

NYR4-S03

Extracurricular Activities

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Nyronnd Introductory Adventure

Version 1.5

Round 1

by Joshua Kennedy

with special thanks to David Keith

A Royal University field trip has gone terribly wrong, and somehow you find yourself in the middle of the whole mess. Can you save a life and a reputation without turning the entire academic community on its head? A one-round introductory scenario for prudent first-level characters.

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

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Introduction

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

Preparation

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

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

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

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

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 DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

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

Tracking

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out the RPGA Tracking Sheet. The DM 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.

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

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 free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

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

Adventure Background

Kerwig Gablet Stringson Effervescery Tinkerman Hosennosh Kradallston is a promising Professor of Alchemy and the Arcane Arts at the College of Outgarius in Rel Mord University. Though still young for a gnome (only

65), Kerwig has proven himself among his colleagues to be a keen observer of all things magical. His dignified lineage, which he can trace back to the founding of the college, sets him apart from the more capricious gnomish magic users such as those in the AAAA. As an active Outgarian, Kerwig has striven for years to unlock the natural laws governing the use of magic. His particular academic emphasis has been the study of the properties of material components for arcane spells. Recently he has developed a theory regarding the necessity of material components in arcane spell casting. In order to qualify for a promotion to the office of Distinguished Professor in the Royal University Kerwig will present the results of his recent research to the review board during the annual Banquet of Distinction. In order to confirm his theory, though, he needs a sample from a Displacer Beast – no easy task for a bookworm like himself!

Kerwig has assigned his research assistant, an ambitious halfling named Maelwyn Tuckenbuck, to take a group of students to the town of Arndulanth where for years there have been rumors of a large, six-legged predator in the nearby Gamboge. They were instructed to secure the sample by whatever means necessary and return to Rel Mord before Kerwig's presentation.

Unfortunately, there are those who would rather see Kerwig fail in his efforts. Marcosh of Westerwood, a prominent member of the Wadroll School at the University and a member of Rel Mord's famous Wizard's Guild, is not fond of Kerwig's efforts to demystify his craft. Marcosh believes that those seeking to understand magic from a physical perspective are in fact trying to steal the honor that rightfully belongs Boccob. While Boccob is indeed "The Uncaring", not all of his followers are so apathetic, and Marcosh cannot ignore the blasphemy of people like Kerwig Kradallston. In fact, Marcosh's zeal is fundamentally neurotic. He has been affected by certain ancient Ur-Flan texts that he has been studying and has become quite mad. As a result, he plans to take whatever steps necessary to prevent Kerwig from getting the material he needs. Marcosh has hired a band of thugs to rough up the expedition and slow them down enough that Kerwig will miss his deadline.

Adventure Summary

- **Encounter One: A Strange Tale** - The PCs enter Arness, a farming community a day's travel from Arndulanth. There they

meet an Innkeeper and a minstrel who tell them about some of the recent activity in town. The minstrel also tells them about the local legend, the "hellcat."

- **Encounter Two: A Stranger's Tale** - The PCs travel into the Gamboge to investigate the existence of the creature and the fate of the other parties that recently passed through. They learn that Kerwig's research expedition has been recently attacked by bandits. They meet the Gamboge Foresters and they are asked by the researchers to help secure some much needed materials from the den of a Displacer Beast (the "hellcat").
- **Encounter Three: A Strange Tail** - The PCs explore the Displacer Beast's lair. They find the necessary materials and escape a dangerously unstable portion of the cave.
- **Encounter Four: Tailed by Strangers** - On their way to Rel Mord to collect their reward the expedition and party are attacked by the same thugs that originally attacked the camp.
- **Encounter Five: Strange Mail** - Back in Rel Mord the party meets Kerwig and are rewarded for their help. They are asked to help root out the source of Kerwig's problems once and for all.
- **Encounter Six: A Strange Trail** - The party investigates the recent attacks on Kerwig's operations and determines that Marcosh of Westerwood probably had a hand in the attack.
- **Encounter Seven: Strange Ale** - Marcosh makes one last attempt to thwart Kerwig at Kerwig's presentation at the annual Wizards Banquet.
- **Encounter Eight: Stranger Than Fiction** - The PCs confront Marcosh and solve Kerwig's problem once and for all, one way or another.

Preparation for Play

You may want to have any dwarven PCs roll a Search check ahead of time for the trap in Encounter Three. Since this is an introductory adventure, it is not likely that any other special preparation is necessary. Even if one or more characters have had interactions with members of

Rel Mord University or the Rel Mord Wizards Guild there is no reason to expect that they would have heard of any of the NPCs involved in this scenario.

If any of the PCs are already familiar with one another they may start out the scenario traveling together. Otherwise, the PCs meet in Encounter One.

Introduction

You've been traveling for days. Your feet are muddy, your back aches from carrying all your belongings in a sack for the last however-many-miles, and now it's starting to rain...again. No one ever told you that being an adventurer would be this much fun. Oh, the Nyronid countryside is pleasant enough, especially here in the shadows of the Gamboge, and at least you're not at home doing whatever chores those poor saps are stuck with; but where are the heroic exploits and the chests of gold of which you dreamt when you decided to go out on your own?

As dusk falls you find yourself approaching the small rural community of Arness. Just one more day and you'll be in Arndulanth. Surely you'll be able to find some adventuring work there; at least that's what you've been telling yourself the last few days. Through the dimming light you can see farmers in the nearby fields finishing their evening tasks. Candles appear in the farmhouse windows and you realize that they are probably sitting down to a hot meal. Just as you contemplate exactly how long it's been since you've had such a meal you catch the sweet smell of freshly baked bread wafting your way from the inn just ahead.

Encounter One: A Strange Tale

In this encounter the PCs meet each other and are prompted to investigate the strange creature in the nearby woods.

The inn, which is called Hokon's Place according to the sign outside, is mostly empty, but it's far from quiet. A large man behind the bar, who might as well be wearing a nametag that says "HOKON", is clapping and stomping his feet to the rhythm of a lively jig. Two barmaids dance and twirl as they clean off the

tables, tossing glasses and plates back and forth playfully.

The music is coming from a round-faced half-elf sitting on a barstool with his back to the south wall. In his lap is an old but finely crafted mandolin that resonates throughout the hall. Presently you are noticed, and the music stops. "Well, bust my buttons and call me a griffon's uncle!" the half-elf exclaims. "More adventurers!"

"Welcome, welcome," the man at the bar says loudly. "My name's Hokon, and this here's my place! Make yourselves at home!"

It seems that a few other weary travelers have followed the same enticing odor and are now standing in the doorway next to you.

Hokon Halfknot and his barmaids (who are also his daughters), Matilda and Gwenn, are jovial and pleasant. They welcome the PCs and are happy to serve them. Salista, the bard that was playing when they arrived, will take particular interest in the most heavily armed party members and will take to asking them all sorts of questions about the life of an adventurer; what it feels like to kill something "with that big sword", etc.

During the conversation, either as a result of direct questioning or as a matter of conversation, the PCs learn the following:

- The PCs comprise the third group of strangers that has passed through Arness in the last week. This is odd since the town is far enough away from Arndulanth that they rarely have large groups of adventurers pass through at any one time.
- About a week ago a large, poorly armed group (more than a dozen) was in Hokon's Place asking about the beast of local legend. They took off into the Gamboge looking ill prepared and carrying a lot of paper, ink, and quills.
- Just two days ago a group of 8 "adventurers", all heavily armed, also came through the village. They were asking lots of questions about the expedition that passed through earlier. Upon learning that just such a group had headed into the hills a few days before the party left hurriedly without even a proper meal or night's rest.

The first group was the expedition from Kerwig's lab, headed by Maelwyn Tuckenbuck.

The second group was the band of thugs, hired by Marcosh to insure the failure of the expedition. They would not have been wearing their fake IFG medallions. They save the medallions until just before their attack on the camp.

Should anyone ask more about the local creature, Hokon will quickly tell the PCs that it's nothing but a local superstition. Salista, though, has other ideas. He will wait until Hokon is in the back room to offer more information:

“Superstition, my foot,” the bard half mutters. “I suppose the missing livestock and eerie howls late at night are just my imagination?”

