

SHL5-03

The Book of Dark Alchemy

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Shield Lands Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

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Plague ravages the Shield Lands. As the population weakens, reports are that the forces of Iuz are growing stronger. The party has an opportunity to secure part of the cure but to do so must face evils best left sleeping... An adventure for hearty adventurers who are not afraid of sacrificing themselves for the good of the Shield Lands: APL 2-8.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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For questions specific to this document and your region, please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at jeff@shieldlands.net; for LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in *bold italics* provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine this modified Average Party Level (APL) follow the steps below:

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLS are given in even-

numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.
- 5.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round regional adventure, set in the Shield Lands. Characters native to the Shield Lands pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this scenario.

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at

least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*.

Adventure Background

For the last few years, the Shield Lands has fought hard to reclaim their homelands from the Occupation by Iuz. However, after some all too sweet gains, Iuz struck back! Torkeep, South Keep, Gensal and Bright Sentry were all attacked. Gensal actually fell in the initial assault. And then, with the Iuzian army poised to strike to the heart of the Shield Lands, the Iuzians withdrew...

Meanwhile, a virulent plague, known as the Black Breath of Iuz, is sweeping through the Shield Lands. Only Paladins and some Monks seem immune to its effects. Weakened soldiers find it hard to fight and consequently raids on caravans are increasing. Weakened mages and clerics find it difficult to cast spells and consequently divine and arcane solutions seem unlikely...

In Bright Sentry, adventurers put an end to an invasion by goblin mercenaries and secured the aid of Lineene the Bear. This formidable adventurer learned much of the nature of the plague and also learned of a possible cure: Three items of great power must be secured. The first of these is the Book of Dark Alchemy...

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins out side of Critwall on the way to Gensal. The party is camped out on their way to discover information about the Book of Dark Alchemy, rumored to be outside of the Gensal Region.

Once in Gensal, the party can interact with the locals and learn a little about the war effort. From there they can go to investigate the ruins of Gensal.

In the ruins it is possible for the party to find Trys sitting on the rim of the ruins, looking a bit tense about something. Investigating the bottom of the pit reveals a cavern opening below the traditionally known ruins of Gensal.

Going down the rift quickly reveals the earth switching from natural openings to worked stone. There will be an entire complex beneath the ruins.

Exploring the ruins, the party can find the horrible fate of the Iuzians who were still here, searching, and destroy the undead guardians of this tomb. Finally, they

can encounter the Alchemist's lab and retrieve the Book of Dark Alchemy.

In the conclusion, the party will return to Critwall where they will receive a letter from Simen Sharn, advising the party to be careful in their dealings with Natan Enerick. Simen believes Natan may be trying to engineer matters so that he does not have to step down from the council.

Preparation for Play

The Black Breath of Iuz: Various characters in the Shield Lands may have the Black Breath of Iuz. It is a nasty virus that seems to be magical in nature. Players should have campaign documentation that explains the details more completely. Non-player characters may have their reaction to infected characters spelled out in the module. If not, their reaction will vary from fear and loathing to pity and everything in between. At the end of the adventure, if there are any party members who have this disease, the other party members might catch it! Characters immune to disease are also immune to this disease. Characters must make a fortitude save DC 14 to avoid catching the disease. Note the fortitude save is higher than in previous modules. This is because much of this adventure takes place in the Lands of Iuz where the plague seems more virulent. The Dungeon Master should give creative players circumstance bonuses to their savings throws to avoid this plague: for example a player might insist on wearing heavy leather gloves and a thick face mask when dealing with the ill. This might be worth a +2. Another player might role-play their devotion to their god and claim their god will protect them from such a vile disease! Good role-playing in such a case should also be worth a +2 circumstance bonus. In other words: This should be something that gives players a role-playing opportunity.

In this adventure, there is a possible encounter with an NPC, Trys. There are two versions of Trys listed in the module: Trysta and Trystim. It is possible that more than one player has an AR with a favor of Trys printed on it. In this adventure it is possible for the party to learn that Trysta and Trystim are actually sister and brother. However, at the end of the adventure, Trysta will only choose to give her favor to one adventurer who previously received her favor. Trystim, the cad, can actually give out his favor to as many adventurers who have previously received his favor...

Bards, Wizards and other scholars: Oh My! There may be party members with special access to information in the party. Generally speaking, in order for access to exist, either the player must be a bard (bards just know stuff!) or have a Knowledge Skill that is appropriate. Some

players may receive bonuses to such checks because they are members of a Shield Lands Meta-organization.

Here is the various things to be learned (the DC is 25 for each):

- Bardic Knowledge: There are a variety of poems and stories from ages ago (we are talking hundreds upon hundreds of years ago) about the animosity between dwarves and elves. Apparently there was an alchemist who was skilled with enchantments and transmutations. He did a lot of work for the two races, until he stole from them. He pointed each race at the other as the source of their loss.
- Knowledge (Arcana): The Book of Dark Alchemy is rumored to let the user make potions for free.
- Knowledge (History): Many centuries ago, the elves and dwarves fought some bloody wars in the Gensal region – apparently over a stolen magic item that belonged to the dwarves.
- Knowledge (Religion): The Book of Dark Alchemy is rumored to have the power to steal a mortal's soul, condemning them to a life of evil.

Introduction – Fire

Read or paraphrase the following to the party:

Bitter winds and chilling rains plagued your party most of the day, but now, flickering lights that can only be from Gensal pierce the darkness. Moving forward through the mud soup that passes for a road, you recall the events that brought you here...

Only four days ago, word had been brought to you that one of the eldritch items of lore that may yield a cure for the plague blighting the Shield Lands may have been located. The Arcanists broke the seal to the chamber housing their darkest books of lore, and therein, found reference in molding scrolls to the Book of Dark Alchemy.

They learned the Book is a vile book of greatest darkness. Its secrets could very well pervert the soul of the purest saint into that of the foulest of sinners. And yet, such a foul object lies buried in the Shield Lands very back yard...

It seems that beyond the borders of the Shield Lands, deep beneath the ruins of Gensal, lies catacombs unbreached for ages. Nearly forgotten, save for a reference here, a whisper there, the ruins of the mad alchemist M'rial Errot would have been lost to all times.

However, two things conspired to bring this name back to light. First, in recapturing Gensal three years ago, there were signs of heavy mining activity under Gensal Keep. The Iuzians were doing

something there, but what, nobody knew. Second, when Gensal was recaptured, there were bodies everywhere: bodies that had died from a mysterious plague.

These pieces of information were tied together as references for research. In light of the information received by Lineene, suddenly obscure clues hooked together like puzzle pieces. All of the activity of the Iuzian armies, the resources spent capturing and recapturing this pile of land, seemed to make sense. Power draws evil like carcasses draw flies, and the power of the Book must have drawn the Iuzian forces time and again...

But that research is for the light of a new day. Now, the ruined village of Gensal, with its few survivors, beckons. The Jousting Mug, one of the only surviving buildings in the village, has lights from its windows full of the promise of warmth, food and shelter.

Let the party introduce themselves. Players who were able to perform research into the Book may receive it (and reveal it if they wish) at this time. The time is 7:30 at night in early spring. The sun set a half-hour ago. The party, if they continue on to Gensal, would under typical conditions, be 'exhausted'. Resourceful parties may have ways to easily defeat such a condition (and can be presumed to have memorized such spells as desired).

