The Missing Miners

A Phandalin Adventure

Introduction: This module is the first in a new campaign arc dealing with the region around Phandalin and a threat from serpentfolk upon the lands. This module adds to the previous updates to the town found in the adventure: Return to Phandalin, however only the updated town and NPCs are needed throughout the campaign arc. In this adventure, the PCs start out in the world by taking on a job searching for several missing miners. An encounter with goblins leads them to an abandoned tower where they get their first clues of a larger threat.

This is a 10 page module with a mostly straightforward layout consisting of several combat encounters mixed with investigation and NPC interaction. The module is designed as a beginning to a new campaign with first level PCs. 1st level characters should advance to 2nd level at the completion of the module.

A multi-night adventure for 1st-2nd level characters

by Keith Stonefield
The Missing Miners
For Characters of Level 1-2

Background
The town of Phandalin was once a frontier town on the up when the forge at Wave Echo Mines was used to create magic weapons and armor. The town was destroyed by a horde of orcs hundreds of years ago and was all but forgotten until last year when the lost mine was found and re-opened. They are not creating any magic items yet, but word has been spreading and an influx of people to the town and region has created a boom in the mining of the region once again.

A new mining group calling themselves The Goldgrubbers have staked several claims over the last few months and have begun exploring for gold and silver deposits. In the last few weeks, a few of the miners have gone missing. The owner, a human out of Neverwinter named Gytus Bluewater is worried about goblins and seeks adventurers to locate them and discover what is happening.

A hobgoblin chief named Silverclaw recently took over a few groups of scattered goblins and a few bugbears that were remnants of a group operating out of Cragmaw Castle last year. They survived the winter conducting minor raids and hiding in an abandoned castle at the foot of the Sword Mountains between the towns of Phandalin and Leilon.

Recently Silverclaw was approached by Lord Setch, a human looking snakefolk pureblood that has come from The Setpent Hills to the south. He has bought off Silverclaw and has him capturing slaves. The slaves are being transformed into Histachii, a zombie-like degenerate slave of the snakefolk, in preparation of starting a new clutch of eggs in the region. The ultimate goal is to infiltrate one of the minor towns on the rise and create a power base for the snakefolk in the region.

Adventure Setup
The Adventure starts with the PCs already out searching for the missing miners and encounter a group of goblins. Marks on the goblins reveal an organized force in the old Castle Whitecloud. The outer tower around the old estate hold the captured miners and saving them leads to a final encounter with the goblin sergeant and his gift of a pet snake servant of Lord Setch.

This sets up a following adventure where the PCs find and clear out Castle Whitecloud. There they will encounter Silverclaw and begin to discover the hidden threat behind the attacks.

#1 The Outside Entrance
Read the following at the beginning of play.

The trail you have been following for two days is getting old and the rain is not helping. You are beginning to think that the job you took to locate some missing miners may not be worth the 10 gold you are each getting from the claim owner.

A week ago you arrived in Phandalin with one of the first cargo wagons of the spring. The wages you were paid to escort the wagons were drying up and a simple lost and found mission looked like quick money. Gytus Bluewater, a dandy out of Neverwinter seems to own a lot of claims, but is clearly not a miner or even a woodsman.

With your provisions and patience running low, you sit around the morning fire deciding if you should go back to town. A sudden rustling in the brush nearby breaks your conversation about leaving to more present dangers. A pair of goblins burst from the bushes on the side of your camp and charge towards you.

The PCs can make a Wisdom check (Perception DC12) to notice another goblin staying in the woods nearby armed with a bow. The goblins will try to take the PCs down and capture them once they are knocked out. Any PC below 0 HP will be stabilized and brought to 1 HP. They will bring them to the Border Tower once captured, to be sold as slaves with the miners.
If the PCs defeat the goblins they will discover the goblin tracks leading back to another campsite not too far away.

**Treasure:** The goblins carry little treasure with them as most of their belongings are with the campsite in the next encounter. Each goblin carries 1d10sp and 1d10cp. One of them wears a silver-piece that has been made into a pin bearing what looks like claw marks across the front.

The prisoners are both human miners that have been captured and are being taken to the Border Tower. They believe they can find their way back to town on their own if the PCs wish to travel to the tower. They can provide a general description on how to get to the tower based on their travel so far and overhearing some of what the goblins have said. Neither of them are part of the miners that work for Gytus.

**Treasure:** The goblin equipment is of little quality or worth. They do have 10gp worth of gold dust and 8sp among their gear.

