



A short module for 3-6 adventurers of level 1

Samhain Festival at Easthome



a Tutorial Adventure in the World of the Five Gods

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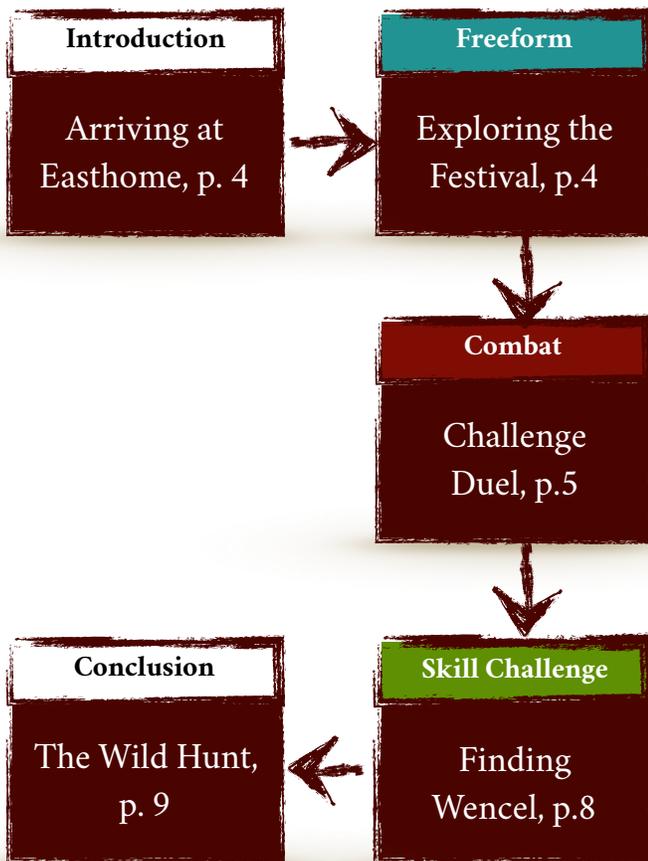
Overview

This module is designed to introduce players to roleplaying in general and give a new group or GM a chance to work together on a simple adventure. The module is set in within a single day in the capital city of a the a high magic nation. It contains role-playing, a combat, and skill challenges in a straightforward, linear plot.

Summary

The PCs have traveled Easthome, the capital city of a high magic nation, to enjoy the Samhain festival. They take in the atmosphere of the festival, enjoying the performers, haggling with the merchants, participating in a little competition. When challenged by another party to a friendly duel, they rise to the occasion. But when their sponsoring lord says that a member of his entourage is missing, they need to find him quickly and get him ready to ride in the Wild Hunt at the end of the festival or bad fortune and dishonor could plague his clan.

Structure



Adventure Hooks

The PCs need to be in the entourage of the clan lord, although they don't all need to have the same reason to be in the entourage. Some reasons they might be in the entourage include the following.

- The PC is a member of the clan, and so is a soldier or crafter or mage or other specialist for the clan lord.
- The PC is studying or visiting with a member of the clan lords court, such as his priest, smith, bard, etc.
- The PC is a visitor from another land or clan and is welcomed by the clan lord for a traditional three days guesting in exchange for news from afar.
- The PC is part of an envoy from another land or clan and is staying with the Lord's court to work out a treaty, negotiate an agreement or to cement an alliance.
- The PC is a spy or conman, trying to ingratiate him or herself on the clan lord or someone else in the inner court.

- The PCs are ringers, an excellent fighting team recruited by Waldemar because this year he wants to win the team fighting competition in the festival (if this is the case, the team fighting competition can replace the honor duel).

Whatever the reason, Lord Waldemar is a powerful and astute man that lives in a culture that esteems generosity. He'll welcome in the PCs and recognize their usefulness, cultivating their goodwill and gratitude so that he can best use them later.



Arriving at Easthome

Today is a gloriously crisp fall morning, and the first day of the Festival of Samhain. You travel with the Horseriver clan entourage and some of their guests along the Southwitch way road, a broad, cobbled and paved highway wide enough to fit six men across on horseback.