The Jousting Mug is a one-floor affair, built of wood. The fact it survived the assault is nothing less than amazing. Perhaps it is a testament to invading armies to destroy the military but save the food and drink... In any event, except for a few charred boards, and a few hastily repaired holes, it seems no worse for wear. It is about 45' wide by 35' deep. There are two windows on the front and each side, and none on the rear. A chimney from the back side puts out a thick smoke, rich with the smells of food being cooked.

The party does not have to go in. The ruins of Gensal should be described as being about 20 wood buildings, all of which are more or less destroyed. The party can, within 15 minutes or so, find suitable, if wet, shelter for the evening. There will be no encounters during the night, and about three in the morning, the storm will let up.

Inside the bar, however, is where the real action begins...

Encounter One: Water

The Jousting Mug

The inside of the bar is basically a 30' wide by 35' deep room. There are 8 tables set up and on the back wall is a roaring fire. Fire wood (that looks suspiciously like

busted boards from some destroyed building) is stacked neatly nearby. An animal of some sort roasts over the fire (it is a deer). On the far left (north) hand side is another door, currently shut.

The owner is currently Gandor Meadbow. He is a bull of a man, and is never without his falcion strapped into a scabbard on his back. Obviously of mixed decent, his balding brown hair hangs in greasy strands around his head. His dark brown eyes are hard and almost cruel, and his hands are calloused slabs. His clothes are thick cotton work clothes, stained and patched. Despite his appearances, he is generally friendly enough. Stuffed in his belt is a mouth-harp. However, if anyone looks like they are casting a spell (and he actually notices), he will point at a sign hanging above the fire places that reads "No Wizzies. This means you!" (His definition of a wizard is pretty wide). Except for Heironeous and Fortubo, he does not personally recognize ANY clerical symbols (which is not to say he does not know of other religions, just that he does not know their holy symbols). He survived the siege of Gensal by staying in his tavern and hacking just about everything he could to death with his falchion.

If asked about the siege of Gensal, he will relay it was horrible. A few of the locals made a stand with him, a few others at the local shrine to Fortubo, but most went into the fort, where they were slaughtered. The Iuzians seemed nearly fanatical about retaking the fort, and for the most part were almost attacking the town as an afterthought. The explosions from the siege engines and magic still ring his ears...

He does not have a lot of different foods to offer. He has venison, a vegetable stew, a thick coffee-like drink they call 'mud-water', and a very good ale.

Gandor Meadbow: Male human Brb 1/Ftr 1/Brd 1.

In the northeast corner, near the door, a group of dwarves sits at a table (three male and two female). They are very grumpy, not liking this weather ("Not one bit, I tell you. I like it not one bit."). They are all merchant/miners, loyal to Lord Bladehone (the dwarf lord on the Council of Lords). Their family was traditionally from Laws Forge. They are now off to do mining in the hill region northeast of Gensal. They are not too worried about the possible dangers "...as we are more of the granite sort, and not grassy, like, say elves or such..." They are dressed in traveler's gear, but a Spot check of DC 15 or better will show they are wearing armor. All of them have battle-axes and shields. Their backpacks are carefully lined against the wall. In the middle backpack (belonging to Pokes) is their masterpiece, an adamantite heavy pick. It is currently not for sale. However one of their band, Khelvan, is currently sick (he hacks, wheezes and coughs a lot, and sits

huddled, shivering, despite the fire). A Heal check (DC 20) will reveal he has contracted a lung infection that will kill him, but it is not the Black Breath. *Cure Disease* or similar will cure him of this. If the party is able to cure him, then the dwarves will offer to sell the heavy pick to them (3,308 gp).

The dwarves dislike elves (they got the raw end of a business deal once before) and so will charge elves and half elves double costs and make no bones or apologies when talking about “flighty elves” or muttering something about “elf gold isn’t worth half the trouble to get it so it should cost twice as much”. Dorgan is the leader and is cranky. Quarrel is the “map-reader” of the bunch and generally likeable (she especially likes Halflings for some inexplicable reason). Pokes is shy around strangers, while Nogzi is a mild braggart. Khelvan is very ill.

☛ **Dorgan:** male hill dwarf Ftr 3/Rgr 2.

☛ **Quarrel:** female hill dwarf Ftr 3/Wiz 1.

☛ **Pokes:** female hill dwarf Ftr 3

☛ **Nogzi:** male hill dwarf Ftr 2/Rog 1

☛ **Khelvan:** male hill dwarf Ftr 2

In the middle of the room sits a group of human farmers, three men and three women, two of them, a man and a woman, seem very young, maybe only 16. They look LESS than pleased to have so many adventurers in here (an ‘adventurer’ to these farmers is anyone they have not seen before, such as the dwarves, and probably, the party). None the less, they are trying to make the best of it and will be friendly enough with the players once introduced. In fact, the 16 year old Dorienson will virtually BEG to hear any stories involving fighting orcs and goblins and the like. He views himself as “The Big Hero to Be” and would love the taste of adventure. The two families are out for a bite to eat and to get together to chat. (With the hopes that Dorienson and Zayle will want to see more of each other). They survived the siege on Gensal by coming here to the tavern and fighting for it tooth and nail. They found it odd that the Iuzians, for the most part, ignored slaughtering the village and hammered so heavily on the fort.

☛ **Dorien:** male human Com 3

☛ **Wheata:** female human Com 2

☛ **Dorienson:** male human Com 1

☛ **Tobius:** Male human Com 2

☛ **Marta:** female human Com1/Ftr 1

☛ **Zayle:** female human Com 1

Other than what is mentioned above, the party can use Gather Information. Soldiers of the Standing Army will have a +2 circumstance modifier because the locals appreciate all they have done.

DC 15

☛ There is a band of ogres still in the area, under the sword of a particularly nasty one named Gristletooth.

☛ The Iuzians hammered the fortress unmercifully. There appeared to be virtually no survivors.

☛ The army (reinforcements) is currently about a mile out of town, to the east, working on a new set of border forts.

☛ The only other building in town that survived more or less intact was the fortress to Fortubo.

☛ Nobody goes into the ruins of the keep. The keep is haunted by the spirits of all the soldiers who died there.

DC 20

☛ Gristletooth has a magic sword, named “Hate” that seems to cut down all foes for him.

☛ They have overheard that the plan is to build a series of forts further out from Gensal, and try to have a more mobile command to react to the Iuzian armies. After that is established, they will be working on rebuilding the fort.

☛ There are strange lights that started appearing in the ruins of the keep. Also, a cart loaded with supplies was left near the ruins and the next morning it was empty! Nobody is willing to investigate. After all, it could be the spirits of dea-d soldiers...

DC 25

☛ A survivor of a merchant band attacked by Gristletooth said the ogre was very large and the sword was black as midnight. She thought the ogre was probably headed towards Torkeep.

☛ The Knight Barronette survived the attack on Gensal, but suffered from grievous wounds. She was sent back to Critwall for healing.

☛ After the attack, the Iuzians marched towards Critwall, but then, merely two days later, marched back out. They seemed to be in a state of confusion. None of them noticed the few survivors in Gensal and marched right on by, as if they were not there...

Staying in the tavern for the night gets the party common floor space (although warm).

The Shrine of Fortubo

This structure is set 200 yards south west of the Jousting Mug, beyond the main wreckage of the town. It is a newer structure set into the side of a hill about 40 feet across. The outside of the structure is not much more than a set of stone blocks on either side of a dug out entrance into the hill. The blocks are crossed by an additional stone block about 10’ wide and 2’ high. All of

the blocks have tiny carvings related to the worship of Fortubo, as well as prayers for those have 'gone to earth' (died) (Fortubo is a lesser deity of mining worshipped typically by humans, although occasionally by dwarves.). Inside the hill is a hollowed out 20' by 20' area big enough for only a handful of worshippers. It looks largely unfinished.