“Listen, you guys are adventurer’s, right? Well, I’ve seen enough to know that there is definitely something in that forest. See, the farmers around here are always loosing sheep and cattle, but for some reason they’re content to blame it on rustlers. Take Hokon, for example. I’ve heard him talking to Gwenn about something he calls the “hellcat”, but he refuses to admit it openly because he doesn’t want to drive away the little business he gets.

“I figure the other adventurers who came through this week are after the hellcat, since they all headed straight for the woods. Unfortunately, I didn’t get the chance to talk to any of them before they left. If you all are thinking of doing the same, would you consider doing me a favor? I’m always in search of good stories and good songs. If you could bring me back a good description of the hellcat I might be willing to work your names into a nice epic song for posterity. What do you say?”

Salista doesn't know anything else about the "hellcat", which is actually a Displacer Beast. He is sincere in his desire for a good description of the animal. If pressed further he will point out how odd it is that the motley crew of a week ago seemed to be armed with nothing more than a couple of crossbows and a lot of books. He hopes this party is better equipped.

Salista can point the PCs toward the small trail that the other parties followed into the Gamboge Forest. He suggests that the party start there, since the other "adventurers" seemed to know what they were after. He doubts whether anyone knows the exact location of the creature, though.

Encounter Two: A Stranger's Tale

Presumably the intrepid adventurers are interested in at least taking a look in the woods for the "hellcat." If the PCs set off in pursuit of the other "adventurers" read the following.

Underneath the green canopy of the Gamboge the thick, sweet air is a refreshing change from the road dust you've been choking down for the last few days. The Gamboge is a dense, lush forest and there are signs of life everywhere as you try your best to follow the tiny trail that Salista points out to you. As the path winds through the forest you catch a few glimpses of the Flinty Hills to the Southeast. Soon, the forest floor itself turns to rolling hills. The path you are on, which originally led you due East into the forest, is slowly bearing South.

A successful skill check using Knowledge (Local) or Knowledge (Nature) will reveal the following:

DC 10: The Gamboge is a wild forest, claimed by neither Nyronid nor The Pale. It is rich in natural resources and home to all sorts of intelligent and animal life.

DC 15: The residents of the Gamboge include many humanoids as well as many different species of dangerous animals.

A Survival check will give:

DC 15: There are plenty of small animals around, but the PCs notice that there are no signs of any animals medium or larger.

DC 20 (with Track feat only): Despite the rain the PCs can tell that they are following the tracks of at least one large party of humans or humanoids into the forest. They can't tell exactly how many, nor can they tell exactly how old the tracks are.

Finally, a Spot or Listen check will give:

DC 25: The PCs get the feeling that they are being watched, but they never get a good glimpse of anything more than a fleeting shadow.

The party is being watched by members of the Gamboge Foresters. The Foresters are wary of the PCs, having witnessed the recent violent attack of the research expedition by the hired thugs. Eventually, though, the PCs stumble across the ruined camp of the University expedition for

themselves. As they catch sight of the campsite read the following.

As the day wears on the light fades more quickly in the shade of the trees than on the King's highways, and in the twilight the shadows seem to dance and sway.

The trail widens slightly as you round a sharp bend, and before you is a unique scene: the remnants of a large camp are strewn across a broad clearing. Four tents are standing at the perimeter of a 50 ft. diameter circle, but others lie tattered throughout the camp. Several humans and a few elves, halflings, and gnomes, all dressed in simple robes, are huddled around a tiny fire at the edge of the camp. They are surrounded by clothing, pots and pans, and a veritable sea of waterlogged parchments strewn about the carpet of ferns and moss beneath your feet.

As you survey the scene you become aware of a few more figures in the camp that you didn't notice at first. Blending in to the surrounding vegetation almost perfectly are a handful of humans and elves that seem to be helping tend to the others. Two are standing guard around the edge of the camp and two more are helping to cook something over the fire. All of a sudden, a wood elf wearing a dark green cloak and earth-toned adventuring gear steps out of the forest.

"Halt! We'll have no more violence here. What are your intentions, strangers? Why are you in our wood?"

The elf's name is Tathre. He and his associates are members of the Gamboge Foresters, a reclusive band of rangers and druids dedicated to protecting the Gamboge and all of its peaceful residents. If the PCs ask about what happened, Tathre will tell them the following.

- The Gamboge Foresters are a loose-knit society of Rangers, Druids, and others who appreciate nature. They form a subset of the Nyrond Wilderness Alliance, whose main purpose is to protect the natural resources and peaceful inhabitants of Nyrond's forests and other wilderness areas.
- The Foresters heard a commotion late the previous day and came to investigate. They found a band of warriors attacking an unarmed encampment. The Foresters chased off the aggressors, killing a few in

the process, and have been tending to the wounded ever since.

- The leader of the camp is a halfling named Maelwyn who is currently helping apportion rations and fresh food brought by the Foresters to the rest of the people in the camp.

The attackers were thugs, hired by Kerwig's rival Marcosh, but were disguised as members of the Iron Fist Guild. They didn't take anything of value (the researchers really don't have anything of value), but just destroyed the expedition's equipment and killed a few researchers. The PCs will most likely not recognize the guild amulet, but Tathre will point out that each of the assailants was wearing a circular medallion with a symbol of crossed gauntlets in the middle. There are a few of these lying around on the 4 arrow-riddled bodies of the assailants that did not retreat fast enough.

If the PCs talk to Maelwyn they will find him to be a bit absent-minded and just a little aloof. He is preoccupied with the care of his assistants and the thought of the eminent failure of Kerwig's experiment. He is so distracted that it will be hard for the PCs to get any straight answers out of him.

Allow them to attempt a DC 12 Diplomacy check to get him to talk to them. Note that any attempt to Intimidate Maelwyn will result in the Foresters insisting that the PCs move along, in which case they will need to succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check just to continue questioning Maelwyn. Even if none of the PCs is able to make the skill check with Maelwyn, allow them to role-play their way into his graces by asking him direct questions. Eventually, Maelwyn will start talking straight.

"My name is Maelwyn Tuckenbuck. I am the head research assistant of the great Professor Kradallston at Rel Mord University. It has been my honor to lead this group of student researchers in pursuit of a matter of great interest and importance. I guess we just looked like easy targets to these bandits. Fortunately these woodsmen have been kind enough to defend us.

"We are all healed now, and have enough supplies to return home, but our work here is not done. I wonder if a group of adventurers such as yourselves would be willing to help us finish our assignment? My master is a prominent member of the academic community in Rel Mord, and I would make sure that he was made aware of your support."

If the PCs are willing to help, Maelwyn takes them a stone's throw away from the group huddled around the campfire and fills them in on the details. Otherwise, the party can go home, because the adventure is over for them.

“Perhaps you have heard the stories of a creature that lives in these woods? I believe the local farmers refer to it as the ‘hellcat.’ This creature does indeed exist, though it is no supernatural phenomenon. It is simply a powerful and rare predator that has taken up residence a bit closer to human settlements than others of its kind. Professor Kradallston has asked us to observe this creature, which he calls a Displacer Beast, and record in detail its behaviors. This we have done.

“There is something else, though, that is vital to our research. The professor requires a sample from the creature: a tooth. He has assured us that this beast sheds its teeth regularly. Unfortunately, this magnificent beast roves so far and fast, and with such stealth and finesse, that we have been unable to follow its tracks to collect a tooth in the wilderness. I believe the only reliable place to find the sample is in the beast’s own lair.

“The good news is that the beast goes out to hunt regularly, so there are many opportunities to gather the tooth. However, he is never gone for long, and my men and I are too weak and shaken to attempt the foray ourselves. Certainly a brave group of adventurers would be capable of securing this simple item. Will you help us? As I said before, my master would certainly be very grateful.”

Basically, Maelwyn and the other researchers are scared. They are still emotionally shaken by their ordeal the previous evening, and they have seen enough of the Displacer Beast to know that they don't want to get near it. For their part, the Foresters have counseled the scholars to stay away from the beast and have refused to enter its lair themselves. They consider the creature to be a natural animal that has more right to be in the Gamboge than any “city-slickers” from Rel Mord.

