

TP5 Tofarian Response

By Dan Hass



The village of Chogneaux rebelled against the Tofarian Empire when an unexpected special levy was imposed. Heroes emerged who deposed the baron of Chogneaux to establish a new regime that is asserting its independence from the Tofarian Empire, but the Empire won't sit idly. Can heroes defend the fledgling revolution against the Tofarian response? A Dungeons and Dragons® 5th Edition Adventure for 1-8 5th level characters. Episode five of *Tyranny in Purple*.

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Adventure Summary

TP5 Tofarian Response is a Dungeons and Dragons® 5th Edition adventure designed for 1-8 5th level characters. It is designed to run using only the *Basic Rules (BR)* and *DM Basic Rules (DBR)* (these are a free download [here](#)). It also utilizes the free *Unearthed Arcana Feats (UAF)*, *Feats for Races (UAFR)* and *Starter Spells (SS)* ([here](#)), *Hoard of the Dragon Queen Online Supplement* ([here](#)) and *Wardrow's Feat Compendium* ([here](#)) The DM and players should get an exposure to D&D 5th Edition and if it is going to be a primary hobby the *Player's Handbook® (PHB)*, the *Monster Manual® (MM)*, and the *Dungeon Master's Guide® (DMG)* are necessary investments.

While the encounters include scaling for 1-8 characters, parties of 1 or 2 PCs and 7 or 8 PCs are fringe circumstances that may play oddly. Specifically, parties of 1-2 are highly susceptible to a single bad die roll, and 7-8 can slow play dramatically. Ideally a party will be 3-6 PCs.

It is set in the *Dimgaard Campaign Setting* (the *Dimgaard Campaign Guide* is available [here](#)), but could be set elsewhere. Digital copies of the maps are available [here](#).

Dimgaard Philosophy

Dimgaard's primary principle is that D&D should be an entertaining experience. In particular, it should be fun and interesting. The "best" D&D is a collaborative storytelling event where the DM provides the framework and supporting details, while the players contribute by roleplaying the heroes (their characters) that results in epic tales.

"Epic" implies that the heroes be challenged and that success is a question to be decided by the heroes' deeds and choices. *The Lord of the Rings* is only an epic because the reader doesn't know until the final pages if Frodo, Aragorn and the rest will achieve their objectives or die, fruitless, in their efforts.

A great Dimgaard session (and really any D&D session) is where there is the finest line between success and failure and the heroes *just* manage to win (occasionally, just surviving is "winning"). But for those narrowest of victories to have true meaning, they cannot be foregone conclusions, and likely there will be times when the PCs fail – Boromir comes to mind or Gandalf's expedition to Isengard where he was captured.

Preparing the Adventure

It is always a good idea for the DM to read through an adventure before running it. *TP5 Tofarian Response* is no different. There are some rather complex encounters that will benefit if the DM spends a few minutes deciding how she will play them. *TP5 Tofarian Response* can be run with a lot of interaction between the PCs and NPCs depending on the inclinations of the players and DM. The module deliberately gives **just enough** information about NPCs to move the plot along, leaving a lot of room for a DM to individualize these to her campaign. It makes things smoother if the DM spends a few minutes deciding how she will deliver the NPCs' interactions. Some DMs revel in the opportunity to assume the personas of multiple NPCs over the course of a session while others prefer a summary approach. The decision is a matter of style and showmanship. Similarly, many players look forward to opportunities to interact "in character" while others prefer to summarize. Neither approach is "correct"; both are valid ways to collaboratively build a story, but the DM should try to anticipate her players' preferences (and decide her own) and prepare accordingly.

A battlemat or dungeon tiles may be helpful, but not necessary.

Items for Review

- Basic Rules/PHB: action surge, cunning action, sneak attack
- Creatures: berserker, dire wolf, swarm of insects, scout, thug
- Feats: Human Determination
- Magic Items: cloak of elvenkind, stone of good luck
- Spells: dispel magic, fireball, freedom of movement, guidance, longstrider

Running the Adventure

TP5 Tofarian Response is made up of five encounters. An encounter is "something significant that happens" (on average an encounter should take 20 to 40 minutes of game time). Generally, these will fall into two categories: roleplaying or combat. Often the decision as to what type of encounter it will be is based on the PCs' actions. Sometimes a combat encounter may evolve into a roleplaying encounter when mistaken identities, misunderstandings, or action based on false assumptions are corrected, thus ending the violence. Other times conversations, interrogations, or negotiations can become heated and erupt in violence changing a roleplaying encounter into a combat encounter.

