

Dawn

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Highfolk Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

by Greg Marks

Editor: Todd Ammerman

Triad Reviewer: Todd Ammerman

Circle Reviewer: Britt F. Frey

Playtesters: Rob Cronwell Atis Kleinbergs, David N. Krolnik, Ben Siekert

All things must end. The Dawn rises. Part four of The Coming Dawn and the finale of all things Highfolk. A one-round Highfolk Regional adventure for APLs 4-12.

Resources for this adventure include Book of Exalted Deeds [James Wyatt, Darrin Drader, Christopher Perkins], Complete Adventurer [Jesse Decker], Complete Warrior [Andy Collins, David Noonan, Ed Stark], Monster Manual IV [Gwendolyn F.M. Kestrel], Monster Manual V [David Noonan], *Player's Handbook II* [David Noonan], *Spell Compendium* [Matthew Sernett, Jeff Grubb, Mike McArtor].

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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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2008.

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 rule 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. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix 1 for full

information on NPCs and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix 1 is split by APL.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA session 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). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

See Chapter One of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook* for details on APLs. If the APL of your group is an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

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.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard Regional adventure, set in Highfolk. Characters native to Highfolk pay 1 Time Unit per round; all other characters pay 2 Time Units per round.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

There is an ancient force in the Vesve that for good or ill, has dwelt there in relative silence for centuries. It has gone by many names, but some now call it the Dawn. Those sensitive to such things have prophesied its ascendance, although many have misinterpreted the meaning of those seers, thinking it was the Old One that they whispered of. A few powerful beings try to balance the entity, but the scales have been tipped, and Dawn is coming.

In preparation for its coming, the Dawn sent its herald, ex-Knight of the High Forest, Releshi Elethiel to recover the Tree of the Arclight, a powerful living artifact tied to the Vesve once thought lost. However, as she approached the grove sacred to Obad-Hai where the tree was located, Releshi found that the changes her service had worked upon her body and soul made it so that she could not enter the clearing. Dupes were needed, and were easily found among the nascent adventuring community (HIG5-09 *Twilight*).

The Tree of the Arclight was in the hands of the Dawn who sought to bend it to its own purposes, but then chance revealed another use. A discovery by another group of adventurers turned up the possibility that several of the Dawn's greatest foes were in fact aspects of the same being (HIG6-05 *A Column of Five*). If this is so, the Tree of the Arclight could be used as bait for the weakest of these aspects in order to capture a portion of the Dawn's foe and possibly cripple her before the coming battle. Releshi was able to capture Maegla the Dreamer, but in the process lost the Tree of the Arclight (HIG6-08 *Dusk*). Maegla was delivered to the Dawn, where it was later revealed (HIG8-03 *Lies of Iron*) that the Dawn had consumed her along with the Tree of the Arclight and several other powerful persons and artifacts. One of the few items denied the Dawn was another magical plant known as the Al'Torrey Congerrin; a green blossomed rose (HIG7-05). These efforts were partially made possible by an alliance first broached with Svatek Grimblood, a minion of the Old One sent from Boneheart Panshazek to find allies against the Dawn. Svatek would later take up permanent residence in the village of Weeping Willow as part of the treaty of alliance with the Empire of Iuz (HIG8-05 *...Thicker Than Water?*). Worried what the ritual of Ascension means for Aensylorin, the child of Releshi Elethiel and Calentir Rellen, Releshi's friend Wynda Ceara has kidnapped the boy and fled to her paramour Leaijrn Greenoak, Lord Marshal of the Rangers of the Vesve. In turn, he has taken them to hide in the shrine of Pelor in Weeping Willow where a former adventuring companion, Berinia Starshine is High Priestess.

Detecting the theft, Releshi has left home immediately to find those responsible and the trail leads her to Weeping Willow. She arrives too late however; not only has Wynda returned to the Oronodel to confess her treachery and ask her family to see reason, but Mnemosyne, whose son Rhynian also stands to inherit the Rellen House, has taken matters into her own hands and hired a fellow member of the Blood Owls, an anti-Iuzian intelligence organization in Highfolk, to steal the child from Berinia's shrine and deliver him to her.

Less rash than Releshi, her husband Calentir seeks those who would be most rewarded by their son's disappearance and enters into the household of his stepmother Mnemosyne Menanine-Rellen in the disguise of a nanny, waiting for sign of his son to appear. Now in the presence of both heirs, Calentir concocts a plot to steal both children for his Verdant Mistress, the Dawn.

The stress over the succession of House Rellen continues to push the elves closer to civil war. Oronodel gather forces in the north and the faith of Ehlonna has

split over the argument. The Vesve is poised to break under the weight of things to come.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Introduction: The PCs are traveling together on the Quagflow Road, headed for Highfolk, when they must pass through Weeping Willow. A mob has gathered outside the general store. The mob calls for the lynching of Svatek Grimblood, the cleric of Iuz that runs the store, blaming him for the massacre in the shrine of Pelor. If the party prevents mob justice, Svatek can tell them the truth of what happened.

Encounter One: The PCs investigate the massacre and destruction of the shrine of Pelor. High priestess Berinia Starshine is dead and Lord Marshal Leaijrn Greenoak has been taken. There is no sign of Councilor Wynda Ceara or Aensylorin, the child of Releshi Elethiel and Calentir Rellen. There is an ultimatum left behind demanding the return of the baby or the Lord Marshal will be executed.

Encounter Two: The PCs follow evidence that leads them to seek out the Highwayman Mr. Coldeven. Following a confrontation with his bandits, the PCs are granted an audience and learn that Coldeven is in fact Steerpike, who was once a candidate for mayor. Steerpike admits that he spirited the baby away from the shrine, though Wynda was not there. He gave the child to Mnemosyne Menanine-Rellen, the Lady of House Rellen, who was last at the Rellen compound in the Elven District of Highfolk town.

Encounter Three: The PCs follow the trail to Mnemosyne who admits to having both heirs to House Rellen. She refuses to give up either child, instead claiming to foster the Oronodel baby for the betterment of all. She orders the PCs out of her home as she departs for Flameflower in the company of the children and their nanny.

Encounter Four: The party has no choice but to attend the meeting and try to negotiate for Leaijrn's release, or to try to free him by force.

Encounter Five: The PCs are confronted first by the Dawn's minions and finally by the Dawn herself, but just as they are about to be slain, the Dawn pauses and the party is given the chance to flee with the aid of the Dreamer of Sea and Stars.

Conclusion: While the PCs were attempting save Leaijrn, Calentir in the disguise of Mnemosyne's nanny has stolen away both children.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

ABSENCE OF RESPONSIBILITY

For those PCs who are devoted to the Lady of the Wood, adventuring with other PCs who are opposed to her may prove difficult if not impossible, especially if the adventure centers on thwarting her.

To accommodate this, the Lady of the Wood is using a powerful artifact to magically disguise her loyal supporters. This magical disguise not only alters the appearance of the PC, but grants them a new identity. This means they are somebody else.

It is suggested the player with the affected PC determine this new identity, including a name. Other players are strongly encouraged to role-play this effect and are discouraged from meta-gaming.

This effect can be dispelled (caster level 20) and spells like *true seeing* can pierce the magical disguise.

It is strongly suggested that any PC devoted to the Lady of the Wood accept this magical disguise before going on **THIS** adventure, especially since it deals with those who are trying to thwart her efforts. The PC may reveal to others their magical disguise or even refuse it completely. Be forewarned there may be consequences for refusing this as well as consequences if the magical disguise is pierced. The table judge may be called upon to determine this consequence.

For this adventure, the most danger is present in Encounter 3 while Encounter 5 has little or none.

BALANCE OF SCALES

Determine if any PCs have levels of Dragon Disciple or other draconic prestige classes, base classes, feats, or other abilities and do not have Highfolk regional documentation granting them access (that is, they gained access from another region, or took access exercising the core or Open option) or are playing a kobold using the "Sojourner from the Mist Kingdom" Player Rewards card. These PCs should be noted, as they may receive a special encounter or be specifically targeted during Encounter 5; also refer to the Adventure Supplement for this adventure, if present. Those PCs that do have levels of Dragon Disciple with Highfolk regional documentation should also be noted, as they too may receive special attention, if they are not given.

LEGENDARY DEEDS

At the beginning of this scenario, each player must determine the recognition of his Highfolk Legendary Deeds. These deeds automatically activate (no rolling necessary). At the beginning of this scenario, each player chooses ONE of their unused Legendary Deeds and for the entirety of the event, NPCs recognize the hero for the

deed he has accomplished, and the benefit listed on the deed may be used. After the scenario, if the deed expires, mark it "USED".

HIGHFOLK INFLUENCE CHART

PCs may wish to spend various Regional Influence Points during this adventure. Refer to the Supplemental Highfolk Influence Chart for guidelines.

INTRODUCTION

As the adventure begins, the PCs have met on the road and have been traveling together for a few hours on their way from Verbeeg Hill to Highfolk. It is near midday on the 17th of Wealsun and they are approaching the village of Weeping Willow.

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) reveals the following significance about the date (PCs who are Devoted of the Green and White receive a +4 circumstance bonus to this check): the 17th of Wealsun is the Ceremony of the Turning, which is celebrated among the Flanaess, the Marklands, and in Druidic communities. Seven-year olds are carried blindfolded and barefoot into the woods, and must find a new name before returning to the village feast. Each child is released separately and alone. They are guided by rowdy singing (and a huge bonfire if they are slow), and when they return they are carried into the center of the gathering to whisper their name into the fire. This is their Truename, with all that it implies. It should be noted that rangers and priests of Ehlonna are also especially busy this night, quietly patrolling the area and looking out for the children's safety. In friendly lands some elves are also drawn to this sort of role, and it is considered a good omen for a child to successfully spot one.

It is a bright and sunny Wealsun day as your make your way south on the Quagflow Road with the eventual intention of arriving in Highfolk Town. Your path has brought you into the company of several other travelers as you approach the village of Weeping Willow, where it appears some sort of commotion is afoot. Smoke drifts up from the remains of the shrine of Pelor and a large mob has gathered in front of the general store, armed with troches and various farming implements. Someone is about to be lynched!

The PCs are at the edge of town, approaching from the north. The shrine of Pelor appears to be in ruins. Only one wall and the sacristy remain standing and it is clear that it has seen recent fire (more recent than the events of HIG8-05 ...*Thicker than Water?*). If the PCs decide to

investigate the smoldering ruins despite the obvious angry mob, proceed to Encounter 1.

The mob has gathered around the general store with the intent on blaming the man within for the massacre and desecration of their temple.

Villagers surround the store waving their torches and farm implements menacingly at the two men baring access to the store. Many of the villagers shout "Kill 'em," "Burn them out," and "Hand him," but the men fold their arms and do not seem impressed. Behind the men, a hand-lettered sign in the window reads, "Under New Management, Curios and Spellcasting Services for Sale. We purchase furs, timber and foodstuffs. All Welcome."

The general store, formerly Religuth's Goods, is now under new management (HIG8-05 ...Thicker Than Water?). The store owner Svatek Grimblood, cleric of Iuz, now uses the store to sell and buy goods in the name of the Empire, as part of the alliance agreement between Greenreach and Highfolk. The villagers blame him for the woe that has befallen the Halls of the Radiant Sun, despite his innocence. If any of the PCs crowd what has occurred, they claim that the priest of the Old One that lives inside killed everyone in the shrine. A DC 10 Sense Motive suggests that the crowd is more angry and distrustful than they are certain it was Svatek who did the deed. None of the townsfolk have any proof that he was involved, but only assume he was since he is a follower of Old Wicked.

Svatek Grimblood: male human cleric 7 [Iuz], hp 45; oily; Appendix 1.

Glabrezu (2): hp 174; MM 43; magically disguised as humans in leather armor.

Creatures: If the PCs do not act, the villagers attempt to storm the store. Once that happens, Svatek will no longer hold back the demons and they kill until the villagers flee. The only hope to avoid bloodshed is for the PCs to calm the crowd. A DC 10 Diplomacy or Intimidate check forces the crowd to back down enough to allow the PCs past to speak with the Glabrezu who in turn direct the PCs to Svatek inside. Any overt show of force (such as destructive magic) also disperses the crowd. This is not intended to devolve into a combat, so the DM should give the PCs every opportunity to disperse the crowd. The DM should also make it clear to bloodthirsty PCs that if they attack Svatek and his men, it is likely that many of the villagers will be hurt or killed and it is clear that the cleric is currently taking no offensive actions. If the PCs seem dense, Svatek warns them that he will not be held responsible for any collateral deaths should he be forced to defend himself.

SPEAKING WITH SVATEK

Svatek is only too happy to speak with the PCs, as he has no wish to kill the townsfolk, realizing that while it is easily within his power, it would have disastrous consequences for his master's (the Boneheart Panshazek) alliance with the people of Highfolk against the Dawn; if he were to disrupt that alliance, he would be severely punished.

The two men open the door to the store in order to admit you. A tall oily man in dark robes stands behind a counter well stocked with jars and knickknacks. "I'm so glad you happened by friends, or I'm afraid something rather untoward might have happened." The man offers you a predatory smile not unlike that of a hungry serpent trying to be friendly towards a plump mouse.

Boneheart Panshazek has dispatched Svatek Grimblood, an ambitious up-and-coming priest originally from the Bandit Kingdoms, to meet with people throughout the Vesve region. He is to offer them an alliance against the Dawn, as well as an increase trade between Greenreach and the rest of the Marklands. Due to the actions of adventurers, Svatek came into possession of the store in Weeping Willow as part of the promised alliance between the Empire and the Vesve (events of HIG8-05 ...Thicker Than Water?).

As the official representative of an allied government, Svatek is only too happy to help and demands nothing in return other than the ability to continue his commerce unmolested.

- **What did you do?** "I did nothing, but I did see what occurred during my late night meditations."
- **What happened?** "I was up a little past midnight communing with my god by my window, when I witnessed a young woman who stormed into the Pelorite temple. I believe she was quite angry given the expletives she hurled as she kicked the door wide with both thinblades drawn."
- **Who was it?** "Well, she was a short grey elven woman with fire red hair and great wings covered in scales. Since I doubt there are two such women in the area it had to have been Releshi Elethiel. I imagine she came looking for her stolen child. Not that she would have found it."
- **What happened after that?** "She left, dragging an unconscious man behind her who must have been Lord Marshal Leaijrn Greenoak of the Rangers of the Vesve, who had been hiding in the shrine with Releshi's baby Aensylorin and his paramour, Councilor Wynda Ceara, who I believe spirited the babe away from her mother."

