

Rockslide Ahead!

You have been navigating the North Road for hours. Travel in the Mangled Hills is slow between the mud and boulders. When the journey couldn't feel more arduous you spy a massive rockslide ahead. The northern wall of the gully has collapsed onto the road with mud and large boulders spanning the entire width of the road.

The mass of mud and stone can be climbed over with caution. It will dramatically slow movement. It should take 1d3-Agility modifier rounds to cross without risk. Combat, running/hurried climbing over the rockslide should be at DC5. Fumbling this roll should result in a sprained or broken ankle causing 1d3 hp of subdual damage. It will take as many weeks to heal as damage sustained. The PC must seek healing or stay off of the ankle until it heals on its own. A path must be cleared in order for carts/wagons to pass. This will take 1d3 hours.

Cacophonous Ambush

The stillness of the hills is suddenly shattered. Clatter erupts from all sides. Shouting. Metal beating on metal. Hurried movement atop the gully's walls. You are surrounded!

Pack animals (DC15), hirelings (DC10), and other NPCs (DC5) should make a Will check to see if they panic. Failure should result in hiding/non-action, and a fumble should cause them to flee as quickly as possible along the path of least resistance.

The ruckus abates. A voice echoes across the ravine.

"We have no quarrel with you. Leave all of your food and belongings in the center of the road and you will be allowed to pass."

The bandits will be true to their word. If the PCs are slow to react, a warning arrow will be fired at the feet of the PC with the lowest Luck. If the arrow misses its target spot, have the PC make a DC10 Ref save or be hit by the arrow.

If the PCs attack rather than complying or attempting a reasonable negotiation, the cacophony will resume as the bandits attack in waves. If

negotiations drag, impetuous young Ackerin Nockcutter with fire an arrow. Make sure to reinforce the noise throughout the encounter.

Wave 1: Behndrid Potshaper (bandit leader), Theracin Nockcutter, and his son, Ackerin Nockcutter will appear behind the log on the northern terrace. They will fire at anyone scrambling up the rockslide, or at the most obvious threats on the ground (archers, chanters, fighters).

Wave 2: Three bandits equipped with pots and pans will rush in from the east, hidden along the road. (from the west if the PCs came from the east.)

Wave 3: Three more bandits slide down the gully wall and charge in from the west (east). One has a hand axe and pot, the other two have pans.

No bandits will appear from the south. A lone woman with an array of pans hanging from trees is tasked with making it sound like several more bandits are lurking upon the southern terrace.

Negotiation/Retreat: The bandits have no desire for a bloody fight. Their goal is to intimidate travelers into giving up their stuff. Behndrid will restate his demands every round. He is not unreasonable and will discuss other options including stealing back their taxes from Lastor Bagbearer (*The Protectorate of Jenulane*), or investigating the rain walkers (*Cleft in the Mangled Hills*).

Behndrid Potshaper (they, ironsmith, 42 years old) Level 1 warrior, AC: 10, HP: 12, +2 melee damage

Possessions: heavy apron, large hammer

Traits: grizzled, surly, jaded, follower of Gorhan

Motivations: survival, vengeance against Lastor

Theracin Nockcutter (he, fletcher, 34 years old) Level 1 outlier, AC: 10, HP: 8, +1 missile damage

Possessions: leather armor, longbow/12 arrows

Traits: revolutionary, vocal, visionary

Motivations: survival, reshape Jenulane

Ackerin Nockcutter (he, fletcher, 14 years old) AC: 10. HP: 3. **Possessions:** Longbow/8 arrows

Traits: eager, bratty, impulsive

Motivations: impress the others

Both Nockcutter's speak common and silent speak



The Cacophonous Bandits

The cacophonous bandits roam the North Road between Stennard and Hastrull. They aren't soldiers. They are some of the rural folk from between settlements. Their name is derived from their method of intimidation - they bang on pots, pans, and any other loud instruments they have from their previous lives as bakers, cobblers, and iron-mongers. They banded together because they have nothing left other than each other. The last pass of House Jenulane's tax collector, Lastor Bagbearer left them destitute and starving. They despise the Protectorate and what it stands for. They owe a debt of vengeance fueled by the Protectorate's hypocrisy. They do not wish to kill their former neighbors, but they do wish to survive by whatever means are necessary. Their approach has caused their numbers to swell. Some of their victims have proven impoverished as well, and have been anxious to join the mob.

At current standing, there are 19 members. They usually hunt in smaller groups, which allows them to watch the roads in shifts. They have raided some of the wealthier farmsteads, but thus far they've only turned up a handful of proper weapons.

The North Road

The North Road runs through the Mangled Hills, named for its crumbling rockfaces and constantly changing landscape. The frequent landslides from the torrential rains have ensured that they have multiple excellent locations from which to ambush travelers on the road, making them harder to find and root out - not that the Protectorate has the bodies to spare for such an endeavor.

Adventure Hooks

1. Authorities/merchants offer a reward for the heads of the brigands on the North Road.
2. Local merchants need sellswords to protect goods traveling between towns on the North Road.
3. The bandits on the North Road have seized a treasured heirloom and the family wants it back.
4. A local family member has gone missing in the Mangled Hills, but they secretly joined the bandits.
5. A merchant wants to offer a deal to the thieves.



They send the PCs to convince the outlaws to ignore specific deliveries, and focus on those of a rival merchant.

Connections to Stennard Content

Stennard Courier Vol. 1: Ohlnicks Muttwrangler, Illian Warestrader, etc have Rumors and Information to send PCs on jobs involving the North Road. *Cleft in the Mangled Hills:* Takes place on the North Road in the Mangled Hills and the bandits are referenced in the rumors.

The Protectorate of Jenulane: The bandits despise Lastor Bagbearer and are referenced in rumors.

The Map

- The central path represents the road in a deep gully (~20') blocked in the center by a rockslide.
- PCs climbing fallen rocks DC5. Gully walls DC15.
- The central road is flanked to the north and south by natural treelined terraces that overlook the gully. They are the vantage point for ambushers.
- The gully walls continue above the terrace and are heavily forested. Bandits on the north side will scramble up this wall to retreat.
- The bandits will use the fallen trees and large boulders for cover/protection.