

URD04-04

Water Stilled

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

Version 1.0

Round 1

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“Enough!” Thundered Ellis Lorinar as he pounded his fist on the table. “I intend to drive these gods-forsaken Slavers from the Duchy once and for all!” An adventure for APLs 4-12, and particularly suited for a party with a rogue. Sequel to URD2-08 *Freedom's Price*.

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 record-keeping 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.

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

Playing the Game

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

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 judge) 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 judge 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 bold italics. 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.

Tracking

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and judge fill out the RPGA Tracking Sheet. The judge should complete the top of the form and list his name and RPGA number. The players should each list their name and RPGA number. After the form is filled out it should be given to the Event Coordinator.

LIVING GREYHAWK

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 discussed in the Preparation section above 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. Nevertheless, if a character has the Mounted Combat feat, he may bring a single warhorse, light or

heavy, with him in the adventure and it will not count toward the APL calculation.

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

Further, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the scenario unless the highest APL supported by the adventure is APL 12.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If a group is APL 1 there are three things that the group 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 move action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If the animal is wounded or has taken

any nonlethal damage or ability score damage, the DC increases to 12.

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
CR of Animal	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

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. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy

new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this scenario.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

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

Adventure Background

The Slavers are back. In fact, they never left. Decades ago their entire organization was crushed, but some of the Slave Lords survived. Retreating to the shadows to lick their wounds, they have been quietly building their network anew: gathering humanoid armies, surreptitiously recruiting allies among governments that oppose them, and building themselves back into a formidable force.

After several successful years of conquest in their traditional areas of influence in the Woolly Bay, in 590 CY the Slave Lords tentatively expanded their slaving operations into the Nyr Dyv. Nervous about extending themselves too far into unfamiliar territory, it was with some trepidation that they established a small secret base on the Greyhawk peninsula. This modest new base was

to be the first outpost in a very ambitious, long-range plan of expansion throughout the whole of the Lake of Unknown Depths.

The initial goals for the slavers at the new post were to quietly gather information, establish contacts, and maintain a very low profile. Almost immediately, however, they found a serious buyer: Iuz. The Slave Lords were unprepared to begin operations from this location so soon, and the Old One's lands were further than they had wanted to extend themselves at this point, but the money offered was so outrageous they took the risk.

By 592 CY, the traffic through the new base was attracting unwanted attention. The Slavers were already under intense pressure from the residents of Dyvers, and the Greyhawk Navy was a constant irritation. To deflect some attention, the Slavers hastily established a pair of outposts further east inside the Duchy of Urnst. These locations handled all of the ship traffic, and were to serve as a jumping point for expansion into the County of Urnst.

But the Nyr Dyv Slavers had grown overconfident with their easy successes, mistaking blind luck for good tactics. In a fit of megalomania, Varcob, the leader of the Duchy operations, went too far. Needing a large number of slaves in a hurry to fill his rapidly approaching quota, he sent his underlings to the village of Lunis, and hauled away every able-bodied man, woman, and child en masse. Not surprisingly, this attracted a lot of attention. A strong group of adventurers descended on Varcob's base mere hours later and wiped it out (URD 2-08 *Freedom's Price*)

Of course the Slave Lords would not give up so easily. As the citizens of the Duchy celebrated their success, the Slavers quietly shifted their resources to their second base and continued their operations with barely a pause. The second base was further east, on an uninhabited lump of rock just a few hours from the coast. It was a perfect hiding place; too small to be noted on any but the most detailed nautical charts, close enough to minor shipping routes that occasional boat traffic would not attract attention, but far enough away that no one would ever stumble upon it unless they had determined to go there. And no one ever did.

This secondary base was a crude affair, little more than log stockades and damp caves, and was barely functional. It would take a miracle of good leadership to turn it into a working outpost. So the Slave Lords sent one of their best.

Markessa... The Many

One of the most powerful Slave Lords is an elven fighter/wizard named Markessa. To many of the Slavers it seems like she is everywhere at once, and in many ways she is. She has a long practice of placing brainwashed "doubles" in various positions of power throughout the Slaver network. These doubles are near-perfect physical

duplicates; elven women of similar appearance, modified by magic and expert surgery. They are then subjected to months of brainwashing, magical coercion, and powerful mind-altering drugs. In the end, they not only look like Markessa, they think they *are* Markessa. They are obsessively loyal to their mistress, and think in almost the exact same fashion, making them ideal Slave Bosses.

The more widely known Markessas are feared and despised throughout the Flaeness. Markessa the Red is the ruthless overseer of the Nyr Dyv operations and deeply hated in Dyvers; Markessa the Black is a reclusive assassin in the Woolly Bay area; and Markessa the Gold is a fearsome power broker in the Pomarj. Some of the less-perfect, and less well-known, Markessa doubles figure prominently in the Slaver politics in the Duchy. Markessa the Green is the free-willed runaway who was supposed to join the ranks of the Slaver Bosses but disappeared. The White Markessas are defective *simulacra* of the original, who are near-automatons. Markessa the Blue, who proved incapable of learning magic but extremely savvy at all things political, is now the Slave Boss of the Duchy base.

Assigned to her position shortly after the debacle at Lunis, she has had tremendous success. Where Varcob saw the proximity of Lunis as a threat, Markessa the Blue saw the village near her own base, Stillwater, as an opportunity.

What's Going on in Stillwater?

Behind the scenes of this seemingly idyllic little community that lies on the coast about midway between Leukish and Nystran is a vicious power struggle between Sharynne, Stillwater's mayor, and Lord Breckenridge, the titular noble associated with House Kaste with dominion over this region. Lord Breckenridge would like nothing better than to throw Sharynne out of office; but she is so popular with the villagers, the village militia and the Sheriff would likely refuse to obey him.

Breckenridge would lose a great deal of standing among his peers if he were to go outside the village for military or political aid, so he has taken a more strategic approach. As taxes are collected from the villagers and turned in to him, he is simply refusing to turn them over to Sharynne. Eventually she will have to come begging to Breckenridge for money, at which point he can extort whatever from her that he wants.

This ongoing battle with Lord Breckenridge has fundamentally affected the mayor. Not so long ago, Sharynne's motivation came from an earnest desire to do good for her citizens. Now the only thing important to her is beating Breckenridge, by any means. When Breckenridge intercepted the tax revenues, Sharynne was desperate. The village's coffers were empty and she needed an immediate infusion of cash.

Markessa the Blue chose this time to quietly make a deal with the mayor. The Slavers paid Sharynne a monthly bribe, and they took over a network of cellars,

sewer tunnels and sub-basements under the village. The mayor deflected attention as they finished construction on their underground base; she ordered their supplies, disguising them as supplies for the village, and she even sold them a warehouse to use as a legitimate front for their operations.

The Slavers were quite happy with this arrangement, except that they couldn't entirely trust Sharynne. Markessa the Blue worried eventually the mayor might have second thoughts and do something rash. So just a few days ago, she arranged a night-time encounter between Stillwater's mayor and a cleric of Iuz named Dengern, a survivor of the assault at Lunis. Sharynne was turned into a vampire.

The mayor continues to manage the village from the heavily draped inner office of her home, venturing out only in the evenings. Markessa brings her slaves on which to feed, to ensure none of the population goes "missing". Ultimately, Markessa imagines Sharynne could be a useful slave boss, like Varcob but with far better political connections. This could be a fruitful association for the Slavers.

Markessa the Blue has completed her Stillwater base, and hopes to move her operation there permanently in a matter of days. All that's left is to move her soldiers and slaves to the new location.

Adventure Summary

Encounter 1: Come into my Parlor, says Ellis Lorinar

The adventurers are gathered up from around Leukish and given an "invitation" to meet with Sir Ellis Lorinar. There, they find that the Slavers were not all destroyed as was previously thought and there are hints of their activity in the small town of Stillwater.

Encounter 2: Setting up Shop

This encounter details the PCs arrival in Stillwater and their choice of accommodations, then segues into the gossip of the town and finally learning the slaver's whereabouts.

Encounter 3: Looking for Dirt in Stillwater

This deals solely with the search for information in Stillwater.

Encounter 4: The Slavers' Base

The exploration of the Slaver's base begins, first through various rooms and traps, then the guards of the base... the White Markessas. Finding Xarashanamyar's item here may lead the party into a mistake or a great reward. In the end the party must beware the cornered Blue Markessa. A note dropped gives the party a key clue to help Lord Ellis' attack force, but will they be able to decipher it in time?

Encounter 4: Optional Encounters

At some point during the exploration of the Slaver's base Markessa the Green helps the PCs. Depending on the PCs reaction, this encounter may or may not be beneficial.

Encounter 5: Where Do We Go From Here

Here the adventure takes one of three paths. If the party uses the information from the secret note from Encounter 4, they must first deal with Markessa the Blue's accomplice, the vampire Mayor Sharynne in Encounter 6. If they succeed they have a much easier time with Encounter 7

If the party rushes to help Ellis Lorinar's invading naval force, heedless or ignorant of the contents of the secret note, they avoid the mayor and Encounter 6 altogether. However, they have a much more difficult time during Encounter 7.

In all other cases, the party skips to Encounter 10 when the PCs are summoned to Leukish by Lord Ellis after the battle.

Encounter 6: A Word With the Mayor

Mayor Sharynne will use coercion or force in order to stall the players from leaving to warn Ellis. If her coercion is successful then proceed to Encounter 10 when the PCs are summoned to Leukish by Lord Ellis. If the PCs best the mayor, they can avoid the very difficult encounter with a sea monster in Encounter 7.

Encounter 7: The Raid

When the PCs reach the slaver's island, a massive battle is in progress. Lord Ellis and Xarashanamyar try to organize their forces into an assault on the keep while a massive sea monster destroys their boats. Upon seeing the PCs, the monster heads straight for their ship, requiring its appeasement or defeat. Depending of the outcome of this encounter the PCs will move onto Encounter 8 or Encounter 9.

Encounter 8: Sweet Success!

The defeat of the beast turns the tide of the battle, and Ellis Lorinar's invading force takes the Slaver's island.

Encounter 9: Bitter Victory

If the PCs fail to defeat the beast, the battle goes grimly, with many men lost and ships abandoned before a bittersweet victory.

Encounter 10: While You Were Out

The PCs return to Leukish and are met by Lord Ellis and Xarashanamyar and hear of the battle at the Slavers island.

Conclusion

Lord Ellis and Xarashanamyar listen to the PCs discoveries in the Slaver base. Depending on what they

tell them and the retrieval of the item, the PCs receive different favors from each of them.

Preparation for Play

It is advisable to read up on the rules for vampires during the preparation of this module. Players should roll Will saves before the adventure in order to determine the effects of the domination. Asking for two of each type of save is somewhat effective in masking what might happen to the players and putting them off guard.

It would also be a good idea to review if the PCs have played URD 2-08 Freedoms Price or URD 3-05 Plague of Rage and find out how those modules were resolved for them.

Introduction

Leukish is a city of magnificent sights. Grand architecture is everywhere and the streets are kept meticulously clean. The marketplace thrives with activity as merchants make deals at every corner, here in the capital of the merchant Duchy of Urnst. Perhaps you're here for the commerce, but Leukish also has many fine restaurants and the best wines in the world are often imported to the nobility's table.

Whether the PCs are here to buy, sell, sample, or party, they'll eventually end up at the same tavern, restaurant, or pub depending on the majority's tastes. It is here that the soldiers find them. They are approached by thirty impeccably groomed, but heavily armed and armored soldiers. At their head is a page in the fanciest of finery bearing an exquisitely scribed letter. He wordlessly presents it to the PC with the highest Charisma.

It is a very briefly worded summons for an audience, and is signed "Lord Ellis Lorinar, Administrator of Kelefane, nephew to the most noble Duke". It is clear to whomever reads the note that it is an order, not a request; very politely worded, but an order nevertheless. If the note, and the presence of thirty soldiers, doesn't convince the party to go along, the soldiers encircle the party and march them along.

If a fight breaks out, the soldiers back off and return to Ellis Lorinar. He decides the PCs weren't such a good choice after all and pursues another group. Hand each PC their AR indicating zero gold and XP earned, and subtract their upkeep.

Encounter One: Come into my Parlor, said Ellis Lorinar

If the PCs accept the summons, the page escorts them to the Ducal Palace. Inside they are led to an elegant dining

room with a long polished wooden table. Read the following

Judges Note: Xarashanamayar is pronounced "Zara-shan-ah-mah-yar".

Seated at the end of the room are two very different individuals. To the left is a broad shouldered Suel man with a severe brush cut and a goatee trimmed to exact angles. He wears a military dress uniform draped in medals, and a gleaming golden sword is strapped to his belt. He stands well over six feet tall, eyebrows knotted in what appears to be a permanent expression of intense concentration. To the right is another Suel man, much shorter, much leaner, and dressed in splendid robes of deep azure trimmed with gold. On each slender finger is a thick golden ring. He is clean-shaven, and his long white-blonde hair flows past his shoulders.

"Welcome" booms the taller man. "I am Ellis Lorinar. May I present Xarashanamayar, Chancellor and High Wizard of the Society of Magi. Please sit."

If any of the characters played URD3-05 Plague of Rage, they have already met Ellis, and they may also know Xarashanamayar. The PCs may engage in some brief conversation, but Ellis quickly gets down to business.

"There is a pestilence in the Duchy of Urnst." says Ellis Lorinar in a deep, penetrating voice. His every word sounds like a pronouncement... or a command. "The Slavers, those foul and disgusting flesh-merchants we thought long eradicated, are again operating inside our borders. They will not be brought down easily, and I wish to recruit you to help in our efforts."

Abruptly he motions towards the wizard with an open palm.

"Chancellor." Lord Ellis says.

