

# MYSTERY IN THE CHICKEN CHURCH

FREEBIE VERSION

LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE

IMMERSIVE LOW-TIER ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE  
FOR THE WORLD'S GREATEST RPG GAME



# CREDITS

**Designer.** Derek Ruiz

**Editor.** Arthur Rouise

**Cartography.** Elven Tower Cartography

**Art.** Elven Tower Cartography, CC-0 stock art, Shutterstock assets, Artbreeder assets, and Public Domain images that require no attribution

**Cover.** Michal Hlavica / shutterstock.com

**Special Thanks.** All of our fantastic supporters on patreon who keep on helping us create fantastic locations and adventures. Without your support, this product would not be possible.

## Notice of Open Game Content

This product includes Open Game Content as defined in the Open Game License below. It may only be used under and in the terms of the Open Game License Version 1.0a

## Designation of Product Identity

All artwork, logos, and presentation are product identity. The following terms, including but not limited to "Elven Tower", "Dungeon Vault Magazine", "Brukesian Duchy", and "Dewborn" are product identity.

## Identification of Open Game Content

No content in this product is Open Game Content unless it is required to be.

## OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are

used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You"

Not for resale. Permission granted to print or photocopy this document for personal use only. System Reference Document 5.1 1

or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

## 15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, LLC.

System Reference Document 5.1 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwab, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Elven Tower Adventures and Art, © 2021, Author Derek Ruiz. Cartography art and written content originally published at [www.elventower.com](http://www.elventower.com) and [www.patreon.com/elventower](http://www.patreon.com/elventower)

END OF LICENSE

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| Credits.....            | 2  |
| Table of Contents ..... | 3  |
| Introduction .....      | 4  |
| Adventure Primer .....  | 5  |
| Cultist Ambush.....     | 7  |
| Thank You.....          | 13 |

This is a freebie version of the level-4 adventure, *Mystery in the Chicken Church*.

It includes the first two chapters of the full adventure.

If you like this content, consider purchasing the full product here.

**Get It Here!**









# CULTIST AMBUSH



Trust me, the road I know is free of cultists or monsters. I'll take you there safely.

Bardolf Beldevere, guide

**C**he heroes arrive at the winery one way or another. There are two main objectives to take care of in this chapter. First, every area or room at the winery has a piece of information or clue for the heroes to understand what happened there. They can take their time searching thoroughly to locate all clues and join the pieces of the puzzle (see What Really Happened).

Second, Payne's cultists wait for the right opportunity to strike and capture the heroes. The many different choices that the heroes can take when they arrive at the place mean the fight can go in many ways too. The ideal outcome for the heroes is to defeat the cultists, find the guide, and march to the Church of the Holy Cockatrices. However, if the cultists were to come out victorious, they'll capture the heroes and the guide, and bring them as prisoners to the underground chambers of the church (see Development).

## MURDER AT THE WINERY

The only thing villagers know about this crime is what the poor boy saw: a bloody corpse in front of the winery. The rumors of chickens-from-hell and hooded-cultists have stopped the locals' attempt to investigate; people are afraid.

With the exception of the **adventure hook** "What Happened Here?", the heroes can learn more information about the winery if they spend time asking someone about the place. If they do, they can learn the following:

- The owner's name is Moe.
- Two young adults worked with him, a brother and sister named Dane and Kinna.
- They had been acting distant for the past few weeks.

## WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

If the heroes are clever enough and look in the right places, they might obtain enough clues and information to learn what happened at the winery. Moe and his two employees' ambitions and risks taken were too high and they paid the highest price. The three people at the winery had been dealing with the cultists of the Church of the Holy Cockatrices.

Being the main source of alcohol around, Payne became interested in the winery. As usual, he ordered his cultists to raid the place and give the people there the choice to join them or be petrified. Moe, Dane, and his sister Kinna, had no choice but to accept. They didn't want to die.

In the following weeks, they worked harder than ever to meet Payne's ridiculous requests on top of their usual work. They didn't want to raise any suspicions so they didn't stop providing villagers with wine. But they were sleeping three or four hours, eating little, this couldn't last. In the end, Moe and the siblings decided to stop working for Payne. They wanted out. The cult's leader took that as treason and ordered his men to kill them and use them as bait to attract more potential sacrifice subjects.

