

URD3-05

Plague of Rage

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Duchy of Urnst Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

Round One
by Kent Ertman

“Violence begets violence” the old saying goes, but what do the halfling farmers have to do with anything? An Adventure for characters of levels 1-6.

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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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That

said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Scoring

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

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

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Duchy of Urnst. Characters native to the Duchy of Urnst pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

Many years ago, the road between Goldplains and Kokenfeld used to be prime territory for bandits looking to loot and pillage the merchant traffic headed to and from Greyhawk City. In response, the Duchy set up a number of guard posts along the route to keep the way safe, and more importantly to keep the wealthy merchant interests happy.

Near the village of Copper Pot is such a guard post, known locally as “Fort Karll”. The soldiers were recently expanding their brig when they broke into a large natural cavern. They decided to convert the cavern into a storage chamber, they only had to clean out the profusion of cream colored mushrooms infesting the cave.

Unfortunately these were no ordinary mushrooms. These were Ivory Toadstools, and their spores have a devastating effect on the minds of creatures who inhale them (see Appendix I). At first no one at the Fort noticed anything, except the cleric who saw several of the men seemed to be developing acne. Tempers were a bit short, but that wasn't really unusual. Within a few days, the mood at the fort grew ugly: soldiers were picking fights, and disobeying orders. The breaking point came when a drunken disagreement between two men suddenly erupted into a wild brawl involving nearly every soldier at the Fort.

The commanding officer was preparing to send word for assistance when a group of guardsmen returned from a routine patrol of the trade road. They had attacked and looted a merchant caravan, stealing a wagon and killing the guards. They marched into the Fort singing battle songs, their faces and armor painted with the blood of their victims, the heads of the dead mounted on poles.

The commander and the other soldiers forcibly herded these crazed men into the newly excavated storage caverns. There were a scant few minutes of calm, and then they too succumbed to the influence of the Ivory Toadstool spores. In an explosion of brutal and savage fury, they tore one another apart with their bare hands. This screaming, bloody rage came to an abrupt end when an arrowhawk, long at odds with the soldiers of the Fort, descended on the crazed survivors and wiped them out.

But not everyone from the Fort is dead. The soldiers locked in the storage caverns are still alive, their rage in temporary submission. There are also a few men from the patrol group that attacked the caravan who did not return to the Fort. They broke away from their fellows, hoping to catch up to the merchant caravan and finish them off. Their path took them very near Copper Pot,

where they attacked a little boy named Joseph. The boy escaped but not before getting a lung full of spores.

Adventure Summary

The author has not given a summary.

Introduction

It is important to create a dreary, cheerless mood in this adventure. Everything that happens is either literally or metaphorically dismal. Until the successful conclusion of the story, the DM should take pains to ensure that no NPC shows any real happiness or joy. The adventure begins with the PCs travelling the road between Goldplains and Kokenfeld.

The day is sunless and gloomy, and everything seems muted, gray, and dull. For days now, the weather has been locked in a never-ending purgatory of damp, sunless, days, and foggy, moonless nights.

It's so surprising when something breaks the monotony it takes a moment to process it. At the bottom of the rise, a knot of men is clustered around short line of wagons. Amidst the shouting and yelling, there is the sharp ring of steel on steel. Suddenly a horse screams and rears, its hooves dripping crimson.

Encounter One – Incredibly Bad Luck

These are merchants from House Einstoffen returning with goods from Greyhawk. They are under attack by a group of soldiers afflicted with the Plague of Rage (see Appendix I), and are not offering much resistance except for a single man in gleaming plate mail, who is carving through the afflicted soldiers like a roast turkey. This is Lord Ellis Lorinar. As soon as the PCs join the fight, the soldiers split into two groups: one turns to attack them and the other focuses on Ellis. The caravan workers retreat from combat and hide for the rest of the encounter.

APL 2 (EL 5)

🗡️ **Raging Ducal Soldiers (3):** hp27 each (see Appendix III)

APL 4 (EL 7)

🗡️ **Raging Ducal Soldiers (5):** hp27 each (see Appendix III)

APL 6 (EL 9)

🔥 **Raging Ducal Soldiers (10):** hp27 each (see Appendix III)

Tactics: The raging soldiers throw themselves at the most threatening target, and fight to the death.

Development: During combat, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

The bloodied, battered soldier is in a screaming, murderous fury. White foam sprays from his lips as he yells and curses. His face is slathered in disgusting, puffy white boils. As he swings and parries, a cluster of boils at his neck rupture with a nauseating “squish”, spraying white pus.

Whenever a PC engages in melee with an opponent afflicted with the Plague of Rage, he runs the risk of inhaling the fungal spores liberated from ruptured boils. Each round, roll a Fortitude save for the affected PCs (DC 20). If they fail, they have inhaled the spores, though they won't notice the effects until much later.

The DM should take pains to describe how affected soldiers shrug off devastating blows, obviously wounded but apparently feeling no pain. When a hit drives them to the ground, they pick their broken bodies up and hurl themselves back into battle. Once the last soldier goes down read the following

Finally the deranged warrior drops heavily to the ground with the sickening crunch of broken bones. He struggles mightily to pull himself up, but his thoroughly smashed and battered limbs can no longer oblige him. He lies on his side, sharp staccato breaths shooting blood from a great gaping rent in his chest. His eyes are so completely bloodshot there is no white to be seen. He hisses furiously each time he exhales:

“Kill!”

“Kill!”

“Kill!”

“killllll...”

And, at last, the crazed lunatic is still.

Finally, Lord Ellis approaches.

A tall Suel man of proud bearing walks swiftly toward you, hand extended. His gleaming plate mail is smeared with dirt, sweat, and blood. His white-blond hair is trimmed short to his skull and he sports of goatee trimmed to perfect angles.

“My deepest thanks, gentlemen.” He booms, while shaking your hands vigorously. “I am Ellis Lorinar, nephew to our most noble Duke Karll. Your timing is fortuitous. Had you not arrived when you did, I’m certain these good servants of House Einstoffen would have been massacred and I along with them. You have my thanks.”

A second Suel man of average height crawls gracelessly from beneath one of the wagons, smearing himself with mud in the process, and introduces himself as Wallerd, the taskmaster.

“My thanks as well, good Sirs.” He says, with a bow, dripping muck from his once-fine velvet robes. “This string of attacks is unprecedented, and so is the generosity of Lord Ellis and yourselves. Why if Lord Ellis hadn’t agreed to personally escort us back to Leukish we would all have perished on these killing fields.”

“Nonsense!” Ellis says waving his hands. “I was doing my duty to protect the people of the Duchy. Any person of good heart would have done the same.” And with that statement, Ellis gives you a knowing stare, left eyebrow raised.

Lord Ellis is cannot stomach the idea of abandoning people in need, and when something like the troubled caravan lands in front of him he cannot refuse to assist. He is, however, on another mission, and escorting them this far has taken him very far from his intended path. While the caravan is out of immediate danger, the attacks have presented the taskmaster with an even greater problem.

