Encounters on the Road

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07-Road at Morning *by* **LJFHutch** *(DeviantArt)*

	Encounter Title	Page Number
100	Troupe	21
99	Daily Chores	8
98	The White Fox	21
97	The Long Game	20
96	Love Never Dies	13
95	Cray-cray Nay-nay	7
94	The Unburied	20
93	Hangman	11
92	High as the Sky	12
91	Prison Transport	15
90	Elementary	9
89	Broken Axle	6
88	Beggar's Riddle	5
87	Runaway Steed	16
86	Gossiper	11
85	Shrine of Safe Travels	17
84	Look the Sculptor in the Face	12
83	Violet Creepers	22
82	Caravan Family	6
81	Basket Case	5
80	Desperate	8
79	The Man and the Bear	20
78	The Spear in Amber	20
77	Sticky Brandwick	18
76	Washed Away	22
75	The "Wine" Job	19
74	Cattle Raid	7
73	Cursed Crow	7
72	Fluff Ambush	10
71	Cartographer	7
70	Entomology	9
69	Innocent Lies	12
68	Drag Race	9
67	Punishment and the Crime	16
66	Svendor the Magnificent	19
65	Hamlet of the Lost	11
64	Pilgrimage	15
63	Silk Isn't No Game	17
62	Leery Lycanthrope	12
61	One Trick Alchemist	15
60	Blast from the Past	6
59	Young Fun	23
58	Sinkhole Season	17
57	Bad Merch	5
56	Spirit of the Wild	18

55	Noble Bastardry	13
54	Dinner Raid	8
53	All Serpents in a Row	5
52	Traffic Hours	21
51	Professional Banditry	16
50	Whispering Stones	22
49	Standoff	18
48	Spirited Away	18
47	River Spring	16
46	Downpour	9
45	Moonshine Hideout	13
44	Predator and Prey	15
43	Thirst for Kindness	21
42	Shadowed	17
41	Old Mill	14
40	Crackling at Dawn	7
39	Deaf not Dim	8
38	Wandering Flora	22
37	Unfaithful Stories	22
36	Mudfest	13
35	Whistle Twice	23
34	Shame Parade	17
33	Untouched	22
32	Fated Painter	10
31	Bluecap	6
30	Tax Collector	19
29	Farmers Dogs	10
28	Harpy Song	11
27	Murders	13
26	Hungry Fog	12
25	Tit for Tat	21
24	Stalked	18
23	Pale Mornings	15
22	Troll-ish	21
21	Bloody Surprise	6
20	Bad Hunt	5
19	Ogre and the Babe	14
18	Dead Men Riding	8
17	Froglegs at Breakfast	10
16	Spooked	18
15	Duke's Aid	9
14	Ogre Scent	14
13	Magistrates	13
12	Cleaner	7
11	Fortune Teller	10
10	Greasy Situation	11
9	Wrong Way Around	23
8	Stranger on the Road	19

7	Shot the Messenger	17
6	Poaching	15
5	The Brains and the Prophecy	20
4	One Head Short	14
3	Noosed	14
2	Wrong Turn	23
1	Every Breath You Take	10

The Encounters

One-hundred easily modifiable fleshed out encounters. Have fun and good luck!

All Serpents in a Row

A clumsy **druid** named Erp will ask to join the party at their fire and spend the night. He talks in his sleep and summons 2d4 + 2 **poisonous snakes** from the surroundings to join the camp. If the guard does not notice this the PCs may wake up with a snake or two in and under their sleeping bags. The druid does not wake up in the morning and a medicine check reveals he was bitten and has been paralysed for several hours. Doing this medicine check also provokes the responsible snake to come out of hiding and attempt to defend its master. In the stuff of the druid there are 2 potions of antidote (with the side effect of not being able to talk/speak for 1d4+1 hours) and 3 home-made minor healing potions (one of these is actually a paralysing poison instead).

Bad Hunt

A (giant) **eagle** swoops in and grabs a familiar/animal companion and drags them off into the sky and up and away. If it gets away it will bring it to its nest quite a way up on a cliff. The challenge is getting up there to save their beloved without falling off as the eagles (there will be a pair here) protect their nest and young.

Bad Merch

Two merchants come up with their cart. They have some minor magic items such as an *ever-clean* cloak pin, and a cloak of *protection against cold*. If players buy something they get a weird wooden stick for free, the two brothers know it is magical but they don't know what it does. If they take it, the brothers, who are serial killers (**assassins**), will track them and at dusk they will activate the stick, which functions as an *explosive rune* with a smoke effect. They will attempt to take down the strongest character in the group first.

Basket Case

A raging mad halfling (**barbarian**) is found sitting on the road, he will scratch, stab, bite, and jump people that come within 10ft of him and doesn't stop screaming about some bastard who he killed that took his mind and cursed him. If he is killed his eyes will grow clear and he will thank you with his last words before closing his eyes in peace. The PC that delivered the killing blow is now cursed, taking over the curse this halfling had. From now on, every week the PC gets a new madness from a **semi-permanent madness table** but loses the madness that it had previously until he/she him is killed or the curse is lifted.

Beggar's Riddle

The road splits in three ways, a beggar sits in the middle fidgeting with some wood. His name is Vevric and he will say; "*Oh heroes and noble men, please help me, I am a frail old man. Silver 'n gold, I'd take any gift. I'll tell you even the path safest and swift. Lasses, ladies, please hear my plea! Show some compassion and sympathy*.". If they give him something equivalent to gold: "Thank you, M'lord, M'Lady! So few of you are not this greedy. The right path is yours, t'has no goons. I hope to see y'all again. Real soon.". The right path leads around and after an hour or so they get back on the road they came from, back to the smiling beggar. Silver equivalent: ''*Ladies, and gentlemen, what a*

gracious gift. Words must be kept, the best way, safe and swift! The right path is yours, but it is the left. You look like good folk, neither dim nor daft." Copper equivalent: '*'I see, you are beggars yourselves. I wouldn't wanna encumber your delves. Straight is the way you want to go. And if you come back, spare an old man some though.*". This path leads straight into a **goblin** encampment with which he has a deal.

Blast from the Past

A con-artist named Redgy (a **satyr** appearing as halfling due to glamour) will attempt to appeal to one of the PCs in the party, claiming to be a blast from the past. If the PC doesn't seem to recall any of his vague stories that could have happened to anyone he will use *charm* to persuade the PC to catch up on old times. At a moment of convenience Redgy will use his dice of modify memory to play a game with the PC to alter his/her memory to incorporate him. He does this all to reap the rewards for being an old-time friendly NPC.

