

Court and Causality

A One -Round Dungeons & Dragons[®]

Living Greyhawk[™]

Regional Adventure set in Ratik

Version 1.5

by Dean Bailey

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Fate is a funny thing. One day you are travelling along a muddy road minding your own business. The next you are moving in social circles of the elite and powerful.

After helping a man with a lame horse on the muddy roads of Ratik, the PCs find themselves invited to attend a Baronial Banquet as his personal guests. For some this is an opportunity to climb the social ladder, for some it is a chance to make new alliances while for others it is merely the opportunity to eat well and drink deeply at someone else's expense.

All that can be certain is that a night at the baronial court is a night to remember.

Part Two of the Fractured Crown series.

A one -round Regional adventure set in court of Her Excellency, the Arch-Baroness in Ratik for characters level 1-7 (APLs 2-6).

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include *Complete Adventurer* [Jesse Decker] and *Complete Warrior* [Andy Collins, David Noonan, Ed Stark] and RTK6-01 *The Fate of Alain* [Greg Dreher, Mark Somers].

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

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

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

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Players Read No Farther

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

Preparing for Play

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

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

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in

this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

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	

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player char-

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

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

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round regional adventure, set in Ratik. Characters from Ratik pay one (1) Time Unit per round, while all other characters pay two (2) 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 adventure.

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

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For a number of years it appeared that, beset on all sides since her assumption to the throne, Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh has been content to remain in the background, fearful of her position. This inaction has resulted in the rise of the merchant guilds as a power in the Barony, in some instances, to the detriment of the common folk.

One such trade guild is the Worshipful Company of Broiders and Weavers. This guild, controlled by Vionelle Glidden, has a monopoly on the silk trade and as a result

the price of the material has been rising steadily for a number of years.

This is about to change, due to the recent actions of the Archbaroness and Teniel Rogesh. Teniel, a young half elf mariner and adventurer, has recently returned to Ratik after a short but successful adventuring career. With his fortune made, he has decided to settle into a quiet and safe life as a merchant. Through his adventuring, he was fortunate to make friends with the son of a silkworm farmer in the countryside of the Pale. Noticing the monopoly on the trade in Ratik, and always being one to buck the system, he decided to enter into the market.

Competition is not something that sits well with Vionelle Glidden, and she began to call in favours to ensure that this upstart and his new venture would be ruined. Teniel found that suddenly caravan companies would not transport his goods, guards were failing to turn up to duty and merchants were cancelling contracts to buy his merchandise.

This did not dishearten Teniel, who travelled to Marner to apply to the guild council for official sanction. Once again Vionelle Glidden moved to block the enterprising young half-elf. Teniel found his acceptance into the guilds of Ratik, and thus his opportunity to access certain markets rejected. It appeared to all watching, that he was about to fail and lose all he had worked for. In the background, Vionelle Glidden stood ready to add his business to her own for a price far below what it was worth.

At the eleventh hour, Teniel found a saviour. That saviour was in the form of Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh. Baroness Evaleigh had seen the result of Vionelle Glidden's control of the silk trade. Many of the peasantry in the industry were forced to work for barely subsistence wages, while Vionelle garnered huge profits.

Recently the Baroness has started to take a more active role in the affairs of state, (*See RTK6-01 Fate of Alain*) and in a bold move to help the peasantry and to begin to break the trade guilds hold on her country, she gave Teniel baronial sanction and favour and all silk used by the baroness and her household would be imported by the Rogesh silk company. As a result of this move, the fashionable members of the baronial court suddenly developed an interest in Rogesh silk, and overnight it became the material to wear. This of course has not left Vionelle Glidden a happy woman.

It has also left a number of other merchants worried how this might affect their control on other areas of the mercantile industry, and as a result someone has decided to show the court of Ratik the accidents tend to happen to people who interfere in their business, regardless of their station. This unknown merchant has used the financial problems of Jarimous Manque, a member of the baronial court, to convince him to be a part of the whole affair.

Under instructions, Jarimous has recommended a man simply known as Chef to the baroness' seneschal, Sir Edmous, as head chef for the upcoming baronial banquet.

The man is really a master assassin tasked with poisoning the banquet.

Unfortunately for Jarimous, while he was getting ready to attend the banquet, his contact came calling and lured him to the attic. There he paralysed Jarimous and killed him. The contact then searched to ensure that there was no incriminating evidence and then trapped the body. They wanted the body to be found as a warning that, but also wanted to destroy anything they had missed. A nice evocation trap would accomplish this. Little did they know that Jarimous had palmed a small brooch in the hope of exposing his killers.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Act 1 – Before the Banquet

Encounter 1

It is the night before the great banquet and the PCs arrive at the manor house of Sir Edmous where they are greeted by his wife, Dame Annalise Tralleine. They discover that Edmous is still at the court where he is finalising a number of details for the banquet. In this encounter the PCs learn some court gossip and the fact that the banquet is held to honour Taniel Rogesh, a merchant and friend to the Baroness. Dame Annalise has also taken the liberty of obtaining courtiers outfits for the PCs in case they did not have any themselves and will also explain the etiquette of the occasion, informing the PCs that armour and heavy weapons will not be allowed at the banquet.

Encounter 2

Later that night, Sir Edmous arrives home. He greets the PCs and invites them to join him in the drawing room for a glass of cognac. There he relaxes by the fire and makes general chit chat. Again, this is a chance to learn more about the happenings at court. During the general conversation, Sir Edmous will enlighten the PCs about his hiring of a well known chef from Nyronde on the suggestion of Jarimous Manque, a member of the baronial court.