The goblin and rats can be surprised by PCs making a **Dexterity check (Stealth DC11).** The goblin will try to fight for a few rounds with the rats, but will try to flee once any of the rats have been killed. He will try to make his way back to the tower and inform the goblin sergeant.

The prisoners are both human miners that have been captured and are being taken to the Border Tower. They believe they can find their way back to town on their own if the PCs wish to travel to the tower. They can provide a general description on how to get to the tower based on their travel so far and overhearing some of what the goblins have said. Neither of them are part of the miners that work for Gytus.

**Treasure:** The goblin equipment is of little quality or worth. They do have 10gp worth of gold dust and 8sp among their gear.

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**Goblin (3)**

**Armor Class** - leather 13
**Hit Points** (2d6) 7
**Speed** 30 ft.

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**Skills** Stealth +6
**Senses** DV 60’, Perception 0
**Languages** Common, Goblin

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Abilities**

**Nimble Escape.** Can take Disengage or Hide as a bonus action each turn.

**Actions**

**Scimitar:** +4 to hit, (1d6+2).

**Short Bow:** +4 to hit, (1d6+2). 80’/320’

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**#2 The Goblin Campsite**

The trail from the PCs camp leads roughly ½ mile to the goblins site. There is a crude tarp hanging to provide shelter for the goblins and a pair of humans tied to the base of a tree.

Read the following when the PCs come to the edge of the site.

The trail you have been following runs roughly ½ mile to a small clearing near a large oak tree. An old tarp is strewn over a branch making a lean-to from the rain. A pitiful fire burns in front of the shelter containing a stew pot with some brown mush in it. To the right of the shelter is a smaller tree with a pair of prisoners tied to it. They appear to be sleeping.

Under the shelter you see another goblin playing with a few giant rats. They appear to be his pets and wriggle around the animal skin blankets.

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**Rat, Giant (3)**

**Armor Class** natural 12
**Hit Points** (2d6) 7
**Speed** 30 ft.

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(-2) (+2) (+0) (-4) (+0) (-3)

**Senses** DV 60 ft., Perception 0
**Languages** —
**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Abilities**

**Keen Smell.** Adv. on Wisdom ( Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Pack Tactics.** Adv. on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the rat’s allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn’t incapacitated.

**Actions**

**Bite:** +4 to hit, (1d4+2) piercing damage.
The Campsites
Part 2: The Border Tower

The tower once provided protection for the soldiers protecting the edge of the ancient kingdom’s border. There was once a farmstead located here serving the tower, but all that remains are some partial walls and the crumbling tower itself.

PCs that scout around the tower have a chance to notice that the crumbling wall in room 4 can be bust open and entered. PCs need to make a Wisdom check (Perception DC12) to notice. Observing the tower also notices smoke coming from the chimney. Goblins also seem to come and go in groups of 3-4 every hour or so. If the PCs observe for more than 6 hours they will notice a pair of goblins bring a wolf out to relieve itself and also a hobgoblin go to use the latrine set up along the side of the outer wall.

There is a secret tunnel that leads to the basement from the base of a large tree over 100yards away. PCs have a chance to locate the tunnel with an Intelligence check (Investigation DC20) if they say that they are looking.

#3 Main Entrance

The ground floor was primarily a meeting room and armory for the soldiers stationed here.

Read the following when the PCs enter the room.

The front doors open to a brightly lit room measuring 40x40ft. A large fireplace on your right sits next to a smaller door leading to the other room on the first floor. A grand set of stone stairs in the rear left of the room lead upstairs. In the middle of the room towards the rear of the room is a large oak table.

In the room are a few goblins sitting at the table, they seem to be gambling and drinking so are loud and unfocused. A wolf sleeps near the fire, but awakens suddenly upon your entrance and starts growling.

The goblins are surprised on the first round of combat, but the wolf can act normally. Fighting in this room will only alert the other rooms if the combat goes on longer than 6 rounds. You should mark the rounds using a d6. After 6 rounds, 2 goblins from upstairs will come down to investigate before returning to warn the sergeant. PCs cannot take a rest in this room without being discovered by the occupants of the other rooms.

There is a secret door hidden at the base of the stairs leading to the 2nd floor. A Wisdom check (Perception DC14) or Intelligence (Investigation DC12) is needed to locate.

Treasure: Each goblin has 1d10cp and 1d6sp worth of coins, some are scattered on the table from the gambling. There is also a potion of healing lying on the table.

