

BEORN, THANE OF TISSBURI 003 SWORD LAKE

Beorn's current game stats are Edge +1, Heart +2, Iron +2, Shadow +1, Wits +3

Momentum +8, Health +5, Spirit +3, Supply +2

Assets: Companion:Horse (Swift) harm 2/5 - Thunderbolt

Companion:Hound (Ferocious) harm 2/4 - Dexter

Domain:Tissburi (Security:2, Prosperity:4)

Bonds: Folk of Tissburi

Starting Vow: **Avenge his Father's Death by killing the Saxon King of Sussex, Aelle (Extreme)**

Current Vow: **Raid against the Ravenclaws (Dangerous)**

I envisioned the steps to be...

1) Get Home (done) 2) Scouting (he's halfway through this step)

3) Make Plans 4) The Raid (Progress 2/10)

It is the Summer of 486 and Beorn and his Tissburi troops (just a few of his mounted retainers) have been riding patrols for several weeks along the southern borders of Falt Manor to deter Saxon raids.

I'm going to allow him to have tried to Heal his two Companions and Resupply during those weeks as they have been in Salisbury County which is friendly.

During the last few weeks of patrolling, he tries to tend to his Thunderbolt's injuries...

Heal : **1** +3 wits = 4 vs **5** & **6** MISS

Pay the Price, D100=63 – it is Harmful! So, it makes Thunderbolt's injury worse (harm now 3/5).

.. his meddling only seems to aggravate the wound, so he decides to leave the horse in stables until next season and ride a spare horse called "Lostland" (rolled a couple of times on the settlement Name oracle).

Despite finding his skills at animal medicine are poor, he tries the same with Dexter...

Heal : **6** +3 wits = 9 vs **4** & **4** STRONG HIT !! MATCH !!

The hound is fully healed, and the match lets Beorn try to Forge a Bond.

Forge a Bond : **4** +2 heart = 6 vs **5** & **3** STRONG HIT

Take +2 Momentum (now 10) or +1 Spirit and tick another box on the Bonds track.

His careful tending of Dexter manages to let the dog's wounds heal and forges an even closer bond between them, raising confidence greatly.

...After three more weeks of riding patrols, Beorn is once again in the lands south of Falt. A thick morning mist lies on the forest when Dexter begins to whimper again and suddenly the very same old man emerges from the bushes! This time he isn't injured and speaks with great authority. "Good – it's you again boyo – must be your Fate. Come along with me at once" and he turns and strides back into the mist between the grey trees. One of Beorn's older retainers, Osric, swears under his breath and then calls out "You know who that was don't you? That was Merlin!" ...

As Merlin is known to be King Uther's closest advisor (and possibly his relative) there seems little choice. Beorn and his men lead their uneasy horses into the mist. It swirls around them as they push through what seems like sheets of spider webs that cling and threaten to choke them, finally emerging into a forest glade where golden afternoon light shimmers in the air in slanting shafts.



The old man gestures for them to remain silent and keep following as they head down into a valley towards a glittering mist-covered lake. They are walking down a steep-sided pass when a huge Giant steps out from behind bushes ahead of them, wielding a massive spiked club.



The horses try to bolt but Merlin seems to have expected trouble and leaps to strike at the creature with his staff. Beorn has to decide between losing some horses or taking time to tether them and joining the fight.

If he takes time to tether the horses, -3 on the Action Die for "Enter the Fray". If he leaps straight in, +3 on the Action Die but his domain will lose 1 Supply...

Thinking that they may need the horses to make a quick exit from this place later, he orders some of his men to tether the horses, throws his reins to Osric and leaps to join Merlin fighting the Giant.

A Giant would normally be an Extreme Foe, but with the help of Merlin and Beorn's Troops, it will be **only Formidable** (1 Progress per Harm and inflicts 3 harm). However, on a 1 on the Action Dice damage will go to either his Hound or his Troops.