Outside of the Shrine is a crude shed, built literally of wreckage of other shacks. It is only 10' by 10' and a curl of smoke comes from its roof. Inside is a female, possibly in her mid 40's with graying short brown hair and dangerously bright brown eyes, dressed in white with black and red trim, a flaming hammer of Fortubo sewn into her shirt. She has very few possessions in here: a sleeping bag, a backpack with a few changes of clothes, and some food supplies. A camp fire is set in the center of the room, its smoke rising through a hole in the roof of the shack.

She is "Mother" Garla Gravelstone. "Mother" is her rank in the church. She has been here about six months, having been drawn by word of the shrine being erected here. Previously, she lived in Tent Town near Critwall and worked as a potter. She follows Fortubo because he seems very down to earth (literally) and does not seem to be involved in the weighty politics like the other local churches do. Further, she is drawn to the aspect of this local branch of the church which seems to venerate the wisdom of one's ancestors (some members go so far as to carry a bone or skull of a loved ancestor with them).

Upon questioning, she can relay the following:

- The village of Gensal was completely obliterated by the invading army.
- She and a few defenders rallied here at the shrine, shooting missiles from the entry way.
- When the Iuzians started to come this way, she used magic to shape the stones into a covering. Those she saved now farm the outer regions, having decided to stay on.
- The Iuzians seemed to be driven by some force, more than merely their commanders. They seemed to overly focus on destroying the keep itself as opposed to setting up any kind of a supply base or anything else that might have aided them long term.
- There have been a number of shady explorer/adventurer types in the region as of late. They always check out the ruins of Gensal but none go in. There was one who had a strong accent (possibly from Dyvers...).
- She will act as a source of healing for the party (at standard prices) for spells of level two or lower.

☞ "Mother" Garla Gravelstone: female human Clr 3.

Encounter Two: Air

The Surface

The party can investigate the ruins day or night. The only difference is the effect that a lack of lighting would have. During the first night (the night the party arrives), the sky is overcast. During the second night, the sky is partly cloudy with both moons visible (but neither full). Read or paraphrase the following to the party.

The ruins of Gensal: a picture of complete destruction. The mighty outer walls are smashed, almost as if a gigantic child was tired of its toy. The inside of the ground is littered with rubble, broken weapons and scraps of armor. Where there were once small buildings and shops around the perimeter, there are now only heaps of stones and busted timbers.

As to the central keep, itself, there is only the vaguest hint of stone walls surrounding a crater. One can only imagine the destructive force necessary to completely destroy such a building, and then to realize the armies of Iuz wield such power... It is amazing that Torkeep and South Keep survived the most recent assault.

The party can spend as much time as they want searching through the rubble. They can find any number of busted weapons, armor scraps, etc., from just about anything in the Player's Handbook off the weapons and armor table. To make any of these items usable would require magic, such as *mending* spells or the like. Doing so will add 1 TU to the party's time spent here digging up such treasures and restoring them. Also, the party will then receive (automatically), the maximum treasure for their APL, regardless of any other activity.

All of the area around here is severely obstructed terrain (See Tumble, page 84 of the PHB). Unless a character states they are moving cautiously, have that character make a climb check, DC 10. Failure means they have twisted their ankle. Treat this as a wound from a caltrop (player moves at ½ speed for next 24 hours unless they receive a Heal check DC 15 or at least 1 point of magical curing).

The central keep is a complete loss. Rubble is everywhere, mixed with the debris of civilization: an iron cup lies smashed here, a burned map (now useless) is buried there, etc. Feel free to describe all manner of destroyed trinkets if the party insists on being archeologists. However, a party member with Knowledge

(Dungeoneering) or Knowledge (Architecture), or Stonecunning may make a check after 10 minutes of studying the region, DC 25, to reveal the keep looks more like it was exploded from within, rather than pounded from without.

There is actually a lack of rubble in the central chamber, and instead there is a pit approximately 250' across by 100' wide. It is about 30' deep to the lower floor area. See Map 1. This is the wreckage of the basement area of the keep. Players who played in SHLO1-11, The Invisible Hand, may remember there was a set of ruins beneath the castle.

Players may also attempt to use the Track feat. In such a case, a Survival check DC 28 (20 for Hard Surface + 2 for each 24 hours since the tracks were made +8 for 8 hours rain – 2 for tracking up to six creatures) will reveal that some of the rubble appears to be scraped, perhaps by the metal nails on the bottom of boots, and there is the occasional gnawed on rat carcass lying about. The amount of marks is consistent with a half-dozen or so humanoids moving in or about the region within the last week.

If any of the party members has the favor “A Kiss from Trys” from SHLO5-01, A Dirty Little Job, then Trys will be found sitting on the edge of the ruin, crying. If in fact MULTIPLE players have the favor AND the party members are not of the same sex, then BOTH Trys' will be here (with the additional explanation they are brother and sister). Each Trys will ONLY end up flirting with one character in the party. Thus, if there are three players at the table running 2 female characters and 1 male character, each with “A Kiss from Trys”, then the female Trys will automatically flirt with the male character, while the male Trys will only flirt with one (chosen at random – such is the ways of fate) of the female characters.

Trys should be run as competent. That said, Trys is interested in discovering if the spark of love has a chance to ignite. Trys will be a bit on the flirtatious side, but nothing too over the top. In the previous adventure, Trys was drawn to the something positive about the character (their character class, high strength, etc.). In this adventure, Trys will instead find a way to compliment them on something they would not normally be complimented on (“you are so gentle for a fighter” for example)

Trys is a sorcerer from the Far East (Trys most recently spent time honing his/her skills in Eastfair in the Great Kingdom of Northern Aerdy). However, Trys does not like to reveal any of his/her background, at least at this time. Characters who are able to use skills or magic to learn more about Trys' background will only get that Trys is Blakunish, a sorcerer, is exploring the area (but is being paid by an unrevealed employer for anything

learned), and is, genuinely, interested in a member of the party.

Description of Trysta: She is a young woman dressed in black, from her pointed wide-brimmed hat, down to her thigh-high leather boots. Her olive skin and dark hair set off her equally dark eyes. She is holding a broom and a black cat sits nearby, lazily licking at a paw.

Description of Trystim: He is a young man dressed in black, from his pointed wide-brimmed hat, down to his sturdy leather boots. His olive skin and dark hair set off his equally dark eyes. He is holding a quarterstaff while a black cat sits nearby, on a hand woven carpet.

Read or paraphrase the following to the party (making sure to modify it appropriately if brother and sister Trys are present):

As you cross the rubble filled ruins, you can see a person sitting on the remnants of what used to be a wall. (he/she) is looking pensively into the pit, and is gripping the wall so tightly that (his/her) knuckles are turning white.

You recognize this as none other than Trys, whom you last saw in Bright Sentry. (he/she) turns to you flashes you a big grin “Oh! Well this is unexpected. What a pleasure to bump into a friendly face. Oh, I’m being the imperfect (host/hostess): Welcome to Gensal!”

Trys will interact with the party as politely as the party will interact with Trys. Trys will especially be interested in interacting with party members who have previously caught his/her favor. After all interaction is completed (see below), and if the subject has not been broached by such a party member, Trys will ask if the party member would be interested in meeting for a bite to eat in two weeks time in Critwall ‘between your duties and adventures, of course...’ If the player agrees (or suggests something similar) they get the favor on the AR “A lunch with Trys”.