- **What do you mean she wouldn't have found the baby there?** "Well the baby had been gone for hours. I myself wouldn't have noticed, but my bodyguards are particularly keen eyed. One of them, the one called Molleck the Soul Feaster, informed me that a man wearing the clothing of fop and an iron helm shaped like that of a jack-o-lantern snuck into the shrine and made off with the child. He was not invisible, but simply more skilled at hiding than any natural rogue. From the description, I expect it was the bandit Mr. Coldeven who has been rumored to be plaguing the High Vale for years, though I don't know what he would want with the child."
- **Which way did Releshi go?** "She moved towards the woods and used magic to transport herself and the Lord Marshal elsewhere. I know not, though perhaps she left clues in the shrine."
- **Why didn't you stop her?** "I'm not suicidal, and nothing in our agreement suggests I should throw away my life on such a foolish endeavor. I did all I could by baring witness to what came to pass."
- **Which way did Mr. Coldeven go?** "Ahh, now that is the real question. I have been endeavoring to locate him and I have used magic to speak with the Old One on this manner. He says to seek Mr. Coldeven in the lair of the old Quagflow bandit. Whom that is I know not."
- **Where was Wynda?** "Going to her death I imagine. The mage left two days ago against my advice. Apparently she felt she owed it to her friends and family to return to the Oronodel and try to explain why she had done what she had done. I imagine she must be dead by now."
- **Why would Wynda leave?** "Wynda came to believe that the child would be sacrificed as part of the ritual in the Dawn's ascension. I think she felt that the Oronodel were just misguided in some way, and that she could convince them to not do anything evil. She thought if she could just convince some of her friends, such as Calentir Rellen the child's father, that what she did was best, that they would magically see her point of view. Of course, as we all know, the Oronodel are corrupted by an unspeakable evil and cannot be trusted."
- **Why do the townsfolk think you are responsible/Why should we believe you?** "Smallfolk are quite superstitious and the locals have not been properly educated in the glories and benefits of the Old One. They naturally fear that which they do not understand. I imagine that it will take some time for us to become friends but never fear, my allies, I will win them over; one way or another."
- **What became of the magical handbasket held in the shrine?** "I believe that Lady Releshi took it with her."
- **Where is High Priestess Berinia Starshine or Acolyte Derith?** "I have no idea. I have been unable to

investigate the ruins due to the mob outside my door, but perhaps they, or their bodies, might be found within."

- **How did the fire start?** "The fire started during the ensuing fight. I am not sure if it was started intentionally or not, nor who caused it to happen. When Releshi entered, there were many raised voices, and eventually combat occurred. The fire occurred as a consequence of that combat."
- **Didn't the shrine already burn down last week?** "Oh, I believe they did have a small fire, but the damage was fixed very quickly."
- **Will you cast spells to assist us?** "Of course, my allies. If you wish this day I could invoke his terrible majesty to speak with the dead or divine that might aid you further in your quest, whatever that might be. Of course, you will have to disperse the crowd if I am to be of any further use to you."
- **Who is more important to save, Aensylorin or Leaijrn?** "Don't ask how I know this, but Wynda has been whispering secrets to the Lord Marshal when they are alone. I suspect he knows ways we might get behind the Oronodel lines with minimal loss of resources. That said, you must recover the child. The entire future of the Vesve relies on saving that child."

Svatek does not plan to go anywhere, and is available for the PCs to question or aid in the casting of spells for the duration of their investigation. He is however only willing to cast spells that obviously aid in the investigation (divination, speak with dead, etc...) and is not willing to cast spells such as hero's feast or raise dead without proper compensation. He charges the rates found in the Player's Handbook, but offers the party a 10% discount due to their close alliance with the Lord of Pain. In addition to spellcasting services, his store sells all open scrolls or potions found in the Dungeon Master's Guide that are available without documentation.

Svatek encourages the PCs to save both Aensylorin and Leaijrn. While rescuing the Lord Marshal from the Oronodel would be important, as he leads the Ranger of the Vesve, it is critical that they find and recover Aensylorin, as it is thought that the child may be critical to the ritual of the Dawn's ascension and so he must be denied to her at all costs.

When the PCs go to investigate the ruins of the shrine, proceed to Encounter 1.

1: DIGGING THROUGH THE RUINS

This encounter covers the party's attempts to investigate the ruins of the Halls of the Radiant Sun, cast spells to further their investigation, or closely interrogate the villagers.

HALLS OF THE RADIANT SUN

The shrine of Pelor appears to be in ruins with only the rear wall and the sacristy still standing. While it still smolders in some places, it is not so hot as to be unsafe.

The damage from the fire is worse at the front of the building. The untouched rear wall, holding up a soot blackened metal sun, bear a message hacked into the wall in the script of the elves. The sound of weeping comes from the sacristy.

The PCs can safely enter the ruins without fear. The worst of the fire has long since burned itself out, though it looks as if someone has made efforts to prevent the fire from spreading. A pail stands near the door to the sacristy.

There are several avenues of investigation that the PCs might pursue:

The Ruins Themselves

A search of the ruins themselves turns up no specific clues, though PCs with the Track feat who make a successful DC 24 Survival check confirms that there are tracks in the soot that at least loosely confirm Svatek's story. A slight medium-sized humanoid wearing soft boots left the scene dragging another medium-sized humanoid. There are also tracks made by a sandal wearing medium-sized humanoid who apparently worked to put out the fire. There are also signs of blood and fighting, though the fire has destroyed any significant evidence.

A DC 25 Spellcraft check detects the signs of a flame strike spell near the door, suggesting it was likely the cause of the fire.

The Writing on the Wall

Writing in Elven is carved hastily into the rear wall, likely done with a small blade. Given that some of the letters have soot in them, they were likely carved during the fire. Give **Player Handout 1** to anyone who can understand Elven.

Any spells cast upon the carving confirm it was written by Releshi the previous night.

The Weeping

Those PCs that proceed into the back room find a grisly sight.

Towards the rear of the sacristy, a teenage human boy dressed as the acolyte of Pelor kneels covered in blood. He cradles the bloody and broken form of an

elfen woman, his face buried in her robes as he sobs. He does not acknowledge your presence.

Derith, acolyte of Pelor, has been broken by the death of High Priestess Berinia Starshine. Since coming to the temple, he has harbored feelings beyond respect for a superior and has always hoped that someday they would be together. Now that she has died, his dreams are dashed and he is a shell of his former self.

Derith: male human cleric 1 [Pelor], hp 8, Cha 15; clumsy, naïve, nervous.

A few soothing words later and Derith eventually looks up. Through sobs and tears, he can offer the following information, which confirms what Svatek told the PCs earlier:

- **What happened here?** "Releshi was here! She *sob* murdered High Priestess Berinia."
- **Where is Wynda?** "She left two days ago to go home. She went to confess what she had done."
- **Where is Aensylorin?** "I don't know. The child was gone when Releshi got here. Mistress Berinia and the Lord Marshal were shocked to find that the child was missing."
- **Did you see Mr. Coldeven?** "Who is that? I don't know who or what that is. Are you saying he stole the child away?"
- **Can you help us prove Svatek isn't lying?** "I have a scroll of zone of truth which I could cast for you. He could choose to willingly submit and I would know if he tried to resist."
- **Can you raise Berinia from the dead/Do you want us to raise her from the dead?** "That miracle is beyond my ability and I don't think she would want to come back. She is with Pelor now."
- **How did the fire start?** "Mistress Berinia was forced to call upon the glory of Pelor to flame strike Releshi after Releshi started attacking us. That started the fire, but I did my best to put it out."

Derith is willing to use his zone of truth scroll on Svatek to confirm Svatek's story, if the PCs wish. Derith is unwilling to help the PCs further. He has to see to Bernie's funeral and the rebuilding of the shrine.

While he will not go with the PCs, he urges them to do everything they can to save the child Aensylorin and Leaijrn from whatever fates have befallen them.

SPELLCASTING

This section covers the casting of several information gathering spells, whether the PCs, Svatek, or Derith cast them. In general, if a topic is not covered below, use the background provided above to answer it. Note that questions specifically concerning the Dawn, Releshi's or Calentir's location, or either of the Rellen heirs go unanswered. Wynda or information regarding her cannot

be determined via magic (due to the effects of a *mind blank* spell).

Commune or Divination: If the PCs are capable of casting such powerful spells (or have Svatek do it), their deity can tell them where Mr. Coldeven has gone, or that his real name is Steerpike the Highwayman. In the case of a *divination* spell, rather than giving no answer the DM should try to twist the answer so as to give some useful hint. They cannot learn if he currently has Aensylorin or if someone else does.

Speak with dead: If the PCs cast *Speak with dead* upon Berinia, she confirms the story as told by Derith and Svatek. She does not know the location of the child or Releshi, though she suspects that Releshi will have returned north. She does want the PCs to rescue Leaijrn, and does not wish to be raised from the dead.

Zone of Truth: If the PCs or Derith cast *zone of truth* on Svatek he is not lying about what he claims to have seen.

SPEAKING WITH THE TOWNSFOLK

Most townsfolk are willing to speak with the PCs, and encourage them to help them string Svatek up, though they have no real proof of his guilt. Most are suspicious of the PCs when they don't attack the cleric of Iuz, but most are unwilling to risk attacking him themselves without others at their back to aid them.

Witnesses: None of the villagers were awake at the time of the fight, but the screams, yells and explosions woke several. By the time they dressed and came outside, the fight was over. They immediately assumed that Svatek was to blame and surrounded his store to prevent him from leaving.

The Quagflow Bandit: If asked about the Quagflow Bandit, most villagers can tell the story. Four years ago, a group of thieves led by a jackalwere known as the Quagflow Bandit terrorized the Highvale. A group of adventurers eventually put down the menace, at great cost to themselves. The Bandit and his band hid in a small cave complex a few hours northwest of the village. To the best of anyone's knowledge the place has been deserted since.

Assuming the PCs decide to become involved, the only trail they have leads to Mr. Coldeven and his band of merry men in the hills northwest of Weeping Willow. Proceed to Encounter 2.

2: TEA AND GARROTES

This encounter assumes that the PCs leave midday of the same day that they arrived in Weeping Willow. If that is

not the case, the DM should adjust accordingly. It is an hour before dusk when this encounter occurs.

Following the directions given, you have followed the trail into the foothills. Both secluded and with a good view of the road, it is clear why this makes a good hideout for a group of highwaymen.

"Stand and deliver," a deep voice calls out as a man steps out of the bushes. The man is dressed in simple leathers with a helm in the shape of a jack o'lantern and threatens you with a flaming sword!

A group of Mr. Coldeven's Merry Band watch the trail to their hideout in case the law should eventually come looking for them or a rich looking caravan should be headed down the Quagflow. In this case, it seems like travelers have brought the prize directly to them and the bandits intend to rob the PCs. Not seeing any reason to be especially bloodthirsty, they have no intention of permanently harming the PCs.

While they know who and where Mr. Coldeven is, they are not in the mood to parlay, though they trade witty jibes and taunt the PCs while they fight. No one ever comes to visit and they would have been told if someone was coming, so attempts to Bluff the guards receive a -4 circumstance penalty.

CREATURES

The guards are really just members of Mr. Coldeven's Merry Band, and they have lived a happy and wealthy life since taking up with the rogue. In a profession where vice and greed are common, the merry band embraces it all with a panache and style. They intended to take everything the PCs have and then turn them loose on the road with nothing but their small clothes. If forced into a fight, they use non-lethal attacks unless forced otherwise.

DM Note: The EL of this encounter has been reduced by one due to the nonlethal tactics employed by the bandits. It is important that the DM make note of these tactics when running this encounter.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Merry Bruisers (3): male human barbarian 1/warrior 1; hp 23; *Appendix 1*.

Merry Blackjacks (2): male human duskblade 1/rogue 2/warrior 1; hp 30; *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Merry Bruisers (3): male human barbarian 1/fighter 1/warrior 1; hp 32; *Appendix 1*.

Merry Blackjacks (2): male human duskblade 1/rogue 4/warrior 1; hp 48; *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Merry Bruisers (3): male human barbarian 2/fighter
2/warrior 1; hp 51; *Appendix 1*.

Merry Blackjacks (2): male human duskblade 3/rogue
4/warrior 1; hp 62; *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Merry Bruisers (3): male human barbarian 2/fighter
4/warrior 1; hp 69; *Appendix 1*.

Merry Blackjacks (2): male human duskblade 5/rogue
4/warrior 1; hp 76; *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 13)

Merry Bruisers (3): male human barbarian 4/fighter
4/warrior 1; hp 89; *Appendix 1*.

Merry Blackjacks (2): male human duskblade 6/rogue
5/warrior 1; hp 89; *Appendix 1*.

Tactics

Since they are thieves and not murderers, the bandits use nonlethal damage unless they are attacked for lethal damage, in which case they are willing to kill the offending PC. If they do not attack first and are hit for lethal damage, they still use nonlethal damage, giving the PCs a chance to change their ways. If they do not change, they kill anyone who resists.

Two of the bruisers move forward and attack for nonlethal damage. The third bruiser tries to surprise the PCs by pushing the camouflaged cart (see below) into the party in order to knock as many foes prone as possible.

The blackjacks try to flank foes and use their sneak attack and *blade of blood* in combination with their Subduing Strike feat. At higher APLs, they use *swift invisibility* to gain sneak attack damage.

The Merry Bandits surrender if three or more of them are dead or unconscious and it is clear they cannot win the fight.

Treasure: The PCs can gain the following treasure if they take all of the bandits' belongings. Note that this is unlikely if they let the bandits live and speak with Steerpik.

All APLs: Loot 217; Total 217 gp.

Camouflaged Cart

The bandits have filled a cart with rocks and sandbags uphill from the trail, and camouflaged it with piles of brush. It can be spotted with a DC 18 Spot check, though realizing its purpose may not be immediately obvious.

With a shove, the cart can be used as a weapon against those downhill of it, though it does not get going very fast. Those in the cart's 10-ft. wide path suffer 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and are knocked prone. Those who succeed in a DC 15 Reflex saving throw move

to the nearest open square and avoid the damage and remain standing.