The clan chief, Lord Waldemar, leads the caravan as you ride into Easthome. You'll be sharing a room in his massive townhome with some other guests, but since space is at a premium during the festival, you know you're lucky to at least have a guaranteed bed. You heard that last year, more than one duel was fought over the right to bed down in a public room of an inn.

As you enter his courtyard and dismount from the horses and wagons, the Lord turns and gathers the attention of the Horseriver entourage.

Waldemar: "I bid you all welcome to Easthome. We've arrived in good time, so you should have the rest of the day to get settled.

*"Horserivers, we'll meet here tomorrow at dawn to take part in the cavalcade. I **trust** you will all be prompt, sober, and prepared to best represent the clan. Wear your formal tabards.*

"And my guests. Please enjoy your time here. I'll be leaving for the festival grounds in an hour and would be glad for the chance to show you around.

"Until then, I'll leave you in the capable hands of my steward, Eileen. "

He and a few high clan kin continue onto the family wing of the home while Eileen steps forward and organizes everyone to their rooms to get unpacked and settled in.

Adapting to your Setting

- This adventure uses Irish and Germanic personal names with English place names. Feel free to change the names and descriptions of the characters and places to better suit your setting.
- This adventure also assumes that the adventurers are in the train of a clan lord at a festival. If your setting doesn't have clans or lords (especially if it's democratic), then perhaps Waldemar can be replaced by a rich merchant or patron of the arts or other high-status individual who might be inclined to cultivate a variety of people who are beholden to him or her.
- To customize the speech, Waldemar can specifically refer to one of the Adventure Hook before he leaves the party with Eileen. For example, if the PCs are an envoy, he might say "I look forward to speaking with you later about that treaty."

Freeform: The party can ask Eileen some questions, grab some food, socialize with each other, or unpack before heading out.



Exploring the Festival

To get to the fairgrounds, you cross the potter's lane bridge and take a left onto Southwitch. The fairgrounds are easy to find. Although the city teems with festival goers from every province in the country and beyond, everyone seems to be heading in the same direction, forming a living current of people. Long before you get to your destination, you're surrounded by performers and drunken celebrants and eager tradesmen. The edge of the fairground proper is marked with a row of carved poles wrapped in long streamers in orange and brown. Everyone from buskers to merchants to mercenary troupe recruiters has put up a stall or blanket on the fairgrounds and is vying for attention.

Freeform: The party can listen to music, talk to other festival goers, or buy a snack or trinket.

Skill Checks

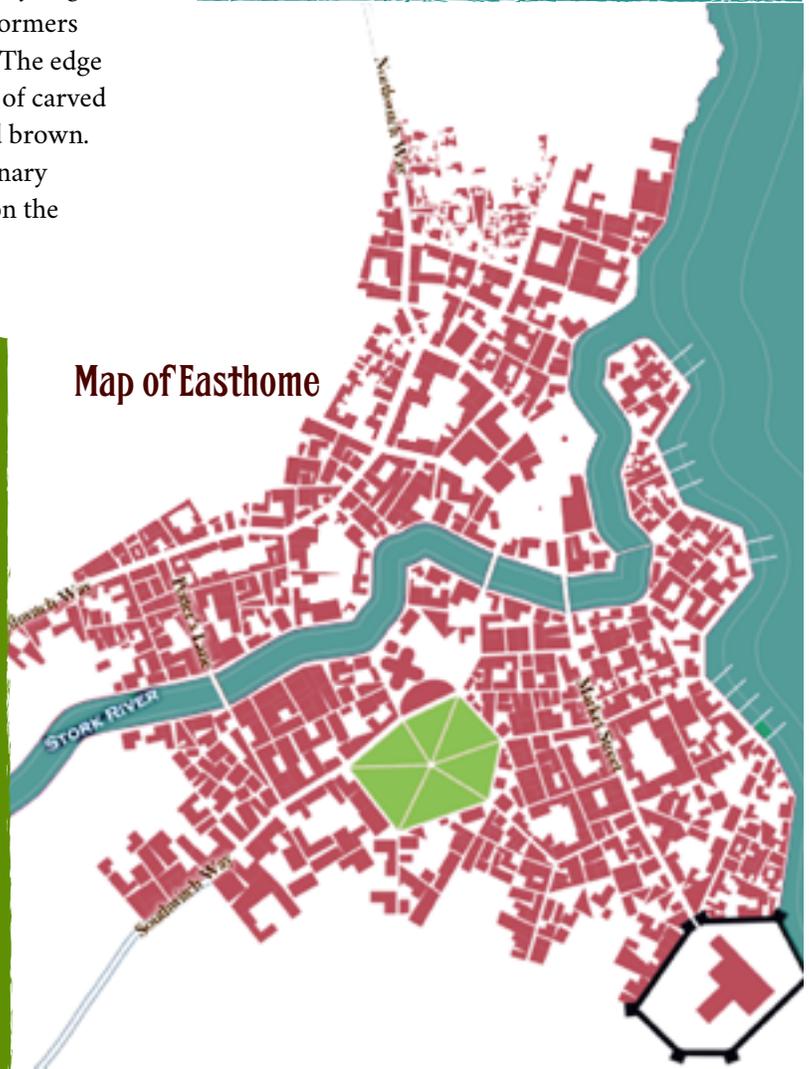
The party can try their luck at some of the impromptu sport competitions such as...