Act 2 – The Baronial Banquet

Encounter 3

The PCs enter the Banquet hall. They are announced by the Chamberlain and shown to a table next to the baronial high table where Sir Edmous and his family are seated, (as well as Lord Brayen Fadric & family and Hengon Mogotten). Sir Edmous will provide introductions to those at the table as well as pointing out the names of the other guests.

Sir Edmous and the other guests seated at the table will answer any questions about those in attendance and hand out some snippets of court gossip.

Encounter 4

The first remove is served. Soup, fish and roast meats are brought to the table. During the meal, the PCs will overhear Vionelle Glidden scold a serving boy for bringing her

shell fish, which according to her, she is allergic to. This is interrupted when a bed-robed Lexnol III enters the hall, barely able to walk as the effects of the palsy send fits through his body. He points at the table of the PCs and Baroness and speaks. He then collapses and the Baronial guard rushes to his side to assist him back to his chambers.

Encounter 5

With the first remove over, people get up to mingle. This is a chance for the PCs to talk to other people. The PCs can collect rumours and information during this time and there is much to learn about the inner workings of the court and the guilds.

Act 3- Behind the Banquet

Encounter 6

At some time during the adventure, the PCs may want to have a look around. (If not, you should find some way to encourage them). Outside the banquet hall, they will run across a kitchen boy in a panic. A Diplomacy check is needed to calm the boy down, and learn that his friend is very sick. If the PCs pass the DC, then they can arrive in time to save the sick boy. If they fail, then the boy has died.

Encounter 7

The PCs are led to a young boy who has been poisoned. Depending on their Diplomacy check in the previous encounter, he may be dead already. If he has not died, the boy will not live through the secondary damage and it is up to the PCs to save him through a Heal check or magic.

If he is saved, he will tell the PCs that he fell sick when he stole and ate some of the seafood stew.

If he dies, his friend can tell them that he worked in the kitchen. Another Heal check will reveal that he had just eaten something with seafood.

As soon as the PCs have figured out that the stew was poisoned, they hear the head butler announce the serving of the Seafood Medley. This should motivate them into stopping the dish being served.

Encounter 8

As the PCs go to intercept the seafood medley, three of the chef's assistants move to intercept them. These villains will fight to the death as they know that they will be interrogated (tortured) and then executed if caught; and they have no information with which to bargain.

Encounter 9

Once the food has been intercepted, the PCs should go to apprehend the Chef. They will encounter him as he attempts to flee the castle. He will first try to bribe the PCs to let him go. Failing that he will attack and try to fight his way out. He knows that he will most likely be executed if captured alive, but if reduced to 5 or less hit points, he will beg for his life in exchange for naming who hired him and his team.

Encounter 10

Having learned that the person who hired the assassins was Jarimous Manque (either through questioning the cook or remembering that Jarimous was the one that recommended the chef), the PCs are sent by Sir Edmous to apprehend him immediately before he can escape. Unfortunately he has already been murdered by the person who hired him to arrange the foul deed. The PCs will find his body lying on the floor in the middle of his apartment and the killer has taken the time to cut out his tongue so that a *Speak with Dead* spell will not function. They have also trapped the body so that when it is examined a magic spell will trigger, destroying any evidence.

If the trap is neutralised, then the PCs will find a broken copper brooch. This is the only piece of evidence that they will have to lead them to the person who organised the assassination attempt.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Any PCs that have accepted the invitation of Sir Edmous to stay at his manor will receive free Rich upkeep for the duration of this adventure. Inform the players after they have made their decision on where to stay so that they can adjust their Charisma-based skills as appropriate.

INTRODUCTION

Court and Causality begins when the PCs receive an invitation to the baronial banquet being held by the Archbaroness to honour Teniel Rogesh, a young half-elven silk merchant and friend to the Baroness. The PCs have managed to garner this invite by performing a random act of kindness a few weeks ago.

Deliver the Read Aloud text and hand the players *Player Handout 1*.

A little while ago, when traversing the muddy roads of Ratic, you came across a traveller whose horse had come up lame and was struggling in the muck. For some reason, whether it was kindness or a whim, you decided to assist the stranger. The man thanked you for your kindness and continued on his journey. You gave no more thought on the matter and continued onto your destination.

A few weeks later a messenger arrived with an invitation.

Give the players *Player Handout 1*, which is reproduced below.

“Greetings and Salutations

Once again I wish to thank you for your assistance when my horse was taken lame. Your kindness allowed me to make an important appointment. In gratitude I would like to invite you to join me as my

guests at the court of Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh, for a grand banquet.

Should you require accommodation while at Marner, I also invite you to be my guest for the week at my manor. My page will convey your response.

Yours in service to the Crown

Sir Edmous Tralleine

Seneschal to Archbaroness Evaleigh “

With the invite extended, it is up to the PCs on whether or not they accept. If they do not accept then the adventure is finished for them.

The players may ask to make a knowledge check on the identity of Sir Edmous. A Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) will reveal the following:

- DC 10 – He is the seneschal of the Archbaroness and a member of the Knights of the Silk Garter
- DC 15 – He has been a friend of the Archbaroness for over eight years
- DC 20 – He is a member of the Council of the Knights of the Silk Garter

ACT 1: BEFORE THE BANQUET

The night before the banquet is a chance for the PCs to learn some information about the court and its members. This section assumes that the PCs have accepted the invitation of Sir Edmous to stay at his Manor.