Lord Ellis takes you aside as the caravan workers start readying the wagons for departure.

“Wallerd understates his current troubles.” Says the tall nobleman. “During the attacks yesterday, some of the bandits made off with a wagon of supplies. On that wagon were three boxes of financial records of House Einstoffen.

“There is some political wrangling going on in the Honorable Chamber; House Meisel has accused House Einstoffen of financial improprieties. In the Duchy that is almost worse than murder. It is a ridiculous charge, if you know the House, but one should never take such an allegation lightly. I worry that without those records, We will be unable to mount a proper defense. Now I cannot afford to spend any more time away from my current mission, I have already lost more time than I can afford taking them this far. Perhaps you might help?

Ellis is appealing to the PCs sense of honor, and bristles if they ask about a reward. He says that doing what is right is its own reward and glowers at the questioner. In any case, House Einstoffen cannot afford to offer one, and Ellis refuses to.

Wallard and Ellis freely offer the following information if asked:

This is the second attack on the caravan in as many days. The caravan guards were killed, to a man, repelling the first assault. Lord Ellis, who just happened to be riding in this direction intervened to save them.

The missing wagon carried only foodstuffs and House financial records: three boxes of records, seven crates of salted mutton, and a dozen bags of sugar.

Both men are amazed bandits are operating so brazenly on the trade route. The Duchy has well-manned guards posts along the road.

Characters who examine the corpses can make Heal checks to learn the following:

- **(DC 15)** – The insides of their throats are lined with gooey white muck that produces the white mucous running from the mouths and noses.
- **(DC 20)** – This white muck is a fungus.
- **(DC 25)** – The fungus releases a continuous stream of spores into the corpse's nose and throat.
- **(DC 30)** – The fungus has properties like a narcotic.

Harrick is incredibly anxious to get back on track to Leukish. He refuses offers to escort him, saying he would rather the PCs retrieve his records.

The party can take two paths from this point. If they chose to travel back along the road to the site of the first attack, it takes a day's travel time (go to Encounter 2). If instead they chose to track the soldiers they just dispatched, the trail leads them to the village of Copper Pot by nightfall (go to Encounter 3).

Encounter Two – Glorious Gore

A sprawl of mutilated bodies spans the roadway and down into the ditch. It is quite impossible to see any details through the miasma of flies clogging the air, but it looks as if most are missing their heads.

There are nine bodies, seven without heads, and none of them has as much as a single copper piece's worth of valuables. The faces of the two bodies with heads are covered with puffy white boils. Thick, white mucous runs generously from their noses and mouths. Any PCs who inhaled Ivory Toadstool in Encounter 1 are also oozing white mucous from their noses by this point. The players can learn the following with appropriate skill checks.

Search (DC 10) – Knowledge: Duchy or Knowledge: Nobility (DC 10) – The seven headless bodies wear the livery of House Einstoffen. The other two do not.

Knowledge: Duchy (DC 15) – The two other corpses wear uniforms of Ducal Patrols, though identifying marks appear to have been defaced.

Heal – As with Encounter 1 above.

Tracking the bandits is ridiculously simple. Their trail goes directly north into the forest for several miles, then east along the edge of a massive canyon to within a mile of Copper Pot. The trail then swings back northwestward. The party reaches Copper Pot by nightfall, and the twinkling lights of the village should be an inviting sight. If the players go to Copper Pot, run Encounter 3. If the PCs insist on pursuing the trail, after a day's travel it takes them to the Fort (go to Encounter 5). In this case, they do not meet Sparrow and do not play Encounters 4, 10, 12 or 13.

Encounter Three – The Village of Copper Pot

The gray day turns into a soggy gray evening. Up ahead, nestled in the middle of acres of well-trimmed farmland, is a small cluster of buildings. Light twinkles invitingly from the windows.

There are four broad, shallow streams meandering through this area that ruin any attempts at tracking. PCs following the trail from Encounter 1 lose it here.

Copper Pot is a village of halfling farmers. There are two-dozen buildings, most of them residences. The inn, The Roaring Hearth, is the only place open for business at this hour, and the streets are quiet and empty. See Appendix II for details about the town.

The inn is also quiet. Only Maretta, the innkeeper, and two customers occupy the common room. Everything inside is built for halflings, except for one table with eight human sized chairs. Maretta stands on an empty crate to serve the tall folk. If the PCs ask about

the soldiers, or the Fort, Marettta says ***“I’d best let you talk to Sparrow.”*** She then calls a small halfling girl from the kitchen and sends her off on an errand. She serves the PCs whatever food or drink they like while they wait.

A few minutes later a confident halfling strides into the room. He wears fine clothes and carries an exceptional crossbow slung across his back. Marettta introduces him to the PCs. See Appendix IV for Sparrow’s statistics.

“This is Sparrow. He’s one of the Keepers. He knows the most about the soldier men, and all about the Duchy. He can help you.”

Sparrow is distracted and says very little to the PCs until he hears mention of the white boils that the PCs saw on the crazed soldiers’ faces. At that point he perks up, and makes the PCs a deal.

“I can help you. But you must also help me. Come.”

He then leads the party out of the inn to a small house. He opens the door, speaks quietly to a tearful halfling woman inside and leads the PCs through the living room to a tiny bedroom.

Sparrow stops you at the open doorway.

“Don’t go inside,” he says, “we don’t want you to catch the disease.”

On the bed is a truly heart-wrenching sight. A little halfling boy clad in a simple white shirt and shorts thrashes mightily against his restraints. His hands and feet are tied to the bed posts with stout rope, but he is struggling so fiercely, the rope has bitten deeply into his skin. Blood oozes from his raw wrists and ankles, staining the bed sheets.

The child sees you and is suddenly still. His teeth are bared in a horrid grimace, and white fluid leaks from the corners of his mouth. Ragged breaths whistle through his clenched teeth, and his whole body shudders with the effort. His sweat-drenched face is covered with puffy white boils.

“This is Joseph.” Sparrow says, staring down at the boy. “He’s been like this for hours. Nothing we do seems to help him, and I’m beginning to lose hope. Unless I’m mistaken, this is the same disease affecting the men who attacked Lord Einstoffen’s caravan.

“The way you describe the attackers is unmistakable. Those are the Ducal soldiers who patrol the trade road. There is a guard post less than a

day from here if you know the route. I will guide you there if you agree to share with me everything you learn about this horrid disease.”

Suddenly the boy screams and arches his back high off the bed. “KILL!” he shrieks madly, his eyes rolling so far back into his skull all you can see are the whites.

“KILL!”

“KILL!”

“KILL!”

Sparrow quickly ushers the PCs out of the house. If they ask to examine Joseph or use magical healing the halfling tries his best to convince them not to, telling them he is concerned they might contract the disease. If the PCs insist he relents, but they are unlikely to learn anything new (see Appendix I for details). Anyone who enters the room must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) each round or inhale the Ivory Toadstool spores.