## GETTING A GUIDE

After the confrontation with the cultists at the winery, Bardolf appears. He is a man who knows the lands well and works as a guide. He is aware of the rumors and wishes to help. Bardolf can become a travel companion or a prisoner companion. If the heroes beat the cultists, Bardolf introduces himself when it's safe. If the cultists win the battle, they soon find Bardolf hiding spot too and capture him. He becomes the adventurers' cellmate (see Development).



## BARDOLF BELDEVERE

*Chaotic good, human (age 52)*

Bardolf (**scout**) works as a guide; the vast green lands look all the same and it is easy to get lost. He lives in one of the villages nearby and is aware of the rumors. He wishes to help if he can and that's why he was eavesdropping at the crime scene, to learn something useful.

He knows the territories well and knows a path that leads to the Church of the Holy Cockatrices safely. However, Bardolf calls the building "Chicken Church" like all people.

**Manner.** Bardolf walks with a pretty wooden cane. However, he doesn't need it to walk. His limping is fake and he sometimes forgets to do it.

**Ambition.** Bardolf wants to see the chicken-shaped church up-close. He's curious about the demon-chickens.

## EXPLORING THE WINERY

The heroes are free to investigate the winery in any order they wish. Each area contains a clue or a piece of information that might be useful to them. There is no expected chronological order attached to these clues.

The group of cultists hiding in area A2 would rather surprise the heroes when they're inside the house. However, if the party splits, it would be convenient to attack an isolated target. As the DM, you have the power to handle this encounter as you think is best (see area A2 for details on the encounter and Development for the outcome).

## GENERAL FEATURES

The following descriptions of areas A1 through A10 correspond to Moe's Winery map.

**Roads.** The roads look heavily transited. Many people come to the winery often every day. Tracks and footprints are hard to follow on the road.

**Trees.** The thick and large cedar trunks. The apple trees planted in rows next to the winery are ripe for harvest.

**Corpses.** The bodies aren't all in the same place but share similar wounds and cuts. They were killed with the same kind of slashing weapon.

**Flora.** Dandelions dance with the wind along with the high grass. The cedar trees east of the cabin are a nice contrast to the smaller apple trees in the orchard.

**Winery.** The porch of the winery is stained in red. The wood swelled from the blood. The window next to the main door is broken and has blood marks too. The main door is closed, the same as the cellar. The chimney exhaust doesn't release any smoke. The place is calm and silent.



Roll on the following table when the adventurers ask villagers or the guide about the recent crime or the strange chicken building, ignore repeated results or just pick one:

### d8 Rumors About the Winery Crime

- 1 A villager claims he once saw three hooded men in the forest. They started walking toward him so he ran home to hide. He doesn't go to that part of the forest since.
- 2 A woman sadly describes how her lover started behaving differently and talking about a cult. One day he left and never came back from the forest.
- 3 A farmer claims one day he lost a mule. He spent the day looking for it and found it a few miles away from his farm, in the forest. It had turned to stone. He came back to town to bring witnesses but didn't find it again.
- 4 A drunk guy describes he was in the forest a few days back. He says he doesn't know how he ended up there but he swears on his mother that he saw two men and a large chicken-pet kill another man.
- 5 The barkeep says Moe at the winery had been acting strange. He looked stressed and irritated. Plus, he evaded all questions regarding his altered state.
- 6 A person claims he heard Dane and Kinna, the workers at the winery, arguing a few days back. He doesn't recall well but he believes he heard the word cockatrice.
- 7 An explorer staying in town says a group of bandits tried to attack him a few nights back. He says the men had a monster-chicken with them. He ran and escaped.
- 8 A friend of Dane's says they spoke two days ago. He noticed Dane was afraid of something but wouldn't say what. He adds that Dane muttered "I don't wanna turn to stone, man!" before leaving.