Enter the Fray : **1** +3 wits -3 delayed for horses = 1 vs **3** & **9** MISS

The Giant has initiative. We are at disadvantage, and it was a "1" so either the hound or the Troops will be affected, Pay the Price D100=56 (delay or disadvantage).

I realise now that I never gave my Domain Troops any Health Track! I think they should count as a companion, have the same 5 Health as my Horse companion, and if they die, the domain loses 1

Security. *Incidentally I notice I forgot to use the Companion Endure Harm move each time my horse and hound took harm – I'll start doing that from now (for the Troops too).*

I'll choose the Troops to take this first hit. They are now at harm 3/5 scattered by a sweep of the mighty club. The delay/disadvantage will be a -1 in the next Action Dice.

Companion Endure Harm : **6** +2 health -1 disadvantage = 7 vs **1** & **10** WEAK HIT

They are battered, but no other effect.

With a huge sweep of his cudgel, the giant smashes into the band of men, scattering them like skittles. A few are knocked senseless or maybe dead, the others scramble groggily back to their feet.

Merlin, despite appearing like a frail old man, is capering about swinging his staff and landing tremendous blows. The Giant swings his club again...

Clash : **2** +2 iron = 4 vs **5** & **10** MISS

The Giant keeps initiative and Beorn must Pay the Price D100=28 (something of value is lost or destroyed). He will now use his option to Turn the Tide (once per fight)

The cudgel smashes one of Beorn's silver arm rings, a gift from his father, shattering it and hurling the fragments into the forest (-1 supply now +1).

Infuriated by the loss, Beorn surges forward, turning the tide of battle and seizing initiative.

Strike : **4** +2 iron +1 from Turn the tide = 6 vs **2** & **4** STRONG HIT

Inflict +1 harm +2 for Beorn's Sword +1 for the Hound's ferocity = 4. The giant is now harm 4/10 Beorn retains initiative and gains +1 Momentum (but he's already got +10 so it is wasted)

Strike : **6** +2 iron = 8 vs **8** & **7** WEAK HIT *I'll burn the +10 momentum to turn this into a STRONG HIT (momentum now +2) instead and inflict another 4 harm to the giant (now harm 8/10) and go straight to the End of fight move to try and resolve the conflict...*

End the Fight : 8 Progress vs **4** & **10** WEAK HIT

Victory but have to choose a consequence from the list... Others won't forget – this is a much longer-term concern, but some other giant will learn about this and their hatred of Beorn will fester and grow.

As the giant falls, skewered by a dozen swords and spears, the men of Tissburi give a ragged cheer.

Merlin scowls "Silence fools! These woods are teeming with Giants!"

Before Beorn can question him further, he leads them down to the lake's edge where a small coracle rests against the shore. The rest of the lake is shrouded in silver mist.



The tiny cove has only two ways into it, the valley they have followed and another narrower path a short distance away. As Merlin clammers into the coracle, there is a shout from the narrow gap.

"Miscreant Wizard! Thou hast been warned. I shall take thy life for this!" And then the sound of a heavily armoured man running down steps.

“Hold him off until I return – Kill the bastard if you can, though I doubt you can.” He begins to paddle out towards the mist, turns to look back briefly “Quickly Boy! This is important. A great destiny is being forged this day!”

Baffled, but obedient, Beorn leads his men to the narrow defile and they form a little half circle around it, hoping to surround and contain their enemy.

Secure an Advantage : **1** +3 wits = 4 vs **5** & **8** MISS

You fail or your assumptions betray you – Pay the Price D100=99!!! Roll twice more, both results occur... D100=8 (a person or community you care about is exposed to danger) D100=55 (Delay/Disadvantage) I'll just give him Initiative and not do an Enter the Fray!

The man who leaps down the stairs with a clatter is a head taller than any of them, six foot six and heavily built. Clad in strange green armour that seems more like ancient oak than iron...



At the strange sight of the glowing eyes on his shield, some of the men begin to shrink away raising their hands in the gesture to ward off evil. Faithful Osric shouts “Hold men, for the glory of Tissshuri”. The approaching stranger snarls, almost like a wolf's growl.

