



QUARTERLY PATRON REWARD:
SCARLET DREAMS



D&D 5E HOMEBREW

Expand your Rise of Tiamat campaign with this rewarding side adventure or run it as a separate one-shot.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure can be used to expand upon the events of the Tyranny of Dragons storyline. For example, Fyro can be the first metallic dragon the party meets. This way making friends with Fyro can become a starting point in setting up the Metallic Dragons, Arise episode of Rise of Tiamat adventure.

Scarlet Dreams is not a combat heavy adventure, but it is roughly balanced for a party of 7-8th level characters at its extremes. Although it can be easily adjusted for even the 1st level, if you'd like running it as a one-shot, for example. This can be achieved by substituting giant vulture with simple vulture, lowering the damage of Dagon's fingers seaweed, removing encounters with the black dragon and lowering the numbers of hostile dwarven miners in the case of conflict.

BACKGROUND

In the southern reaches of the Sword Mountains there's a lair belonging to a young copper dragon named Fyro. A relatively small band of the cult of the dragon has recently raided it and has been moving south. When Fyro discovered that his lair was ransacked and his most precious item, an ancient Kara-Turian sword, gone, he pursued the raiders.

Fyro reached the raiding party just as they were about to attack a small settlement. He engaged in a fight with the black dragon clutching the magic sword in her paw. They brawled and tussled in the air, while spells and arrows flew at them from the ground, where the rest of the raiders engaged in a fight with a dwarven miner's caravan that happened to stay in the hamlet on its way to Daggerford.

Lacking their most powerful asset, the cultists fell. And the dragon fight has concluded above the Scarlet Lake, a few hours of walk from the hamlet. Having slain his rival, sending her to rest at the bottom of the lake, Fyro crashed nearby, stricken with a paralytic arrow that took awhile to take him down.

THE OLD HAMLET

On the Trade Way, somewhere between Daggerford and Dragonspear Castle, there's an old hamlet with only four buildings that remain nowadays: a tavern, a small temple of Lliira and two old huts that have rooms for weary travelers. There's also a small stable that grows out of the tavern.

Strewn about the hamlet center are the corpses of slain raiders. 7 cultists, 12 kobolds and 4 guard drakes. The corpses have already been looted, but a thorough search will reveal 1d4 50 gp gems. Most of the corpses, as well as the ground around, have marks of acid burns. They were caused by Fyro's breath weapon. Near the tavern are two pack mules and two mining carts filled with ore and tools.

The ore, containing coal, iron, and just a few pounds of mithral, makes a total of 2400 lb. Among clothes and belonging are the following mining tools:

- 2d6 miner's picks
- 2d6 pitons
- 2d6 bullseye lanterns
- 2d6 hammers
- 1d6 grappling hooks
- 500 feet of hempen rope.



THE DEAD FOX

The tavern is called The Dead Fox. Katumshel, an old blind **hobgoblin**, runs it. He and three of his **goblin** staff members all wear *hats of disguise*, appearing like a human and gnomes. They all have chaotic good alignment. They often change their personas, so that it appears that there are more people working here than there actually is.

The hats on goblins have tiny bells attached to them, so that their blind boss always knows where they are. The tavern is decorated with vibrant colors like pink, green or yellow. Even though Katumshel has good and somewhat traditional taste, the goblins use his blindness to let their creativity thrive, lying to him about the looks of his own tavern.

The following customers are currently in the tavern:

- A party of twelve dwarven miners led by Balpham Stoodahr. One of the miners is under the effect of a lullaby poison (see the sidebar). The effect will last 8 more hours. She lies on a table while her wife tends to her wounds. The poisoned purple feathered arrow lies nearby.
- Five caravan guards with Griswald Greycastle in charge. These guards were hired by Balpham back when his caravan started its journey. Griswald is a 40 year old **veteran** with salt-and-pepper on his temples and beard. His four **guards** are Tegan, Brogan, Anlouv and Brig.
- Half-orc **priest** of Lliira is asleep at the bar. She is one of the very few residents of this hamlet, and he spends more time at the tavern than at his shrine. Even when hungover, she smiles and jokes around, fairly optimistic. Lliira is the goddess of joy, dance and freedom. Her symbol is a triangle of three six-pointed stars.

Lullaby Poison (Injury). A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw immediately and every subsequent minute to the total of five times, unless the poison has not been neutralized in the meantime. On a failed save the creature is poisoned for 24 hours. The poisoned creature is paralyzed.

