

Instant Encounters: The Blade of Love & Fury

We give you a ready-made encounter to insert into your 5E game. You add the adventure!

This encounter is intended for 1st or 2nd Tier play

Encounter Scenario: A fabled weapon; The Blade of Love & Fury awaits a worthy wielder to claim it. It has different powers determined by the wielder's alignment so the powers it possesses hinges greatly upon the heart of the one who claims it. In the encounter the PCs and a group of less than goodly, hardscrabble, halfling bandits find their way into an isolated forest glade. The stone circle, the sword, and its sheathing stone lay at the center of. It is plain for any to see that the ornate sword is valuable and a prize worth fighting for. And that is exactly what happens between the PCs and the halfling bandits: winner gets the sword.

Encounter Area: a wide, roughly circular clearing deep in a dense wood or forest. The clearing is a 120 ft radius circle. Its only features are a circle of standing stone monoliths, each with a different sylvan rune (Good, Evil, Chaos, Law, and Balance) carved onto them. They surround a heart-shaped stone known as the sheathing stone. The sheathing stone is half black and half white in coloring and covered in numerous patterns of the same five runes that decorate the standing stone about it. In the sheathing stone is an ornate longsword (*The Blade of Love & Fury*), its keen blade buried halfway to the hilt. Movement through the forest counts as difficult terrain for any creature of medium size or larger.

Getting the PCs involved

- The PCs could stumble upon sacred clearing, just as the bandits do. Perhaps

while traversing the forest or looking for a campsite.

- One of the PCs could be sent to claim the blade as their birthright or sacred duty (great for a Paladin PC), or even just to keep it out of the hands of an evil wielder.
- The PCs find the location of the glade on a treasure map or in a dusty old tome they uncover on another adventure or while a spell caster was doing research for something else.

(Use the appropriate boxed text for how the PCs are involved)

(If the PCs stumble upon the glade)

As you push through the dense growth of the woods, the brambles and barrier of close-set tree trunks suddenly opens into a wide clearing that wasn't visible to you before stumbling upon it.

The clearing is a hefty bowshot across and strangely circular in a way too perfect to be natural. The round glade has golden yellow grass that looks to be knee high to a man. At the middle of the glade is a circle of five standing stones. Each of the stones is ogriously in girth and stature, worn mostly smooth by age and weather. They are carved with a large, single flowing rune that differs on each of the stones. Thick green moss weirdly grows within all the runes as if highlighting the deep carvings. At the exact center of the standing ring is a heart-shaped stone that shares all five of the runes. The heart is half ebony and half pearly white. Half sheathed in the heart-shaped stone, stands what appears to be an ornate sword. Your attention is pulled from the sight by quick shadowy shapes dashing about the tree line across the glade from you.

(If the PCs were seeking out the glade)

You push through the dense growth of the woods, brambles and barrier close set tree trunks suddenly opens into the wide clearing you have sought.

The clearing is a hefty bowshot across and strangely circular in a way too perfect to be natural. The round glade has golden yellow grass that looks to be knee high to a man. At the middle of the glade is a circle of five standing stones. Each of the stones is ogreish in girth and stature, worn mostly smooth by age and weather. They are carved with a large, single flowing rune that differs on each of the stones. Thick green moss weirdly grows within the runes as if highlighting the deep carvings. At the exact center of the standing ring is a heart-shaped stone that shares all five of the runes. The heart is half ebony and half pearly white. Half sheathed in the heart-shaped stone, stands what appears to be an ornate sword. Your attention is pulled from the sight by quick shadowy shapes dashing about the tree line across the glade from you.

(GM) The shadowy shapes are the *Merry Magpies*, a band of cutthroat halfling bandits, led by Maggie Mucktoe.

Maggie Mucktoe Tactics: (Round 1) from the safety of trees she sends half the total Swarms of Magpies to attack the PCs who come nearest the sword, leaving the rest in reserve.

(Round 2 and beyond) She sends All, but (2) of the Trained Magpies to harass as many of the PCs as possible, by having them take the Help Action so her bandit's bowshots can cause sneak attack damage as she starts towards the sword. This continues until she has the sword or a PC has it. Once she has the sword she flees to hide in the woods, using all Swarms of Magpies to cover her escape if possible. If a PC has the

sword all swarms and attacks focus on them until they are slain, so she can get the sword and then she flees. Maggie always tries to keep (2) trained magpies within 5 feet so she can take advantage of her **Redirect Attack** reaction ability.