Players who have the Hatred of Try will have some explaining to do as Trys suddenly recognizes them as those insufferable meddlers. If they can change Trys' reaction from Unfriendly to Indifferent (Diplomacy DC 15), then Trys will perk up and become friendly. Otherwise, Trys will become quite cross with that person/persons and refuse to deal with them any further (This would eliminate any favors such a player may have). It is very possible for Trys to like one player (who has the favor) and hate another in the party (who has his/her hatred).

Trys reveals the following information based on polite conversation:

- He/she is here because he/she is looking for acquaintance) friend that was lost during the

siege (his/her father, actually, which can only be revealed via magic or similar. Absent this Trys will NOT voluntarily reveal this information).

- If asked if the acquaintance was a soldier here, Trys will answer no, and say they were here at the fort on business.
- If asked specifically if the acquaintance was a member of the Shield Lands, Trys will shake his/her head sadly and say “no, just here at the wrong time, I’m afraid”.
- He/she will NOT reveal more about her acquaintance or why that person was here.
- He/she will state it is amazing the amount of devastation that occurred here and that it is clear nothing survived.
- He/she will state he/she has spent all the time he/she can here and must be off on other matters (again, magic can reveal he/she is thinking about a job to survey the Shield Lands by an employer – but he/she will NOT be thinking about who that employer is).
- If asked if he/she saw anyone in the ruins, he/she will say no, but it looked like someone WAS here and will point to some burned out torches in the bottom of the pit.

When finished speaking to the party, Trys will get on her broom/his flying carpet, blow a kiss to the party member if they have set up a lunch date and say something along the lines of “until next time”. Then he/she will fly off to the south.

If party members INSIST on following Trys, Trys will fly straight off to Critwall, camping over night once, and thence continue in to stay at Dewey’s Tavern. Spying on Trys in such a fashion will lose any favors of Trys that player might have (although Trys will at first try to warn off the character that ‘now is not the time for this’ if Trys can spot or see the character.

The Pit

The pit edge drops about 30’ to the new surface. Those with stonemasonry or with Knowledge (Dungeoneering) or Knowledge (Architecture) will, upon being lowered into the pit, clearly see the devastation is centered from within, even if they did not see it before. There are no signs of fire or the like and there are no signs of explosions per se (other than the walls were blasted apart) such as scorch marks.

While there is nothing too tricky about getting lowered into the pit, it may prove a bit of a challenge for animal companions and the like. The pit is edged with an overlapping lip, so there is no place to actually repel

against. Treat it as an “overhang with handholds but no footholds” for Climb checks (DC 25).

Upon reaching the bottom, players will note the ground is handworked stone (as much as survived). There are bits and pieces of statuary mixed in with the rubble, but there is not enough left for identification.

In the north east wall, there is a 15’ wide section of wall mostly covered with rubble that fell back into the pit. A Search check DC 15 will reveal there is something odd about the rubble. Looking behind it will reveal a startling site. Read or paraphrase the following to the party:

Behind the rubble is a strange sight: A room about 15 feet on a side is filled with what appears to be statues of three axe wielding warriors fighting some fiends of an indescribable sort. Between the knights and fiends lies another figure. All of these figures appear as if they are trapped in yellow amber, obscuring their features from complete identification. The armor of the knights is quite old and the figures wear full helms. The figure on the ground is in full robes, and is possibly a wizard or scholar due to the robes worn. The fiends seem to be a flurry of claws, horns, and teeth.

Appropriate Knowledge skills may reveal additional information:

- Arcana DC 25 The amber is not a magical effect, as in a spell, but it may be alchemical in nature.
- History DC 20 The warriors are dressed in ancient (400+ year old) armor associated with the Knights of Holy Shielding from that time period.
- History DC 20 Gensal is thought to be only 300 to 400 years old.
- Local (Iuz Metaregion) DC 30 The warriors are dressed in ancient (400+ year old) armor associated with the Knights of Holy Shielding from that time period. (Yes, it is tougher to make this skill check than it is for a person schooled in history)
- Nobility and Royalty DC 25 The warriors are dressed in ancient (400+ year old) armor associated with the Knights of Holy Shielding from that time period. (Yes, it is tougher to make this skill check than it is for a person schooled in history)
- Planes DC 20 The fiends appear to be similar to many of the demonic types. It is impossible to determine exactly which as they are stuck in the midst of shape changing into their demonic forms.

There is nothing more to learn at this site, and the party would not have any magic that can free anyone from the amber. This odd effect first appeared in SHLOI-II the Invisible Hand. What it portends for the future of the Shield Lands is not revealed at this time. However, after the party explores the under ruins (or at least 6 hours has gone by), a Spot check DC 30 will reveal that the figures appear to have moved ever so slightly. Finally, a Search check DC 25 will reveal that the amber effect may have pulled back over time. Lying under the rubble, as if they had finally fallen free of the trapped room, are three silver strings. These are the Strings of the Three Fingered Bard (see the Adventure Record for more information).

It will not require a person with the tracking skill to determine the pit has been recently used by others. Lying against the walls are a number of very long ladders, such as those used in a siege (40' long) as well as remnants of a campfire. This is in addition to the burned out torches visible from the upper rim of the pit.

Finally, in the North West corner of the room, there is a crevasse in the earth. It is not visible from the upper rim, and unless the party is actively looking for it (they search the pit) it will not be noticed. However, even a cursory search will reveal it. Investigating the ruins reveals a five-foot wide crack in the wall. It goes to a chamber five foot wide, and on the opposite side is a rift leading deeper into the earth.

Treasure:

APL All: *strings of the three-fingered bard* (regional, Adventure Record, 275 gp)

Encounter 3: Earth

Note: all of the doors in this dungeon, except for the door to room 6, are exceptionally thick and are locked with an incredibly cunning set of locks. All such doors have the following traits:

☛ **Stone Doors:** 2 in. thick; hardness 15; hp 25; AC 5; Break DC 35, Open Locks DC 40.

The door to room 6 is identical to those above except it not locked but is stuck and requires a Strength check DC 20 in order to push it open. Once it is pushed past the sticking point (which takes one round), it swivels easily open.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The chamber in front of the party is a narrow, twisting rift in the earth. It is as if the gods had dug into the ground and pulled the bedrock apart. The rift

is about five feet wide and descends rapidly into the darkness beyond.

The party can traverse the chasm down 100' to the subterranean area. The chasm is hard bedrock and is very rocky. There appears no signs of anyone being here (although a character with Tracking may make a Survival Check DC 28) to discover minute traces of recent travel (scrapes in the stone where metal brushed against it).

The chasm opens up into a 30' by 30' chamber. The ceiling stretches far into the overhead darkness (nearly 60').

1. The Black Door

Read or paraphrase the following:

Into the wall across from the chasm appears a set of double doors made from cold iron. It is 15' tall and each section of the door is 5' wide. The doors contain a hideous relief molded in of a fanged skull. Where the two doors meet, the skull appears solid, as if the skull were set on top of it, instead of molded from it.

The jaws of the skull appear red. Sticking to the metal teeth is something that looks like blood...

