

THURSDAY DROP-IN ADVENTURE TEMPLATE

Tabletop Thoughts Weekly Adventure Plug-In

Title:

The Beast on Briarthorn Pass

Level Range: 1–3



Adventure Hook

Trade through Briarthorn Pass has nearly stopped. Wagons return shattered, livestock vanish from the roadside, and survivors speak of a winged beast with a disturbingly human face screaming from the cliffs before descending in a storm of claws and spikes.

What's Going On?

A furious manticore has begun attacking travelers along the mountain road, but the creature's rage is not random. Weeks ago, village hunters captured one of the manticore's cubs, hoping to sell it to a wealthy collector. The cub is now chained beneath the village storehouse, and the adult manticore has been desperately trying to reclaim its young ever since.

Key Locations

1. Briarthorn Pass – A narrow mountain road littered with broken wagons and dried blood.
Hazard: loose stones and steep drops.
2. The Watchtower – A weathered stone tower overlooking the cliffs. Hunters track the manticore from here.
3. Village Storehouse – Locked and guarded after dark. Strange growls echo beneath the floorboards.
4. The Manticore's Nest – Hidden high among the cliffs, filled with bones and signs of frantic searching.

Notable NPCs or Monsters

Briarthorn Manticore – AC 14 / HP 29 / 2 Rend +6 (2d6) or 2 Tail Spike +4 (1d8) / Move: Fly
Spikes: Carries 4d6 tail spikes and regrows them each dawn.
Broken Speech: 'Give... back...' 'My child...' 'No kill... return...'

Elder Carrow – Village leader hiding the truth. HP 2 / AC 11

Captured Manticore Cub – Frightened and aggressive; whimpers when the adult is nearby.

Notable Loot / Oddities

- Bundle of Tail Spikes – Valuable to fletchers and alchemists.
- Iron Cub Collar – Marked with merchant insignias.
- Traveler's Lockbox – Silver and letters from missing merchants.

Timers, Twists, & Terrors

 Countdown Timer: Each day the cub remains captive, the manticore grows more aggressive.

 Twist: The manticore is telling the truth—it only wants its offspring returned.

 Escalation: If the cub is harmed or moved, the manticore attacks recklessly and fights to the death.

Closing Note

The Beast on Briarthorn Pass works best when the manticore feels tragic rather than purely monstrous. Play up its intelligence, desperation, and broken attempts at communication.

Keep on gaming! 