"Thank you," says Xarashanamayar, his voice flowing like honey. "What makes the Slavers so difficult to expose is that they use agents completely ignorant of their larger plans. One such agent is a wizard and former colleague named Hodar. Hodar has no loyalties to anything besides cash, and he needs a lot of it. Many years ago he was a resident of the Duchy, and he was jailed for life for, shall we say 'forbidden' research. He earned clemency from Justinian Lorinar, Duke Karll's brother, by undertaking a mission inside the Ghost Tower of Inverness. He used that to his advantage to gain membership into the Society of Magi."

At this Xarashanamayar sniffs as if some foul odor has tickled his nose.

"I overlooked his less-than-reputable character for a chance to learn what he saw inside that legendary Tower. The gods-forsaken bastard strung all of us at the Society along, feeding us half-truths

and partial stories. He continued the charade until I let down my guard. He stole something from me and fled the Duchy. Something very important and I want it back."

"Come to the point please, Chancellor," says Lord Ellis.

The wizard regards him coolly for a moment with his icy blue eyes, and then continues.

"Obviously he took great pains to conceal himself from me. I never was able to locate him directly, but I did finally locate the item. By scrying on it I ultimately located Hodar in Dyvers. I knew he'd miss something. He always does."

Xarashanamayar lets slip a tiny smile of satisfaction before continuing.

"In the short time I watched him, he sent an unusual number of magical communications. Most of them went to settlements around Wooly Bay, but there was one he sent into the Duchy. It was perhaps a hasty decision, but I intercepted the message. Hodar detected the interference immediately, and ended the communication. We don't believe he was able to identify me, so he probably has no idea who was spying on him.

"Nevertheless, I learned the message was a series of orders from the leaders of the Slavers to a base inside the Duchy."

"Imagine my surprise." interrupts Ellis Lorinar, his voice dripping with disgust. "I thought we had sent them a very clear message two years ago when we destroyed their base near Lunis. Apparently the Slavers are hard learners."

"Unfortunately no Lord Ellis, the Slavers are persistent." says Xarashanamayar to Ellis with a cheerless smile. "There is a fortune to be made selling slaves to the Old One, and they cannot do it from their bases in the Pomarj. The Duchy is a useful half-way point."

The wizard turns to you and continues.

"The next day Hodar fled Dyvers by boat with my item and headed to the Duchy. He went directly to their base, presumably to deliver the rest of the orders personally and to inform the Slavers that their communications had been discovered. That is when I approached Administrator Lorinar. The presence of the Slavers inside the Duchy is unacceptable to both of us."

"I want their base destroyed." Says Ellis quite matter-of-factly. "I intend to drive them from the Duchy, so convincingly they will never even consider returning here. But the Slavers could not have kept their presence hidden without help. I cannot risk word getting to them through their

agents or lackeys. Our assault must be a complete surprise."

"Time prevents us from using more traditional channels." says Xarashanamayar. "If we were to introduce a motion in the Honorable Chamber it would probably be days before the bickering subsided long enough for us to request military action. By then word would spread far and wide."

"I am authorized," says Ellis, "in some matters of imminent threat to the Duchy, to take whatever military action I see fit in its protection. To date I have only ever exercised these powers to fend off raids from bandits of the Abbor-Alz, but nothing excludes me from exercising them here. It was a monumental effort, but I moved an entire regiment of my most loyal soldiers, in complete secrecy, from their posts in the Abbor-Alz to Leukish. I also transferred three ships to carry us to the Slavers' base. We were going to launch our ships this morning when Xarashanamayar uncovered new information. Hodar left the Slaver base with the commander, an elven woman named Markessa, an elven woman and Slave Lord, and sailed directly to the nearest coastal village. There we lost track of them.

"We are still planning our attack on their main base, but obviously there is someone or something in the village of importance to Markessa. I need to know what, and that is where you can help." Ellis Lorinar says staring at you.

What Ellis Lorinar says next depends on what games the PCs have played. If the characters participated in Freedom's Price and were defeated by the Slavers read the following.

"You have confronted these vermin before, and you know they are beneath contempt. I'm offering you a chance for vengeance. Show them the consequence of meddling with men from the Duchy!"

If the characters participated in Freedom's Price and beat the Slavers read the following.

"You have confronted these vermin before. And they've tasted your wrath. I'm offering you a chance to strike them a second time; to show them the consequences of meddling with men from the Duchy!"

If the characters participated in Plague of Rage read the following.

"I know you are honorable folk, willing to take up the sword to protect the innocent. You've proven your valor to me, to House Einstoffen, and the villagers of Copper Pot. I want you to be fighting alongside me."

If the game is being played at APL 6 or better read the following.

“And I need individuals with exceptional strength, and might. You have fought many a campaign both here and abroad. I know of your exploits, and I know you will be valuable allies.”

If the game is being played at APL 4 read the following.

“I can see that you are skilled enough to be of value to me. But you are not so well known as to be a risk to the secrecy of this mission. If I may be frank, your lack of notoriety is an asset.”

Then continue with the following.

“No one outside of this room, including my own men, knows the details of our plans. This mission must be completed in complete secrecy and you can tell no one of the purpose of your journey. I am asking you to travel to the village, a tiny slum of a place named Stillwater. Find Markessa, and learn what allies or resources are hidden there. I have a small merchant ship at your disposal. It is a day’s travel, so if you leave immediately you will arrive by late afternoon tomorrow.

“We launch our assault on the Slavers’ base at dawn two days hence. If you find anything of value to our attack, you must get it to us before then.”

“And of course,” interrupts Xarashanamayay, “if you happen to locate my item I trust you will return it to me, unopened. You’ll know it if you see it.”

“You will, of course, be compensated for your efforts.” Lord Ellis continues. “Both Xarashanamayay and myself are very generous with favors to our friends. Do we have a deal?”

Both men smile at you.

If the PCs accept, Ellis rises, shakes each of their hands and summons the page to escort them to their ship for immediate departure. He also provides a map of the Duchy’s coast, indicating Leukish, Stillwater, and the Slavers’ base. The page runs errands for the PCs if they need any equipment from the city. Continue with Encounter 2.

If the PCs refuse, are belligerent, or start trying to negotiate a reward, read the following.

Ellis’ expression doesn’t change at all, but Xarashanamayay glares darkly.

“Very well, this meeting is over.” Ellis says without rising. “You are, however, in possession of sensitive information that constitutes an imminent threat to the security of the Duchy. By the discretionary powers granted to me as the Administrator of Kelefane I order you held to be held in custody without writ or trial. I’ll find others to help me”

He rises and claps his hands loudly, at which point the thirty well dressed and well-armed

soldiers who escorted you here file into the room. Lord Ellis turns to address them.

“These people are to be held in solitary confinement in the dungeons for seven days.”

He turns back to you almost as an afterthought.

“Unless you’d like to change your minds.”

Ellis Lorinar is quite serious. If the PCs won’t work for him on his terms, they are held for seven days and then released. Give the players their ARs, but award them no treasure or experience. If the PCs change their minds, continue with the adventure as normal, however the PCs earn no favors from either Ellis Lorinar or Xarashanamayay.

Encounter Two: Setting Up Shop

The ship Ellis Lorinar secured for the PCs is a cog named *Dimuzi’s Rage*. She has a crew of eight, and the captain is a muscular human named Mardhox. His orders are to take the PCs directly to Stillwater with no delays for any reason, and he cannot be convinced to do otherwise. Once there, however, he quite agreeably takes orders from the PCs, and takes them nearly anywhere they ask.

This encounter begins with the party having just arrived at Stillwater.

As you leave the company of the ships crew you find yourself put ashore in a little town with the bustle of industry. The half dozen warehouses along the shore swarm with workers unloading merchant goods. Yet the main bustle lies in the dusty streets off in the distance. A few businesses and buildings stand out. There is a rather massive brewery at the edge of town, conveniently connected to the village’s only tavern. The whole compound proudly bears an unadorned sign that reads “Beermok’s Beers”. There is heavy dwarven traffic. Next to the tavern is a long scorched barracks for Stillwater’s militia. The militia men are a motley bunch; half orcs in full plate walk side by side with elven archers. The only thing they have in common are their plain red tabards.

Towards the middle of town is the settlement’s only two story building. It is made of stone and the sign out front indicates it serves both as the Civic Offices and the Mayor’s Mansion. The front door is closed tight and heavy drapes are drawn before the windows.

Along the coast line are a half dozen warehouses clustered around the village’s single pier. Sitting behind them is the village’s tiny business district: a general store, a locksmith, and a butcher. And wedged in the midst of the residences is a wooden temple with a crooked spire, leaning precariously

like the well-lubricated dwarves staggering out of the tavern.

When the party arrives in Stillwater, their first order of business will likely be finding lodging, and then hunting for information. Depending on the upkeep the PC's chose read the following and apply as required.

Living off the Wild – During the morning, an elderly gnome named Gibbernick runs into the PC. If the PC is polite, he sits down and talks for as long as he or she is willing to listen. Mostly this is about Ranger type stuff, but for every twenty minutes they chat with the man, they get one rumor (in order) from the table in Encounter 3. To get the full slate of rumors, the poor character will have to endure six hours of endless prattling!

Standard – Beermok's Beers is the best (only!) inn in Stillwater. The PCs will sleep three to a room under breezy linens, and dine on hard bread and chicken stew with lumps of flour. The ale, however, is outstanding. Apparently a lot of dwarves live in Stillwater.

Rich – The extra money gets the PCs temporary lodging at the Red Guard Barracks, home to Stillwater's militia. Here they get small, private rooms with thick furs and blankets, and access to a bathing chamber with ample stocks of soap and towels. Further, the Barracks has a dedicated man-servant named Gerry who will cook three sumptuous meals a day for residents. He also washes and mends clothing, runs brief errands, and stables any horses.

Luxury – Unfortunately, the only place better than the Red Guard Barracks is the mayor's mansion, and she isn't accepting calls. PCs who select luxury lifestyle get no better treatment than those who paid for Rich, but throwing around that kind of money still earns them extra respect from the Stillmen.

Encounter Three: Looking for Dirt in Stillwater

Stillwater is a quaint village, and the people are hard working, honest, and generally kind. Petty crime is a rare thing, and violence is usually met with stern opposition by the constabulary and the citizens. All in all, it's not the sort of place one would expect to find the base for a major crime syndicate. For a detailed history of the village see Appendix 2.

If the PCs wish to "roll" play the process of information gathering, the PCs make DC 10 Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate checks as they see fit. Each successful attempt gets one piece of information from the list below *in order*. In other words, the PCs only get all six pieces of information if they make six successful checks. The players can try as many times as they like; the Stillmen are a talkative bunch.

However, if they choose to go to specific locations and seek out specific individuals, use the information below as a guideline. If the PCs ask, Lord Breckenridge is away on business and not currently in the village.

Judges Note: *It is critical that this investigation end very close to dusk as **Encounter Six** takes place at that time. Whether they role-play it or just make skill checks, make sure the investigation ends at the end of the day.*

People and Places of Interest:

General Information: Everyone in town will remark on the odd behavior of the mayor over the last few days. She is not seeing any visitors except at night and she has virtually sealed off her offices and mansion from the sun and the village. There are a number of rumors about this:

- Some say that she is ill and quite the trooper to see visitors at night despite her failing health.
- Some say that she is conducting secret meetings to try and finally end her disputes with Lord Breckenridge with the help of some mystery stranger.
- Some say that she is secretly courting an orc, and he refuses to venture out in the daytime, so she can only have a liason with him during the night.
- Some say that she has become a vampire and has joined up with House Urlirel to steal babies and turn them into undead monsters.
- Some say that it doesn't matter and to mind your own business. The mayor still does a good job and that's what is important.

Feel free to make up your own rumors, both outlandish and well thought out.

Jeannine's Outfitting: A general store that sells all mundane equipment from the Player's Handbook, but no weaponry or armor. The owner, Jeannine, is a young woman of average looks and smarts. With a successful DC 10 Diplomacy or Gather Information Check she shares rumors 1 and 2 from the list below

Locksmith: This is a run down shop, owned by a gnome named Sudwak with no real interest in the business. An aspiring, but shockingly untalented, bard, he spends the workday practicing his mandolin... badly. He shushes all questions, unless the PCs say something flattering about his abysmal music, in which case he freely answers questions. He offers rumors 3 and 4 from the list below, no skill checks required. He also suggests they talk to the mayor if they need to know more.

Civic Offices/Mayor's Mansion: Sharynne stays holed up in her mansion during the day and refuses to answer the door. The windows and entrances are sealed up tight. If the PCs are truly persistent and pound on the door for ten minutes or more, she hollers at them to get lost or she'll call the Red Guard. If the PCs are

convincing (DC 15 Diplomacy, Bluff or Charisma check) as they holler through the door, and they have already heard rumor 4, she counters with rumor 5.

Temple: Most days, three prominent clergy members sit on the outer porch of the building debating and smoking pipes. The first is a dwarf cleric of Gendwar Arggrim named Urik, the second is a human cleric of Trithereon named Murf, and the last is an elf cleric of Corellon Larethian named Cellenar. They are wary of talking to strangers (DC 15 Diplomacy check before they agree to talk), though Urik freely spills his guts to anyone who brings him a beer (+10 bonus to the check). If they are speaking freely, they share rumors 1, 2, and 3 over the course of about an hour's discussion. If the party has already learned rumor 5, they also share rumor 6.

Butcher/Stable: Kenneth is a retired military man, who doesn't like outsiders. If truly impressed with a PC (DC 18 Diplomacy or Gather Information check), he'll share rumor 4. Pressed further he simply says "Take it up with the mayor!"