It is, in fact, blood that is nearly dry (it is sticky to the touch). The orc band had spent some time trying to figure out how to get the door open. Finally, yesterday, one of them had stuck its hand into the skull's mouth to try and twist the teeth, thinking that may open it. Instead, the skull snapped down, biting off the orc's hand. The skull itself, if the party checks, will swivel on an unseen hinge. To get the proper leverage, the party needs to grab the spikey teeth and twist the skull. It will then swivel, allowing the doors to open. Since there is already blood on the skull's teeth, it will not bite down on anyone's hand.

Note that it will NOT swivel back down on its own. Clever players may wonder, then, what caused it to swivel back down...

2. The Entry Chamber

Read or paraphrase the following:

The chamber behind the door is a 35' by 35' room carved from the stone itself. A wrought-iron candelabrum hangs dark and silent from the ceiling. Dusty piles of cloth, wood and metal outline where a number of chairs must have sat, and possibly a table as well. A door way sits in both of the two walls: one to the right and one to the west. On the far wall is a fireplace, choked with rubble. In the midst of this wreckage lies the body of an orc, hacked to death in a

manner most grim. A trail of blood leads to the left, through the doorway...

In this room, guests of the alchemist (few and very far between) were made comfortable while they waited his arrival. More than often, he used it as a reading room. The candelabrum is rusty and of no special quality. The wreckage of the various bits of furniture hides nothing special. The fireplace has been filled with rubble for centuries and is filled nearly solid with stone and dirt. The orc was slain by the undead in room 3. The Track feat can be used to determine there is a lot more blood in this room, leading to room three, than would have come from just one orc... (Survival DC 15). The hallway to room 3 and 4 are shaped stone, 10' wide and 10' tall.

3. The Room of Blood

Read or paraphrase the following to the party as they approach this room:

The stone door to this room, five feet wide and eight feet tall, sits dead center at the end of the hall. It is carved from top to bottom with figures in a process of change ~ a cat becoming a wolf, a fish becoming a man, a mouse becoming a dragon, (and more!) and then, cyclically, the carvings show the figures changing back to their original form. One of the figures, located dead center, should be that of a skull (having changed from a man and back again). However, the skull appears to be missing. On the ground in front of the door lie broken bits of stone. The door stands ever so slightly ajar... The trail of blood from the entry chamber leads within.

The door is very heavy and requires a Strength Check (DC 15) to open it. This is not intended as much as impediment as it is to set the mood of a big heavy door, more or less unopened for centuries. That said, how the party gets around this affects the tactics of the monsters in this room. None the less, the door will make a horrible scraping sound as it pushes in. The rubble itself appears as if it could be pierced together to form a stone skull, roughly of the size and shape of the hole in the door. Once inside, read or paraphrase the following to the intrepid band of adventurers (presuming an adequate light source):

The chamber before you is 25' wide and 40' long. A heavy scent of copper hits your senses before anything else. Hanging from five (out of six) vile contraptions in the ceiling are five orcs. The orcs are dead, but horribly so. The contraptions have literally squeezed all of the blood from the orcs, draining them into vats beneath them. Rising from the vats are

bloody human shapes, their dark eyes flashing at you greedily. Horrible symbols carved into their bodies.

Also in the room, on the far side, is a door, again with elaborate carvings. This time, the carvings are all of moons. The two moons of Oerth are shown in every possible combination: waxing, waning, eclipsed, etc. There is a crescent moon missing in the center of the door. If the party checks, the door with the skull in it has a clear handle from the inside, allowing those within to easily open it.

APL 2 (EL 2)

➤ **Ghouls (2):** hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

APL 4 (EL 4)

➤ **Ghouls (4):** hp 19 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

APL 6 (EL 6)

➤ **Ghasts (3):** hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Ghasts (6):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

Tactics: The first monster (Ghoul or Ghast) at each APL is wearing a suit of Masterwork Dragonhide Half-Plate armor. This increases its AC by +7 and reduces its movement to 15'/round. Unless the party had somehow silenced the opening of the door, the undead will NOT be surprised. If the party took more than a single round to break in, the undead will have taken a round of initiative to set their initiative scores to 20 (22 with their bonus). The undead will rush forward to attack whoever they can. If they paralyze a victim they will then move on to the next. The exception is elves (and half-elves) who they will not attack until the very end. As a special note: If a player is a member of the Sidhee Nation Shield Lands Meta-organization, they will find themselves filled with an unnatural loathing for these creatures. This is because the symbols carved into their bodies are actually in a derivative of the ancient Sidhee Language (and an abomination to be used in such a grisly manner). As a result, such characters will get a +1 Morale Bonus to hit, damage and wound these creatures.

Treasure:

APL All: *Dragonhide Masterwork Half Plate* (Adventure; DMG; 1500 gp)

This room has no trinkets or treasures that are readily seen. There are two items to find in the room. First, one of the undead had been wearing a silver amulet (it is shaped like a crescent moon with unusual Sidhee

symbols etched into it) of no real value (only about 6 gp). It slipped off in one of the vats. It would require a search check (DC 25) to locate it in the bottom of the vat, unless the vat is otherwise drained. The amulet DOES have value to the Sidhee nation, as it belonged to one of their warriors, an elf named Elz'hara. Elz'hara was lost centuries ago with no word of what became of him. Bringing this to the Sidhee will allow a player to either: learn the Sidhee language (and join the Sidhee nation if an elf), or learn a special feat. See "Favor of the Sidhee" on the Adventure Record.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, is a stone the size of a man's hand, shaped from granite into a nine-pointed star. It is hidden just inside the door inside a secret door. The alchemist hid some of his notes here and kept the key (the stone) with it. The secret door is DC 25 to locate and opens a 3' by 3' chamber, filled with dust. In the dust is the stone key. It opens room 4.

4. Room of Dust and Lies

The hallway to this room is dusty with no signs of any activity. The end of the hall ends in a carved stone door. The carvings are of various constellations, revolving around a central star. A Knowledge (Nature) check (DC 20) will reveal there is a theme: the carvings are set up to tell the changing of one season into the next based on the various constellations visible around the star. The central star is missing. Using the star shaped stone key from Room 3 allows the door to unlock. The door is in excellent shape and easily (and quietly) pushes in.

The room should be described to the party as follows:

This dusty room's purpose is lost to the ages. Was it a shrine? The many bas-relief sculptures of horrible creatures, some with wings, some with fangs, all deadly looking, would lead one to believe so. Was it some sort of room for working on statuary? The ground, being littered with bits of marble and white stone dust lend truth to such a theory. In any event, it is now empty.

The room is, on its face, empty. However, some of the bas relief carvings are actually monsters. When the party enters, the monsters will break free of their wall fixtures and attack.

APL 2 (EL 4)

➤ **Animated Object (Medium) (2):** hp 31 each; see *Monster Manual* page 113.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Gargoyles (2):** hp 37 each; see *Monster Manual* page 113.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Gargoyles (4):** hp 37 each; see *Monster Manual* page 113.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Gargoyles (8):** hp 49 each; see *Monster Manual* page 113.

Tactics: Please note: at APL 2, the animated objects are statues in the shape of gargoyles. Their stone exterior has crumbled with age giving them a hardness of only 4, instead of the normal 8.

These ageless monsters were bound here centuries ago by the iron will of the alchemist. They have served as mute watchers to the silent boring centuries waiting to serve out their last command: Guard the key to the door to room 5. The alchemist used to feed the gargoyles the occasional failed experiment or slave, and now they are ravenous, having not been fed for centuries, and will attack without mercy, targeting those without hard shiny metal skins first (armor), regardless of whether this is actually a good idea or not. The animated objects will just mindlessly attack the closest character.

Treasure: In one of the recesses of their alcoves is crescent shaped piece of stone. It is the key to room 5.