## A1. SOUTH ROAD

**Heavy transit** (footprints and tracks mark all the road).

**Leaves** (scattered, from the cedar and apple trees).

The adventurers arrive from this road regardless of the adventure hook that brought them here. From this point, the heroes can see what's described in General Features. If they wish to learn more about something in particular, they must approach and investigate the area in question.

**Not on my Watch.** There is a slight chance that the heroes notice the danger to come the moment they step into the crime scene. A highly-observant hero (DC 18 Perception) sees the reflection of sunlight on a dagger of a cultist hiding in area A2. If this isn't enough to draw the heroes' attention or put them on their guard, they're up for a surprise.

## A2. CEDAR TREES

**Thick trunks** (the cedar trees are decades old).

**Ropes** (attached to some tree branches at the tops).

Tall and large cedar trees stand on both sides of the east road. Dry leaves fill the road and their surroundings with dry vegetation. It creates a beautiful view in the Fall.

**Is that a Person?** If the heroes come close to the cedar trees, they might become aware of the cultists hiding on top of the trees. If they look close enough (DC 15 Perception), they notice some of the green colors at the top of the trees are robes. The cultists attack once they're spotted.

## PAYNE'S CULTISTS

**Green robes** (to camouflage with their surroundings).

**Cockatrice medallions** (made of steel, bathed in silver).

These men wear dark green robes that hide most of their bodies. They swing their scimitars menacingly.

The group of four **cultists** and three **thugs** hide in the tree-tops of the cedar trees, waiting for the right timing.

**Reaction.** The cultists' intention is to surprise and ambush the heroes. They wait for the heroes to spread out and become isolated. If the heroes enter the building as a group, that can also be a good opportunity to attack.

## A3. THE WATER WELL

**Old** (eroded blocks of stone and moth-eaten wood).

**Bucket and pulley** (attached to the wooden beam).

The water well provides the winery with fresh water. Dane used to be in charge of hauling water to the winery.

**Blood Money.** Approaching the well or pulling the pulley's ropes causes the heroes to notice a loose brick on the inside. Removing the brick reveals a small compartment that contains a leather pouch. In it, there are 100 gp and three cockatrice medallions like the ones the cultists wear.

## A4. APPLE ORCHARD

**Fresh apples** (ripe, juicy, and red with yellow hues).

**Sweet smell** (from the dozen apple trees and their fruit).

Twelve apple trees stand in three rows as if soldiers of a platoon. The fruit looks ripe and ready for the taking.

The apple trees look magnificent. Moe and the siblings took good care of them. It seems that they were about to harvest these apples. A closer look reveals someone was interrupted while picking them; a turned basket with apples lies beside a tree with fewer apples on the lower branches.

**Hidden Note.** Buried in a mound of dirt beside a tree, Kinna hid a note. It is addressed to her parents. She asks for their forgiveness and says she regrets her stupid decision.

## A5. CABIN'S YARD

**Corpse** (Moe's body lays motionless on the ground).

**Blood trail** (from the corpse to the door, it goes inside).

The lifeless body of a man lies on the grass. Dry blood draws a trail from it to the door of the winery.

There is nothing to be done for Moe, he's dead. His body has been here for a few hours. The heroes might learn a thing or two if they inspect the body closer.

**Set Up.** If the heroes spend a minute to inspect Moe's body, they find a small key. They also notice that the body was dragged from inside the house to here. Someone carried the body to place it here on purpose (If the cultists haven't been discovered, they might take advantage of the heroes' distraction with the body and attack them by surprise).