Red Guard Barracks: A human with horrendous hygiene named Morrin and a dwarf named Borric, both "Red Guardsmen", repair and clean the barracks exterior during the day. They are not actually "Red Guardsmen" in the official sense, but rather employees that have been hired to help them get out of their squalid situations. They are proud of their association with the guardsmen and will boast about how they are part of them, but if pressed will admit the reality of their situation. Neither is particularly social, but if asked specifically about crime in Stillwater, they share rumors 1, 2 and 3.

Beermok's Beers: The owner, Beermok, is a loud-mouthed dwarf with a wooden leg and a legendary constitution. Even among dwarves his capacity for liquor is astounding. The serving girls are well-endowed human women of middle years, reflecting Beermok's personal taste in the opposite sex. The PCs can gather any rumors they may be missing from the patrons; each round of drinks (5 gp) gets one of rumors 1 through 4. If the PCs have heard rumor 4, Beermok thunders that it is rubbish, and tells them rumor 5. Eventually he tires of conversation and tells them to talk to the "church guys" if they need to know more.

If a dwarf asks questions of Beermok about the recent construction on the basements and sewers, and is a paying customer, he will tell them that he never did the construction on his root cellar and that it wasn't blocked up like the other cellars in town. He will boast that the mayor herself gave special permission to leave it alone because he's such an upstanding citizen and important part of the business community. He doesn't care if PCs go look at it as it is empty.

Beermok will share the information about his root cellar with non-dwarves, but only if they have six or more drinks.

Rumor List

- 1) I don't think any large-scale crime operation could last long here, but there's plenty of local intrigue. Lord Breckenridge and Sharynne the mayor have been at each other's throats for over a year now. It's been a constant source of amusement. It looks like Breckenridge is finally getting to Sharynne, though. She's been holed up in her mansion for the past several days.
- 2) There really isn't any crime in Stillwater. Because of the Red Guard, the undesirable element pretty much stays away. I hear that a group of bandits recently took refuge in the sewers and are stealing chickens and goats from the farmers. That won't last for long!
- 3) No, there's no organized crime here. Too many soldiers and not enough spoils. It doesn't stop folks from trying, though. I heard that a while back some thieves tried running a protection racket from a base in the sewers. They must have been driven out awfully fast.
- 4) I'll tell *you* what's criminal! Last season the workmen at Beermok's Beers kept me awake for weeks at night with all the construction on the basement. Scandalous!
- 5) None of the buildings in Stillwater have basements any more. They were all ordered sealed two years ago by order of the mayor. Apparently the water table was rising, and if she didn't take steps the foundations of the buildings would collapse.
- 6) People here are pretty naïve if they believe there's no crime. Sure, violence is pretty much non-existent, but there's not much policing of the merchant traffic through here, or the private warehouses. An unscrupulous merchant, and we have a few come through, could fill one with illegal contraband, and our guards would never know what they were looking at. That's assuming they even bothered to look inside, which they don't.

Encounter Four: The Slavers' Base

If the players rush headlong into the underground compound based on the first pieces of information they gather, they are falling right into Markessa the Blue's first trap. Over the past several months she has planted vague rumors about crime gangs operating out of the village's sewer. Any do-gooders actively pounding the pavement hear that rumor first. This completely fake bit of gossip actually leads them directly to the most difficult approach to the base — which was precisely Markessa the Blue's intent when designing this deathtrap. There are three entrances and only one is safe. None are guarded

- 1) The Sewers – The main sewer outlet is a large natural tunnel near the shore. After a brief exploration inside, the PCs find a man-made passage, obviously new construction, leading deeper underground to Area 1.
- 2) Beermok's Beers – A search around the building quickly turns up an unused root cellar in the rear. Inside, behind a stack of empty boxes is a tunnel underground to Area 6 (DC 10 Search check to find it).
- 3) The Warehouse – Of the half-dozen warehouses in the village, one extends over the water so that a boat can actually anchor inside and be conveniently out of view for unloading. If the PCs give things some thought, this is the only practical warehouse for a slaver operation. If the party investigates, they find it unguarded and empty. There is a wide trap door in the floor with a sturdy wooden staircase leading down to Area 9. If the PCs instead try searching warehouses randomly, the DM should roll a d6 to determine if they pick the right one. After the second wrong choice, the Stillwater authorities gently intervene and tell the PCs to stop harassing the merchants. The militia starts actively patrolling the warehouses from then on, and physically prevents the party from any further investigation.

Obviously, the Slavers need a completely safe way to move slaves in and out of the compound. This route begins in the secret warehouse, follows the main hallway to area 9, then through the secret door leading to the southern side of the portcullis at area 7. Once down the stairs, the safe route goes through the secret door inside the largest jail cell. The secret hallway then leads to the southern most set of double doors into area 11.

The base is loaded with traps, but they can be bypassed by cautious adventurers. Rash characters are in for a much more difficult time.

Area 1 – The Dump

This room is the base's garbage dump. Everything from kitchen trash to human waste gets hauled here and left on the floor. Not surprisingly the stench is horrific. If the PCs approached from the sewers, read the following.

Abruptly the winding hallway ends, opening into a massive stone chamber. The floor is some thirty feet down, and is heaped with mounds of putrid refuse. A narrow stone ledge, perhaps a foot long and ten feet wide, juts out over the pit of reeking filth. Barely visible opposite is an exit, and a similar stone ledge. A thick metal chain, coated in flakes of bright orange rust, hangs down from the shadows above, the free end looped around a sturdy hook in the wall.

The floor is thirty feet down, and the ceiling is forty feet up. The walls and ceiling are coated in a thick, slippery

film of black mould that obscures details of the stone, makes climbing treacherous (DC 25 Climb check), and *spider climb* spells useless. The obvious intent of the chain is for the PCs to grab hold and swing across to the opposite ledge. The chain is sturdy and supports up to 1500 lbs. It is not trapped and has not been tampered with in any way. Similarly, its attachment point on the ceiling seems equally sturdy.

The trick here is that the attachment point in the ceiling is not a closed ring, but a metal hook, forming only two-thirds of a closed circle. The open end of the hook points straight north and if anyone grabs the chain and swings to the other side, the chain slips off the open end of the hook when the PC is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way across the room, dropping him and the chain to the floor. This is an insidious trick because the chain and hook really are sturdy, so most Search checks find nothing. From the other side of the room or the floor of the pit it is apparent that heavy swinging will dislodge the chain.

A rope or lasso can be thrown around the hook if the chain has fallen off, requiring a ranged touch attack hitting AC 20.

If characters are aware of how the hook dislodges and they take great time and care, they may make a DC 15 Reflex save or a DC 15 Balance check to swing across on either the chain or a rope.

All APLs

↗ **Chain & Pit Trap:** CR2; mechanical trigger (swinging on the chain); manual reset; no save once activated; Search DC 10 (or 30)*; Disable Device n/a; 30 ft drop (3d6 fall)

* The only way to discover this trap is to directly examine the hook in the ceiling. The Search check penalty for doing this from the ledge is -20 because of the obscuring layer of slime, and the distance. PCs who can get within five feet of the hook, by flying or climbing the chain while it is still secured at the southern end, take no penalty.

The least dangerous way through the room is to climb down to the floor and walk across. Embedded into the western side of each ledge are a series of black, metal rungs. They are difficult to see against the black mold (DC 18+APL Spot, DC 13+APL Search), but are safe to use.

At APL 4-6, the muck on the floor is offensive, but harmless. At APL 8 and above it is actually a massive colony of green slime (DMG p76), which can be particularly dangerous to any PC who falls into the middle of the room. Only the non-shaded areas on the map are free of slime.*

APL 8-12 (EL 4)

➡ **Green Slime:** hp NA; see DMG page 76.

Area 2 – The Trap That Never Goes Out of Style

This entire hallway is a dead-end. The only features are two false doors, each hiding a spring-loaded spear trap. The eastern false door is also locked (DC 20 Open Locks)

APL 4-6 (EL 2)

↗ **Spear/Door Trap:** CR2; mechanical trigger (opening door); manual reset; Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 20; Atk +17 ranged (1d8/x3)

APL 8-10 (EL 6)

↗ **Fusillade of Spears/Door Trap:** as APL 4-6 except CR6; Search DC 26; Atk +21 ranged (1d8/x3 per spear); multiple targets (1d8 spears per target in a 10ft by 10 ft area)

APL 12 (EL 8)

↗ **Poisoned Fusillade of Spears/Door Trap:** as APL 8-10 except CR8; plus poison damage (giant wasp poison, Fort save DC 18 resists. 1d6 DEX / 1d6 DEX)

Area 3 – The Way In

This door is hidden on the floor of the pit behind a monstrous heap of filth. It is difficult to notice by casual observation (DC 18 Spot check), but quite easy to find with a determined search (DC 10 Search check). Note that PCs are not entitled to a check unless they declare they are actively searching.

Area 4 – Double Cross...bow

When the PCs reach this part of the hallway a DC 5 Spot check notices six loaded crossbows, three on each side of the corridor, in slots in the walls. A more successful Spot check (DC 13+APL) notices a honeycomb of narrow slots in the floor between them. An exceptional success on a Spot check (DC 18+APL) discovers something more insidious: the crossbows were meant to be seen.

The crossbows are fake and present no real danger, but they look like they are wired to pressure plates in the floor. “Disarming” them triggers the real trap: an array of spring loaded daggers under a thirty-five foot length of the hallway (the shaded squares on the map).

APL 4 (EL 4)

↗ **Hallway of Daggers Trap-Within-a-Trap:** CR 4; mechanical trigger (tampering with the crossbows); manual reset; Search DC 19; Disable Device n/a; Atk +14 melee (1d4, dagger); multiple targets (1d8 daggers per target in 35 ft section of hallway)

APL 6-8 (EL 6)

↗ **Hallway of Poisoned Daggers Trap-Within-a-Trap:** as APL 4 except CR 6; poison (medium spider venom, Fort save DC 14 resists, 1d4 STR / 1d4 STR)

APL 10-12 (EL 10)

↗ **Hallway of Poisoned Daggers Trap-Within-a-Trap:** as APL 6-8 except CR10; Atk +22 melee (1d4, dagger); multiple targets (2d8 daggers per target in 35 ft section of hallway)

It is actually completely safe to walk through the corridor, ignoring the entire apparatus. The trap is only activated if the crossbows are tampered with.

Area 5 – The Door is Always Open

These sets of double doors are sometimes locked and always trapped.

APL 4-6 (EL 4)

↗ **Glyph of Warding (Blast):** CR 4; spell; spell trigger (tampering with the door); no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast – sonic], 5th level cleric, 2d8 electricity, DC 14 Reflex save ½ dmg); Search DC 28; Disable Device 28; multiple targets (all within 5 ft)

APL 8-10 (EL 6)

↗ **Glyph of Warding (Blast):** as APL 4-6 except CR 6; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 16th level cleric, 8d8 electricity)

☛ **Door, Locked:** Stone, 4 in thick; hardness 8; 60 hp; Open Locks DC 25

APL 12 (EL 7)

↗ **Glyph of Warding (Blast):** as APL 8-10

↗ **Doorknob Smear With Contact Poison:** CR 7; mechanical touch trigger; manual reset; Search DC 19; Disable Device 19; poison (dragon bile, DC 26 Fort save negates, 3d6 STR / 0)

☛ **Door, Locked:** Stone, 4 in thick; hardness 8; 60 hp; Open Locks DC 30

Area 6 – Son of a Beach

The concealed door here is only concealed on the root cellar side. There is no attempt to conceal it from the Slavers compound side. The entrance from Beermok's Beers is also unusual in that the floor is covered with a thick, even layer of coarse sand. After following the sandy hallway for a hundred feet, it opens into a large chamber. A portcullis blocks the one exit at the far corner of the room.

Lying on the floor, hidden beneath the sand, are twenty-eight loaded bear traps. Any PC who takes a step into a 5-foot square with a loaded trap (indicated as a shaded square on the map) runs the risk of getting their foot caught. The bear traps are effectively invisible under the sand. A safe, but tedious, way through the room is to move slowly while probing the floor ahead with a staff or sword.

The inhabitants of the complex have taken great pains to hide their trail through the sand. A successful Survival (track) check (DC 25) by a character with the Track feat reveals faint evidence of the safe path through the bear traps.

APL 4-8 (EL 1)

↗ **Hidden Bear Traps (28):** CR 1 (each); mechanical location trigger; manual reset; Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 22 (though the trap can easily be avoided without disarming once it has been detected); Atk +10 melee (2d4/x4, bear trap)

APL 10-12 (EL 3)

↗ **Poisoned Hidden Bear Traps (28):** as APL 4-8 except CR 3 (each); poison (medium spider venom, Fort save DC 14 resists, 1d4 STR / 1d4 STR)

Area 7 – Gimme a Brake!

The portcullis at the end of the room is locked. The winch mechanism is plainly visible on the other side of the bars 10 feet away. PCs who make a DC 10 Knowledge: Engineering check, or a relevant Profession check (such as miller, sailor, or any other occupation dealing with mechanics, also DC 10) identify the brake lever. If the PCs can trip the brake lever (using mage hand or other more creative means), the DC to lift the gate drops by 20.

APL 4-8

🛡 **Iron Portcullis:** 2 in thick, hardness 10, 60 hp, Lift DC 25

APL 10-12

🛡 **Iron Portcullis:** 3 in thick, hardness 10, 120 hp, Lift DC 30

There is no more sand on the floors on the other side of the portcullis. There is a rake leaning against the wall near the winch, for smoothing out footprints in the sand if anyone actually uses this exit.

Area 8 – Screening Room

This room is where slaves are to be separated into groups, and for overflow when the slave pits (Area 11) are full. Particularly valuable, or dangerous, slaves can be secured in the smaller cells to the east away from the general population in the pits. The western cell has a secret door leading to the only safe entrance to Area 11.