TROUBLESHOOTING

It is possible that the PCs may find some way around this combat using treachery or smart play. Characters particularly skilled in Bluff or stealth or who are willing to make large bribes might manage to meet with Mr. Coldeven without fighting any of his men. The players should not be penalized for these tactics and should still be awarded full experience for this encounter.

Should the PCs find a way past the guards, proceed to the section labeled Mr. Coldeven below and adjust accordingly.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the PCs have defeated the bandits, they happily give up and are willing to lead the PCs up the hillside to their lair to meet with their Captain: Mr. Coldeven. They are good-natured about the whollop they gave and received unless the PCs killed any of the bandits, in which case they are much more wary.

MR. COLDEVEN

This section assumes that the PCs fought with the bandits, and after a nonlethal fight, they brought the PCs to see Mr. Coldeven. If that is not the case, the DM will have to adjust accordingly.

The bandits, bruises already spreading across their faces, lead you up the hillside and into a cave. The inside is brightly lit and furnished like the sitting parlor in an expensive brothel. Tapestries cover the walls, a lush carpet covers the ground, and lavish food and wine sit on a gilded table. At the rear of the cave upon a large gold painted chair surrounded by flowers sits a man wearing a jack o'lantern helm that burns with magical fire. "Hello my pretties, I'm so glad you could come to the party. What say you to a fine glass of sherry?" The foppishly dressed man removes his helmet to show a powdered Suel face and long curled black hair.

Mr. Coldeven (aka Steerpik the Highwayman) is only too happy to entertain visitors, though he is not without caution. He stays out of arms reach and is ready to hide in plain sight and flee if necessary. Unless the PCs become belligerent, he is every bit the flamboyant gentleman. The only exception to his pleasant demeanor is reserved for those of Baklunish decent whom he loathes. Such PCs are the target of as many demeaning and witty put-downs as he can muster.

Steerpike the Highwayman: male human (Suel) fighter 2/ rogue 5/ shadow dancer 7/assassin 1; Hide +50, mind blank, pass without trace.

- **What's your real name?** "I'm surprised you don't recognize me, I did run for Mayor of Highfolk not that long ago. Some may know me as Steerpike the Highwayman, brother to Lady Fuschia the previous town councilwoman of Highfolk before Mordianna."
- **Why did your men attack us?** "Well, they are brigands and mendicants really, it's in their nature. No harm done now was there? Just a few scrapes."
- **Why are you thief?** "Tis a tale of woe that led me to this path I assure you. My parents were slain by a Baklunish man upon the road to Highfolk and since then the road has fed and clothed me and what a journey it has been."
- **Why did you take the child?** "I don't normally care much for children. They do not fit in well with my carefree lifestyle you see. In this case however, the price was right."
- **Where did you take the child?** "The buyer was one Mnemosyne Menanine-Rellen, the Mistress of House Rellen. I'm not sure if the harpy plans swaddle or eat the poor child, but that's none of my concern. I deposited the wailing bundle of joy in her arms on the Rellen estate in the Elven District of Highfolk town, yesterday."
- **Yesterday? How did you get there and back so quickly?** "Some of us are not entire dependent on our feet for transportation."
- **Why are you helping us?** "The mistress Rellen and I have never gotten on all that well, despite the occasional similar goals. I have little use for women and it will please me to see her pulled into the mud for a cat fight."
- **Will you help us steal the child back?** "Ah... now there's the rub. I may not particularly like her, but I'm not about to directly lock horns with her. She could make things more difficult for me than I care to endure."
- **Will you help us fight against the Dawn?** "Well now, I see very little profit in such a dangerous enterprise, but if you were to gild my lily with a precious or two, I might be willing to aid your cause."
- **Do you know where Releshi/Wynda/Leaijrn is?** "Tis a wonder I can manage to find my own trousers, less others who might be in them. I imagine you should have to look elsewhere to find your friends."
- **Can we join your Merry Band?** "Oh there's a trial of hazing and what not first, but I imagine you haven't the time or likely the stamina. *wink* You best be on your way to trouble the elves. They could use a good mount in the mire."
- **Are you a member of the Highfolk Gardening Society?** "I was once, but I left for the life of a traveling circus performer."

If the PCs attempt to convince Steerpike to aid them, he is not willing to cross Mnemosyne, but the services of his Merry Band can be bought for the upcoming battle with the Dawn's forces. This requires the PCs pay him 1000 gp x APL. This money can come from their own coin, or favors owed to the PCs. A PC can turn over influence points with Highfolk organizations to Steerpike for 500 gp per IP. Contacts and favors with Highfolk NPCs can be traded for 1000 gp each. Any IP, contact, or favor used in this method is used up and should be crossed off. Permanent IPs cannot be used in this manner. Knowing they will not be honored Steerpike does not except any favor with Mnemosyne, Calentir, Releshi, or any Oronodel NPC. The notation *Friend of Urrai Isalos* from HIG6-03 as well as the *Conflagration 2006 Interactive* can be expended as a favor.

If the PCs can come up with this much money, Steerpike agrees to fight in the upcoming battle against the forces of the Dawn.

Any PCs that contribute to bribing Steerpike receive **Contact – Steerpike** on their AR.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Should the PCs insist on fighting, Steerpike hides in plain sight and flees. As an experienced adventurer, assume Steerpike has a way to exit any situation the PCs can create. Six Merry Bruisers and four Merry Blackjacks stay to fight the PCs halfheartedly, but run at the first sign of losing.

DEVELOPMENT

The PCs have little choice but to head to Highfolk in search of the child. If they wish, they can stop back in Weeping Willow (it is on the way). Both Svatek and Derith are still present and available to speak with and purchase spells from if desired.

Once the PCs do make the trip to Highfolk, proceed to Encounter 3.

3: FOSTERAGE

If the PCs are walking from Weeping Willow, they can make it to Highfolk in three days. If they have other means of travel, they may make it with greater speed. Regardless of their mode of transit, this encounter assumes that they seek out Mnemosyne in the Elven District of Highfolk.

Despite the pleasant summer day, the idyllic peace of the Elven District seems askew. Passersby no longer offer a friendly smile and a wave as they go about their business, but now eyes are downcast or furtively dart back and forth. Children play indoors

instead of running free in the summer sun. They may not speak the words, but all know: war is coming.

You are received at the gate to the Rellen estate and the guards lead you inside to a pleasant garden. The beautiful and elegant Lady Rellen stands waiting for you. In the distant background two young boys, one strong and hale, the other slight and sickly, play under the gaze of an elderly nanny.

Mnemosyne has been expecting that eventually someone would come looking for Aensylorin and she is well-prepared for such an eventuality having spent a good portion of her House's fortune to make ready. The clearing in which the children are playing is an antimagic field. The nanny is not in the clearing but sits nearby on a bench, knitting. In her yarn bag she has five beads of force. In addition, they are in full view of dozens of witnesses included several guards (elf fighter 4/ranger 2; Favored Enemy: Human). She is hoping that these precautions, provided with the political weight of her House, will serve as protection enough. None of these precautions should be obvious. She has taken great pains to maintain a veneer of civility despite her plans.

Mnemosyne Rellen: female wood elf rogue 10/exotic weapon master 1 [war fans]/spy master 3; Cha 18, Bluff +70 (with *potion of glibness*), refined, smooth, duplicitous.

"Hello adventurers, welcome to my home. Who are you and how may I be of service to you this day?"

Mnemosyne sees this confrontation as necessary to continuing her plans and always assumed that Steerpike would tell someone of his actions to spite her. She was counting on it, and given his (in her opinion) cowardly human nature, she expected to find nosey adventurers and not Releshi herself. This allows her to properly control the flow of information.

Use the following to answer questions put to Mnemosyne:

- **Did you steal Aensylorin?** "I did not 'steal' anything. I have saved the child from a life of running and bloodshed. I shall foster him along with my own son, Rhynian, in the tradition of the elven Houses."
- **Did you tell Releshi about this?** "Unfortunately Aensylorin's parents are not very responsible people. I had no choice but to act in the child's own best interest and save him."
- **Weren't Wynda and Leaijrn going to save/raise the child?** "Please, an outcast renegade and a half breed commoner? They could offer the child nothing but more danger. House Rellen has the resources to give the child a

proper, cultured upbringing. He is after all, second in line to inherit the House."

- **Will you give us the child so we can trade him for the Lord Marshal?** "Certainly not. Wynda and her lover knew what they were getting into, but I will not sacrifice the child. He will stay with me and we will leave this place. Of course someone must still rescue the Lord Marshal for the Rangers. I suppose that is what you are for."
- **Where are you going?** "We leave today immediately after this meeting for Celene," (This is a lie.)
- **You are lying!** "I care not what you believe."
- **Won't you give us some help to rescue Leaijrn?** "I imagine he's fallen into a pit somewhere, why don't you start there? I suppose I do owe a little something for your trouble, as misplaced as it may have been. Here take these items to aid you in your mission. You may use them for whatever plan you concoct, be it force, stealth, or negotiation."
- **How can we get there in time?** "I'm willing to pay for the Guildsmen of the High Art to teleport you there if you do not have the capability."
- **We're going to tell Releshi (or anyone else) what you did and where you are!** "You cannot threaten me. Do as you please and consign the Vesse to darkness. I will be gone from here with my son and his new playmate." (This is a lie.)
- **We'll take the child by force!** "You certainly could try, but I assure you that I have taken precautions against such things. In addition, I will see you imprisoned or hung for attacking a noble in their home."

Once the PCs have questioned Mnemosyne and it is quite clear that she is not going to hand over the child, she offers to pay for the Guildsmen of the High Art to teleport the PCs to the meeting location.

As soon as the conversation ends and the PCs leave, Mnemosyne, both children, the nanny (secretly Calentir using a *thousand faces* while protected with a *mind blank*) and a handful of guards go to a *teleportation circle* within the house and teleport to the Rellen compound in Flameflower.

Treasure: To aid the PCs in their efforts to liberate Leaijrn and to subtly bribe them to get out of her hair, Mnemosyne gives the following items to the PCs.

APL 4: Magic 100 gp, 4 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each); Total 100 gp.

APL 6-12: Magic 225 gp, 4 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), javelin of lightning (125 g); Total 225 gp.

Detect Magic Results: javelin of lightning (faint evocation), potion of cure moderate wounds (faint conjuration).

TROUBLESHOOTING

It is quite possible that some parties will try to use force, come back for the child later, or seek outside help. The tactics listed here are intended to prevent this. Try not to let the players get off track by spending their limited time trying to outwit Mnemosyne when they have little time to save Leaijrn. Anyone that does attack a noble in her own home will be severely punished. This is considered a Grave Offense (*Player's Guide to Highfolk*, p. 20) unless the PCs kill someone or start a fire, in which case it is considered an Irredeemable Offense. Traitors will be caught and punished (Mnemosyne has the money to hire someone to make it happen.)

If the PCs attempt to locate and plead with NPCs they have met in previous adventures to intercede and force Mnemosyne to give them the child, either they are unable to locate the individual or the NPC is unwilling to cross House Rellen (whether they are afraid of the Shandareth or they believe it is better the Shandareth have the children over the Oronodel varies with the NPC). Constable Paxana is out looking for Leaijrn who has been "missing" for more than a month, Mayor Mordianna is visiting Lord Kashafen in Flameflower, and Fraek the High Priest of Pelor in Highfolk town is away from town blessing the troops for the upcoming fight, etc... Everyone they can locate unanimously believes the PCs should try to free or negotiate the release of the Lord Marshal.

DEVELOPMENT

When the PCs are ready to go to the rendezvous, Mnemosyne is willing to send a servant (a butler named Gevius) with the PCs to the Guildsmen of the High Art where he arranges for the Lady Mnemosyne's credit to pay for teleportation services to the meeting. Gevius, despite his station as a servant, looks down on the PCs as adventurer rabble and is unwilling to pay for additional services or be threatened. Of course he is just a servant and no match for the PCs powerful magic or attacks if they should choose to harm him or magically compel him, though such things are also punishable by the law and Mnemosyne is vindictive enough to make sure they are charged.

Oronodel PCs: If any PCs aligned with the Oronodel, using the Absence of Responsibility, or Worships the Dawn moves to take one of the children, Calentir, disguised as the nanny, winks at them and warns them that doing what they are about to do would be counter to their own desires, and allows his eyes to flash momentarily green. The disposition of the children is well in hand and plans are already in motion and the PCs will just disrupt them if they get involved. Calentir

suggests the PC go along to make sure the party fails at rescuing the Lord Marshal.

4: UNDERFOOT

This encounter assumes the PCs are arriving at the meeting location at the appointed time via teleportation. If that is not the case, the DM will have to adjust accordingly as described below.

The familiar spinning sensation of a teleportation spell engulfs you and when your vision clears, you are in the Vesve near the location where Releshi expects to meet with Wynda. The shadows are deeper and more menacing than you remember and there is a deep chill here under the shade, despite the summer sun above the canopy. In the distance you can see the Shield Mage's Tower, and the hill you seek is directly ahead of you.

What happens next depends on the approach the PCs are attempting. The PCs may choose to try to liberate Leaijrn by force or stealth or negotiate for his release. Releshi waits seething, expecting Wynda's arrival. She does not expect a group of adventurers and is even less inclined to speak with anyone who is not returning her child. She is clearly distracted and the PCs could easily take a circle around her and arrive at Leaijrn's prison without dealing with Releshi. If the PCs are sneaking around her and to Leaijrn's prison, skip this boxed text and proceed to the description of that place below.

Releshi Elethiel: female grey elf barbarian 1/ fighter 2/ marshal 2/ ranger 2/ sorcerer 1/dragon disciple 10 (green).

A short red-haired grey elven woman sits on a large rock muttering angrily to herself. She half-heartedly swings her thinblade at a nearby tree as thick as a man and fells it without noticing. "I know you are there, you might as well come out."

Releshi is impatient and angry. Her brief interactions with the PCs are punctuated with great focused rage. She demands to know why the PCs are here, as her initial belief is that the party is comprised of Wynda's minions. Any response short of returning her child only adds to her infuriation. She is unwilling to trade Leaijrn for anything short of her child and demands the return of her child or she will kill Wynda's paramour at the given time as stated in her ultimatum. She is obsessed with retrieving her child and punishing Wynda for stealing him.

A DC 20 Sense Motive suggests that she really does not want to kill anyone but feels forced into this corner

by the actions of others. She denies this even if the PCs point it out. She will not negotiate. Even telling her who has her child increases her annoyance; assuming that Mnemosyne and Wynda are now working together to spite her.