- Archery (athletics+coordination)
- Climbing (athletics+coordination)
- Darts (athletics+craft)
- Foot Racing (athletics+coordination)
- Horse riding (athletics+nature)
- Lumberjacking (athletics+nature)
- Weightlifting (athletics+discipline)
- Wrestling (athletics+culture)

Check Description

< 22	Laughably bad performance
22-30	Respectable performance
30-38	Good showing. Earns you a silver piece.
38+	Exceptional performance. People talk about it. Earns you a gold piece.

Map of Easthome



Challenge Duel

While wandering around, you run into a group led by a very large, very fierce woman. She stops like she's seen a ghost and then points to Lorkan.

(Aisling): "It's him! It's him! It's the fish guy! It's all his fault I'm pregnant!"

And then she bursts into tears. The rest of her party stares at him in amazement. The big older guy in the lead smacks his hand against his forehead and briefly looks around like he wishes he could be magically transported to somewhere, anywhere else.

(Owein, sighing): "Well, hello. I'm Owein the Nose. I suppose you've met my wife Aisling." [awkward pause] "We've heard a lot about you."

(Aisling, crying): "It's his fault I tell you! I been farting for three weeks straight, and I can't get away from the horrible smell, and I'm tired and angry, and if I have to suffer, then he should too! Fish server person, whoever you are, I challenge you to an duel!"

(Owein): "Honey, your pregnant. I think it's making you a little irrational. I don't think dueling is going to make you feel better."

(Aisling): "Are you trying to tell me how I feel?"

(Owein): "No...no! I just meant...you see...[he turns to the party] Would you *please* be willing to have a bit brawl — nothing fatal! Loser buys a round of drinks? It would make my Aisling feel ever so much better."

If you have someone willing to play a guest NPC (not one of the players), Aisling is a great opportunity to come in and ham it up. If you can't get another person, consider mostly skipping Owein's part of the dialogue and just acting out Aisling acting irrationally belligerent and emotional.

If the PCs are reluctant to duel, the Aisling and her kids taunt them into agreeing. If they continue to hold back, Aisling attacks, and you should roll for initiative.

If the PCs win, the strangers are good sports about losing. The NPCs buy the PCs the round of ale and recount highlights of the battle, teasing each other as much as they did the PCs before the fight.

If the PCs lose, they're still good sports, but expect to receive their round of ale. If the PCs don't pay up, the NPCs eventually wander off, complaining about poor-spirited celebrants this year.

Did Lorkan really cause her pregnancy?

Canon says yes. About two month ago, he served a meal of fish to a large group of pilgrims at a shrine to a Goddess of fertility and motherhood, and he did it because her saint told him to. He didn't realize it at the time, but he was party to a miracle. All the women who ate his fish that meal got pregnant. Aisling's happy about it in general - she just though she was done with diapers 15 years ago.

Adapting to your Party & Setting

This scene assumes that Lorkan is one of the characters in your party. If not, make sure to include another character who could reasonably have been party to a miraculous feast of fish, or just have the NPCs be a group that wants to have a fun brawl and challenges or dares the PCs.

If your setting doesn't have duels, you can replace the scene with a different rationale for the combat. For example, the party could be set upon by thieves when they accidentally wander into (or were led to) a dark alley.