5. The Hall to Nowhere

The door from room 3 opens into a hallway that runs immediately to the left then travels 35' before turning sharply left. When the last square (before the turn) is stepped on, a pressure plate falls away and the corridor tilts down sharply on a pivot. The high end is the far end by the sharp turn. The end that drops is actually just before room 3 (see the map). The pit drops down to a pit filled with spikes. Originally, this trap would reset. However, time has ruined it and now once the pit has been triggered, it stays open.

Characters on the corridor when it tilts might not slide down the ramp. First, they may make a Balance Check (DC 20) to brace themselves in some manner. If that fails, they slide at great speed down to the end of the ramp. At the end, they may make a Reflex save (DC 20) in order to grab the lip of the pit and avoid a nasty fall 20' to the spikes below.

APL 2-8 (EL 2)

➤ **Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; DC 20 Balance Check or DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6 fall); multiple targets (anyone on the corridor area when triggered); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 damage each); Search DC 20, Disable Device DC 15.

Development: How the alchemist ever used such an entrance to his lair in any feasible manner is a mystery (although a healthy supply of potions of *gaseous form* is suspected). In the base of the pit is a door. This leads to the last room of the dungeon, room 6. This door at first has no symbols on it. However, when pulled open, the stone door will open to a copper door immediately behind it. The copper door, when opened, will reveal a rotted wooden door, so brittle that it cannot be opened, but merely falls apart at the slightest touch. Behind the three doors is a short corridor.

6. Chamber of the Master

This room is behind a door at the end of a short corridor. The door to this room is stuck and requires a Strength check DC 20 in order to push it open. Once it is pushed past the sticking point (which takes one round), it swivels easily open.

☛ **Stone Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 15; hp 25; AC 5; Break DC 35, Open Locks DC 40.

Behind the door is a massive room with a vaulted ceiling. A variant of *continual flame* keeps the ceiling tiles lit. They are covered with bright, cathedral like, stained glass paintings. The paintings are all of horrible changes: People changing to beasts and beasts to people, plants into animals and vice-versa, demons into men and women and back again. Overall: very unpleasant. The room itself is void of nearly all furnishings, all having turned to dust, except for three features:

First, there is an iron bird cage hanging from the ceiling. Inside of it is a bird skeleton. It flops around harmless inside and its beak opens in an attempt to make squawking noises. This is a 1 hp animal skeleton included only for atmosphere and roleplaying purposes. The party can easily kill it and it is not intended to have any combat purpose.

Second, there is a massive chair, built of metal and vials and glass tubing and wires and sparkly bits and, well, it's very chaotic. One could possibly describe it as an electric chair designed by the truly insane. There are clamps for legs and arms, as well as weird copper crown hooked by a spring dangling from bony-looking arm. Sitting in the chair is a skeletal being (the alchemist – or what's left of him). NOTE: At APL 8, in the 10 ft. by 10 ft. section in front of the deathlock, there floor is littered with a vast number of slightly larger than normal caltrops, each of which bears a sickly green stain on its points (actually a *silent image*).

Finally, there is a stone pedestal, not far from the chair. It is carved in an intertwining mass of creatures, each mutating into the one adjacent to it. On top of the

pedestal is a massive book, black as sin and bound with brass. It is the Book of Dark Alchemy.

Upon entering, the creature in the chair will turn and look at the party, then rise and attack to defend its lair.

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **The Alchemist (Deathlock, 1st level wizard):** hp 26. See the Appendix.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **The Alchemist (Deathlock, 3rd level wizard):** hps 40. See the Appendix.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **The Alchemist (Deathlock, 5th level wizard):** hps 54. See the Appendix.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **The Alchemist (Deathlock, 7th level wizard):** hps 68. See the Appendix.

Tactics: It is important to note that the alchemist was turned into this undead abomination by the very chair he is sitting in. It was his greatest invention. He used it to convert his other abilities into intelligence, literally draining himself to increase his brilliance. Unfortunately, he went too far and drained himself of all of his constitution, converting him to an undead. Over time, his converted intelligence faded, leaving him with mere whispers of his former power. Being drained in such a fashion has made him lose much of his knowledge. At all levels, the alchemist is unaware of the passage of time, having been trapped in an endless hatred over his own failure. He will use that hatred against the party to slay as many of the intruders as possible.

At APL 2, the alchemist will not use its *ghoul glyph*. At APL 4 and 6, it will have placed three *ghoul glyphs* (See the map). At APL 8, the alchemist will also have placed a *silent image* spell of a 10 ft. by 10 ft. area filled with unusually large caltrops. The tips of the caltrops are covered with a vile sticky green substance. If interacted with and a player fails their Will save, the caltrops act as normal. However, make an affected character roll Fortitude saves for the green substance (which has no effect). If the party took more than one round to push open the door the Alchemist will also prepare other spells.

At APL 2, the alchemist will not leave its lair. Thus the party can go get healed at the temple of Fortubo and then come back, better prepared, to slaughter it. At all other APLs, the Lich will pursue victims to the very end.

At APL 4 and higher, the Alchemist's *magic missile* spells are all heightened. At APL 8, the Alchemist saves its *dimension door* spell to use in case it gets grappled or needs to cut off an escape.

Treasure:

At APL 2, the Alchemist has nothing. At APL 4-8 he is wearing a ring. At APL 4, the ring is worth 1,200 gp (200 gp to each character when sold) and at APL 6, the ring is worth 2400 gp (400 gp to each character when sold). However, at APL 8, the ring is a true treasure. It is a ring of wizardry I, however its magic has faded, making it a valuable trinket in its condition (worth 5100 gp or 850 gp to each character when sold). It can be repaired, however, and a player could buy it (the cost works out to buying one new, repairing it works out to being the cost of crafting it – and requires the skill to do it as well).

APL 2 none

APL 4 silver ring 200 gp

APL 6 silver ring with ruby inset 400 gp

APL 8 faded *ring of wizardry* 850 gp

Also, there is a stone brick near the chair. It appears to have no value, although there is a hole drilled through it, perfectly. It radiates strong enchantment magic.

Development:

The Horrible Chair: This is the Alchemists SECOND greatest invention. It twists and alters its user's abilities. It has one use left. It radiates strong transmutation magic. There has been MUCH foreshadowing that the alchemist was into changing thing (the carvings on the various doors). Further, the undead thing was sitting in the blasted chair! Nonetheless, if a player sits in the chair, they may make a Fortitude Save (DC 20) to avoid its affects (or may choose to voluntarily allow the magic to take affect). Roll 1D6: 1 being strength, 2 being dexterity and so on. Reduce that score by 2. Roll 1D6 again. Increase that score by 2. IF DOUBLE ARE ROLLED (the same score rolled twice) the player wins! Increase that score by 2 with no reduction. 4D12 hours after a player has been affected by the machine, the effects fade away returning the player's ability scores to normal. The machine crumbles to worthless junk and dust, beyond the repair of any magics available short of a full *wish* or *miracle*. If not used, it will fall apart from the disturbance within 24 hours in any event.

The Book of Dark Alchemy: This is the Alchemists GREATEST invention. Holding it bestows a negative level on anyone who is not evil. Players were advised in the introduction the book is incredibly evil. It radiates both evil and magic at the highest of levels. Studying its blasphemous writings will shift the alignment of the reader one step towards chaotic and evil in this manner:

Original Alignment	New Alignment
Lawful Good	Lawful Neutral
Lawful Neutral	Neutral
Neutral Good	Neutral

Neutral	Chaotic Neutral
Chaotic Good	Chaotic Neutral
Chaotic Neutral	Chaotic Evil

The Will DC to resist this effect is DC 20.