If the PCs have decided to stay elsewhere then inform them that they have been invited to the manor for evening drinks with Sir Edmous and adjust as necessary.

If the PCs still refuse, then begin the adventure at Act 2 and adjust as appropriate. Sir Edmous will have made sure that they were informed of the weapon and armour restrictions and organised courtier outfits, but they may miss out on some of the gossip they would have heard if they spent the evening at the manor.

ENCOUNTER 1: ARRIVING AT THE MANOR

The manor of Sir Edmous Tralleine is a well presented, but modest manor house in a respectable area of Marner. The façade suggests that Sir Edmous is a grounded man, not one of these flashy, ostentatious nobles interested only in where they sit on the social ladder.

The door of the manor is thick, rich mahogany carved with the image of a hunting dog and a rose. A large brass knocker hangs in the middle of the door.

If the PCs knock at the door.

You hear the sound of the knocker echo within the manor house. Within a few moments a second

sound is heard, that of approaching footsteps. Soon they stop and the door opens. There, dressed in black is a tall proper looking man with greying hair. "Good evening. May I help you?"

The man answering the door is Morris, the butler. Assuming that the PCs introduce themselves, they will be shown to the drawing room and offered wine. Morris will excuse himself so that he can inform the mistress that the PCs have arrived.

Morris is the archetypal butler; very polite, speaks quite formal Common and will not answer any questions about his lord and lady, instead suggesting that they should be addressed to directly to Dame Tralleine as is proper.

With Morris the butler gone, you are able to have a look around the drawing room. The room itself contains a number of very comfortable armchairs and a small ornate wooden table. On one wall is a large portrait of a man and a woman. The man is dressed in ceremonial armour, the same man that you helped on the roadside. Next to him is an attractive darkhaired woman dressed in a sky blue gown and holding a harp made from what you think may be silver birch or ash.

On the other wall is a large map of the Archbarony of Ratik and a drinks table. The wall opposite the door is mostly taken up by a large fireplace. On one side of this fireplace hangs a green banner with a rampant white hunting dog and a white rose. On the other side of the fireplace is a second banner that has a sheaf of golden wheat and a golden harp on a blue background. Above the fireplace is a third banner that is green with a white rose and a blue band at the top.

A DC 15 Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) will reveal that the left banner is his coat of arms, the right is his wife's and the banner above the fire place is the arms of the Order of the Silk Knights

At this time the door to the room opens and the woman from the painting stands within its frame. "Good evening, I am Annalise Tralleine. I am so glad you could join us. Dinner will be ready shortly. If you would like to freshen up, Morris can show you to your rooms."

If the party decide to freshen up, then each will be shown a separate room where a bath will already be drawn. If the PCs look around, they will discover a set of courtier clothes and accessories hanging in the wardrobe. After a short time, Morris will knock at the door and announce that dinner is about to be served. After which, he will wait outside until they are ready to be escorted to the dining hall.

If the PCs are more inclined to chat, then Annalise is happy to oblige. She will take a seat in the drawing room and, over a glass of wine, answer what questions that she

can. Eventually dinner will be called and people will move to the dining room.

If the PCs use detection spells (*Detect Evil* etc) then Annalise will ignore it, but a DC 15 Sense Motive check will inform the player that she is not impressed with their rudeness.

The dining room is a large area with a grand table in the centre. At this time the table is set with fine silverware and the smell of roasting meat drifts from the kitchen. Dame Annalise takes a seat and motions for you to do the same.

The meal is of the finest quality and during dinner, Dame Annalise will continue to answer any questions that the PCs may have.

She will also inform the PCs that she has taken the opportunity to procure a set of courtier's clothes for the banquet for each of them as she was not sure if they had their own. They will also be told that there will be a restriction on weapons and armour at the Baronial banquet (Players Handout 2).

The following is a list of possible questions that may come up in conversation.

Can I wear my armour to the banquet?

"This is a baronial banquet. It is not appropriate for armour to be worn. Besides, it is really bulky and not necessary as the baronial guards will be there.

However if you feel you must have some protection, I have a friend that can make padded or leather doublets that will turn aside a casual blade"

{Masterwork padded or leather armour}

Why can't I bring my greatsword, etc?

"This is a baronial banquet, not a tournament. It is not appropriate for weapons to be worn. Besides, it is not necessary as the baronial guards will be there. If necessary we can lend you a dress sword."

{The estate has 4 masterwork longswords, 2 masterwork shortswords and 2 masterwork rapiers that the PCs can borrow.}

What is the purpose of the Banquet?

"The banquet is to honour the merchant Teniel Rogesh, a friend of the Archbaroness."

What does Teniel do?

"He is a silk merchant. He has only just begun trading in Ratik. Most of the court is clothed in Rogesh Silk."

How did he and the Archbaroness become friends?

or

Why is the court in Rogesh Silk?

"Before Teniel came to Ratik, the only supplier of silk was the Worshipful Company of Weavers and Broiders, controlled by Vionelle Glidden. When Teniel came to Ratik, he had a great deal of trouble breaking into the market. Vionelle was a powerful

woman with powerful friends. Teniel tried to endure, but eventually all his capital was gone and it looked like he was about to fail and Vionelle was waiting in the wings to buy up his company for a price well below what it was worth.

This was where the Archbaroness stepped in. For some reason she took a shine to Teniel and made him the sole supplier of silk used by her household. As such, the rest of the court, bless their little sycophantic hearts, followed suit, and Rogesh Silk became the only thing to wear in court."