Goblin (4)

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Skills: Stealth +6
Senses: DV 60’, Perception 0
Languages: Common, Goblin
Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)
Abilities

Nimble Escape. Can take Disengage or Hide as a bonus action each turn.

Actions

Scimitar: +4 to hit, (1d6+2).

Short Bow: +4 to hit, (1d6+2). 80’/320’

Wolf

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Senses: DV 60 ft., Perception 0, Stealth +4
Languages —
Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)
Abilities

Keen Smell and Hearing. Adv. on Wisdom (Perception) checks- hearing and smell.

Pack Tactics. Adv. on attacks against a creature if at least one of its allies is within 5 feet of the creature and isn’t incapacitated.

Actions

Bite: +4 to hit, (2d4 + 2) piercing damage, plus make a saving throw (Str DC11) or knocked prone.

Dungeon Features

The Border Tower is a well-built tower with 5ft thick walls. It was built hundreds of years ago and has mostly stood the test of time. The ceiling sags and leaks and the outer wall is partially crumbled, but it can be repaired.

Ceilings: Each of the three floors has high ceilings that are 15ft high.

Doors: Most are reinforced wooden doors and unlocked unless noted. The two doors to the outside are metal clad doors.
Light: There are large fires burning in most of the rooms, and gaps in the ceilings on the areas 4 and 5. The basement contains torches, but the secret tunnel is dark.

#4 Prisoner Room

This room was once a kitchen for the tower outpost. The large stove was removed long ago and all that remains is the fireplace.

Read the following when the PCs enter the room.

The 30x30ft room is sparse, save for a large fireplace. Light streams in from several holes in the ceiling and from the fireplace. Around the room are several piles of rags mixed with straw and leaves making crude bedding. Metal rings have been nailed into the perimeter of the walls as well. These hold several humans and a dwarf who are captives. A few are beat up and show several visible wounds.

In the room is a pair of goblins guards sitting on some rubble throwing acorns at the dwarf prisoner, while a third tries to sleep in a corner near the fire.

The goblins will attack the PCs until two of them are killed and the third will try to flee. If the PCs found the loose rubble on the outside of the building they can surprise the goblins in the room by coming in from the hole in the rubble.

The prisoners are in various states of injury but are able to move. They will need assistance to get back to Phandalin. Most of them work for Gytus and will be grateful to him for sending the PCs to rescue them. One of them knows that others have been taken before and were brought someplace else in the mountains. Another will say that the name Silverclaw was spoken and it sounded like the goblin was afraid of him.

Goblin (2)  Sm. Huoid (goblinoid), LE
Armor Class- leather, shield 15
Hit Points (2d6) 7
Speed 30 ft.

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<th>STR</th>
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Skills Stealth +6
Senses DV 60’, Perception 0
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)
Abilities

Nimble Escape. Can take Disengage or Hide as a bonus action each turn.

Actions
Scimitar: +4 to hit, (1d6+2).
Short Bow: +4 to hit, (1d6+2). 80'/320’
Treasure: The goblins each have 1d10cp and 1d4sp.
One of the prisoners will reward the PCs with free drinks every time they are in town and he sees them.

#5 The Tower Upstairs

The top floor of the tower was once a lounge and sleeping quarters for the captain of the settlement.

Read the following when the PCs enter the room.

This 40x40ft room opens to a lounge area taking up half of the space and 2 small bedrooms on the far side of the room, with one having its door closed while the other is missing. Light comes in from arrow-slit windows and a few holes in the ceiling where it is sagging.

Sitting at a table eating are 2 goblins and a hobgoblin. You also see another pair of goblins sleeping in the bedroom with the missing door. The hobgoblin at the table jumps up and draws a sword when it sees you coming up the stairs.

The goblins and hobgoblins can be surprised by the PCs with a Dexterity check (Stealth DC11). The noise from the fighting will alert the goblins sleeping and the champion goblin who is in the room with the closed door. The 2 sleeping goblins will be able to act on the second round of combat and the champion will act the round after.

The goblins will not retreat or surrender if the champion is still alive and fighting, but will try to flee once their leader and hobgoblin guard are dead.

Searching the bodies and room will discover the treasure and that the goblin sergeant/champion has a brand pressed upon his left cheek. It is in the same shape of the coin pins bearing the claw marks. It is the mark of Silberclaw, the hobgoblin leader of the goblin band found in Castle Whitecloud.