The researchers will all be extremely grateful to the PCs if they decide to help because the assignment is very important to their work and to Kerwig Kradallston's status in the University. If the PCs agree, Maelwyn suggests that they embark the following morning.

Encounter Three: A Strange Tail

Now the PCs will come to understand the magnitude of their task. They must wait for the terrible Displacer Beast to leave its den and then quickly try to gather the necessary sample. Maelwyn leads the party a few miles into the forest, heading northeast. He stops in a particularly dense part of the forest and turns off the main path onto a recently cleared trail, warning the PCs to keep quiet. Allow them to make Move Silently checks and role-play the suspense if they are loud.

After a few hundred yards on this makeshift trail you approach a small clearing. Maelwyn ducks behind a large tree trunk that has fallen to the forest floor and urges you to do the same. On the North side of the clearing is a cave entrance, about 12 feet in diameter, looming ominously among the dense undergrowth.

“This is the beast’s lair,” whispers Maelwyn. “I dare not approach any further; I must return and see to my men. Meet us back at camp when you have secured the tooth. We must leave for Rel Mord as quickly as possible!”

The PCs should now “stake-out” the cave for a while. If they feel like rushing straight down Maelwyn will warn them strongly. Neither Maelwyn nor the Foresters wish any harm to come to the animal. If they still go forward, allow a DC 13 Listen check to hear sounds of the beast in the cave and a DC 15 Survival check (if they say they are looking) to determine that the tracks near the cave entrance are about 8 hours old. If they still proceed, the Displacer Beast will be happy to have a mid-morning snack at its doorstep. Please do your best to dissuade them from any notions to attack the creature outright.

Displacer Beast, Large Magical Beast (1): hp 51; see *Monster Manual* page 66.

If the PCs stay hidden, as they should, they will wait for just over an hour. During this time they may make a DC 10 Survival check to notice that they do not see any signs of life while they are waiting. All other animals seem to avoid this area of the forest. After the hour has passed the PCs see the Displacer Beast emerge to hunt for breakfast. Describe the beast vividly, in accordance with the description in the monster manual, and try to awe the PCs with the beast's

apparent size and strength. Also, allow a DC 20 Spot check to notice its displacement ability.

After the beast is gone the party should explore the cave. Appendix B contains the map of the cave. The areas within the cave are described below. Once the party is past the entrance (Cave A) the ambient light from outside is not enough to see. Keep track of the party's marching order and of how long they take in each area (especially in area C).

Cave A

“A large hole in the dark green undergrowth of the forest floor leads sharply down into darkness. From the shards of light leaking through the canopy above you can see that the shaft continues down for about 20 feet and then levels off.”

This area of the cave is steep (~70°), but relatively easy to climb. It is a DC 10 Climb check, so any PCs with a lot of armor have a slight chance of falling. Even then, though, they only take non-lethal damage.

Cave B

Here is where the cave levels off. The ceiling is about 8 feet tall, but there are stalactites and stalagmites everywhere. Point out that the cave is wet and many of the stalagmites crumble as the PCs brush past. This is their only clue to the danger in section C. Movement is reduced to half speed for everyone throughout the cavern. Any non-Dwarf PCs (even others with darkvision) must make a DC 15 Spot check or DC 5 Search check to notice the side passage about 5 feet into the level portion of the cave. Dwarven characters automatically spot it.

A DC 25 Survival check, for those with the Track feat, will reveal that the beast's tracks lead in and out of the side passage but not into the stalactite chamber (section C).

Cave C

The stalactites in this area are unstable and will begin to fall when the presence of the party raises the temperature and disturbs the air and walls of the room. Secretly start keeping track of rounds when the PCs first enter the area. Once two or more PCs have been in the area marked on the map in Appendix B for two rounds the trap will activate. It need not be the same two PCs for the duration of the two rounds. Stalactites will then fall for three rounds (going first in initiative order). Any dwarven characters may make Search checks

even if they are not actively searching the area for traps.

As a full round action, PCs can squeeze against the cavern wall along the edges of the passage to avoid the falling stalactites. Additionally, if they succeed at a DC 10 Hide check (move action) they can find cover from the falling rock behind standing rock formations on the ground. A DC 20 Hide check will afford a PC total cover.

Stalactite Trap: CR 3; mechanical; proximity trigger; no reset; no bypass; Atk +10 ranged (1d4+1, falling stalactite); multiple targets (all within area); Search DC 19; cannot be disabled.

Cave D

“This passage is narrower than the other areas of the cave, but it is much less cluttered by stalactites and stalagmites.”

This is the beast's path in and out of its den.

Cave E

“This is obviously the heart of the beast's lair. The remains of countless woodland creatures, and even some humanoids, lie in a huge heap in the far corner of the cave. A pungent odor seems to emanate from a pile of hair and rotting vegetation in the center of the chamber.”

In one corner of the cave is a small pool that is fed by a tiny underground spring and flows underneath the cave wall. There are several teeth, both whole and broken, among the remains of the Displacer Beast's past meals. There is also a bit of treasure.

A DC 15 Search check reveals both. If the PCs choose to take 10 or 20 while searching the cave, be sure to drum up the suspense. They never know when the Displacer Beast will return.

Treasure: In the pile of debris are the remains of some of the beast's sentient victims, including: 15 gp, 1 large ruby (20 gp), and a +1 Short Sword (195 gp).

Maelwyn and the other members of the expedition will be absolutely overjoyed to see the PCs return with the droppings and tooth (or teeth).

If the PCs report any of the treasure they found, the researchers insist that the adventurers keep it all. They will congratulate them for their bravery and offer them their best rations, including some elven cakes. Maelwyn suggests that they leave immediately for Rel Mord (since, presumably, it is still before noon when the PCs return).

One of the Foresters, a Druid, is still helping out and can heal any PCs who have been hurt.

Encounter Four: Tailed by Strangers

While the PCs deal with the expedition, the thugs who were driven off by the Gamboge Foresters regroup and decide to attack the expedition after it leaves the forest. After one day on the road, the party comes across the body of a dwarven fighter lying in the road. He is faking, of course, but the PCs need a DC 18 Heal check or a DC 22 Spot check to notice that his wounds are fake (ketchup or something). He is not wearing the false IFG medallion, but he is carrying it in his pocket. Hidden behind some large rocks on either side of the road (Spot DC 31) are his three accomplices, the Denaella sisters (the halfling rogues). If the PCs offer aid to the Dwarf, he will take a swing from prone, and the rogues will spring into action. If the PCs make any indication that they do not believe the Dwarf is really hurt the rogues will attack immediately.

Male Dwarf, Ftr1: hp 12; see Appendix A.

Female Halfling, Rog1 (3): hp 6; see Appendix A.

Tactics: The rogues will flank with each other to get an advantage on any fleshy-looking targets, while the fighter will take on the fighters in the party. If one rogue goes down, the others will continue fighting unless reduced to 2 hp or less, in which case they will flee. The Dwarf will fight to the death. The rogues will try to fight defensively and feint in combat to catch their opponents off guard (don't forget, they have the Dodge feat!), and the Dwarf will bully and badger the party verbally during the fight, attempting to Intimidate.

Encounter Five: Strange Mail

Finally, you have arrived at the great city of Rel Mord. As you pass through the city gates most of the members of the expedition leave your company. Many head straight for home, but you see some of the injured researchers being escorted by priests into the great Temple of Heironeous, just off to your left. Maelwyn leads you quickly down one of the major city streets, turning north at the common square. Just past a large, ornately decorated library you see an enormous complex of interconnected buildings surrounding a

verdant courtyard. It is Rel Mord University, the kingdom's center of learning.

Normally, an armed group of adventurers would be asked to show credentials (such as an Adventurer's License) in order to carry weapons in the city. However, Maelwyn seems to know several of the guards at the gate and personally vouches for their behavior in the city. You don't have to mention this, unless any of the players asks about it.