Also in the room is a large desk, the drawers well stocked with paper, quills and ink, a square table, and four wooden stools. Behind the desk is a large chest, filled with ten sets of cheap manacles with keys in their locks. Hanging on the wall by the double doors is a black leather whip with a horrific metal hook at the end. The

room has no inhabitants currently, though it seems well prepared for guests.

Area 9 – The Long Walk

The safe way into the base begins here. There are two secret doors on the east wall. The southernmost door is cleverly concealed (Search DC 21 at APL 4, and Search DC 25 at all others). The northernmost door is much easier to find (DC 12 Search) and leads to a tiny office. Inside the office is a simple wooden desk filled with papers, a hard backed wooden chair, and an oil lamp.

A ten-minute study of the papers reveals a number of things. Business ledgers indicate that there was frequent and heavy traffic in slaves through this base at one time, but it dried up. Demand in the area was quickly saturated, and patrols from the Urnst states made continuing the operation impractical. The last entry is dated CY 592.

Among the papers is a letter addressed to “Dengern, emissary of The Old One” also dated 592 CY. It is an invitation to come to the base for his shipment, bringing this letter as proof of his identity. It indicates after he has given the letter to the guard, to proceed directly to the bronze double doors where the leader of the base will welcome him.

This entire room is a red herring, and the documents are fake. A DC 30 Search check of the room reveals the lamp was never used, and never held any oil. Similarly, the quills in the desk were never used either. If the PCs searching the room give any indication they believe the papers are bogus, or that the room is a diversion, the DC drops to 20.

Area 10 – Welcome!

The hallway ends here at a pair of bronze double doors. The 15 feet of floor in front of the doorway is a covered pit, and the lid slams open once a PC turns either doorknob. This also rings a bell in Area 11, alerting the White Markessas to intruders.

APL 4 (EL 1)

↗ **Covered Pit Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger (opening door); manual reset; Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; long slide (1d6 damage, fall); multiple targets (everyone in a 10ft by 15 ft square)

APL 6-8 (EL 2)

↗ **Covered Pit Trap:** as APL 4 except CR 2; DC 25 Reflex save avoids

APL 10-12 (EL 3)

↗ **Covered Pit Trap:** as APL 6-8 except CR 3; Search DC 29

Under the pit is a steep, greased slide to Area 11 that dumps victims into the slave pits. Once PCs start sliding, it is nearly impossible to stop (DC 35 Climb check). Also, at higher APLs there are scythe blades embedded in the floor.

APL 8-10

↗ **Slide Lined with Scythe Blades:** CR 3; location trigger (falling down the slide); Search DC n/a; Disable Device DC n/a; 3 blades Atk +8 melee (1d8/x3, per blade); multiple targets (everyone who falls down the slide)

APL 12

↗ **Slide Lined with Scythe Blades:** as APL 8-10 except CR 4; 4 blades

Note that while sliding, PCs get no DEX bonus to AC and are considered prone, but they are not immobilized or helpless.

Area 11 – The Many Faces of Markessa

This large, square chamber has a high vaulted ceiling that soars up out of sight into the shadows. A fitfully burning hooded brazier in each corner lights the lower portion of the room. There is a cluster of nine pits in the middle of the room, each covered by iron bars, with only a five-foot walkway around the outside. In the center of each wall is a set of large double doors. The room appears empty.

Each brazier has a *continual flame* spell cast on it, and the four of them provide just enough light to illuminate the floor space. They do **not** illuminate the ceiling sixty feet up, nor the dozen open balconies fifty feet up. They effectively give direct light to the lower ten feet of the room, and shadowy illumination to the ten feet above that.

Moving over the barred pits requires a DC 20 Balance check each round to avoid tripping and falling prone. The northernmost set of double doors is a fake; they are hinged at the top and swing open easily.

PCs falling down the slide from Area 10 go flying through this doorway and are dumped prone on top of the center, north pit cover.

Currently, the base's only regular occupants all have chambers on the second floor overlooking this room. Their rooms are dark, so while they can certainly see the PCs, the PCs probably cannot see them.

The White Markessas are imperfect *simulacra* of the original half-elf slave lord. They are physically weak, have white hair and eyes, unnatural pallor, and vacant stares. Their lack of free will makes them unsuitable as agents, but useful as guardians. They are stationed here to guard the uninhabited base, and will be shipped back to the Pomarj once Markessa the Blue moves in her

soldiers. They are trained to attack and kill anyone who enters the room without Markessa the Blue as an escort.

The White Markessas sit on the floor in their rooms meditating, facing area 11. If the PCs set off the collapsing floor trap at area 10, or either *glyph of warding* at area 5, the *simulacra* use the advance warning to prepare themselves as detailed below. They try and wait until the entire party is inside the chamber before they begin their assault. Unless the PCs have the ability to see the White Markessas through the darkness (and possibly even through their *invisibility*), the women have a surprise round.

If the PCs get to this room without tripping the floor trap of the *glyphs*, then the Markessas are unprepared. Further, if the PCs succeed at a Move Silently check opposed by the Markessas' Listen checks, then the sorceresses are surprised.

The White Markessas stand on balconies 30 feet above the floor, so they are out of range of normal lighting, out of range for melee attacks, and beyond the range for Point Blank Shot for any attacker not standing directly beneath them. Further, the dividing walls between them interfere with many area effect spells like *fireball*.

Note: Due to the potential havoc caused by being ambushed by so many spellcasters, this encounter has an EL adjustment of +1. The Markessas always roll "10" on initiative checks, adjusted by their Initiative Modifier.

Creatures

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **White Markessas (8):** hp 2 each; *see Appendix one.*

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **White Markessas (12):** hp 2 each; *see Appendix one.*

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **White Markessas (12):** hp 4 each; *see Appendix one.*

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **White Markessas (12):** hp 6 each; *see Appendix one.*

APL 12 (EL 15)

☛ **White Markessas (12):** hp 8 each; *see Appendix one.*

Tactics (all APLs): The White Markessas fight like automatons, and battle fearlessly to the death. They move eerily in unison, and all attack at the same point in the initiative order. They stay on their balconies, never fleeing, using spells as specified below. If they run out of useful spells, they draw their crossbows and fire at any

available target. They do not willingly enter melee combat, but if forced, they draw their daggers and fight without hesitation.

The White Markessas are so physically weak, that a successful hit is virtually guaranteed to kill them. Most parties can wipe them out completely in less than 5 rounds. However, there is a very good chance that one, or even two, characters will be dead by then. In other words, this combat will be short and extremely vicious.

Tactics at APL 4: Given time to prepare, the Markessas cast *shield*. Track durations from the point the party alerts the Markessas, as the spell can easily expire. When PCs enter area 11, four of the sorceresses target their *magic missiles* at the first PC they see enter the room, and the other four target the second. If any of them run out of first level spell slots they use their crossbows, saving their 0 level spells for flying or closing opponents that come within the short spell range of *ray of frost* or *acid splash*.

Tactics at APL 6: As APL 4, except the Markessas work in two groups of six.

Tactics at APL 8: Given time to prepare, the Markessas cast *shield* and *mage armor*, then drink their potions of *protection from arrows*, and then finally cast *resistance* (4 rounds of preparation). Track durations from the point the party alerts the Markessas, as the spells can easily expire. They divide into three groups of four and attack as with APL 4. Note that at this APL, the sorceresses generate two *magic missiles* with each casting of the spell.

Tactics at APL 10: Given time to prepare, the Markessas cast *mirror image*, *shield*, and *mage armor*, then drink their potions of *protection from arrows*, and *invisibility*, and then finally cast *resistance* (6 rounds of preparation). Track durations from the point the party alerts the Markessas, as the spells can easily expire. On the first round of combat, the sorceresses divide into three groups of four and attack different targets with their *scorching ray* and *magic missile* spells (two using each spell if possible). On the second round, half the Markessas from each group cast a *magic missile*, while the others clog the room with their *web* scrolls. On round three, all of them cast *magic missile* into the morass at any targets they can still see. If the webs are dispelled or people burn them away they will use *scorching ray* on these clear targets. At this APL, the sorceresses generate three *magic missiles* with each casting of the spell.

Note that *scorching ray* only has a range of 35 feet for these casters, so if their target is on the floor, it is only in range if it is within 5 feet of the floor square directly in front of the Markessa.

Tactics at APL 12: Given time to prepare, the Markessas cast *mirror image*, *see invisibility*, *shield*, and *mage armor*, then drink their potions of *protection from arrows*, and *invisibility*, and then finally cast *resistance* (6 rounds of preparation). Track durations from the point

the party alerts the Markessas, as the spells can easily expire. On round one, the Markessas divide into three groups of four, each group targeting one of the first three PCs to enter the room with *dispel magic* (the 1st caster), then *scorching ray* (the 2nd and 3rd), then *magic missile* (the 4th). Bear in mind that each sorceress now casts two rays or 4 *magic missiles*. The following round, two casters open with *dispel magic* (area dispel) throughout the room, while the others clog the room with their *web* scrolls. The next round, and every round thereafter, three Markessas cast *fireball*, filling the entire chamber. The others cast *scorching ray* or *magic missile* all focusing on a single target.

Note that *scorching ray* only has a range of 40 feet for these casters, so if their target is on the floor, it is only in range if it is within 10 feet of the floor square directly in front of the Markessa. If a Markessa can't use *scorching ray*, it uses *magic missile* instead.

Development: When the White Markessas are reduced to 0 hp, their bodies turn to piles of wet slush. Read the following the first time this happens for effect.

The white robed woman falls heavily to the floor. There is an alarming sloshing noise, and great sprays of wet slush fly in every direction, as her body literally dissolves into a pile of wet snow.

The astounding cacophony during the battle alerts Markessa the Blue and Hodar to intruders. Both flee through the secret door in her bedroom to the underground escape cavern at Area 17.

Optional Encounter A

If any character was killed up to this point in the adventure, and the party is incapable of bringing the PC back to life, Markessa the Green appears. Refer to Appendix six for her statistics, tactics, and descriptive text for the scenario.

If the meeting goes well, she uses the last charge of her *ring of wishes* to resurrect the fallen PC. She then wishes the party the luck of the Gods and leaves never to be seen again. She does not appear again in Optional Encounter B or Optional Encounter C.

Area 12 – Living Area

Until the guards from the island base are moved here, the White Markessas live in these rooms. The large area on the main floor is a common room and dining hall, furnished simply with long wooden tables, benches, and a few sofas against the walls. The rooms labeled 12a on the second floor are small bedrooms. Each contains a bed, a small dresser, and a chest for personal belongings. The White Markessas have no belongings, so there is nothing at all in any of the rooms except for a spare set of white robes.

Area 13 – Kitchen

The kitchen is well equipped and designed to serve hearty food for up to two dozen soldiers, and gruel for dozens of slaves. Currently it is unused as the Markessas subsist on bread and cheese.

Area 14 – Storage

This room is crammed with shelves and hooks, nearly all of them empty. Every square inch of space will be filled once operations move to this base, but for now there is nothing but a few dozen loaves of hard bread, and a stack of large cheese wheels.

Area 15 – Sanctum of Big Blue

This suite is to be the personal quarters of Markessa the Blue, and she is quite eager to move here after living in squalor at the island base. All are opulently furnished with thick rugs on the stone floors, embroidered tapestries, polished wood furniture with rich red cushions, and statuary and artwork throughout. It's obvious to any PC of breeding that the decorator has no real taste.

Room 15a is a sitting room and private dining area, 15b is an office, and 15c is a bedroom. The office contains no paperwork, as the really juicy documents are all at the island base.

Markessa and Hodar were in the office when combat erupted in Area 11. They immediately retreated through the secret door to Area 17. The secret doors are located with a DC 25 Search check. At APLs 4-6, there are muddy footprints in Area 15b that betray one door's location, making it a DC 18 spot check or a DC 10 Search check.

Optional Encounter B

If the PCs cannot find the secret doors leading to area 16, and if Markessa the Green has not already appeared to help them in Optional Encounter A, she appears now. Refer to Appendix six for her statistics, tactics, and descriptive text for the scenario.

If the meeting goes well, she reveals the secret doors in Markessa the Blue's chambers. She then wishes the party the luck of the Gods and leaves never to be seen again. She will not appear again in Optional Encounter C later in the adventure.

Area 16 – Xarashanamyar's "Item"

At one end of this L-shaped hallway is a ragged tunnel in the stone that leads away into darkness. Resting in the corner is a circular container made of shining steel. It is about a foot in diameter and four inches high. Etched onto the lid in precise script is the following:

"Property of the Leukish Society of Magi.

Contents unstable and highly dangerous.

DO NOT OPEN.

DO NOT TARGET WITH ANY MAGICS"

This is the mysterious "item" Xarashanamyar was referring to in Encounter 1. The box weighs nearly 1000 pounds, and radiates strong magic of all schools. It has no lid, no seams, and no apparent means to open it. Hodar left it as he fled, because it was too heavy for him to carry while running, and he was unwilling to risk transporting it magically.

Xarashanamyar originally secured the container with a convoluted series of magical wards, and Hodar added a few of his own. The result is a dizzying mishmash of magical protections that defy any attempts to analyze or *dispel* them. The PCs simply do not have the means to open the box, or discern what is inside. They can carry it away, and that's about it.

If the PCs try to break open the box, or if the box is subjected to any spell effect greater than 0-level, it *teleports* away to an unknown location. Somehow, the magical wards on the box transmit this information to Xarashanamyar who will be furious.

Area 17 – Secret Escape Exit

Read the following just before the PCs emerge into the largest cavern.

Just where the tunnel veers off to the left, a light shines around the corner. You hear a low male voice muttering, and then abruptly there is a yell.

"Damn you Hodar!" a woman screams. "Don't you leave me here you yellow-bellied jack-ass!"

