



Episode #1 – “Coming of Age”

BrowserQuests™ RPG Module Document

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Module Overview

This initial BrowserQuests™ (BQ) RPG module “Coming of Age” serves two purposes. First, it tells a short story regarding the genesis of the player hero within the Sisalus fantasy world and gently introduces the player to the game and how it works, providing an initial set of encounters, various directions, hints and clues regarding how the player should address a variety of situations when playing BQ. Second, the module serves as an example to other potential authors looking to design and implement their own quests, modules and campaigns, acting as a sort of template for their own derivative works.

This module is the first of the overall “The Sorrow of Sisle” campaign, the “official” (introductory) campaign of the BQ system. Hence, the module is the first of many to come, intended to be a smaller story told within the context of a much-larger story arc.

NOTE: If you are a player of the BQ system, stop here and do not read further, as the following documentation is not meant for game players—only authors!

Story Overview

After the player has created her own custom character, she begins her adventures within the small village of Tabin, a human settlement located within the goodly country of Pirapa. Having just graduated as a new adventurer from the town guild, the player character finds herself within the local Tabin merchant, there to purchase some initial supplies and equip herself as all adventurers must do.

After some initial purchases, the player quickly meets **Rachel**, the young daughter of the merchant who is a 2nd-level human thief herself. Rachel and her grumpy father have recently discovered a rat infestation within their large basement below the shop, and the player is quickly recruited into helping Rachel deal with the vermin.

Within the cellar, Rachel and the player soon discover that a large mother rat has chewed through the hidden door of a previously-unknown secret room, her babies the source of the infestation. Additionally, Rachel’s grandfather—a true rogue himself who had gone missing two years previously—is found within the secret room, the apparently victim of a natural heart attack. Hence, not only must the mother rat and her babies be taken care of, but the player will also help solve a small mystery regarding Rachel’s grandfather and what ultimately happened to him.

Locations

Two locations are used within the module, the **Tabin Merchant** and the **Tabin Merchant Basement**. An old wooden stairway connects the two locations, while a large front door leads out and away from the merchant building (a doorway that is impassible throughout this initial module).

Honor

Sure, always keeping your behavior in check, doing everything asked of you and following the law to the letter helped steer you down what otherwise would have been a rocky and even dangerous path. Being willing to do the right thing regardless of the circumstances isn't always easy, earning you a small bonus to your character's Honor behavior.

+1 Honor

Tolerance

Yeah, remaining tolerant of those with little tolerance in return certainly kept you out of a lot of trouble, helping you to master your anger and strengthen your ability to resolve conflict peacefully. Whether it was disagreeable actions, ideas or behaviors, your willingness to remain calm under pressure has earned you a small bonus to your character's Tolerance behavior.

+1 Tolerance

Encounter #30 – Merchant Entrance

So yes, you persevered nonetheless, and as you neared adulthood you embarked on the career of an adventurer, taking the last year to professionally train and prepare at the local adventurer's guild. Having just graduated from the guild, your first order of business is to equip yourself, and so you now stand just inside the entrance to the Tabin merchant, ready to begin your career as a goodly hero of Mairiga!

As you stand there and reflect upon the past year, let's do a Spirit Check on your character to see what you may be feeling...

Encounter #30 Resolution (Player Behavior Check—Spirit)

Success

While your training this past year was hard—by far the hardest thing you've ever done—all of that is in the past now and you're quite excited for the future and all the adventures to come! Indeed, you can't help but smile as you step forward, a sense of near-euphoria filling your soul as you begin the next chapter in your life.

Failure

The training you've endured this past year was hard and you're certainly glad that it's over. However, you're equally nervous now, as the life of an adventurer will be incredibly challenging and you're still not entirely sure if it's the life for you. Still, here you are, so you may as well at least equip yourself.

Encounter #40 – Initial Resolution

Standing in the entryway, you'll want to move to the storefront area itself. To do that, simply click the TRAVEL TO NEW AREA dropdown button within the “Response” panel and select “Doorway South (Merchant Storefront).” You'll always use this general approach of selecting a destination option from the TRAVEL TO NEW AREA button whenever you wish to leave the current area and journey to an adjacent encounter area.

Encounter #40 Resolution (Wait for Outside Resolution)

You quickly make your way to the simple door to the south, the actual entrance to the storefront beyond.

Encounter #50 – Quest Not Yet Complete

You’ve returned to the merchant’s main entrance, the stairway down to the cellar just off to the east. You can always return to the merchant's storeroom at anytime, but you won't be able to pass through the northern door out into the village of Tabin itself until after the completion of this initial quest.

Encounter #50 Resolution (Wait for Outside Resolution)

Encounter #60 – Wait for Module #2

And that's a wrap regarding this initial quest, "Vermin Extermination!" Naturally, the module was just a taste of what the BrowserQuests™ platform is all about--expect more quests, modules and even entire campaigns in the future!

