



## INTO THE BLOOD MINE

**I**nto the Blood Mine is a Fifth Edition adventure for four to six characters of 3rd-to-5th-level. Characters of 3rd or 4th level may have difficulty navigating some of the adventure's challenges which requires stealth and smart thinking on the part of the heroes versus force. A party that successfully finishes the quest and retrieves the noble's lover's corpse should earn enough experience to earn half the experience needed to reach 4th or 5th level, or one-third of the experience needed to reach 6th level.

### BACKSTORY

A few years ago, a human jeweler from the south named Karst Fultane supplied a worthy sum of capital to a group of dwarves to tap into the Khol Tharum lode. Fultane correctly predicted the Khol Tharum lode would yield healthy deposits of the rare gem bloodstone. The first two years were a huge success for Karst as he saw his investment paid off in triplicate. Unfortunately, the dwarves dug too deep and tapped into something dangerous. While digging an expansion to the mine, they released a swarm of strange, multi-colored insects. Although the insects weren't aggressive, their thick, gem-like hides made them impossible to kill. When provoked, their innate poison was enough to kill a fully grown reindeer. To make matters worse, the insects fed on gems. Within a matter of weeks, the buzzjewels—as the miners dubbed them—made mining bloodstone impossible. The dwarves abandoned the mine.

Unfortunately, not everyone in the mine made it out alive. Fultane's business partner, Anaya, was swarmed by the insects and poisoned to death. Because Fultane refused to send troops into the mine to reclaim it, Anaya's body was never recovered. A year later, Anaya's former lover, Raphail Manolou of Presson's Enclave, wants the characters to enter the mine and recover whatever they can of Anaya so they can properly lay her to rest.

### GETTING THE QUEST

While the characters are traveling through a northern settlement (the village of Borgstrand from the adventure path *They Came From Beyond!* works perfectly) they're approached by a lawful good human **noble** named Raphail Manolou. Likely the noble heard about the characters' deeds and recognizes them by their reputation.

It's a cold day like any other in the north. As you're traipsing through the snow, a well-dressed man approaches you. "Excuse me!" he says over the cold wind. "If you are who I think you are, I could really use your help. I'm willing to pay."

Raphail introduces himself and explains the details mentioned above. He hopes the characters can enter the mine at Khol Tharum and find the remains of his ex-lover Anaya who perished a year ago. He realizes that her corpse will probably be in a poor state and mostly unrecognizable, but mentions that she often wore a pearl necklace he gave her. Each pearl in the necklace had a gold "A" set onto it. If the characters find the necklace, they will likely find Anaya. Raphail offers to pay the characters 300 gp to recover Anaya's remains.

If the characters agree, Raphail gives them directions to the Khol Tharum lode and provides transportation if necessary.

### THERE BE TROLLS

The mine is 10 miles from the village where they met Raphail Manolou. Mid-way to the mine, the character with the highest passive Wisdom (Perception) score or one proficient in Survival notices large tracks in the snow heading the same way that they are going. As they get closer to the mine, the tracks are more frequent.

A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check recognizes the tracks as those made by trolls.

Soon the characters will discover that a band of three trolls and their pet polar bear have claimed the ground level of the mine. They will have to get past the trolls and their pet if they hope to descend to the lode.

## KHOL THARUM MINE LOCATIONS

The majority of the mine's floors, tunnels, and ceilings are made from rough hewn stone. The top level is exposed to the elements and relatively cold compared to the warmer lower level. Excluding the first few areas that allow in natural light, the mine lacks illumination.

**Sleeping Trolls.** The three trolls and their pet polar bear recently nabbed a pair of grazing reindeer. Because these trolls aren't acclimated to the weather like their ice troll cousins, the large meal and lack of warmth encourages them to sleep for long hours throughout the day. If the characters are quiet and don't make too much noise entering the ground level of the mine, they can bypass the trolls without combat. Even if they wake the trolls, the trolls would rather sleep than chase after some obnoxious adventurers, only going far enough to scare them away from the mine.

**Buzz Jewel Remains.** If the characters kill a swarm of buzzjewels, they can collect 3d20 gems from their remains. Each gem is valued at 5 gp. Additionally, there is a 5% chance that one of the buzz jewels yields a gem worth 100 gp.