If the PCs attack her or try to move past her, she throws her hands into the air and screams “*Fine, take him if you can. I will deal with your mistress Wynda myself!*” and then she simply fades away, using no obvious magical effect to explain it.

RANGER IN A PIT

Lord Marshal Leaijrn Greenoak languishes feverishly in a barred oubliette, twenty feet deep. He is in no position to aid the PCs with his escape and so it is up to them. The great trapdoor of metal bars is locked and he is manacled to the stone floor. The area around the pit glows with a green light due to a *dimensional lock* cast at 15th-level.

Trapdoor: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 25; Open Lock DC 40.

Manacles: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 30; AC 5; Break DC 23; Open Lock DC 30.

Leaijrn suffers from a truly debilitating sickness that has been inflicted on him by the Dawn, leaving him too weak to stand and too delirious to be aware of his surroundings. It can only be cured by a *remove curse*, followed by a *neutralize poison*, followed by a *greater restoration* or *wish* or *miracle*. If all three spells are not successively cast, the fever does not break and he does improve.

Lord Marshal Leaijrn Greenoak: male half-elf barbarian 1/ ranger 6/ pious templar3/wildrunner 7; currently 50 hp, 153 hp maximum.

Traits: loyal, honorable, modest, easy-going. An air of sadness hangs around Leaijrn and at moments he seems distracted. He is quite a capable leader, however, and cares deeply about his Rangers and the people of Highfolk. He is currently unconscious.

CREATURES

Despite the apparent lack of watchers, Leaijrn is not unguarded. One (or more) greathorn minotaurs act as his ‘gaoler(s)’. Driven out of their homes by competition with the Goliaths of the mountains, these minotaurs have thrown their lot in with the Dawn and her forces and have a strong hate for those displaying their goods or arms, or speaking their language. Ruthless and angry, the minotaurs wait under the ground and watch with their tremorsense ability for anyone to vent their frustrations upon.

APL 4 (EL 7)

Greathorn Minotaur: hp 104; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 9)

Greathorn Minotaur Brute: hp 126; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Greathorn Minotaur Brute (2): hp 126; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Greathorn Minotaur Myrmidon (2): hp 148; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Greathorn Minotaur Myrmidon (4): hp 148; Appendix 1.

Tactics

The minotaurs take advantage of their earth glide ability to move about the battlefield without drawing attacks of opportunity. They try to engage a lone target, five-foot stepping out of the earth, activating its earth warp as a swift action, and full attacking. If the party is especially adept at range attacks or flying tactics, the minotaur waits under the ground until someone comes to open the trapdoor or rescue Leaijrn and then it attacks them or uses a *bead of force* if it has one. At higher APLs the Greathorn Minotaur Myrmidons use their *potion of fly* to engage enemies they cannot reach.

Treasure: If the PCs defeat the minotaur(s) they may claim their gear as spoils of war.

APL 4: Loot 2 gp; Total 2 gp.

APL 6: Magic 889 gp, +1 *huge greathammer* (193 gp), +1 *mitral breastplate* (446 gp), *bead of force* (250 gp); Total 889 gp.

APL 8: Magic 1778 gp, 2 +1 *huge greathammers* (193 gp each), 2 +1 *mitral breastplates* (446 gp each), 2 *beads of force* (250 gp each); Total 1778 gp.

APL 10: Magic 2091 gp, 2 +1 *huge greathammers* (193 gp each), 2 +1 *mitral breastplates* (446 gp each), 2 *beads of force* (250 gp each), *belt of one mighty blow* (125 gp), 2 *potions of fly* (63 gp each); Total 2091 gp.

APL 12: Magic 4047 gp, 4 +1 *huge greathammers* (193 gp each), 4 +1 *mitral breastplates* (446 gp each), 4 *beads of force* (250 gp each), 4 *potions of fly* (63 gp each); Total 4047 gp.

Detect Magic Results: +1 *huge greathammer* (faint transmutation), +1 *mitral breastplate* (faint transmutation), *bead of force* (moderate evocation), *belt of one mighty blow* (faint transmutation), *potion of fly* (faint transmutation).

Once the PCs have rescued Leaijrn, they have to find some way to move him, as he is incapable of assisting the PCs in his own rescue. Once they move to leave the

immediate area of the pit and the *dimensional lock*, proceed to Encounter 5.

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

The Dawn's plans are important to allow Releshi's rages to disrupt the intricate balance she has planned for centuries. So unbeknownst to Releshi, she was not alone here. Everything unfolded as the Dawn foresaw, and she allowed it to happen for the PCs are at the crux of history and fate. They have been present at nearly every major step of the Dawn's path to Ascension and so they have not only been a thorn in her side, but have collected the wisps of destiny about them and it is time for that Destiny to end. She has dispatched a vinespaw, a kind of intelligent plant made of many vines. The vinespaw has been ordered to kill or capture as many of the PCs who are not her followers as possible that she may consume as she has with so many other artifacts and important persons.

Hurrying away from the oubliette and into the cover of the woods a sudden breeze picks up and you hear a strange wailing, as moss and shrubs peel away from a nearby tree and move toward you!

The vinespaw is initially hiding before making its attack, so make a Hide check versus each PC's Spot to determine who is surprised. While it is not specifically targeting him, it is important to note the position of Leaijrn as it is quite possible that he may be killed during this encounter if the vinespaw engulfs the PC carrying him.

APL 4 (EL 6)

Immature Vinespaw: hp 83; *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Dark Vinespaw: hp 102; *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Dark Vinespaw Elite: hp 186; *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Dark Vinespaw Elder: hp 336; *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Greater Dark Vinespaw: hp 432; *Appendix 1*.

Tactics

The vinespaw moves to engulf as many opponents as possible, though it is smart enough to tell the difference between mounts and PCs and so targets the humanoids

that are more likely to be dangerous. Once it has some foes engulfed, it crushes them as a free action and then focuses the rest of its attacks on other enemies. If facing a dark vinespaw, the creature hides in plain sight, even after making an attack (-20 Hide for hiding after an attack). PCs subject to the Balance of Scales are priority targets if the vinespaw must choose between two otherwise equal and available targets. An extension of the Dawn's will, the vinespaw fights to the death.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the PCs attempt to flee in any manner, move directly to the next section of this encounter. The Dawn will not allow them to escape. Attempts to use teleportation magic to flee the area fail, though such magic can be used to escape the vinespaw's grapple. As long as the PCs stay put in the area, the Dawn is pleased.

... DAWN

As soon as the PCs defeat or flee the vinespaw, the Dawn comes! If the PCs are fleeing the vinespaw, it still moves to grapple PCs but no longer attempts to cause any damage, preferring to hold meals for the Dawn.

The ground begins to shudder and quake and a shadow falls across the land. A roar that sounds as if Beory herself were rent asunder draws your attention skyward as ice chills your veins. She comes! The Dawn herself in all her verdant draconic glory circles once and plummets through the trees, her abrupt landing shaking the ground with a forceful explosion.

The PCs must immediately make a DC 50 Will save versus dragon fear and a DC 25 Balance check or be knocked prone from the force of her landing. The Dawn appears in the form of a Colossal+ sized green dragon, taking up a forty by forty square with 50 ft. reach with her bite and 60 ft. reach with her tail. Emerald flames trail from her eyes and the Vesve grows at her touch, grass and trees sprouting where she walks.

For the target of the boxed text below, choose a PC at random who is prone and is not a follower of the Dawn. If there is a PC subject to the Balance of Scales, they are automatically chosen whether they are prone or not. Next likely choices include paladins of any deity or clerics of Ehlonna loyal to the Quaalsten branch of the church.

A deep rumbling fills the air, a sound that can only be the great dragon's chuckle at your plight. With sibilant whispers she smiles, "I have been waiting

for you." Her prodigious size is both wondrous and terrifying at once.

With massive claw she pushes you (selected PC) into the ground forcefully, driving the air from your lungs and twists her claw back and forth worrying you into the dirt. With a swift catlike motion, she grasps you tightly and moves as if to toss you into the air and swallow you whole.

At the last moment, she pauses and looks at you strangely as if confused. Setting you gently on the ground the emerald fire goes out of her eyes and is replaced a soft yellow sunlight. "Run my children, Run!" she says with the voice of an elderly human woman. The Dawn shakes her head as if to clear it, and paws at the ground. Gouts of green flame fight with bursts of sunlight in her eyes as if a struggle takes place within.

Those PCs who have met Maegla the Dreamer recognize her voice. Maegla, a cleric of Ehlonna was a noted seer and is one facet of the tripartite entity also including the Seer of All Time from the now decimated Timeless Tree and the fey Dreamer of Sea and Stars. Since Maegla was captured and consumed so that her essence could be added to the Dawn's own, the Dreamers have had a small measure of control that they have used to see the Dawn's secrets and the forces that oppose her. Maegla, thankful for the many adventurers that have aided her in the past, likely some of these same PCs, exposes herself in a struggle for control of the Dawn's corporeal form that she might delay the Dawn long enough for the PCs to flee.

Nothing PCs can do at this time can seriously harm the Dawn, and Maegla tells any PC that does not immediately flee, that she cannot hold the Dawn for long and urges them to flee. Anyone that chooses to wait (and is not a follower of the Dawn, is killed and eaten a few minutes later.

CONCLUSION

Worshippers of the Dawn do not receive this Dream:

Whether caused by fear or self preservation, you ran until you could run no more, then sleep took you. A soft light causes you to stir with joy. It grows and grows, becoming brighter until it blocks out all sight and coalesces into the form of a woman. "We am the Dreamer of Sea and Stars and we are pleased to see that you still live. Over a year ago, the sister-me that was Maegla the Dreamer was sacrificed to the voracious appetite of the Dawn that she might open a crack in its defenses through which the sister-me Calandryen might watch. Your plight forced us to act, as it was not your time to die at the

hands of the Dawn. She knows now that we watch and we am unsure how much more help we can be, but take this last gift from us that we have safeguarded while you trend the path of destiny and know that her time of ascension is here. Listen, for the Vesve shudders with the drums of war."

The ground shakes so violently that it causes you to wake. You are wearing a pair of gloves made of doeskin and dried leaves.

Each PC who opposes the Dawn gains Adventure access to the **Wooden Heart Gloves**. If the character possesses a **Soul Orb** from previous adventures in this series, they instead have Regional access. Followers of the Dawn DO NOT gain this access or the increased access if they have a **Soul Orb**.

If Leaijrn lives continue:

The Lord Marshal recovers from his imprisonment quickly and despairing for what has become of his lady love who remains missing, he becomes a force to be reckoned with marshalling all the forces of the Vesve to march. The future of the Vesve will be decided in war.

If Leaijrn survived the rescue attempt, each PC receives **Favor of Leaijrn Greenoak** and the **Influence Point with the Church of Ehlonna** (usable in Quaalsten only).

If the PCs bribed Steerpike to join with the forces against the Dawn, continue:

As the forces of the Green and White muster, rogues, brigands, and mendicants arrive from the fringes of the region. Making good on his word, Steerpike has gathered a horde of scoundrels spoiling for a fight. Shocked that the highwaymen stand beside you instead of against you, the Highfolk Merchant Guilds praise your forward thinking and vow to aid you in the future.

If the PCs bribed Steerpike to join the forces of the Green and White, they gain the **Influence Point with the Highfolk Merchant Guilds**.

As you muster for war, buoyed high by the camaraderie of arms, disheartening news crushes any hope. The Shandareth have been betrayed and the nanny who watched over both Aensylorin and Rhynian has disappeared, spiriting both away in the night. No one knows the location of either heir of Rellen, but all fear the worst.

Treasure: The PCs who meet with the Dreamer of Sea and Stars receive the last piece of the *raiment of the wood*.

All APLs: Magic 758 gp wooden heart gloves; Total 758 gp.

Detect Magic Results: wooden heart gloves (moderate transmutation).

The last chapter of the Highfolk story will be told in the interactive HIG8-i02 Apotheosis. Those who are unable to attend Milwaukee Summer Revel 2008 may contact the Highfolk POC by email to obtain a copy of this event (without the AR) for home play.

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.

2: TEA AND GARROTES

Defeat the Merry Bandits

APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP

4: UNDERFOOT

Defeat the Gaolers

APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

Defeat the Vinespawn

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP

STORY AWARDS

Convince Steerpike to join the war effort

APL 4	25 XP
APL 6	50 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	100 XP
APL 12	125 XP

Rescue Leaijrn Alive

APL 4	110 XP
APL 6	130 XP
APL 8	150 XP
APL 10	170 XP
APL 12	190 XP

TOTAL POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE:

APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1125 XP
APL 10	1350 XP
APL 12	1575 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.

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

2: TEA AND GARROTES

DM Note: It is unlikely that the PCs get this loot.

All APLs: Loot 217 gp; Total 217 gp.

3: FOSTERAGE

APL 4: Magic 100 gp, 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each); Total 100 gp.

APL 6-12: Magic 225 gp, 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), *javelin of lightning* (125 gp); Total 225 gp.

4: UNDERFOOT

APL 4: Loot 2 gp; Total 2 gp.

APL 6: Magic 889 gp, +1 *huge greathammer* (193 gp), +1 *mitral breastplate* (446 gp), *bead of force* (250 gp); Total 889 gp.

APL 8: Magic 1778 gp, 2 +1 *huge greathammers* (193 gp each), 2 +1 *mitral breastplates* (446 gp each), 2 *bead of forces* (250 gp each); Total 1778 gp.

APL 10: Magic 2091 gp, 2 +1 *huge greathammers* (193 gp each), 2 +1 *mitral breastplates* (446 gp each), 2 *bead of forces* (250 gp each), *belt of one mighty blow* (125 gp), 2 *potions of fly* (63 gp each); Total 2091 gp.

APL 12: Magic 4047 gp, 4 +1 *huge greathammers* (193 gp each), 4 +1 *mitral breastplates* (446 gp each), 4 *bead of forces* (250 gp each), 4 *potions of fly* (63 gp each); Total 4047 gp.

CONCLUSION

All APLs: Magic 758 gp *wooden heart gloves*; Total 758 gp.

TOTAL POSSIBLE TREASURE

APL 4: Loot 219 gp; Magic 857 gp; Total 1076 gp.

APL 6: Loot 217 gp; Magic 1873 gp; Total 2089 gp.

