

# Mouse Guard Fall 1154: The Thieves of Pebblebrook



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The small town of Pebblebrook lies on the outskirts of the Territories, far removed from the other towns with the Weasels of Darkheather's border dangerously close. When mail runners from Pebblebrook stop arriving, Gwendolyn, the Matriarch of the Guard, sent out a small patrol consisting of the guards Paige, Aubrey, and Delvin. When Paige's patrol is more than a week late, Gwendolyn does the only thing she can do, she sends in backup.

### Form Patrol

*The Thieves of Pebblebrook* can be used as the first adventure for a new patrol or can be inserted as an ongoing adventure of a patrol already outside of Lockhaven. Gwendolyn could very easily assemble the new patrol solely to go find the missing mice and check on Pebblebrook.

### Assign Mission

When Gwendolyn briefs the mice, she informs them of the lack of communication from Pebblebrook and the missing patrol. She makes sure to identify the patrol mice by name and identifying marks, like their cloak colors, so the new patrol will know what to look for. She stresses that the mission is dangerous and that they are to turn back if they get in over their heads. She's can't afford to lose a second patrol.

Alternatively, a patrol already out of Lockhaven could be given orders to check out Pebblebrook by Gwendolyn through a runner. This especially makes sense if the patrol is near the western edge of the Territories. It's also possible that while trading in Barkstone or another town, the patrol hears word that no one has come from that far west in a long time and many of the trade caravans are overdue. They could even

report a patrol heading out to investigate and disappearing as well.

Start the adventure as the patrol is entering the surrounding forest, still a distance away from Pebblebrook as the group stumbles across an abandoned farm house.

### GM's Turn

#### Investigating the Farm House

The patrol notices an abandoned farm house, its front doors thrown open and goods scattered in front of the house. There's a barn off to one side. The first level of the house has been thoroughly ransacked, with an emphasis on the pantries. The second level is exposed to sky as the back part of the house on this level has been ripped away, leaving large claw marks on either side of the opening and mouse blood on the floor.

Taking a closer look at the claw marks with a **Loresource** Ob. 1 check or some kind of relevant wise reveals that the marks were made by a raptor, most likely a hawk of some kind.

Outside near the cellar doors, there is a dead mouse child with no visible wounds. Any **Healers** or **Scientists** in the party can easily determine that she was dropped by a great height, which further confirms the idea of the attacker of this farm being a hawk.

When the patrol moves towards the barn or as their investigation brings them back outside, they notice a group of three mice coming out of the barn, laden with goods. When the three bandits spot the guards' cloaks, they take off running, goods spilling out of their full arms and knapsacks.

Here the patrol may decide to split up if they feel that there is more investigation to be had at the farm. At this juncture that is okay. The **Stop Those Mice!** conflict can be run quickly with a smaller patrol or as an Obstacle if the GM is concerned about running two halves of the patrol for a short time. If this happens, add some more details for the group back at the farm, confirming the hawk's presence and possibly even a sign of **Illyia**, the fox in the area to reward them for their persistence.

### Stop Those Mice! (Chase Conflict)

The bandits are lead by a mouse named Morris who has been collecting goods from the now dead residents in the area. Morris and his group work with the fox, Illyia, in the area, though it's not exactly a relationship of mutual respect. Morris and the bandits' goal is pretty clear, to escape from the patrol with their stolen goods. Possible compromises they could make include dropping enough of their stolen grain and supplies to provide a trail back to the bandits' lair (this may or may not require an Ob. 1 or 2 **Pathfinder** check to follow at the GM's discretion). On the other side of things, a losing patrol is going to suffer from the **Tired** condition. If Morris and the bandits are caught, they will try to remain stalwart at first but will give up the information they have with only a little bit of convincing or force and will begrudgingly lead the patrol back to their lair.