### 1 - MINE EXTERIOR

A twenty-foot-high wooden palisade encompasses the entrance to the abandoned mine. Despite years of neglect, the fortifications look to be in excellent condition. It appears that the only way into the actual mine is through a large, wooden gate.

A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check detects that the trolls have been entering the fortress by climbing over the southern side of the palisade right near where it connects to the rockface.

The gate's hinges have rusted shut making it almost impossible to enter the fortress that way. Not even the trolls could pry the gate open. They've since taken to using it as an obstacle for would-be trespassers. The characters can pull the gate open with a successful DC 23 Strength check.

Climbing the palisade is simple with a rope and grappling hook. Otherwise, a character needs to succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to get over the wall. Unless the character is careful, though, they might run into the trap set by the trolls (see "Fortifications" below).

### 2 - FORTIFICATIONS

The palisade's interior wall walk is trapped with sharpened metal spikes, broken glass, and other hazards. Characters who climb onto the palisade's wall walk from any area other than the 10-foot section closest to the southern rock face must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) piercing damage from the hazards. Characters who are aware of the hazards make their saving throws with advantage.

Once the characters enter, read the following:

Large snow drifts blanket tipped-over mine carts, discarded tools, and other signs that this was once a working mine. Fresh, giant-sized tracks lead into the mine's dark entrance. With the icicles that cling to its ceiling, the entrance looks not unlike the gaping maw of some malicious creature.

The tracks are the trolls'.

Snoring. The troll lying on the platform in area 4 is sound asleep. Its snores so loud, it almost sounds like a gargantuan creature's growl.

### 3 - THE MINE

A mine cart track leads deeper into the mine where it meets a junction. When the mine was still operational, two levers allowed the miners to change the direction of the minecarts. The gears used to operate the system no longer function.

**Treasure.** One of the mine carts on the track is filled with large, gray rocks. A character with a passive Perception score of 10 or better notices a gem glistening in the cart—bloodstone. However, a character with a passive Perception score of 15 or better notices that the cart's wheels are rusted nearly to the point of ruin. Each time a character touches the cart, roll a d6. On a result of 5 or higher, one of the cart's wheels breaks, spilling the rocks onto the wooden platform. This alerts the trolls in areas 4, 6, and 7, as well as the polar bear in area 5. It takes 1 round for the trolls to wake. They then go to investigate the disturbance. Cold, tired, and lazy, the trolls won't chase the characters beyond the palisade unless the characters do something to anger them.

The bloodstone gem is worth 50 gp.

### 4 - SLEEPING TROLL

One of the three trolls that inhabit the upper level of the mine uses the platform to sleep. Having just eaten a meal of reindeer and buried under thick furs, the **troll** is quite comfortable where it is and won't appreciate the characters waking it.

**Treasure.** The troll keeps a stash of "goodies" it found in the cave in an old, leather satchel. It holds the satchel like a teddy bear when it sleeps. The satchel holds 60 gp, 8 uncut bloodstones (each worth 50 gp), and a jeweled dagger worth 100 gp.

### 5 - SLEEPING POLAR BEAR

The trolls' nameless pet **polar bear** sleeps between a pair of picnic tables the miners once used for meals. Like the trolls, it recently had a large meal of reindeer and is fast asleep. So long as the characters don't make a lot of noise moving through the area, the polar bear won't wake from its slumber.

### 6 - BARRACKS

There are four bunks in this small room. A **troll** has pushed together two of the bunks and now lies across two of the lower beds, fast asleep. The trolls did a good job of looting the common areas. There is nothing else of value here.

### 7 - FOREMAN'S QUARTERS

This room was once Anaya's. Now a **troll** has claimed it as her own.



Cartography by Tom Cartos. Get variants of this map on [Tom's Patreon account](#).

**Empty Treasure Chest.** The chest at the foot of the bed is empty.

### 8 - RICKETY PLATFORM

This old platform holds nothing of value. However, the last twelve months haven't been kind to it. Its supports are completely dry-rotted. If 100 or more pounds are placed onto the platform, it collapses. Any creature standing on or under the platform when it crashes must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much on a successful one. Naturally, the sound alerts the trolls and their polar bear.

### 9 - BROKEN ELEVATOR

Once a marvel of dwarven ingenuity, this old elevator's gears and cables have turned to rust. No amount of tinkering will get the device operational. The platform is currently on this level, however, the 100-foot-deep shaft into which it once descended is easily accessible at the elevator's rear.