Today Markessa the Blue's luck has completely run out. Her escape tunnel at the southern end of the cavern collapsed during a recent deluge of rain, and she's only now discovered it. Hodar decided to cut his losses, and escape with his life. He *teleported* away to safety, dearly hoping Markessa the Blue dies in here so that she can't come after him later.

The PCs can delay as long as they like preparing for combat. Markessa the Blue intends to make her last stand where she has plenty of space, and has no desire to get embroiled in melee in the cramped tunnels.

When the PCs enter the room, read the following:

The large, natural cavern is well lit by torches, burning fitfully in improvised sconces. Standing at the far end, before an exit tunnel choked with fallen rock, is a woman with a disturbingly familiar face. She bears an alarming resemblance to the army of albino elven women who assaulted you in the Slave Pits.

This one, however, has piercing ice-blue eyes and raven black hair that shimmers in the flickering torchlight. She is draped head to toe in elaborate plate armor, painted blue. She holds a long, metal chain, bristling with barbs and spines, and crackling with blue sparks. Her beautiful elven lips are locked in an angry snarl, white teeth grinding.

“Go ahead and try to kill me.” she seethes through clenched teeth. “Just remember, when you cut off a hydra’s head, two more take its place.

“This is NOT over.”

There are four everburning torches about the chamber.

Markessa the Blue is a superlative schemer and planner when calm, but in situations like this one she loses her cool and succumbs to blind rage. She throws herself furiously into melee, fighting to the death, completely ignoring any attempts to negotiate or parley.

Creatures

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Markessa the Blue:** hp 38; *see Appendix two.*

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Markessa the Blue:** hp 52; *see Appendix two.*

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Markessa the Blue:** hp 64; *see Appendix two.*

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Markessa the Blue:** hp 76; *see Appendix two.*

APL 12 (EL 14)

➤ **Markessa the Blue:** hp 88; *see Appendix two.*

Tactics: Markessa drank her *potion of barkskin* when she first started to flee. At APLs 4-6, if she heard the PCs approach Area 17, she also drank her *potion of blur*. At APL 4, she wades directly into combat, using her reach and spring attack ability to keep her opponents at bay. At APL 6-8, unless the PCs close with her immediately, she begins combat by throwing her *javelin*. Once engaged in melee, she either keeps her opponents at bay using her reach and spring attack ability, or if she is surrounded she makes devastating use of her whirlwind attack combined with her reach. At APL 10, she targets humans to make more effective use of her human bane spiked chain. At APL 12, she has a cloak of displacement rather than the *potion of blur*.

Developments: If the party was defeated by Markessa and any members are left behind, those left behind are not dead, but subdued. Markessa will strip them of all of their gear and ship them off for slave training. This results in a penalty of 12 TUs until they can find a chance to escape. This can be reduced by 1 TU for every influence point used or 1,000 gp of wealth they have left behind and can use for ransom.

If the party defeated Markessa, aside from her personal equipment, Markessa the Blue carries a rumpled, dog-eared, and much-thumbed piece of parchment. It is a coded letter from her superior Markessa the Red. According to Slaver protocol she should have destroyed the message immediately, but for reasons she couldn't explain she was unable to part with it.

This is a fiendishly difficult code, and it is highly unlikely the players can crack it without help from Markessa the Green (see Optional Encounter C). Each successful DC 30 Decipher Script check decodes 25% of the sentences determined randomly. Note the spell *comprehend languages* doesn't work on codes. Players may not retry this check if they fail.

The uncoded letter reads as follows:

My Blue Sister,

I have sent a guardian for your island base, for extra protection from sea attack. It will lair at the foot of your island, claiming all the waters around as its territory. It will attack and destroy any ships that approach within half a mile.

But be warned, though I have succeeded in training it somewhat, it has no loyalties and will destroy your own ships as surely those of your enemies. If your ship's captains throw a side of cow, or a large pig carcass, overboard after the beast's first approach, it will leave with the meal and let the ship pass. Be vigilant! I lost a ship last year because an inattentive crew was slow to provide the beast its' snack.

Glory to all our Sisters, and our Most Flawless Mother,

Your Red Sister.

Optional Encounter C

If the PCs have not already met Markessa the Green in either Optional Encounter A or B, she appears now. Refer to Appendix six for her statistics, tactics, and descriptive text for the scenario.

If the meeting goes well, she offers to read the coded message as she knows the code. This saves the players the anguish of having to decode it. She then wishes the party the luck of the Gods and leaves never to be seen again.

Encounter Five: Where Do We Go From Here?

It is very important that the party emerge from their underground explorations after nightfall. Regardless of what time the party first started, the DM must adjust the time so that they get back to the village just after sunset.

Sharynne the mayor has been watching the PCs since they first arrived. She noted their disappearance some hours ago, and she sees them immediately when they emerge. She suspects they have found the Slaver

base, but is not confident enough to take action against them unless she is sure. If she sees that them in a hurry to leave by boat she may intervene, as noted below.

Where the adventure goes from here depends entirely on what the PCs know, and what they choose to do about it.

The PCs do not decode the message and do not join Ellis Lorinar's assault on the island base. In this case, they probably think the adventure is over. Wherever they go, the next day Ellis Lorinar eventually summons them Leukish. Go to Encounter 10.

The PCs decode the message and do nothing, either because they miss the significance or because they are unwilling to participate. Functionally this is the same as above. The next day they are summoned to an audience with Ellis Lorinar in Leukish.

The PCs decide to sail to the island base to help Ellis Lorinar in his assault but do not bring a carcass for the sea-boat, either because they did not decode the message or they missed its significance. The mayor does not interfere and stays hidden. The PCs skip Encounter 6 and continue with Encounter 7, but if they do not have a meal for the sea-boat, they end up fighting the beast.

The PCs decide to sail to the island base to help Ellis Lorinar in his assault and bring a carcass for the sea-boat. The mayor takes steps to delay their departure; go to Encounter 6. Once she is dealt with, the party continues with Encounter 7, but they do not have to fight the sea-boat.

Note that the party should wind up fighting the mayor if they've learned how to bypass the sea-boat. This is intentional; the party is intended to have combat with one of the two monsters, but not both. It is also entirely possible for the PCs to never discover the mayor's true nature. This, too, is intentional.

As a final note, high level parties may be able to simply *teleport* to the boat from the underground base. The boat does not stock freshly killed meat in the galley, so if the PCs are looking for a carcass, they still have to go into town, and into the all-seeing gaze of the mayor. Even if they *fly* to and from the butcher's, at some point they have to touch terra firma, and that is when Sharynne approaches them.

Encounter Six: A Word With The Mayor

This encounter only occurs if the PCs decoded the message in Area 17, and then decided to go by boat, possibly with an animal carcass in hand, to help Ellis Lorinar with the raid against the island base. Just as they are about to board *Dimuzi's Rage*, read the following.

The ship looms before you, framed in silver moonlight. The quiet hubbub of the village mingles with the peaceful lapping of the waves. Then all of a sudden, out of nowhere, there is a woman standing directly in front of you.

Thankfully, this time it isn't Markessa. Her wavy black hair blows gently in the wind, and she stands with her hands planted firmly on her hips. One eyebrow is raised, she grins at you coyly.

"I'm Sharynne, the mayor. I'm disappointed you're leaving so soon." She asks. "I haven't, yet, had the chance to invite you to dine."

She glances down at the animal carcass, looking only a little surprised, and laughs.

"I'm sure the cook at Beermok's Beers could do a better job preparing your repast than the ship's galley"

Sharynne's goal is to keep the PCs from leaving. She tries to *dominate* each of them in turn, starting with any muscle-bound, armored fighter-types. The DM should use the Will saves rolled in the beginning. All she tries to do at this point is convince them to join her for dinner at the tavern; not a completely unreasonable request, all things considered. If the PCs agree, either through coercion or of their own free will, then dinner is all that happens. They enjoy a wonderful meal, followed by the most expensive wines and liquors Beermok's Beers has in the cellar.

If she succeeds in delaying the party, they miss participating in the raid on the island base. Proceed with Encounter 10. If however, she cannot keep the party from leaving, Sharynne resorts to force.

Creatures

APL 4 (EL 3)

☛ Sharynne: hp 29; see *Appendix three*.

APL 6 (EL 5)

☛ Sharynne: hp 29; see *Appendix three*.

APL 8 (EL 7)

☛ Sharynne: hp 45; see *Appendix three*.

APL 10 (EL 9)

☛ Sharynne: hp 69; see *Appendix three*.

APL 12 (EL 11)

☛ Sharynne: hp 85; see *Appendix three*.

Tactics: Sharynne has little combat experience. As a brand new vampire, she also has no turn resistance. She fights without much strategy, hitting hard and fast. If she reduced to 0 hp she assumes *gaseous form* and retreats back to her only coffin, poorly hidden in the cellar of her mansion. Following her back to her coffin is simple, if

the PCs choose to do so in order to finish her off. It will take at least an hour without magical assistance to find the coffin in the house as it is fairly well hidden.

Once Sharynne is dealt with, the party is free to leave. Continue with Encounter 7.

Encounter Seven: The Raid

Mardhox the captain does an astounding job of pushing Dimuzi's Rage to its best speed. When the PCs finally get to the island base, the raid is already in progress – if they've arrived early, then events forced Ellis Lorinar's hand, and he began the attack early (the departure of a pirate vessel presented an opportunity not to be missed)

It is obvious from a fair distance from the smoke and noise that battle has been joined, and the party should be allowed to cast long-duration spells. Subtract ten minutes from the durations of any pre-cast spells, then read or paraphrase the following:

The scene is one of absolute chaos, and Ellis Lorinar's forces are clearly not faring well. One of his three ships is sinking; the back end is still afloat but the bowsprit is underwater. Dozens of soldiers and sailors swarm the deck of the doomed ship like ants, for some reason not setting out in the life boats.

From the island there is a virtual torrent of arrows, flaming catapult shot, and ballista missiles raining down on the other two ships, pulled in front of the sinking boat to shield it. Standing in the crow's nest of the lead ship is Xarashanamayar. From his hands springs a glittering green shield of light that seems to protect his beleaguered ship from most of the missile fire. His face is locked in a furious grimace, as he shouts orders in draconic.

Ellis Lorinar stands on the deck of the second boat, screaming orders to his men. The panicked soldiers try to return arrow fire at their concealed attackers, while the crew strings rescue lines to the sinking ship. Lord Ellis himself is hauling men across, desperately trying to get them off regardless of the threat to his own well being.

Two details immediately strike you as odd. First, most of the armed soldiers are not directing their attention at the island, but at the water. Second, none of the ships are moving any closer to the island. It is as if they have stopped their assault. Suddenly the reason becomes obvious.

A massive aquatic creature abruptly breaks the surface of the lake next to the three ships, blowing a great spew of water. It's gigantic head looks like an enormous wild boar, and it lets out a deep penetrating squeal. It dives back, under trailing its snakelike body behind it. The moment it breaks the

water line, Ellis Lorinar's soldiers all start screaming and firing arrows into the Nyr Dyv.

It is a useless gesture.

Lord Ellis hollers at his men, but they appear more terrified than organized and his orders go largely ignored. Xarashanamayar is now the only person holding back the assault from the island, and he looks taxed to the limit. With a great crash a flaming catapult shot smashes into the main mast of his ship and the sails burst aflame. The glittering green shield wavers momentarily as the flames lick up at the wizard's perch.

Just when it appeared things couldn't get any worse, a fourth ship pulls around from the other side of the island. This one bears the yellow sails of the Slavers.

Xarashanamayar sees the PCs ship, and whispers to them across the water. Miraculously it is clearly audible to you.

"If you can't somehow stop the sea-boar we're all as good as dead."

Almost as if on cue, the great underwater behemoth once again breaks the surface of the water one hundred feet from you, and swims towards you at great speed.

Xarashanamayar attempts no other communication. Even if the PCs have the means to contact him, he has no other information or advice.

If the PCs have brought along a large animal carcass, like a cow or a pig, and hurl it over the side of the boat, the sea-boar swims over, grabs its snack, and retreats to its undersea lair to eat. In this case proceed directly to Encounter 8. If the PCs can't provide the sea-boar a meal, it attacks their ship.

Creatures

APL 4 (EL 6)

👉 Sea Boar: hp 63; see Appendix four.

APL 6 (EL 9)

👉 Sea Boar: hp 84; see Appendix four.

APL 8 (EL 10)

👉 Sea Boar: hp 120; see Appendix four.

APL 10 (EL 12)

👉 Sea Boar: hp 154; see Appendix four.

APL 12 (EL 14)

👉 Sea Boar: hp 208; see Appendix four.

Tactics: The sea-boar stays on the surface when it first attacks the PCs boat. If they can somehow engage it in melee, it stops attacking the ship and stays at the surface

to fight them. Ranged attacks drive it under water where it cannot be seen (total cover), and it attacks the boat's hull from below. Note that the sea-boar has improved cover from attacks on the surface even when only partially submerged, see DMG pages 92 and 93 for further information on aquatic combat.

Development: Left to its own devices the beast breeches the hull in 6 rounds, and the boat sinks 4 rounds later. If the PCs can reduce the sea-boar to 25% of its hp total, it retreats to its underwater lair and is not seen again.

If the PCs kill or drive off the sea-boar before it sinks their vessel go to Encounter 8. Otherwise go to Encounter 9.

Encounter Eight: Sweet Success!

"Spectacular!" Shouts Xarashanamayar from his perch in the crow's nest, sounding for the entire world like he's standing right next to you. "If you help the men on the sinking ship, Lord Ellis and I just might be able to salvage a victory from this mess!"

If the PCs do as they are told, Ellis' forces swing into gear. Freed from having to defend the disabled boat, Lord Ellis leads a devastating attack on the Slaver ship while the wizard pummels the island's archers with fireballs. This buys the soldiers on his ship enough time to land, and begin a ground assault. There, with superior numbers, Lord Ellis Lorinar's men are ultimately victorious.