What about Vionelle Glidden?

"Well she was not happy. Rumour tells that she flew into a rage that lasted three days. Two of her servants quit. It did not help that she did not receive an invite and has had to come as a guest of someone who did receive an invite."

Who is she partnered with?

"Lord Merdick Loegrimm. Merdick represents his people on the Council of Lords, but it is obvious to all concerned that he has no real power in his own lands. The guilds do as they please. One of his own guards even refused to arrest a merchant who assaulted him. Merdick is a weak-willed man who is kept on a leash by Vionelle Glidden. There was hope that his wife would put an end to that."

Who is his wife?

"Lady Gwynden is Merdick's wife of four years. She is much more assertive and tried to restore the power of House Loegrimm. Her efforts have earned her in the past couple of years: one attempted kidnapping, two assassination attempts, and a fistfight with a farmers' wife in the middle of a market. Gwynden won the fight much to the disgust of the crowd. Lately however, she has been less active."

Needless to say, she and Vionelle do not get along. The fact that Merdick has taken Vionelle and not Gwynden shows how far she still needs to go to restore House Loegrimm."

Who else is on the guest list?

"You will need to ask Edmous about that. I know that there are a number of guildmasters and a few of the nobility attending. That's what made the slight to Vionelle so forceful."

Any other interesting gossip?

"The only other thing happening at the moment is that a new physician has been appointed for the Archbaron Lexnol, and she is an elf."

Oh and the Archbaroness has started a new fashion by wearing elbow length gloves."

Treasure: Each PC is given a set of courtier clothes and associated jewellery. Because of the small amount, this has not been factored into the treasure. If the PCs want to

buy an outfit at the end, then they can, otherwise it is considered a loan, or was "ruined" at the banquet.

NPCs

☛ **Dame Annalise Tralleine:** female human aristocrat 6/ bard 1.

☛ **Morris Flargish:** male human expert (butler) 3.

☛ **Sara Flargish:** female human expert (housekeeper) 2.

☛ **Rina:** female human expert (maid) 3/rogue 2.

ENCOUNTER 2: AN EVENING WITH SIR EDMOUS

Just as dinner is finished, the door to the dining room opens and standing there is the same man that you helped on the muddy roadside.

"Good, you have made it. I am sorry I was not here to greet you when you arrived, but I was detained at the Baronial palace. Still I am sure that you have been well looked after by my beautiful wife." Sir Edmous smiles broadly, but you can see the tired look to his eyes.

"Well I see that you have finished dinner, I was planning to have a nightcap in the drawing room, would you care to join me for a Cognac?"

If the PCs decline the offer, Sir Edmous will pull up a seat at the dining table so they can talk. Morris will fetch Sir Edmous a drink.

If the PCs accept, they will be lead back to the drawing room where Sir Edmous will offer them a glass of fine cognac.

Regardless, Sir Edmous will attempt to engage them in conversation

Taking the glass from Morris, Sir Edmous takes a sip, closes his eyes and breaths a sigh.

"Procan knows I needed that. It has been an interesting day. Let me tell you, the number of things that need to be done even for a small banquet like this is unbelievable. Added to that, the number of minor courtiers vying for an invite or bringing me some requirements for one of the guests has meant that I have been run off my feet."

Still it should be a good evening. Especially if the chef from Nyronid is half as good as his reputation suggests. I must remember to thank Jarimous for suggesting him.

Forgive me, I am prattling on. How was your trip, I hope it was not too arduous."

Sir Edmous knows a number of interesting things about the happenings at the court. These are summarised below. At no time will he say anything bad about the Archbaroness due to his position as a Knight of the Silk Garter.

Who is the Chef?

"He is a chef from Nyronnd and has quite a reputation. I am unsure of his name as he has just been called Chef for as long as people can remember. He is a bit arrogant and will not answer to anything else. Still his seafood medley is meant to be spectacular, and if the man does half the things with desserts that I have heard about, then it will be a very successful night indeed."

Who is Jarimous?

"Jarimous Manque is a courtier in the court of the Archbaroness. He comes from old money and I believe that he has interests in a number of guilds, but his primary interest lies in a small group of merchant ships."

Who can we expect to see at the banquet?

"It has quite an extensive list for such a small banquet. There will be the Archbaroness and the newly knighted Sir Teniel of course. Archbaron Lexnol's second cousin Lord Mandris will attend. Sir Hengon Mogotten, War Wizard of Ratik, Lord Brayen Fadric, master of House Fadric and his wife Lady Shelova Fadric will be seated at our table."

Also attending are a number of the noble lords. Lady Bresht will be there as will be Lord Ridderick of House Devonmeek. Lord Bredivan and his delightful daughter, of course. I will point out the guests to you tomorrow night."

Are we really restricted in wearing armour?

"Of course, this is a banquet. We are not barbarians in Ratik, we know how to act in a formal function."

What about mithral armour?

"This includes mithral. While it may look nice, it is still armour. If you are determined that you need to wear something, talk to my wife. She has a friend that makes padded or leather doublets."

What can you tell us about the Archbaroness?

"Not much to tell, she has decided that it is time to stop the guilds destroying Ratik with their greed. That is why she has supported Teniel, so she can break the Worshipful Company's hold on the silk industry."

I hear that there is a new physician?

"There has been a new physician appointed about six months ago. Her name is Saralianous and she is an elf from Keoland that specialised in herb-lore and illnesses of the mind."

I have heard that Vionelle Glidden is not happy?