Or perhaps they happened upon evil doers attacking an innocent and tried to fight them off.

Or perhaps they enter a team fighting competition as part of the festival.



Descriptions

- **Owein:** Big burly man in his late thirties or early forties with a large crooked nose, blond hair and an aura of practical leadership about him
- **Aisling:** A large, fierce woman with bright red hair, dark circles under her eyes, and a wired, slightly frantic air.
- **Seamas:** A lean, dark-haired young man wearing a short sword and short bow. He looks quick and competent and watches the goings on like he's avidly watching a play
- **Lowrie:** A young woman with strawberry blonde hair that looks a bit like Owein around the eyes and needles the twins with sarcasm at every opportunity.
- **Rhys & Cai:** Twin young men, they are about 6 ½' tall with a shock of thick, red hair and the heavy musculature of their father.

Combat: The PCs enters combat mode by rolling initiative. The NPCs information is on the next two pages.

For added flavor, use pennies to represent bystanders and have them skirt around the edges of the duel at the end of each round, moving 3-4 spaces at a time. They can also occasionally yell encouragement or taunts at the PCs. The battlegrid is at the end of the module.

Cut these hexagons out and stick them on pennies so that can act as tokens.



Adapting to your Party

This adventure is made to accommodate up to 3-6 players

# Players	NPCs to use
3	Owein, Aisling, and Rhys
4	Like 3, but add Lowrie
5	Like 4, but add Cai

Aisling & Seamas are identical

Use the Center strip to track HP

Cai & Rhys are identical

Aisling (Skirmisher)

Seamas (Skirmisher)

Init 20 • Sp 6 • AC 16 • For 19 • Wil 12 • Ref 12

Skirmisher Tactics: Move at least 4 spaces from initial position to deal 2 extra damage on the next ranged attack.

Short Sword (Standard) Melee 1
20 vs AC • Hit: 1d3 + 2d2 damage.

Short Bow (Standard) Ranged 15/30
Effect: Move 2 spaces and don't provoke opportunity attacks
20 vs AC • Hit: 1d3 + 2d2 dam

Quick Reflexes (Immediate Reaction)
Trigger: You're missed by a melee attack
Effect: Shift 1 space

Lowrie (Controller)

Init 12 • Sp 5 • AC 16 • For 17 • Wil 15 • Ref 13

Hunter: +2 to damage vs prone, immobilized, slowed, or restrained enemies.

Short Sword (Standard) Melee 1
15 vs. AC • Hit: 1d3 + 2d2 damage.

Net (Standard) Creatures in Area burst 1 within 5
19 vs. Ref • Hit: Targets restrained (Save Ends).

Bolas (Minor) Ranged 5
19 vs. Ref • Hit: Target falls prone & can't stand up until end of their next turn.

Shadow Step (Immediate Reaction)
Trigger: Adjacent PC hits you
Effect: Teleport to hex adjacent to triggering PC

Seamas 26 HP

Aisling 26 HP

Rhys 31 HP

Cai 31 HP

Lowrie 25 HP

Owein 56 HP

Rhys (Brute)

Cai (Brute)

Init 16 • Sp 6 • AC 13 • For 12 • Wil 9 • Ref 9

Shieldbrother: Any PC that starts its turn flanked by Rhys and another NPC takes 2 damage.

Bone Spear (Standard) Melee 2
17 vs. AC • Hit: 1d3 + 2d2 damage.

Brutal Spear (Standard, Recharge 5) Melee 2
17 vs. AC • Hit: 3d4 damage.

Penetrating Spear (Standard, Recharge 5) Melee 2
Trigger: You must be bloodied
17 vs. AC • Hit: 2d4+1d3 dam, and PC gains vulnerable 2 all until end of their next turn.

Owein (Elite Soldier)

Init 0 • Sp 6 • AC 18 • For 16 • Wil 14 • Ref 12

2 Turns per round • +2 Save • 1AP

Defender's Aura (Aura 1)
Trigger: Adjacent PC's attack doesn't include you as a target • Effect: Triggering PC takes 2 dam.

Mace (Standard) Melee 1
19 vs. AC • Hit: 1d3 + 2d2 damage.