Encounter #60 Resolution (Wait for Next Module)

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

Now that you’ve finished this initial quest within the town merchant’s building, you’re free to leave through the door to the north via the TRAVEL TO NEW AREA dropdown button. Note that if you DON'T see the “Village of Tabin” option, just refresh the browser and it should appear.

#2 – Merchant Storefront

Large and secure, all manner of items, possessions and adventuring supplies can be purchased and sold here.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

You step into the merchant’s main storefront, a large warehouse of a building where almost anything commonplace can be purchased and sold. However, the merchant himself seems to be an old, angry, unhappy man, looking you over during your first encounter as if thoroughly judging you without even knowing you.

GM Hint: Buy/Sell Advice

Encounter #10 Resolution (Buy/Sell Possessions)

The merchant moves slowly and methodically, keeping his eyes on you the entire time.

Encounter #20 – Racist Question

“You there!” the merchant calls after your initial transaction, showing his rotting teeth. “You...are you...human? You better be—I don’t serve no stinkin’ humanoids here!”

Encounter #20 Resolution (Choose Option)

No, I’m Not Human

“I thought so!” the merchant retorts, far angrier with you than he should be. “Get out of here, you scum! I said I don’t serve no humanoids here!”

What Of It, Jerk?

The racist question is quite unwelcome, of course, and you feel ready to give him a piece of your mind. That said, the non-human races ARE treated with much disrespect these days, but it’s another thing to actually experience it.

Yes, I’m Human

You answer affirmatively, but the merchant continues to stare at you as if he doesn’t believe you at all. The man clearly has issues, and while insulted, you’re not sure whether to be really angry or really sad for him.

Encounter #30 – Enter Rachel

“Come now, father!” a woman’s voice calls out from behind you. “Is that any way to treat a paying customer?”

Turning around, standing there is a young human woman dressed almost like a thief. The human looks you over from head to toe and smirks before continuing.

“Ah, and an adventurer—we don’t get many of your kind anymore! I don’t care WHAT race you are, so long as you have coin and are willing to buy.”

Encounter #30 Resolution (Converse)

“The name’s Rachel,” the woman continues, stepping into the large storeroom with you. “I live here—he’s my father. Pay no attention to how he talks.”

Encounter #40 – Rat Vermin Intro

“You chased all those damn rats out yet?” the old merchant hollers at his daughter, still quite angry and suspicious. “I HATE them things!”

“Not yet, you snarky old man!” Rachel returns, raising her own voice. “I told you, they’re a bit much for just a thief like me. I need some help!”

Encounter #40 Resolution (Choose Option)

Rats?

“Yeah, a bunch of normal-sized rats, I think led by a GIANT mother rat!” Rachel answers, holding her hands about four feet apart to indicate the size of the mother rat. “They’ve been crawling around downstairs for two weeks now and we can’t get rid of them! Meanest and most disgusting creatures we’ve seen!”

Encounter #50 – Giant Rat Trope

The merchant spits-out whatever it was he was chewing, the disgusting substance landing in a spittoon on the floor. Rachel pays him little heed, however, as she approaches you with an interesting offer.

“Say, you’re one of those fancy heroes from the guild, aren’t you, who goes around taking care of...problems like this. What say you help me clear out some vermin down in the basement?”

Encounter #50 Resolution (Choose Option)

Disgusting! No Way!

While giant rats may be something you can’t stand, you are a hero and this is a new quest, so you really don’t have a choice. Come on, every self-respecting adventurer must complete an initial giant rat quest—otherwise this wouldn’t be a legitimate fantasy role-playing game!

"What's in it for me?" you ask, hoping the reward will be enough incentive to agree.

Let Me At Them!

Well spoken, <Hero>! You know the trope—every self-respecting adventurer must complete an initial giant rat quest—otherwise this wouldn’t be a legitimate fantasy role-playing game! You then ask about a reward, hoping for something significant in return for your services.

What’s In It For Me?

Of course, with great risks come great rewards, huh? Sure, it’s OK to ask for something in return for your services. Just enjoy the giant rat quest, a favorite fantasy role-playing game trope!

Encounter #60 – Giant Rat Quest

“You’ll get nothing and like it!” the grumpy old man shouts, almost making you laugh.

“There’s all kinds of stuff here you can have once the deed is done,” Rachel offers, the reward seemingly appropriate. “I’m sure the two of us will be more than a match for the vermin down there!”

Rachel is willing to join you and form a small adventuring party together! Click the RECRUIT CHARACTER button to invite her into your party.

Encounter #60 Resolution (Recruit Character—Rachel)

Rachel appears equipped with a sling, shortsword and rudimentary equipment. Go ahead and click on Rachel’s profile to learn more about her!