"Now there is an understatement. From what my sources tell me, when Rogesh appeared on the silk scene, she used all her contacts to ensure that no-one would buy his merchandise or transport his goods. Just when she thought she had ruined him, so she could buy him out, in steps the Archbaroness and makes him the official supplier to the court."

Added to that, Evaleigh then goes and knights Teniel and holds a banquet in his honour. A banquet that she is not invited to so she can't make a show of refusing to attend, and because everyone else is invited to it, she has had to exert influence on Lord Merdick, so as to attend as her guest."

What about Lord Merdick?

"A weak man who wants to do his best for his people but is under the thumb of the guilds. His wife has tried to stand up against them and so far this has earned her a number of kidnapping and assassination attempts against her. Still she tries to prevail, but she has had to take a more cautious approach recently."

What's the word on Teniel Rogesh?

"He is a young half elf mariner and adventurer who has recently returned to Ratik after a short but successful adventuring career. With his fortune made, he had planned to settle into a quiet and safe life as a merchant since he was fortunate enough to make friends with the son of a silkworm farmer in the countryside of the Pale whilst adventuring. Noticing the monopoly on the trade in Ratik, and always being one to buck the system, he decided to enter into the market."

When he was almost ruined by the manipulations of Vionelle, the Archbaroness stepped in, using the opportunity to break the stranglehold of the guilds by making him her personal supplier."

Where were the Silk Knights when they were needed seven years ago (or other questions relating to RTK6-01 The Fate of Alain)?

Sir Edmous' reply will depend very much upon who is present. If all of the PCs were involved in the events of RTK6-01 The Fate of Alain and swore an oath of secrecy then the knight will nod at Morris and dismiss him. Once the loyal servant has departed, then Sir Edmous speaks quietly.

"This is not a matter for lengthy discussion, yet I am aware of your part in certain matters. Let me just say that our Order did what we could, and many loyal souls perished in attempting to do the deed most recently performed for the lady. I can assure you that we knights have done everything that we could, given certain promises made to the one we serve..."

If not all of the PCs have been involved in the events of RTK6-01 The Fate of Alain, then Sir Edmous looks stern for a moment.

"The Order has always been loyal and steadfast in its service. Sometimes matters are taken from our hands, and we are often unable to talk about such matters. We take our oaths very seriously..."

This should be enough of a clue for PCs to be careful in their discussions. If they continue to do so then Sir Edmous will politely refuse to discuss the matter further, and the DM should take note of any PCs who are breaking oaths of secrecy and inform the Ratik Triad.

NPCs

 **Sir Edmous Tralleine:** male human aristocrat / knight 8.

Development: Once the PCs are finished with their questions, Morris will show them to their rooms.

ACT 2: THE BARONIAL BANQUET

The baronial banquet is an evening affair and this gives the PCs time to buy equipment, such as a dress sword, if they feel the need. If the players want to make a gather information check, then they can learn the information from the table in Encounter Five, up to and including DC 15.

When the PCs arrive at the banquet, the chamberlain and guards will greet them. If they have any items or animal companions other than those listed, then they will be informed that such items and creatures are not permitted at the banquet. The guards are happy to arrange stabling / storage of any prohibited item or creature.

If the PCs insist on bring the prohibited item or creature, then they will not be allowed entry and inform the players that this will result in the adventure being over for them.

If the PCs attempt to sneak something into the hall, then the guards have a spot of +10. Assume they are taking 10 giving a DC 20 Spot check against the PCs Sleight-of-hand check.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE INTRODUCTIONS

Passing the guards inspection, you are escorted into the banquet hall by a young woman and shown to a table where Sir Edmous and Dame Annalise are seated. The table is directly left of the high table, where the Archbaroness herself is seated.

Sir Edmous stands as you approach, "Ah, you have arrived. Please allow me to make introductions."

Sir Edmous will introduce the others seating at the table. The other people seated at the table are:

- Sir Hengon Mogotten, War Wizard of Ratik
- Lord Brayen Fadic, master of House Fadic
- Lady Shelova Fadic, wife to Brayen

The PCs have the opportunity to introduce themselves and talk to the other guests at the table. A list of topics and information known by each of the guests at the table is included below.

Sir Edmous

A grey haired man with a noble bearing.

Sir Edmous knows the following:

- Teniel has opened a hospice for some of the unemployed workers that have left Vionelle's clutches.
- A large number of the nobility have been invited to witness the Archbaroness' moving against the power of the guilds. More than would normally attend an event like this.

Dame Annalise

A beautiful woman of middle years.

Dame Annalise knows the following:

- Lady Gwynden is rumoured to be ill. Especially in the mornings.

Sir Hengon Mogotten

An older man, Hengon is getting on in years and it shows on his world-weary face.

Hengon Mogotten knows the following:

- The new physician has started Lexnol on a new remedy. She came to me for some advice on ingredients. She seems to know her herbs.

Lord Brayen Fadic

A remarkably charismatic man.

Lord Brayen Fadic knows the following:

- The seas have been growing more dangerous of late. Pirate attacks are up.
- The tournament circuit is shaping up to be good one this year.
- Silus Freeman (also a guest tonight) was seen leaving the temple of Procan looking worried and shaking his head.

Lady Shelova Fadic

A somewhat homely woman, possibly with some distant orc blood.