### Morris and the Bandits

Raw Abilities	Rating	Special Abilities	Rating
Mouse Nature	4	Resources	2
Will	2	Circles	3
Health	5		

**Skills:** Deceiver 3, Fighter 4, Pathfinder 3, Scout 5

**Traits:** Natural Bearings (1) and Suspicious (1)

**Tools:** Familiar with the Area (+1D to one Action during the conflict)

### Bandits' Lair (Mouse Obstacle)

Morris and company make their home in a tunnel running beneath a tree, which has two entrances at either end. If the patrol failed to catch them, then the bandits have abandoned the lair long by now with some of the more valuable items, though they leave the Guards' equipment. The tunnel is a tight fit for any particularly large or tall mice. The tunnel opens up into a small set of chambers where the gang has unloaded all of their goods, including food, kitchenware, and some other nicknacks. A through investigation with a successful **Scout Obstacle 2** test locates several Guard weapons—a halbred, a sword, and a bow—and the tattered remnants of a blue cloak. A higher result may reveal a blood-stained letter to Lockhaven that provides more details on the Paige's patrol's activities.

### Patrol Leader Paige's Journal: Fall 1154

“Many of the farms on the outskirts of Pebblebrook have been abandoned. We've noticed signs of a fox in the area, though it seems to be purposefully keeping its distance. So far the city seems abandoned though the signs here point to something more dangerous than any one predator. It's still possible that weasels hit the town.”

Alternatively, if the patrol has captured Morris and his bandits they can be persuaded to reveal their ill-gotten gains, either the nice way with a **Persuader Obstacle 2** check or the hard way with a **Fighter Obstacle 2** check. In addition they are well aware that there is both a hawk and a fox in the area though they will try to shift the bulk of the blame on the hawk.

### **Twist: A Peculiar Meeting (Animal Obstacle)**

If the patrol fails to locate the goods inside or are unable to convince Morris and his bandits to reveal anything, than the Guard spends too much time at the bandits' lair and encounter a most unusual sight: a large, red and white fox with a large leather bag draped around its neck. She speaks in a manner the patrol can understand and does so slowly, deliberately, and with complete confidence that she has control of the situation. She will move slowly and deliberately as well, not looking to threaten the patrol but is not above tactics like closing off one end of the tunnel and talking to the patrol through the other one if they're all inside the bandits' lair.

Illyia will introduce herself before trying to get information from the patrol. She's curious as to why a second patrol is entering Pebblebrook. She is well aware of the hawk, the weasels, and even works with Morris and his bandits from time-to-time, but will play dumb at first, though in a wholly unconvincing manner. Illyia claims the lands outside Pebblebrook are her territory and demands some sort of gift for the patrol's safe passing. She'll suggest this could be a physical object by shaking the bag around her neck, which rattles with bits of metal and other objects; a piece of valuable information, this could be cluing her in to some other goings over the course of a campaign or even a made up story; or, even a snack, which she'll lick her lips after saying. She will not eat Morris and his bandits' citing that they, "Have their uses,"

though might accept their release as part of a bargain. She will also offer to give up information in exchange for additional goods or information. Offering to remove the hawk from her territory will also count as a fair exchange for information on where to find the hawk's nest is just outside Pebblebrook. If the patrol fails to amuse her in some way or give her something of value this could lead to an a **Fight Animal Conflict**. It's worth noting that Illyia is too big to be slain by a pack of mice, but can be driven off.

If asked, Illyia can access the contents of her back by lowering her head and pressing the bag to the ground, which allows her to stick her muzzle inside and retrieve objects. The inside of her back is full of many shiny things including dishware, weapons, and shiny stones. She doesn't actively make use of this stuff, but likes her collection all the same. If given a reason to answer, Illyia's bag was manufactured by Godric, a blacksmith and leatherworker who lives in the nearby town of Barkstone.

Illyia will not be willing to directly confront anybody, much less the hawk or the weasels, citing that she prefers an "unfair fight." If the patrol is especially open-minded, Illyia is open to discussions about working more closely with the Guard, but will remain wary until they do more to prove their loyalty.

Alternatively, Illyia can be dropped in as an additional obstacle or as a twist for failing the earlier Chase Conflict with the Bandits.