Bloody Surprise

A heavy buzzing is in the air and something smells badly somewhere off the road. Investigation leads to a carcass of a pack animal covered in **stirges** who are feeding off of it. If disturbed in any way a large part (3d4 +6) of the stirges attack their new fresh prey, pursuing PCs and horses alike. The carcass belonged to a horse of a messenger, he had some pristine leather saddlebags with him, in them several personal letters one of which bears the crest of a king/council/duke and is magically sealed.

Bluecap

A corpse of a boar lays on the side of the road, its belly is covered in blueish mushrooms, touching the corpse or poking it will release a cloud of mushroom spores. Targets within 10 ft may make a constitution save to avoid being impregnated with *bluecap* mushroom spores. These spores use the targets skin to develop into mushrooms in 1d4 days after which they shrivel and die, during this time the PC becomes light sensitive and has disadvantage on charisma checks, on the last day the targets become very infectious and any within 5 ft must make a constitution save or be infected as well.

Broken Axle

Broken axle, whether it is your own or from a family on the road. They are trying to fix it but could use a hand or two. A small skill challenge of 2 successes against 2 failures will help overcome this encounter. If it was not their own cart they receive 2 rations and a wineskin for their troubles.

Caravan Family

You catch up with a merchant caravan and with a small deal with the leader of the caravan you are allowed to travel with. For all intents and purposes this caravan functions as a general store and can resupply the party with any (simple) mundane items. There is even a smith traveling with them that can repair armour and weapons if needed. In return, the PCs are required to share some stories about their past with the people of the caravan. One of the people in the caravan (**bard/rogue**) has very big ears and if the party is even slightly famous he will sell this information to the wrong people.

Cartographer

Meet Ewen, a cartographer and explorer. There is a good chance that he has maps of the region to sell, as well as some obscure pieces. One of his maps costs 20 gold pieces, the obscure ones 35. But he will give you one for free if you can rid his backpack of moths that are eating his papers: a map he said to have illegally copied from a library hidden under the streets of a city (your choice), from a book he believes to be written by (in)famous man called Lanne Chaim.

Cattle Raid

Three odd looking farmers (**highwaymen**) pass by with a small herd of goats and a cow. Several minutes later a man comes running along with a black eye, roughed up clothes, and holding a rake pleading the party to tell him where the bandits went with all his livestock and if they can please help him.

Cleaner

A knight in full-plate (**paladin**) blocks the road, when the party contains anything along the lines of a tiefling or half-orc he (Covric the Cleanser) will demand a trial by combat handing off his cloak and receiving his weapon from his squire (named Jeffry). His creed demands him to rid the civilised world of barbaric and evil beings. If the trial by combat is not respected he will use *spirit guardians*, otherwise he will fight fairly and will yield as soon as he goes below 10% of his hit points.

Crackling at Dawn

You have accidently camped on a nest of **shocker lizards**. At dawn, they emerge from their holes (2d4 + 2 of them) and wander amongst the party. Any sudden movements will set them off.

Cray-cray Nay-nay

They meet an odd **druid** named Mud. He is a bit scrambled but if you share a meal and some wine with him he will show you a shortcut that cuts your travelling time considerably. He has ears like a bat and if the word *crazy* falls he will become really mad and his voice will sound like the thunder, winds will pick up, and he will disappear into the twirling leaves. The storm will last a whole 2d8 hours and if there is no proper shelter there might be some survival checks in order to make it without losing one thing or another (Branches in eyes, flying equipment, tents and bedrolls).

Cursed Crow

A crow starts to follow the party from the sky, sometimes landing and khawing at them. The thing is that to all but one of the players this sounds like a normal bird, but this one player swears he hears it say "I will come for you, I will" over and over again. On the third day the crow is gone but that same evening this player will be attacked by this cursed creature in his dreams. The dream involves him slow-running through the current environment in nothing but a loincloth while being attacked by this bird dealing mental damage in the process, wisdoms saves to wake up. Once he wakes up a dark figure falls from the tree in a fury of sounds, beak, and claws as it attacks the player. The creature looks like a bird, but almost humanoid and definitely cursed in some evil twisted way (use **kenku** stats).

Daily Chores

There is a small hamlet along the road, the people living there are nice and although they have no inn they will find a warm dry place to sleep for the night and a good bowl of hot stew for some small compensation. For some work around the hamlet (cutting wood, milking the cow, etc.) and 15 silver pieces total they will provide this service. Work around the hamlet is resolved with a skill challenge that needs three successes before three failures. If someone suffered from an ability drain they may heal 1 point of it during this stay.

Dead Men Riding

On a dreary day a figure appears out of nowhere nearly 100 ft ahead. A rider in all grey sits on top of a barded warhorse (**centaur** stats, undead subtype), he slowly lifts his lance and points it at you. He charges at full speed and coming closer you see dark smoke roll under his helmet and from the manes of his long-dead horse. He will charge and fight until defeated or banished.

Deaf not Dim

You will have to cross a small river, the only way over is by a small boat that currently is located on the other side of the river. The gnome (**commoner**) that owns the boat sits in front of it next to a small shack smoking a pipe and fishing in the river. He is deaf and his sight is not what it used to be, so getting his attention is a small challenge. The fare costs 2 silver pieces each and takes about ten minutes. If more than 4 creatures are in the boat, it will start leaking and the gnome will ask for some help throwing the water overboard while he is rowing. If someone complains that it goes slow, he will bet them a silver piece they can't do it any faster than he can (they can with a moderate strength check and a minor wisdom save to figure out how to steer properly), if accepted he will go sit on a bench and will smoke his pipe with a smug face letting the person do all his work while he makes money.

Desperate

A group of farmers (**commoners**) you meet on the road are relocating to the nearest city as they lost their houses and families in recent orc raids on their hamlets. They will try to sell the party anything they have left for some money so they can survive in the city and not end up in the streets as beggars: livestock, heirlooms, their cart, even their last pack animal. One of them is even so desperate that he will sell his daughters hand in marriage for a handful of gold.

