



PREVIEW

HORSELORD'S
VENGEANCE

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Adventure Primer

CREDITS

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RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5th Edition monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. Monster stat blocks created specifically for this adventure will be included at the end. When a creature's name appears in bold type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, it will be included in the appendices of the adventure.

Adjusting Encounters

This adventure contains advice for adjusting encounters based on the number of characters in the party. You are empowered to modify the number of enemies in an encounter and their hit point totals as you see fit. If you need to adjust the difficulty of an encounter during combat, you can alter hit point totals without the player characters ever knowing and have enemies retreat or reinforcements arrive as needed.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points
AC	Armor Class
DC	Difficulty Class
XP	experience points
pp	platinum piece(s)
gp	gold piece(s)
ep	electrum piece(s)
sp	silver piece(s)
cp	copper piece(s)
NPC	nonplayer character
LG	Lawful good
CG	Chaotic good
NG	Neutral good
LN	Lawful neutral
N	Neutral
CN	Chaotic neutral
LE	Lawful evil
CE	Chaotic evil
NE	Neutral evil

The Horselord's Vengeance

The Horselord's Vengeance is a Fifth Edition adventure for three to seven characters of 3rd to 4th level and is optimized for five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3.

An awakened horse hires the party to free its brethren from a group of bandits, but the horses refuse to leave until they have stomped the life out of the bandit leader. Clues in the saloon point the characters underground to a hidden vampire lair.

BACKGROUND

This adventure takes place in the Sleepless Hound, a tavern that's built its reputation on being open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The place is owned by a vampire spawn named Chantrea. The thugs and bandits that she employs believe that she is a true vampire, capable of granting them immortality through vampirism once they prove themselves worthy.

Years ago, the horse, Lady Thunderhooves, and her three companions were awakened by an old elven druid named Mór with too much time on her hands. Three moons ago, the group of awakened horses were captured by bandits and sold to the Sleepless Hound. Lady Thunderhooves escaped, and she has been collecting (stealing) gold to hire adventurers with.

Why are the bandits loyal to a vampire? They are interested in the immortality that they believe Chantrea can give them.

Aren't vampire spawns ravenous? Chantrea is unusually well-collected for a vampire spawn, though her patience runs short quickly, especially when she's hungry.

Where is Chantrea's master? The true vampire, a woman named Maeve who has control over Chantrea has little interest in commanding her, leaving Chantrea to do as she likes but not granting her full vampiric powers. Chantrea can be pressed into revealing her master's name with a successful DC 17 Charisma (Intimidation) check.

GETTING THE QUEST

While the characters are traveling, either through town streets or country roads, a horse approaches them. Read the following:

A plump horse trots deliberately down the road and stops in front of you. The horse wears a rudimentary metal crown, and a small pouch tied to rope hangs around its neck. It lifts one leg, bows its head briefly, and begins speaking in perfect Common.

"Greetings, most esteemed colleagues! My name is Lady Thunderhooves and I come requesting your aid. Cruel bandits are keeping my brothers and sisters in chains. I must see them freed, but I cannot free them alone."

At this point, the characters may have questions. Lady Thunderhooves (awakened riding horse) can provide the following information:

- She has enough gold to pay the characters 40 gp per character.
- The other horses are at a tavern about a three-day journey away.
- The tavern has a sign that reads "The Sleepless Hound".
- The tavern does not have any hounds.

After the characters are satisfied, Lady Thunderhooves urges them to hurry. She overheard some of the thugs complain about having to feed blood-sucking creatures.



THE SLEEPLESS HOUND

The Sleepless Hound is a moderately-sized tavern of poor quality. Its main draw is their selection of wines imported from several faraway places.

On a typical night, the clientele is impressively violent. Rather than a band, the bar's primary forms of entertainment are gambling and fights in the yard outside.

General Features

Unless otherwise noted, locations in the Sleepless Hound have the following features.

Ceilings. The ceilings are nine feet high and feature exposed wooden beams. Termites can be seen eating through patches of the wood.

Floors and walls. The floors are made of hardwood and the walls are made of clay bricks.

Doors. The doors are made of wood and have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. None of the doors are locked.

Light. The first floor of the tavern is well-lit by oil lanterns and light filtering in through the windows. The basement is dark, devoid of sources of light.

Smell. The tavern smells of sweat, blood, and beer.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Sleepless Hound.

1 - Tavern Exterior

When the characters arrive, read the following:

Clay bricks and wooden pillars make up most of the building's gloomy outer structure. There are two horses tied to posts on one side of the building and several men wrestling in the mud nearby.

There is one obvious entry into the building: the front door that leads onto the tavern floor (room 2). In the back there is a hatch door hidden beneath the brush.

A set of footprints in the mud leads from the horses and around the front of the building. To notice the tracks from here to the cellar, a character must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Hatch. The hatch can be pinpointed behind the brush with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The hatch leads to the cellar (room 6). There is blood smeared across the hatch's wood frame.

Wrestling Men. There are three human commoners just having a good 'ole tussle. If a character wishes to join, resolve the wrestling match with a contested Strength (Athletics) roll.

Horses. The horses here are named Mudslide and Bravado. They are happy to be set free, moreso if Lady Thunderhooves is present. They refuse to leave the premises, informing the characters that their companion, Sugar Feet, has been taken into the tavern.

Horse: Mudslide. Mudslide is a clumsy, lanky awakened riding horse with white hair. He panics easily and is prone to sticking his head in the ground.