Resolve Area: Shop Entryway – Quest Not Yet Complete

Quest Log: “Vermin Extermination” – “I agreed to help Rachel dispatch the rats that invaded her father's basement and she promptly joined my party--my very first fellow adventurer! I should first make sure I have some torches, then descend the stairway into the dark cellar with Rachel as soon as possible.”

Encounter #70 – Stairway Beyond

“The stairway down is back where you first entered the building,” Rachel continues confidently. “It’s quite dark down there, so we’ll need a source of light—make sure you have a few torches before we go.”

The old merchant continues to watch suspiciously as Rachel points toward the northern door. You can still buy and sell from the merchant, but nothing more will happen with Rachel until you leave this room and descend the stairway to the north.

Encounter #70 Resolution (Leave Area)

Rachel smiles a bit as she escorts you out, retrieving an old key from a hidden pocket.

Reveal Ext: Basement Stairway – Unlocked Door

Resolve Area: Basement Stairway – Ready to Descend!

Encounter #80 – Initial Resolution

The old merchant remains here, still quite suspicious of you but willing to buy and sell.

Encounter #80 Resolution (Wait for Outside Resolution)

Encounter #90 – Quest Complete!

You and Rachel return to the main shop area, your first quest complete. Rachel’s father is still down in the basement, but Rachel can help you buy and sell additional items if you wish.

This ends the initial BrowserQuests™ module “Coming of Age!” We’re currently working on the second module of the campaign, “Antidote of Fear.” Be sure to [sign-up for our newsletter](https://mailchi.mp/3b5b5bb782f4/browserquests-signup) so you’ll be contacted as soon as the new module is released and ready for play!

Encounter #90 Resolution (Wait for Outside Resolution)

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

The old merchant has now returned, still rather gruff but indebted to you and so much easier to work with now that you’ve helped with his rat infestation issue (not to mention the finding of his deceased father).

Rachel remains here as well, ready to depart her father’s shop and accompany you out into the village of Tabin. You’re now free to leave the building anytime you wish!

#3 – Basement Stairway

A worn but secure flight of wooden stairs descends about 20 feet, ending at a normally-locked cellar door.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

You stand about mid-way down a wooden staircase, the steps certainly worn but solid and secure. Peering down, you see a closed door that is likely locked as well, the entrance to the merchant’s cellar. Naturally, the basement is off-limits to customers such as yourself, so you’ll need to ignore it for now.

Encounter #10 Resolution (Wait for Outside Resolution)

Encounter #20 – Ready to Descend!

Rachel readies her worn stone key and quickly unlocks the door. She then nods for the two of you to continue.

Encounter #20 Resolution (Leave Area)

The two of you descend down the dusty stairway, Rachel unlocking the door moments later.

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

With Rachel at your side, you’re free to go up and down the stairway to the basement here as often as you wish.

Encounter #30 Resolution (Player Behavior Check—Empathy)

Success

From what you can tell, Rachel had a much closer relationship to her grandfather than her own father above, seeing her grandfather—and the often rebellious life he lived—as intriguing, perhaps even inspirational. From what little you know of Rachel, it’s very likely that she chose to become a professional thief to try and make her own grandfather proud.

Quest Log: “Vermin Extermination” – Descending into the labyrinth-like basement, a small conversation with Rachel revealed that she was fairly close with her grandfather, a rogue himself who likely served as a role-model for Rachel. She claims that he suddenly disappeared a few years ago, a bit of a mystery no one has been able to figure-out.

Failure

They say the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree, so to speak. You still don’t know much, but it seems Rachel is just like her grandfather, both rogues who don’t like authority and are out just for themselves.

Quest Log: “Vermin Extermination” – Descending into the labyrinth-like basement, a small conversation with Rachel reveals that she was fairly close with her grandfather. She claims that he suddenly disappeared a few years ago, a bit of a mystery no one has been able to figure-out.

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

Paths lead away to the north, east and south, while the stairs will take you back up to the merchant’s main floor above.

#2 – Damaged Ceiling

Probably the far northwestern corner of the basement, the ceiling here looks weak enough to collapse so be careful.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

You’ve reached perhaps the far northwestern corner of the basement, the walls mostly covered in shelves containing all sorts of junk and themselves old and cracking in several places. The ceiling appears to be in even worse shape—careful, it appears ready to collapse. However, you also notice something twinkling on the floor amidst the dust and debris in your artificial light.

Encounter #10 Resolution (Search Area)

As you investigate, you quickly disturb what appears to be a rat’s nest—and the little beasties aren’t too keen of your presence!

Encounter #20 – Rat Combat

A few normal-sized rats appear along with a GIANT rat from a small nest on the floor, ready to defend their territory with surprising wrath. Time to earn your keep as a would-be exterminator!