Dinner Raid

Ambush by 4 orc **berserkers** and 2 **archers**. The orc berserkers work in pairs and are connected by a spiked metal chain, which they use at the start of the encounter to bulrush multiple members of the party in one bulrush (this functions like a normal bulrush but deals 2d4 piercing damage if you do not wear metal armour). They will go for downed creatures first, taking them out. If a creature is flanked by two orcs of the same pair, each orc can attempt a trip attack as a bonus action.

Downpour

Heavy rain makes it almost impossible to continue, besides, something is out there in the rain. **Water elementals** are playing outside but they would spook the horses. The next morning the road is covered in **giant slugs** making it impossible to travel on horseback and treacherous by foot because of the slime. For several days traveling will take longer as the whole road has turned to mud from the heavy downfall, increasing travel time.

Drag Race

The sound of hooves traveling at great speed comes towards you on the twisting roads. Make some wise decisions because there are over a dozen **horses** galloping at high speeds along the road in a drag race for some serious price money. They leave you in a huge dust cloud as even more pass. A straggler has fallen of his horse but he is stuck in the stirrups and is dragged along, he will not survive the race.

Duke's Aid

A group of 15 rough looking **soldiers** have barred the road with two heavy carts. They will roll them aside for a "Duke's aid" fee of 7 gold pieces per person. They can be negotiated with until 4 gold pieces but any lower and they turn sour and rather take some lives. Upon being met with hostilities they will overturn their carts and use the slits they cut in the bottom to shoot crossbows from almost total cover while their foot soldiers use a make-shift towershield to advance on the party. If 5 of them die and they are not clearly winning they will give up and surrender.

Elementary

A sudden storm breaks up the day and forces any wise creature to stay inside safe and sound. Staying inside will cost them some travelling time however it spares them from the 2d4 **wind elementals** that will be harassing them on the way (pushing them off the path or their horses, playing with their gear and grabbing cloaks and pulling at them). If met with hostility the storm will locally flair up and every round there will be a chance (10%) of a lightning strike hitting the floor at their feet. Lightning will deal 6d6 damage and half on a dexterity save as well as 6 lightning damage to any creature within 20 feet standing on the ground. The main target is the highest character.

Entomology

A frightened man bolts onto the road towards the party, he is running for his life. Out of breath he begs their protection and to get him away as quickly as possible, if the party hesitates he will hand them a small wooden box. He seems to be a researcher of some sort with a notebook strapped to his chest and a backpack full of tracking gear on his back. A high-pitched noise coming from the side of the road somewhere ahead should be enough of a warning. The box when opened shows a small glass canister which seems to be holding some sort of insect, a knowledge nature check might reveal it to be a bee, a high roll will show it to be a queen bee… At that moment the high-pitched noise turns into angry buzzing and 2d4 +2 **swarms of bees** come rushing at the party. If they throw the canister away half the swarms will go off and protect their queen while the others attempt to chase of the humanoids. The researcher wants the queen as it is a special one, rare and quite valuable.

Every Breath You Take

A **young dragon** is on the hunt and it picked up the smell of the party. They make an easy target on the open road…

Farmers Dogs

Five huge **guard dogs** chase the party from a nearby farm. The farmer follows them calling their names to stop them from chasing people on the road. They will not bite but come really close, barking with foam in their mouths. They will attack if attacked. If two dogs bite the same target they can drag this creature prone for free, each turn afterwards they can drag the creature away up to 10 ft. If the dogs are killed the farmer will call the party names and murderers for killing his dogs and he will cry with their corpses.

Fated Painter

Meet Andreas du Vavier an **artisan**, a painter. He is painting the local scenery and he seems to do a pretty good job, a scruffy dog lays lazy at his feet. For 35 gold pieces he will make a portrait of a PC, this will take 6 hours and the PC may choose one object to be depicted, a pose, and one fictional thing to change from reality. This painter is talented and supported by *The Fates*, as a cruel cosmic twist of fate it is now up to the DM to make a reality of this painting 3 times, but in twisted ways.

Fluff Ambush

A tree has fallen over the road and blocks passage. Either you have to find a way around or get it out of the way. The only ambush here is your party moving in on the disgruntled **squirrel** that had a nest in the dead trunk.

Fortune Teller

They meet Madame Murene, a wildly dressed travelling fortune teller (**sorceress**), she is generally in a good mood and will give one telling for free, any other telling costs 10 gold pieces. She will grab the hand and the side of the head of the one she is going to tell the future from, magical detection will actually tell you there is divine magic involved and she will say; *''I see a Child in your future.*". If anyone is rude or makes her out to be a charlatan of sorts she will ignore it but halfway through an interaction her eyes will turn back in her head and she will speak in a deep voice addressing the rude PC *''I see a fiery death in your future!*" before snapping back into reality, those that check might make this out to be all a show. However, she will shake his/her hand to apologise for her actions and actually curse the touched person. Upon departure she will bestow inspiration on all of them. Curse: All saves involving fire are made at disadvantage, and somewhere deep in all fires he/she might see the face of Madame Murene.

Froglegs at Breakfast

The **giant frogs** here are obnoxious at night. Their croaking prevents anyone from sleeping that does not make a hard wisdom save, gaining them exhaustion for not sleeping. Killing at least half a dozen will shut them up for a bit and gets you advantage on your save to fall asleep. In the morning 2d4 +1 will hop into camp in search for food, they are initially not hostile but will rummage through their stuff and are hard to chase away.

Gossiper

A traveling minstrel (**bard**) has made himself comfortable at the road side at a crossroad. For a silver piece he will tell a PC a tidbit of information that might interest them. He will produce some information about the road ahead or about the region that might help the PCs, afterwards he demands to be paid a silver by all PCs as they all listened. If they don't pay he will be disgruntled and call them cheap under his breath, he will ignore them like a 6-year-old girl unless he is payed the full amount. If he is paid he will give 1d4 + 1 rumours for free, at least one of which is a straight out lie and the others must be true.

Greasy Situation

A screaming horse can be heard up ahead as well as the roaring of something big and wild. A wounded **horse** is stuck in the harness of its overturned cart kicking and screaming in panic and pain. A man hides under the cart as the **owlbear** that attacked them is fending off an opportunistic pack (2d4 + 2) of **worgs**, apparently you weren't the only one attracted by the loud noise. They are currently busy ripping off fur and feathers from each other but sooner rather than later one of the two parties will give up and the winner will finish his price. The peddler was transporting pots of grease from the country side to the city as winter preserve, his product is smeared all over the road and complicates the fight as everything is slippery.