“Tissshuri ey? I know that pathetic hovel. I'll burn it to the ground, slaughter every man, woman and child, every goat and pig and I'll blight the fields, so nothing grows there for a thousand years!”

Then he is on them.

*This Green Knight is a supernatural Foe. He is **unkillable** without a magical blade. His armour makes it hard to damage him, so he is an Extreme Foe for the purposes of being harmed (requires 2 harm to tick off a box) however, he is just one man with a sword, against a group of armed warriors, so he only inflicts damage as though he was Dangerous (2 harm). If/When the Green Knight loses 10 boxes (if there is no magical sword), the realisation that he cannot be killed will trigger an Endure Stress. (effectively when his head is cut off and he keeps fighting!)*

To give myself some choice/dilemma, I can allow Merlin to return any time after I've done 5 boxes of damage to the Green Knight, but I'll impress Merlin more, if I can do all 10 boxes before Merlin returns. When Merlin returns he will add +2 harm and we will finally be able to kill the Green Knight. If he is impressed, Beorn will get a bonus to some future attempt to Forge a Bond with Merlin.

Beorn steps forward to meet the Knight's charge...

Face Danger : **1** +2 iron = 3 vs **3** & **7** MISS

It's a “1” again, so the Pay the Price affects either the Hound or the Troops.

Pay the Price, D100=69 – it is stressful. Companions don't have their own spirit Track so, I'm going to make the Spirit damage affect Beorn and lose 3 spirit (dropping his spirit to zero!), but then have the Endure stress roll affect the Troops as they witness something supernatural. If they Forsake their Vow, enough will flee that the domain loses 1 security. If they give in to fear they will just be lost for

this encounter and the Knight will start doing 3 harm – if it comes to Face Desolation, that will affect Beorn!

Endure Stress : 3 +2 heart = 5 vs 7 & 9 MISS

-1 momentum (now +1). At zero Spirit, must mark the Shaken Debility so Max momentum and Reset Momentum values are reduced by 1.

The Troops roll on the Stress Table D100=57 (Persevere – phew!).

Beorn's sword goes right through the knight's heart, as they crash, then the Knight simply pushes him off, pushing the sword out. It has not a single drop of blood on it. There is a sinister chuckle from under the helmet. "What? No magical swords? Pity..."

Beorn feels the icy fear clamp around his heart as he realises what this means. His men fall back, horrified but at the sight of their Lord still facing this monster, they surge back into the fight.

Turn the tide (once per fight). Gain +1 momentum (now +2) and add +1 to next roll.

Steeling himself against the peril and sensing that the Green Knight will make good on his threat against the good folk of Tissburi, if they fail, Beorn rallies his men.

Strike : 1 +2 iron +1 Turn the Tide = 4 vs 3 & 1 STRONG HIT

+1 harm, +1 for the Hound's Ferocity, +2 for Beorn's sword = 4, but that is only 2 boxes.
Retain initiative. Very lucky rolling on the challenge dice!

The men and the ferocious Dexter manage to surround the Knight and attacking him from all sides they seem to be starting to make a difference.

Strike : 5 +2 iron = 7 vs 6 & 9 WEAK HIT

inflict harm, +1 for the Hound's Ferocity, +2 for Beorn's sword = 3, but that is only 1.5 boxes (harm now 3.5/10. Lose initiative. Still need to get to 5 boxes before Merlin can get back!

Beorn tries to rally his men, shouting encouragements that he doesn't really believe himself. "Strike for Tissburi, for your families and friends!"

Face Danger : 3 +2 heart +1 bond with the folk of Tissburi = 6 vs 10 & 2 WEAK HIT

Succeed but have to choose a troublesome cost. Choose -1 momentum (now +1) and delayed/disadvantaged which I'll take to be -1 on the next roll. I realise now that isn't a good tactical choice as it only gives +1 momentum on a STRONG HIT – the only benefit was to get the +1 for the bond instead of only +2 iron. I'm not going to grant the +1 for the bond in all battles as the presence of the troops has already been taken into account by reducing the monster's rank.

