

THE SLEEPING HEIR

Difficulty: Moderate

Introduction

This mini-adventure is suitable for use in any campaign as a fill-in between larger adventures or to serve as an introduction to the intricacies of regional clan politics. It is set in Kanday, but can easily be adapted to suit any campaign location. It may be played at any time of the year.

Lead-Ins

Passers-by: As the PCs are travelling along a deserted stretch of road in northern Kanday, a panicky young man rushes out of the forest begging for help.

Tavern-goers: As the PCs enjoy a quiet beer in the local tavern, the door slams open and the young man stumbles through the door. The other patrons make themselves scarce as the man collapses at the PCs table.

Investigators: Rumours of a man in the woods reaches the PCs employer. He dispatches them to investigate. After some searching, the young man comes out of the woods and surrenders to them.

Setting

The adventure can begin anywhere in northern Kanday. The starting location should be close to some large stretch of unsettled area where the GM can place the cave where the first part of the adventure will take place. Once the PCs have rescued the knight, he will want to immediately return to Ravin Manor. Depending on where the adventure begins, this could be a very long or short trip. After the confrontation at Ravin Manor and possible burglary, it is up to the PCs whether they accompany the knight to Quivum and Dyrisa to plead his case.

This adventure is easily modified to suit almost any feudal kingdom. All that is required is a manor where the former holding clan has been dispossessed and a near by stretch of woods for the cave.

Background

History: In 623TR, after the capture of Ewen Keep by the Checkered Shield, Ravin Manor and Vaseld Manor were granted to Sir Norian Rynn. In 689, a feud broke out between Clan Rynn and their arch-rivals Clan Gepander when in a drunken brawl the heir to the Clan was killed by a Gepander man-at-arms. The feud raged for eight years despite the best efforts of the Bailiff of the Hundred, Sheriff of Norea and Earl of Heroth to stop it.

In 695TR, after virtually every male in Clan Rynn had been killed, the Clanhead sent his only male heir, his

nephew Sir Ordidis, to Clan Gepander on a mission of peace to end the fighting. He was never heard from again.

Two years later, when the Clanhead, Sir Alar Rynn died, the King (faced with an ongoing feud) stripped the Clan of its manors and made them royal fiefs under the administration of the Bailiff of the Hundred. The female descendants of Clan Rynn were ordered out. Clan Gepander was victorious, though rumours of a huge bribe paid to the King for a favourable ruling persist to this day.

Details: Sir Ordidis' body was never found. He was presumed dead, but the Clan refused to allow mass to be said for him in hopes that he would one day return. The female descendants of the family moved to Tharda, though they have made numerous petitions to the King for the return of their land. The latest was in 718TR. It never even got to the King. The petition was denied by the Lord Chancellor.

The currently leader of Clan Rynn in self imposed exile is Lady Lymria Rynn-Masane. She lives in Coranan with her husband, a moderately skilled litigant who she first retained to fight her case. Vurnt of Masane [Coranan location 97] is a greedy grasping man, who has latched on to the Rynn's plight in hopes of elevating himself to the nobility. The couple have three sons: Uril (21), Tharin (19) and Ketta (16). All have been trained as "knights" by an retired gladiator and to be gentlemen by their mother. Uril is the spitting image of his missing uncle, Sir Ordidis.

Objective

The young man who recruits the PCs wants them to help him find the cave again and awaken his master. Once awoken, Sir "Ordidis" wants the PCs to accompany him home to Ravin Manor. Turned away at the gate, he will ask the PCs to retrieve the contents of two chests from the cellar to "prove" his legitimacy. Then, depending what he finds in the chests, he may ask the players to accompany him to Quivum and Dyrisa to plead his case.

The GM should be careful to present Sir "Ordidis" as a sympathetic figure who has been horribly wronged. He will offer to make them members of his household or whatever he has to in order to retain their services.

The Villain

There are two main villains in this adventure, Uril Rynn-Masane and his father, Vurnt of Masane. They are assisted by Querth, who plays the servant and unwittingly by Lady Lymria who has provided the details to make their plan work and the "proof" in the form of a key. Lady Lymria would never willingly stoop to such subterfuge to regain her Clan's lands, something that exasperates her husband and eldest son.

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Rationale: Clan Rynn was unfairly stripped of their lands by their enemies, Clan Gepander aided by a greedy and corrupt King. Ravin Manor and Vaseld Manor are theirs by birthright. In addition, Vurnt has spent so much of his time and effort on his wife's claim and training his sons as knights that he is on the verge of financial ruin. Unless he can get a hold of some funds quickly, he and his family will be out on the street.