Hamlet of the Lost

You come across an eerie quiet hamlet, over a dozen humanoid corpses are rather gruesomely displayed on stakes near the edge. Several **ghost**(ly) figures are gathered around an old tree in the middle of the hamlet, they are non-hostile and will attempt to warn the party about the 3d4 +10 **hobgoblins** with spears hidden within the ruins and remaining houses. The ghosts are bound by some evil magical symbol painted on the tree, which, if destroyed, will allow the ghosts to fight side-by-side with the party against their ambushers.

Hangman

The ruins of a small fortress lay on a small hill. A history check might reveal it once was an outskirt guard post meant to protect this road. At dusk, a **ghost** appears but it seems harmless, it is pacing in a small part of the ruins and mumbling to himself, he can not be interacted with in any meaningful sense. An hour before midnight he sinks on his knees and seems to be praying and wailing. At 10 to twelve he will walk into the former courtyard, climb imaginary stairs, and at 12 precisely he seems to drop flailing as he hangs by an invisible noose. All the PCs will make wisdom saves or will feel a noose around their neck that is not there and they will start suffocating where they stand or sleep. PCs can be saved by a wisdom save every round or by dragging themselves out of the ruins. Six rounds later the ghost hangs limp for the remainder of the night and the struggle stops, at dawn he disappears.

Harpy Song

An alluring song comes from somewhere up ahead. Coming closer you can see a beautiful woman sitting on a large stone. This is when the first wisdom save needs to be made as this is a **harpy**. When most of the players move into the small clearing the chaos

starts as 4 of her sisters dive-bomb from the sky. Fly-by attacks are their go-to move, attacking only those that are in the open and don't have cover. When they lose half their hit points they fall from the sky, if two are taken out and they are not winning they will fly away.

High as the Sky

An older halfling and a younger gnome (**commoners**) sit on the side of the road, they are giggling while they are smoking something from a broad pipe. They seem to be quite out of it and giggle about the PCs that come past. If any of the party have any form of illusionary/glamour magic they will see right through it and comment on it inappropriately. The older halfling will offer the party to buy some while the younger gnome shushes him while giggling, for 5 gold pieces they get a dose of *willoweed*. Smoking a dose of willoweed (takes two minutes) will get you advantage on seeing through illusions and you don't need to be aware of any effect to receive a roll for it. It also makes you giggle and feel totally safe regardless of attacks or other hostile actions around you for 10 minutes.

Hungry Fog

A huge fogbank rolls in consuming the landscape around you. The fog seems to contain humanoid figures that pop up in the corner of your eyes. Sometimes you are attacked (**hungry fog** or **air elemental** stats), and the only way to prevent it is by keeping out of the mist. Creative solutions to locally get rid of the mist are essential for survival.

Innocent Lies

You meet a farmer with his daughter on the road, they pull a stubborn donkey on a leash with some trade wares. Disregarding his warnings about staying away from strangers the girl skips over to the party and holds her hand up with a wooden ring in it. She tells them they look like smart *''magic knowin folk''*, and she asks them about this ring she found next to the road as her father comes over to whisk her away. The ring actually detects as magic (*Magic Aura* spell). It is a scam to sell wooden rings as magical to gullible strangers, the girl has some magical talent. She will only part with her "special" ring for 2 gold pieces, it is how they keep afloat in hard times.

Leery Lycanthrope

Near nightfall a rough and wild looking woman will approach the campsite and asks if she can share the fire. She will offer to share three hunted rabbits with the party in order to secure a place for the night, however, if she sees any holy symbols or signs of people believing in higher powers she will leave without a word and will be swallowed by the darkness. Although she carries a bow and has some trapping gear only a closer eye on the rabbits will give the party a clue that there is a **werewolf** in their midst, as these rabbits bear no marks of arrows or trapping wire. She has no intention of revealing herself or doing the party any harm and simply seeks some human contact that she has been missing since she wounded up with the curse.

Look the Sculptor in the Face

A carriage lays sideways halfway blocking the road. It appears mostly intact and seems to have been transporting statues that broke when it tumbled. You can find part of a

foot and a forearm with a hand attached, the rest is scattered over the road. If you open the carriage, or look through the hole near the bottom, you are looking two **basilisks** straight in the eyes.

Love Never Dies

A set of relatively fresh graves, a simple message scratched in a stick says "In memory of Elean and Roberd". If it is night an encounter will take place with two **wraiths** attempting to steal their bodies and be together again.

Magistrates

You meet **cleric** Mindein (level 5-8) and his **paladin** guard and companion Ornwend (level 7-11). They belong to the church of justice and are travelling magistrates. Mindein dictates the law and Ornwend passes the sentence. When meeting the party Mindein will cast zone of truth and demands each to tell the crimes the others have committed, which he will notarise in his huge Book of Law. Minor offenses they will led slide as this is a harsh world, but capital offenses such as murder of innocent NPCs are not. If the party is significantly lower level they will demand they surrender themselves and throw chains on the dusty road in front of them. If they will be a challenge, Ornwend will be hostile towards them. If they are severely outclassed they will let them pass and later send back a squad to look for them. Murder of a magistrate is met with deadly force and a squad of 5 paladins and 2 clerics to investigate and hunt down the perpetrators, or post wanted posters in bigger cities with a small reward for their arrest if they fled.

Moonshine Hideout

There is smoke coming from somewhere out in the wilderness. When you go near, the smoke stops but with a successful survival check you can locate a still slightly smoking tree trunk. A successful wisdom check however might reveal it to be a hidden chimney. A secret entrance to an underground lair of illegal brewers is hidden nearby under a large rock that can be pivoted sideways. The moonshiners produce something that is nearly toxic called *Dova* made with some weird herb. It is strong enough to burn a hole in a normal human's stomach (as if drinking acid) and is specifically made for dwarves. They say one cup can get a dwarf drunker than a halfling in a keg. The three **alchemist** brothers will protect their turf at all costs.

Mudfest

A mudslide destroyed most of the road ahead and turned it into a slippery mess, crossing it might not be as easy as it seems. Possibly some **mud elementals** (modified water elementals) around. Some parts have quicksand properties that are difficult to escape alone.

Murders

A huge (2d4 +2 swarms) **murder of crows** is collecting over the course of 1d4 + 2 hours, they shadow the party in the trees. Anything mundane short of fire will not scare them away and upon dusk they attack in a cacophony of screams and wings.