After a few hours spent cleaning up the remaining holdouts, and finally securing the base, Ellis Lorinar plants the Duchy's flag at the highest point on the island and there is a great cheer from his men. He then returns to his boat and sails over to Dimuzi's Rage with Xarashanamayar. Read the following.

Ellis Lorinar is drenched in sweat, his armor is dented, rent, and smeared in blood and dirt, and his face is black and burned. Xarashanamayar is also a filthy mess, he is coated in ash, and what used to be his hair is now a wild, tangled, singed, grimy mass. Looking decidedly inelegant, they still smile firmly, white teeth gleaming against ash-stained faces.

"What a victory!" Shouts Ellis as he grabs your hands in a bone-crushing shake. "If you hadn't come this would have been a slaughter. The Chancellor, all of my men, and I, offer our deepest thanks."

Then he turns to the dozens of men standing on the ships and on the beach.

"A cheer for all of the heroes of the battle!" He shouts.

And as one, every man raises an arm and cheers.

Go directly to Encounter 11.

Encounter Nine: Bitter Victory

As the PCs boat slides underwater, they witness the end of the desperate battle. Faced with no other options, Ellis Lorinar and Xarashanamayar abandon the sinking ship. Ellis then rams his vessel into the Slaver boat, sinking both of them. The sea-boar indiscriminately attacks anyone in the water, slaughtering those soldiers and crew who don't drown outright. Since the sea-boar is occupied with the smorgasbord of other victims, he leaves the PCs and the crew of Dimuzi's Rage unmolested. Meanwhile, Xarashanamayar pummels the island forces with fireballs, giving his ship enough time to land and begin a ground assault. With such severely reduced numbers of troops, the battle is a near thing and goes practically down to the last man.

While Ellis Lorinar's assault is ultimately victorious, the cost is very dear. Fully two-thirds of his force is killed, and most of the survivors are injured. Two of his ships are destroyed, and Dimuzi's Rage is kindling. He hauls all the survivors aboard the last ship for an immediate departure for Leukish. Read the following.

The mood is somber. The boat is crammed with wounded soldiers, hastily bandaged, lying on the open deck. No one speaks, and the silence is unnerving.

Ellis Lorinar is drenched in sweat, his armor is dented, rent, and smeared in blood and dirt, and his face is black and burned. Xarashanamayar is also a filthy mess, he is coated in ash, and what used to be his hair is now a wild, tangled, singed, grimy mass. The two sit dejectedly on coils of rope near the bow.

"If the stakes hadn't been so high," says Ellis Lorinar thickly, "I could say this campaign was a complete success. Such a horrendous loss of life!"

Xarashanamayar merely shakes his head and lowers it into his hands, staring deeply into the lake of bottomless depths.

It will be a long trip back to Leukish.

Go directly to Encounter 11

Encounter Ten: While You Were Out

If the PCs don't join the attack on the island base, the next day they are once again summoned to an audience with Ellis Lorinar at the Ducal Palace. He and Xarashanamayar greet them in the same audience chamber, but they look terrible. Both have visible burns to their faces, Xarashanamayar is missing large chunks of

hair, and Ellis has thick bandages over his chin and left arm.

They give the players an account of the battle (paraphrase the events from Encounter 9), and how the Duchy forces succeeded in taking the base, but at tremendous cost. There are veiled insinuations that the PCs presence at the battle could have made a difference to the final outcome, but they both stop short of making accusations. Go directly to Encounter 11.

Encounter Eleven: Conclusion

At this point, Ellis Lorinar and Xarashanamayar ask to hear what the PCs found in Stillwater. Both react with shock and surprise to hear the Slavers had built such an expansive base, and are relieved that they never got a chance to use it. The PCs earn at least a certain measure of congratulations, and depending on their successes they might also earn some valuable favors.

If the PCs learned Sharynne is a vampire, and if they think to tell Ellis Lorinar, he and Xarashanamayar are horrified. Particularly if the PCs can't assure them that she was permanently killed. After extracting every last detail about her from the party, Ellis sits thoughtfully, and says he will have to consider his options before deciding what to do next.

For helping Ellis Lorinar in his assault, they earn **Influence with Ellis Lorinar**. If they also drove off the sea-boar (either by killing it or luring it away with a meal) they also earn the **Favor of Ellis Lorinar**.

Lord Ellis will demand that the PCs return all of the goods found on Markessa the Blue, explaining that they were all taken from the homes of captured slaves in the Duchy. If the PCs ask, he has documentation to verify that they were taken. If the PCs question the truthfulness of his statements in this regard, they can only gain the **Influence of Ellis Lorinar**, not the **Favor of Ellis Lorinar**. If the PCs refuse to return the goods so they may be returned to the rightful owners, they may not gain either the Influence or the Favor of Ellis Lorinar nor the Favor of Xarashanamayar, but gain full access to all of the items that Markessa the Blue had and may use them for MIC purposes (cross off and initial the NO MIC on the item access). If the PCs return these items to Ellis, they still gain access on the AR to any one item that Markessa the Blue had (representing the families appreciation for killing her), but only for purchase and not for Magic Item Creation. This item must be chosen on this AR. Cross off all other items that Markess the Blue owned.

If the PCs have earned either Influence or Favor with Ellis Lorinar, he will make sure they are paid any difference between what they found and the treasure cap, basically making sure that they are properly compensated for their troubles.

If the PCs return the box from area 17 to the Xarashanamayar, he is overjoyed and they earn the **Favor of Xarashanamayar** unless they have not returned the stolen items that Markessa the Blue had. If they do not return the box but tell him of its location, he immediately goes to claim it but finds it missing. In this case the PCs get nothing. If instead they tampered with the box and it *teleported* away, he is furious and berates them at length. They earn the **Enmity of Xarashanamayar**.

The PCs earn no favors or influence with either gentleman if they fouled up Encounter 1.

If the PCs had a peaceful interaction with Markessa the Green or they succeeded in driving the Slavers from the Duchy without her help, they earn the **Favor of Markessa the Green**.

The End

Experience Point Summary

Award XP as follows based on which of the following goals were accomplished.

Encounter Four

Surviving the gauntlet of traps.

APL 4 – 125 XP

APL 6 – 150 XP

APL 8 – 200 XP

APL 10 – 250 XP

APL 12 – 275 XP

Defeating the White Markessas: Area 11

APL 4 – 180 XP

APL 6 – 240 XP

APL 8 – 300 XP

APL 10 – 360 XP

APL 12 – 420 XP

Defeating Markessa the Blue: Area 17

APL 4 – 120 XP

APL 6 – 180 XP

APL 8 – 240 XP

APL 10 – 300 XP

APL 12 – 360 XP

Encounter Six

Exposing/Defeating Sharynne

APL 4 – 90 XP

APL 6 – 150 XP

APL 8 – 210 XP

APL 10 – 270 XP

APL 12 – 330 XP

Encounter Eight

Repelling/Killing the Sea-Boar

APL 4 – 90 XP

APL 6 – 105 XP

APL 8 – 145 XP

APL 10 – 180 XP

APL 12 – 210 XP

Conclusion

Returning the box to Xarashanamayar

APL 4 – 50 XP

APL 6 – 75 XP

APL 8 – 100 XP

APL 10 – 125 XP

APL 12 – 150 XP

Total XP

APL 4 – 655 XP

APL 6 – 900 XP

APL 8 – 1195 XP

APL 10 – 1485 XP

APL 12 – 1745 XP

Treasure Summary

The PCs can gain the following treasure if they retrieved it (unused) from their foes.

Encounter Four: Slavers Base

Area 11 – The White Markessa

APL 4: L: 24gp; C: ogp; M: ogp

APL 6: L: 37gp; C: ogp; M: ogp

APL 8: L: 37gp; C: ogp; M: 300 gp -potion of protection from arrows (25 gp each)

APL 10: L: 37gp; C: ogp; M: 750 gp -potion of protection from arrows (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), scroll of web (3rd level) (12.5 gp each)

APL 12: L: 37gp; C: ogp; M: 750 gp -potion of protection from arrows (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), scroll of web (3rd level) (12.5 gp each)

Area 17 – Markessa the Blue

APL 4: L: 126 gp; C: ogp; M: 3,177 gp -+1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain (1527 gp), potion of barkskin (+2) (25 gp), potion of blur (3rd level) (25 gp), Gloves of Dexterity +2 (333 gp), Mithral Breastplate (350 gp), Ring of Protection +1 (167 gp), Vest of Resistance +3 (750 gp).

APL 6 – L: 1 gp; C: ogp; M: 3260 gp – Gloves of Dexterity +2 (333 gp), +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain (1527 gp), potion of barkskin (+2) (25 gp), potion of blur (3rd level) (25 gp), Ring of Protection +1 (167 gp), Mithral Breastplate +1 (433 gp), Vest of Resistance +3 (750 gp).

APL 8 – L: 1 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 3,726 gp - Gloves of Dexterity +2 (333 gp), +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain (1527 gp), potion of barkskin (+4) (75 gp), potion of blur (3rd level) (25 gp), Ring of Protection +2 (333 gp), Mithral Breastplate +1 Light Fortification (683 gp), Vest of Resistance +3 (750 gp).

APL 10 – L: 1 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 4,143 gp - Gloves of Dexterity +2 (333 gp), +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain (1527 gp), ring of protection +2 (333 gp), potion of barkskin (+4) (75 gp), potion of blur (3rd level) (25 gp), Mithral Breastplate +2 Light Fortification (1,100 gp), Vest of Resistance +3 (750 gp).

APL 12 – L: 1 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 9,076 gp - Gloves of Dexterity +2 (333 gp), +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain (1527 gp), ring of protection +3 (1,500 gp), potion of barkskin (+4) (75 gp), cloak of displacement (minor) (2000 gp), boots of striding and springing (458 gp), Mithral Breastplate +2 Moderate Fortification (2,433 gp), Vest of Resistance +3 (750 gp).

Total Possible Treasure*

APL 4: L: 150 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,577 gp - Total: 894 gp (cap at 650 gp)

APL 6: L: 38 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 2256 gp - Total: 1461 gp (cap at 900 gp)

APL 8: L: 38 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 4105 gp - Total: 3310 gp (cap at 1300 gp)

APL 10: L: 38 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 6140 gp - Total: 6178 gp (cap at 2300 gp)

APL 12: L: 38 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 7879 gp - Total: 9778 gp (cap at 3300 gp)

**NOTE: Read the conclusion carefully. Most of the items on Markessa the Blue will not be cashed in and therefore will not contribute to the Total Possible Treasure here. If PCs do not hand over the items to Lord Ellis, then most of that treasure will be over the cap and they will not get to keep it.*

Items for the Adventure Record

Special

Influence with Ellis Lorinar:

For helping Ellis Lorinar in his mission, the Administrator pulls some strings on your behalf. This can either be used as (1) two influence points from a noble house for the purposes of qualifying for meta-orgs, or (2) a free upgrade from Standard to Luxury lifestyle on any three Regional modules set in the Duchy of Urnst. The DM voids this favor once it is used.

Favor of Ellis Lorinar:

For helping Ellis Lorinar to achieve a spectacular come-from-behind victory, he puts his personal smith at your disposal. You may use this favor to buy, at standard prices, any one of the following upgrades to a suit of armor or a shield: upgrade from +1 to +2, *glamered*, *shadow*, or *blinding*.

Favor of Xarashanamayar:

You have proven your character to Xarashanamayar. You may use this favor for one of the following options. The DM voids this favor once you use it.

- Xarashanamayar personally tutors you in preparation for exams at the College of Sages and Sorcery in Nellix. This training provides a +6 circumstance bonus, divided as you please, among the required Knowledge checks. You retain this bonus until you pass.
- If you have already played URD3-05 *Plague of Rage*, and you still have the favor “Ellis Lorinar pulls some strings”, you may purchase those upgrades at half the listed cost. You must still, however, use the listed influence points.
- If you have already played URD3-05 *Plague of Rage*, and you still have the favor “Ellis Lorinar pulls some strings”, you do not need any influence points to access the listed upgrades. You must still, however, pay the listed cost.
- The mages of the Society of Magi imbue any single weapon with the *icy burst*, *shocking burst*, *thundering*, or *flaming burst* special ability at the usual cost. Only one enhancement may be added and only to one weapon.

Enmity of Xarashanamayar:

The Chancellor is furious with the PC for tampering with his box. If the character played URD3-05 *Plague of Rage* and has the favor “Ellis Lorinar pulls some strings”, the DM voids it immediately. The character can never gain another favor from Xarashanamayar.

Favor of Markessa the Green:

The rogue Slave Lord has taken an interest in this character, and will indirectly provide assistance in the future. What form this assistance will take is unknown by all but Markessa the Green.

Item Access

All APLs:

+1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain (Adventure; DMG)

+3 Vest of Resistance (Adventure; Tome & Blood)

APL 4:

Mithral Breastplate (Adventure; DMG)

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

Mithral Breastplate +1 (Adventure; DMG)

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

Mithral Breastplate +1 Light Fortification (Adventure; DMG) – NO MIC.

Ring of Protection +2 (Adventure; DMG)

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

Mithral Breastplate +2 Light Fortification (Adventure; DMG)

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

Mithral Breastplate +2 Medium Fortification (Adventure; DMG)

Cloak of Displacement, Minor (Adventure; DMG)

Boots of Striding and Springing (Adventure; Minor)

Appendix One – Encounter 4 Area 11

APL 4

White Markessas (8): Female elf Sor 1; CR 1; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 1d4-2; hp 2 each; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Base Atk +0; Grp -1; Atk or Full Atk -1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ elf traits; AL N; SV Fort -2, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +2, Listen +7, Search +2, Spot +5; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts.