In addition to acting as the Alchemist's spell book (containing the following spells: 0—[*detect magic, ray of frost, touch of fatigue*]; 1st—[*color spray, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image*] 2nd- [*ghoul touch, glitter dust, mirror image, scorching ray*] 3rd - [*blink, lightning bolt, vampiric touch*] 4th- [*dimension door*], the book also bestows foul, alchemical secrets upon its reader. Upon successfully reading its foul secrets (which takes 4 TU and costs 400 gp in materials) the reader gains the following ability: When attempting a Craft (alchemy) skill check, the character may make an Intelligence check (DC 10) to remember some insight from this tome. This insight gives the character a +3 circumstance bonus to their Craft (Alchemy) check. Further, any potions a character who has read the book makes last 20% longer (where appropriate), than a normal potion. However, the user will develop a strong paranoia that others want their secrets. This results in a -2 penalty on all Diplomacy checks.

Conclusion

The party can go back to Critwall with the book. On the way, they may decide to stop at the Jousting Mug or the Shrine and report the lights were undoubtedly from the Iuzians, who are now dead.

Upon their return to Critwall, the party should take the book to the Church of Holy Shielding or the Arcanist's Society. The authorities will thank the party for their actions and let any party members who want to study the book to do so.

As to the mysterious stone brick recovered from the Alchemist's Lair, further study of it reveals it to be dwarven in origin. The party will be contacted by a representative of Lord Bladehome (the dwarven member of the Council of Lords), asking if it can be inspected. If the party agrees, the dwarven lord will return a note to the party offering access to a few magic trinkets in exchange for it (See Items for the Adventure Record, below). He will reveal in the note that is a partly constructed head to a dwarven weapon of some sort. It is possible that ages ago, the stone was brought by dwarves to the alchemist for enchanting, but beyond that he would have no idea what it was doing in the lair of the Alchemist.

Finally, anyone in the party who participated in SHL5-01 will receive a note from Simen Sharn, the future Lord of Bright Sentry. It will read as follows:

A quick note to thank you again for your assistance. As long as you are on the main land, I thought I would ask you to keep an eye out. My guardian left for Critwall after spending a week here. He was VERY angry about something. It felt as though he was upset that I survived being captured by goblins! Can you imagine that! Well, I just thought you should know since you were the instrument of my salvation... Appreciatively yours, S. Sharn.

The adventure ends with the party being thanked again by the Church and Arcanists for their work:

The thank you from the Church and Arcanists seems almost hollow, somehow. Certainly, you did find the Book of Dark Alchemy, but such a foul device seems oddly suited to help the Shield Lands defeat the plague. Anyways, there are still MORE relics to find if the plague is to be defeated. This means the cure will not be happening soon, and every day without a cure means a day more Shield Landers suffer the wrath of Iuz. You can only hope the other pieces are found quickly, and that a cure is achieved.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter Three – Room 3

Kill the monsters

- APL2 60 xp
- APL4 120 xp
- APL6 180 xp
- APL8 240 xp

Encounter Three – Room 4

Kill the monsters

- APL2 120 xp
- APL4 180 xp
- APL6 240 xp
- APL8 300 xp

Encounter Three – Room 5

Avoid the Trap

- APL2 60 xp
- APL4 60 xp
- APL6 60 xp
- APL8 60 xp

Encounter Three – Room 6

Defeat the Alchemist

- APL2 120 xp
- APL4 180 xp
- APL6 240 xp

APL8 300 xp

Story Award

Retrieve the Book:

- APL2 45 xp
- APL4 63 xp
- APL6 90 xp
- APL8 113 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award

- APL2 45 xp
- APL4 62 xp
- APL6 90 xp
- APL8 112 xp

Total possible experience:

- APL2 400 xp
- APL4 600 xp
- APL6 800 xp
- APL8 1250 xp

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter Two

APL All: M - 275 gp strings of the three-fingered bard.

Encounter Three – Room 3

APL All: M - 125 gp masterwork dragonhide half-plate armor.

Encounter Three – Room 6

APL 4: C - 200 gp

APL 6: C - 400 gp

APL 8: M – 850 gp faded ring of wizardry.

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: M: 400 gp - Total: 400 gp

APL 4: C: 200 gp; M: 400 gp - Total: 600 gp

APL 6: C: 400 gp; M: 400 gp - Total: 800 gp

APL 8: M: 1250 gp – Total 1250 gp

Special

Well-worked Stone: This stone is carved by true masters of the art. Further, it has received special enchantments. What does it do? Who knows! But if you want it you will have to pay. If you want Regional access to this item, you must have your Dungeon Master cross out access to the *wand of magic missiles* (5th) and the *pink and green sphere ioun stone*. Price 5,000 gp.

Strings of the Three-Fingered Bard: These silver mystic strings, when attached to a masterwork stringed musical instrument, such as a lute, allow a possessor with bardic music as a class ability to create certain magical effects. As a full round action, its user can produce *tasha's hideous laughter* twice per day, and *joyful noise* (*Complete Adventurer*) once per day.

Faint enchantment; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *tasha's hideous laughter, joyful noise*; Price 4,800 gp.

Items for the Adventure Record

Lunch with Trys: You managed to get a lunch date with Trys. You are quite the sly dog!

Well-worked Stone: This stone is carved by true masters of the art. Further, it has received special enchantments. What does it do? Who knows! But if you want it you will have to pay. If you want Regional access to this item, you must have your Dungeon Master cross out access to the *wand of magic missiles* (5th level) and the *pink and green sphere ioun stone*. Price 5,000 gp.

Favor of the Sidhee: You return the amulet of Elz'hara to the Sidhee nation. This takes 1 TU. In exchange, you receive access to the Sidhee language (you must spend the skill points necessary to learn the language) and are then able to join the Sidhee meta-organization. You do not need to be an elf to use this favor but you may not be a dwarf or a half-orc.

Strings of the Three-Fingered Bard: These silver mystic strings, when attached to a masterwork stringed musical instrument, such as a lute, allow a possessor with bardic music as a class ability to create certain magical effects. As a full round action, its user can produce *tasha's hideous laughter* twice per day, and *joyful noise* (*Complete Adventurer*) once per day.

Faint enchantment; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *tasha's hideous laughter, joyful noise*; Price 4,800 gp.

Student of Dark Alchemy. You have successfully read the Book of Dark Alchemy and deciphered its foul secrets (which takes 4 TU and costs 400 gp in materials). Your alignment is now _____. The book has bestowed foul, alchemical secrets upon you. When attempting a Craft (alchemy) skill check, you may make an Intelligence check (DC 10) to remember some insight from this tome. This insight gives you a +3 circumstance bonus to your Craft (alchemy) check. Further, any potions you create have a 5% chance of being affected as though they had the Extend Spell feat (roll percentile dice at the time of potion use). However, you have developed a strong paranoia that others want your secrets. This results in a -2 circumstance penalty on all Diplomacy checks.