Noble Bastardry

You come across two young men, one of which in noble attire and the other is rather clumsily holding a rapier that is too expensive. The noble (**duelist**) is exercising his right

to call a duel, this peasant didn't look where he walked and spooked his horse. The peasant is clearly out of his debt but does what he is told as he fears for his daughter's life (who is crying at the side of the road begging them to stop), he will most definitely be killed if this duel takes place. If the party interferes the noble will size them up and offer them a gold piece each to get out of his way and keep their heads when his father hears of their interference, in all senses this guy is a prick, but a noble one. If met with hostility the young noble will bravely fight but upon losing (or dying) he or his father himself will make it a personal mission to ruin this party.

Noosed

You pass by three corpses that hang from a nearby tree. A small carving in common in the tree trunk marks them as thieves. Getting any closer will let this possessed tree come alive as a **hangmanstree**.

Ogre and the Babe

You stumble upon a gruesome sight. An overturned car is wedged between two trees, from the horse that pulled it only guts and bloody reigns are left, the male driver is speared through by a heavy branch a few meters earlier. A huge trail of blood leads into the surrounding environment, eventually leading to an **ogre**. The whole road is paved with broken containers and other scattered cargo leading back about 150 meters, halfway there is a corpse of a woman. She is all curled up and bloody but she managed to protect a small bundle with a tiny baby in her arms, it is still alive.

Ogre Scent

They run into a hunting trip of an **ogre**, they spot him a way off as he is setting up camp. There are 3 humanoids with him, two of which are halflings. The humanoids are bound and gagged and dinner, after the ogre gets the fire going he will make a human barbeque from one of the victims. The ogre has 5 large **greyhounds** with him that roam the area and might surprise the surprise attackers.

Old Mill

An old mill stands on the side of the road. The boards creaks, the door only partly opens, and some beams are on the point of collapsing but there are strange lights inside. The whole interior is a hazard and inhabited by a **violet fungus** as well as two **will'o'wisps** that lure the PCs in. As soon as the violet fungus attacks the structure of the whole mill starts to tremble, 1d4 rounds later the mill will collapse or earlier if excessive force is used against the structure. The wisps will attempt to cover the door so they are unable to leave the mill. The collapse deals 8d6 damage, half of which is non-lethal and throws everyone prone, and those that fail a dexterity or strength saving throw are considered pinned.

One Head Short

A razor sharp thin wire is tied on neck-height of a medium sized rider/creature across the road. Only a high perception check might result in seeing a glimmer in the air. If not spotted the first person is subject to a coup de grace attack causing 11 slashing damage + 3d4 bleeding damage each turn until healed without a save. The next two get a reflex

save to avoid the same fate (11 slashing damage and 1d4 bleed, half damage without any bleed for a save). Directly afterwards they are set upon by three **highwaymen**.

One Trick Alchemist

A female dwarf walks her own small cart along the road. She is called Buggles and she is an **alchemist** and "*'brews a bit of ev'rythin*". She sells everything liquid from acid to ale, from alchemist fire to potions of healing. She will sell them only in threes, and they have to be different. Actually, what she sells is the only thing she can make; *potion of imagination*. She developed a method to incorporate a magical potential in a liquid that is released with consumption, the effects are based on what the target believes it is (placebo), for any other it is just coloured water in a bottle. The magic is not perfect and she can only create enough potential for minor potions.

Pale Mornings

One random PC wakes up with a **giant tick** attached to their neck. He/she looks very pale and takes 1d4 +1 CON damage before the sleeper wakes up. Saves need to be made for 2 random **diseases**.

Pilgrimage

A group of simply dressed peasants are led by a dwarf named Elfric in garb that marks him is a **cleric** of the god(ess) of travel/cities. They were tasked to start a pilgrimage to a new holy place and start a community out there. The party is welcome to travel with them as long as they like. These pilgrims travel 12 hours a day but do not get exhausted and the same goes for the party if they travel along, this gets them forward at a steady pace. If the party departs Elfric will bless them, making them immune to exhaustion for a day.

Poaching

There is roaring and thrashing from somewhere off-road. A wounded **griffon** (or wyvern) is trapped in some poachers' device and her left wing is damaged by some sort of bear claw device connected to a chain. The chain is locked and hammered into a tree stump, next to it lays the carcass of a goat that was probably used to lure her here. The creature is very wary and will attack any humanoid on sight if it weren't for her chain radius of 40 ft. Freeing her is not easy as she distrusts everything around her now. This is reinforced the moment someone tries to remove the chain as arrows fly from the shrubbery and the **poachers** return for their trophy, this turns the beast hostile again.

Predator and Prey

A moderate perception check spots over a dozen **giant centipedes** curled around trees, half hidden under leaves, and crawled around rocks, their antennae tasting the air around them. They are waiting for new prey. A skill challenge involving stealth and creative thinking is needed to avoid the 3d4 +9 giant centipedes (groups of 4 in initiative, half of them arrive in the second round) to crawl from the woodworks and dive upon their fresh diner.

Prison Transport

You are passed by a huge caged cart accompanied by 8 **soldiers** and their captain. Captain Rosh is transporting 5 prisoners (**commoners**) to the city (one of the prisoners

might be a NPC the party knows!). About 2 minutes after they pass you a group of 5 riders (**bandits**) in leather with scarves around their faces pass you, they are loading crossbows and reading swords. They aim to kill one of the prisoners so he is unable to talk or be tortured for information, he is some runner for some criminal organization.

Professional Banditry

Ambush by 6 **bandits** and their **barbarian goliath** companion. They use the strength and mass of the goliath to split the party up by letting him jump in the middle and start smashing around wildly (can attack all creatures in its range that are surprised with a disadvantage, functions more to scare than be effective). The rest of the bandits will not reveal themselves in the first surprise round, rather they will wait for party to split and 4 of them will run for the same PC (surprising him/her) while the other two will aid the goliath. Their whole strategy is based on them grabbing a weaker/important member of the group and get him/her pinned down so they can force the party to stop fighting or they slit the throat (coup de grace mechanic) of this creature. They will demand surrender by throwing all their weapons, food, and valuables on a pile. They will take all the food and gold, and each ambusher may pick a weapon in return for leaving his own behind (they have no magical knowledge, and will act accordingly) These are professionals and the whole affair is very civilised.