Lady Shelova Fadric knows the following:

- Lady Gwynden was to accompany her lord to the banquet, but at the last minute stayed home to manage the affairs of the manor.
- Bazzik's wife Remorria has been seen in the company of an older gentleman.
- Lord Merdick was assaulted a while ago. His guards did not step in to prevent it.
- Kitavia Bredivan married a half-elf, imagine that. He is of course beneath her station, but he has money.

If the PCs enquire about the guests at the other tables, then Sir Edmous will give them a brief description. This information is reproduced in **Player Handout 3**.

Other guests present

- Archbaroness Evaleigh – Archbaroness of Ratik and widow of Alain
- Teniel Rogesh – Young half-elf merchant and friend of the Archbaroness
- Vionelle Glidden – Guild mistress of the Worshipful Company of Broiders and Weavers
- Abril Bresht – Lady of House Bresht, in Ratikhill. Cold and cunning.
- Abrom Cormik – Lord of House Cormik
- Aethlin Goldmantle – Kitavia Bredivan's half-elven husband
- Allovale Devonmeek – Arbitrator of Law for Devonmeek.
- Aramson Cormik – Son of Lord Abrom
- Armat Ukakane – Dwarven warrior, leader of "Armat's Rogues"
- Baron Guy Sovét – A distant cousin of the Archbaroness and a military tactician
- Corble Minket – Formerly Alain's squire
- Dame Kasellia Brans – Knight commander of the Knights of the Silk Garter
- Digwel Grosseschnozz – Conductor for the gnomes of Ratik on the Council of Great Lords.
- Gorym Strongkeel – Master of the Shipbuilders Guild in Fadric
- Harden Azure – Master of the Navigators Guild in Cormik
- Hayv the Tactful – Marner courtier and diplomat
- Horm Ukakane: – The head of clan Ukakane
- Isiva Devonmeek – A lady of House Devonmeek known as a skilled ranger, and a good friend of Lord Krevik Bredivan
- Jenaia Devonmeek – Magistrate of War for Devonmeek
- Kitavia Bredivan – Daughter of Krevik Bredivan; late teens
- Krevik Bredivan – Lord of House Bredivan
- Lady Katharna – Wife of Vartuel and the real power in Keth.

- Lord Mandris Ratik – Second cousin of Lexnol III
- Lord Merdick Loegrimm – Lord of Loegrimm
- Phelgar – Lord of House Ulthek.
- Remorria Bazzik – Daughter of Lord Abrom, wife of Wyvel
- Ridderick Devonmeek – Administrator of Agriculture in Devonmeek, a most important position since agriculture is the houses' chief resource.
- Silus Freeman – Head of the Marner temple of Trithereon.
- Sir Althen – Captain of the Ratikhill Guard.
- Sir Ardent Bentner – Head of security in Marner for the Archbaroness
- Sir Gatoril – Ratik's general.
- Sir Lothak Bresht – Son and heir to Lady Abril.
- Thek Ulthek – Half-orc half-brother of Lord Phelgar.
- Tormund Ukakane – Head of the Goldsmiths Guild in Marner. (Dwarf)
- Vartuel Keth – Lord of Keth.
- Wyvel Bazzik – Master of the Shipbuilders Guild in Marner/Shiptown

ENCOUNTER 4: THE FIRST REMOVE

With the sounding of trumpets, the guests quickly move to take their seats in preparation for the first remove of the banquet. According to the server waiting patiently behind you, it will start with a scallop & oyster consommé, followed by seared sea bass, honey glazed pheasant and oven roasted peacock in full splendour (feathers reattached to give it a life-like appearance).

As the servers start to move from table to table with the consommé, the friendly chatter is interrupted by the clattering of dishes and raised voices from one of the tables.

If the PCs turn and look then they will notice that it is the table containing Vionelle Glidden. In fact it is Vionelle's voice that is raised.

"Just what are you trying to do? Murder me? My attaché informed the kitchen before my arrival that nothing containing shell fish was to be presented to my table. Remove this at once and ensure that the kitchen is well aware of the situation. Rest assured that I will be informing Sir Edmous of the incompetence of his staff and will not be satisfied until such incompetence is duly punished. Now be gone from my sight and make sure that a proficient member of the staff returns as our server."

The abashed young serving boy retreats with the offending dishes with all due haste.

Any PC that makes a DC 10 Listen check can hear Sir Edmous mutter under his breath

“Tomorrow is not going to be a good day. Must remember to make sure the boy gets a little something extra for causing Vionelle to make a scene.” A slight smile plays around his lips.

The PCs can interrupt the box text at any time. However if any of them moves to go to the table or before Vionelle can respond to any comments they make, there is a gasp from the crowd as the old Archbaron enters the hall.

The hall suddenly goes quiet as the doors open to allow entrance to a stumbling, shaking figure dressed in only a nightshirt of white linen. The once powerful frame of Lexnol III has been wasted by the effects of the palsy that struck him down when his son was slain. Even now, his body is constantly wracked with severe shakes and fits, that makes it a wonder that he can stand and walk.

Any PC that goes to move will find that Sir Edmous (or one of the other guests at the table) will have put a restraining hand on their shoulder and be shaking their head to say no. If then insist, the guards will block their passage to Lexnol. All through this the old Archbaron will be unaware of what is happening around him.

The old baron seems to look around the hall with cloudy, unfocused eyes. He does not seem to know where he is, until he focuses on the Archbaroness, and in a shaky voice.

“You are not she that has been beside me since Alain was taken. Not she that has cared for me these past years.”

He then turns his head slightly as if hearing something that no one else can hear. Then in a strong voice that will later be described as his voice in the days when he led the army of Ratik, he speaks to all that will listen.