Encounter #20 Resolution (Defeat Encountered)

You take care of the rats, leaving their small nest open to discovery.

Monsters: 1 giant rat and 3 normal rats

Trap: 1 ceiling trap

Encounter #30 – Rat’s Nest Bounty

Although you’ve already searched the general area, in a situation like this you can also search a specific object (in this case, the rat’s nest). Just click the SEARCH OBJECT dropdown menu and select “one rat’s nest” to give it a thorough search!

Encounter #30 Resolution (Search Object—Nest)

Searching the nest, you find an old, broken hand mirror which was reflecting your light, a piece of trash that was certainly not worth its recovery. However, you also find a small bracelet, a bit tarnished but worth perhaps 20 gold pieces to the right buyer—be sure to click the TAKE ITEMS dropdown to recover the minor treasure!

Available Items: 1 bracelet

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

The rats taken care of, there’s little left to do here. Paths through all the collected stuff lead away to the south and east.

#3 – Sacks of Coal

Five large burlap sacks filled with coal lie neatly arranged here, enough of the heat-giving stone to last an entire winter. Naturally, you’ll want to keep your torches away from the coal!

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Amidst the many shelves and piles of stuff all about, you’ve encountered a small collection of large, sturdy burlap sacks, nearly four feet high and bulging with something inside.

“Oh, that’s only coal for the winter,” Rachel comments, looking over the five large sacks. “We just received it for this upcoming winter. Keep the torches away from it—the stuff burns easily.”

Let’s do a Curiosity Check with your hero to see if you notice anything unusual.

Encounter #10 Resolution (Player Behavior Check—Curiosity)

Success

As an adventurer, you’re always looking for items that could come in useful in sticky situations—and a piece of coal (and it’s substantial burning qualities) likely fits the bill.

Failure

Thinking little about the coal, Rachel reminds you that as an adventurer, you should always be looking for items that can come in useful in sticky situations—and a piece of coal (and it’s substantial burning qualities) likely fits that bill.

Encounter #20 – Coal for the Taking

Hence, you may want to think about searching the sacks here and grabbing a piece of the black, rocky substance. Who knows where you may need some sustained fire at some point?

Encounter #20 Resolution (Search Object—Sacks)

First asking if it’s OK with Rachel, you reach into one of the sacks and retrieve a fairly large brick of coal, stashing it away in your own pack. Rachel smiles and nods her head in agreement before suggesting that you continue on your way.

Possession Assigned to Player: Coal Brick

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

One of the coal sacks now raided, there’s nothing more to do here. Paths lead away to the west, east and south.

#4 – Weapons Cache

While certainly no armorer, the merchant has acquired quite the collection of old swords, axes, polearms and even a few missile weapons over the years here, all stockpiled in this area.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Likely marking the far northeastern corner of the merchant basement, you’ve come across a small cache of weapons and armor; while certainly no blacksmith, the merchant has acquired quite the collection of old swords, axes, polearms and even a few missile weapons over the years, all stockpiled in this area. Most of the items are in very poor repair, which is likely why the weapons aren’t available for sale in the merchant’s showroom above.

Encounter #10 Resolution (Search Area)

“Wow, look at all this junk!” Rachel exclaims, genuinely surprised. “I had no idea father had all this down here.”

Encounter #20 – Cursed Shield

After a thorough search, however, you really don’t find anything that’s any better than your own current equipment. Further, the stuff doesn’t exactly belong to you anyway.

About to give up, you then notice a small but shiny and attractive shield in all the junk, seemingly out of place. As Rachel continues to sift through all the stuff as well, what do you do?

Encounter #20 Resolution (Choose Option)

Leave The Shield Alone

“Wise move,” Rachel comments to you moments later, apparently watching whether you would actually take the shield or not. “It’s cursed—once you have it, you wouldn’t be able to get rid of it and it will make it easier for monsters to hit you.”

Perhaps having learned an important lesson, let’s reward that action with some bonus experience points!

+40 Experience Points

Take The Shield

As you reach for the shield, you feel a sudden yet very compelling desire to own it, as if the object is utterly crucial to your survival. Your hand just inches away, Rachel grabs your wrist from behind, her look of concern quite obvious.

“No, <Hero>, don’t. It’s cursed—once you have it, you won’t be able to get rid of it and it will make it easier for monsters to hit you.”

Quite thankful for the advice, you step away from the wretched thing!

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

The pile of armor and weapons a complete bust, it’s time to move on. Paths lead away to the west and south.

#5 – Crates of Foodstuffs

Several wooden crates full of carefully wrapped food—perhaps a dozen altogether—stand stacked atop one another here.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Several wooden crates full of carefully wrapped and preserved food—perhaps a dozen altogether—stand stacked atop one another here, encased in some sort of cloth to better protect them from spoilage. However, a few of the crates have been knocked over and even chewed into, their contents spilled across the floor. Clearly, the merchant above has a significant rat infestation problem!