## Illyia (Fox)

Raw Abilities	Rating	Special Abilities	Rating
Fox Nature	7	Resources	6
Fast Learner Predator Trickster		Circles	4

**Traits:** Cunning (1) and Inquisitive (2)

**Fox Weapons:** Snapping Jaws (Useful (as sword): +1 D to one Action during the duration of a fight, (Long (as spear): +1 Maneuver against normal weapons, two Attacks become vs. and is Independent vs. Maneuver.)

## Pebblebrook (Fight Animal Conflict)

Whether the patrol comes here first or armed with information does not matter. They find an abandoned town with many damaged and destroyed buildings, though there are no mouse bodies or weapons lying in the street. As the patrol begins to explore, they hear a loud screech and a hawk swoops down on them from the air.

The hawk's goal is to kill and eat one of the mice. It can be either driven off or killed. Compromises could include the hawk flying away wounded to potentially be taken care of at a later time and during the course of the fight it may inflict the **Injured Condition** on several of the patrol.

## Hawk

Raw Abilities	Rating
Hawk Nature	7
Flying Predator Screeching	

**Hawk Weapons:** Raptor's Beak (+1D to Attack), Short Rounded Wings (+2 Maneuver in a forest), Talons (+1S to a successful Attack)

## Players' Turn

Once the hawk has been dealt with, the Players' Turn begins. There are plenty of hooks for the players to potentially follow up on. Here are a few suggestions.

Most likely the place to start will be Pebblebrook itself which is in a sorry state. Exploring the area could reveal a group of survivors, including the town's mayor, Clove, who locked themselves away in the inn's cellar when the town was attacked by weasels. There are scarcely more than a dozen survivors. Should the patrol wish to follow up, they can locate signs of weasels passing through and while hawk's do not often eat dead prey, weasels are known to take dead mice for consumption later on. If the GM wishes, the patrol may be able to track down and stumble across the weasel encampment but this is likely the purvey of a later adventure.

If the patrol failed to catch Morris and the bandits, they could take the time to track them down and bring them to justice. Morris and his group are not fighters and only have so much running in them for one day so this can be handled through the use of an **Obstacle** to sneak up on them, catch them, or even apprehend them through a deal with Illyia. Alternatively, the patrols' attempt to track them down could have them stumble across the group as they talk with Illyia and trade goods to her, thus showing the extend of their business relationship.

The patrol may take time to chat with Illyia further and make additional deals. If the first few agreements have gone well she will lighten up considerably and be more open to riskier propositions, like a long-term relationship with the Guard.

There is also still the matter of Paige's missing patrol. Morris and his bandits collected their weapons, the journal entry, and Delvin's cloak, but claim they just found these items abandoned on the ground. In actuality, Paige, Aubrey, and Delvin lie at rest in the nest of the hawk, their bones scattered around along with shreds of Paige's red and Aubrey's gold cloaks. If the hawk was not slain it will have come back to rest here and will be in no condition for a further conflict should the patrol wish to try and slay it before it can make a move to escape.

### **Ending the Mission & Continuing the Adventure**

If the patrol explored Pebblebrook and found the survivors then there are a couple of potential next sessions to come from that. In one scenario, the patrol could escort Clove and the other survivors back to Barkstone or even Lockhaven for protection. Along the way they can gather more information and have to make their way past weasel patrols. Illyia might be willing to assist them if they were cooperative with her in *The Thieves of Pebblebrook*.

Alternatively, the patrol could leave the survivors of Pebblebrook to get by on their own and focus on locating and eliminating the weasel threat. This military style op could have them taking out a weasel patrol or following one back to their encampment just over the border where they are commanded by one **Captain Cairn**, a particularly large, clever, and armored weasel who wields a battleaxe. This style of adventure should lead to the patrol getting in over their heads. Weasels are still no easy foe for even seasoned mice. Alternative wins could involve rescuing some prisoners Cairn and the others have taken for use as a snack, or capturing a lone weasel or ferret and questioning them learning about the weasel's plans

to slowly enter the Territories.

If the patrol did not explore Pebblebrook then the follow-up could focus on further investigations, beginning in the town and leading to one of the other adventures, or the patrol's journey back towards Lockhaven where they may learn more information about the dangers in the westernmost part of the Territories.