APL 8: Loot 217 gp; Magic 2761 gp; Total 2978 gp.

APL 10: Loot 217 gp; Magic 2948 gp; Total 3165 gp.

APL 12: Loot 217 gp; Magic 4914 gp; Total 5131 gp.

ADVENTURE RECORD

Child of Destiny: You are or will be a hero of legend and your destiny is known to the Dawn who seeks to consume you in order to gain your power for herself. Now that you know about this well of fate, you can call upon it to put off death that you might meet your true destiny. You may expend this favor if you

are taken to -10 or lower by a single attack and instead be placed at -8 (though not stable). Cross off this favor when used.

Contact - Steerpike: You have made contact with Steerpike who may share gardening tips with you in the future.

Favor of Leaijrn Greenoak: You have rescued Lord Marshal Leaijrn Greenoak from the clutches of the Dawn. This favor counts as a commendation for the Rangers of the Vesse and awards access to the items marked with *. If you are Devoted of the Green and White, you also gain access to the items marked with a †.

IP: Church of Ehlonna (Qualsten only)

IP: Merchant Guilds of Highfolk

Wages of Sin: Your close ally, Svatek Grimblood the cleric of Iuz, wishes to further cement your alliance. Svatek gives you a magical cat-o-nine-tails that you may use to flagellate yourself as a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. You may use this whip once to summon a demon that stays for one round to use one of its spell-like abilities as you designate. The demon will not attempt to summon other demons. Once you have used the whip once it explodes in flames and crumbles to ash, destroyed. You may summon the demon listed for your APL or lower: 4-dretch; 6-quasit; 8-babau; 10-vrock; 12-hezrou.

Wooden Heart Gloves: These leather gloves are inlaid with alchemically treated leaves surrounded a holy symbol of Ehlenestra. The gloves grant a +1 dodge bonus to armor class and 5 points of acid resistance. Once per day as an immediate mental action, the wearer gains moderate fortification (as the armor special ability) until the beginning of their next turn.

The collection benefits for wearing any combination of two parts of the *raiment of the wood* grant the ability to *feather fall* at will, three parts grant the ability to *tree shape* as a 3rd-level druid once per day, and four parts grants evasion (or a +4 competence bonus to Reflex saving throws if you already have evasion) once per day as an immediate mental action. This item cannot be crafted and functions only for PCs who are Devoted of the Green and White.

Price (Item Level): 9,100 gp (12th)

Body Slot: Hands

Caster Level: 7th

Aura: moderate; (DC 18) transmutation

Activation: — or immediate (mental)

Weight: — lb.

ITEMS FOUND DURING THE ADVENTURE

APL 4:

- Wooden heart gloves (Adventure/Regional; see above)
- *Gloves of spell disruption (Adventure; MIC)
- † Badge of Valor (Adventure; MIC)

APL 6 (all of APL 4 plus the following):

- Javelin of lightning (Adventure; DMG)

- *Dimension stride boots (Adventure; MIC)
- †Helm of tactics (Adventure; MIC)

APL 8 (all of APLs 4-6 plus the following):

- *True strike gauntlets (Adventure; MIC)
- †Horn of resilience (Adventure; MIC)

APL 10 (all of APLs 4-8 plus the following):

- Belt of one mighty blow (Adventure; MIC)
- *Necklace of fireballs V (Adventure; DMG)
- †Raptor arrow (Adventure; MIC)

APL 12 (all of APLs 4-10 plus the following):

- *Owl feather armor (Adventure; MIC)
- †Helm of the hunter (Adventure; MIC)

SECOND ADVENTURE RECORD FOR DEVOTED OF THE GREEN AND WHITE

Devoted Points: Add the number of Highfolk Regionals, Highfolk Specials, and Highfolk Interactives that your character played while Devoted of the Green and White (even if you are no longer Devoted). This number becomes your number of Devoted Points and is used below. List the value here: _____

Freedom! If you are Devoted of the Green and White, you are released from all restrictions for being Devoted but retain all benefits for being Devoted in all future Highfolk adventures.

Legendary Resilience: Expend this favor as a swift action to gain fast healing 3 for a number of rounds equal to your HD.

Pride in the Green and White: You have a strong pride in the Vesve that you can draw on in times in need. As an immediate action before rolling, you can add a +1 morale bonus to any d20 roll. You may do this a number of times equal to your Devoted Points.

The following benefits only apply to characters who are currently Devoted of the Green and White. You may choose one option from the category that applies to your character and one from each of the lower categories

Fair-Weather: 10 or less Devoted Points

- Change the access of one item on a Highfolk AR from “adventure” to “regional.”
- Gain access to a not open not closed spell from the Spell Compendium: _____
- Immediately change your home region from Highfolk to any other region in the Iuz Meta-region.

Committed: 11-25 Devoted Points

- Change the access of one item on a Highfolk AR from “regional” to “any.”
- Reuse ONE favor or reward from a year 6, 7 or 8 Highfolk regional adventure that is marked USED. Note on AR and mark this USED.
- The clerics of Ehlonna provide *break enchantment*, *greater restoration*, *heal*, *remove curse*, or *remove disease* spell free of all costs.
- Treat any one animal companion, familiar, special mount, or regular animal with alchemical mixtures from the Vesve so that they gain a +2 inherent bonus to Constitution and increase their natural armor by +1.

Loyal: 26 or more Devoted Points

- Select a +2, +4 or +6 ability enhancement to add to any magic item of the appropriate Body Slot that your PC already possesses. See MIC 234 for adding/improving common item effects for cost. Note on AR and mark this USED.
- The clerics of Ehlonna provide *raise dead* or *resurrection* spell free of all costs.
- If you are a special Highfolk character, gain a spell-like ability usable once per day based on your type: *Born of the Vesve* - *heroism*, *Caressed by angels* - *prayer*, *Dwarf of Dargas Mor* - *stone shape*, *Kissed by devils* - *invisibility sphere*.

ITEMS FOUND DURING THE ADVENTURE

All APLs:

- Battle bridle (Adventure, MIC)
- Bracers of arcane freedom (Adventure, MIC)
- Camouflage paint (Adventure, MIC)
- Chronocharm (any) (Adventure, MIC)
- Collar of healing (Adventure, MIC)
- Dragondoom scepter (Adventure, MIC)
- Dragon's draught (copper, green, red, silver) (Adventure, MIC)
- Dragon's-eye amulet (Adventure, MIC)
- Dragonrider Armor (copper, green, red, silver) (Adventure, MIC)
- Ehlonna's seed pouch (Adventure, MIC)
- Hand of the oak father (Adventure, MIC)
- Horn of plenty (Adventure, MIC)
- Necklace of copper dragon scales (Adventure, MIC)
- Orb of mental renewal (Adventure, MIC)
- Rod of bodily restoration (Adventure, MIC)
- Rod of cats (Adventure, MIC)
- Swordbow (Adventure, MIC)
- Thorn pouch (Adventure, MIC)
- Unicorn pendant (Adventure, MIC)
- Wilding clasp (Adventure, MIC)

INTRODUCTION

SVATEK GRIMBLOOD

CR 7

Male human cleric 7

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Abyssal, Common

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; (+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield)

hp 45 (7 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mwk morningstar +5 (1d8-1)

Ranged light crossbow +7 (1d8/19-20)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Special Actions rebuke undead 2/day

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th, 8th for chaotic and evil spells):

4th—*divination*, *freedom of movement*, *unholy blight*^P (DC 18)

3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *magic circle versus good*^P, *speak with dead*

2nd—*aid*, *hold person* (DC 16) *shatter*^P (DC 16), *silence*, *sound burst* (DC 16)

1st—*bless*, *cause fear* (DC 15), *divine favor*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from law*^P, *shield of faith*

0th—*create water*, *detect magic* (2), *detect poison*, *light*, *mending*

D: Domain spell. Deity: luz. Domains: Chaos, Evil.

Abilities Str 8, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 8

Feats Divine Vigor, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Concentration +11, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (religion) +11, Spellcraft +11

Possessions plate mail, heavy steel shield, masterwork morningstar, holy symbol, light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts, *scroll of raise dead*

2: TEA AND GARROTES

MERRY BRUISER CR 1

Male human barbarian 1/warrior 1
 CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot 1
Languages Common

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)
hp 23 (2 HD)
Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee mwk greatclub +7 (1d10+4)
Ranged javelin +3 (1d6+3)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5
Atk Options rage 1/day
Combat Gear tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8
Feats Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatclub)
Skills Intimidate +4, Listen +3, Ride +5, Survival +3
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork greatclub, 5 javelins, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield

Hook “Hand it over or we get rough.” *the sound of cracking knuckles*

MERRY BLACKJACK CR 3

Male human duskblade 1/rogue 2/warrior 1
 CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +6; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)
hp 30 (4 HD)
Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1; evasion

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk greatsword +8 (2d6+4/19-20)
Ranged longbow +6 (1d8/x3)
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6
Atk Options sneak attack +1d6
Combat Gear thunderstone
Duskblade Spells Known (CL 1st):
 1st (3/day)—*blade of blood*, *stand*
 0 (3/day)—*acid splash* (+5 ranged touch),
 disrupt undead (+5 ranged touch), *ray of frost* (+5
 ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+6 melee touch,
 DC 12)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th):
 5/day—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC
 9), *ghost sound* (DC 9), *read magic*.

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 8
SQ armored mage (light), trapfinding

Feats Improved Initiative, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Bluff +4, Climb +8, Concentration +7, Disguise +7, Gather Information +4, Hide +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Search +7, Spot +4, Tumble +7

Possessions combat gear plus chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, longbow, 20 masterwork arrows

Hook “’ello guvner, might you have a spare coin for bloke in need?”

4: UNDERFOOT

GREATHORN MINOTAUR CR 7

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)
Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sent, tremorsense 120 ft., Listen +8, Spot +8
Languages Giant, Undercommon

AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15 (1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural)
hp 104 (11 HD); **DR** 5/-
Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares); earth glide
Melee gore +17 (2d6+10) OR
Melee greathammer +17/+12/+7 (3d6+10/x4) AND
Melee gore +12 (2d6+3)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +11; **Grp** +22
Atk Options Awesome Blow, Power Attack
Special Actions Earth Warp

Abilities Str 24, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10
SQ natural cunning
Feats Awesome Blow, Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track
Skills Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +3
Possessions greathammer

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it., double movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur, when the minotaur leaves the area the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

IMMATURE VINESPAWN CR 6

N Large plant

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +4

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Dodge, Mobility (-1 size, +5 Dex, 4 natural)

hp 83 (8 HD); **DR** 5/slashing

Immune plant immunities

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +11 (1d6+6)

Ranged vine net +10 touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +16

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions engulf, spawning

Abilities Str 22, Dex 20, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ plant traits

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack

Skills Climb +12, Hide +12 (+20 in forest), Listen +3, Move Silently +8, Spot +4

Vine Net (Ex) A vinespaw can hurl parts of its body up to 30 feet as a ranged attack. Each of these tightly wound balls opens in flight to form a net that can entangle a creature up to one size category larger than the vinespaw. A vinespaw can creature one vine net per day for every 4 Hit Dice that it has.

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can flow over Medium or smaller creatures, entrapping the, within its form. The vinespaw simply moves into the opponent's space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A vinespaw cannot make slam or vine net attacks during a round in which it engulfs. It can engulf as many creatures as fits in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against a vinespaw, but if they do, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex saving or be engulfed; on a success, a creature moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the vinespaw's path. The save is Strength-based.

As a swift action, a vinespaw can crush engulfed creatures, dealing 2d6+12 points of nonlethal damage. Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the vinespaw's body, but they can attempt to damage the vinespaw or escape from it as with a normal grapple. A vinespaw is not considered to be

grappling when it has engulfed a creature, and it cannot be pinned by an engulfed creature.

A creature engulfed by a vinespaw is subject to any area effect to which the vinespaw is subjected. Grappled and engulfed creatures lose any Dexterity bonus to AC but gain a +4 bonus on Reflex saves for having cover. An engulfed creature takes half damage from any attack that does piercing damage to the vinespaw. This half damage is calculated before the vinespaw's damage reduction is applied to the attack.

A vinespaw can choose to expel engulfed creatures as a standard action. If a vinespaw is killed, any engulfed creatures are freed.

Spawning (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can attempt to insert its spawning root down the throat of an engulfed humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant. An unconscious engulf creature cannot resist the spawning root. A vinespaw must succeed on a grapple check to indirect any other creature. The engulfed creature takes 1d6+8 points of damage as the thorny appendage burrows into its stomach. The presence of the spawning root prevents talking, the casting of spells with verbal components, or any other activities requiring speech. Removing a spawning root requires a successful grapple check by the creature invaded by the root, but doing so deals and extra 1d6 points of damage. If the vinespaw is killed, the spawning root can be removed without dealing damage.

A spawning root nourishes an unconscious creature, keeping it breathing while the vinespaw uses periodic swift actions to deal nonlethal damage and keep the target unconscious. If the target creature is left in this state for 1 day, vines grow through its veins. On the fourth day in this state, the victim dies as an adult vinespaw exits the body of the parent.

A vinespaw that is attacked during the spawning process can fight back but cannot move without disengaging its spawning root. Only if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points does it break off, disengaging the vine, dealing damage as above, and fleeing with the engulfed creatures in tow.

If extracted before the fourth day, the victim is sickened even when returned to consciousness. Such victims die in 2d4 days unless *remove disease* is used to destroy the vines that can be seen growing beneath the skin.

2: TEA AND GARROTES

MERRY BRUISER CR 2

Male human barbarian 1/fighter 1/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot 1**Languages** Common**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)**hp** 32 (3 HD)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** greatclub +8 (1d10+4)**Ranged** javelin +4 (1d6+3)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +6**Atk Options** rage 1/day**Combat Gear** tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8**Feats** Power Attack, Powerful Charge, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatclub)**Skills** Intimidate +5, Listen +3, Ride +5, Survival +3**Possessions** masterwork greatclub, 5 javelins, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield**Hook** "Hand it over or we get rough." *the sound of cracking knuckles***MERRY BLACKJACK CR 5**

Male human duskblade 1/rogue 4/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); uncanny dodge**hp** 48 (6 HD)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2; evasion**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk greatsword +10 (2d6+4/19-20)**Ranged** longbow +8 (1d8/x3)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +8**Atk Options** sneak attack +2d6**Combat Gear** thunderstone**Duskblade Spells Known** (CL 1st):1st (3/day)—*blade of blood*, *stand*0 (3/day)—*acid splash* (+7 ranged touch), *disrupt undead* (+7 ranged touch), *ray of frost* (+7 ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+8 melee touch, DC 12)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th):5/day—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 9), *ghost sound* (DC 9), *read magic*.**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 8**SQ** armored mage (light), trapfinding, trap sense +1**Feats** Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword)**Skills** Bluff +6, Climb +8, Concentration +7, Disguise +9, Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Search +9, Spot +6, Tumble +9**Possessions** combat gear plus chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, longbow, 20 masterwork arrows**Hook** " 'ello guvner, might you have a spare coin for bloke in need?"