*“Futures darken like waters in flood.
Honour no longer need be masked.
Poison flows in royal blood,
When questions sleeping are roused and asked.*

*The ghost hand grasps upon the sword.
The strong hand holds aloft the shield.
Both hands stay true to blood sworn word,
Or hopes die trampled on the field.”*

As his last words echo around the chamber, Archbaron Lexnol III collapses to the floor. At the doorway, his new physician, an elf, runs to his side. She orders the nearest guards to assist her in helping the unconscious Lexnol back to his chambers.

Any PC that make a DC 16 Listen check will hear Vionelle muttering “How unfortunate” in a condescending tone.

At this time the PCs may try to intervene or assist. Once again they will be stopped by Sir Edmous. If they offer to help take Lexnol to his chambers, then the elf will refuse their aid, unless they are known at court.

If they are not known, Sir Edmous will intervene, saying that it is best that someone known to the Archbaron goes, and that he and Hengon will assist Lexnol to his rooms.

If the PCs have a favour that makes them well known in court, then the physician will allow it. They can follow the elf to the Baron’s chambers, have a look around, and even ask a question or two. All that they will be able to find out is that

- the elf’s name is Saralianous,
- she was hired about six months ago
- she is a expert (in herb-lore and illnesses of the mind) from Keoland

After this, a guard will show them back to the banquet, when they can mingle with the other guests.

NPCs

🧝 **Vionelle Glidden:** female human Expert (merchant) 4 / rogue 3.

🧝 **Saralianous:** female elf Expert (herbalist) 9 / cleric 2.

ENCOUNTER 5: WORKING THE CROWD

After the first remove has been served, the party have a chance to talk to the other guests. Sir Edmous and Sir Hengon will have returned by this stage if they went off to assist Lexnol. The majority of the guests will know a number of common pieces of information and gossip. A couple of the NPCs know specific information. These NPCs are listed separately with what they know. It is also possible for the PCs to do a general Gather Information check. A table is included for this eventuality

The sources of information for this section are:

- Vionelle Glidden
- Teniel Rogesh
- General Knowledge by non specific NPCs
- Gather Information check

Vionelle Glidden

Vionelle Glidden is a sour woman who has the controlling interests in the guild of the Worshipful Company of Broiders and Weavers.

Vionelle does not know about Lady Gwynden’s pregnancy. She will try not to show it, but a DC 10 Sense Mo-

tive will tell the players that she is surprised if told about the pregnancy.

Lord Merdick will show nervousness about her finding out and a DC 10 Sense Motive will reveal that he was trying to keep it hidden

Vionelle knows the following:

- The baroness is not all that she appears to be. She has started acting differently over the last two months and what's with those gloves that she always wears now?
- Teniel is not from Ratik, his mother was a sea elf who seduced his father while at sea. But for what purpose?
- The guilds of Ratik have kept this country strong and prosperous. Now the Archbaroness seeks to undermine that. Remember she is not a Ratikan, and who knows what her father has told her to do.
- She has hired a new physician to look after the Archbaron, Lexnol. Still he has gotten no better. Instead his condition has worsened.

Sir Teniel Rogesh

A handsome young half-elf with eyes that remind you of the stormy sea, and blond hair that, in the right light, almost has a tint of sea green.

Teniel knows the following:

- My father was a Ratikan sailor, my mother was an elven woman that travelled on his ship one time. They had a brief fling and a few months later I was born. When I was old enough, my mother sent me to live with him and learn to be a sailor.
- During my first trip out, I met up with a group of adventurers. They were heading to the hills near Greyhawk. We became close friends and I joined them.
- When my adventuring was over I decided to return to Ratik. Seros, one of my companions, was returning to his father's silk work farm in the Pale. We decided to go into business.
- Through my investigation into the silk market, I have found that a number of vocal weavers and silk workers have disappeared.
- It is not uncommon for merchants bringing silk in from the outside to meet with accidents.

General Knowledge

Not all the guests at the banquet will have specific information that may be of interest to the PCs. Some of the guests are minor courtiers who have pulled strings to get invites, members of guilds that are not privy to the workings of Ratik's social elite or simply individuals that are not currently significant to the plot lines or have anything significant to impart. To assist the GM in running these minor NPCs, a general knowledge table of rumours

and gossip is included to flesh out any interaction the PCs have. Not all the items are true.

General knowledge known:

- Jarimous Manque was going to attend but illness has left him at home.
- A group of mercenaries recently killed a guildsman in Marnar. Some say it was the nobility behind it.
- The Silk Garter knights are becoming more influential. Some say they are forming a private army for the Archbaroness.
- The elf that has been brought in from Keoland has been seen to walk the baronial grounds at midnight.
- The baroness has been having an affair with the new knight Teniel.
- The gnomes are not happy with the Archbaroness. Their conductor is an old friend of Lexnol's and is suspicious of his "retirement". (This will not be heard from Digwell though and he will deny it)

Gather Information

If the players are not interested in role-playing the encounter, time is running short or the players would just like to do a general Gather Information check; a table to assist the GM is included.

Give the PCs the information for the DC achieved plus any below. Not all are true.

Gather Information (DC5):

- The baroness knighted Teniel for "services rendered".
- The Halflings are getting restless.
- The blood of a brass dragon runs in Teniel's veins.
- There is something large and dangerous in the waters off the coast of Ratik. The word "kraken" has been mentioned.
- The mercenaries from Perrenland are threatening Ratik values. They are pushing around the common folk. I tell you there are three things wrong with them, they are over paid, over bearing and over here.