**Climbing the Shaft.** If the characters don't use their own gear to descend down the shaft, they can climb up or down the elevator's old cables with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. A character who fails the check falls down the shaft. To determine how far the character falls, subtract the check result from 10 and multiply the difference by 10. The character takes 3 (1d6) damage for every 10 feet they fall this way. For example, a character who gets an 8 on their check will fall 20 feet, taking 7 (2d6) damage as a result.

**Droning.** The first time the characters descend the elevator shaft, they can hear the sound of the buzzjewels' droning.

### 10 - COMMON AREA

Anaya and the other principals once worked from this common area as the dwarves toiled in the western tunnels. Thick dust covers everything.

**Encounter: Buzzjewels.** A **swarm of buzzjewels** (see the sidebar) buzzes about this area. The swarm won't attack unless provoked. If the characters are carrying any valuable gems on them, the buzzjewels might inspect and try to snatch the jewels, but still won't bite unless the characters attack first.

### 11 - ANAYA'S CORPSE

A desiccated humanoid corpse lies on this old, wooden platform. All around the body lie the remains of dead buzzjewel insects, each a blackened, hollow corpse.

The corpse is Anaya's. If the characters inspect the body, they will find her old pearl necklace. Although the pearls are gone, eaten by the buzzjewels, the gold remains.

**Bad Pearls.** If a character makes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check on the buzzjewel remains, they will discover that each of the insects has a pearl lodged in its abdomen. Pearls are toxic for buzzjewels, killing them instantly. The eight pearls are worth 100 gp each. Returning the corpse to Manalou and its necklace is enough to prove Anaya's fate.

## SWARM OF BUZZJEWELS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 42 (5d8 + 20)

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Spell Reflection.** The swarm has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects. If the swarm succeeds on its saving throw against a spell, the effect is reflected back at the caster as though it originated from the swarm, turning the caster into the target.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

### Actions

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half its total hit points or fewer remaining. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

### 12 - POOL

The miners used to use this pool to draw water, which they then boiled to sterilize. Buzzjewels won't enter the water, therefore, it might act as a safe place to hide should the creatures swarm.

### 13 - DEADLY PATH

This narrow, winding path is beset by 50-foot deep pits. A creature who falls into a pit takes 22 (5d6) damage from the fall. Climbing out requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Encounter: Buzzjewels.** Two **swarms of buzzjewels** (see the sidebar) gnaw on bloodstone still stuck in the rock. The swarms won't attack unless a character comes within 5 feet of them. Once aggravated, the swarms will chase the characters until they jump into a pool of water (see area 12) or leave the level.

## 14 - DRONING

So long as the buzzjewels in area 15 are still alive, the buzzjewel's droning reaches a cacophony in this part of the cavern. A creature that enters this area for the first time must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, or become deafened for 1 minute. A character can repeat their saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on a success.

The walls of this chamber are heavily pocked, signs that the buzzjewels picked the entire area clean.

## 15 - THE HIVE

When the dwarves were digging in this part of the cavern, part of the floor collapsed revealing the buzzjewels' tunnels below. Immediately, the buzzjewels filled the mine, attracted to the mine's bountiful supply of bloodstone.

**Encounter: Buzzjewels Hive.** The buzzjewels now make their hive here. There are six **swarms of buzzjewels** (see the sidebar) here. If the characters come within 10 feet of the buzzjewels, they instinctively defend their territory and attack. The buzzjewels won't follow the characters into water or back up to the ground level.

## CONCLUDING THE QUEST

Once the characters return with Anaya's remains, Raphael Manolou pays the 300 gp promised. Naturally, the noble is devastated at the loss of Anaya. He blames Karst Fultane for her death and wishes there was some way he could get back at the tyrannical jeweler.

Unless the characters cleared the tunnels of the buzzjewels, the mines are worthless. However, they might have noticed that pearls are toxic to the buzzjewels. With a healthy supply of pearls, they could potentially clear the mine of the vermin.

And it just so happens that Karst Fultane's jewelry store specializes in pearls. Ω

## OPEN GAMING LICENSE

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other forms in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphics, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly

identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License
6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title, and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. System Reference Document 5.0 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson. Into the Blood Mine. Copyright 2020, Hamrick Brands, LLC. Authors: Dave Hamrick and Tom Cartos.

END OF LICENSE