Punishment and the Crime

A man hangs from his arms from a large tree, the chains with which he is suspended seem sturdy and a small sign hangs from his neck; "Sentenced to die for his crimes, any that support him will suffer the same fate.". Three **soldiers** are dragging a screaming woman to the same tree, you see she dropped some sort of knife and is pleading for help. She is the daughter of the chained half-dead man and came to finish his suffering but couldn't, and when the soldiers saw her, they grabbed her and are planning to hang her next to her father for interfering.

River Spring

Just of the road there is a short trail to a small pond. It is the spring of a rather large river downstream, a water spirit (**marid/nereid**) lives here. She is very picky about who and what may take water from her spring. You must be clean, you must be nice, and you must not stare at her delicate parts. Those that bring her suitable favours she will fill their water skin personally and turn it into a potion of (minor) healing. If any hostilities break out she will curse the perpetrators with thirst, water will turn to dust upon touching their lips, and flee through the spring.

Runaway Steed

A **noble steed** comes galloping over the road, the rider is nowhere to be seen. A skillchallenge is needed to stop this beast from running on and calming it down (3 successes before 2 fails). Saddlebags with a crest imbedded on them are filled with paper documents, a huge pouch of silver (425 sp), and some travelling rations. The saddle is also engraved and probably worth a pretty penny. The horse was stolen from an estate and the rider was thrown off and killed by the horse. Everyone in the region would recognise the crest.

Shadowed

The party may notice they "caught" something. An extra **shadow** on the road, a twisting shape in the firelight. It might not even be hostile at first, it will just need what it takes, and every night it will visit a party member and drains them for 1 strength point. It wants to reach a town or city, only then will it attempt to kill, as it now has a way to flee to others.

Shame Parade

A group of **kids** follows you from the hamlet you just passed by. They are shooting berries at the party using improvised blowpipes (+7 to hit, 1 bludgeoning damage) and throwing stones (+4 to hit, 1d4 -1 damage). They have set some weird traps in the surrounding forest to get away when followed (sweeping branch dexterity save, which cuts movement for that round on a success and deals 1d4 slashing damage on a fail).

Shot the Messenger

They find a messenger with an arrow through her leg. The message is important and the letter needs to be delivered as soon as possible, and she is unable to. She will ask someone to take that responsibility and deputises them by handing them a small silver feather (the sign of the messenger guild). They get 1d4 +1 day to locate the recipient of the letter (a **NPC known** by the PCs) and deliver it before they have to deliver it to a corpse as the target will have been murdered without getting that warning letter. They might be stalked by an **assassin** that wants to take that letter away as to help their partner get away with the murder of the target.

Shrine of Safe Travels

A small shrine to the **goddess of protection and travelers** stands at the roadside, a simple grey stone altar with a holy symbol carved into it. On top there are several items, a few silver coins in an ornate bowl, several candles, a ribbon tied to a wooden stick-figure, a bouquet of dried healing herbs and a healing potion hidden near the base. A worthy offering gains them advantage on the next throw, if they are in dire need they can take what they need from the shrine, taking something unnecessarily or desecrating the shrine will gain them 1d4 times disadvantage.

Silk Isn't No Game

A textile merchant is hoping to relocate to another city. He will sell all kinds of coats, masterwork backpacks, and even some fancy dresses. He will also sell expensive fabrics such as silk and satin from overseas, he even has 2 square meters of enchanted fabric, but that will cost. He is transporting illegal *silk worms* (reason he got chased out of the last city). He carries a rod of cold iron, as he and specifically his silk worms are hunted by *silkweavers* (2d4, **phase spiders** stats with damage reduction 3/cold iron).

Sinkhole Season

The road ahead is messed up and looks like it has been ploughed through several ways over. There is a nest of **ankheg** dug under the road, several chambers of which are directly under the road and function like sinkholes to drag creatures in. A creature falling in one of these chambers needs to make a dexterity save and on a fail is stuck

under the collapsed earth and needs to free him/herself first, otherwise he/she is just prone on the bottom of a 10ft pit/underground chamber.

Spirit of the Wild

A huge elk (**giant elk**) struts onto the road, if there is a druid or ranger in the party it will bow. A skilled hunter or opportunist might know a head of such a creature might fetch a really pretty penny. This is however a guardian of the region and will be defended by the forest if threatened (**assassin vines**, **dire bear**, *entangle* growth, a group of vicious **squirrels**). If spoken to with respect in sylvan it might grant safe passage through this region and a fortuitous road ahead, shaving some travel time off and the forest's aid in any further encounters in this region.

Spirited Away

You find a set of clothes on the road, next to a masterwork rapier, a small backpack with travelling supplies, a good knife, a skin full of good wine, and silver necklace with the name *igwine* etched into it. There is no sign of the wearer or what happened to him but the remnants of some arcane sigil in the road. A good 100 meters ahead there is another such sigil hidden below the dust of the road, this one is still active and the first creature in marching order with fey blood (such as elves) needs to make a high wisdom saving throw or be turned into a puff of smoke that vaguely resembles their form. The puff of smoke starts to drift on the wind deep into the wilderness if they cannot somehow prevent it from doing so. After an hour the spell will end, but if they couldn't stop him/her they will end up in the lair of a very old **night hag**.

Spooked

The horses spook from something (**worg** smell) and start galloping along the road. They need to be reined in as they flee into the surrounding environment. Each person on a horse needs to complete a skill challenge: 3 successes needed before 5 fails or the horse tosses them and runs, each fail causes some kind of distress/damage to the rider.

Stalked

You are being stalked by a large **pack of wolves**, they will keep their distance but will be present. They will follow the party for 1d4 days or until a weaker target makes itself aware. If at some point a party member will seclude him/herself they will attack.

Standoff

When you visit a roadside inn you walk into a showdown between 2 **bounty hunters** and their quarry. The whole inn is tossed and tables lay on their sides, close to the door a wounded (leg) bounty hunter winds his crossbow to shoot from cover assisting his companion that is now being boxed in from all sides. The three remaining half-orc **marauders** are slowly flanking the bounty hunter that has sought cover behind a broken table, a fourth half-orc lays dead in the center of the room with a crossbow bolt in an eye socket. Regardless, the bounty hunters are clearly losing against their prey, but maybe the players can shift the tide while negotiating about a percentage of the cut.