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Dimgaard gives the DM opportunities to reward good roleplaying. Good roleplaying can generally garner players an easier path to achieving the desired outcomes.

However, it takes stellar roleplaying to completely avoid combat. Dimgaard is a dark and violent place where opponents with short tempers often find violence the most direct route to achieving their goals.

The encounters in *TP5 Tofarian Response* challenge PCs in different ways. The combat encounters are expected to meet the definition of **hard** (*DMG* p.81), but additionally there are encounters to test the PCs ability to deal with diplomatic situations and pose difficult questions about their character's morals.

Modification "Exploits"

Technically each encounter uses a **medium** XP budget per the encounter building guidelines. And for many parties a **medium** encounter may turn out to meet the definition of hard as PCs may be built for roleplaying and the party may not have optimized their tactics.

Modifications have been made to the creatures which do not increase the calculated CR of the creature but do increase the challenge of the creature. These are denoted with a ¹. These are not intended to be used with all parties, nor does a DM need to use every suggested modification. The DM should gauge the effectiveness of the party and decide which of these to use (keeping in mind the definition of **hard** encounters).

Adventure Background

Several weeks ago, the village of Chogneaux faced their annual tribute to the Tofarian Empire. The Empire – concerned about the growing strength of Chogneaux – imposed a surprise levy that increased the slave quota to the point that Chogneaux would have to send citizens to the Empire's mines. The citizens revolted.

The baron tried to suppress dissent, and the rebels deposed him in favor of his son, who supports independence.

It has taken several days for the news to reach the Tofarian regional governor, Argun. These sorts of things are known to happen from time to time, and he is not overly concerned. He doesn't want to ask for a full Tofarian army (about 5,000 well-trained veterans). He has activated the troop obligation from other vassals near Chogneaux to augment the garrison force at his immediate disposal. He believes these will be sufficient to suppress the Chogneauxian revolt.

He has committed his captain of the guard, Toshtoga, to lead the assault. The Tofarians and the vassals will link up into an overwhelming force today.

Adventure Outline

Chogneaux is in a hysteria when news arrives that the Teulon vassals around Chogneaux have assembled their obligatory troop contribution and are awaiting the arrival of the governor's Tofarian troops.

The PCs are prompted to investigate the camp and undermine the mounting assault, which exposes them to the dangers and intrigues of the camp.

After returning to Chogneaux, the PCs lead the defense of the town, which culminates with the PCs facing the legendary leader of the Tofarians.

Rests

The PCs are expected to complete 6+ medium or hard combat encounters without taking a long rest. Even short rests should be cautiously allowed since many PCs' resources recharge on a short rest.

Once the action starts, the PCs can't take a long rest. If they insist, the action progresses without them. The Tofarians attack and the Chogneauxians barely fight them off without the PCs receiving any rewards or XP associated with the battle.

Starting the Adventure

Downtime in Chogneaux

Chogneaux is a typical small fief. It has smiths, craftspeople, and clergy. Further, Chogneaux is now a war zone, and opportunists know that a war economy offers the chance for profits.

The DM can comfortably inject whatever items she desires. Certainly the items from the *PHB* should be available for purchase.

It has been several days since the events of *TP4 A Different Baron*. Much of that time is expected to have been used in solidifying the PCs' position within the Chogneauxian leadership, but the DM can award several days of downtime within the context of the plot. Despite the upheaval of changing barons, Chogneaux is a well-supplied town with numerous craftspeople, and the DM should consider this environment when resolving downtime activities. The *PHB* 187, *DMG* 127, and the *Dimgaard Campaign Guide* all have suggestions for downtime activities and the DM may develop some of her own.

PCs' Resources

Managing the PCs' access to extraordinary equipment is another tool to modulate the difficulty of the encounters. If PCs are underpowered, downtime can contribute resources (potions, scrolls, etc.) to increase their effectiveness. Stronger parties may not need this type of support.

Typically, at a minimum, the PCs should have several *potions of healing*. Also in the party's resources should be *lesser restoration* and *revivify*. If no PCs can prepare these spells, the DM can use renown or downtime (or both) to place *spell scrolls* of these spells within the party if they are on one of the PC's spell list. If not, then the DM may need to be more creative. One option would be to place an artificer in Chogneaux who can infuse an item with the ability to cast each of these once (which does expand the abilities of the artificer slightly); a forge cleric's ***Blessing of the Forge*** could be expanded to perform this same function.

When the downtime is resolved, the players should have recently progressed to 5th level, and may want to discuss elements of their characters with other players. The DM can facilitate this with the following:

The revolt in Chogneaux has drawn the attention of other disaffected parties from within the frontier region of the Tofarian Empire. It is slowly rising to the category of revolution. Within the motley assemblage, you have found a group of exceptional heroes within the cause. This morning you take your breakfast with them in one of the town's common rooms.