Maelwyn opens a side door in the easternmost building and motions for you to follow. Once inside his pace seems to quicken. You begin to weave in and out of small corridors and stairwells, and it's hard not to become a bit disoriented. Finally, after navigating through several dark passages and at least two secret doors, Maelwyn stops in front of a small door with a frosted glass window. Embossed on the window is, presumably, the name of the room's inhabitant.

Give the players Player Handout #1.

"We are here," pants Maelwyn. "Give me a moment to introduce you before you say anything. Oh, and don't touch anything!"

Maelwyn raps lightly on the door, and, after a muffled response from the other side, cracks it opens. "Master Kradallston, I have returned."

"Come in, my boy! Do be mindful of the acid next to the door, won't you?"

The room is filled almost to overflowing with tables, benches, stools, and chairs containing flasks, beakers, pots, jars, and even mugs of liquids, powders, and gasses of every conceivable color and consistency. There are also great rows of books on shelves along all four walls. As the party enters, Kerwig has his back to the door, intently working on something at a table on the opposite side of the 20' X 30' room.

"Were you successful, my friend?" asks the gnome at the table.

"Well...no, sir...and yes," replies Maelwyn. "We had some unusual difficulties, but we also received some surprising aid."

"Whatever do you mean?" responds Kerwig. He spins around to face his assistant and, startled at the sight of so many strangers in his lab, drops a flask of some dark purple liquid. As the liquid hits the floor it begins to

hiss and then erupts into a plume of bright red vapor. “Oh, drat!” exclaims Kerwig, “now I’ll need another Roc egg to rebrew that elixir. Put that on the list, please, Maelwyn.”

Once Maelwyn introduces the PCs and explains the events of the past week, Kerwig happily greets the party and expresses his gratitude for their help.

He explains that he has had several other setbacks in his work during the last few months, but that this is the first time that any of his assistants has actually been accosted. In the past, equipment and supplies have turned up missing, but no one has ever been injured before.

Kerwig is very concerned at the news. He is convinced that someone is out to get him, but he’s not sure who or why. He begs the PCs to help him find the culprit before evening falls. His work over the past year has all been in preparation for his promotion board review, which is taking place immediately after the annual Banquet of Distinction this evening. He needs the Displacer Beast tooth for his demonstration, which should secure him a permanent position at the University, as long as nothing goes horribly wrong. The PCs should already have an idea where to start (the IFG medallion), but Kerwig can offer one more clue. He recently received a threatening letter (Player Handout #2) that was sealed with the holy symbol of Boccob. He will not volunteer any other information unless the PCs ask him directly. Leave it up to the PCs as much as possible to investigate. If the PCs investigate the guild or the Shrine of Boccob (in the Royal Annals) on their own they should be led to each of the other sources of information in turn. If they get stuck, though, Kerwig can give them the following suggestions in order:

- **The Iron Fist Guild:** The medallion’s worn by the thugs are similar to the symbol on the office building of a local mercenary guild.
- **Shrine of Boccob:** Worshippers of Boccob, particularly those among the Wizards Guild, pay tribute to The Uncaring One at this shrine inside the library. Perhaps the author of the threatening letter can be found there.
- **Jergon Blackbelly:** Kerwig’s childhood friend, and a Patron of the Arcane Wanderer, usually has his finger on the pulse of the city. If anything strange is afoot, he usually knows about it first.

- **University Professors:** Other members of the Royal University have witnessed the problems that Kerwig has experienced, but have refused to get involved for the sake of impartiality. Perhaps they will speak more openly with a group of neutral outsiders.

Kerwig asks the PCs to gather as much information as they can before dinner, which gives them just under two hours. After that, it will be too late to do anything about it. He invites them to be his guests of honor at the banquet, and he hopes that they will also be available to guard him should anything else unpleasant arise. He will offer as many cure potions as the PCs need to heal completely.

Encounter Six: A Strange Trail

In this encounter the PCs will track down clues to the identity of Kerwig’s enemy, who is actually Marcosh of Westerwood. Marcosh always wears a dark purple cloak and has a large amulet bearing the holy symbol of Boccob. He is a professor of the History of Magic in the Flanaess at the University. He teaches at the Wadroll School, whose members are generally traditionalists since it is one of the original colleges in the University and was founded by the Rel Mord Wizards Guild.

Marcosh has recently gone mad from overexposure to certain Ancient Ur-Flan texts. His studies have made him believe that magic is a gift from Boccob and that any practitioners of magic who do not worship Boccob are blasphemers. The most egregious offense to Boccob, in Marcosh’s mind, is Kerwig’s attempt to explain magical energy in physical terms. His experiments, which attempt to demystify the casting of spells, are an affront to Boccob’s glory. Thus, Marcosh believes that Kerwig must be prevented from gaining any improved status in the University so that his blasphemy will not spread.

This is silly, of course, since Boccob is True Neutral and doesn’t care who pays him honor and who doesn’t. If Kerwig succeeds in impressing the University leadership with his research, though, Marcosh plans to murder him as an example of the fate that awaits those who blaspheme Boccob.

The PCs may gain information at each of the following locations. It is not necessary for them to visit each one, but they should visit as many as they need in order to present some real evidence

to Kerwig. Keep track of game time as they investigate, since they only have two hours to complete their questioning. Unless they are running everywhere they go, or paying luxury upkeep to take a taxi, the city is big enough to limit their investigations to two or three of the following leads.

The Iron Fist Guild

The main offices of the Iron Fist Guild are located inside a large brick building near the center of town, just to the north of the Royal Palace. Stanel, the officer at the front desk, is a huge man who looks extremely uncomfortable sitting in a small chair in the front room of the office building, and his demeanor is quite gruff. He will resent the PCs questions (Diplomacy DC 16 to get him to talk at all) unless they show him the medallion found on the bodies of the thugs that attacked the expedition. He will immediately recognize the medallion as a fake and become extremely interested in what the PCs have to say. After they've told him their story he will tell them what he remembers about a strange encounter a couple of weeks earlier.

***“Now that you mention it, there was this one fellow in here just a couple of weeks ago. He wanted to hire us to do a little dirty work for him. We’re not strictly opposed to that sort of thing, if the money is right, but this was different. He wanted us to rough up a group of unarmed schoolboys or something like that. That’s just not the kind of thing that helps build a good reputation, so we didn’t take the job. He never did give his name - just let his money do the talking – and I never got a good look at his face underneath that purple hood. He did make a point, though, of telling me that it was for the glory of Boccob...whatever that means.*”**

“Listen, if you’re after this guy, we’re behind you 100%. It just won’t do to have common criminals impersonating guild members. You bring me some more evidence, and I’ll make sure you’re properly compensated for your time.”

Stanel will take the false medallion, along with any others the PCs have, and he will immediately begin writing a message to members of the guild leadership (who are in the training camp outside of town).

Stanel, Male Human(Oeridian) Ftr7: hp 63; see Appendix A.

Shrine to Boccob

The only official honor to Boccob in Nyrond’s capitol city is inside the Royal Annals. The Annals are housed inside a large marble and granite building consisting of a central domed structure and three main wings. Above the oak door that serves as the main entrance is carved the words, “Knowledge is the Gods’ Greatest Gift.” Inside the library are shrines to many of the deities important to scholars and magic users, including Boccob, Delleb, Lydia, Zuoken and even Labelas Enoeth. Unfortunately, only University students and professors are allowed free access to the library. The PCs will have to convince the attendant just inside the front door that they are working for Kerwig in order to gain entrance. They can try Diplomacy (DC 15) with the following modifiers to the attempt:

- One or more party members are wearing medium or heavier armor: -2
- One or more party members are carrying visible weapons: -2
- The PCs mention that they are friends with (or working for) Kerwig: +2
- There is at least one wizard in the party, and that wizard aids in the diplomacy attempt: +2

If successful, the PCs will be allowed to pay the standard fee of 10 gp a piece (not part of standard upkeep) for access to the library, but they will be required to leave their weapons at the door.

Sneaking in is also an option, of course, since the receptionist does wander away from time to time. However, it will take some effort (and time). Adjudicate accordingly. There are two guards that roam the library grounds (but stay well clear of the interior).

University Guard, Male Human(Oeridian) War5 (2): hp 48.

There is a log book at the front desk of the library’s patrons. Marcosh’s name is there often, but so are many, many others.