Sticky Brandwick

You encounter a **traveling minstrel** named Brandwick, he is all about pursuing his personal dream of becoming a world-renowned bard. He will use all the magic in his

arsenal to become liked and loved and overstays all welcome. Upon meeting he will be jovial, cast friendship on a party member, charm another, will make up a song about the third, and gives a pouch with 10 gold to the most greedy looking PC. He will help in any way he can and will not take no for an answer but doesn't like to get his hands dirty. As the party soon will find out he is really hard to get rid of, and whether it is bad luck or not he will turn up randomly in the same tavern, brothel, mayor's house, or prisoners camp despite the best efforts of ridding themselves of him.

Stranger on the Road

A stranger on the road, her name is Brigitt and she is a tough cookie and plays a mean flute. She will tell horror stories about monsters that can change into men and ruin their lives, stories of someone she knew that was convicted of murder, something he didn't do but everyone saw him do it. She is fleeing from her former life and she might let it slip that this man was her brother. Upon departure she will ask the party for a bit of blessing on the road and gives one of the PCs her flute, the PC may make a very difficult perception check to see her eyes have changed colour to match his. The name engraved on the flute is "*Lariander*". She is the **doppelganger** from her stories and will now attempt to ruin the life of the PC she gave the flute to by assuming his appearance and going on a targeted crime-spree.

Svendor the Magnificent

A small carriage stands near a fork in the road, huge curly letters on the side state "*Svendor the Magnificent*" and in smaller letters "*Accomplished member of the Travelling Wizard Guild.*". The backside of the carriage opens up into a counter which is manned by a lanky half elf carefully painting something on a piece of parchment and dusting it with some colourless powder. He can sell the party any number of level 1 and several level 2 magic scrolls which he fetches from the back for the base price minus 5 gold pieces. Hostile actions or attempts at robbery will end badly as the whole carriage vanishes from this plane into a pocket dimension, all creatures caught in the smoke this produces (30 ft radius) will receive a *magic mark* on their face making them recognisable by any wizard or well-informed citizen.

Tax Collector

Tax collectors also make their rounds up here, you meet one and his entourage of 6 duke **soldiers**. The collectors' chest is open and he is standing around his grinning comrades. The story writes itself. When it comes to it he will offer the party 50 gold pieces to keep their mouth shut.

The "Wine" Job

You hear the sound of fighting and the whinnying of horses. A heavy cart pulled by two horses appears to have suffered a broken axle, one of the barrels it was transporting has rolled off and broke. A large wriggling mass of goo is spreading through the wreckage. This (black) **ooze** is currently consuming one of the guards present, three other guards are attempting to control the situation and a fourth is laying on the ground under the wreckage of the barrel with crushed legs afraid for his life as the ooze slowly moves closer. You see a man riding a horse fleeing the scene at high speed, this is the merchant who owns these barrels of "wine".

The Brains and the Prophecy

Meet Qimlock, a gnome hedge **wizard**, and Tere, a patient goliath warrior (**monk**). Tere has received a vision from the elder of her tribe, which led her to Qimlock, a young gnome bound to be great. Tere is there to make sure this happens and to keep convincing Qimlock that he is destined to do something great in the future, something to be sung about in taverns around the country decades after the fact. She knows this is true. Qimlock himself is young and knows he is no match for anything, but he is eager to improve himself and wants to trade spells with other spellcasters in the party. A quick look at his spellbook will let you know that this kid is beyond brilliant and he in fact invented several spells himself, for example; Level 1 *Umbrella*, prevents any diminutive water-based fluid from entering a 20 ft static sphere.

The Long Game

A single **goblin** stands in the road, her name is Bait and she demands 20 gold pieces for passage. A moderate perception check will show the presence of 6 others in the bushes in cover. Upon hostile action one of the goblins in the bushes will cast *entangle* and all goblins will bolt. Later that night the goblins will return in force with advantage on their stealth checks to approach the camp as they carry a stone with them on which *silence* is cast. The guard may notice something being tossed in camp; the stone in the fire. The resulting silence will prevent the guard from screaming out and waking the others as 10 goblins jump them. Five will go for all the lose equipment in camp and bail with it, the others will slit PCs throats (coup de grace if they sleep) and attempt to kill them quickly in the silence bubble. Before the players stand up, the caster goblin will cast entangle (disadvantage for prone creatures) and all goblins split up and retreat.

The Man and the Bear

A huge brown **bear** lays groaning at the side of the road. When you get closer you see there is a wounded and unconscious man laying under one of its huge paws dressed in lively garb, three other men colour the road with their own entrails. The bear (Pimpel) wears a bright collar now stained red, the bear is gravely wounded but will still protect his master (Pip) until it dies. What transpired basically writes itself, the thing is that Pip remembers 4 **soldiers** being there.

The Spear in Amber

The trunk of an ancient tree patiently awaits at the side of the road. A large spear is jammed into the centre of the trunk and is encased in a soft glowing amber. Edged in the wood around the spear tip are the words *''She who knows my name may wield me once again.*" in sylvan. While druidcraft seems to do something, the tree seems to resist magic. Any rough violence will draw out 4 **dryads** from the surroundings to protect the ancient sight.

The Unburied

You wander upon two corpses slain in the middle of the road. Both appear to be simple travelers and their backpacks and other valuables appear to be missing. They have been dead for several days. Any that approach the corpses within 5ft will need to throw constitution saves later that day at camp for 1d2 random **diseases**.

The White Fox

A white fox is spotted twice over the course of an hour. An appropriate check might reveal it to be a magical beast of sorts. If followed it will bring the party to a sacred grove filled with clarity, peace and abundant flora. Several bushes with goodberries grow in the shade of a large white willow. Staying for a long rest here will shed them of 1d4 negative effects they currently experience as well as give them 5 temporary hitpoints. If this grove is desecrated in any way the fox will turn into a giant white **dire bear** with damage reduction 14/evil and chase them out.

Thirst for Kindness

A young girl named Amanda sits on the road, she has clearly been crying and looks up hopefully but when she sees the party she will start sobbing again. She lost her mom and her dad who are travelling to the big city. She will follow the most non-cuddly character around, and generally will attempt to join the party. That night she will cuddle up to whomever allows it as she is cold and alone. During the night she will bite and drain her cuddle partner to an inch of his/her life (accepting the cuddling equals failing her charm), she is a 131-year-old **vampire** and this is her scam. She will disappear before morning, if spotted she will say she needs to pee or something.