With introductions complete, the DM can launch the action of *TP5 Tofarian Response* with the following:

The Chogneaux resistance has grown to nearly three hundred able-bodied combatants. Each day a few more souls who are ready for an end to Tofarian tyranny trickle in to join the revolution. The infrastructure of defense progresses. The warriors are being organized into fighting units, and the walls of Chogneaux are being reinforced. As part of organizing Chogneaux to face the Tofarians, scouts are positioned several miles out to watch for approaching dangers and warn the village. Two of these rush in and gush, "The other villages. They've assembled their soldiers. Over a thousand. They are camped about six miles away. Looks like they are waiting for something. No Tofarians in sight. Only other Teulon vassals." The defenses of Chogneaux stand no chance of withstanding over a thousand dedicated assailants. Simply waiting in Chogneaux is a plan for annihilation.

It should be clear to the players that the Teulon vassals are waiting for Tofarian reinforcements that will result in an irresistible force for the fledgling revolution. Further, Chogneaux's military situation doesn't yield itself to a broad attack against a superior force. The only options are abandon the revolution to be wiped out by the Tofarians, or for a party of specialists (the PCs) to venture forth to discern if there is an opportunity to turn the tide.

Encounter 1: Predators

Random Encounters

The DMG p.85 has a section on random encounters. In Dimgaard adventures, the first encounter is often isolated from the storyline, and heavily skewed towards combat. This serves multiple purposes.

The DM can use it to gauge the PCs' combat effectiveness to modulate the subsequent encounters. However, if the encounter goes badly, the PCs can still successfully complete the adventure.

The random encounter also presents the DM with an opportunity to tailor the adventure. She can substitute an encounter she has designed for the particular PCs in her campaign and still complete the storyline of the adventure.

Finally, there may simply be a different encounter that the DM believes would be more interesting to present to the players.

There are Encounter Galleries in the Kickstarter offerings that may offer alternative encounters that make substitution an easier task.

Map. Path Near Forest

Background. As the PCs travel to the campsite, they infringe on the territory of some dire wolves.

It is fairly easy to follow the scouts' directions to the camp. The day is clear and crisp with calm weather on the horizon. It is great battle weather.

Running the encounter. The wolves are hungry and under the influence of disease. They move to attack the PCs.

Avoiding Combat

This is expected to be a combat encounter primarily so the DM can determine how effective the PCs are, but if the DM already has a good feel, a different approach is to allow PCs with an affinity for nature and animals to exercise their skills to avoid combat. For example, they can use Wisdom (Animal Handling) to first calm the wolves, and then use healing resources to ease the disease and calm the wolves. When presenting the encounter without combat, the two keys are that the encounter consume resources as expected, and that the encounter still contributes to the story in an interesting way.

Scaling the encounter. There is one **Chogneauxian Wolf** per PC. One of the wolves is the pack leader with a 16 AC & +2 bonus to all attack rolls and ability checks.

Chogneauxian (Dire) Wolf.

BR 16/MM 321.

'Diseased. A humanoid bitten by the wolf must succeed on a DC13 Constitution saving throw or become diseased. While diseased, the humanoid suffers disadvantage on Strength ability checks. A long rest ends the diseased condition.

'Heightened Trip (Recharge 5-6). When the wolf hits with its bite, the Strength save to avoid being knocked prone is made with disadvantage.

Skills Usage & Treasure

It is desirable to deviate from random loot as treasure at times. One way is using skills to extract valuable components from the carcasses of defeated creatures. Harvesting poison (DMG 258) is the precedent for this: it requires a DC20 skill check to successfully extract loot from the carcass; the carcass can yield only one item; a failure destroys the carcass without any loot being extracted.

In this case, the hides of the wolves would be appropriate for armorers/leatherworkers. Appropriate skills would be Nature or Survival. Alternately, a PC could use Armorer's Tools or Leatherworking Tools.

Concluding the encounter. There is another obstacle between the PCs and the camp that must be dealt with – an insect infestation.

Insect Infestation.

Creature event

As you progress towards the camp, suddenly the area comes alive with buzzing and biting insects.

The PCs have wandered into an area infested with poisonous, biting and stinging insects. Two **swarms of insects** (DBR 45/MM 338) per PC attacks once with surprise and then dissipates. Against targets that cannot be surprised or with a passive Perception of 15+ the attacks have disadvantage. Any creature injured by the insects must succeed on a DC13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. A long rest ends the poisoned condition.