Horse: Bravado. Bravado is a strong black-haired awakened riding horse that's easily distracted and often looking in the wrong direction.

2 - Tavern Floor

Read the following:

People are seated at round tables all throughout the main floor, some rougher-looking than others. In the southwest corner a cloaked figure is sitting at a table shrouded in the dark.

Encounter: Bandits. There is one human bandit captain for every three characters in the party seated near the bar and one human bandit for every character in the party scattered throughout the room. Unless the horses are brought inside, the bandits do not suspect anything out of the ordinary. If the characters draw their weapons or are caught trying to enter the kitchen, the bandits attack mercilessly. They are profoundly loyal to the tavern and its owner.

Characters might sneak past the barkeep and the bandits by buying a round of ale for the tavern (10 gp) or inciting a tavern brawl with a successful DC 15 Strength (Performance) check. Characters that attempt and fail to incite violence inside the tavern are told to take it outside to the mud pit. After the characters create a distraction, they must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check to slink away in the commotion without being noticed.

Dark Man in the Corner. Nearly hidden in the corner, there is a scarecrow that is dressed up to look like the stereotypical "shady figure in a bar" so frequently talked about in tales of taverns. The bartender has a running tally on a nearby chalkboard to record how many people are tricked by it on a daily basis.

3 - Public Washroom

This small room contains a toilet and a basin to wash hands in. The first time the characters enter, there is an ornery man (human commoner) sleeping on the toilet. If the characters wake him up, he shoos them away.

4 - Kitchen

Read the following:

There is a narrow countertop running along the north and west wall with a sink overflowing with dirty dishes. A ladle in a large pot of stew sits in a fireplace to the south, stirring itself.

Stew. The stew is tasteless and watered down. It is being stirred by an unseen chef (see below).

Floor Hatch. There is a floor hatch beneath the unseen chef. This hatch is unlocked and leads to the cellar (**room 6**). A character that inspects the hatch notices dried blood on its handle.

Unseen Chef. The cook is an invisible force conjured from a pair of *shoes of the servant* (see below). It is capable of creating rudimentary dishes and performing simple tasks like cleaning dishes. It responds to the bandit captain(s) on the tavern floor (**room 2**).

Treasure: Shoes of the Servant. The *shoes of the servant* are an uncommon magic item that require attunement. Once a character attunes to the shoes, an invisible servant fills the shoes and responds to their commands as if created by the *unseen servant* spell. The servant lasts for eight hours. Once the spell ends, the shoes cannot be used this way again until the next dawn.

5 - Kitchen Washroom

This small room contains a toilet and a basin to wash hands in. A blood-stained rag and an empty bottle of alcohol sit on the basin's rim.

6 - Cellar

A ladder and a ramp provide access to this plain room carved out of the earth. There are several crates pushed against the eastern wall near the ramp.

Ladder. There is a ladder connecting this room to the kitchen (**room 4**). The ladder is wet and moldy, making it slippery. A character using the ladder must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid falling and taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

Ramp. There is a ramp that rises north toward a set of angled hatch doors wide enough for a Large creature to pass through.

Treasure: Illicit Goods. A character that searches the crates and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds stolen wool and animal hides worth 50 gp in a box with a false bottom.

7 - Feeding Grounds

Read the following:

Two bandits carrying torches are tying down a horse in the center of this natural cavern. The horse is asking them for more apples in Common.

Hostage: Sugar Feet. The *awakened riding horse* Sugar Feet is being tied down by two human **bandits**. The bandits are nervous about being in this room and retreat to Chantrea's living quarters (**room 8**) if endangered.

Encounter: Giant Stirges. There is one **giant stirge** for each character in the party. The characters can spot the stirges if they can see in the dark and succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check. The stirges hungrily await their next meal. If the bandits or characters cause a commotion, the stirges begin attacking indiscriminately.

A giant stirge uses the stirge stat block with the following changes:

- Its size is Medium
- 14 (3d8 + 0) hit points
- Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.
- Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)
- Blood Drain deals 8 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage on hit, and targets lose 8 (1d8 + 3) hit points from blood loss.

Horse: Sugar Feet. Sugar Feet is a curious brown horse with white hair on his lower legs.

8 - Vampire Living Quarters

Read the following:

Musty yellow banners are draped across the corners of this large hexagonal room. A sunken lounge with a small fire pit dominates the room.

Encounter: Vampire Spawn. If the characters made significant noise while fighting the stirges, Chantrea (female **vampire spawn**) groggily enters this room from behind the western curtain.

9 - Vampire Sleeping Quarters

Read the following:

There is a modest coffin with a chest at one end in the center of this small hexagonal room. A vast array of robes and other clothing are held on the walls by hooks.

Encounter: Vampire Spawn. Unless she has been disturbed, Chantrea, the vampire spawn, is sleeping in this coffin.

Clothes. There are 10 sets of common clothes, six sets of traveler's clothes, and two sets of fine clothes. Most of these clothes have blood spatters on them.

Treasure: Chest. The chest contains a single set of blood-stained clothes and a pipe that blows bubbles. These garments were worn by Chantrea the night she was turned into a vampire spawn and hold some sentimental value to her.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

At the end of the adventure the characters have at least found all of the horses and fought against Chantrea, the vampire spawn. Regardless of whether all the horses survive, Lady Thunderhooves pays the party the 40 gp per character as promised.

After paying the characters, Lady Thunderhooves and the rest of the horses trot off into the distance in search of greener pastures.



Chantrea

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