Tit for Tat

A tinkerer (**commoner**) named Himmenwell with a bag full of supplies has stumbled and wrecked his ankle. He will offer a strong piece of hempen rope, a bag of caltrops, and a pouch with 3d12 mysterious seeds if they can get him to the nearest town.

Traffic Hours

A nearly endless line of **giant ants** crosses the road on three places, they are busy transporting stones, pieces of carcasses, and other organic material. Several **giant soldier ants** patrol amongst the workers and will attack when their trial is approached within 10 ft. If a fight ensues every round 2d4 +2 more soldier ants show up. After 4 rounds the normal ants start to dissolve their lines and will gang up with 2d10 each round.

Troll-ish

You meet Domp the **troll** just while he is busy removing a small tree from the road. He is friendly but his common is not very good and he will stereotype all travelers. All with metal armour are knights, all with bows are either hunters if human or elves if not human, everything in robes is a wizard. He is fascinated by magic and will take that as proper toll for his maintenance of this road, otherwise he will ask for something small and useful and he will not take coins.

Troupe

A troupe of performers and travelers, a small circus of sorts. The Ringmaster is a shoddy figure with a broken top hat and a golden tooth, and a generally jolly fellow named Bunner. Together with a beautiful harp player with a magical voice (Miss Mys), a very supple acrobat and his brother a juggler (Han and Gus), a knife-throwing dwarf (Muckel), and an old magical storyteller (Maya) that can dazzle and fascinate even the most hardy soul, they form a Troupe. They travel under the protection of the deity of travelers and

they are perfectly hospitable and enjoy the company of strangers. All travel with them is smooth and without incident.

Unfaithful Stories

You stumble upon an abandoned camp next to a large boulder, a smothered campfire and a still rolled sleeping bag lay next to it. Those that investigate might find the ashes still slightly warm and wet from a recent drowning and the grass is indented around the place as if someone was present recently. No trails leave the camp though. *Detect magic* might reveal that there is something off with the boulder but that it is not alive. Patience might be rewarded by a scrawny figure emerging magically from the boulder where he attempted to hide. His name is Munchkin Goldtongue, he is a **bard** and he is wanted in the next town over by the constable as he slept with the constable's wife, daughter, and mistress.

Untouched

You meet an elf on a bridge, he is contemplating and meditating with the calm water. He is a **high level monk** (+11 on all checks and saves) that perfects his senses (among them tremorsense) and is training to be untouchable. He will offer 10 gold pieces for any person that can "lay a finger on him". He will use non-lethal damage to swat away attacks and ready actions to evade attacks and evade teleport tricks (dexterity save in addition to AC). He will use tremorsense against invisible opponents and other sneakiness. Creativity is key.

Violet Creepers

The plants in this clearing that the road runs through are not what they seem. The plants produce some sort of volatile chemical that requires a moderate wisdom save or will put targets to sleep for 1d4 hours. Unconscious creatures are detected and pulled of the road by vines (**assassins vine**) and are slowly strangled over the course of minutes and are swallowed whole by the shrubbery. If any AoE attacks are used that produce damage the whole shrubbery shrivels up and forms a **shambling mound** that carries unconscious creatures as humanoid shields.

Wandering Flora

The road ahead is overrun with 2d4 **yellow musk zombies,** you can see them stumbling about. If one is attacked 3d4 +4 start to stumble from the woods one by one from both sides. The **yellow musk creeper** these belong to will only emerge when a player is downed or isolated from the group.

Washed Away

A deep creek splits the road in two, the wooden beams that once formed a bridge have been washed away in a recent storm. Several locals on the other side of the creek are also searching for a solution to cross with their cart. The current is strong and it is too deep to cross with a horse but the stream is only 40 ft wide.

Whispering Stones

The roads wind between a series of small hills. Weirdly shaped old black stones cover their surfaces. The winds play tricks on you here and the voices you hear may not be as solid as you might think. It is a mysterious place. Each PC might receive 1 or 2 personal

whispers, something that might or might not be true but something only the world could know (something about family being alive, or tribes being hunted and killed). The spirits here represent something ancient and they are mirrors of one's soul, if a character is vengeful the spirits will mirror this in their whispers.

Whistle Twice

A creature with clear fey ancestry sits on the side of the road on a stone, he will waive the party over. He is eating a piece of fruit and asks them if they want to pass safely, because he knows how. He will sell them the answer for 3 good gifts. If they do give him three good gifts he will learn them a whistle that they have to perform well when they see an old oak tree. If they don't whistle at the oak two arrows fly from the side of the road (+8 to hit, 1d6 + 3 piercing damage), targets are those not wearing armour. The oak tree houses a dryad and is protected by some fey, the first fey is just scamming travelers for gifts.

Wrong Turn

The road bends off to the left. A trained eye or a detailed map would reveal the overgrown road straight ahead, covered in hastily grown shrubs and small trees. Part of this is forest is craft and part (the larger trees) are illusions. The new road leads to a small grove with three small houses of loggers with a tiny farm. Three families live there, the wives of which are all **hags**, the husbands are brainwashed **commoners**, one of the daughters is quite the powerful **witch** in training. The hags need fresh blood and the trick with the road is their way to get victims.

Wrong Way Around

A small caravan of peasants and traders pass you by, the oxen of their last cart is being obnoxious, delaying their travel. They greet you and a woman on the second cart will ask if you want to buy some stuff, particularly the wine is good this year. It takes a proper sense motive or perception check to notice something is up, the peasants (8 **bandits** + 2 **warlocks**) are wearing leather under their clothes and they seem rather nervous and on edge. A soon as they approach the woman on the cart the first and the third cart will be pulled sideways to block the road and box them in, weapons appear from under bushels and canvas. The woman will demand surrender of their gold and valuables and drop their weapons to the ground (using suggestion to do it as she is a **warlock**) if they want to live another hour.

Young Fun

Near a small hamlet three kids are playing next to the road. Two are standing under a large oak while the third is climbing it to reach a nest of eggs. It seems dangerous as the nest is quite high up, but the kid is determined. Interference is an option and several scenarios might occur; He climbs too far up in the thin branches and will fall, he climbs up but doesn't dare to come back down, the couple of **crows** of whom the nest is come back and will attack him defending the nest. If something bad is prevented their parents will offer free dinner, a place to sleep warm, and a blueberry pie for on the road.