Encounter #10 Resolution (Search Object—Crates)

Poking at the fallen crates on the floor, you’re not at all surprised to discover a small group of rats having their way with the foodstuffs within.

Encounter #20 – Rat Attack

Quite upset at having been discovered, the rats leap at you and attack!

Monsters: 5 normal rats

Encounter #20 Resolution (Defeat Encountered)

The rats are dispatched and you further examine the foodstuffs, counting three crates in total that have been damaged and will need to be replaced. Rachel shakes her head, mumbling something about how angry her father will be when he learns about what the rats have done here.

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

The crates now investigated, there’s nothing more to do here. Paths lead away to the north, west and southwest.

#6 – Wall of Lockboxes

Sitting on several shelves against a wall are dozens of small stone lockboxes, each requiring a key to open.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Sitting on several shelves against a wall here are dozens of small, stone lockboxes, each requiring a specific key to open. These boxes certainly contain valuables, but you are equally-forbidden to search them.

“I think this is where father keeps his little treasures,” Rachel comments, shaking a few of the boxes to ensure they are indeed secure. “I don’t even have the keys to open them.”

Encounter #10 Resolution (Possession Check—Ornate Dagger +1)

Success

Given that the old merchant has just given you something of substantial value, you wisely decide not to disturb any of these lockboxes.

Encounter Jump to Final Resolution

Failure

You should probably respect the wishes of the merchant above and leave these lockboxes alone.

Encounter #20 – Lockbox Consideration

Of course, anything that's locked typically means it's valuable! You can either walk away from the lockboxes or, perhaps, let temptation get the better of you and search the boxes just to see what might be available.

Encounter #20 Resolution (Search Object—Lockboxes)

Likely more curious than you should be, you try opening several of the lockboxes, Rachel watching with a combination of respect and intrigue as well.

Encounter #30 – Magical Dagger

Suddenly, you tug on yet another lockbox and the mechanism securing the unit breaks, falling into pieces on the floor—the box is now free to open! You give Rachel a look, asking with your eyes as to whether you should go ahead and actually open the box or not; Rachel nods affirmatively, and you give the drawer a slow pull.

Inside is a small but ornate dagger, its blade gleaming in the dim light. What do you do?

Encounter #30 Resolution (Choose Option)

Leave The Dagger Alone

While certainly tempted, you know in your heart that the weapon doesn't belong to you and you slowly push the drawer back in, apologizing to Rachel for having destroyed the lock. Rachel smiles and indicates that she will let her father know.

Let's reward your honesty with some experience points!

+100 Experience Points

Take The Dagger

Temptation getting the better of you, you withdraw the weapon from the lockbox and examine it.

“I think it's magical,” Rachel comments, gazing upon the item with equal intrigue. “Look how the blade shines in the light! I had no idea father had something like this locked-up down here.”

The dagger is yours and you secure it in your backpack.

Possession Assigned to Player Hero: 1 ornate dagger +1

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

The remainder of the lockboxes are closed and secure. At a natural intersection within the cellar maze, you can travel any of the four cardinal directions.

#7 – Stored Portraits

Tucked away into the far corner here are several old paintings, presumably of the merchant and his family.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Having reached the far southwestern corner of the basement, you find several old paintings tucked away into the far corner here, dusty from years of inactivity. Rachel takes a casual look and confirms that the

images portray her immediate family, the young thief showing a slight grin as she looks through the various paintings.

The woman then stops at a particular painting of an elderly man with a cocky smile.

“Grandfather...” Rachel whispers with longing and admiration.

Encounter #10 Resolution (Search Object—Painting)

You step alongside Rachel to get a better look. Her grandfather appears tall, handsome and proud, easily someone you’d expect Rachel to be equally proud of. You distinctly notice a unique gold chain around his neck, something he apparently possessed much of his life and greatly treasured.

Encounter #20 – Rachel’s Recollection

“This was commissioned about five years before his disappearance,” Rachel begins, continuing to admire the man within. “That was about the time he was working with some smugglers in the caves north of Tabin. He’d even take me out there with him from time to time to work with the men—they were just doing what they needed to feed their families and weren’t evil at all.”

The comment is a bit surprising. How do you wish to respond?

Encounter #20 Resolution (Choose Option)

That's One Way to Look At It

Attempting to remain neutral, you simply smile and nod, recognizing it’s not your place to say one way or another. Rachel smiles and continues.

There's No Dishonor in Survival

Recognizing that everyone is entitled to do as they must to survive, you express your tolerance of the situation, commenting that you’d likely do something similar. Rachel appreciates the comment and continues.