Once inside, the PCs can find the shrine to Boccob in the far end of one of the three wings in the library. Let them wander around a little bit to get a feel for the age and magnificence of the library. It is an ornate structure inside and out. There are a few other people doing research in the library, but none will be too willing to engage in a conversation. After all, they have paid good money to be here.

“In the southern wing of the library stands a large pedestal in the middle of a golden pentagram inlaid in the stone floor. Atop the pedestal floats a permanent, illusory eye, rotating slowly and never blinking. Each of the two altars on opposite sides of the pillar hold candles and other simple offerings to The Uncaring One. A short half-elf is lighting a candle as you approach, but soon turns to thumbing through the volumes on a nearby shelf.”

The half-elf is Sarrus Tallowell, a professor of Evocation in the Wadroll School and a member of the Wizards Guild. If the PCs talk to him about Kerwig’s letter and/or the mystery man wanted by the Iron Fist Guild he will readily tell them everything he knows:

“Hmmm...that is somewhat unsettling. Of course, it’s none of my business; and it’s not as though the behavior you’ve described would be particularly offensive to Boccob. Still, from what I’ve seen, Kerwig is a fine fellow and a very good alchemist. I can’t imagine who would want to ruin his reputation.”

“Certainly there are a few professors at the University who disagree with Professor Kradallston’s objectives. I know some of the Wadroll professors take issue with his efforts to demystify their art. Personally, I think it’s fascinating. I mean, there must be a reason why there are so many different forms of magic in Oerth. Anyway, I’m sorry I can’t be of more use to you. I do wish Kerwig all the best in his performance tonight.”

If pressed for more information, Sarrus will suggest that the PCs visit the Arcane Wanderer. Despite being a haven for sorcerers and bards it is also a center of informal discussion on magic in the city. Many debates about the principles of magic are conducted there, and Kerwig is known to frequent the tavern for that very reason.

Sarrus Tallowell, Male Half-Elf Wiz6: hp 19.

Jergon Blackbelly

The Arcane Wanderer is a tavern that was established in CY588 by a pair of Royal University dropouts who had a natural talent for magic. Since then, the Wanderer has been a central gathering place for spontaneous casters of all kinds, as well as those willing to be entertained by them. The main room contains a small stage where magic users practice and entertain. The back room, however, is even larger and contains a huge

hearth along the northern wall and plenty of comfortable seating. A bar along the western wall serves the Wanderer’s patrons as they discuss matters of magic, politics, adventuring, and anything else of interest.

The Arcane Wanderer’s founders and owners, Genris Venderin and Ytalis Fostin, are currently away. Jergon Blackbelly is acting as the manager in their absence.

If the PCs start asking around concerning Kerwig or any of the names they might have gotten from Sarrus they will be directed to Jergon, who oversees the discussion parlor every night.

Jergon Blackbelly, Male Human Sor7: hp 29.

Jergon is an avid sorcerer who loves being able to “show up” the wizards in town by casting the same spell several times in a row. However, he is quite respectful of the wizards who actually show their faces in the Wanderer, rather than remaining in their “lofty” towers. If the PCs ask about Kerwig, Jergon relates the following:

“Yeah, that Kerwig is a fine fellow, if you ask me. He ain’t gifted like most of us here, but he gives the right respect to sorcerer and wizard alike. Seems to me we see him in here about once a month or so, usually asking folks about how they feel when they use magic and other weird stuff like that. Anyway, I remember pretty good the last time he was in here. Got into some kind of debate with some of those wizards from the guild. Don’t know what they were doin’ in here.”

If the PCs continue prodding, or if they ask about any of the names that Sarrus might have given them, Jergon will tell them:

“Well, we have pretty lively discussions in the Wanderer most nights, but a few weeks ago there was some big bru-ha-ha that didn’t even involve any of the regulars. It was just good ole’ Kradallston and a couple of guys from the Wizards Guild. I didn’t recognize those other guys, all except that one with the purple cloak - I’ve seen him around town a bunch.”

Anyway, he was goin’ on and on about how Kradallston was no better than ‘those aberrant heathens’ or something like that. They all stormed out of here in a huff, but that one fella stopped at the door and yelled back something about Boccob’s story, or was it Boccob’s glory? Something about Boccob. Off his rocker, if you ask me.”

If the PCs make it clear that their investigation is of great importance to Professor Kradallston, Jergon will try his best to remember some more details. He will recall that the man in the purple cloak had a name that started with 'M' and bore a huge holy symbol of Boccob around his neck.

University Professors

If the PCs ask around in general at the Royal University, assuming they have visited at least one of the other places already, they may find out the information below with a successful Gather Information check. Encourage them to assist each other in their rolls. If they have not investigated any other lead when they start asking around the University they learn very little other than that some professors in the Wadroll School disagree with Kerwig's approach to magic.

DC 10: Professor Westerwood is one of the head instructors of magic in the Wadroll School of the University. The Wadroll School is one of the founding colleges in the University and has strong ties to the Rel Mord Wizards Guild.

DC 13: The only professor at the University who consistently wears a large, purple cloak is Marcosh of Westerwood, a professor of the History of Magic in the Flanaess. Marcosh is an accomplished historian but a mediocre magician.

DC 16: Kerwig and Marcosh have been overheard in the halls of the University from time to time having heated discussions about the nature of magic, and the sources of magical power on Oerth. However, Marcosh and Kerwig have generally avoided each other lately.

DC 19: Marcosh of Westerwood has been more withdrawn over the last month. He has failed to attend several University socials, and his students report that he has seemed less focused in class. He has even missed a few of his own classes.

If the PCs visit Westerwood's office they will be turned away by his secretary. The secretary, a timid acolyte, will tell them that Marcosh is in his office preparing his lectures and cannot be disturbed. However, she will be happy to leave him a message if the party desires.

Also, the door to his office is Arcane Locked. If they try to force their way in, a magical alarm will sound and 6 guards will arrive in 5 rounds.

University Guard, Male Human(Oeridian) War5 (6): hp 48.

Encounter Seven: Strange Ale

If the PCs arrive back at Kerwig's office in time (before the banquet) and tell him what they have discovered he will be mildly surprised. He is aware, of course, of his disagreements with Marcosh, but he never imagined that Marcosh would be so bold as to interfere violently. He thanks the PCs for their help and asks them to accompany him to the banquet as his guests of honor and also for protection. Maelwyn also attends.

If, however, the PCs take too much time investigating and miss the beginning of the banquet, Maelwyn will meet them in Kerwig's office and escort them to the banquet. In this case, they do not have time to warn Kerwig of the identity of his nemesis. They arrive just after dinner and just before Kerwig's presentation, and they must stand along the side of the room for the show (see Appendix B for a map of the banquet hall).

In either case, when the PCs arrive at the banquet hall they are asked to leave their weapons outside. They may keep their armor, if they wish, though they receive many strange looks if they do. There is a guarded closet where their weapons and other cumbersome gear may be stored. This is very important! It is designed to slow the PCs down in Encounter Eight so that Marcosh has enough time to prepare for combat.

If the PCs arrive on time, read or paraphrase the following:

Dinner is an amazing medley of exotic foods and drink. The aroma of a dozen unfamiliar spices permeates the room as a servant follows you into the banquet hall pushing a tray of goblets filled with a bright orange liquid that bubbles slightly as the cart rolls along. Kerwig leads you to the head table and invites you to sit on either side of him. He introduces you to several men and women who are the official representatives from each of the colleges in the University. The most significant of these is Tielle Lanahn, the 65 year old dean of the College of Outgarius.

"This is the lady who will ultimately decide the fate of my career," Kerwig says as he introduces her.

"Nonsense, Kerwig. You are so dramatic! Besides, I'm sure you'll do fine tonight." She

takes a seat at the end of the head table and everyone begins to eat.

Kerwig asks the PCs to be vigilant. Marcosh has done some surprising things lately, and Kerwig doesn't know where he'll draw the line. He is very worried that Marcosh will do something during his presentation.