Treasure: The goblins each have 1d10cp and 1d4sp. The hobgoblin also carries 1d6gp. The leader goblin has a potion of healing and a small chest with 30sp, 40cp, and 20gp.
Goblin (2)  
**Sm. Huoid (goblinoid), LE**

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<th>Hit Points (2d6)</th>
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**Skills** Stealth +6  
**Senses** DV 60’, Perception 0  
**Languages** Common, Goblin  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)  

**Abilities**  
**Nimble Escape.** Can take Disengage or Hide as a bonus action each turn.

**Actions**

- **Scimitar:** +4 to hit, (1d6+2).
- **Short Bow:** +4 to hit, (1d6+2). 80’/320’

Hobgoblin  
**Med. Huoid (goblinoid), LE**

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**Senses** DV 60’, Perception 0  
**Languages** Common, Goblin  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)  

**Abilities**  
**Martial Advantage.** 1/turn can deal +2d6 damage if hits creature w/in 5” of ally.

**Actions**

- **Longsword:** +3 to hit, (1d8+1).
- **Long Bow:** +3 to hit, (1d8+1). 150’/600’

Gooblin, Champion  
**Sm. Huoid (goblinoid), LE**

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**Skills** Stealth +6  
**Senses** DV 60’, Perception 0  
**Languages** Common, Goblin  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)  

**Abilities**  
**Nimble Escape.** Can take Disengage or Hide as a bonus action each turn.

**Actions**

- **Multiattack:** Make two melee attacks.
- **Handaxe:** +4 to hit, (1d6+2).

#6 The Basement

The secret door from the base of the stairs leads to the basement. At one time this was storage for the tower and held weapons for the armory and foodstuffs for the soldiers. The escape tunnel was added later.

Read the following when the PCs descend the stairs.

This 30x30ft room is dimly lit by a few scattered candles placed around the room on the walls and from a central candelabrum holding several. On the far side of the room is some sort of crude altar to some sort of snake god. There is a bear skin rug in front of the altar. Around the room are a few sheets and other animal skins hanging like tapestries.

Cuddled up on the skin in front of the altar is a large white snake coiled as if it is sleeping. Around the back of the altar is a kobold dressed like a spellcaster. He hisses something at you in draconic and moves to cast a spell.

The kobold is a representative of the serpentfolk sent to observe the goblins and Silverclaw. The snake is its master and connection to the snakefolk. It will fight to the death to defend it. The frost snake will fight to the best of its abilities, but will flee out the escape tunnel if below half its hit points. The tunnel leads a few hundred feet into the woods and emerges in the base of a large tree.

PCs in the room can determine the escape tunnel with a Windom check (Perception DC12). It will become automatic once the fight is over and the PCs search the room since it is just hidden by a hanging hide.

There is a clue to a larger plot within the room. The players may wonder why a kobold is working with goblins and what the snake statue means. The gold cup that is part of the treasure is marked with pictures and drawings of snakes intertwined and a half-snake/ half-man carving. The makers mark on the bottom can be traced back to the town of Scornubel to the south.

If the PCs take the cup to Elmar at Barthen’s Provisions he has a chance of revealing some of this information. Linene at Lionshield Trading will know more information. She can hint at that region being a hotbed for the snakefolk and would fear an infiltration from them. She would reach out to some of her contacts and seek answers over the next few weeks.

**Treasure:** The kobold has a gold cup sitting by the altar worth 25gp and the candle holder is silver worth 10gp. There is also an amulet of health draped over the arm of the statue.
Snake, Frost

Lg. elemental UN

**Armor Class**: Natural 14
**Hit Points**: (5d10+5) 40
**Speed**: 30 ft. swim 30ft.

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**Senses**: blindsight 10ft., Perception +3

**Languages**: understands Auran but cannot speak.

**Challenge**: 1 (200 XP)

**Abilities**

**Frost Touch**: Creatures hitting the frost snake with melee weapons take (1d4) cold damage.

**Actions**

**Bite**: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., (1d6+3) piercing, and the target must make a saving throw (Con DC 10), or take an additional (1d6) cold damage and be slowed, (SE).

Kobold, Wyrmpriest

Sm. Hoid (kobold), LE

**Armor Class**: leather 13
**Hit Points**: (3d6) 12
**Speed**: 30 ft.

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**Senses**: DV 60’, Perception -2

**Languages**: Common, Draconic

**Challenge**: 1/2 (100 XP)

**Abilities**

**Sunlight Sensitivity**: Disadvantage on attacks when he or target in sunlight.

**Pack Tactics**: Adv. on an attack roll against a creature if at least one ally is within 5 feet of the creature and isn’t incapacitated.