Bow (Standard) Ranged 15
19 vs. AC • Hit: 3d2 dam.

Drive Back (Standard, Recharge 4) Melee 1
19 vs. AC • Hit: 1d4 + 2d3 damage. Push target 1 space, then shift 1 into the space the target occupied.

Vengeance (Im Reaction, Recharge 5) Melee 1
Trigger: PC hits you
19 vs. AC • Hit: 1d4 + 2d3 damage. 1 ally in 5 spaces of you can move 5 and make an MBA vs the triggering PC as a free action.



Finding Wencel

After the melee, a young runner approaches Lord Waldemar, whispering a message in his ear. His face turns grim and for a few moments he looks lost in thought. Then Waldemar turns to you.

(Waldemar): "Apparently, a member of my entourage, Lord Wencel, is missing. Wencel is supposed to be among those who ride in the Wild Hunt at the end of the festivities. A clan skyseer, Anoura, has prophesied that he needs to ride in this hunt for the good of the clan. I'm going to go back to the manor and see if I can figure out where he went. I apologize for cutting short this outing. I'd account it a personal favor if you would search the fairgrounds just in case he's wandering here. And if you find him, please make sure he's ready to ride for this evening."

If questioned, Waldemar admits that Wencel is not known for his bravery, so he may be chickening out. Or an enemy of his or the clans may have heard of the prophecy and took the opportunity to sabotage the clans fortunes.

Skill Challenge 1: Find Wencel

Scour the fairgrounds and the city trying to find the missing lordling

Achieve 5 successes before 5 failures.

The allowed skills are:

- Analysis
- Culture
- Influence
- Insight
- Perception
- Stealth

Adapting to your Party

For this skill challenge, make the success and failure threshold numbers equal to the number of PCs in the party. For example, if you have six players instead of five, you would need six successes before six failures.

If the PCs succeed, they find him drinking in a the backroom of a tavern and can start for part 2 of the challenge with one free success.

If the PCs fail, go back to the townhouse. Waldemar has a lead that he may have gone out drinking. He hands them a list of taverns his people haven't checked yet. You find Wencel drunk in the tavern.

The mystery solved: Wencel had been having nightmares about participating in the Wild Hunt. He's convinced they're true divinations, but his descriptions of dreams where he's suddenly riding naked and being asked hard questions by a huntmaster that resembles his stern Aunt Hilda convince the party that he's having normal, non-supernatural anxiety. He'd bribed the innkeeper to keep quiet about his location while he tried to drink away his nerves.

Skill Challenge 2: Get him to the Shrine on time

Wencel is both nervous and drunk.

Convince him that he both can and must take part in the hunt and then get him sobered enough to do it.

The allowed skills are:

- Craft
- Culture
- Heal
- Influence
- History
- Religion

The Wild Hunt

The party brings Wencel to the shrine where the shamans consecrate all the potential hunters to the Wild Hunt. On the way back, they run into Lord Waldemar, who is much relieved to see his nephew ready to take his place among the hunters.

Freeform: The party can wait in line to visit the shrine or talk to Wencel or Waldemar. It is said that if you break a promise said to the shrine and sealed in blood, the while hunt will come for you at Samhain.

Afterwards, you can take part in the hunt or return to the townhouse with Waldemar.

(Description of the Shrine) The shrine in the heart of the fairgrounds, in a grove of blood maple trees, carefully tended, with an open-air stone altar at their center by a small spring. Although the fairgrounds are crowded, the shrine itself is untroubled by stalls and commerce. The only disturbance is the sounds and smells wafting in on the breeze. A long line of people steadily snakes through the grove under the watchful eyes of the shrine's guardians.

(A description of the Wild Hunt for Hunters) The shamans anoint your forehead with woad and have you breathe colored smoke. You feel detached and swimming in distorted time. You travel somewhere and feel excitement as your spear finds its target. Suddenly, you were back to yourself in the fairgrounds, exhausted and so light you felt like you could float away on a mild breeze. It's midnight - hours have passed. Afterwards it occurs to you to wonder where the spear came from and what you killed, but the dreamlike haze that surrounds your memories makes that impossible.