THE MINERS

There were twenty of them, but six died in a fight. Balpham and his dwarves are moody and not very talkative. Balpham is an especially greedy and pragmatic dwarf. His business suffered serious casualties due to the war. The mine in his dwarven village Rockmouth collapsed during a dragon attack. He had to hire bodyguards and move with his team to Daggerford to meet with his cousin who might have some work for them. Meanwhile he looks for any opportunity to make a spare coin.

Balpham is beyond upset with losing his men. Not out of sentiments, but purely because they were his workforce. The treasure the raiders were carrying is a good thing, but this is nothing on the scale of his damaged mining business. Not to mention he'll have to share the loot with Griswald. Balpham always tries to take every last bit of profit out of any situation. That's why he sent two of his men to look for the dragons. He is willing to take the magic sword and even the dragon hides, whether they are dead or alive. This time he doesn't want to share with anybody.

Use the **scout** statistics for the dwarves, except they use mining picks instead of shortswords. Balpham has 60 hp, 16 (+3) Intelligence and Strength and an adjusted CR of 2. Some of the dwarven names include: Berenda, Baelnar, Dirnara, Gognar, Rozag.

Treasure. Every dwarf and guard has a coin purse with 2d10 gp. Balpham also has 2d6 10 gp gemstones and a 500 gp peridot. In addition to ore and mining tools, Balpham now acquired the goods stolen by raiders. The goods include 2d10 pounds of food, twelve wooden casks of Oakbrew Stout ale worth 30 gp each, 2500 sp, 2d4 50 gp gemstones and 1d4 magic items (determined by rolling on Magic Item Table B in chapter 7 of the Dungeon Master's Guide). Half of the silver, all the gemstones and magic items were stolen from Fyro by the raiders.

CAPTURED CULTIST

Griswald and his guards were able to capture the raiders' leader - a wearer of purple named Cheela Flegsteel. She fled the battlefield, but they tracked her down. Cheela is a **mage** with no available spell slots left.

She knows the following information:

- The cult plans to attack a large number of settlements in the Delimbiyr Valley, including Daggerford. All the treasure they were carrying was taken by the dwarves, except for the magic sword, which was carried by the young black dragon.
- The young copper dragon must have tracked them down and attacked them with his acid breath weapon. Then the two dragons clutched with each other and flew away.
- The copper dragon is slain and lies near the lake. Cheela found him while she was looking for the magic sword. She found neither the sword nor her black dragon ally, then she took a scale from Fyro's body and walked away. The scale was taken away by Balpham.
- She awaits no reinforcements.

At your discretion, Cheela can lie, conceal information and bargain it for her life as much as she wants. She might have shared some or all of the information with Griswald and Balpham, if you would rather skip the interrogation scene. You can also add more facts to her knowledge if you will.

SCARLET LAKE

More a pond than an actual lake, this small basin is fed by the waters of Delimbiyr river where it winds through the Sword Hills, north of the Misty Forest. The lake bears its name because it is surrounded by a crimson leaf maple grove. The crowns reflect in the mirror surface of the lake, painting everything red, especially during the sunset hours. This grants this place a very serene and magical ambience. Rangers and druids love this place and often use it as a meeting place for their circles.

Scarlet Lake is roughly 150 feet by 250 feet across and rather shallow, reaching 60 feet at its deepest point. Characters with Passive Perception score of 15 or higher notice a tiny whirlpool disturbing the mirror surface of the pond about 50 feet from its nearest bank.

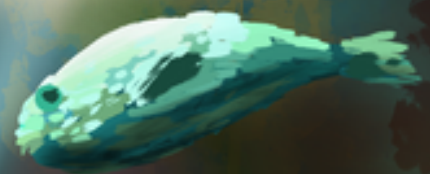
The lake is easy to find and it is about an hour walk from The Dead Fox tavern. The location is mostly empty at the moment except for 2d4+3 **giant vultures**.