## A6. CABIN'S MAIN ROOM

**Cold atmosphere** (from all the blood and two corpses).

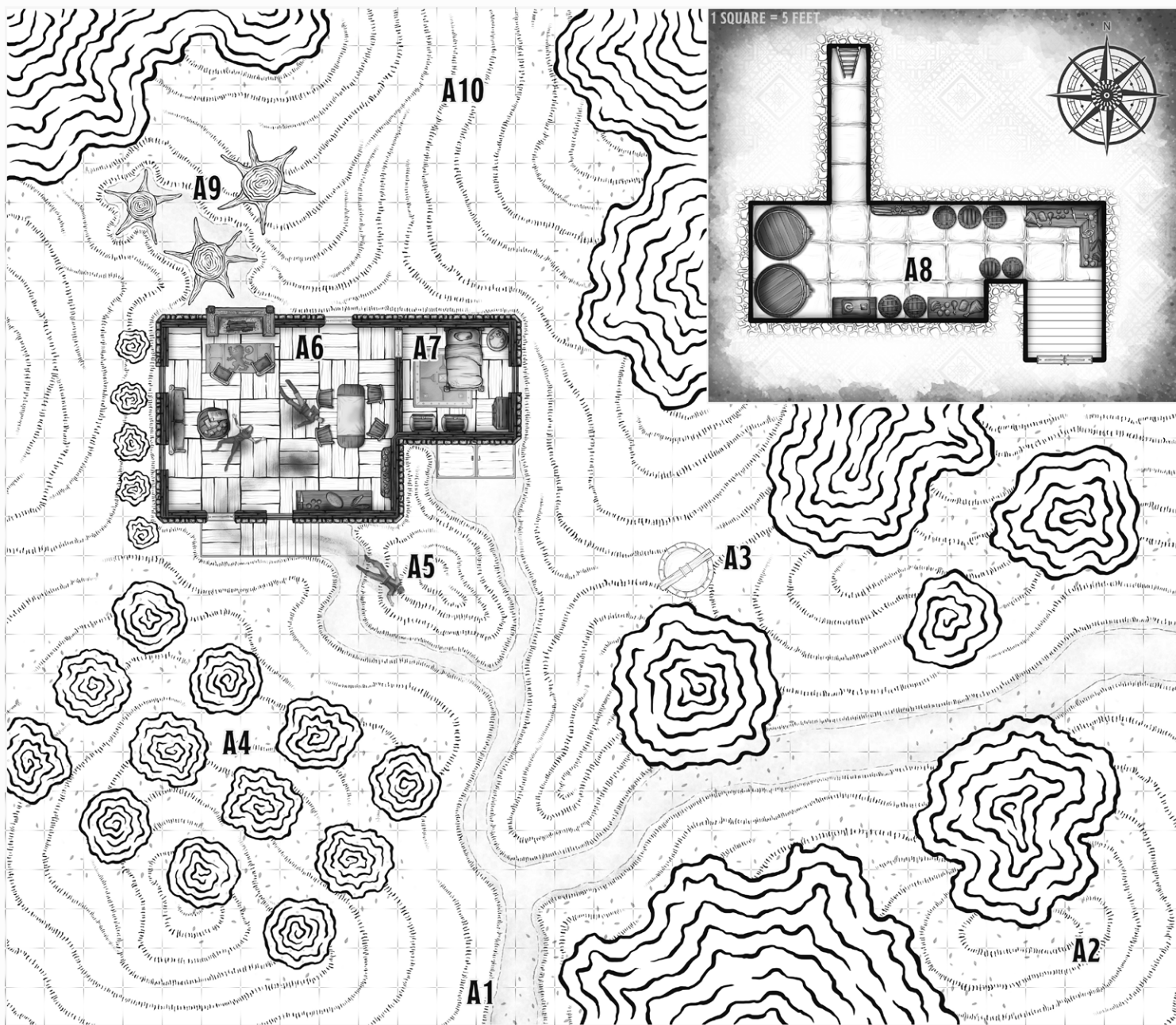
**Furniture** (stained with blood, mostly undamaged).

The bodies of a young woman and a man lay motionless on the floor. Their pallid faces look alike.

There are two seats in front of the hearth, a large sofa with a circular table, a bookshelf by the east wall, and a wooden table with four chairs. None of the furniture looks damaged or messed with. The food on the table is untouched too.

The bodies of Dane and Kinna were left where they died. A large bloodstain marks where Moe died; the blood trail to his body ends here. The wooden flooring is swollen from the blood it has sucked. A strong iron smell fills the room.

**Carved Message.** If the heroes inspect the area for a minute, they find a message carved on the floor of the cabin, on the wood. The message was crudely carved with a knife. It reads: "No loose ends, traitors". This is a clear clue that Moe and the siblings had dealings with the cult.



