



17. CENTAUR GROUNDS

Centaurs, the mighty four-legged creatures of the forest, half-man and half-horse. They avoid human contact; men's destructive nature contradicts everything they believe and would fight for. They occupied all areas of the duchy before men arrived. Now they hide north, far away from humans' steel and concrete.

Centaurs live in small settlements that never surpass twenty of thirty individuals. Most of them are settled by the river. Druid centaurs and elite warriors allied with the Dewborn. The most powerful of them are stationed in The Jade Palace.

D6 Failed Exploration Results

- 1 Several horse tracks lead to a clearing in the forest and stop there
- 2 A cave lair that has become and infestation of fungi and rot
- 3 A fungi-ridden bear carcass
- 4 An abandoned centaur campsite
- 5 The corpse of 1 centaur
- 6 A dead man. Torn in half.

D10 Random Events

- 1 No Encounter
- 2 – 3 Area Effect
- 4 – 6 Creature Encounter
- 7 – 9 NPC Encounter
- 10 Creature and NPC Encounter

D12 NPC

- 1 1 sentient myconid insists he's a farmer from Barrowstream
- 2 1 neutral centaur merchant
- 3 1d3 neutral pigmen druids
- 4 1d4 pixies (5-in-6 chance they summon 3d6 apes if threatened)
- 5 1d4 neutral merfolk eat in the river
- 6 1d6 neutral Dewborn rangers on a trip to parley with the centaurs
- 7 1d4 injured Brukesian soldiers. They insulted the centaurs
- 8 2 pigmen disguised as a centaur
- 9 2d6 pixie merchants, they sell charms to hex nosy travelers
- 10 2 neutral centaur diplomats. They strongly suggest foreigners to leave
- 11 1d3 sentient deer approach in absent-minded curiosity
- 12 1 friendly ogre enjoys conversing in elven. His language skills compare to a 2-year-old toddler

D12 Area Effect

- 1 A swallow caws at travelers and yells "LEAVE!". Then flies away
- 2 Abandoned centaur camp, 4-in-6 chance of finding evidence of horse tracks that lead to an ambush
- 3 1 predatory myconid eating a random **Creature**
- 4 1d6 deer being eaten by a random **Creature**
- 5 1d3 talking deer insist foreigners should not be here
- 6 Terrain danger (fallen tree, quicksand, landslide, flood, etc.) 2-in-6 chance one **NPC** is present
- 7 Dense green mist covers the woods for 1d8 hours, 4-in-6 chance creatures fall asleep and become centaur prisoners
- 8 A magical windstorm scourges the forest for 2 hours. This is the doing of a centaur druid
- 9 Trap set by centaur hunters (triggered), 1 dead **Creature**
- 10 A centaur horn announces the presence of intruders
- 11 1d6 neutral Dewborn travel south toward the Jade Palace Town, they mean no harm and have no weapons
- 12 1d4 satyrs play a song that causes other humanoid to follow them mindlessly (2-in-6 chance)



D12 Creature (Wilderness)

- 1 1d3 myconid predators
- 2 2d4 centaur hunters
- 3 2 trolls, they are centaur allies and flee to warn them if needed
- 4 1 pixie attempts to charm and make unwary travelers trigger a trap
- 5 2d4 centaur soldiers
- 6 1d4 ogres (2-in-6 chance camping)
- 7 2d6 starving wolves
- 8 1 shambling mound
- 9 1 giant myconid elk
- 10 1 centaur druid accompanied by six centaur soldiers and rangers
- 11 A squad of elite Dewborn soldiers. Three swordsmen and two archers
- 12 1 elite centaur hunter (4-in-6 chance it hides in the thickets)

Area of Interest

The Astral Dial

ASTRAL DIAL

Your mere presence defies the balance of the dial.
'Tis my duty to bring an end to your existence

Centaur Guardian

Ancient artifacts and relics from past civilizations help current societies learn from their predecessors. However, sometimes fate brings two completely different cultures together, even if they're divided by thousands of years in history. This is what happened to the centaurs in the Misty Forests. The nature-inclined people stumbled upon the Astral Dial, a thousands-of-years-old elven artifact to read the stars and the movement of other planes in contrast to the Astral Sea.

THE ASTRAL DIAL

Thousands of years ago, the elves that inhabited the now-called Brukesian Duchy built the Astral Dial. Their people were an exemplary group of elves. They had the cunning and thirst for knowledge of High Elves, and Wood Elves' deep connection with nature. As a result, their curiosity for the world that surrounded them had no limits.

The Astral Dial is the pinnacle of their long-gone civilization. The complex artifact allowed them to learn about the planes, their movement, and their relation to the Astral Sea. They deciphered star constellations that hid for centuries. The Astral Dial was more than a simple tool to satisfy their curiosity. It was a means to reach the next era of their civilization. The key for change.

Alas, they're gone. And nobody knows what happened to them. There is no trace of their departure, and there are no bones to mark their death. Their fate and whereabouts are, as of today, a mystery.

THE CENTAURS AND THE DIAL

The centaurs once occupied the vast lands of the Brukesian Duchy. The arrival of men and their thirst for conquest forced them to retreat into the deepest part of the northern woods.