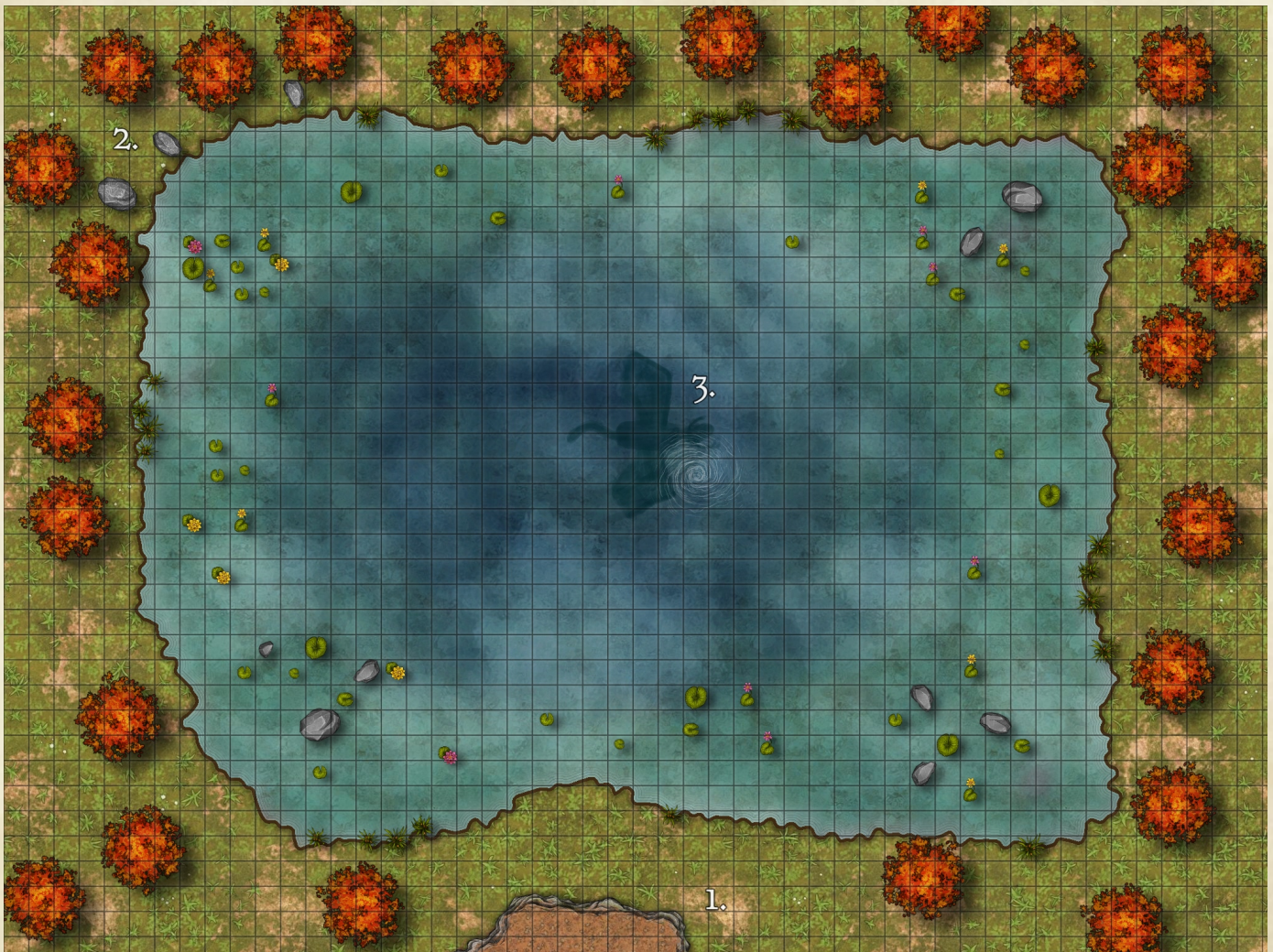
1. SLEEPING DRAGON

Fyro, a **young copper dragon**, lies on the grass some 50 feet away from the lake. He is under the effect of the lullaby poison (see the sidebar). The effect will last 8 more hours. An average inspection reveals a purple feathered arrow identical to the one that stung the paralyzed miner back in the Dead Fox tavern. Fyro also has one missing scale on his neck.

Three giant vultures bicker around the dragon. They've been pecking on his wing occasionally, leaving Fyro with 45 hp at the moment. Another two vultures are devouring the body of a dwarf. This is one of Balpham's miners that he sent to find the dragons. Another one hides nearby, too afraid to run. He will run to the tavern the instant the player characters distract the vultures. He is otherwise hesitant to talk and doesn't share the reason he's here. His friend was killed by the vultures. The rest of the vultures are either perched on a nearby cliffside or circle around in the sky. The cliffside is a steep rock varying from 15 to 20 feet in height.

Fyro has a rather sparkling personality and a strong sense of humor. Even given the circumstances he won't miss the opportunity to joke about his misfortunes (once he is cured from poison). Given that the characters don't act suspicious, Fyro is quite friendly and talkative. He willingly shares the story of his latest adventure if asked. The dragon cannot offer anything for his rescue though since the cult taken everything. He is curious as to what has come of his belongings.





Saved from the vultures and cured from poison, Fyro still has two levels of exhaustion and needs to make a long rest before he can fly again. He won't disdain the idea of staying near the Dead Fox.