If, however, they are late read or paraphrase this:

As the door to the banquet hall opens the aroma of a dozen unfamiliar spices spills out into the corridor. The room is filled almost to capacity with scholarly types, and several servants bustle back and forth filling empty goblets with strangely colored liquids. Kerwig is seated in the middle of the head table at the far side of the room, but that area is roped-off and guarded by half a dozen University guards. The usher at the door points to a section along the east wall where there is some standing room. It looks like the presentation will begin shortly.

The PCs will not be allowed to approach Kerwig's table in person, but they use any other means they can think of to get him a message. He will acknowledge their presence but will be unable to invite them to sit with him since the seats of honor have already been taken by University dignitaries.

The Presentation

After dinner Tielle Lanahn, the chair of the promotions committee, makes a short introduction and then gives Kerwig the floor. He rises from his seat and begins to speak.

"My friends and fellow scholars, I am pleased to unveil to you tonight the fruit of many sleepless nights and much blood, sweat, and tears. Before starting I would like to publicly thank my personal assistant, Maelwyn Tuckenbuck, as well as these brave adventurers here who have been an invaluable help in overcoming recent opposition to my work."

With that, Kerwig pauses for a moment and surveys the room, pausing momentarily when his gaze meets the icy stare of a man at the other end of the room wearing a bright crimson cloak.

"Magic can be found in all walks of life. I have hoped for more than a year now to find a connection between the various manifestations of magical energy, and I am

confident that I have made some progress in the right direction. I will now ask my assistants to come forth."

Two people step into the middle of the floor. One is a mature elf and the other is a human in his late thirties. The human pulls a piece of blue leather from a pouch in his belt, tosses it in the air, utters a short incantation and waves his hands in a deliberate pattern. As the scrap of material descends it erupts in a puff of blue smoke and the man seems to flicker for a minute. You blink, and when your eyes focus again the man seems to be standing a few feet to the side of where he started.

The elf humphs audibly. Then, making similar gestures and sounds but producing no leather, he flickers briefly in the same way as the human.

Kerwig descends from the head table down to the banquet hall floor and stands between his two assistants. "You will all recognize this spell as Displacement, I'm sure," Kerwig says, waving his hand through the illusory bodies of his assistants. "Daol, here, has used the leather of a Displacer Beast's hide to empower his incantation, but Ethyk has needed no such focus. He has learned to cast the same spell without the essence of the magical beast for which the spell is named.

"Now, why did Daol need the beast's hide? Is the displacing magic held in the skin of the beast itself? Certainly not! The leather is completely mundane once separated from the living creature, so what is so special about it? If the leather contained the necessary energy, why could Ethyk reproduce the spell with no materials at all?"

"I submit to you, my would-be peers, that the leather is a crutch. It is nothing more than a lump of inert matter. If we can train our students to understand this principle, perhaps we can make them more versatile!"

A wave of whispers and murmurs spreads through the crowd, and you hear more than one person near you expressing their contempt for what Kerwig has asserted.

"Now, now, my friends, I know that this flies in the face of tradition, but I would like a chance to prove what I am saying. Daol has not learned to cast spells in the same way as Ethyk, who eschews the material components

that we in the University teach are necessary. However, I will now ask him to cast the spell again using a different component altogether.”

With this, Kerwig produces a small white object that you recognize immediately as the tooth that you found in the Displacer Beast’s lair. Kerwig whispers in Daol’s ear and hands him the tooth. Daol clenches the tooth in one hand and commences the incantation again. He finishes, flickering as before, and opens up his hand to reveal the still present tooth. He, along with everyone else in the room, is astonished to see that he is now displaced once more. A few people begin clapping. Then, all of a sudden, everyone is on their feet and applauding.

“My fellow magicians,” Kerwig exclaims, “Daol has cast the same spell, but has focussed upon the tooth of the Displacer Beast instead of consuming its hide. Before long, I predict that Daol will be able to cast in the same fashion as Ethyk and others like him who are able to forgo the use of such materials altogether.”

Just then, the doors burst open and a raspy voice booms from the entrance. “Blasphemer! Usurper! How dare you dishonor he who has given mortals the power of the Gods?!” There is no one visible in the door.

Marcosh of Westerwood, Male Human
Exp1/Wiz3: hp 15; see Appendix A.

Marcosh has taken a potion of invisibility. He believes, irrationally, that he is acting in the name of Boccob. He thinks that by being invisible that everyone will think that Boccob himself is attacking Kerwig. He has forgotten, though, that he will become visible once he attacks! He uses his surprise action to cast Magic Missile at Kerwig. He then realizes he is visible and has to roll initiative, along with everyone else. Roll initiative for Kerwig, Tielle, and a few other wizards in the audience. All of the other attendees will spend several rounds casting defensive spells on themselves. A few will be of high enough level to teleport away. Generally, the room is in chaos, and there is no one willing to risk themselves in Kerwig’s defense or Marcosh’s pursuit. The few armed guards will escort various dignitaries out of the room through the side doors. The only exceptions are Maelwyn and Tielle, who rush to Kerwig’s aid on their initiative but can offer no help to the PCs because they are focussed on protecting their friend. For

his part, Kerwig is stunned by the attack and cowers behind whatever cover is available, latching on to Tielle as she comes to help. If any of the PCs aid Kerwig, Tielle assures them that she will attend to him and urges the PCs to catch Marcosh before he flees. NOTE: Tielle does not say “kill” Marcosh, she says “catch” him.

Encounter Eight: Stranger than Fiction

The PCs emerge from the banquet hall just in time to see Marcosh turn a corner in the passage to the north. He is headed for his office. If the PCs have been there already they may make an Intelligence check (DC 13) to recognize this area of the campus and navigate their way to his office. Otherwise they will have to find Marcosh’s office among the many others as shown on the map in Appendix B. Remember that the PCs weapons (and possibly armor) are in the closet just outside the banquet hall.

Marcosh of Westerwood, Male Human
Exp1/Wiz3: hp 15; see Appendix A.

Tactics: Once he realizes that he has become visible, Marcosh withdraws to his chambers to gather his most vital possessions and flee the city. If the PCs stop to gather their equipment Marcosh has time to use scrolls of mage armor and shield on himself. If the PCs take the time to don armor (if they had previously removed it) before following Marcosh, he drinks another potion of invisibility. Marcosh will try to subdue as many party members as possible with Color Spray first. He will then use his damaging spells on the most threatening characters (like fighter types). Finally, he will resort to melee with his quarterstaff, but will all the while attempt to safely flee.

Marcosh’s only aim at this point is to escape. If all the PCs are rendered unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, Marcosh will flee. He will leave everything and flee the city as quickly as possible. In this case, the PCs do not receive the XP for defeating him. They also do not receive the Thanks of the Wizards Guild, but they still have the Favor of Kerwig for everything they’ve done up to this point.

Treasure: Most of Maelwyn’s possessions would be of little value to any sane person. However, he does carry a Ring of Protection +1 (167 gp).

After the combat is over the PCs will have a couple of rounds to look around before the University Guards arrive. Marcosh’s journal

(Player Handout #3) is open on his desk. NOTE: If the PCs take any of Marcosh's belongings other than the journal they will not earn the favor of the Wizards Guild. On the other hand, if they leave his office intact, the University gives the PCs an additional reward for their tact.

Conclusion

There are several things the PCs may want to do after the fight with Marcosh. Allow them to discuss with themselves who they would like to talk to before considering the adventure complete.

Marcosh's Quarters

The PCs will find several interesting tomes in Marcosh's office that detail ancient Ur-Flan beliefs and rituals. His journal, which details his descent into insanity, is lying open on his desk (see Player Handout #3).

Kerwig Kradallston

If he survives the day Kerwig couldn't be happier with what the PCs have done to help. He rewards them another 50gp each and tells them that he will be glad to let them take his courses at the University for free anytime they qualify.

Wizards Guild

If the PCs defeat Marcosh without killing him and do not loot his office they will have the thanks of the Wizards Guild for rooting out his insanity.

Iron Fist Guild

If the PCs show Marcosh's journal to Stanel at the Iron Fist Guild they will have the thanks of the guild and a standing invitation to join them once they meet the requirements.