If the PCs agree, Sparrow recommends they take rooms at the inn and get a good night’s rest. He tells them he will come find them tomorrow after lunch, so they have time to buy any equipment they need from Cobble’s Wares. Proceed to Encounter 4.

If the PCs refuse his offer, not only are they hard-hearted and foolish, they are probably stuck. It takes a successful Knowledge: Duchy check (DC 25) to find the Fort without a guide, and the Potters certainly won’t help. If the party makes their way to the Fort without Sparrow go to Encounter 5, but do not play Encounters 10, 12 or 13.

Encounter Four – Night of the Sparrow

The journey to the Fort takes until the next morning, and is completely uneventful. Pretty much all hostile activity has been driven out of the area around the Fort; until the soldiers themselves became the hostiles. By now, PCs who inhaled Ivory Toadstool spores during Encounter 1 are starting to show symptoms of their affliction. If they played Encounter 2, they may also be experiencing Wisdom drain and altered moods. The DM should play this to the hilt, reminding those PCs at regular intervals about their symptoms, telling them they feel a slow burning anger in their bellies.

Have the party declare an order for night watch. Whoever is awake at midnight can participate in the following encounter. The other players are not allowed to speak or offer advice.

The night is as dull and cheerless as the gray day that came before. The barest smudge of dingy moonlight seeps through the ever-present clouds. You notice Sparrow sitting alone about twenty feet away from camp. Somehow he sneaked away unnoticed. His knees are up to his chin and his arms are wrapped around his legs. He is sobbing quietly.

Sparrow is engaging in a little self-pity. He is not inclined to discuss what is bothering him, but might be willing to talk if properly approached. At heart the halfling is quite fragile and insecure, so ridicule, insensitivity, or intimidations drive him away.

Sparrow's initial reaction to any PC inquiries is to clam up. He abruptly stands, clears his throat, wipes his eyes self-consciously, apologizes for disturbing the PC and moves to go back to sleep. If the PC makes a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15), Sparrow tells his story. The PC gets a +2 bonus for being a halfling (+5 if also a Keeper of the Vale), another +5 if he showed concern for Joseph, and an additional +1 to +5 for good role-playing (DMs discretion). The PC gets 2 chances to make the roll before Sparrow decides to keep his problems to himself. Sparrow's story, if he tells it, is as follows:

I live in a village called Stillwater, near Leukish. At least I used to live there. My friends... well my former friends and I were part of a group called the Red Guard. We defended our village from bandits and served our Lord on special missions.

Last winter we were sent to a neighboring county to help treat and contain an outbreak of cackle fever. It was actually a very near thing, the disease was spreading like wildfire, and we only barely managed to get all of the folks contained. We set up a temporary camp for the two-dozen or so folks that were treatable on an isolated cliff top. The only way you could get to it was by crossing this terrifyingly narrow rope bridge over a deep, rocky gorge. We had to keep the sick isolated from the other villagers or we'd be facing a full-scale plague.

Once that part was done, and the clerics started treating the sick, there wasn't much for me to do. I did lots of perimeter patrols. There was one little girl who struck me pretty hard. Both her parents had died of the fever, and the healers told me she was so grievously infected herself the poor child was beyond saving. She was nearly hysterical at being separated from her parents, and in her delirium she thought we were keeping her from them. It was heartbreaking.

Well about three days later I'm patrolling the bottom of the gorge looking for a wolf that was

harassing the camp when I hear this commotion from up above. I see the little girl running across the bridge back to her village. It was plain to see my friends were chasing her, but by she was too far ahead. There was no way they'd catch her before she got to the woods on the other side, and then they'd never get her. She'd find her way back to the village and infect everyone she touched.

All I could think about were the dozens of people who'd already died, and the dozens still deathly sick, and suffering. So I picked up my crossbow and shot her in the back. It was a perfect hit. She fell fifty yards to the rocks right at my feet. I left Stillwater a few months later. I just couldn't face my friends. So I came back to Copper Pot. The problem is...

Sparrow pauses and chuckles while shaking his head. There is no joy in his laugh.

"The problem is I don't belong here any more either. I don't belong anywhere. I suppose that shouldn't surprise me. After all, there really isn't anyplace for a child killer.

Sparrow is heavily burdened with guilt, and the PC is the first person he's reached out to since it happened. He desperately wants to be told he did the right thing, that taking an innocent life was for the greater good, even though he can't believe it himself.

If the PC mocks Sparrow, berates him, or is cruel, the halfling clams up immediately. He says "Sorry for disturbing you." and goes back to sleep. If the PC shows some concern, or tries to absolve Sparrow of his guilt, the halfling is grateful but unmoved. He isn't ready to forgive himself. He thanks the PC for their kind words, shakes their hand and says "I'm sorry for burdening you with my dreary tales, but thank you for listening." He then goes to sleep.

The rest of the night passes uneventfully. Go to Encounter 5.

Encounter Five – The Fort

By early morning, the party arrives at the Fort. It is a simple structure, built against a large rock outcropping with a palisade of tall logs around three sides (see the map for details). The main gate is wide open, and three wooden buildings are plainly visible inside. There is not a living thing in sight, nor a sound to be heard. Sparrow won't go in with the PCs, but offers to set up camp on the other side of the rock outcropping and watch their mounts and gear. He also offers to cast *Bull's Strength* on one character. He does not participate in the adventure

again until Encounter 10. Read the following when the PCs enter the Fort.

Just as you pass the gates the wind shifts, and you are blasted with an ungodly stench so thick it is almost a palpable thing. It is a riotous mixture of rot, ozone, sweat, and the horribly sweet smell of fried flesh. Laid before you in the open courtyard is naked male corpse lying on his back with arms and legs spread wide. His gut is peeled open from neck to navel and the contents heaped obscenely on his face.

It gets worse.

A dozen more bodies lay smashed and torn in a ghastly heap before the stables. An enormous bloody stain soaks the ground around them, squirming with a black mass of flies. A half dozen more are scattered about the yard, bloody and burned, little more than bone and charred flesh. Barely a ten feet from you is the last body. It lies prostrate on its stomach, a battered sword buried to the hilt in its back. Clenched in its deathly grip is a dismembered human arm. Thick white mucous is puddled around his nose and mouth.

From a low building to the left that looks like a smithy, you hear a sizzling noise like bacon frying on skillet.

In five rounds, the arrowhawk that finished off the last surviving soldiers attacks the party. It is flush with victory having just wiped out its long-standing enemies, and will not tolerate new invaders in its domain. The arrowhawk glides silently from behind the party on the first round, gaining surprise against PCs who fail a Spot check (DC 15).

APL 2 (EL 3)

🦅 **Juvenile Arrowhawk:** hp 16 (see MM p19)

APL 4 (EL 5)

🦅 **Adult Arrowhawk:** hp 38 (see MM p19)

APL 6 (EL 8)

🦅 **Elder Arrowhawk:** hp 112 (see MM p19)

The main area of the Fort contains three buildings: a smithy, stables, and the barracks. Behind the barracks is a locked gate leading into the rock. There is literally nothing of value in the Fort or on the bodies; in their madness the soldiers demolished everything.