Bandit Sniper Tactics: All the bandit Snipers, save two will fire short bows from the tree line while the other two dash to find cover by one of the standing stones. All the bandits and Maggie try and use their cunning action to hide whenever possible. The next round, the first two snipers will shoot their bows along with the ones in the tree line, as two more bandit snipers dash to standing stones and join the first pair.

Each round will be the same until all snipers are at the standing stones or engaged with the PCs. None of the bandit snipers, besides Maggie will try for the sword. If Maggie is slain or captured, the rest of the bandit snipers flee. If Maggie gains the sword and gets to the woods, they all flee and disappear into the woods behind her. Since the bandits know the woods far better than the PCs, any effort to track or find them are attempted at a disadvantage (even when the halflings are using the Dash action to escape).

Threats

(1st Tier Play)

Maggie Mucktoe (see stat blocks)

(4+1 per PC) Halfling Bandit Snipers (see stat blocks)

(4) Swarms of Magpies (use Swarms of Ravens stat blocks, see core rulebook)

(6) Trained Magpies (use Raven stat block, see core rulebook, with *trained*.) They all function as Maggie's animal companions and can be given commands as an action.

2nd Tier Play

Maggie Mucktoe

(8+2 per PC) Halfling Bandit Snipers

(8) Swarms of Magpies (use Swarms of Ravens stat blocks (see core rulebook)

(8) Trained Magpies (use Raven stat block, see core rulebook, with *trained*.) They all function as Maggie's animal companions and can be given commands as an action.

Loot: Each halfling bandit sniper has a small pouch of 25 GP.

Maggie has (2) *Potions of Animal Friendship* (see core rulebooks) and a Silvered shortsword.

The blade in the heart-shaped stone is *The Blade of Love & Fury* (see below)

The Blade of Love & Fury

Weapon (longsword), legendary (requires attunement by one worthy enough to draw it, see below)

Rules of the blade: Drawing the sword from the stone requires a creature to succeed at a DC15 Charisma Check. Only one such check can be made per creature every 24 hours. Only a creature who drew the blade from the stone is allowed to attune to the blade. If the attuned wielder dies, the blade instantly teleports back to the stone, no matter the distance or plane of existence.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The wielder is granted Advantage on all Charisma Saving throws and is immune to the *Charmed* condition. The blade also sheds a pale rosy light like a torch when drawn. This light can be turned on and off by the wielder using a bonus

action. In addition, the blade grants extra powers, dependent upon the alignment of the attuned wielder.

- *Lawful:* The wielder has advantage on all Insight Skill tests and can use the spell *Zone of Truth* three times per day using their own Charisma as their spell casting ability.
- *Chaotic:* The wielder has advantage on Intimidation skill checks and can use the spell *Shatter* three times per day using their own Charisma as their spell casting ability.
- *Good:* The wielder has advantage on Medicine skill checks and can use the spell *Calm Emotions* three times per day using their own Charisma as their spell casting ability.
- *Neutral:* The wielder has advantage on Perception skill checks and can use the spell *Silence* three times per day using their own Charisma as their spell casting ability.
- *Evil:* The wielder has advantage on Deception skill checks can use the spell *Darkness* three times per day using their own Charisma as their spell casting ability.

Stat Blocks

Maggie Mucktoe

small humanoid (halfling), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 35 (10d6)

Speed 25 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 10 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

Skills Animal Handling +5, Nature +2, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6, Survival +4

Senses passive perception 14

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Lucky. When the halfling rolls a 1 on the d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, they can reroll the d20 and must use the new result.

Command Beasts. As a bonus action, Maggie can verbally command any all beasts she has trained to take the Attack, Dash, Disengage, Dodge or Help Action.

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the halfling can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the halfling deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the halfling that is not incapacitated and the halfling does not have disadvantage on the roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Maggie makes two melee or ranged attacks.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320, one target. Hit 7 (1d6 +4) piercing damage.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 7 (1d6 +4) slashing damage.

REACTION

Redirect Attack. When a creature that Maggie can see targets her with an attack, Maggie chooses another ally within 5 feet of her. She switches places, and the chosen ally becomes the target instead.

Halfling Bandit Snipers

small humanoid (halfling), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 10 (3d6)

Speed 25 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

Skills Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5, Survival +4

Senses passive perception 14

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Lucky. When the halfling rolls a 1 on the d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, they can reroll the d20 and must use the new result.

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the halfling can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the halfling deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the halfling that is not incapacitated and the halfling does not have disadvantage on the roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The halfling makes two ranged attacks.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 80/320, one target. Hit 6 (1d6 +3) piercing damage.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 6 (1d6 +3) slashing damage.