The Green knight shrugs them off with unnatural strength, like dogs attacking a bear. Then his sword swings down again.

Clash : 5 +2 iron = 7 vs 7 & 4 WEAK HIT

Inflict harm +2 for sword, +1 for ferocious hound = 3, for another 1.5 boxes (harm 5/10 boxes) but Beorn has to Pay the Price D100=3 (person or community you trusted loses faith in you or acts against you). I'm going to interpret this as the death of one of the men will make his brother hate me for leading them into this danger and he will desert for now then attempt to get his revenge later.

The sword swings for Beorn's head and he stands frozen as it descends, then one of the Tissburi men, John Carpenter, pushes him aside to sprawl on the beach and the blade cuts into John's neck sending gouts of blood across the golden sand. The man clutches the wound, stares at his younger

brother Harald and collapses gurgling to the ground. Harald drops his own sword and falls to his knees next to his brother. Beorn doesn't see the hate-filled glance Harald gives him as he watches his brother die.

Things are not going well for Beorn, I'd better let Merlin join this fight and give up hoping to take the Green Knight down on my own.

As Beorn is getting back to his feet, on the lake he sees Merlin at the edge of the mist as a woman clad in white, with long golden hair, seems to rise from the water.



She gives him something that glitters in the strange light – a sword! Then the mists close over her and the coracle drifts quickly back toward the shore (even though the old man isn't paddling it).

The bloody fight continues but suddenly Merlin is with them and the strange sword glitters in his left hand as he parries with his staff in his right.

"Well done Boy. Let's kill this bastard once and for all, then we can head for home!"

Heartened by the return of the old man, who everyone knows is a great magician, the men of Tisburi meet the Green Knight's attacks with renewed hope.

Clash : 4 +2 iron +2 Merlin = 8 vs 6 & 7 STRONG HIT

Inflict Harm - +2 for sword, +1 for ferocious hound, +2 for Merlin = 5 + choose to take +1 harm is 3 boxes (harm 8/10). Regain initiative.

Strike : 5 +2 iron +2 Merlin = 9 vs 2 & 10 WEAK HIT

Inflict Harm - +2 for sword, +1 for ferocious hound, +2 for Merlin = 5 + choose to take +1 harm is 3 boxes. All the boxes but lose initiative.

End the fight : 10 Progress vs 2 & 7 STRONG HIT

Beorn hacks off the Knight's head which rolls across the beach.

From the helm comes the croaking voice "You'll have to do more than that, mortal!" and the headless body turns to slash down. Merlin leaps up and rams the silver blade into the neck of the armour. The body flails about, clutching feebly at its throat, then falls still.

Merlin spits at the fallen body. "Will that do..." he seems to wait for an answer "...thought so". There are several men badly wounded, but only John Carpenter is dead. His brother carries him back to the horses, angrily refusing help from Beorn. Harald drapes the body over the back of his own horse not daring to stop Merlin clambering onto John's, and they make the best speed they can up the valley and back into the mist.

When they emerge back into the drizzle of the normal forest, Merlin wraps the silver blade in a big leather sack.

“Well done b... Beorn” then gestures to the others **“Well done all of you. Know that what you did today will make a difference. You have played your part something greater than any of us.”** He speaks in a booming, impressive voice, then rides next to Harald and lays his hand gently on the corpse. **“This man’s sacrifice has meaning. It is important! Remember well this day as the day a great destiny for Britain was born.”** He looks into the eyes of each man. Then to Beorn, in a more normal voice, he says “I’ll get this horse back to you for Yuletide in Sarum – look for me there. Don’t miss it boy, don’t miss it”.

He jerks the horses head roughly around, digs in his heels and gallops off into the drizzle.

Notes...

Beorn hasn’t made much headway in any of his own Quests. In fact, he has just gained the hatred of a Giant and of one of his own folk, as well as being shaken by his encounter with the supernatural (a debility)! It was fun though 😊

Next...

Christmas with the King and the Adventure of the Sword Feast