Smithy: The sizzling sound comes from another dead soldier, thrown onto the slow burning coals in the

forge. He continues to char for several days before the fire completely dies.

Stables: The floors are bathed in a bloody jumble of horse entrails and straw.

Barracks: Mercifully, this building is free of the dead, but has been thoroughly ransacked and pillaged. There is a large common room filled with destroyed bunk beds and dining tables, a small and similarly ravaged officer's room, and a mostly unspoiled kitchen. The final chamber is the cleric's room and infirmary. It is locked from the inside (Break DC 15, Disable Device 12), and a pool of dried blood has seeped under the door.

Inside the infirmary, the cleric sits at a desk with his face smashed down onto the surface so forcefully his teeth are embedded in the wood. He is soaked in blood from the waist down. The surface of the desk is smeared with white fluid oozing from his nose and mouth. One bloody hand is firmly clenched around a dagger, and the other is stuffed deeply into a gaping hole in his belly. There is an open book on the table with all but the final page torn out.

In his last raging moments, the cleric decided to hide the contents of his private journal. He tore the pages out, cut open his stomach, and stuffed the pages inside. He then quietly bled to death. Only the single remaining page is legible.

"...an understatement if there ever was one. Irritable doesn't even begin to describe it. They'll stay safely locked away until we can figure out what's going on. The white boils can't be common acne. The fluid appears to be fungal, just like the discharge from their noses and mouths. This must be related to what we found in the caverns, it's the only logical explanation. Logic! Now there's a rare thing these days!"

Encounter Six – Screaming Steel

When the players first examine the gate read the following.

From the other side of the gate there is a faint noise in the inky blackness, like metal scraping lightly on stone. Then after a brief pause you hear a woman's voice just barely louder than a whisper. It sounds like an old infant's lullaby.

"Baby blue, baby blue."

"Sleep my child. I'm here with you."

Then there is a high-pitched tittering, and dead silence.

The DM is encouraged to sing the lullaby (to the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star) to set the mood.

The key to the gate is hanging conspicuously from an iron ring about ten feet away. Three bloody, torn fingers are tightly wrapped around the key ring, though their former owner is nowhere in sight.

The gate is not trapped, but the hinges are extremely rusty and squeal like a banshee when the gate is opened. This alerts the soldiers in the cavern of intruders and they cannot be surprised. PCs searching for traps (DC 15+APL) figure this out before hand, and that lubricating the hinges will keep them from squealing. There is cooking oil in the kitchen if the PCs have nothing themselves.

Encounter Seven – Deep Gloom

Fire pots dimly light the caverns: cauldrons filled with slow-burning, pitch-soaked rags. For the moment, the soldiers trapped inside are in an unstable calm. They stay that way until the first sign of intruders at which point they rush to attack. They fight to the death, and they pursue relentlessly.

Event 7a: When the PCs round the first corner they see two corpses before a fire pot, a man and a woman. They are seated, embracing one another tenderly. Their eyes are wide open, their mouths gaping and flowing with thick white fluid that pools on their chests before puddling on the floor. In a brief, shared moment of lucidity this married pair came here to die together.

A few moments later, a woman's voice can be heard singing softly.

"Baby white, baby white."

"Sleep my child, in purest light."

Event 7b: Unless those PCs were very quiet, the crazed soldiers in the main chamber are aware of their approach. Opening the squeaky gate, searching the corpses from 7a, or talking above a whisper automatically alerts them. Otherwise, the DM should secretly roll a Move Silently check (DC 10). If the party manages not to alert them, they gain a surprise round when combat begins, and the soldiers further suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to their initiative rolls.

Half a dozen fire pots dimly light the large chamber beyond. The flickering flames bathe the room in angry orange radiance, and tapestries of shadow do a lunatic dance on the walls. Standing motionless and silent about the room are a dozen

figures, partially cloaked by inky darkness. There is a greasy, musky smell here.

No one moves, no one makes a sound.

The flickering illumination gives you brief glimpses of disturbing images. Faces locked in soundless snarls. Hands clenched so tightly, blood drips between the fingers. Armor painted with dried gore. One man stands facing you, eyes staring blankly at the ceiling, his scalp a raw patchwork of bleeding skin, two clenched fists full of hair hanging limply at his sides. And then the gentle singing starts again.

"Baby red, baby red."

"Can't wake up... BECAUSE YOU'RE DEAD!!"

Suddenly her voice rises to a piercing shriek that echoes off the walls.

"DEAD! DEAD! DO YOU HEAR ME? WE'RE ALL DEAD; OUR BODIES JUST DON'T KNOW IT YET! HAHAAHAHAH!"

And with a savage roar every person in the room turns to face you. Their mouths dripping bloody white foam, as they scream in fury.

Tactics: The soldiers attack en masse, and fight to the death. They pursue fleeing opponents until they or the target is killed. This will likely be a bloodbath

APL 2 (EL 4)

🔥 **Raging Ducal Guards (7):** hp 15 each (see Appendix III)

APL 4 (EL 5)

🔥 **Raging Ducal Guards (7):** hp 15 each (see Appendix III)

🔥 **Raging Ducal Soldiers (2):** hp 27 each (see Appendix III)

APL 6 (EL 8)

🔥 **Raging Ducal Guards (7):** hp 15 each (see Appendix III)

🔥 **Raging Ducal Soldiers (5):** hp 27 each (see Appendix III)

Developments: During the battle, the singing woman continues her maniacal laughter. This should be profoundly disturbing to the PCs.

Event 7c: After the battle, read the following.

Finally you see what you came for. Pushed into the corner is a wooden cart, heaped with crates and bags, and three wooden boxes marked with the crest of House Einstoffen. Sitting on the edge of the wagon, with her shoulders slumped forward is a haggard looking woman with wild, matted hair. Blood and muck coat her mouth. The right sleeve of her shirt is torn away and the arm underneath is a mangled mess that looks like glistening hamburger. She lifts the arm up to her face and stares at it in bewilderment as blood drips freely onto her lap.

Carmine lips part as she sings softly.

"Baby black, baby black."

"Rot in Hell, you can't come back." She turns her face slowly and looks straight at you with bloodshot eyes.

"I can never come back."

And with that she opens her mouth, bares her teeth, bites at a bit of loose flesh at her wrist and begins to tear away a strip.

The woman has one hit point, and kills herself in moments if left alone. When the party approaches the wagon, go to Encounter 8.

Encounter Eight – Tumble Down

The floor beneath the wagon is unstable. There is just a thin shelf of slate and dirt supporting it, and it collapses under 25 pounds of additional weight. The instant before the floor gives way, the woman on the cart looks tearfully up to the ceiling and whimpers, "Will this agony ever stop?" She dies in the fall. PCs actively searching the area, and dwarves within 10 feet, have a chance to notice the unstable flooring.

