the earth torn. Its hollow bellow shakes the trees as it reaches for you, hungering for the warmth of your living essence. The namesake of the Wraith Woods has appeared and you are its prey.



Wraith Woods

Traversal - Tier 1

Difficulty: 12 | Impulses: Confuse, Consume life, Create Fear
Potential Adversary: Wood Wraith, Wood Wolf, Corrupted Vines

Feast on Fear - Action

The woods themselves seem to turn against the party. The first time a character rolls with fear they gain disadvantage on their next roll.

Spiteful Thorns - Action

Pick a point within the Wraith Woods. All Targets within Very Close range of that point must succeed on an Agility Reaction Roll or take 1d6+4 physical damage.

Wrath of the Wraiths - Reaction

On the first roll with fear start a Consequence Countdown (4). If it was a failure with fear start it at 3. Spend a fear to decrease the Consequence Countdown by 1. If the consequence countdown triggers before the Progress Countdown summon 1 Wood Wraith within Far Range of the Party.

Corrupted vines

Minion - Tier 1

Motives: Constrict, creep, lash

Difficulty: 10 | Thresholds: None | HP: 1 | Stress: 1 | ATK:-2 | Vine: Melee | 2 Phy

Minion (3) - Passive:

The Vine is defeated when they take any damage. For every 3 damage a PC deals to the vine, defeat an additional Minion within range the attack would succeed against.

Group Attack - Action:

Spend a Fear to choose a target and spotlight all Corrupted Vines within Close range of them. Those Minions move into Melee range of the target and make one shared attack roll. On a success, they deal 2 physical damage each. Combine this damage.

Wood Wolf

Skulk - Tier 1

Motives: Defend Territory, ambush, hunt

Difficulty: 12 | Thresholds: 5/9 | HP: 3 | Stress: 3 | ATK:+2 | Bite: Melee | 1d6+2 Phy

Twisted by the Woods - Passive

When a PC rolls a failure with Fear while within Close range of the Wood Wolf, they lose a Hope.

Wood Wraith

Solo - Tier 1

Motives: Restrain, punish intruders, silence life

Difficulty: 13 | Thresholds: 7/15 | HP: 9 | Stress: 4 | ATK:+4 | Vine Slam: Very close | 1d12+2 Phy

Relentless (2) - Passive

The Wood Wraith can be spotlighted up to two times per GM Turn. Spend Fear as usual to spotlight them.

Lash and Grind - Action:

Pick a target within Very close range and **Mark a Stress** to make an attack against all targets within close range of that target. Targets the Wood Wraith succeeds against take 2d4+1 physical damage.

Corrupted Forest - Action:

Summon three Corrupted vines, who appear at Far Range.

Hunger of the Wraith Woods - Action:

Spend 2 fear to spotlight the Wood Wraith and 2d4 Corrupted Vines within far range.

Momentum - Reaction

When the Wood Wraith makes a successful attack against a PC, you gain a fear.