Goals and plans: Uril Rynn-Masane and his father, Vurnt of Masane, have two goals. The preliminary goal is to secure funds immediately to shore up the families finances before they end up on the street. The final objective is to reclaim the family manors, if possible.

Vurnt of Masane is so short on money he could barely afford to equip Uril as a knight. But there wasn't enough to afford a horse. In order to retrieve the hidden money from Ravin, they needed additional agents with special skills which they couldn't afford. Uril came up with the idea of impersonating his uncle and convincing some sympathetic adventures to join his cause for free.

They set up the cave and dispatched Tharin, the middle brother, to find such a group in the local area. Disguised as a wandering beggar, he spotted the PCs a fortnight ago. He listened in on their plans and then informed his brother.

Once they recruit the PCs, Uril (as Sir "Ordidis") will lead them to Ravin Manor. He will play up his act that he is the long lost heir who was bewitched by Clan Gepander for twenty-three years. If possible, he hopes to get inside the manor for at least a night. If they are turned away, he will suggest they camp nearby. That night he will "confide" in the PCs that proof of this legitimacy is hidden in a secret room in the cellar and ask them to recover it.

If there is money (as he hopes), he will return to Coranan to "consult the family litigant". His father will join the party and head for Quivum and Dyrisa. Whether the PCs follow them is up to the PCs and the GM.

Recent activities: It is up to the GM to determine if the PCs notice Tharin spying on them. This is not necessary or even desirable. The PCs should think they have been picked at random. Once he informs his brother of the PCs direction of travel, Tharin will return to Coranan to await the outcome of the plan.

Uril and Querth walked from Coranan to the local area and set up camp near an old cave Uril had used before. They set up the cave with the bedrolls and triangular objects. Then they drew the lines on the floor and sprinkled fine dust outside of the circle and added the "badger tracks" and the tracks of Querth leaving his bedroll.

While Querth went to intercept or fetch the PCs, Uril prepared the small magic item he had brought to make

the illusion complete. He waited by the cave entrance until the PCs were close and then leapt from the cave entrance to the circle, activated the glowing runes and shimmering bubble and pretended to be in a deep sleep.

Relationships: Querth is Vurnt's only servant. He has been with his master for eight years. He watched Uril and his brothers grow up. He is in on the scam for the promise of a freehold and a piece of the profits.

Vurnt and his sons Uril and Tharin are ruthless profiteers. They care little about the merits of Clan Rynn's case; they just want the money and power the manors will bring them.

Lady Lymria and her youngest son, Ketta, are idealists. They believe they can win their case on merit alone and Larani will see them victorious. They are blind to the activities of Vurnt and the eldest two boys.

Timing

This adventure does not have any particular time constraints. Starting it while there is snow on the ground will make it too easy to figure out. Other than that, the GM is free to make it happen as quickly or as slowly as they wish. The adventure is fairly linear and follows the following basic steps:

1. The PCs are met by Querth who begs for their help.
2. The PCs must find their way back to the cave. Querth will pretend to be completely lost, but will "recognise" various landmarks if the PCs get too far of track.
3. The PCs rescue Sir "Ordidis" from his magical sleep. Simply knocking over the triangular stone will suffice.
4. Sir "Ordidis" leads them to Ravin Manor where he will try and talk his way in.
5. If turned away (most likely) they will camp nearby to plot his revenge.
6. The PCs will be asked to sneak into the manor in the dead of night, enter the secret room, open the chests, recover whatever treasure is present and return to the camp without anyone being the wiser.
7. Sir "Ordidis" will split a fraction of the treasure with them and return to Coranan.
8. The PCs may accompany him and stay in his service if they wish.

Clues

Since this is not a mystery, clues are not necessary to complete the adventure. Rather, the clues are presented to help the PCs figure out they are being scammed. A generous GM may allow the PCs enough clues to figure this out before they commit the grievous crime of robbing

a Royal Manor. A crueller GM will just drop hints and if the PCs don't pick them up, let them get themselves deeper and deeper in the Clan Rynn treason.