APL 2 (EL 1)

↗ **Collapsing Floor (20 foot fall):** no attack roll necessary (2d6); Reflex save (DC 15) avoids; Search (DC 15); Disable Device n/a. Affects all characters within 5 ft of the cart.

APL 4 (EL 3)

↗ **Collapsing Floor And Sharp Rocks Below (40 foot fall):** no attack roll necessary (4d6); +10 melee (1d8+4); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device N/A. Note: affects all characters within 10 ft of the cart.

APL 6 (EL 5)

↗ **Collapsing Floor And Sharp Rocks Below (40 foot fall):** no attack roll necessary (4d6); +10 melee (1d4 sharp rocks for 1d8+4 points of damage each); Reflex save (DC 25); Search (DC 20); Disable Device N/A. Note: affects all characters within 15 ft of the cart.

When the floor collapses, the wagon and its contents drop into the chamber below with a thunderous crash, followed by a huge white cloud billowing upwards. These are Ivory Toadstool spores. Go to Encounter 9.

Encounter Nine – The Blister

This chamber is the fragile ecosystem that supports the Ivory Toadstools, and it is literally stuffed full of them. Anyone who breathes in this room automatically inhales the Ivory Toadstool spores.

This natural cavern is dully lit by three ragged holes in the ceiling that allow in dingy beams of sunlight. It looks like the inside of some nightmarish toadstool farm. The floor, the walls, and even the ceiling are covered with masses of creamy white mushrooms. The largest mushrooms are nearly a foot tall, but most are barely a few inches high. Whenever anything disturbs the delicate fungi, even the gentlest air currents, a lazy cloud of white spores puffs out from underneath the mushroom cap. The air is thick and heavy with swirling white tendrils of mildew. Around the wreckage of the fallen cart, the haze is so thick it coats everything in white powder.

With every breath you can taste the moldy stench of the room.

It is utterly silent in here. Silent, except for a faint hissing noise. All around the cart, the mushrooms are shriveling and folding in upon themselves. Before your eyes, a small patch of fungi simply wither and die, until nothing is left but dry white dust on the rocky floor.

Then suddenly there is the ear splitting crack of thunder, and a flash of lightning through the cracked ceiling. Moments later rain comes pelting down in sheets.

The PCs are witnessing perhaps the most important discovery of the entire adventure. If they examine the dying patch of Toadstools, they see several bags of sugar from the wagon broke open and spilled onto the cavern floor. Anywhere the sugar fell, the Ivory Toadstools quickly shrivel and die. If the PCs don't jump to this conclusion on their own, those who make a Heal check (DC 15) or a Knowledge: herbalism check (DC 10),

deduce that sugar kills the fungus and can be used to cure the Plague of Rage.

There is also one other extremely important discovery to be made here. A successful Search check (DC 12) reveals that the toadstools are also dead wherever the beams of sunlight strike the floor. There are three long swaths of fungus-free stone where the light crosses the room as the sun moves overhead.

Another Search check (DC 25), a Profession: mining check (DC 10), or a Knowledge: engineering check (DC 15), reveals the entire cavern is unstable. Dwarves get a +4 bonus to the check. The ceiling is a fragile aggregate of shale and dry clay, and a determined effort could collapse it entirely.

The PCs can recover the wooden boxes containing House Einstoffen's business records from the wrecked cart. They are beaten up and battered, but the papers are undamaged. Anyone who goes through the trouble of examining them in detail finds nothing incriminating. These are merely ordinary (and boring!) business ledgers.

A minute after the cart falls into the lower cavern, go to event 10.

Encounter Ten – Sergeant Slaughter

While the PCs were exploring the Fort, one of the imprisoned soldiers, the fort's second in command, crawled into the Ivory Toadstool chamber through a natural chimney. From there he climbed through one of the holes near the ceiling of the Blister to escape his confinement. This put him only a few feet from the party's camp, and the unsuspecting Sparrow. The moment the Sergeant saw the halfling he flew into Rage.

This event should happen once the party has explored the toadstool cavern, but before they have a chance to remove the boxes of records. Presumably they are in the Blister at the time. Read them the following.

Suddenly there is a shout from outside, and the clang of metal.

"Help!" Yells Sparrow. "HELP! HE'S KILLING ME!"

The party has four rounds before the Sergeant kills Sparrow. The fastest way to reach the battle is by climbing the rough cavern walls to the cracks in the ceiling. Otherwise, the PCs must run through the caverns, out of the fort, and around the rocky hill to their camp (nearly 500 feet). At APL 2, the only hazard is

falling. At higher APLs, there are potential cave-ins to worry about.

APL 2 (EL -)

✦ **Unstable Cave Wall:** Climb (DC 12); exit is 15 feet up.

APL 4 (EL 2)

✦ **Unstable Cave Wall:** Climb (DC 15); exit is 20 feet up. On a failed check, fall automatically. Fail by 5 or more and cause a cave-in; 2d6 hp damage to all within 10 feet; Reflex save (DC 15) avoids.

APL 6 (EL 4)

✦ **Unstable Cave Wall:** Climb (DC 20); exit is 25 feet up. On a failed check, fall automatically. Fail by 5 or more and cause a cave-in; 4d6 hp damage to all within 20 feet; Reflex save (DC 15) avoids.

Once free of the blister, the PCs have to deal with a major downpour outside. The driving rain imposes a –4 penalty on listen checks and on ranged attacks at targets within 20 feet. Targets further than 20 feet away have total concealment.

After three rounds, Sparrow is reduced to zero hit points. On the fourth round, the Sergeant performs a coup-de-grace and kills him. If any PC can intervene, they draw the Sergeant's attention and Sparrow escapes. The following round, the halfling supports the party as best he can with his spells (probably *magic missile* and *flaming sphere*). If any PC falls in combat or indicates they are seriously injured, he rushes in with a *potion of cure light wounds*.

APL 2 (EL 4)

✦ **Raging Ducal Officer, Human Male Ftr4:** hp 44 (see Appendix III)

APL 4 (EL 6)

✦ **Raging Ducal Officer, Human Male Ftr6:** hp 64 (see Appendix III)

APL 6 (EL 8)

✦ **Raging Ducal Officer, Human Male Ftr8:** hp 84 (see Appendix III)

Tactics: The Sergeant is deeply in the throes of the Plague of Rage, and fights to the death. He attacks the closest target.

The PCs have enough information at this point to not only cure those afflicted with the Plague of Rage, but also to completely eliminate the Blister of Ivory Toadstools. If the PCs go looking for ways to collapse the cavern, they can so by toppling some large boulders from the top of the hill down onto the ceiling of the Blister. The demolition is spectacular as the cavern roof implodes and a massive cloud of white spores belches upwards. The sun burns away the whole colony of Ivory Toadstools in a matter of days.