4: UNDERFOOT

GREATHORN MINOTAUR BRUTE**CR 9**

Greathorn minotaur fighter 2

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sent, tremorsense 120 ft., Listen +8, Spot +8**Languages** Giant, Undercommon**AC** 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural, +6 armor)**hp** 126 (13 HD); **DR** 5/-**Fort** +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); earth glide**Melee** gore +19 (2d6+10) OR**Melee** greathammer +19/+14/+9 (4d6+11/19-20, x4) AND**Melee** gore +14 (2d6+3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +13; **Grp** +24**Atk Options** Awesome Blow, Power Attack**Special Actions** Earth Warp**Combat Gear** *bead of force***Abilities** Str 25, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10
SQ natural cunning**Feats** Awesome Blow, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greathammer), Improved Natural Attack (gore), Monkey Grip, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greathammer)**Skills** Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +4**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 *huge greathammer*, +1 *mitral breastplate***Earth Glide (Ex)** A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence.**Earth Warp (Su)** As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it

to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it., double movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur, when the minotaur leaves the area the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

DARK VINESPAWN CR 8

N Large plant (extraplanar)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., superior low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +4

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Dodge, Mobility (-1 size, +5 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 102 (12 HD); **DR** 5/slashing

Immune plant immunities

Resist cold 10

Fort +11, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4

Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 slams +14 (1d8+6)

Ranged vine net +13 touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +19

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions engulf, hide in plain sight, spawning

Abilities Str 22, Dex 21, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ plant traits

Feats Dodge, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack

Skills Climb +14, Hide +22 (+30 in forest), Listen +3, Move Silently +14, Spot +4

Vine Net (Ex) A vinespaw can hurl parts of its body up to 30 feet as a ranged attack. Each of these tightly wound balls opens in flight to form a net that can entangle a creature up to one size category larger than the vinespaw. A vinespaw can create one vine net per day for every 4 Hit Dice that it has.

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can flow over Medium or smaller creatures, entrapping the, within its form. The vinespaw simply moves into the opponent's space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A vinespaw cannot make slam or vine net attacks during a round in which it engulfs. It can engulf as many creatures as fits in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against a vinespaw, but if they do, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex saving or be engulfed; on a success, a creature moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the vinespaw's path. The save is Strength-based.

As a swift action, a vinespaw can crush engulfed creatures, dealing 2d6+12 points of nonlethal damage. Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the vinespaw's body, but they can attempt to damage the vinespaw or escape from it as with a normal grapple. A vinespaw is not considered to be grappling when it has engulfed a creature, and it cannot be pinned by an engulfed creature.

A creature engulfed by a vinespaw is subject to any area effect to which the vinespaw is subjected. Grappled and engulfed creatures lose any Dexterity bonus to AC but gain a +4 bonus on Reflex saves for having cover. An engulfed creature takes half damage from any attack that does piercing damage to the vinespaw. This half damage is calculated before the vinespaw's damage reduction is applied to the attack.

A vinespaw can choose to expel engulfed creatures as a standard action. If a vinespaw is killed, any engulfed creatures are freed.

Spawning (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can attempt to insert its spawning root down the throat of an engulfed humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant. An unconscious engulfed creature cannot resist the spawning root. A vinespaw must succeed on a grapple check to indirect any other creature. The engulfed creature takes 1d6+8 points of damage as the thorny appendage burrows into its stomach. The presence of the spawning root prevents talking, the casting of spells with verbal components, or any other activities requiring speech. Removing a spawning root requires a successful grapple check by the creature invaded by the root, but doing so deals and extra 1d6 points of damage. If the vinespaw is killed, the spawning root can be removed without dealing damage.

A spawning root nourishes an unconscious creature, keeping it breathing while the vinespaw uses periodic swift actions to deal nonlethal damage and keep the target unconscious. If the target creature is left in this state for 1 day, vines grow through its veins. On the fourth day in this state, the victim dies as an adult vinespaw exits the body of the parent.

A vinespaw that is attacked during the spawning process can fight back but cannot move without disengaging its spawning root. Only if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points does it break off, disengaging the vine, dealing damage as above, and fleeing with the engulfed creatures in tow.

If extracted before the fourth day, the victim is sickened even when returned to consciousness. Such victims die in 2d4 days unless *remove disease* is used to destroy the vines that can be seen growing beneath the skin.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex) Can use the Hide skill, even while being observed (except in natural daylight, the effect of a *daylight* spell, or similar effect).

2: TEA AND GARROTES

MERRY BRUISER CR 4

Male human barbarian 2/fighter 2/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot 1**Languages** Common**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield); **Uncanny Dodge****hp** 51 (5 HD)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** greatclub +10 (1d10+4)**Ranged** javelin +7 (1d6+3)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +8**Atk Options** rage 1/day**Combat Gear** tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8**Feats** Power Attack, Powerful Charge, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatclub)**Skills** Intimidate +7, Listen +6, Ride +4, Survival +3**Possessions** masterwork greatclub, 5 javelins, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield**Hook** “Hand it over or we get rough.” *the sound of cracking knuckles***MERRY BLACKJACK CR 7**

Male human duskblade 3/rogue 4/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); **uncanny dodge****hp** 62 (8 HD)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; **evasion****Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk greatsword +12/+7 (2d6+4/19-20)**Ranged** longbow +10/+5 (1d8/x3)**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +10**Atk Options** arcane channeling, sneak attack +2d6**Combat Gear** thunderstone**Duskblade Spells Known** (CL 3rd):1st (5/day)—*blade of blood*, *Kelgore's fire bolt* (+9 ranged touch), *stand*, *swift expeditious retreat*0 (5/day)—*acid splash* (+9 ranged touch), *disrupt undead* (+9 ranged touch), *ray of frost* (+9 ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+10 melee touch, DC 12)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th):5/day—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 9), *ghost sound* (DC 9), *read magic*.**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 8**SQ** armored mage (light), trapfinding, trap sense +1**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword)**Skills** Bluff +6, Climb +8, Concentration +14, Disguise +9, Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Search +9, Spellcraft +3, Spot +6, Tumble +9**Possessions** combat gear plus chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, longbow, 20 masterwork arrows**Arcane Channeling (Su)** Use a standard action to cast any spell known and deliver it through your weapon with a melee attack. Casting of this spell does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Spells cast this way must have a casting time of 1 standard action or less. If melee attack is successful, deal damage and then apply spell effect.**Hook** “ ‘ello guvner, might you have a spare coin for bloke in need?”

4: UNDERFOOT

GREATHORN MINOTAUR BRUTE**CR 9**

Greathorn minotaur fighter 2

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sent, tremorsense 120 ft., Listen +8, Spot +8**Languages** Giant, Undercommon**AC** 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural, +6 armor)**hp** 126 (13 HD); **DR** 5/-**Fort** +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); **earth glide****Melee** gore +19 (2d6+10) OR**Melee** greathammer +19/+14/+9 (4d6+11/19-20, x4) AND**Melee** gore +14 (2d6+3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +13; **Grp** +24**Atk Options** Awesome Blow, Power Attack**Special Actions** Earth Warp**Combat Gear** *bead of force***Abilities** Str 25, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10**SQ** natural cunning**Feats** Awesome Blow, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greathammer), Improved Natural Attack (gore), Monkey Grip, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greathammer)**Skills** Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +4**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 *huge greathammer*, +1 *mitral breastplate*

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it., double movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur, when the minotaur leaves the area the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

DARK VINESPAWN ELITE CR 10

N Large plant (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., superior low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +4

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 13; Dodge, Mobility (-1 size, +6 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 186 (20 HD); **DR** 5/slashing

Immune plant immunities

Resist cold 10

Fort +16, **Ref** +14, **Will** +6

Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 slams +21 (1d8+6)

Ranged vine net +20 touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +25

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions engulf, hide in plain sight, spawning

Abilities Str 22, Dex 22, Con 18, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ plant traits

Feats Ability Focus (engulf), Dodge, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Climb +14, Hide +31 (+39 in forest), Listen +3, Move Silently +15, Spot +4

Vine Net (Ex) A vinespaw can hurl parts of its body up to 30 feet as a ranged attack. Each of these tightly wound balls opens in flight to form a net that can entangle a creature up to one size category larger than the vinespaw. A vinespaw can creature one vine net per day for every 4 Hit Dice that it has.

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can flow over Medium or smaller creatures, entrapping the,

within its form. The vinespaw simply moves into the opponent's space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A vinespaw cannot make slam or vine net attacks during a round in which it engulfs. If can engulf as many creatures as fits in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against a vinespaw, but if they do, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex saving or be engulfed; on a success, a creature moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the vinespaw's path. The save is Strength-based.

As a swift action, a vinespaw can crush engulfed creatures, dealing 2d6+12 points of nonlethal damage. Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the vinespaw's body, but they can attempt to damage the vinespaw or escape from it as with a normal grapple. A vinespaw is not considered to be grappling when it has engulfed a creature, and it cannot be pinned by an engulfed creature.

A creature engulfed by a vinespaw is subject to any area effect to which the vinespaw is subjected. Grappled and engulfed creatures lose any Dexterity bonus to AC but gain a +4 bonus on Reflex saves for having cover. An engulfed creature takes half damage from any attack that does piercing damage to the vinespaw. This half damage is calculated before the vinespaw's damage reduction is applied to the attack.

A vinespaw can choose to expel engulfed creatures as a standard action. If a vinespaw is killed, any engulfed creatures are freed.

Spawning (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can attempt to insert its spawning root down the throat of an engulfed humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant. An unconscious engulf creature cannot resist the spawning root. A vinespaw must succeed on a grapple check to indirect any other creature. The engulfed creature takes 1d6+8 points of damage as the thorny appendage burrows into its stomach. The presence of the spawning root prevents talking, the casting of spells with verbal components, or any other activities requiring speech. Removing a spawning root requires a successful grapple check by the creature invaded by the root, but doing so deals and extra 1d6 points of damage. If the vinespaw is killed, the spawning root can be removed without dealing damage.

A spawning root nourishes an unconscious creature, keeping it breathing while the vinespaw uses periodic swift actions to deal nonlethal damage and keep the target unconscious. If the target creature is left in this state for 1 day, vines grow through its veins. On the fourth day in this state, the victim dies as an adult vinespaw exits the body of the parent.

A vinespaw that is attacked during the spawning process can fight back but cannot move without disengaging its spawning root. Only if

reduced to 20 or fewer hit points does it break off, disengaging the vine, dealing damage as above, and fleeing with the engulfed creatures in tow.

If extracted before the fourth day, the victim is sickened even when returned to consciousness. Such victims die in 2d4 days unless *remove disease* is used to destroy the vines that can be seen growing beneath the skin.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex) Can use the Hide skill, even while being observed (except in natural daylight, the effect of a *daylight* spell, or similar effect).

2: TEA AND GARROTES

MERRY BRUISER CR 6

Male human barbarian 2/fighter 4/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot 1**Languages** Common**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield); **Uncanny Dodge****hp** 69 (7 HD)**Fort** +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** greatclub +12/+7 (1d10+6)**Ranged** javelin +9/+4 (1d6+3)**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +10**Atk Options** rage 1/day**Combat Gear** tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8**Feats** Dodge, Power Attack, Powerful Charge, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatclub), Weapon Specialization (greatclub)**Skills** Intimidate +9, Listen +6, Ride +4, Survival +3**Possessions** masterwork greatclub, 5 javelins, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield**Hook** "Hand it over or we get rough." *the sound of cracking knuckles***MERRY BLACKJACK CR 9**

Male human duskblade 5/rogue 4/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); **uncanny dodge****hp** 76 (10 HD)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4; **evasion****Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk greatsword +14/+9 (2d6+4/19-20)**Ranged** longbow +12/+7 (1d8/x3)**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +12**Atk Options** arcane channeling, quick cast 1/day, sneak attack +2d6**Combat Gear** thunderstone**Duskblade Spells Known** (CL 5th):2nd(3/day)—*swift invisibility*1st (6/day)—*blade of blood*, *Kelgore's fire bolt* (+11 ranged touch), *ray of enfeeblement* (+11 ranged touch), *stand*, *swift expeditious retreat*0 (6/day)—*acid splash* (+11 ranged touch), *disrupt undead* (+11 ranged touch), *ray of frost* (+11 ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+12 melee touch, DC 12)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th):5/day—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 9), *ghost sound* (DC 9), *read magic*.**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 8**SQ** armored mage (medium), trapfinding, trap sense +1**Feats** Blind-fight, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword)**Skills** Bluff +6, Climb +8, Concentration +16, Disguise +9, Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Search +9, Spellcraft +9, Spot +6, Tumble +9**Possessions** combat gear plus chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, longbow, 20 masterwork arrows**Arcane Channeling (Su)** Use a standard action to cast any spell known and deliver it through your weapon with a melee attack. Casting of this spell does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Spells cast this way must have a casting time of 1 standard action or less. If melee attack is successful, deal damage and then apply spell effect.**Quick Cast** Once per day cast a spell with a casting time of 1 standard action or less as a swift action.**Hook** " 'ello guvner, might you have a spare coin for bloke in need?"