They Were Breaking the Law

Taking the high road, you comment that regardless whether the smugglers were trying to take care of themselves and their families, their acts were still illegal and they should have been punished. Rachel dislikes the comment but continues.

Encounter #30 – Sislán Interference

“Then the Sislans discovered their ‘Antidote’ and helped shut down the smuggling activities, claiming the caves as their own. Grandfather continued to serve as the town’s merchant above along with my father, until he disappeared about two years ago. It’s been just my father and me since.”

Encounter #30 Resolution (Auto Advance)

Rachel continues to gaze upon the portrait of her grandfather a bit more, then puts the painting away and covers it again, the touching moment over.

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

With little else here to discover, it’s time to move on. Paths lead away to the north and east.

#8 – Chewed Hole in the Wall

Amidst all of the shelving and supplies lying about, a modest hole appears in the wall here along the floor in the corner.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

As you walk past all of the shelving and supplies lying about near what appears to be the far southeastern corner of the labyrinth-like basement, you notice a disturbed area in the southern wall that appears to have been broken through and is now large enough to even crawl through.

“That’s odd,” Rachel begins, taking a closer look. “I haven’t seen THAT there before.”

Encounter #10 Resolution (Search Object—Hole in the Wall)

Both of you take a closer look at the hole, about two feet wide and two feet tall, just large enough for something your size to crawl through.

Encounter #20 – Hole Details

As you further examine the hole, you can clearly see that the edges have been chewed, not just cut, and the various droppings on the floor confirm your suspicions—this is how the rats are getting into the cellar!

Let’s do an Intelligence Check on the party to see if the two of you notice anything more.

Encounter #20 Resolution (Party Ability Check—Intelligence)

Success

It doesn’t take long for you to recognize that the wall here is actually a wooden secret door! Rachel quickly feels for the edges around the door, then finds a latch that opens the door to reveal what appears to be a secret room beyond! Apparently, the rats had found the wooden door from the other side and chewed their way through recently.

Exit Revealed: Chewed Hole in the Wall – Secret Door

Failure

Examining the hole, it soon becomes clear that the wall here is actually a wooden secret door! Rachel quickly feels for the edges around the door, then finds a latch that opens the door to reveal what appears to be a secret room beyond!

Exit Revealed: Chewed Hole in the Wall—Secret Door

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

You can now proceed south through the secret door. You can also travel west, north and northeast within the basement as well.

#9 – Hidden Chamber

This hidden chamber is only 20 feet to a side but contains the furnishings of a modest recreation room.

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Passing through the damaged secret door in the northern wall here, you find what is clearly a hidden chamber, just 20 feet to a side and containing the furnishings of a modest recreation room. The area is quite humid and you hear the trickling sounds of water in the far southeastern corner of the chamber. You’ll certainly want to give the room a thorough search!

Encounter #10 Resolution (Search Area)

It doesn't take long to recognize that you've found an apparent safe room, otherwise hidden from the rest of the basement and made for hiding-out or for extended stays as necessary.

Encounter #20 – Grandfather's Hideout

Indeed, among the furniture are foodstuffs, several books, some knucklebones (for playing games of chance) and even some wood-working tools for passing the time away. By the looks of things, someone could hide out down here for weeks at a time if necessary.

Of course, it's the corpse sitting at the table that piques your curiosity and you soon make your way to it.

Encounter #20 Resolution (Search Object—Skeleton)

The two of you quickly make your way to the body at the table, slumped over but still sitting upright in its chair.

Encounter #30 – Grandfather Himself

Dressed in standard merchant's garb, the corpse is now mostly a skeleton, the flesh all but gone and its hair lying on the floor, the body slumped over in front of what appears to have been dinner perhaps a few years ago. The right arm of the corpse appears to be clutching at its chest, but no means of foul play are noticeable.

What IS noticeable is the unique gold chain around the skeleton's neck, and Rachel suddenly recognizes the body.

“Grandfather!”

Let's do a Constitution Check to see if you notice anything else about the skeleton.

Encounter #30 Resolution (Party Ability Check—Constitution)

Success

By the looks of the body, it seems fairly clear that Rachel's grandfather likely suffered some sort of heart attack while hidden-away down here. While certainly poignant, it appears that the old man simply died of natural causes, solving the mystery of his disappearance!

Quest Log: “Vermin Extermination” – While exploring the merchant's vast cellar, we discovered a secret room where, apparently, Rachel's roguish grandfather would hide himself away, likely to just get away from life for a while. Unfortunately, it appears the old man suffered a fatal heart attack and died at his makeshift dinner table. At least the mystery behind his disappearance has been solved!

Failure

Unfortunately, you really can't tell how Rachel's grandfather died (and whether it was a natural death or not). But while poignant, at least you've helped solve the mystery of his disappearance!