Spells (5/4; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 – acid splash, ray of frost, touch of fatigue; 1st – magic missile, shield.

APL 6

White Markessas (8): Female elf Sor 1; CR 1; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 1d4-2; hp 2 each; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Base Atk +0; Grp -1; Atk or Full Atk -1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ elf traits; AL N; SV Fort -2, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +2, Listen +7, Search +2, Spot +5; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts.

Spells (5/4; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 – acid splash, ray of frost, touch of fatigue; 1st – magic missile, shield.

APL 8

White Markessas (12): Female elf Sor 3; CR 3; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 3d4-2; hp 4 each; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grp +0; Atk or Full Atk +0 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ elf trait; AL N; SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Listen +8, Search +2, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, potion of protection from arrows.

Spells (6/6; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 – acid splash, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue; 1st – mage armor, magic missile, shield.

APL 10

White Markessas (12): Female elf Sor 5; CR 5; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 5d4-2; hp 6 each; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ elf traits; AL N; SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Listen +9, Search +2, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, potion of protection from arrows, potion of invisibility, scroll of web (3rd level caster).

Spells (6/7/5; base DC 13 + spell level): 0 – acid splash, flare, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue; 1st – mage armor, magic missile, magic weapon, shield; 2nd – mirror image, scorching ray.

APL 12

White Markessas (12): Female elf Sor 7; CR 7; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 7d4-2; hp 8 each; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +3; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ elf traits; AL N; SV Fort 0, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Listen +10, Search +2, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Spell Focus (evocation).

Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, potion of protection from arrows, potion of invisibility, scroll of web (3rd level caster).

Spells (6/7/7/5; base DC 13 + spell level, or 14 + spell level for evocations): 0 – acid splash, dancing lights, flare, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue; 1st – mage armor, magic missile, magic weapon, shield, true strike; 2nd – mirror image, scorching ray, see invisibility; 3rd – fireball, dispel magic.

Appendix Two – Encounter 4 Area 17

APL 4

Markessa the Blue: Female elf Rog 3 Ftr 3; CR 6; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 3d6+3d10+6; hp 38; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flatfooted 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (2d4+4+1d6/Spiked Chain); SQ elf traits, Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense +1, Evasion, Sneak Attack +2d6, Trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +10, Jump +8, Knowledge (Local – Nyrond Metaregion) +4, Listen +7, Profession (Slaver) +5, Sense Motive +11, Spot +7, Tumble +14, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Spiked Chain), Negotiator, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain, potion of barkskin (+2), potion of blur (3rd level), Gloves of Dexterity +2, Mithral Breastplate, Ring of Protection +1, Vest of Resistance +3.

APL 6

Markessa the Blue: Female elf Rog 3 Ftr 5; CR 8; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 3d6+5d10+8; hp 52; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flatfooted 16; Base Atk +7/+2; Grp +9; Atk or Full Atk +12/+7 melee (2d4+4+1d6/Spiked Chain); SQ elf traits, Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense +1, Evasion, Sneak Attack +2d6, Trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +14, Jump +8, Knowledge (Local – Metaregion IV) +4, Listen +7, Profession (Slaver) +5, Sense Motive +11, Spot +7, Swim +4, Tumble +14, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Spiked Chain), Improved Feint, Negotiator, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Gloves of Dexterity +2, +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain, potion of barkskin (+2), potion of blur (3rd level), Ring of Protection +1, Mithral Breastplate +1, Vest of Resistance +3.

APL 8

Markessa the Blue: Female elf Rog 4 Ftr 6; CR 10; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 4d6+6d10+10; hp 64; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flatfooted 16; Base

Atk +9/+4; Grp +11; Atk or Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d4+6+1d6/Spiked Chain); SQ elf traits, Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense +1, Evasion, Sneak Attack +2d6, Trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +20, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +16, Jump +8, Knowledge (Local – Metaregion IV) +4, Listen +9, Profession (Slaver) +7, Sense Motive +13, Spot +7, Swim +6, Tumble +14, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Spiked Chain), Improved Feint, Negotiator, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Spiked Chain), Weapon Specialization (Spiked Chain).

Possessions: Gloves of Dexterity +2, +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain, potion of barkskin (+4), potion of blur (3rd level), Ring of Protection +2, Mithral Breastplate +1 Light Fortification, Vest of Resistance +3.

APL 10

Markessa the Blue: Female elf Rog 5 Ftr 7; CR 12; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 5d6+7d10+12; hp 76; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 16, flatfooted 23; Base Atk +10/+5; Grp +12; Atk or Full Atk +16/+11 melee (2d4+6+1d6/Spiked Chain); SQ elf traits, Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense +1, Evasion, Sneak Attack +3d6, Trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Diplomacy +20, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +18, Jump +8, Knowledge (Local – Metaregion IV) +4, Listen +10, Profession (Slaver) +10, Sense Motive +18, Spot +8, Swim +8, Tumble +14, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Spiked Chain), Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Negotiator, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Spiked Chain), Weapon Specialization (Spiked Chain).

Possessions: Gloves of Dexterity +2, +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain, ring of protection +2, potion of barkskin (+4), potion of blur (3rd level), Mithral Breastplate +2 Light Fortification, Vest of Resistance +3.

APL 12

Markessa the Blue: Female elf Rog 6 Ftr 8; CR 14; Medium-sized humanoid (elf); HD 6d6+8d10+14; hp 88; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 17, flatfooted 24; Base Atk +12/+7/+2; Grp +14; Atk or Full Atk +18/+13/+8

melee (2d4+6+1d6/Spiked Chain); SQ elf traits, Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense +2, Evasion, Sneak Attack +3d6, Trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +24, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +20, Jump +8, Knowledge (Local – Metaregion IV) +4, Listen +11, Profession (Slaver) +11, Sense Motive +20, Spot +8, Swim +10, Tumble +14, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Spiked Chain), Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Negotiator, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Spiked Chain), Weapon Specialization (Spiked Chain).

Possessions: Gloves of Dexterity +2, +1 Merciful Bane (humanoid – human) spiked chain, ring of protection +3, potion of barkskin (+4), cloak of displacement (minor), boots of striding and springing, Mithral Breastplate +2 Moderate Fortification, Vest of Resistance +3.

Appendix Three - Encounter 6

Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 14, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Climb +3, Profession (politician) +14, Diplomacy +15, Hide +10, Listen +19, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Sense Motive +22, Spot +12; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Diplomacy, Skill Focus: Profession (politician), Skill Focus: Sense Motive.

The save DC for Sharynne's vampire abilities is 16. This save DC is Charisma-based.

APL 10

Sharynne, human vampire Ari6/Mnk2: CR 9; Medium undead; HD 8d12+8; hp 69; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (touch 17, flat-footed 19); BAB +5; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain, unarmed strike); Full Atk +7/+7 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain on 1st attack that hits, unarmed strike); SA blood drain, create spawn, domination, energy drain, flurry of blows, stunning fist (2/day, save DC 14); SQ alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft, evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance 10, spider climb, undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 18, Con -, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +21, Climb +4, Profession (politician) +15, Diplomacy +17, Hide +14, Listen +20, Move Silently +14, Search +11, Sense Motive +23, Spot +13; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Diplomacy, Skill Focus: Profession (politician), Skill Focus: Sense Motive, Stunning Fist.

The save DC for Sharynne's vampire abilities is 19. This save DC is Charisma-based.

APL 12

Sharynne, human vampire Ari6/Mnk4: CR 11; Medium undead; HD 10d12+10; hp 85; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23 (touch 17, flat-footed 19); BAB +7; Grp +11; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4 plus energy drain, unarmed strike); Full Atk +9/+9/+4 melee (1d8+4 plus energy drain on 1st attack that hits, unarmed strike); SA blood drain, create spawn, domination, energy drain, flurry of blows (+8/+8/+3 three slams), stunning fist (4/day, save DC 15); SQ Alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft, evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance 10, slow fall 20 ft, spider climb, still mind, undead traits; AL LE;

APL 4

Sharynne, human vampire spawn: CR 4; Medium undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +2; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, domination, energy drain; SQ damage reduction 5/silver, darkvision 60 ft, fast healing 2, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance 10, spider climb, undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 14, Con -, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +8, Profession (politician) +4, Diplomacy +4, Hide +10, Search, +8, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Profession (politician), Toughness

APL 6

Sharynne, human vampire Ari 4: CR 5; Medium undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; BAB +3; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, create spawn, domination, energy drain; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance 10, spider climb, undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 14, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +18, Climb +3, Profession (politician) +12, Diplomacy +10, Hide +10, Listen +17, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Sense Motive +20, Spot +12; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Profession (politician), Skill Focus: Sense Motive, Toughness.

The save DC for Sharynne's vampire abilities is 15. This save DC is Charisma-based.

APL 8

Sharynne, human vampire Ari 6: CR 7; Medium undead; HD 6d12+6; hp 45; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; BAB +4; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, create spawn, domination, energy drain; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance 10, spider climb, undead traits; AL LE; SV

SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +12; Str 18, Dex 18, Con -, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +21, Climb +3, Profession (politician) +17, Diplomacy +19, Hide +14, Listen +20, Move Silently +14, Search +11, Sense Motive +25, Spot +13; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility Skill Focus: Diplomacy, Skill Focus: Profession (politician), Skill Focus: Sense Motive.

The save DC for Sharynne's vampire abilities is 20. This save DC is Charisma-based.

Appendix Four – Encounter 7

APL 4

Sea-boar: Half-green dragon advanced sea lion; CR 6; Large dragon (augmented magical beast); HD 6d12+24; hp 63; Init +1; Spd 10 ft, swim 40 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +6; Grp +18; Atk +13 melee (1d6+8, claw); Full Atk +13 melee (1d6+8, 2 claws), +8 melee (1d8+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA breath weapon, rend 2d6+12; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +12, Spot +12, Swim +25; Alertness, Endurance, Iron Will.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot line, once per day, damage 6d8 acid, Reflex save DC 17 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rend (Ex): If the sea-boar hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an extra 2d6+12 points of damage.

APL 6

Sea-boar: Fiendish half-green dragon advanced sea lion; CR 9; Large dragon (augmented magical beast, extraplanar); HD 8d12+32; hp 84; Init +1; Spd 10 ft, swim 40 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +8; Grp +21; Atk +16 melee (1d6+9, claw); Full Atk +16 melee (1d6+9, 2 claws), +11 melee (1d8+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA breath weapon, rend 2d6+13, smite good; SQ darkvision 60 ft., DR 5/magic, immunity to acid, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, resistance to cold and fire 10, scent, spell resistance 13; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 28, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +14, Spot +14, Swim +27; Alertness, Endurance, Iron Will.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot line, once per day, damage 6d8 acid, Reflex save DC 18 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rend (Ex): If the sea-boar hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an extra 2d6+12 points of damage.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, the sea-boar can make a normal melee attack to deal 8 points of extra damage against a good foe.

APL 8

Sea-boar: Fiendish half-green dragon advanced sea lion Bbn 1; CR 10; Large dragon (augmented magical beast, extraplanar); HD 9d12+1d12+50; hp 120; Init +0; Spd 20 ft, swim 50 ft.; AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +10; Grp +24; Atk +19 melee (1d6+10, claw); Full Atk +19 melee (1d6+10, 2 claws), +14 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA breath weapon, rage 1/day, rend 2d6+15, smite good; SQ darkvision 60 ft., DR 5/magic, immunity to acid, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, resistance to cold and fire 10, scent, spell resistance 15; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 31, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +15, Spot +15, Swim +29; Alertness, Die Hard, Endurance, Iron Will.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot line, once per day, damage 6d8 acid, Reflex save DC 19 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rage (Ex): 1/day, duration 10 rounds, fatigued when rage ends. Stats when raging are as follows: hp 140; AC 22, touch 8, flat-footed 19; Grp +26; Atk +21 melee (1d6+12, claw); Full Atk +21 melee (1d6+12, 2 claws), +16 melee (1d8+6, bite); SQ Rend 2d6+18; SV Fort +15, Will +9; Str 35, Con 24; Swim skill goes to +31; Breath weapon DC goes to 21.

Rend (Ex): If the sea-boar hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an extra 2d6+15 points of damage.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, the sea-boar can make a normal melee attack to deal 10 points of extra damage against a good foe.

APL 10

Sea-boar: Fiendish half-green dragon advanced sea lion Bbn1; CR 12; Huge dragon (augmented magical beast, extraplanar); HD 10d12+1d12+77; hp 154; Init +0; Spd 20 ft, swim 50 ft.; AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +11; Grp +33; Atk +23 melee (1d8+14, claw); Full Atk +23 melee (1d8+14, 2 claws), +18 melee (2d6+7, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Breath weapon, rage 1/day, rend 2d8+21, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR 5/magic, immunity to acid, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, resistance to cold and fire 10, scent, spell resistance 16; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 39, Dex 14, Con 24, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +16, Spot +16, Swim +34; Alertness, Die Hard, Endurance, Iron Will.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot line, once per day, damage 6d8 acid, Reflex save DC 22 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rage (Ex): 1/day, duration 12 rounds, fatigued when rage ends. Stats when raging are as follows: hp 176; AC 23, touch 8, flat-footed 21; Grp +35; Atk +25 melee (1d8+16, claw); Full Atk +25 melee (1d8+16, 2 claws), +20 melee (2d6+8, bite); SQ Rend 2d8+24; SV Fort +18, Will +9; Str 43, Con 28; Swim skill goes to +36; Breath weapon DC goes to 24.

Rend (Ex): If the sea-boar hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an extra 2d8+21 points of damage.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, the sea-boar can make a normal melee attack to deal 11 points of extra damage against a good foe.