Item Access

APL 2:

- Adamantine heavy pick (Adventure, DMG)
- Dragonhide half plate (Adventure, DMG)
- *Strings of the three-fingered bard* (Regional, see above)
- *Well worked stone* (regional; 5,000 gp)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Wand of magic missiles* (5th level) (Adventure, DMG)

APL 6 (all of APLs 2-4 plus the following):

- *Pink and green sphere ioun stone* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2-6 plus the following):

- *Ring of wizardry I* (Regional, DMG)

Appendix One – APL 2

Encounter Three. 6

The Alchemist (Deathlock, 1st level Human Wizard): CR 4; Medium Undead; HD 4d12; hp 26; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp: +1/+1; Atk +1 melee (1d4 bite); Full Atk +1 melee (1d4 bite); Space/Reach: 5ft./5 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Darkvision 60ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 11, Dex 12, Con -, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy) +6; Concentration +6, Hide +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +8, Spot +9; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2; caster level 1st; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—[*detect magic*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue*]; 1st—[*ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*]

Spell-like abilities: At will – *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13), *read magic*, 3/day – *cause fear* (DC 13), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*, 2/day – *death knell* (DC 14), *ghoul glyph* (DC 14)*. Caster level equals the deathlocks HD (3). The save DCs are charisma based.

Appendix Two – APL 4

Encounter Three. 6

The Alchemist (Deathlock, 3rd level Human Wizard): CR 6; Medium Undead; HD 6d12; hp 40; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp: +2/+2; Atk +2 melee (1d4 bite); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 bite); Space/Reach: 5ft./5 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Darkvision 60ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 11, Dex 12, Con -, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy) +7; Concentration +7, Hide +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +8, Spot +9; Alertness, Empower Spell Like Ability – *magic missile*, Improved Initiative, Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (4/3/1; caster level 3rd; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—[*detect magic, ray of frost, touch of fatigue x2*]; 1st—[*color spray, ray of enfeeblement, shield*] 2nd—[*ghoul touch, mirror image*]

Spell-like abilities: At will – *detect magic, inflict minor wounds* (DC 13), *read magic*; 3/day – *cause fear* (DC 13), *magic missile, summon monster I*; 2/day – *death knell* (DC 14), *ghoul glyph* (DC 14)*. Caster level equals the deathlocks HD (3). The save DCs are charisma based.

Appendix Two – APL 6

Encounter Three. 6

The Alchemist (Deathlock, 5th level Human Wizard): CR 8; Medium Undead; HD 8d12; hp 54; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp: +3/+3; Atk +3 melee (1d4 bite); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4 bite); Space/Reach: 5ft./5 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Darkvision 60ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 11, Dex 12, Con -, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy) +8; Concentration +8, Hide +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +8, Spot +9; Alertness, Empower Spell Like Ability – *magic missile*, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus – Necromancy*, Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (4/4/3/2; caster level 5th; base DC = 14 (15*) + spell level): 0—[*detect magic*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue* x2]; 1st—[*color spray*, *ray of enfeeblement* x2, *shield*] 2nd—[*ghoul touch*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray*] 3rd—[*blink*, *vampiric touch*]

Spell-like abilities: At will – *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13), *read magic*, 3/day – *cause fear* (DC 14), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*, 2/day – *death knell* (DC 15), *ghoul glyph* (DC 15)*. Caster level equals the deathlocks HD (3). The save DCs are charisma based.

Appendix Two – APL 8

Encounter Three. 6

The Alchemist (Deathlock, 7th level Human Wizard): CR 10; Medium Undead; HD 10d12; hp 68; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grp: +4/+4; Atk +4 melee (1d4 bite); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4 bite); Space/Reach: 5ft./5 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Darkvision 60ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 11, Dex 12, Con -, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy) +9; Concentration +9, Hide +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +8, Spot +9; Alertness, Empower Spell Like Ability – *magic missile*, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus – Necromancy*, Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/1; caster level 7th; base DC = 14 (15*) + spell level): 0—[*detect magic*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue* x2]; 1st—[*color spray*, *ray of enfeeblement* x2, *shield*, *silent image*] 2nd— [ghoul touch, glitter dust, mirror image, scorching ray] 3rd— [blink, lightning bolt, vampiric touch] 4th— [dimension door]

Spell-like abilities: At will – *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13), *read magic*; 3/day – *cause fear* (DC 14), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*; 2/day – *death knell* (DC 15), *ghoul glyph* (DC 15)*. Caster level equals the deathlocks HD (3). The save DCs are charisma based.

Appendix Two: New Monsters and Spells

DEATHLOCK (from *Libris Mortis*)

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 3d12 (19 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 13 (+2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+1

Attack: Bite +1 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: Bite +1 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance.

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14

Skills: Concentration +6, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcane) +8, Listen +9, Spellcraft +8, Spot +9

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary, trio, or college (5-9)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +3

Skeletally thin, this figure wears a dramatic cloak fringed with magical sigils. Its cadaverous eyes sizzle with cursed power, and deadly spells dance on its fingertips.

Deathlocks are undead born of the corpses of powerful spellcasters whose remains are so charged with magic that they are unable to lie quiet in the grave. Animate, but shorn of the spirit that once ruled their forms, deathlocks seek to bring all those they meet into an intimate embrace with death. Only their knowledge of spellcasting remains, though twisted and charged.

Sometimes deathlocks retain a single shred of memory from their former spirits. If the recollection was dear to the spirit that once inhabited the now shrivelled and blasted body of the deathlock, the creature usually seeks out the source of that memory, hoping to destroy it, compromise it, or undo the deeds associated with it.

Deathlocks stand between 5-1/2 feet and 6-1/2 feet tall and weigh between 100 and 120 pounds.

Deathlocks speak Common, Abyssal, and Infernal.

Combat: A deathlock prefers to use its spell-like abilities from a distance, disdaining melee. Thus it can also use its *inflict minor wounds* to heal itself.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13), *read magic*, 3/day – *cause fear* (DC 13), *magic missile*, *summon monster I*, 2/day – *death knell* (DC 14), *ghoul glyph* (DC 14)*. Caster level equals the deathlocks HD. The save DCs are charisma based.
*This spell is from *Libris Mortis* and is presented below.

Ghoul Glyph (from *Libris Mortis*)

Necromancy

Level: Hunger 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V,S,M

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Effect: One ghoulish glyph that must fit within a 1-ft. square

Duration: Permanent until discharged

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial

Spell Resistance: Yes

You inscribe a glyph that paralyzes any living creature of Large or smaller size that enters, passes, or opens the warded area. You can scribe the glyph to be visible faintly glowing lines, or invisible. You can inscribe a *ghoul glyph* on a portable object, but if the object is moved more than 5 feet, the glyph fades.

Conditions for triggering a *ghoul glyph* are stringent. It takes effect on any creature except yourself that moves to or within 2 feet of it. It affects invisible creatures normally, but is not triggered by those that travel past it ethereally. Only a single *ghoul glyph* can be inscribed in a 5-foot square.

Ghoul glyphs cannot be affected or bypassed by such means as physical or magical probing, though they can be dispelled. *Mislead* and *nondetection* can fool a *ghoul glyph*.

Read magic allows identification of a *ghoul glyph* with a successful DC 13 spellcraft check, if the glyph is noticed before it is activated. A rogue (only) can use the Search skill to find a *ghoul glyph* and Disable Device to thwart it. The DC in each case is 27.

When a glyph is activated, the subject is paralyzed for 1d6+2 rounds. Additionally, if the subject fails his Fortitude save, the paralyzed subject exudes a carrion stench that causes retching and nausea in a 10-foot radius. Those in the radius must make a Fortitude save or take a -2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks until the spell ends.

Material Component: You trace the glyph with earth from a ghoulish lair.

Appendix Three: The Map

Lair of the Alchemist

SIDE VIEW OF ⑤