If Sparrow survived, he is grateful to the party for saving his life and is eager to hear every detail of what they saw inside, in the hopes they found some clue that will lead to a cure for Joseph. If the PCs didn't put the pieces together on their own (that sugar kills the fungus) Sparrow figures it out. The halfling wants to immediately set out for Copper Pot, travelling all night if necessary. If the party goes to the village, go to encounter 12. If instead they want to go directly to Leukish with the business records, and claim their reward from Harrick Einstoffen, go to encounter 11, but do not play Encounters 12 or 13.

If Sparrow died, they have the same options as above, though they do not play Encounter 13, and the DM must alter the descriptions to account for Sparrow's absence. If they have not figured out the cure for the Plague of Rage, however, they cannot successfully complete Encounter 11 and Joseph dies. Further, those PCs afflicted with the Plague are burdened with its effects as indicated on the Adventure Record.

Encounter Eleven – Excuse Me, I'd Like To Be PAID!

If the PCs return the business records to Wallard in Leukish, he is overjoyed. He offers a flurry of thanks amidst much hand shaking and backslapping, and appears truly mortified that the sorry financial state of his House prevents him from offering a reward. Nevertheless he provides the party an excellent tea with freshly baked cookies before bidding them farewell.

As they leave, a very serious Suel man of advanced years meets the PCs and introduces himself as Xarashanamayar, arch-mage of a private college of wizards in Leukish. He explains that Lord Ellis Lorinar, whom the college holds in highest regard, personally requested he offer each party a member a "service" should they return House Einstoffen's financial records. The college is willing to magically enhance one weapon for each character, as long as they cover the expenses. As the party and the mage discuss the particulars, he drops many

thinly veiled hints that the college is a strictly Lawful Good organization, and were they assured of the PCs' good character they might be persuaded to offer more powerful upgrades.

PCs earn the wizard's trust by calling in favors from particular Duchy power groups willing to vouch for them. Players with the following influence points can purchase greater upgrades: House Einstoffen, House Grek, House Coriner, Grey Hood Monks, Lands of Palten, Nobles of Seltaren. Players can purchase any single upgrade. Xarashanamayar's offer can be purchased after any Duchy of Urnst regional adventure.

Original Weapon	Upgrade To	Cost	Influence Points
+1	+2	6,000 gp	0
+2	+3	10,000 gp	2
any	Keen	10,000 gp	6
any	flaming or frost	10,000 gp	4

Encounter Twelve – A Little Boy's Life

Joseph will die by sunrise. If the PCs travel immediately back to Copper Pot with their knowledge of the cure for the Plague of Rage, they arrive just in time. Sparrow certainly pushes them to do so, but it means traveling long into the night through the driving rain. The PCs will be fatigued by the journey (as per the DMG p84), so they may not be willing. If they do not arrive in time, Maretta greets the group sadly when they return to the Inn and tells them the bad news. Sparrow is crushed, and leaves the PCs. Proceed to Encounter 13.

If the party carries out a forced march, when they arrive in Copper Pot every building is dark except for Joseph's house. Read the following.

The miserable storm finally ends as you slog your way through the mud towards Copper Pot. Through the entire town, only the bright light from Joseph's bedroom window shines like a beacon in the dreary darkness. Dank mist rising from the grass signals dawn is approaching. As you approach, you are surprised to see almost two-dozen halflings surround the little home. Some are huddled together in small circles praying to Yondalla, others pace nervously in pairs. Maretta and three other stout halfling women stand at the doorstep muttering to each other. When she sees you she hikes up her skirts and ambles over.

She hugs Sparrow tightly, and then holds his cheeks in her chubby hands.

"I'm glad you came back. It won't be long now for poor Joseph, and I know he'd want you to be with him."

Allow the PCs to be the first to give the good news, but if they don't Sparrow will. Continue with the following.

"Sugar!" Blurts Sparrow excitedly. "Sugar is the cure for the Plague."

Maretta looks at him strangely, as if Sparrow is speaking a language she doesn't understand. Sparrow repeats himself, his hands flapping in exasperation, but Maretta just knots her eyebrows even more tightly. By the time Sparrow gets through it the third time he is jumping up and down in annoyance, when suddenly Maretta's eye go wide like tea cup saucers. Pudgy fingers fly up to her cheeks and she whirls around and runs back to the gaggle of women at the doorstep. The quartet starts chattering and clucking excitedly and then bursts into the house in a flurry of activity.

For the next several hours, the women of the village take turns administering teeth-jarringly sweet juices to the ailing Joseph and each of the PCs, "Just to be sure you didn't catch it." They are an unstoppably determined, motherly force, and under their care each PC is cured of the affliction if they have it. Concerned PCs are politely prevented from entering Joseph's house, unless they are Keepers of the Vale, or clerics, in which case they are allowed to keep watch over the youngster along with the women. Maretta encourages the PCs to return to their rooms at the inn and get some rest.

Not much happens until sometime after noon, when uproar draws the attention of the village back to Joseph's home. The village children quickly gather those PCs who aren't already in the house. As they are ushered into the boy's room read the following.

Joseph, his hands and feet finally untied, is lying peacefully in his bed. The tiny room is absolutely crammed with Potters. Sparrow is on his knees, leaning expectantly over the child. Just as you are wondering why you were dragged over here to watch Joseph sleep, you see the boy's eyelids fluttering.

Is he waking up?

A piercing "SH!" from Maretta quiets the room. Joseph turns onto his side, lazily opens his eyes, and looks squarely into Sparrow's face.

"Hi Sparrow!" He says hoarsely. "What are you doing here?"

And the room erupts into a deafening cheer.

Joseph is going to be fine. The people of Copper Pot are overjoyed, and invite the PCs to join them for a halfling feast. If they stay they are treated to freshly baked bread, rabbit stew, and delicate halfling pastries. Sparrow does not attend the feast, and, in fact, cannot be found anywhere. Go to Encounter 13.

Encounter Thirteen – Can I Ever Go Home Again?

When the PCs start making plans to leave the village, they come upon the following scene in front of The Roaring Hearth, unless, of course, Sparrow was killed.

In front of the Inn stand Maretta and Sparrow. The wizard is solemnly packing his things into the saddlebags on his pony, and the innkeeper is anxiously wringing her hands. Sparrow is having trouble stuffing a fat, dog-eared tome into the pouch.

"But you only just got here." Maretta says, obviously upset. "Where are you going to go?"

With a mighty effort, Sparrow shoves the book into the saddlebag and nearly falls to the ground. He stares at his feet, shoves his hands into his pockets, and presses his lips together.

If a PC comforted Sparrow during Encounter 4, and Joseph has been cured of the Plague of Rage, read Conclusion B. Otherwise, read Conclusion A.

Conclusion A

"West," Sparrow says somberly without looking up, "to Greyhawk city. There's always room there for another murderer."

Maretta's jaw drops. She watches in wordless shock as the wizard hauls himself onto his pony.

"Thank you for everything, Maretta." He says. "Yondalla will remember your kindness."