A few hundred years ago, a group of centaurs moved to start a new settlement in the forest. They stumbled upon a great stone monument. The runes on the massive disks were not unknown to them, they understood this was elven-made. Its purpose, however, eluded their understanding. Centaur sages and druids spent a few years deciphering the functioning of the Astral Dial. The wise centaurs retraced the elves' steps. Little by little, their interpretations of the disks and their connection to the universe become more accurate. Perhaps one day they shall learn what happened to the elves by suffering their same fate.

THE DEWBORN AND THE DIAL

The Dewborn can weigh the importance of the Astral Dial though they aren't sure about it; they remain wary of the drawings and inscriptions left by the elves.

They ignore what happened to those elves to the day and don't wish to learn it the hard way. They once discussed this with the centaurs, but their druid leaders' curiosity for the universe's mysteries was greater than the Dewborn's cautiousness. While the Dewborn share the centaurs' will to protect the place, they certainly don't want to do with its purposes.

D8 Random Encounters

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| 1 | 1 predatory myconid roams the place hunting for easy food |
| 2 | 1d4 centaur scouts, their job is never to confront enemies but to report their presence as soon as possible |
| 3 | 1d4 Dewborn hunters help an injured centaur return home |
| 4 | 1 pack of sentient wolves led by a giant winter wolf |
| 5 | 2d4 angered satyrs reject any non-fey creature within 200 feet of the dial |
| 6 | 1d10 pigmen devoted to the dial fight and give their lives to protect it |
| 7 | 1 pixie mage (3-in-6 chance accompanied by 2 forest trolls) |
| 8 | The centaur guardian's familiar spots intruders and alerts its master |

D8 Random Events

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| 1 | A centaur druid summons a storm. It extinguishes exposed light sources |
| 2 | Mist covers the forest around the dial for 4 hours, the ground is not visible |
| 3 | The move of one of the dial's disks makes a loud clinking noise |
| 4 | A green dragon soars the sky and the echo of its roars lasts for a minute |
| 5 | Excruciating, unnatural silence plagues the forest for 1d10 minutes |
| 6 | A centaur druid emerges from a tree. Travelers scare it as it flees |
| 7 | The sound of a centaur stampede nearby impedes hearing other things |
| 8 | A swarm of fireflies spells the word "leave" and then dissipates |



GENERAL FEATURES

The ancient Astral Dial shows fissures and cracks. Patches of grass have found their way through the concrete. The golden, silver, and bronze disks' magical protection has preserved them well.

The vicinity of the Astral Dial and the dial itself have the following features:

Multi-leveled (three stages). **Mobile Disks** (too slow to perceive).

THE LOST ELVES

Little remains of the creators of the dial. However, the pillars, walls, and even the steps feature engravings and carvings that may hint at their whereabouts.

A carving depicts a green humanoid with large black eyes. Another one looks like a vehicle releasing fire from its back. They look like nothing from this world. There is no way to know if these drawings and the elves' disappearance are connected.

THE PACT OF THE FEY

Fey creatures made a pact to protect the Astral Dial and prevent it from falling in the wrong hands. They consider it a debt to the elves that lived here. Elves are, after all, an offspring of the fey. However, while all Dewborn, satyrs, and pixies would protect the dial, the pact states that centaurs are the rightful keepers of the former elvish artifact. But it doesn't prevent other fey from helping.

THE PROPHECY

The centaurs have come far in their understanding of the universe. They would like to help the Dewborn and believe they might develop a way to help them return to their home plane using the dial.

However, Bromus, one of the centaur druids, had a premonition in a dream: The centaurs were visited by extra-planar beings that arrived in giant floating metallic ships. The centaurs left the land and this world with them, never to return. A prophecy to be fulfilled, it was stated.

This is, in fact, what happened to the elves that created the arcane device. Their understanding of the universe became such that an otherworldly race saw that their thirst for knowledge could no longer be quenched in the confines of this world. The centaurs shall be the next apprentices if they continue down this path.

THE CENTAUR GUARDIANS

The protection of the Astral Dial is not taken lightly by the centaur community. The young ones are taught the importance of tradition, culture, and knowledge. Not long after the pact of the fey was struck, the centaurs formed an elite squad of soldiers devoted entirely to the protection of the Astral Dial. The group is always together and often accompanied by other fey creatures.

The six centaur guardians' names and roles are the following:

- Sophocles, the archer guardian
- Vangelis, the strong guardian
- Karolos, the druid guardian
- Sibylla, the sorceress guardian
- Erasmia, the soldier guardian
- Vasileia, the hunter guardian

DEALING WITH THE GUARDIANS

Humans ignore the existence of the Astral Dial because every time Brukesian soldiers dare explore this section in the forest, they never come back.

If, for any reason, a battle with the guardians should ensue, the guardians seldom fight alone. Other fey come to their aid.

“GUARDIANS, REMEMBER YOUR VOWS”

Strategy (tactical positioning). **Recklessness** (protect the dial at all costs). **Point of no return** (fight to the death).

► **No Mercy.** If combat starts, there is no turning back. The centaurs shall fight until they all die or there are no survivors on the opposite side. The guardians do tell the soon-to-be-dead intruders that they should have listened to the voices of the forest and return from whence they came when they had the chance. The guardians know no forgiveness.