## A7. MOE'S BEDROOM

**Cozy** (comfortable bed, soft linens, soft blue rug).  
**Furniture** (undamaged). **Wardrobe** (mundane clothes).

Moe's room has a bed, a small wooden table, a shelf by the wall, and two wooden chests. The blue rug matches the soft green bedsheets. The bowl by the bed has apples.

**Treasure.** There are 35 gp and three bottles of expensive apple cider marked "Payne's" (300 gp).

**Secret Compartment.** Moe built a secret compartment within one of the chests. The key to open it is in his pockets. Inside, he stored a message written by Payne Cloven. The cryptic message says "I hope our offer has been considered. Be sure that the Holy Cockatrice will be pleased with more sacrifices were you to refuse." There are also 150 gp in assorted coinage in a box that reads "Winery Treasury".

## A8. CELLAR

**Warm** (the temperature is high in this windowless place).  
**Wine smell** (tuns and casks of apple wine stored here).

Dried meats and fermenting wine fill the cellar with exotic smells. There is enough food here to eat for weeks.

**Treasure.** The food stored here is equivalent to 25 days' worth of rations. Expensive salts and spices can be sold to a merchant (125 gp), and there are six casks of apple cider (75 gp each), and two tuns of apple wine (400 gp each).

**Hidden Robes.** If the heroes spend time searching the place thoroughly, they notice an empty cask that contains clothes. Three green robes like the ones the cultists wore.

**Secret Exit.** North of the cellar, there is a ladder that leads to the tree stumps (area A9).

## A9. TREE STUMPS

**Cutting Stump** (shows thousands of axe cuts marks).

**Leaves** (Scattered, from the cedar and apple trees).

Moe used to chop wood on one of these tree trunk stumps. The logs were used as fuel for the hearth. There are some of the logs he chopped inside the house.

**Secret Tunnel.** If the heroes spend some time investigating this area, they find a secret passage. There is a trapdoor hidden by one of the tree stumps. Lifting it reveals a tunnel that descends to the cellar (area A8).

## A10. FOOTPRINTS TRAIL

**Recent** (the tracks are fresh and easy to follow).

**Grass** (patches of it are bent down, stepped on).

A tracker can notice human footprints of at least four individuals. The fresh tracks show the way to the Church of the Holy Cockatrices. The heroes can find this trail by themselves, or with the help of Bardulf the guide. They could also be dragged on it as prisoners. It all depends on the outcome of the fight (see Development).

**Bardulf's Hiding Spot.** The old man hides here while the confrontation happens. He introduces himself once it's safe. His fate depends on the heroes' success. Otherwise, he'll become a prisoner and will be put in a cell in the underground chambers of the church along with the heroes.

## DEVELOPMENT

Depending on the outcome of the fight at the winery, there are two possible endings for this chapter.

### FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

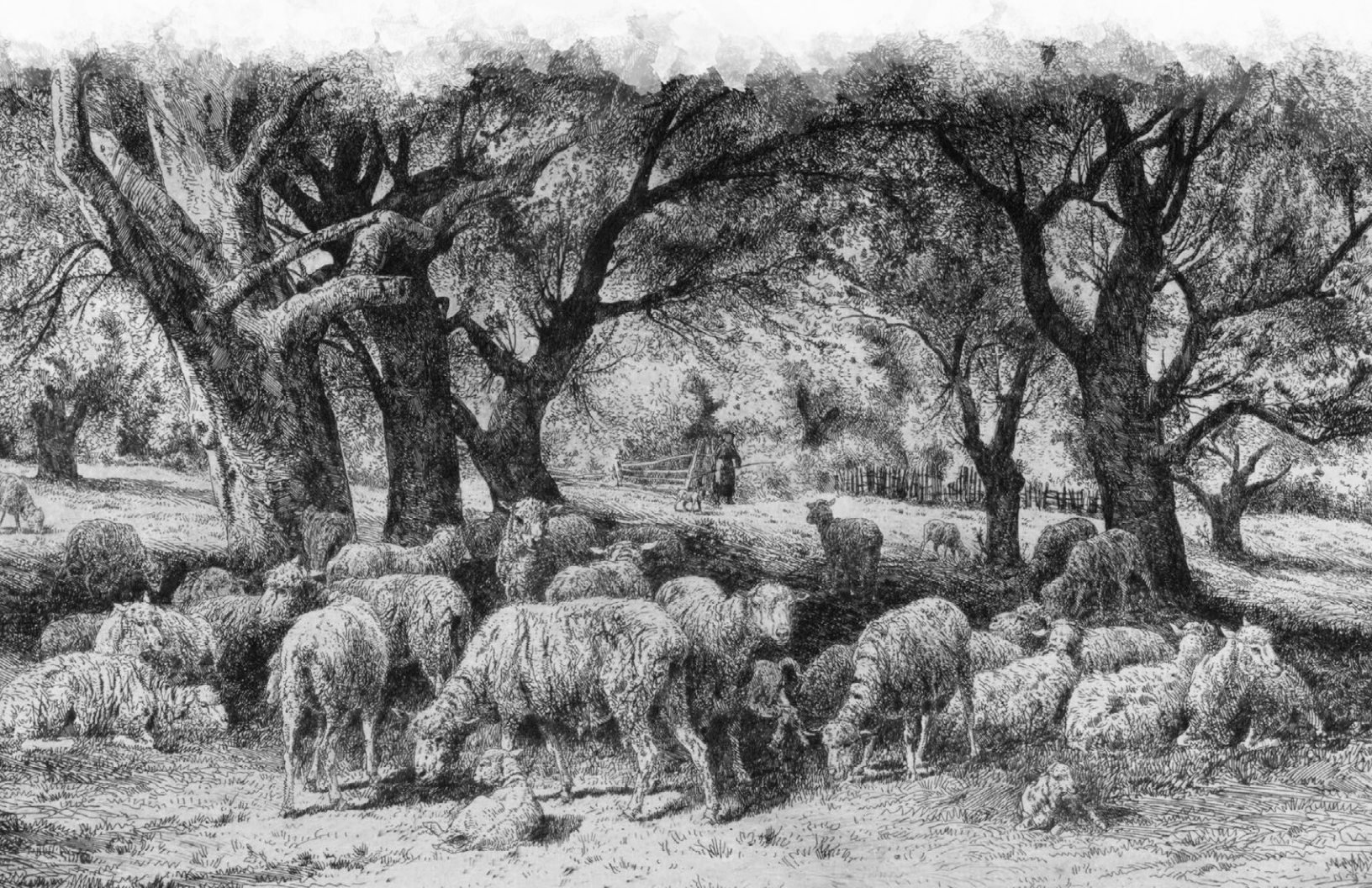
The heroes beat the cultists and meet Bardulf, the guide. After investigating the area and learning everything they can from Moe and the siblings' bodies, they follow the trail and Bardulf's instructions to reach the "Chicken Church".

After following the trail an hour, the heroes and the guide arrive at their destination, the Church of the Holy Cockatrices. They must work out a plan to proceed and stop the evil cultists! There's no time to waste!

### OH NO! WE'RE PRISONERS!

The cultists win the battle and have taken the heroes as prisoners. The adventurers are out of combat but they see Payne's men find Bardulf and bind him too. The cultists call for reinforcements with a horn and more of them arrive with horses and a wagon.