Clues all is not right:

1. If the PCs are in a public place, Querth comes to them to ask for help, not the locals. **GM Note:** *If confronted with this issue, Querth will claim that the PCs were the only once the looked like they were competent enough to help him.*
2. If the PCs encounter Sir "Ordidis" far from Ravin Hundred, they might wonder how and why Clan Gepander would transport the knight all this way just to put him into a magic sleep. Wouldn't it have been easier to kill him? **GM Note:** *Uril will claim that he overheard the guards saying they wanted to take him where no one would think to look and use him for ransom if one of their men was taken hostage.*
3. The cave itself is a little too perfect. The circles have many foot prints inside yet the area outside has been smoothed and has a very even layer of fine dust.
4. Sir "Ordidis" was "put to sleep" with all of his weapons and armour. A strange thing to do for a "hostage". **GM Note:** *Uril will claim to be perplexed with this too. His comment is "who can understand the thoughts of these barbarians in Clan Gepander".*
5. Uril has a slight Thardic accent. He works very hard to conceal it, but he certainly doesn't seem to speak with the local accent. **GM Note:** *Uril will scoff at the idea. "Of course I speak proper Harnic, not with accent of an unwashed serf."*
6. Once at Ravin Manor, Sir "Ordidis" demands access. He demands to see the Bailiff. He acts quite childish. If he is allowed in, he seems quite surprised.
7. Sir "Ordidis" does not seem surprised at being denied entry. He gives up too easily and suggests they camp in the forest. There, he almost immediately reveals the plan to break into the secret room, almost as if that was his intention the whole time (which it was). **GM Note:** *If pushed, Uril will claim he was thinking about this ever since the PCs told him it was 720TR.*
8. Despite claiming he has been in the room before, Sir "Ordidis" has no knowledge of the opening mechanism. **GM Note:** *Uril only knows what his mother has told him second hand from a single visit twenty-four years ago. He is as surprised as anyone that the secret door also locks from the inside.*
9. Once the chests are opened, Uril will tear through them, casting aside food, clothes and weapons in the search for silver and gold. He will find some but not much and seem very disgusted by the amount. He will make only a token search for documents to prove his

"legitimacy". **GM Note:** *Uril will be hard pressed to explain his excessive interest in money and his lack of interest in "proof of legitimacy" if pressed by the PCs.*

10. Sir "Ordidis" gives up far too easily once he gets the money. He is very quick to want to leave for Coranan.

The Truth

Sir Ordidis never reached Mardy Manor. He was ambushed and killed by men of Clan Gepander. His body was weighted with stones and thrown in the Thard River. His sword was brought back to Mardy and added to a chest containing the weapons of every member of Clan Rynn they had killed. However, since this was an illegal killing, the Clan Gepander can hardly come forward to contradict Sir "Ordidis" claim. They will however try and have this pretender killed as soon as they find out about it.

Vurnt and Uril are convinced that the Clan Rynn cause is almost hopeless. They concocted this scheme in order to prop up their tottering finances. However, if the PCs become enthusiastic supporters, they may be willing to go for broke and try to reclaim the manor.

Clan Gepander has kept an occasional watch on Clan Rynn in Coranan and knows how many sons Lady Lymria has though they don't know what they look like. If the claim goes forward, they may search for someone who can testify that Sir "Ordidis" is actually Uril Rynn-Masane.

Options for an Expanded Adventure

Option 1: The PCs succeed in robbing the manor and fall for Vurnt and Uril's scheme. If the scheme goes wrong, the PCs would end up becoming the flunkies for a moderately clever group of NPCs and the hated enemies of Clan Gepander and the Bailiff of the Hundred (Sir Sabir Polyle). Their enemies' allies, the Sheriff of Norea (Bishop Tamys Bakyth), Earl of Heroth and the King, could make Kanday a very unpleasant place for a group of PCs. This option works well if the GM wishes to move the PCs off to another kingdom.

Option 2: The deception is not discovered and the PCs become the entourage of Sir "Ordidis" in his quest to recover his birthright. There will be some awkward dealings as Vurnt and Uril try and keep their "escort" from meeting Lady Lymria and Ketta and discovering the truth. If the PCs do discover the truth, they have the option of becoming willing confederates in the plot. This option works well if the GM wishes to introduce the PCs to the dangerous but sometimes rewarding world of the courts of Sheriffs, Earls and the King.

Option 3: The PCs discover the scheme and turn on Uril. If they turn him in, they could earn the thanks of

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Clan Gepander and Sir Sabir Polyle and possible future employment. Sir Sabir will be very happy if the PCs show him the secret room. They could also kill Uril and Querth and keep the treasure. This would earn them the undying hatred of Tharin his younger brother who would hunt them, trying to derail their plans and get them in trouble with the authorities.

PCs Motivation and Reward

Because of his lack of money, Querth will appeal to the PCs out of a sense of duty and honour. His master is in trouble, he needs the PCs help. This motivation works best with the Lead-In where Querth comes running out of the forest begging for help. He appeals to the PCs sense of charity and good nature.

If the PCs resist the call of duty, Querth will imply that his master has money and will pay them (a lie). Once Sir “Ordidis” is “released” he will apologise for his servant’s lie and promise that he can pay them when he returns to his manor. Once there and it is obvious it is not “his” manor anymore, he will bring up the issue of the secret room and chest. He will imply they are filled with gold (which they are not).