Adapting to your Setting

If your setting wouldn't have a Wild Hunt, you could replace it with another coming-of-age ritual that might make a youngster of status anxious. Perhaps a marriage of state and the aftermath would be Waldemar meeting the bride at the wedding.

If your setting doesn't have shamans presiding over the ritual, replace them with priests, mystics, or secular authority.

(A description of the Wild Hunt for druids) As the shamans consecrate the hunters, you feel compelled to take your beast form. A strong magic grips the world as the last rays of the sun sets, and the hunters and druids and mounts feel a overwhelming kinship. Far to the north, you feel the magic choose a Herne, and can see that hunter grow the antlered crown. The Herne chooses a quarry and although you can't quite tell what it is, the Wild Hunt travels the shadow roads with an unhesitating certainty.

(Back at the Townhouse) You are back in the Horseriver townhouse before sunset and spend the evening in a large, safe, round room in the center of the house. The cheery crowd makes for a festive, if slightly anxious atmosphere. Beyond the walls you could hear a fierce storm raging. Thunder wails like a hunting horn and rain and hail sound like hoofbeats. At midnight, the storm suddenly stops. Moments later, great temple bells peel out, signaling the end of the year's Wild Hunt. The great covenant of the Weald has been renewed for another season. A few of the very young, infirm, or indifferent headed off to sleep, but everyone else exits the kiva and lines the streets, joined by neighbors carrying lanterns and candles and waiting for the return of their young hunters.

An hour later, a slightly sloshed and very exhausted Wencel returned. He and the rest of the hungers are cheered and cosseted, baptized in beer by a couple pranksters who catch them unawares and leave them dripping and sticky and giddy with adrenaline.



Continuing On

This module is designed as a tutorial adventure, so you may want to talk to players at the end of the adventure to see whether they want to continue with this system, and if so, whether they want to create new characters now that they better understand the rules.

Rewards

If the characters do want to continue on with the same characters, then Lord Waldemar and Wencel thank them for their timely intervention by giving them personalized gifts at the feast in honor of Samhain the next day. Appropriate rewards are one 1st level item, worth about 50 gp, for each PC.

- Scholarly PCs may appreciate a day or a couple days paid admittance to the city's most renown public library. This allows them to copy one or several rituals of their choosing, some of which may not be easy to find.
- PCs with an emphasis on a particular skill may appreciate a masterwork kit, such as a...
 - **Surgeon's kit**: +4 item bonus to Heal checks
 - **Traveling alchemist lab**: Potions brewed in half the time and on the road
 - **Disguise kit**: +4 item bonus to checks made to appear as another person
 - **Artist's kit**: +4 item bonus o checks to create convincing forgeries or beautiful artwork
 - **Investigator's kit**: +4 item bonus to checks for finding and analyzing clues
- PCs who use ranged weapons might appreciate special ammunition
- Any PC might appreciate a low-life potion or other one-use item.
- Or perhaps a showy and valuable piece of jewelry or armor, like a torc or girdle or armband that indicates that the wearer has status.
- A gift of cash, to spend on whatever "trinkets" they may wish.

Experience

In addition to wealth, the PCs are more experienced. In the World of the Five Gods, this adventure is worth 3 units. The GM can use his or her judgement about when in a module it makes sense for the PCs to advance in level, but it typically takes about 12 units.

Transitioning

Remember the adventure hooks you started with. If your players want to continue playing with the same characters, you need to think about the PCs motivations, and how you can keep them adventuring together.

If the PCs were members of Waldemar's clan, they can continue on as part of their normal duties, and may have risen to greater favor in Waldemar's court.

If the PCs were part of a group that came together from another clan or nation, they'd likely return to their home to take on the next duty from their lord and possibly find adventure along the way.

The trickier situation is if the PCs came from different places. They've started to bond as a group, but only over the course of a day. You need to give the PCs rational reasons for continuing to work together. Perhaps Waldemar, seeing promise in the PCs, invites them to stay longer and tries to entice them to come work for him. Perhaps on their last day there, an urgent request for help comes from outside the city, and the PCs can help since they're packed to travel anyway. Perhaps one of the PCs urgently needs to take care of something from his or her past and begs his new friends for help.

Comments?

Thanks for giving this a read! If you have the time, please leave feedback or a comment on OverpreparedGM.com or share the link so that others can try it out.