Salista

Finally, if the PCs remember to track down Salista back in Arness and tell him about the Displacer Beast (or if they did this on their way to Rel Mord) he will be forever grateful. He will honor his promise and write a flattering ode about the brave adventurers who took on the terrible beast and escaped unscathed from its lair with secret knowledge for the great Royal University.

Once the PCs have decided what they will do, read or paraphrase the following:

In the days since the University's Banquet of Distinction the school has been abuzz with rumors of Kerwig's strange new teaching method. Apparently, using an inert focus,

where the material of the focus is somehow connected to the usual spell component, has helped several students gain the ability to cast spells without the need of their component pouches.

Unfortunately, the Ur-Flan texts spoken of in Marcosh's journal have not yet been located, and some of the more experienced faculty seems to be less interested in Kerwig's promotion that they are in the recovery of those dangerous scrolls.

As you leave, Kerwig himself escorts you to the gates of the city. "I don't expect all of you to understand just how much you've helped me," he says as you arrive at the gates, "but I owe you a great deal more than my life. Without your assistance it may have been years before I would be given another chance to prove my usefulness to the college. I hope you'll come visit me again whenever you are passing through. Perhaps there will be other opportunities for seasoned adventurers such as yourselves to lend a hand to academia."

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter Three: A Strange Tail

Stalactite Trap, EL 3

90 xp

Encounter Four: Tailed by Strangers

Hired Thugs, EL 3

90 xp

Encounter Eight: Stranger than Fiction

Marcosh of Westerwood, EL 4

120 xp

Story Award

Obtain Displacer Beast Samples:

20 xp

Return to Salista to tell him about the encounter:

10 xp

Identify Marcosh as the aggressor...

10 xp

...and returned to Kerwig in time for the banquet:

10 xp

Show Marcosh's journal to the IFG:

10 xp

Leave Marcosh alive, if possible, and leave his belongings intact:

10 xp

Discretionary role-playing award

Used appropriate skills, feats, racial abilities, and class abilities in solving the problems in the scenario in an efficient and/or creative manner.

30 xp

Total possible experience:

400 xp

Treasure Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

Encounter Three: A Strange Tail

L: 0 gp; C: 35 gp; M: 195 gp - +1 Short Sword

Encounter Four: Tailed by Strangers

L: 50 gp; C: 5 gp; M: 0

Encounter Five: Strange Mail

L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0 gp

Encounter Eight: Stranger than Fiction

If Marcosh is looted

L: 115 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 167 gp – Ring of Protection +1

or, if his belongings are left

L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0 gp

Total Possible Treasure

If Marcosh is looted:

L: 165 gp; C: 140 gp; M: 362 gp - Total: 667 gp

or, if Marcosh's belongings are left alone:

L: 50 gp; C: 240 gp; M: 195 gp – Total: 485 gp

Special

Influence points with various individuals and organizations as described in the Conclusion section and on the AR (see below).

Items for the Adventure Record

Thanks of Salista the Bard

For bringing him a first-hand description of the legendary “hellcat” of the Arness woods, Salista has written a flattering ballad detailing, and exaggerating, your part in discovering the beast’s lair. This song will surely be sung by bards in the Dutchy of Flintill for years.

As a result of your notoriety you may receive free Standard Upkeep during the next regional scenario you play that takes place in vicinity of Arndulanth (subject to Judge approval). Cross through this paragraph (but not the ballad section above) when redeemed.

Thanks of the Iron Fist Guild

For discovering the forger responsible for the fake Iron Fist Guild medallions, the guild has officially recognized your abilities and promised you aid in the future. You may redeem this influence point for a one time bonus of +5 to any Gather Information check made in Rel Mord or anywhere in Justcrown as the guild puts at your disposal their entire network of soldiers and messengers. Strike through when redeemed.

Favor of the Rel Mord Wizards Guild

The Wizards Guild is grateful for your respectful handling of a delicate situation. You have an influence point with members of the guild who are associated with the Royal University.

Favor of Kerwig Kradallston

Kerwig owes you his life and career. You have an influence point with College of Autgarius in the Royal University. This may be redeemed for use as a recommendation for admission or as a waiver of one year’s annual tuition costs at the University. Mark this favor as used when redeemed.

Item Access

As an introductory scenario, this adventure does not give the PCs any new item access, other than those items that are now generally available to characters in the Living Greyhawk campaign.

Appendix A – Combat Encounters

Encounter Four: Tailed by Strangers (EL 3)

Male Dwarf, Ftr1: CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 15ft; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Base Atk/Grapple +1/+3; Atk +4 melee (1d10+3, Dwarven Waraxe) or +3 melee (1d6+2, Light Mace) or +2 ranged (1d4+2, Dart); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Dwarven Waraxe), Weapon Focus (Dwarven Waraxe).

Possessions: Chainmail, Dwarven Waraxe, Light Mace, Dart (5), Fake IFG Medallion.

Female Halfling, Rog1 (3): CR 1; Small Humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +3; Spd 20ft; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 14); Base Atk/Grapple +0/-4; Atk +2 melee (1d4, Masterwork Rapier) or +1 melee (1d3, Dagger) or +2 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); AL CN; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will -1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Bluff +3, Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Disguise +3, Hide +11, Search +6, Sleight of Hand +7, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +3, Dodge.

Possessions: Studded Leather, Masterwork Rapier, Dagger, Shortbow (20 arrows), Fake IFG Medallion.

Encounters Seven & Eight: Strange Ale & Stranger than Fiction (EL 4)

Marcosh of Westerwood, Male Human, Exp1/Wiz3: CR 4; Medium Humanoid; HD 3d4+1d6; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 30ft; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 11); Base Atk/Grapple +1/+1; Atk +2 melee (1d6, Masterwork Quarterstaff) or +1 melee (1d4, Dagger) or +1 ranged (1d4, Sling); AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +5, Forgery +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +11, Knowledge (History) +11, Knowledge (Local) +8, Knowledge (The Planes) +10, Profession (University Professor) +5, Spellcraft +13, Improved Counterspell, Spell Focus (Illusion), Brew Potion.

Buffed: AC 19 (touch 11, flat-footed 19).

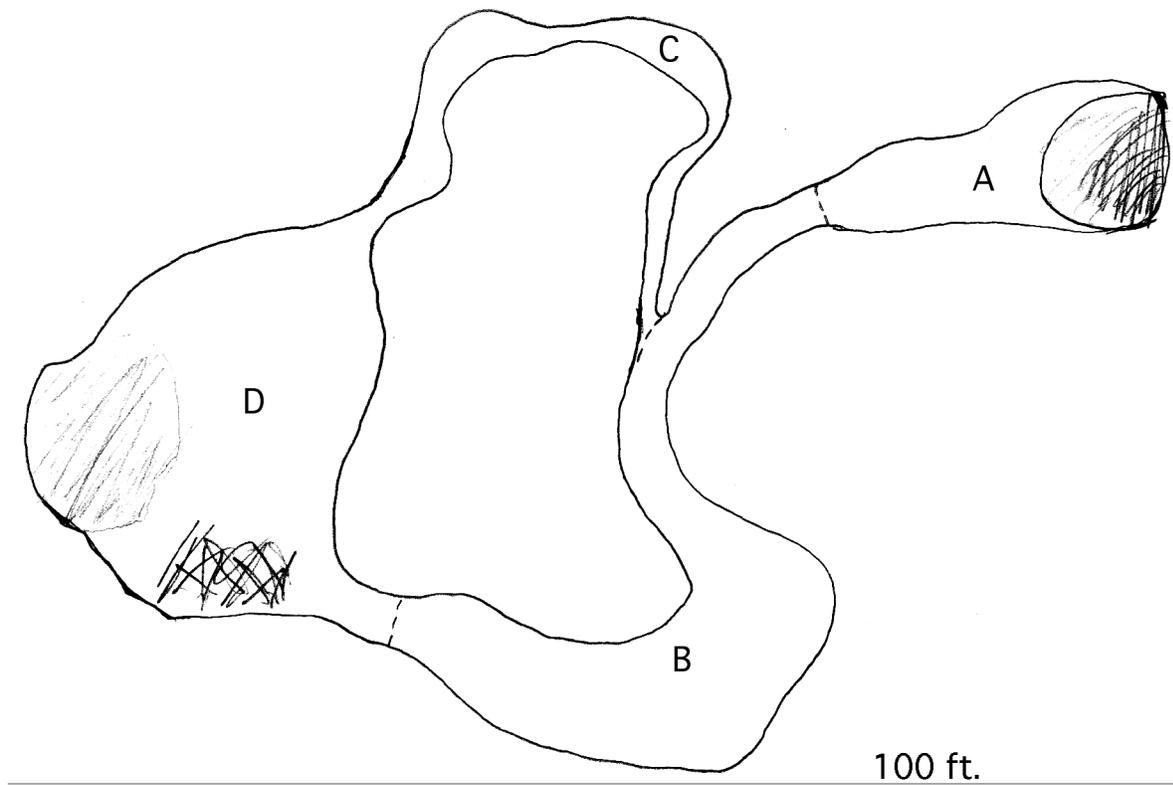
Spells: Caster Level 3 (4/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level; or 15 + spell level if from Illusion school): *0-Daze, Ray of Frost, Acid Splash (2), 1st – Magic Missile, Burning Hands, Color Spray, 2nd – Melf's Acid Arrow, Scorching Ray.*