Since this adventure does not have a lot of obvious rewards, it is up to the GM to string the PCs along with promises and lies. They are not working for the good guys this time.

Afterward

This adventure can lead the PCs in many different directions depending on how it turns out. They can end up in Coranan and adventure from there, or they can return to Kanday and all of the intrigue and adventure that comes from stepping into a clan feud.

However, if this is just a side adventure, the PCs can do the burglary for Sir “Ordidis” and carry on their merry way. If this is the case, they may be approached by Sir “Ordidis” in the future.

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NPCs

Uril: Noble by birth, with some noble skills (such as literacy), he is the son of a litigator who was trained by a gladiator. He is slim and looks somewhat younger than his twenty-one years. He has brown eyes and cinnamon hair. He comes across as somewhat emotionless, but this hides a streak of cruelty. In Coranan he is a frequent visitor and enthusiastic supporter of the Pamesani games. He sweats profusely, especially when lying. He is trying very hard to play the role of Sir "Ordidis" but he lacks practical knowledge, such as where the entrance to the cellar is.

URIL RYNN-MASANE

Son of a Litigator

Str	14	Eye	11	Int	10
Sta	10	Hrg	13	Aur	14
Dex	11	Sml	08	Wil	13
Agl	13	Voi	15	Mor	09
Cml	07	Sunsign – Ulandus			

Combat Abilities: End 12 Mov 13

Skills: Riding 78, Intrigue 60, Rhetoric 65, Folklore 48, Dancing 36, Heraldry 36, Law 13, Oratory 11, Physician 22, **Languages:** Harnic 83, Old Harnic 83, **Scripts:** Lakise 81, **Ritual:** Larani 13, **Piety:** 04

Combat Skills: Initiative 78, Wrestling 85, Dodge 65, Broadsword 70, Knight's Shield 75, Spear 80

Armour /Weapons: Leather tunic, leggings and calf boots; plate half-helm and mail hauberk; broadsword and knight's shield.

Vurnt: The son of a litigator, Vurnt has spent most of his life in court. He is an acceptable litigator, but not brilliant. He thought he struck gold when he was approached by Lady Lymria Rynn to represent her in Kanday. He spent years working on her case in return for a share of the profits. When she ran out of money, she offered him the only thing she had left, her body. She agreed to marry him in return for his continuing representation. Vurnt is a plump man, older man with green eyes and brown hair. He is hard-headed and loves to play games with people.

VURNT OF MASANE

Litigant

Str	10	Eye	13	Int	13
Sta	13	Hrg	11	Aur	10
Dex	12	Sml	09	Wil	17
Agl	12	Voi	10	Mor	08
Cml	06	Sunsign – Ulandus			

Combat Abilities: End 13 Mov 12

Skills: Riding 90, Law 76, Oratory 52, Rhetoric 86, Intrigue 75, Drawing 39, Heraldry 28, **Languages:** Harnic 83, High Azeryani 83, **Scripts:** Lakise 83, **Ritual:** Halea 10, **Piety:** 18

Combat Skills: Initiative 60, Dodge 60, Wrestling 62, Dagger 48

Armour /Weapons: Cloth tunic, hood and leggings; leather calf boots; dagger.

Querth: Born in the slums of Coranan, Querth found service with the Vurnt of Masane because he would work cheaper than anyone else. Although poorly paid, he is well fed and has a strong athletic build. Nineteen years old, Querth has sort of an indeterminate quality. If he doesn't open his mouth, he could be thought older, but he sometimes shows immaturity in his actions. He has brown eyes and black hair. He always seems a bit shady and makes obscure jokes with nonsense punch lines. Uril (Sir "Ordidis") often cuffs him upside the head when he becomes annoying.

QUERTH

Servant

Str	14	Eye	13	Int	12
Sta	14	Hrg	09	Aur	09
Dex	11	Sml	12	Wil	09
Agl	10	Voi	11	Mor	10
Cml	13	Sunsign – Masara			

Combat Abilities: End 12 Mov 10

Skills: Rhetoric 55, Intrigue 40, Cooking 48, Textilecraft 36, Herblore 24, Horsecraft 30, Survival 48, Tracking 36, **Languages:** Harnic 61, **Scripts:** none, **Ritual:** Peoni 11, **Piety:** 26

Combat Skills: Initiative 36, Dodge 50, Wrestling 66, Dagger 58

Armour /Weapons: Cloth tunic, hood and leggings; leather shoes; dagger.