Quest Log: “Vermin Extermination” – While exploring the merchant's vast cellar, we discovered a secret room where, apparently, Rachel's roguish grandfather would hide himself away, likely to just get away from life for a while. We couldn't tell how he died, but at least the mystery behind his disappearance has been solved!

Encounter #40 – Return of the Merchant

Holding back tears, Rachel carefully removes the gold chain from around her grandfather’s skeleton, holding it to her chest as she relives certain memories of the man inside her head.

You then hear a familiar voice from the secret door to the north.

“You, you FOUND him!”

Encounter #40 Resolution (Auto Advance)

Standing in the secret doorway is the merchant from above, Rachel’s father apparently having followed the two of you down here and now just in time to discover his own father as well. Rather stunned by the find, the grumpy merchant slowly steps forward and joins the two of you near the skeleton.

Encounter #50 – Brief Discussion

“I had no idea he built himself a safe room,” the merchant begins, surprised by it all. “He would disappear for days—sometimes weeks—at a time, and nobody knew where he’d go.”

“Doesn’t surprise me one bit!” Rachel chuckles, a fitting end to her grandfather’s wondrous life. “He liked his privacy, always wanting to think and scheme. At least we now know nobody got the better of him.”

“Yeah, but what about US?” the merchant slowly utters, pointing toward something to the east.

Encounter #50 Resolution (Auto Advance)

Turning to your right, you notice what appears to be an underground well in the southeastern corner, a convenient source of water for anyone hiding within the room. However, the well has been turned into an obvious nest for something quite large.

Encounter #60 – Eyes of Trouble

Indeed, two bulbous, reddish eyes stare at you from about twenty feet away, a giant mother rat! The monster is several feet long and possesses teeth that can kill a grown human being. The three of you stare at the beastie for several moments, then the creature backs away, perhaps more afraid of you than you are of it.

“So you’ve found the source of the infestation,” the merchant comments, not willing to take another step forward. “The two of you need to deal with it!”

You look to Rachel, unsure of what to do next.

Encounter #60 Resolution (Choose Option)

Attack the Monster

Well, you DID come down here to take care of the rat problem. Looks like you’ll have one final boss to deal with—just head east to take on the giant rat and beat the monster down!

Reveal Exit: Hidden Chamber: Path East to Well – Path

Flee the Chamber

You suggest that the secret room is not that important, and that a hasty retreat is likely the best approach. Both the merchant and his daughter disagree, however, and Rachel draws her weapon, about to head east toward the well and nest.

Reveal Exit: Hidden Chamber: Path East to Well – Path

Negotiate a Reward

The merchant hastily agrees that he'll provide something for the trouble, but urges you to hurry before the creature can escape. You nod your head in agreement and ready your weapon, Rachel doing the same a moment later.

Reveal Exit: Hidden Chamber: Path East to Well – Path

Encounter #70 – Go East!

Recognizing that the giant rat needs to be dispatched before it can escape down the well, you'll need to rush toward the well and large nest to the east!

Encounter #70 Resolution (Leave Area)

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

There's little to be gained by remaining within the hidden room here. You can retrace your steps back through the secret door to the north.

#10 – Underground Well

A small brick well stands here, clearly created to draw fresh water from below (without having to leave the room).

Encounter #10 – Introduction

Reaching the far southeastern corner of the secret chamber, a small brick well stands here, clearly created to draw fresh water from. Trickling water can be heard from the well—the groundwater must only be perhaps 10-20 feet below.

The well is nearly hidden underneath piles of sticks, leaves and other debris, however, an obvious nest for the giant mother rat that has made the secret room its own recently. Indeed, the beastie isn't too happy that you've invaded its lair—you likely only have a few moments to react before it attacks!

Let's do an Inventory Check on your party to see if you have anything that can help in this situation.

Encounter #10 Resolution (Possession Check—Coal Brick)

Success

Yes, you do have that block of coal you grabbed from the basement earlier. Since it's flammable, you could set it on fire and hurl it toward the nest!

Failure

Standing there, you wish you had something that was very combustible that you could throw into the nest to set it afire. You don't, however, so you'll need to attack the giant rat directly.

Jump to Encounter #50 (Giant Rat Battle)

Encounter #20 – Something to Throw

Select something from your inventory to use as a missile against the giant mother rat and set its nest on fire!

Encounter #20 Resolution (Offer Possession—Coal Brick)

Retrieving the brick of coal from your backpack, you quickly set it afire and hurl it toward the nest!

Encounter #30 – Dexterity Check

Let’s do a Dexterity Check to see if your flaming coal hits the nest or not. Given that the nest is fairly large and you’re fairly close, I’ll award you a +4 to your dexterity on your d20 roll.

Encounter #30 Resolution (Player Ability Check—Dexterity)

Success

Bingo! The strike is a direct hit, and within moments the nest is on fire! Too preoccupied with you, the giant rat doesn’t realize the immediate danger until the fire is burning it as well, and the creature squeals in pain as it lunges forward, its fur partially on fire!

