

#156

Quick Adventures



Food for
the GM's
Mind

Elven
Tower

Elven Tower Cartography

February - 2018

This is part of Elven Tower's monthly releases on Patreon. You can visit our [Portfolio Website](#) to see more of my work.

The intent with this material is to create ideas and extra material for the illustrations I create. You're free to use this information or change it in any way to adapt it to your own game and players.

Patreon Releases:

Thanks to your support, these game supplements are possible.

156 The Educated Gnoll

Cartography by:



Important

Please keep this supplement for personal use. It cannot be used commercially.

Credit must be given to (Derek Ruiz, or Cartography by Derek Ruiz) as the author, and a link to www.elventower.com must be included if it is shared or redistributed.



The Educated Gnoll

About this Resource

This resource features background information on Cagurn, a gnoll who learned a bit of the common tongue and is particularly creative. It includes adventure ideas that are appropriate for low-level (Levels 1 to 5) adventuring parties. Challenge Rating (CR) is calculated using a party of four as the model.

The DM is free to change or modify any or all the information found here. NPC names and settlement names are the first the DM should consider changing to accommodate any homebrew world lore. To modify the challenge rating of the adventure, the DM must first consider the power level of the party. Considering the PCs' individual levels and the number of players is crucial to presenting a good challenge. Not all parties are the same, different playing styles and command of the system in the party can increase or decrease their effectiveness in encounters. The DM may adjust the encounters slightly by adding or subtracting monsters. Alternatively, controlling monsters with more intelligence and strategy is often the easiest way to raise the difficulty of an encounter.

When monsters are referenced, book name and page numbers are noted in parenthesis. Be aware that page numbers may vary depending on the book print. If the DM can't find a monster where noted, it means it is a different book print. Page differences tend to be small so whatever is missing will be reasonably close to the pages noted in the adventure.

Background Lore



he story of Cagurn goes back to his infancy. Like many of his kin, he was born from a hyena infused with the fury and anger of Yeenoghu, the Demon Prince of Gnolls. Even the most studied scholars ignore the fundamental aspects of this transformation. There is only one record of a person witnessing such process. Years ago, during an Underdark conflict known

as the *Rage of Demons*, several manifestations of demon lords were presents in the Underdark. One of them was Yeenoghu himself. The written record explains how The Prince of Gnolls and his pack of other gnolls and hyenas attacked a powerful demonic creature. They brought it down and then feasted on its flesh. It was then, while eating flesh and swallowing demon blood, that some of the hyenas suffered a violent transformation. Their bodies grew and enlarged, taking on a more humanoid shape. They became what adventurers know gnolls. Gnolls are violent evil creatures. They are born from rage and fury and those features rule their existences. From time to time, there's bound to be a member of a society who does not conform to its standards. Be it voluntarily or not, societies must have anomalous behaviors to grow and evolve. Cagurn was such anomaly. Cagurn was as evil and prone to rage as his brethren, but he was cunning and creative. Something seldom seen in such a creature.

Cagurn first exploited his curiosity for knowledge when his pack struck a temporary truce with a tribe of goblins. Together both groups pillaged and sacked towns for a few weeks until animosities broke the groups apart. The gnolls eventually butchered most goblins and ate them. But before that happened, Cagurn managed to learn their language and some of the common tongue. He thought it was useful to know the language of humans and the other races. The other gnolls only laughed at him as they often did. For them, the surface races served only one purpose: food and entertainment. Cagurn felt the same way, but there was a reason why they did not attack the big cities. Humans were numerous and strong. To get things from humans, gnolls only knew one method: physical violence. It served them well so far but it had its limits.

Cagurn then had an interesting idea. He tried to explain it to the tribe boss who could not and did not care. After a few days of insisting, the boss agreed to try it once, if it worked then he would consider it further.

Cagurn led a group of gnoll to a narrow mountain pass where they would execute the plan. They would wait for travelers or merchants to try to cross the mountain pass and then they would show themselves. However, instead of attacking them

physically, as they usually did, the strongest and meanest looking gnoll in the group would ask them to abandon a portion of their stuff and continue on their way. Common human bandits had used this threat for centuries but it was an original idea for a gnoll. Cagurn was not the biggest exemplar of his kind so he taught the words in common to another gnoll named Boxxard. Boxxard stepped in front of the frightened merchants and repeated the learned words in broken common tongue:

“Travelers, we gnoll. Sons of Yeenoghu. You inferior scum. You not want die. We want gold. Put gold there. Leave with heads.”

While Boxxard said these words that he didn’t know the meaning of. The rest of the gnoll pack stood menacingly. The merchants agreed and left gold and some goods in the place they were pointed to and left with their heads in their places. The other gnolls did not understand what had happened but accepted that Cagurn was intelligent. Back in camp, the tribe leader declared Cagurn and Boxxard the “*Scum Speakers*”. A breakthrough in gnoll society; they now understood that maybe they could engage bigger enemies or avoid unnecessary loses

by recurring to *Scum Speaking* and fear.

After that incident, the gnolls have robbed other travelers in the same mountain pass five times.

Adventure Design

This encounter is easy to use. Games tend to have a lot of traveling from one place to another. Any travel scene that goes through a section of rocky or mountainous areas is a great moment to use this. The other approach is to let the adventurers know that there have been reports of wolf-like monsters robbing travelers in the same spot. A big town or city is likely to be economically hurt if merchants are often robbed. The city watch may not have enough resources to send their own men, but they can offer a good reward to sellswords and adventurers willing to risk their skin and clean up the travel routes.

The encounter-group suggestions are optimized for an Average Party Level (APL) of 3. When the adventurers first find their way to the mountain pass, a small merchant caravan of five horse-drawn carts are trying to do the same thing. They are confronted by the expected gnoll robbers.

The group includes **Cagurn (Gnoll with maxed HP; Monster Manual, page 163)**, **Boxxard (Gnoll Pack Lord; Monster Manual, page 163)**, and other 4 gnolls (**Monster Manual, page 163**).

Cagurn will be the first to flee back to camp if things get difficult. The DM is free to expand on this adventure if the PCs decide to track the gnolls back to their camp and get rid of all of them. There is a similar group of gnolls in the camp with the exception of the tribe leader which is a **Gnoll Fang of Yeenoghu (Monster Manual, page 163)**