And with that, the little halfling rides out of Copper Pot. The sun finally breaks through the dismal gray clouds cutting a wide swath of brilliant turquoise. Glittering dewdrops shine like diamonds on the grass, and glittering tears shine like slivers of glass on the chubby innkeeper's cheeks

Sparrow cannot be convinced to change his mind. He may someday learn to forgive himself and return to his friends, but for now he plans to walk alone.

points are restored. Cross this favor off the certificate.

The End

Conclusion B

“East.” Sparrow says, and cracks a smile. “I’m going to go back home to Stillwater. I miss my friends. If I’m lucky, maybe they missed me too.”

Maretta puts her chubby hands on her hips and smiles widely. She then opens her arms and seizes the wizard in such a bone-crushing hug Sparrow’s eyes bulge.

“It’s good to see you smile, boy!” She beams. “Yes, you should go back home. But don’t wait so long to visit me next time. I may not be your mother, but don’t think I won’t turn you over my knee for bad manners!”

The sun finally breaks through the dismal gray clouds cutting a wide swath of brilliant turquoise. Glittering dewdrops shine like diamonds on the grass.

“You see?” Maretta says, gesturing up at the sun. “Yondalla thinks you’ve made a good choice.”

Sparrow grins and looks up at you as Maretta bustles back into her inn.

“Thank you,” he says, “for saving Joseph. And for saving me, I guess!” He laughs absently.

“I owe you one!” He winks at points at your group.

And with that the little halfling rides out of town, whistling.

Sparrow spreads the word of the party’s good deeds to the other Keepers, and they decide that the PCs deserve special recognition. A few days later, a halfling Keeper tracks down each PC and gives him a tiny wooden carving shaped like a sparrow. It is a one-shot magical item that has one of two magical effects of the player’s choice.

1. The next time the character is struck by a blow in combat that would normally drop his hit points to zero or less, and he is outdoors, the goddess of the halflings intervenes to help. A cloud of sparrows suddenly appears out of nowhere to distract the opponent and deflect his killing blow. The player is left with 1 hit point. Once this favor is used, cross it off this certificate.
2. If the character is afflicted with the Taint of the Ebon Waves (from the Duchy adventure Dust in the Wind), the Taint is removed. The lost skill and skill

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter One

Defeat Soldiers

APL2 150 xp;

APL4 210 xp;

APL6 270 xp;

Encounter Five

Defeat Arrowhawk

APL2 90 xp;

APL4 150 xp;

APL6 240 xp;

Encounter Seven

Defeat Soldiers

APL2 120 xp;

APL4 150 xp;

APL6 240 xp;

Encounter Ten

Defeat the Officer

APL2 120 xp;

APL4 180 xp;

APL6 240 xp;

Total possible experience:

APL2 450 xp;

APL4 675 xp;

APL6 900 xp;

Treasure Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter Ten:

APL 2: L: 12 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 two-bladed sword* (392 gp)

APL 4: L: 12 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 two-bladed sword* (392 gp), *boots of springing and striding* (208 gp)

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 two-bladed sword* (392 gp), *boots of springing and striding* (208 gp), *+1 chainmail* (108 gp), *necklace of fireballs (type I)* (12.5 gp per 1d6 damage left, maximum 137 gp)

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: L: 12 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 392 gp - Total: 404 gp

APL 4: L: 12 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 600 gp - Total: 612 gp

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 845 gp - Total: 845 gp

Special

Sparrow Owes You One

This Keepers of the Vale have given the player a magical token with one of the following two benefits. The player chooses which at the end of the adventure and the DM crosses off the other.

1. The next time the character is struck by a blow in combat that would normally drop his hit points to zero or less, and he is outdoors, the goddess of the halflings intervenes to help. A cloud of sparrows suddenly appears out of nowhere to distract the opponent and deflect his killing blow. The player is left with 1 hit point. Once this favor is used, cross it off this certificate.
2. If the character is afflicted with the Taint of the Ebon Waves (from the Duchy adventure *Dust in the Wind*), the Taint is removed. The lost skill and skill points are restored. Cross this favor off the certificate.

Lord Ellis Lorinar Pulls Some Strings

For selflessly helping a Duchy merchant, Lord Ellis has persuaded a group of Leukish wizards to magically upgrade the PCs weapons. The PCs can convince the wizards to offer more powerful upgrades by using the following influence points: House Einstoffen, House Grek, House Coriner, Grey Hood Monks, Lands of Palten, Nobles of Seltaren. Each player can purchase one upgrade and then the DM crosses this section off the AR. The DM also voids any influence points used to purchase the upgrade. This can be purchased after any regional adventure.

Original	Upgrade	Cost	Influence
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Weapon			Points
+1	+2	6,000 gp	0
+2	+3	10,000 gp	2
>= +1	flaming or frost	10,000 gp	4
>= +1	keen	10,000 gp	6

Afflicted with the Plague of Rage

This character is still afflicted with the effects of the Ivory Toadstool spores, and his Wisdom score drops by 1 at the beginning of each subsequent adventure he plays. The ability loss is permanent. This affliction is not a disease so the ability points do not heal naturally, and *cure disease* does not get rid of it. Only spells like *restoration*, *wish*, *limited wish*, or *miracle* restore lost ability points. However, at the end of each adventure, there is a cumulative 1 in 4 chance that the PCs natural diet kills the spores. The player rolls a d4 in the presence of the DM, at the end of each game. If the result is less than, or equal to, the number of games he has been afflicted, he beats the affliction. The DM then crosses this section off the AR. If he fails, the DM records his current Wisdom score on the table below.

Games Played Since Affliction (roll less than this number to beat the affliction)	WIS score
0 (This game)	
1	
2	
3	
4	

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 2:

APL 4:

APL 2 Items

Boots of Springing and Striding (Adventure; DMG; 2,500 gp)

APL 6:

APL 2&4 Items

Necklace of Fireballs (Type I) (Adventure; DMG; 1,650 gp)

Appendix I – Plague of Rage

Description – The Plague of Rage is not actually a disease; it is the result of a drug overdose. Ivory Toadstool spores are a narcotic, and when a victim inhales them they are absorbed directly into the bloodstream through the fine blood vessels in the nasal cavity. Particularly potent doses can leave the victim incoherent, mentally altered, and sometimes violent.

If a victim inhales live spores, they stick to the soft mucous membrane at the back of the throat. The spores eventually form a small fungal colony, which in turn produce more spores. With a colony growing right inside their noses, victims are constantly inhaling potent concentrations of the spores, leaving them so strongly drugged they are affected by the condition known as the Plague of Rage.

Since the condition is not actually a disease, it is not remedied by *cure disease* spells or use of the Heal skill, nor can victims fight it off with successful Fortitude saves. Paladins are not immune either.

Game Effects – Each round of exposure, the DC to avoid inhaling Ivory Toadstool spores is 20. Those who fail must succeed at both a Fortitude save and a Will save (DC 20) every 24 hours or temporarily lose 2 points of Wisdom. When the victim's Wisdom drops to 5 or less, he is affected by Rage (see below). Once Wisdom drops to 0, the victim becomes catatonic and dies 24 hours later.