APL 12

Sea-boar: Fiendish half-green dragon advanced sea lion Bbn1; CR 14; Huge dragon (augmented magical beast, extraplanar); HD 14d12+1d12+105; hp 208; Init +0; Spd 20 ft, swim 50 ft.; AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +15; Grp +38; Atk +28 melee (1d8+15, claw); Full Atk +28 melee (1d8+15, 2 claws), +23 melee (2d6+7, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Breath weapon, rage 1/day, rend 2d8+22, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR 10/magic, immunity to acid, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, resistance to cold and fire 10, scent, spell resistance 20; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +8; Str 40, Dex 14, Con 24, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +20, Spot +20, Swim +39; Alertness, Die Hard, Endurance, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot line, once per day, damage 6d8 acid, Reflex save DC 24 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rage (Ex): 1/day, duration 12 rounds, fatigued when rage ends. Stats when raging are as follows: hp 238; AC 23, touch 8, flat-footed 21; Grp +40; Atk +30 melee (1d8+17, claw); Full Atk +30 melee (1d8+17, 2 claws), +25 melee (2d6+9, bite); SQ Rend 2d8+25; SV Fort +20, Will +10; Str 44, Con 28; Swim skill goes to +41; Breath weapon DC goes to 26.

Rend (Ex): If the sea-boar hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an extra 2d8+22 points of damage.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, the sea-boar can make a normal melee attack to deal 15 points of extra damage against a good foe.

Appendix Five – A Brief History of Stillwater

Stillwater is a village in flux. Up until three years ago, the community was perched on the brink of financial ruin, and the buildings were as near to collapse as the economy. At the time, the shrinking population consisted entirely of impoverished, illiterate farmers and fishermen, a single merchant named Jeannine in exile from Leukish, a gnome farmer named Gibbernick with the gift of the gab, and an overweight, mayor in fantastically poor health. When he received word that Duke Karll Lorinar himself intended to pass through the village on his return route from a conference in the County, the mayor actually died of a heart attack.

Unbelievably, this proved to be the turning point for Stillwater.

Sharynne, the village's young, well-meaning, and hopelessly inexperienced accounting clerk, was thrust into the Mayor's chair. Somehow, she, Jeannine, and Gibbernick managed to throw together an official welcome for the Duke's entourage. The men of Stillwater were all set to work cleaning the mounds of rotting fish entrails from the streets, and doing what repairs they could to the dilapidated, broken-down building fronts, while the women set to weaving monstrous trains of wildflowers to conceal what couldn't be fixed.

As the Duke's entourage crested the hilltop barely a mile away, Sharynne had a flash of inspiration. She grabbed the three broadest, and least drunk, fishermen she could find and dressed them in red sashes made from tearing up the drapes from the mayor's residence. On the spot, she drafted the befuddled men into the village's newly formed, militia. With another flourish she appointed a bewildered Jeannine and Gibbernick Village Councilors. She then lined up every man woman and child along the village's only street. She herself stood at the end of the road, with the militia on one side, and the Village Councilors on the other. She then ordered the villagers to wave and cheer as the Duke approached, with a string of threats so loud and terrifying it would have shamed a harpy.

The Duke was greeted by a cheering mass of villagers before a breathtaking vista of quaint white homes draped in wildflowers. Duke Lorinar dallied for just a few moments; just long enough to compliment Sharynne on her beautiful community and her steadfast "Red Guard". And then he and his entourage were gone.

The Duke's visit had such a profound effect on the morale of the Stillmen. It quite literally changed their lives. They suddenly felt like they might be *worth* something, and almost overnight their fortunes changed.

Every individual villager started pulling together; the farmers formed a cooperative, the fishermen coordinated their trawling, and everyone began working like never before. The "Red Guard" became Stillwater's official militia and its ranks swelled with volunteers, even

working unpaid at first for the prestige. Inside of six months, through sheer bull-headed stubbornness and desire, the villagers actually became the fake façade Sharynne had cobbled together for the Duke's visit. It was a time of almost giddy prosperity.

Of course nothing so idyllic could possibly last. Lord Breckenridge, the titular noble of the region, had long ignored Stillwater as an embarrassing backwater, and an economic liability. When the substantial tax revenues started to accumulate, though, he acquired a sudden renewed interest. On his first official visit, he fully expected to walk in and simply assume political control. He was quite taken aback when Sharynne told him to shove off, and then bodily threw him out of her office.

The Stillmen's loyalty to the woman who had restored their dignity was shocking to Lord Breckenridge. But not nearly as shocking as the loathing for him, the Lord who had abandoned them when times were hard to magically re-appear when things improved. Clearly, if he hoped to win this conflict, he would have to be subtle.

Appendix Six – Markessa the Green

At some point during the adventure, the PCs meet the enigmatic Markessa the Green. She is unique among the small army of Markessa clones, in that she retains some semblance of free will. By all outward appearances, the surgery and brainwashing that turned her into yet another duplicate were completely successful, but when she was sent on her first mission to Hardby she disappeared.

She did not emerge from the cloning process unscathed. She is deeply damaged psychologically, with at least two distinct personalities. On the one hand she hates and despises the Slavers for their evil agenda, particularly the witch Markessa who destroyed the woman she once was.

On the other hand she is fascinated and obsessed with the Slavers, oddly drawn to them and repulsed at the same time. So for the past three years she has tracked their movements, catalogued their strategies, and learned down to the minute detail every working of their operation. That she is a Markessa clone actually helps her. Many times she has simply walked into major Slaver hideouts, taken what intelligence she desired, and walked right back out again.

On a few occasions, when she has observed others actively working to bring down the Slavers, she acted behind the scenes to aid them. Why she cannot bring herself to act directly is a mystery even to her. With the PCs, she sees that what they are doing and is willing to take steps to see they succeed.

At one point in the adventure, triggered by the events of one of the Optional Encounters, Markessa the Green presents herself to the PCs. Read the following when she appears.

Suddenly a figure steps out of the shadows, draped in a green, hooded cloak. From her hands she is obviously a woman; long, slender, delicate fingers, luxurious white skin, and perfectly manicured nails, polished bright green. She moves gracefully forward, keeping her distance.

“I think maybe it’s time I introduced myself.” She says. Her voice is melodic, almost lilting.

Her elegant hands pull back the hood of her cloak. It’s the same woman... again! The face is nearly identical, but her eyes are deep forest green, and her hair, luxurious, brown and wavy, cascades over her shoulders. There is the barest smile on her lips.

She makes no threatening moves, standing with her hands empty and unmoving at her side. Nevertheless, there is a strong chance the PCs may attack her, especially if Markessa the Blue has just said her piece about the hydra’s many heads. If this happens, she uses every power at her disposal to escape. She tries not to kill any PCs, but will not hesitate to do so if it is the only way for her to get away. If, by some miracle, the party does

kill Markessa the Green, her body and all of her possessions disappear in an inexplicable puff of magical energy.

Markessa the Green: female elf ftr6/wiz6; CR 12; medium-sized humanoid; HD 6d10+6d4; hp 58; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 15, flat-footed 18) or 25 w/shield and Dodge; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+4, staff of the woodlands) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6+2, composite mighty shortbow) or +9/+9/+4 w/ rapid shot; SA spells, spring attack; SQ low-light vision, immune to sleep; AL NG; Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills & feats: Concentration +16, Hide +18, Ride +10, Spellcraft +10; Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Combat Casting, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Shot on the Run, Skill Focus – quarterstaff

Spells prepared (4,3,3,2; base DC 12 + spell level): 0 – read magic x2, detect magic x2; 1st – magic missile, silent image, sleep; 2nd – alter self, invisibility x2; 3rd – lightning bolt, haste.

Possessions: cloak of elvenkind, composite mighty shortbow (+2), staff of the woodlands, studded leather armor +2, ring of protection +3, ring of wishes (1 charge)

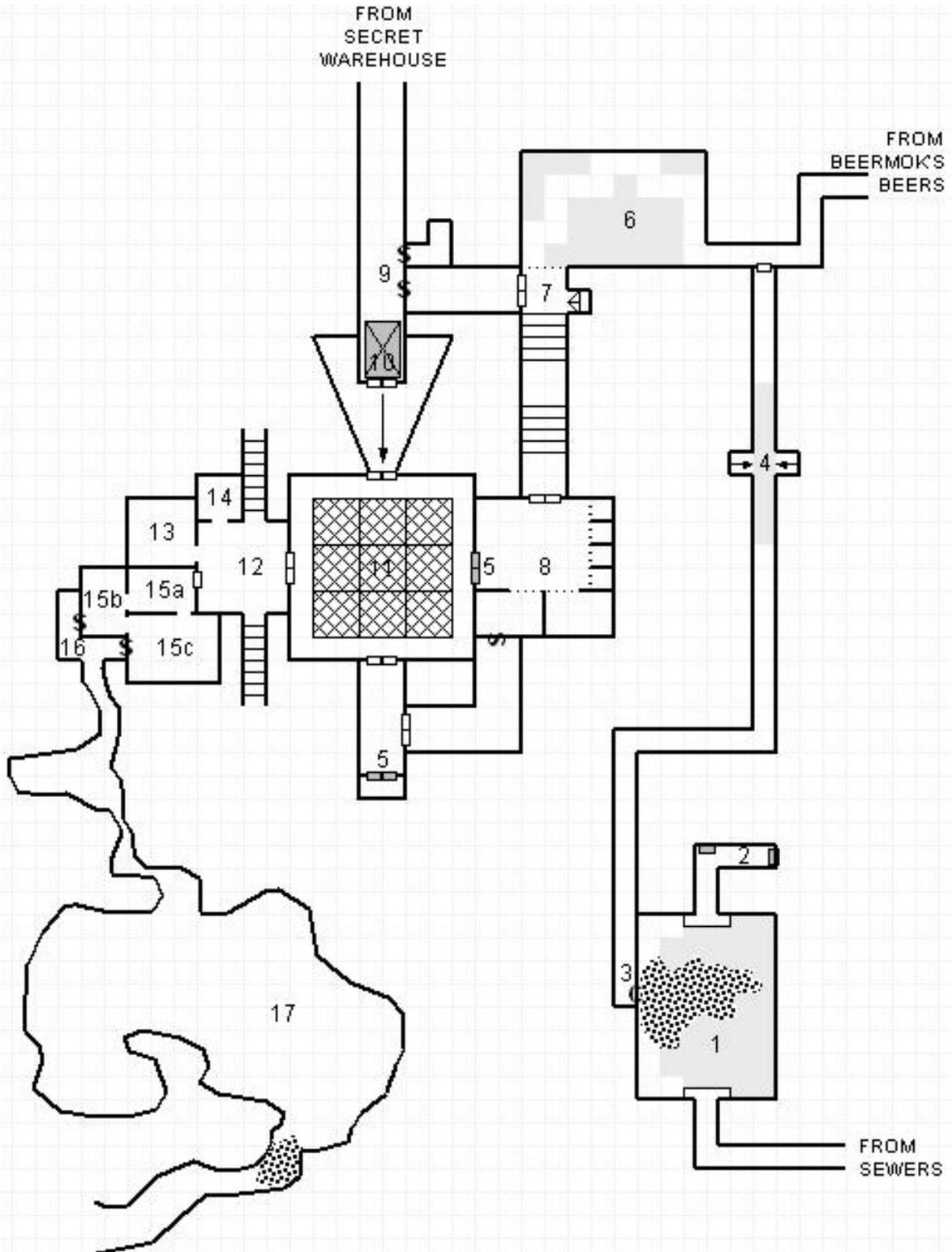
If the PCs do not attack, and are willing to talk, Markessa the Green indicates she is willing to help them destroy the Slavers’ Duchy operations (exactly how depends on which optional Encounter). She answers no questions, and tolerates no funny business from the PCs. She does what she came to do and then leaves. If the PCs makes things difficult for her, she says quite blandly that if they don’t want her help she’ll leave; and she will.

Appendix Seven – Critical Events Summary

The PCs actions during this adventure may affect events in the future. The DM is encouraged to answer the following questions and send the results to **hkertman@telusplanet.net**. The first fifteen summaries received will be used in a future sequel.

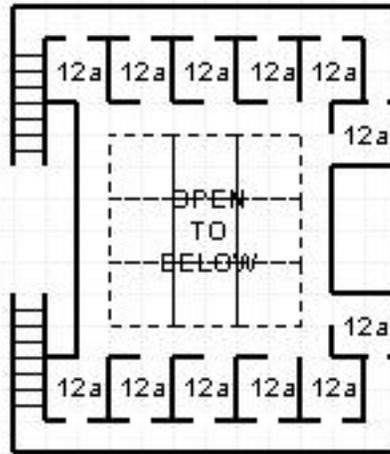
- (1) Did the PCs discover Sharynne is a vampire?
- (2) Was Sharynne killed, and her coffin destroyed?
- (3) Did the PCs tell Ellis Lorinar Sharynne is a vampire?
- (4) Did the party attack Markessa the Green?
- (5) Was Markessa the Green killed?

Appendix Eight – Map of Slaver Base



Stillwater Slaver Base – Ground Level

Appendix Nine – Map of Slaver Base Balcony



Stillwater Slaver Base – Balcony

Player Handout #1

My Blue Sister,

I have sent a guardian for your island base, for extra protection from sea attack. It will lair at the foot of your island, claiming all the waters around as its territory. It will attack and destroy any ships that approach within half a mile.

But be warned, though I have succeeded in training it somewhat, it has no loyalties and will destroy your own ships as surely those of your enemies. If your ship's captains throw a side of cow, or a large pig carcass, overboard after the beast's first approach, it will leave with the meal and let the ship pass. Be vigilant! I lost a ship last year because an inattentive crew was slow to provide the beast its' snack.

Glory to all our Sisters, and our Most Flawless Mother,

Your Red Sister.