4: UNDERFOOT

GREATHORN MINOTAUR MYRMIDON CR 11

Greathorn minotaur fighter 4

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sent, tremorsense 120 ft., Listen +8, Spot +8**Languages** Giant, Undercommon**AC** 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural, +6 armor)**hp** 148 (15 HD); **DR** 5/-**Fort** +14, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); **earth glide****Melee** gore +21 (2d6+10) OR**Melee** greathammer +21/+16/+11 (4d6+11/19-20, x4) AND**Melee** gore +16 (2d6+3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +26**Atk Options** Awesome Blow, Power Attack**Special Actions** Earth Warp**Combat Gear** *bead of force*, *potion of fly***Abilities** Str 25, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10**SQ** natural cunning**Feats** Awesome Blow, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greathammer), Improved Natural Attack (gore),

Monkey Grip, Power Attack, Power Critical (+4 to confirm threats with greathammer), Track, Weapon Focus (greathammer), Weapon Specialization (greathammer)

Skills Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +5

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *huge greathammer*, +1 *mitral breastplate*, *belt of one mighty blow* (only one)

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it., double movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur, when the minotaur leaves the area the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

DARK VINESPAWN ELDER CR 12

N Huge plant (extraplanar)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., superior low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +4

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility (-2 size, +5 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 336 (28 HD); **DR** 5/slashing

Immune plant immunities

Resist cold 10

Fort +21, **Ref** +15, **Will** +8

Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 slams +31 (2d6+11)

Ranged vine net +28 touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +33

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions engulf, hide in plain sight, spawning

Abilities Str 32, Dex 20, Con 22, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ plant traits

Feats Ability Focus (engulf), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Climb +19, Hide +38 (+46 in forest), Listen +3, Move Silently +14, Spot +4

Vine Net (Ex) A vinespaw can hurl parts of its body up to 30 feet as a ranged attack. Each of these tightly wound balls opens in flight to form a net that can entangle a creature up to one size category larger than the vinespaw. A vinespaw can creature one vine net per day for every 4 Hit Dice that it has.

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can flow over Medium or smaller creatures, entrapping the, within its form. The vinespaw simply moves into the opponent's space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A vinespaw cannot make slam or vine net attacks during a round in which it engulfs. If can engulf as many creatures as fits in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against a vinespaw, but if they do, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 25 Reflex saving or be engulfed; on a success, a creatures moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the vinespaw's path. The save is Strength-based.

As a swift action, a vinespaw can crush engulfed creatures, dealing 3d6+16 points of nonlethal damage. Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the vinespaw's body, but they can attempt to damage the vinespaw or escape from it as with a normal grapple. A vinespaw is not considered to be grappling when it has engulfed a creature, and it cannot be pinned by an engulfed creature.

A creature engulfed by a vinespaw is subject to any area effect to which the vinespaw is subjected. Grappled and engulfed creatures lose any Dexterity bonus to AC but gain a +4 bonus on Reflex saves for having cover. An engulfed creature takes half damage from any attack that does piercing damage to the vinespaw. This half damage is calculated before the vinespaw's damage reduction is applied to the attack.

A vinespaw can choose to expel engulfed creatures as a standard action. If a vinespaw is killed, any engulfed creatures are freed.

Spawning (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespaw can attempt to insert its spawning root down the throat of an engulfed humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant. An unconscious engulf creature cannot resist the spawning root. A vinespaw must succeed on a grapple check to indirect any other creature. The engulfed creature takes 1d8+13 points of damage as the thorny appendage burrows into its stomach. The presence of the spawning root prevents talking, the casting of spells with verbal components, or any other activities requiring speech. Removing a spawning root requires a successful grapple check by the creature invaded by the root, but doing so deals and extra 1d8 points of damage. If the vinespaw is killed, the spawning root can be removed without dealing damage.

A spawning root nourishes an unconscious creature, keeping it breathing while the vinespawn uses periodic swift actions to deal nonlethal damage and keep the target unconscious. If the target creature is left in this state for 1 day, vines grow through its veins. On the fourth day in this state, the victim dies as an adult vinespawn exits the body of the parent.

A vinespawn that is attacked during the spawning process can fight back but cannot move without disengaging its spawning root. Only if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points does it break off, disengaging the vine, dealing damage as above, and fleeing with the engulfed creatures in tow.

If extracted before the fourth day, the victim is sickened even when returned to consciousness. Such victims die in 2d4 days unless *remove disease* is used to destroy the vines that can be seen growing beneath the skin.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex) Can use the Hide skill, even while being observed (except in natural daylight, the effect of a *daylight* spell, or similar effect).

2: TEA AND GARROTES

MERRY BRUISER CR 8

Male human barbarian 4/fighter 4/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot 1**Languages** Common**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield); Uncanny Dodge**hp** 89 (9 HD)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** greatclub +14/+9 (1d10+6)**Ranged** javelin +11/+6 (1d6+3)**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +12**Atk Options** rage 2/day**Combat Gear** tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8**SQ** trap sense +1**Feats** Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Powerful Charge, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatclub), Weapon Specialization (greatclub)**Skills** Intimidate +11, Listen +11, Ride +4, Survival +4**Possessions** masterwork greatclub, 5 javelins, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield**Hook** "Hand it over or we get rough." *the sound of cracking knuckles***MERRY BLACKJACK CR 11**

Male human duskblade 6/rogue 5/warrior 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +9**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); uncanny dodge**hp** 89 (12 HD)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5; evasion**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk greatsword +15/+10 (2d6+4/19-20)**Ranged** longbow +13/+8 (1d8/x3)**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +13**Atk Options** arcane channeling, quick cast 1/day, sneak attack +3d6**Combat Gear** thunderstone**Duskblade Spells Known** (CL 6th):2nd(4/day, 3 remaining)—see *invisibility*, *swift invisibility*1st (7/day)—*blade of blood*, *Kelgore's fire bolt* (+12 ranged touch), *ray of enfeeblement* (+12 ranged touch), *stand*, *swift expeditious retreat*0 (6/day)—*acid splash* (+12 ranged touch), *disrupt undead* (+12 ranged touch), *ray of frost* (+12ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+13 melee touch, DC 12)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 12th):5/day—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 9), *ghost sound* (DC 9), *read magic*.**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 8**SQ** armored mage (medium), spell power +2, trapfinding, trap sense +1**Feats** Blind-fight, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Subduing Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword)**Skills** Bluff +6, Climb +8, Concentration +18, Disguise +9, Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Search +9, Spellcraft +11, Spot +9, Tumble +17**Possessions** combat gear plus chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, longbow, 20 masterwork arrows**Arcane Channeling (Su)** Use a standard action to cast any spell known and deliver it through your weapon with a melee attack. Casting of this spell does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Spells cast this way must have a casting time of 1 standard action or less. If melee attack is successful, deal damage and then apply spell effect.**Quick Cast** Once per day cast a spell with a casting time of 1 standard action or less as a swift action.**Hook** " 'ello guvner, might you have a spare coin for bloke in need?"**Power-Up Suite** see *invisibility*

4: UNDERFOOT

GREATHORN MINOTAUR MYRMIDON CR 11

Greathorn minotaur fighter 4

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sent, tremorsense 120 ft., Listen +8, Spot +8**Languages** Giant, Undercommon**AC** 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural, +6 armor)**hp** 148 (15 HD); **DR** 5/-**Fort** +14, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); earth glide**Melee** gore +21 (2d6+10) OR**Melee** greathammer +21/+16/+11 (4d6+11/19-20, x4) AND**Melee** gore +16 (2d6+3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +26**Atk Options** Awesome Blow, Power Attack**Special Actions** Earth Warp**Combat Gear** *bead of force*, *potion of fly*

Abilities Str 25, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ natural cunning

Feats Awesome Blow, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greathammer), Improved Natural Attack (gore), Monkey Grip, Power Attack, Power Critical (+4 to confirm threats with greathammer), Track, Weapon Focus (greathammer), Weapon Specialization (greathammer)

Skills Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +5

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *huge greathammer*, +1 *mitral breastplate*, *belt of one mighty blow* (only one)

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it., double movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur, when the minotaur leaves the area the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

GREATER DARK VINESPAWN

CR 14

N Huge plant (extraplanar)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., superior low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +4

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility (-2 size, +5 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 432 (36 HD); **DR** 5/slashing

Immune plant immunities

Resist cold 10

Fort +25, **Ref** +18, **Will** +11

Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 slams +38 (2d6+12)

Ranged vine net +34 touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +19; **Grp** +41

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions engulf, hide in plain sight, spawning

Abilities Str 34, Dex 20, Con 22, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ plant traits

Feats Ability Focus (engulf), Danger Sense (roll twice for Initiative, take the better), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (grapple), Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Climb +19, Hide +45 (+54 in forest), Listen +3, Move Silently +14, Spot +4

Vine Net (Ex) A vinespawn can hurl parts of its body up to 30 feet as a ranged attack. Each of these tightly wound balls opens in flight to form a net that can entangle a creature up to one size category larger than the vinespawn. A vinespawn can creature one vine net per day for every 4 Hit Dice that it has.

Engulf (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespawn can flow over Medium or smaller creatures, entrapping the, within its form. The vinespawn simply moves into the opponent's space; any creature whose space it completely covers is subject to the engulf attack. A vinespawn cannot make slam or vine net attacks during a round in which it engulfs. If can engulf as many creatures as fits in its space.

Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against a vinespawn, but if they do, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 26 Reflex saving or be engulfed; on a success, a creature moves aside or back (opponent's choice) to move out of the vinespawn's path. The save is Strength-based.

As a swift action, a vinespawn can crush engulfed creatures, dealing 3d6+18 points of nonlethal damage. Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the vinespawn's body, but they can attempt to damage the vinespawn or escape from it as with a normal grapple. A vinespawn is not considered to be grappling when it has engulfed a creature, and it cannot be pinned by an engulfed creature.

A creature engulfed by a vinespawn is subject to any area effect to which the vinespawn is subjected. Grappled and engulfed creatures lose any Dexterity bonus to AC but gain a +4 bonus on Reflex saves for having cover. An engulfed creature takes half damage from any attack that does piercing damage to the vinespawn. This half damage is calculated before the vinespawn's damage reduction is applied to the attack.

A vinespawn can choose to expel engulfed creatures as a standard action. If a vinespawn is killed, any engulfed creatures are freed.

Spawning (Ex) As a standard action, a vinespawn can attempt to insert its spawning root down the throat of an engulfed humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant. An unconscious engulf creature cannot resist the spawning root. A vinespawn must succeed on a grapple check to indirect any other creature. The engulfed creature takes 1d8+14 points of damage as the thorny appendage burrows into its stomach. The presence of the spawning root prevents talking, the casting of spells with verbal components, or any

other activities requiring speech. Removing a spawning root requires a successful grapple check by the creature invaded by the root, but doing so deals an extra 1d8 points of damage. If the vinespawn is killed, the spawning root can be removed without dealing damage.

A spawning root nourishes an unconscious creature, keeping it breathing while the vinespawn uses periodic swift actions to deal nonlethal damage and keep the target unconscious. If the target creature is left in this state for 1 day, vines grow through its veins. On the fourth day in this state, the victim dies as an adult vinespawn exits the body of the parent.

A vinespawn that is attacked during the spawning process can fight back but cannot move without disengaging its spawning root. Only if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points does it break off, disengaging the vine, dealing damage as above, and fleeing with the engulfed creatures in tow.

If extracted before the fourth day, the victim is sickened even when returned to consciousness. Such victims die in 2d4 days unless *remove disease* is used to destroy the vines that can be seen growing beneath the skin.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex) Can use the Hide skill, even while being observed (except in natural daylight, the effect of a *daylight* spell, or similar effect).

FEATS

Danger Sense

You are one twitchy individual.

Prerequisites: Improved Initiative.

Benefit: Once per day, you can reroll an initiative check you have just made. You use the better of your two rolls. You must decide to reroll before the round starts.

Monkey Grip [General]

You are able to use a larger weapon than other people your size.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You can use melee weapons one size category larger than you are with a -2 penalty on the attack roll, but the amount of effort it takes you does not change. For instance, a Large longsword (a one-handed weapon for Large creatures) is considered a two-handed weapon for a Medium creature that does not have this feat. For a Medium creature that has this feat, it is still considered a one-handed weapon. You can wield a larger light weapon as a light weapon, or a larger two-handed weapon in two hands. You cannot wield a larger weapon in your off hand, and you cannot use this feat with a double weapon.

Normal: You can use a melee weapon one size category larger than you are with a -2 penalty on the attack roll, and the amount of effort it takes to use the weapon increases. A larger light weapon is considered a one-handed weapon, a larger one-handed weapon is considered a two-handed weapon and you cannot use a larger two-handed weapon at all.

Source: *Complete Warrior* 103

Power Critical [General]

Choose one weapon, such as a longsword or greataxe. With that weapon, you know how to hit where it hurts.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus with weapon, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: When using the weapon you selected, you gain a +4 bonus on the roll to confirm a threat.

Special: A fighter may select Power Critical as one of his fighter bonus feats.

You can gain Power Critical multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it may be with a different weapon or the same weapon. If you take it with the same weapon, the effects of the feats stack.

Source: *Complete Warrior* 103

Powerful Charge [General]

A creature with powerful charge can charge with extra force.

Prerequisites: Medium or larger, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When the creature charges, if its melee attack hits, it deals an extra 1d8 points of damage (if its Medium size). For Large creatures, the extra damage is 2d6 points, for Huge 3d6; for Gargantuan 4d6; and for Colossal 6d6.

This feat only works when the creature makes a charge. It does not work when the creature is mounted. If the creature has the ability to make multiple attacks after a charge, it can only apply this extra damage to one of those attacks.

Special: A fighter may select Powerful Charge as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Source: *Monster Manual* IV 203

SUBDUING STRIKE [GENERAL]

You are adept at striking to deal nonlethal damage even with normal weapons.

Benefit: You can use any melee weapon to deal nonlethal damage with no penalty on your attack roll. If you are a rogue you can deal nonlethal damage with your sneak attack, even if you are using a normal melee weapon. This feat does not allow you to deal nonlethal damage with ranged weapons.

Normal: If you are using a melee weapon designed to deal lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage instead, you take a -4 penalty on your attack roll. Rogues normally can only use saps or unarmed strikes to deal nonlethal damage with their sneak attacks.

Special: A fighter may select Subduing Strike as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Source: *Book of Exalted Deeds* 46.

ITEMS

BELT OF ONE MIGHTY BLOW

Price (Item Level): 1,500 gp (5th)

Body Slot: Waist

Caster Level: 5th

Aura: Faint; (DC 17) transmutation

Activation: Swift (command)

Weight: 1 lb.

The buckle of this wide leather belt is set with a single blood-red carbuncle.