**Actions**

**Dagger**: +4 to hit, (1d4+2).

**Energy Orb**: +4 to hit, (1d8) cold. 20'/60'

**Frost Breath (Rec 3)**: 15ft cone. Dex Save (DC 12) for half. (3d6) cold damage.

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**What’s Next?**

Rescuing the miners and bringing them back to safety will earn the respect of the owner Gytus Bluewater. As a wealthy benefactor he is in the position to employ the PCs further and will most likely ask the PCs to further explore the stories the miners bring back concerning Silverclaw and a hideout in the mountains.

The PCs can also explore Phandalin and investigate the recovered items. The gold cup will bring clues to the larger extent of the serpentfolk infiltration into the region. Also, NPCs in town will hear about the exploits of the PCs and begin to ask them to complete missions in and around town.

DMs are encouraged to create additional encounters and adventures using the locations in town and create other adventuring sites in the region. New NPCs introduced here and in the Return to Phandalin module can be used to introduce new rumors and intrigue.

Silberclaw will also investigate the loss of his slaves to Lord Setch. He will send additional war parties into the region to gather more captives and search for the PCs. Perhaps he will seek resources from his new allies at Castle Whitecloud.

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**Awarding Experience Points**

DMs should award experience based on each encounter and monsters that were overcome. A story award of 500xp should be given for rescuing the miners and bringing them back to Phandalin or to their mining camp.
The Border Tower
NPCs

NPC, Gytus Bluewater

Armor Class- chain shirt 14
Hit Points (7d8+7) 40
Speed 30 ft.

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Skills Athletics +4, Insight +4, Perception +4,
Languages Common, Dwarf
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Abilities

Brave, Adv. on saves vs. frightened
Spellcasting. 3rd level caster. DC 13 / +6 hit
Cantrip (at-will) light mage hand, shocking grasp (2d8)
1st lev. (3 slots): charm person, magic missile,
2nd lev. (2 slots): misty step, scorching ray

Actions

Multiattack: Make two melee attacks.
Cane: +6 to hit (1d4+2)
Canesword: +6 to hit (1d6+3)

Reactions

Parry: +3 to AC against 1 melee attack he can see from attacker and be wielding a weapon.

Magic: Po. Greater Healing (4d4+4), Ring of the Ram

Gytus is a young dandy from Neverwinter. His family is involved in sea trade and has many contacts up and down the coast. He heard about the lure of fast money in mining around Phandalin over the last winter and mounted an expedition to the region. So far he has spent most of his money and has little return, but he is optimistic about the number of sites he purchased.

There is also no shortage of new bodies coming to the region looking for wealth. He does not want to wire his family for more funds, but will not cheapen his lifestyle at the expense of his pride.

Gytus is confident and struts around town acting like a lord of the city would. His tone and expectations when talking to others seems to back this attitude up. He likes to spend money and buys friends and henchmen to do his bidding. He usually has several guards and followers tagging around in his entourage.

When roleplaying Gytus, DMs should play him as an arrogant businessman who seems to always get his way. He does treat his hired help fairly and keeps his end of deals while expecting this in others he deals with. He also seems to know everyone in town even though he has been here a short while. Townsfolk have mixed opinions on him though.

NPC Soldier

Armor Class- chain shirt, shield 16
Hit Points (3d8+6) 22
Speed 30 ft.

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Senses Perception +2
Languages usually Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Spear: +4 to hit, (1d6+2). 20'/60'
Long Sword: +4 to hit, (1d8+3).

Typical henchman following Gytus. They can be of any race and alignment, but tend to good and neutral humans resembling adventurers rather than guards and family soldiers.

NPC Expert, Miner

Armor Class- leather 13
Hit Points (1d8) 6
Speed 30 ft.

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Senses Athletics +3, Perception +1
Languages Common
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Shovel or Pick: +3 to hit, (1d6+1)

NPC Expert, Miner

Armor Class- leather 13
Hit Points (1d8+1) 8
Speed 30 ft.

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Senses Athletics +3, Perception +1
Languages Common, Dwarf
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Abilities

Resilience. Adv. on ST vs. poison and resistance vs. poison damage.

Actions

Shovel or Pick: +4 to hit, (1d6+2)