Failure

Alas, the throw is errant and the burning lump of coal falls to the stone floor away from the nest—good try, but not good enough. Looks like you’ll have to battle the giant rat at full strength!

Jump to Encounter #50 (Giant Rat Battle)

Encounter #40 – Giant Rat Afire Battle

The monster is now directly in front of you! However, it instinctively rolls about trying to put the fire out; you’ve already significantly damaged the beast, so hopefully the battle will go easier for you!

Half Strength; Must Fight

Encounter #40 Resolution (Defeat Encountered)

A final blow is struck and the giant rat is slain! Well done, you’ve defeated the vermin.

Jump to Encounter #60 (Aftermath)

Encounter #50 – Giant Rat Battle

The monster is now directly in front of you! Be careful, it’s a full two hit die monster, meaning that it likely has as many hit points as you and Rachel combined.

Encounter #50 Resolution (Defeat Encountered)

A final blow is struck and the giant rat is slain! Well done, you’ve defeated the vermin.

Encounter #60 – Aftermath

The combat concluded, the merchant approaches as you bandage your wounds, the old shopkeeper genuinely impressed with both you and Rachel.

Encounter #60 Resolution (Auto Advance)

“Well, my oh my, you two make a good team,” the merchant begins, surveying the giant mother rat. “I really didn’t think you could do it.”

Encounter #70 – Ready to Adventure!

“I told you, father, I’m more than ready for the life of an adventurer!” Rachel exclaims, a little angrier than you would have expected. “So, what do you want to do with this...mess...down here?”

“I’ll take care of it all,” the merchant replies, kicking the mother rat a few times to make sure it’s dead. “I know...people...who can help me clean things up. But I want to keep this room a secret, OK?”

Both you and Rachel nod.

Encounter #70 Resolution (Auto Advance)

The merchant then continues.

Encounter #80 – Treasured Dagger

“Let’s also keep your grandfather’s death a secret—no one need know of what really happened to him. Better that his legend lives on.”

Moments later, the merchant turns to you, something clearly on his mind.

Encounter #80 Resolution (Possession Check— Ornate Dagger +1)

Success

While I’m appreciative of what you’ve done here, you also took something that doesn’t belong to you,” the merchant continues, obviously referring to the bejeweled dagger you found earlier in the basement. “Go ahead and keep it, given what you’ve done here. But it’s certainly not something to be proud of.

Resolve Area: Merchant Storefront – Final Resolution

Effect Applied to Target: Party Reputation -1

Quest Log Complete: “Vermin Extermination” – Quickly locating the giant mother rat, Rachel and I promptly defeated the monster. As a reward, the merchant let me keep the magical dagger I found earlier in the basement, though not without a lecture in taking things that don’t belong to me first. Still, not only did we take care of the rat problem but discovered what had happened to Rachel’s grandfather as well—our quest was complete!

Failure

“Here, <Hero>, let me reward you with this—it’s been in our family for generations, and I think you’ve earned it.”

Resting in the merchant’s hand is an ornate dagger, unnaturally shiny and likely magical. He hands the possession to you, and with Rachel’s affirmative nod you secure the +1 dagger, your first real treasure!

Resolve Area: Merchant Storefront – Final Resolution

Effect Applied to Target: Party Reputation +1

Possession Added to Player: Ornate Dagger +1

Quest Log Complete: “Vermin Extermination” – Quickly locating the giant mother rat, Rachel and I promptly defeated the monster. In return, the merchant gave me a bejeweled magical dagger +1 that had been in the family for generations. Not only did we take care of the rat problem but discovered what had happened to Rachel’s grandfather as well—our quest was complete!

Encounter #90 – Quest Complete!

The old merchant nods, and Rachel gives her father a rather awkward hug. She then steps to you, ready to depart.

At this point, you’ve successfully completed this initial “Vermin Extermination” quest! Feel free to make your way back up to the shop entryway for further instructions...

Encounter #90 Resolution (Auto Advance)

Rachel gives you that cocky grin you’ve come now to expect from her and then steps away, ready to lead you back to the surface and beyond.

"I think we DO make a good team," Rachel continues, apparently ready to stay with you a while longer.

Reveal Exit: Underground Well: Fast Track Back to Stairway Up – Path

Resolve Area: Tabin Merchant – Shop Entryway – Wait for Module #2

XP Awarded: 400

Encounter #100 – Final Resolution

There’s nothing more to do here near the well, so you should head west through the secret chamber and back up to the merchant's entryway.

If you'd rather expedite your return, click TRAVEL TO NEW AREA, choose the "Path West (Basement Entrance)" and you'll be taken immediately to the stairway going up!