Activating a *belt of one mighty blow* generates extra damage on your next melee attack made before the end of your turn. A light weapon deals an extra 1d8 points of damage, a one-handed weapon deals an extra 2d6 points of damage, and a two-handed weapon deals an extra 3d6 points of damage.

A *belt of one mighty blow* functions once times per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *bull strength*.

Cost to Create: 750 gp, 60 XP, 2 days.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* 109.

SPELLS

BLADE OF BLOOD

Necromancy

Level: Assassin 1, blackguard 1, cleric 1, duskblade 1, wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: Touch

Effect: Weapon touched

Duration: 1 round/level or until discharged

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Red blood erupts along the weapon's blade, bludgeon, or point. The blood drips to spatter in thick, viscous drops upon the ground.

This spell infuses the weapon touched with baleful energy. The next time this weapon strikes a living creature, *blade of blood* discharges. The spell deals an extra 1d6 points of damage against the target of the attack. You can voluntarily take 5 hit points of damage to empower the weapon to deal an extra 2d6 points of damage (for a total of 3d6 points of extra damage).

The weapon loses this property if its wielder drops it or otherwise loses contact with it.

Source: *Player's Handbook II* 103

EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT, SWIFT

Transmutation

Level: Bard 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Duration: 1 round

In a breathless voice you call out, as if you were already running a race.

This spell functions like *expeditious retreat* (PH 228), except as noted above.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 85

INVISIBILITY, SWIFT

Illusion (Glamer)

Level: Assassin 2, Bard 1

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Target: You

Duration: 1 round

With a whispered syllable you complete the spell. You notice that others look past you as if you weren't there.

This spell functions like *invisibility* (PH 245), except as noted above.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 125

KELGORE'S FIRE BOLT

Conjuration/Evocation [Fire]

Level: Duskblade 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: See text

You conjure a shard of red-hot rock and hurl it toward an opponent. As it streaks through the air, a nimbus of arcane energy crackles around it.

This spell conjures a small orb of rock and sheathes it in arcane energy. This spell deals 1d6 points of fire damage per caster level (maximum 5d6). If you fail to overcome the target's spell resistance, the spell still deals 1d6 points of fire damage from the heat and force of the conjured orb's impact.

Material Component: A handful of ashes.

Source: *Player's Handbook II* 116

STAND

Conjuration (Teleportation)

Level: Duskblade 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 immediate action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One willing prone creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

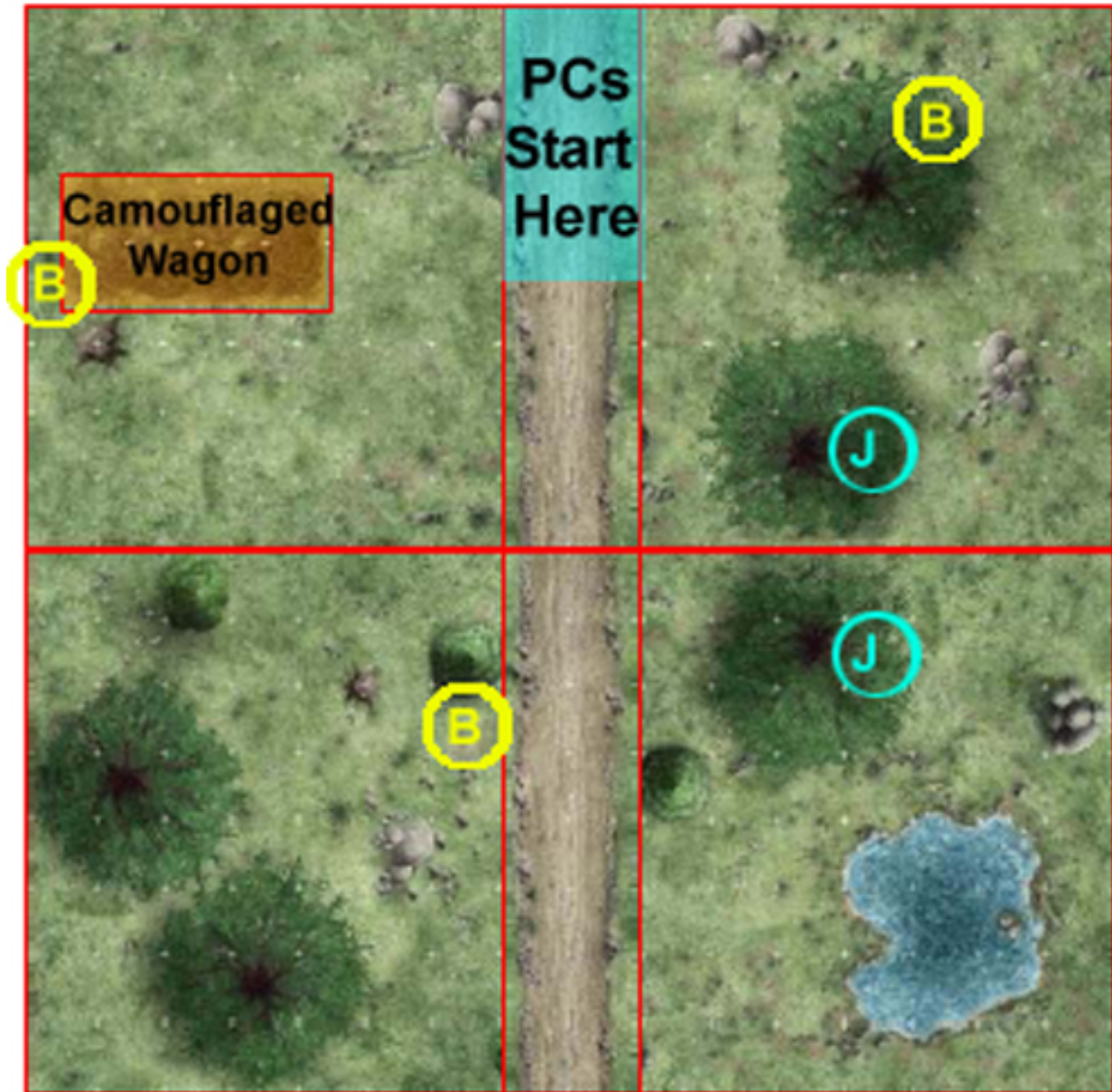
With a swift upward gesture of your arms and a single clarion command (“Stand!”), you enable the prone creature to safely rise to its feet.

The subject creature immediately stands, without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Source: *Player’s Handbook II* 125-126

2: TEA AND GARROTES

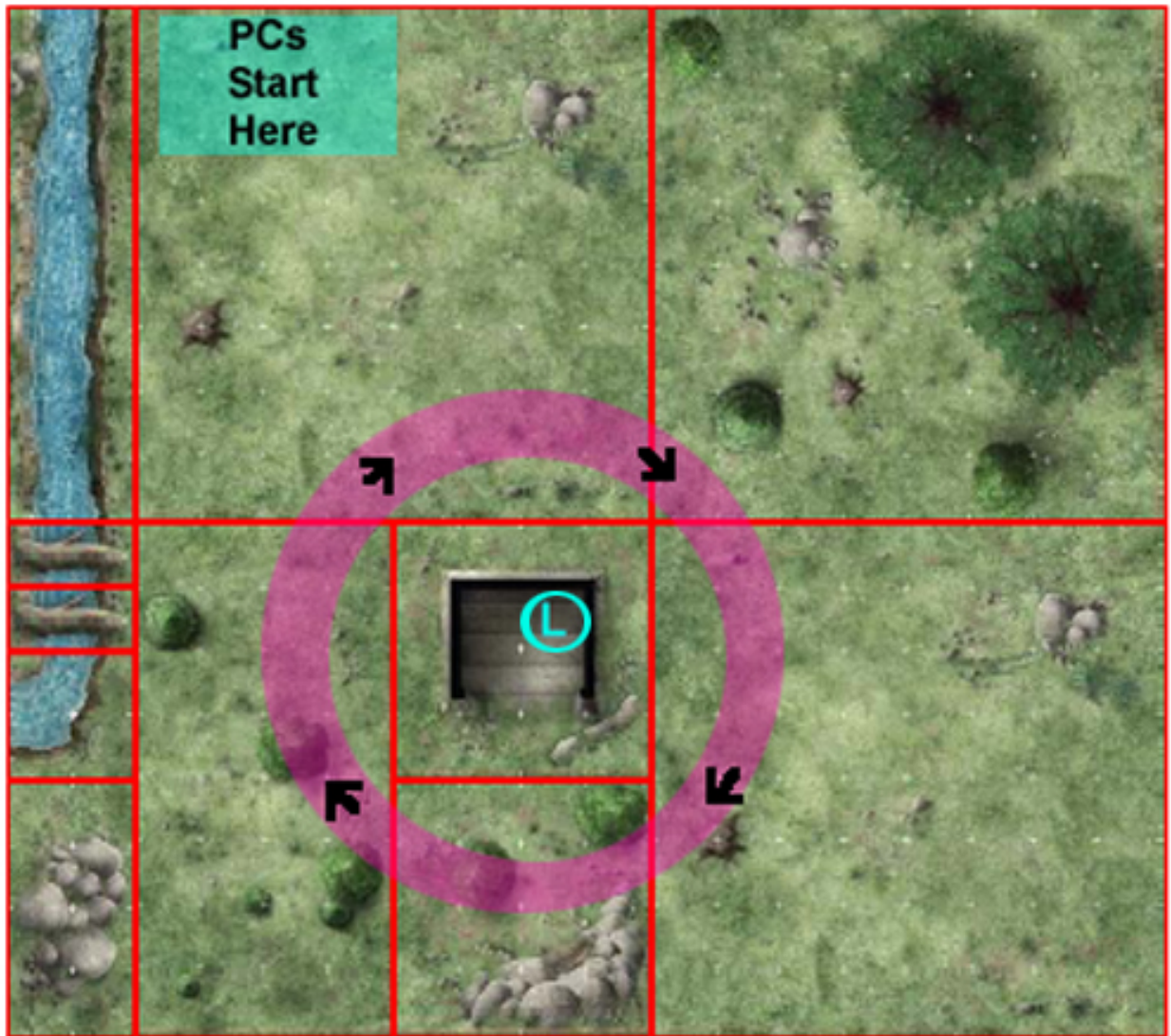
B = Merry Bruiser
J = Merry Blackjack



4: UNDERFOOT

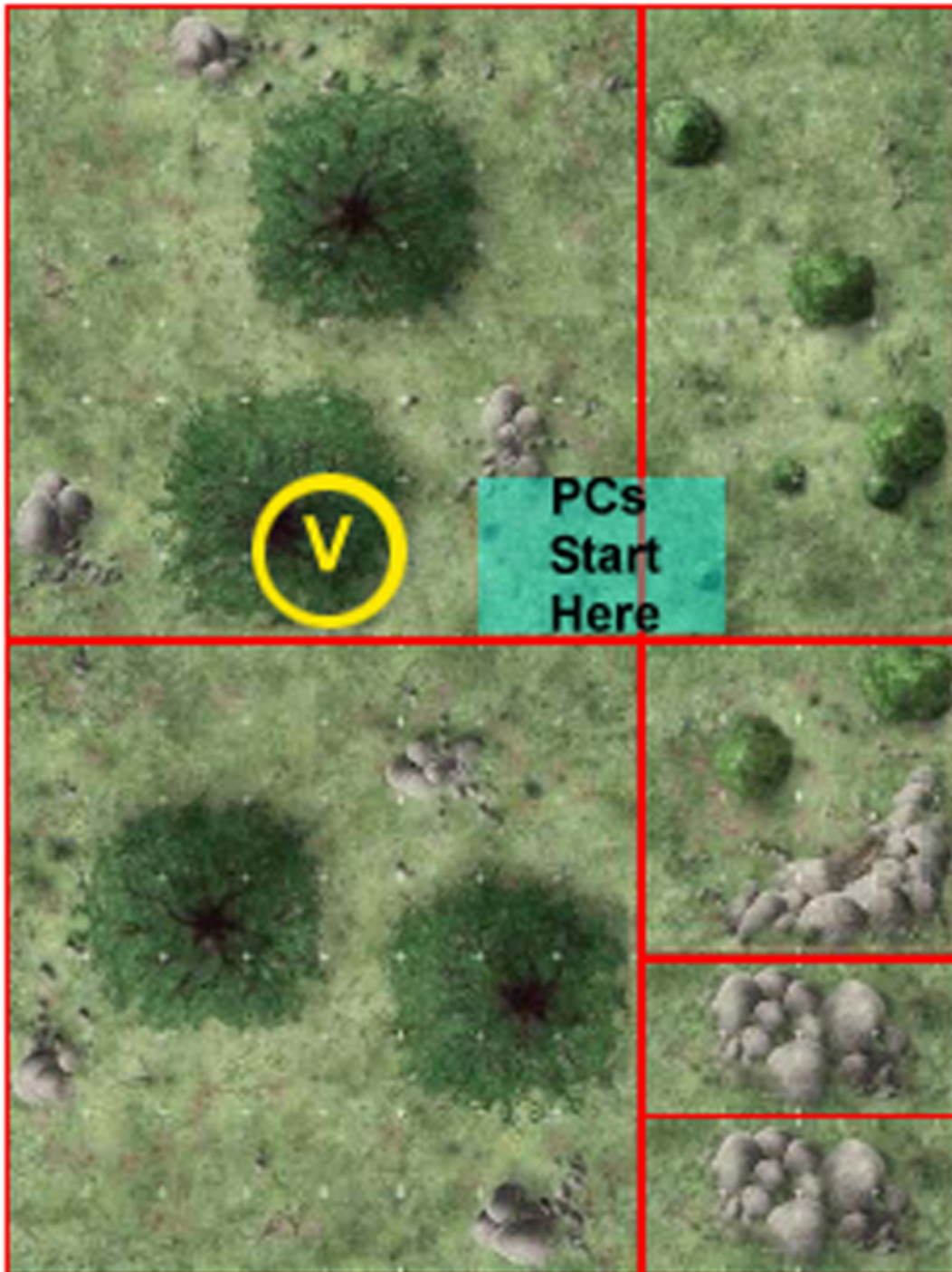
L = Leaijrn

→ = Direction of greathorn minotaur's patrol underground



5: DARKEST BEFORE THE...

V = Vinespawn



Cut into the wall of the Pelorite shrine:

You have four days to bring
my son to the hill just
north of the Shield Mage's
Tower. If you fail, Leaijrn
dies.

—R