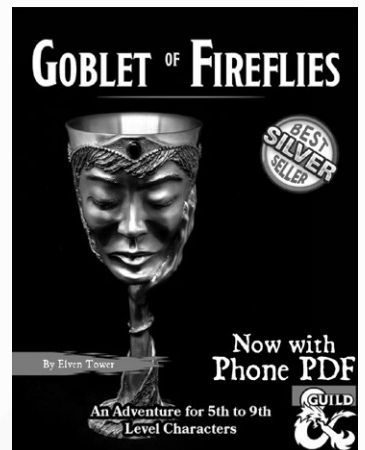
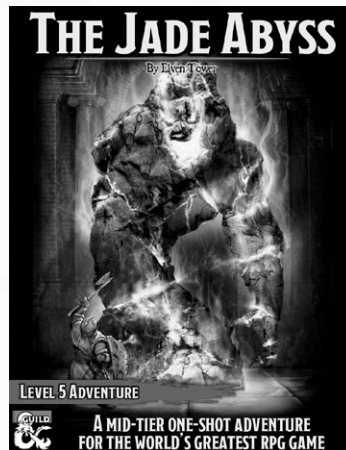
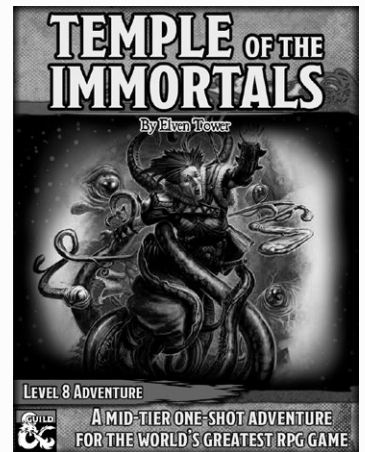
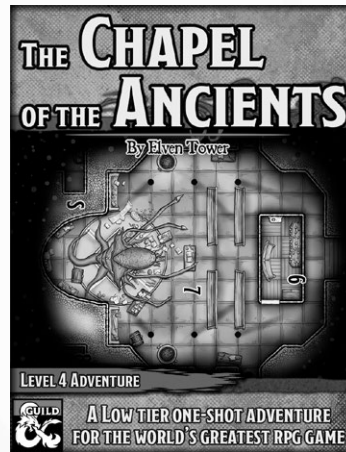
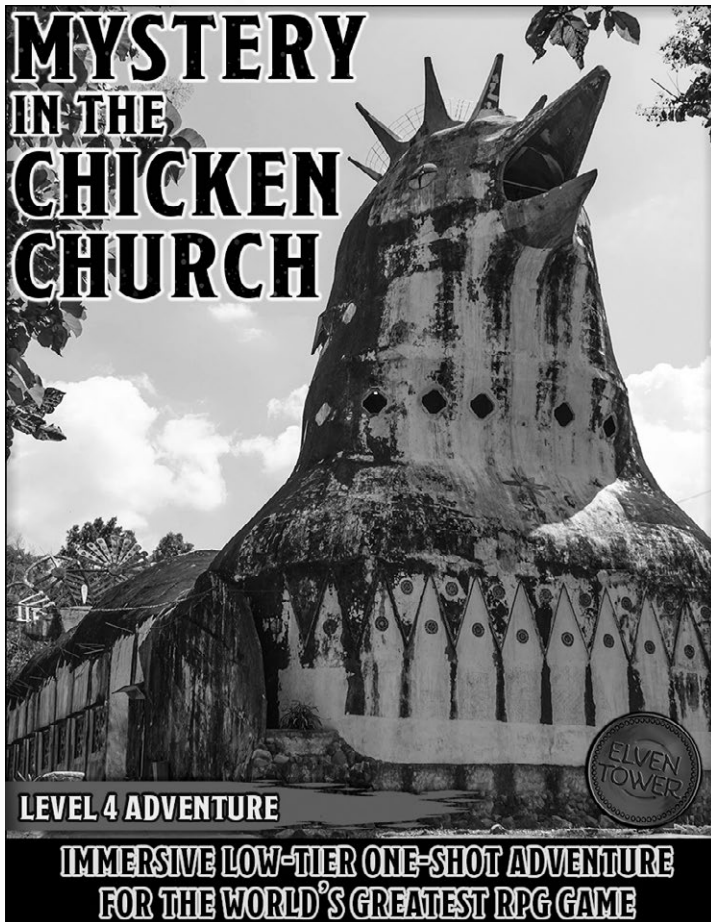
The adventurers and Bardulf join Merek, another prisoner in the church's cell block (area B20). They are going to have to work their way out of the cells and retrieve their possessions before facing the cult's leader.



# THANK YOU

If you like this module so far, consider unlocking the rest of the chapters by joining our [Patreon page](#), gain instant access to over 400+ maps and adventures to enhance your games!

In addition, you can purchase this adventure directly here:



## CLICK HERE TO JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

Get the latest updates about TTRPG maps, adventures, and special discounts for our products.

