

MINI DUNGEONS



MINI-DUNGEON 285

SKIES OVER VOLOSK



4-6

Characters



Levels

3-4



Mountain



Skies Over Volosk

TONY OHRAZDA

INTRODUCTION

Nestled in the frigid Suffered Peaks foothills, the settlement of **Volosk** prospers on a reputation of healthy stock, and quality wares. Atop cliffs overlooking tundra, a bonded pair of **giant eagles** roost. The Voloskians adopted the couple as unofficial mascots, naming them Arrow and Bolt. On clear days, the settlers watch Bolt hunt while Arrow tends the aerie.

OVERVIEW

A nervous young woman, **Irina**, approaches the party, begging its time. Inside the Golden Nest Inn, under warm light and across amber ales, she discloses her newlywed husband, **Rurik**, gambled away her dowry, and has found trouble reclaiming it. Jokingly, Rurik's creditor proclaimed he would accept one of Arrow or Bolt's tail feathers in lieu of her husband's coin; the tavern had a good laugh. Rurik headed into the foothills towards the cliffs above Volosk two days ago; he should have returned yesterday.

Goat-Folk. A nomadic tribe of brutish **mountain strider goat-people** maintain a summer camp beneath the nest. The tribe lives in harmony with the eagles, and the militia tolerates their presence.

The Job. Irina believes Rurik is either dead or a prisoner. She tearfully asks the heroes to recover the fool and offers a worn leather **efficient quiver** containing a stone-tipped **javelin of lightning** and a **potion of animal friendship**.

APPROACH

The simplest approach leads to **Area 1**. The characters describe their method, such as peacefully, forcefully, or covertly. If a strider or eagle spots an adventurer, they alert the others and react:

Peace. A chorus of inquisitive bleats ricochets off rock walls as the party approaches. Role-play and a successful **DC 13 Charisma (Deception)**, **Charisma (Intimidation)**, or **Charisma (Persuasion)** check, convince the **mountain striders** ♦ to escort the party to their elders (**Area 5**). Otherwise, the party is told to leave.

Force. The mountain striders turn away rude characters and attack those that refuse to leave (**Tactics**).

Covert. Arrow and Bolt, giant eagles, watch the camp and skies, using **Keen Sight**. Adventurers make a **Dexterity (Stealth)** check while the eagles and striders make **Wisdom (Perception)** checks, and they compare the results of the two checks. The eagles screech to alert the striders if they see the party. The mountain striders attack creatures discovered infiltrating their camp (**Tactics**).

TACTICS

The striders bleat to coordinate attacks and signal to their giant eagle allies for support. They **Charge** to push enemies off the cliff (**Area 2**). Arrow and Bolt grapple prey, dropping them onto the rocks below.

1. MOUNTAIN PATH

Feodor, a young adult **mountain strider** watches the lowland path. The eager strider makes **Wisdom (Perception)** checks that involve hearing or sight with advantage (**Approach**).

2. CLIFF

Fadoc, another mountain strider, stands at the cliff's edge, watching the sky. Thousands of feet below, **Volosk's** pastures checkerboard the landscape. Fadoc makes **Wisdom (Perception)** checks to spot flying creatures with advantage (**Approach**).

Drop. Ninety feet below the cliff edge is a wide ledge. A creature that **falls** takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it falls. The creature lands prone unless it avoids taking damage from the fall.

An adventurer that moves from the ledge to **Area 2** must succeed at a **DC 13 Strength (Athletics)** check to **climb** up. If they fail the check, at the end of their move, they fall.

3. RURIK

Daria, also a mountain strider, tends a small fire while watching over Irina's wounded husband. A **giant eagle's** tailfeather lies nearby. Focused on Rurik, Daria makes **Wisdom (Perception)** checks involving hearing or sight with disadvantage. The tribe allows the adventurers to assess and treat Rurik once they agree to terms (**Area 5**). He has 0 Hit Points and is fatigued, currently suffering level 5 **exhaustion**.

4. NEST

Arrow and Bolt roost in their aerie. If they spot a character, the infamous avians screech, alerting the tribe. They do not engage unless provoked, or the tribe requests their aid.

The aerie is 60 feet above the camp. An adventurer that moves to **Area 4** must succeed at **DC 11 Strength (Athletics)** checks to **climb** up. If they fail the check, at the end of their move, they fall. A creature that **falls** takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it falls. The creature lands prone unless it avoids taking damage from the fall. Arrow and Bolt attack creatures entering their aerie. A collection of jewelry is interlaced within the nest's weave (2,000 gp).

5. CAVE

The mountain strider tribal elders, **Lydian** and **Yuriss**, generally let the others handle the party but join combat if the tribe is attacked.

Audience. Adventurers brought before the elders can role-play and succeed at a **DC 13 Charisma (Deception)**, **Charisma (Intimidation)**, or **Charisma (Persuasion)** check, to parley, otherwise the striders refuse them access to Rurik and tell them to leave (**Approach**). Peaceful characters make this roll with advantage. If they are prisoners or approach the elders uninvited, the adventurers make the roll with disadvantage.

Thief. Two days ago, they found Rurik, broken and unconscious, at the base of the aerie's 50-foot cliff—clutching a perfect plume. The striders believe the thief's fate is theirs to decide.

Problems. Recently, **Viggod**, a fearsome **yathon**, claimed the nearby peaks and demanded tribute from the tribe. The powerful winged orc is due to return at nightfall.

Solutions. The elders plan to offer Rurik to Viggod. If the party offers to dispatch the **yathon**, it can convince the striders to relinquish Irina's husband with role-play and a successful **DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion)** check (**Conclusion**).

Support. If the party asks, the **mountain striders** agree to join it in battle. The elders ask Arrow and Bolt for their help, too. A Medium or smaller adventurer can role-play and make a successful **DC 13 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** check to coax an eagle to serve as a **mount** while combating the deadly orc. The eagles act independently.

THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

Viggod, a **yathon**  bearing a **flame tongue** greatsword, appears 120 feet from **Area 2**, silhouetted in the sky and rapidly approaching the camp. The party sees its leathery wings and wavy-bladed greatsword. They watch as crimson flames engulf the weapon, leaving scarlet tracers in its wake.

Viggod comes to collect his tribute! If refused, he snatches enemies into the air and drops them to their deaths. The monster uses a longbow to pick off larger or stronger foes before wading into melee with his flaming greatsword. He attempts to recharge **Precognition** at the start of each of his turns.

CONCLUSION

The Volosk militia arranges a 1,000 gp bounty from the kingdom if the party defeats Viggod. Irina is forever grateful if the characters return Rurik alive. If they give her an eagle's tailfeather, she gives them her last two **javelins of lightning**.

If both eagles survive, characters who flew with them become local celebrities, and honored guests whenever in Volosk. If either eagle dies, the party suffers the Voloskians' eternal enmity.



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Publisher: Jonathan G. Nelson, Editor: Stephen Yeardeley, Layout: Roo Thompson



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