Twenty-four hours after the spores implant in the throat, white mucous oozes from the victims nose and mouth. By the second day, the discharge drains continuously in a disgusting sticky stream. Further, puffy white pimples grow on the victim's face and neck. These white boils can grow to enormous size. If ruptured, they release more spores into the immediate area. As the victim's Wisdom score drops, he becomes moody and irritable, and has difficulty staying focused on even the simplest tasks.

Rage – When a victim's Wisdom score drops to 5 or less, he is completely in the throes of the drug. At even the slightest provocation he enters rage identical to that of a Barbarian (+4 Str, +4 Con, +2 to Will saves, -2 AC, +2 hp per level or HD), except that the rage never ends. The victim goes on a bloody screaming rampage, attacking everything and anything in sight, until he is killed. If a raging victim runs out of targets, he moves at his normal speed in a random direction looking for something to kill. The rage continues until the victim is killed in combat, or dies from exhaustion, starvation, or dehydration.

Treatment – The only cure is to completely wipe out the colony in the victim's throat, right down to the last spore, a daunting task for traditional medicine. Two things can kill the spores: exposure to sunlight, and strong sugar solutions. The only practical treatment for humanoids is to feed the victim a steady diet of sweet drinks for several days, which is always 100% effective. Once treatment begins, enough of the colony is wiped out that the Rage ends immediately. Thereafter, the victim regains 2d6 lost Wisdom points per day.

Appendix II – Village of Copper Pot

Copper Pot is a small community of halfling farmers. Fortuitously located only a day's travel from a major Ducal guard post, the village leads a virtually trouble free existence. It is a quiet, friendly community that enjoys its solitude.

There are three businesses in Copper Pot: The Roaring Hearth Inn, Cobble's Wares & General Store, and the Mill. The inn has good food, drink, and rooms available at standard rates. The owner, a gleefully chubby halfling woman named Marettta, treats her guests like gold. The store sells only mundane goods (from table 7-7 in the PH), and has no weaponry or armor of any kind. The owner, Bubba, is roly-poly even by halfling standards, but runs an honest and profitable business.

The Potters, as they call themselves, have strong emotional and familial ties with their fellows in the Vale. If any PC is a Keeper of the Vale, the Potters show them tremendous respect. Marettta gives free meals to the entire party if one of them is a Keeper, saving each of them 4gp on their upkeep.

PCs can learn the following information from the Potters with successful Gather Information or Diplomacy checks. Keepers can learn all the rumors below just by asking; no skill rolls required!

The Soldiers

DC 10 - Guards often pass near the village when they travel to and from the road.

DC 15 - I saw a guard patrol pass by a few days ago. They were rowdier than usual.

DC 20 - I saw a small group of soldiers sneak past town two nights ago. They were headed for the road.

Sparrow

DC 10 - Sparrow was born and raised here. His parents were poor turnip farmers. They died in a flood 15 years ago.

DC 13 - Sparrow has been back for a week now. I guess he missed the old homestead.

DC 15 - Sparrow's parents were determined he would have a better life than they, and they sent him off to a human village to be educated.

DC 18 - The village is called Stillwater, I think. Or is it Backwater?

DC 20 - Sparrow is so solemn these days. He used to be such a happy fellow.

Joseph

DC 10 - Joseph is always rooting around the woods in dangerous places. Could that be where he caught this thing?

DC 15 - Two nights ago, there was a ruckus outside of town. I never saw what it was, but a moment later Joseph comes running through the fields back to his house like a hell hound was chasing him. He isn't allowed out after dark!

Appendix III – Enemy Statistics

Statistics for all opponents below include the effects of the Plague of Rage.

Encounters 1 & 7, All APL's

Raging Ducal Guardsman, Male Human Warr1: CR ½; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d8+7; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 14); Atk +6 melee (1d8+6, longsword); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will –1; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 4, Cha 8

Skills & Feats: Craft (various) +4, Ride +5; Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Possessions: longsword, dagger, splint mail

Raging Ducal Soldier, Male Human Ftr2: CR2; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 2d10+11; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 20 ft; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atk +7 melee (2d6+6, greatsword); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will –1; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 4, Cha 8

Skills & Feats: Craft (various) +5, Ride +6; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Possessions: greatsword, dagger, banded mail

Encounter 10 – APL 2

Raging Ducal Officer, Male Human Ftr4: CR4; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 4d10+24; hp 44; Init +2; Spd 20 ft; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 15); Atk +7/+7 melee (1d8+7/1d8+3, *+1 two bladed sword*) or +9 melee (1d8+7, *+1 two bladed sword*); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 4, Cha 8

Skills & Feats: Ambidexterity, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Mobility, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: chain mail, *+1 two-bladed sword*

Encounter 10 – APL 4

Raging Ducal Officer, Male Human Ftr6: CR6; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 6d10+24; hp 64; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 15); Atk +9/+4/+9 melee (1d8+7/1d8+3, *+1 two bladed sword*) or +11/+6 melee (1d8+7/1d8+3, *+1 two bladed sword*); AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 4, Cha 8

Skills & Feats: Ambidexterity, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Mobility, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: boots of striding and springing, chain mail, *+1 two-bladed sword*

Encounter 10 – APL 6

Raging Ducal Officer, Male Human Ftr8: CR8; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 8d10+24; hp 84; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (touch 13, flat-footed 16); Atk +11/+6/+11 melee (1d8+7/1d8+3, 17-20/x2, *+1 two bladed sword*) or +13/+8 melee (1d8+7/1d8+3, 17-20/x2, *+1 two bladed sword*); AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 4, Cha 8

Skills & Feats: Ambidexterity, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Improved Critical (two-bladed sword), Mobility, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: boots of striding and springing, *+1 chain mail*, *+1 two-bladed sword*, necklace of fireballs (type I).

Appendix IV – Sparrow

Sparrow – Keeper of the Vale, Male Halfling Tra4: CR4; small humanoid; HD 4; hp 13; Init +8; Spd 20 ft; AC 16 (touch 15, flat-footed 12); Atk +2 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +8 ranged (1d8+1, +1 *crossbow*); SQ: Summon Familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills & Feats: Concentration +5, Hide +11, Knowledge (Arcana) +5, Knowledge (Geography) +5, Knowledge (History: Duchy of Urnst) +5, Knowledge (Local) +5, Knowledge (Nobility & Royalty) +5, Knowledge (The Planes) +5, Move Silently +10, Spellcraft +10; Scribe Scroll, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Alertness.

Possessions: +1 light crossbow, dagger, bracers of armor +1, 2 potions cure light wounds, scroll charm person, scroll expeditious retreat, scroll sleep

Spells prepared (4 / 4+1 / 3+1): 0—[*daze*(x2), *mage hand*, *detect magic*]; 1—[*magic missile*(x2), *shield*, *expeditious retreat*]; 2—[*flaming sphere*(x2), *Bull's Strength*].

Sparrow's owl familiar, Hoot, is usually perched on its shoulder.

DM's Aid #1 – Map of the Fort