Possessions: Ring of Protection +1, Masterwork Quarterstaff, Dagger, Sling (10 stones).

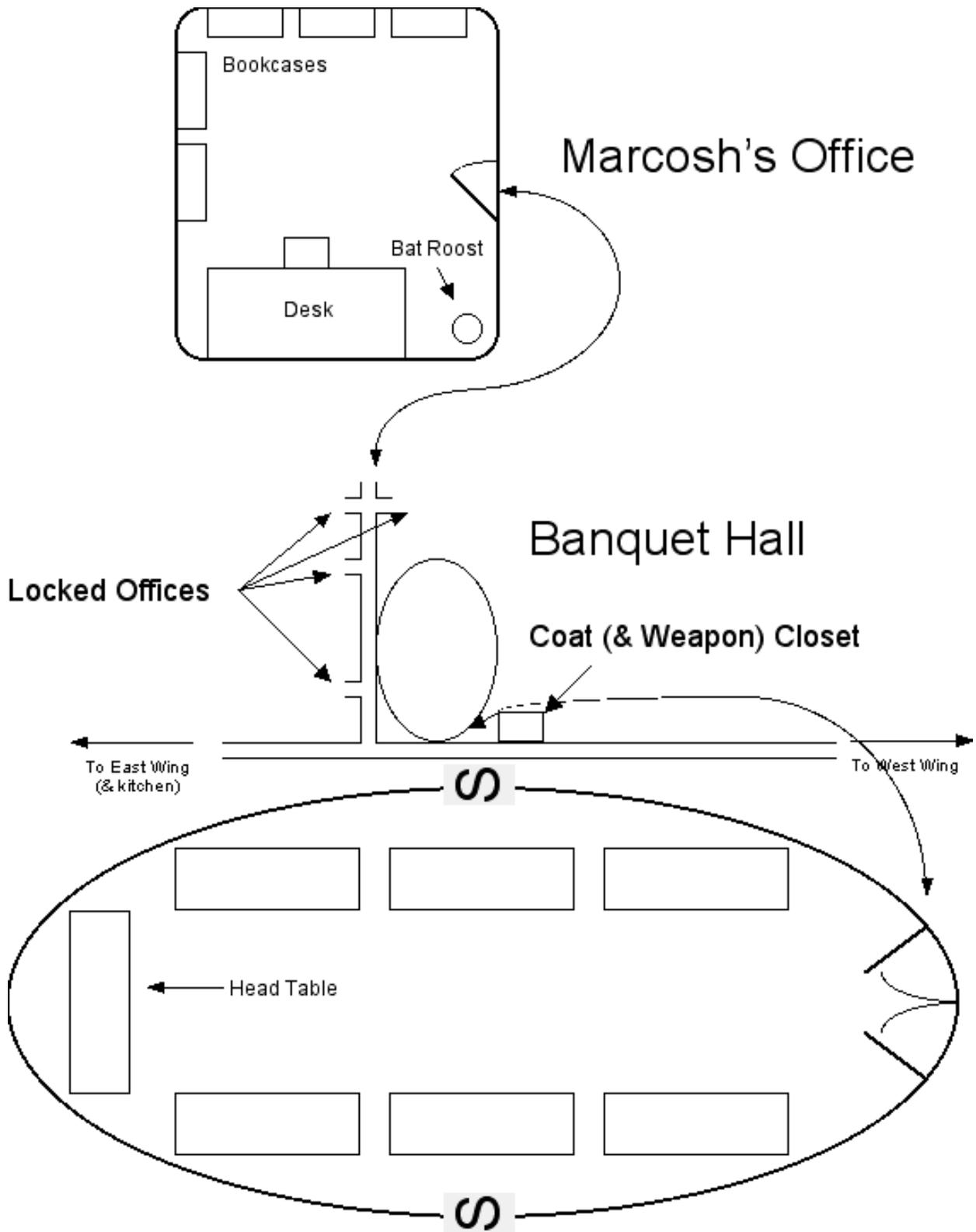
Hyrdak, Raven Familiar: Tiny Magical Beast; HD 4; hp 7; Init +2; Spd 10ft/fly 40ft(avg); AC 16 (+2 dex, +2 size, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk/Grapple +1/-12; Full Atk +5 (1d2-5;20/x2, Claws; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 1(-5), Dex 15(+2), Con 10(+0), Int 7(-2), Wis 14(+2), Cha 5(-3); SA: Improved Evasion, Share Spells, Empathic Link, Deliver Touch Spells, Weapon Finesse, Alertness, Low Light Vision.

Appendix B – Maps

Map #1: The Displacer Beast Lair



Map #2: The Central Hall at the Royal University of Rel Mord, 2nd Floor



**Kerwig Gablet Stringson
Effervescery Tinkerman
Hosennosh Kradallston**

**Alchemical Instructor,
Thaumaturgical Theorist
and
Master of the Arcane Arts**

Player Handout #2 – Mysterious Letter

Kerwig Kradallston found the following note in his office, apparently slipped underneath the door, about a week ago. There is no signature, but it was closed with a wax seal bearing a form of the holy symbol of Boccob.

You have no idea what it is that you seek. It is not yours for the taking. This is your **only warning**.

You know ***nothing***! You see only a pale reflection of the truth.

A curse will be upon you unless you abandon this vain quest.

Player Handout #3 – Marcosh’s Journal

The following passages are excerpts from the research journal found in Marcosh’s office in Rel Mord University. These sections span a period of about a month and a half prior to the time you confront Marcosh:

These scrolls are amazing. There are a several passages that I have translated correctly but that still don’t make any sense. Some of them have the form of an incantation, yet they contain no magical instructions. Perhaps they are part of an ancient ritual designed to focus a primitive magic user’s mind.

In any case, I cannot take my findings to my peers until I understand it better. I’ll resume work tonight.

.....

Amazing! I still can’t quite make out much of the exact meaning, but the incantations in some of the scrolls seem to be some sort of liturgy to a deity of some sort. It is unclear, though, who is being worshipped.

.....

This is quite interesting. I have no means of cross-checking my translation without revealing my newfound secrets prematurely, but I believe I have found reference to a god that resembles our own Boccob in many ways. The eye is ever-present in these manuscripts. Even as I read the original texts I feel drawn to the father of magic.

.....

Finally, I see! It is Boccob! It was always Boccob. He is the source. He is the light. These fools at the University could not possibly understand! They think he is uncaring, but in reality he sees all!

And now that I understand, his true power will be mine!

.....

My father calls me. His gift is being misused all around me. He cannot bear it. That idiot Kerwig thinks that he can explain my father’s mysteries. He must be punished.

I’ve hired a group of mercenaries to interfere with his little excursion into the hills. Once he fails in his performance in front of the entire school he will be forced to recognize the error of his ways.

.....

Apparently Kerwig has friends with some muscle. He got his precious ingredient today.

It may be time to take a more direct approach.