2. DRUID STONES

Druids write on these stones on those rare occasions when they use the lake as a meeting place. The carvings look like abstract symbols and images, almost reminding marks that could be left here by natural causes. A character who knows druidic will understand that the carvings depict rites the local druids use to honor Nature and speak with Her. They will also notice a mention of the "demon weed's" presence in the lake.

A character without the knowledge of druidic needs a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to even notice that the mark's weren't left by natural causes and are actual carvings. Another successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) is required to decipher a warning about the dangerous seaweed in the lake.

Fyro's Humor

To give you the idea of Fyro's character, here are some of his answers to possible questions:

"Can I ride on your back?"

"Sure! But I'll ride on yours first, okay?"

"What do you think about Tiamat?"

"I heard she talks to herself"

Some of his other jokes might include:

"What do vultures and soap have in common? They sting your eyes."

"What did the red dragon say when a knight came to slay them? Ugh, I'm sick of canned food..."

"A knight came back to his king with sacks of gold and prisoners. 'Tell me of your battles!' Says the king. 'Milord, for weeks I've been murdering by your name, pillaging every enemy village to the North.'; the knight answers. 'But, but I don't have any enemies in the North.' 'Well, now you have, milord.'"

3. THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE

The most precious item in Fyro's collection now rests at the bottom of Scarlet Lake, stuck among the fingers of the slain **young black dragon**. The sword is called Fong Chi Go, or the Song of the Wind, and its magic causes the whirlpool visible on the surface of the lake, making it easy to locate. The dragon lies among the carnivorous seaweed called Dagon's fingers.

Fong Chi Go's magic defends the sword from rust and dirt, keeping it shiny and clean. The sword is sheathed, its handle resting right beside the closed dragon's eye.

The carnivorous seaweed is busy slowly digesting the poor dragon. It's visible by how the black scales slowly come off where Dagon's finger grapple the body. The amount and density of bushes is up to you.

Releasing the sword from the dragon's weight requires a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. Getting leverage from the dragon's body lowers the DC to 15. Failing the check by 5 or more will cause nearby Dagon's fingers to attack.

Dagon's fingers

This seaweed has a wide variety of subspecies and is believed to be an extension of the will of the Prince of Depths himself. They say that those touched by the weed are at risk of starting a slow descent into madness. Dagon's finger's statistics will vary depending on the subspecies. Described here is the most common case.

If a creature starts its turn within 5 feet of the seaweed, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw or become grappled by Dagon's fingers. While grappled this way, the creature takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage and has to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 1d6 poison damage and becoming poisoned for 24 hours. A poisoned creature develops a short-term madness (see *Chapter 8 of the Dungeon Master's Guide*). By the end of 24 hours, unless the creature has been cured for the poisoned condition, it must repeat the Constitution saving throw or develop a form of Indefinite Madness.

A single bush of Dagon's fingers has AC 10, 15 hp and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and poison damage.

DEVELOPMENT

You can use the following information as guidelines to mold the finale of this adventure.

GREEDY, GREEDY DWARF

Balpham is most likely going to become the final obstacle towards Fyro's freedom. He wants his hide, but if he'll learn about the existence of Fong Chi Go and the hide of the black dragon, he'll want to have those too. It will take two hours for the scout to inform Balpham of the dragon's location and for Balpham to arrive at the lake along with his miners.

Depending on the pacing of your story, Balpham can arrive while Fyro is still under the effect of the lullaby poison. The dragon's fate will then be entirely at the hands of the PCs.

Alternatively, the confrontation might happen when Fyro and the party gets back to the Dead Fox. In that case Griswald and his guards will be present during this scene. Griswald is a mercenary, but a crime like killing a copper dragon is a bit beyond him. Even though Balpham doesn't want to share this trophy, he will try to buy the veteran's loyalty if his life will be at stake.

THE RISE FROM THE ABYSS

If you want to truly spice things up, you could have the **young black dragon** arise from the depth at the most dramatic point of the story.

It could be as simple as using his last agonising twitch to try and bite the diver character.

Alternatively the dragon can wholly emerge from the waters, digested flesh slipping from his arms and tail like jelly. Having only a few hit points left, he could still use his final vengeful breath to add some chaos to the serene atmosphere of Scarlet Lake.

For even more flavor, you can have those rumors about Dagon's fingers turn out to be true. In this case the touch of the Demon Prince will serve as an explanation for the animation of the seemingly deceased dragon. Having touched a strong beast like this with his "fingers", Dagon paid some extra attention to this place on the Material Plane, deciding to toy with the surroundings. If you go with this option, you can have the dragon retain at least half of his hit points and grant him with a form of indefinite madness by which he believes to be the Chosen of Dagon and struggles to drown as many victims as possible, thus delivering them to the realm of his master.