Gather Information (DC10):

- The old Archbaron is really possessed by a demon summoned by a priest from the Pale.
- The elves have been making sacrifices of human children to their dark gods.
- The barbarians are saying that the Lord of Ice and Winter is stirring.

Gather Information (DC15):

- The new physician likes to walk the rose gardens of an evening. She is meeting someone. Not sure who.
- Sir Ardent Bentner is having trouble controlling the Baronial Guards.
- The War Wizard has been seen slipping into the Archbaroness' chambers.

Gather Information (DC20):

- There is talk of some of the guilds combining to build a new merchant fleet.
- Rudven Castiger, the previous Guildmaster of the Gemcutters Guild (before the current incumbent, gnome Lymon Gemsplitter) died under "mysterious circumstances".
- The Archbaroness is having trouble collecting her taxes. Some say the Guilds are deliberately making it difficult for her, but others say that she's not bothering, or not doing it properly.
- Hengon, has been seen "visiting" the Archbaroness late at night, but this seems to have stopped in the last month or so.

Gather Information (DC25):

- A gnoll druid was given safe passage through the Timberway.

Gather Information (DC30):

- The Baroness has changed recently. She has gotten more assertive.
- A known associate of the Worshipful Company of Broiders and Weavers was seen near the place where the silk caravan from the Pale was burned, near the time of the accident.
- Lord Merdick was roughed up because he started to listen to his wife instead of the guilds

Gather Information (DC35):

- Vionelle and Lady Keth have been seen together talking business.
- One of the Archbaroness' maids recently returned from an extended absence while she was taking care of her sick mother.

Gather Information (DC40+):

- Members of the Worshipful Company of Broiders and Weavers who speak out against the conditions have been seen in the slave pens of the Scarlet Brotherhood.

Approaching the Archbaroness

Some PCs who have previously met Archbaroness Evaleigh may attempt to engage her in conversation. At no point will her guards allow folk of such low station as the PCs near her. Since she shouldn't actually know them (in the public eye at least) she will act politely aloof, as she might when approached by any 'common' strangers. However, when no one else is looking but the PC(s) in question, she will give a sly wink and a hint of a smile.

NPCs

☛ **Vionelle Glidden:** female human Expert (merchant 4) / rogue 3.

☛ **Sir Teniel Rogesh:** male half-elf Expert (merchant 2) / rogue 3 / fighter 3.

ACT 3: BEHIND THE BANQUET

The trigger for Act 3 is when the PCs move away from the main crowd towards the rooms and corridors behind the banquet hall.

The urge to explore may prompt the party to do this themselves, otherwise have Encounter 6 happen at a time when they are at the edge of the hall.

You will need to make sure that you have about 90 minutes available for Act 3 to be completed.

ENCOUNTER 6: IN NEED OF HELP

The night continues on and the sound of conversation fills the air. Many are using this time between feast removes to gossip, make deals and renew contacts.

Have the PCs make a Spot check. The PC who gets the highest result notices Victor looking for someone to help his friend Manny.

While letting your gaze wander about the room, you spy a young boy about ten years old. He is running along one of the corridors that leads towards the back of the baronial manor. He appears to be worried and panicky, with tears streaming down his face.

If the PCs approach Victor to see what the problem is, they will discover that he is completely distraught and hysterical.

If they do not approach him, he will see the PC that made the highest Spot check and run to them.

Because Victor is so upset, the PCs need to make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to calm Victor down in time for him to tell them that his friend Manny is very sick and needs help, before Manny dies.

If the PCs fail the DC 15 diplomacy check then they will eventually calm Victor down so he can tell them that his friend Manny is very sick and needs help, but they will fail to get there before Manny dies.

It is possible for the PCs to use spells, such as *calm emotions* or *charm person* instead of the Diplomacy check to calm Victor.

NPCs

♣ **Victor:** male human commoner 1 (Fort+2, Reflex +2, Will +2).

Development:

If the PC succeed at the Diplomacy check and follow Victor, then they reach Manny before the poison kills him.

If the PC fail at the Diplomacy check and follow Victor, then they fail to reach Manny before the poison kills him.

If the PCs do not follow Manny (and this should be extremely unlikely to happen), then the second course is called. The seafood medley is served and any PC that eats it must make a Fortitude save vs *Dark Reaver Powder* (DC 18; 2d6 Con / 1d6 Con+1d6 Str).

If the PCs are poisoned (and live) then they may go to the kitchens, but the chef is gone. It is also possible that the PCs may realise that Jarimous Manque was involved. In that case the DM can play out Encounter 10, and adjust Conclusion D as necessary. (It is possible for the PCs to find the copper brooch).

ENCOUNTER 7: THE POISONED BOY

If the PCs agree to help Victor, then he will lead them to where his friend is. His friend Manny will be alive if they succeeded the Diplomacy check or dead if the check failed.

The boy is alive

Pulled along by young Victor, you are quickly led to a small alcove where a second boy lies doubled over claspng his stomach. The second boy looks at you weakly and another spasm hits his pain wracked body.

The PCs have made it to Manny one round before he needs to make his secondary save against the poison. The boy will fail his saving throw by one and will die unless the PCs and prevent it. They have one action each to act. The DC of the poison is 13 and Manny rolls a 12. At the very least a quick DC 13 Heal check can save the boy.

The boy is dead

Pulled along by young Victor, you are quickly led to a small alcove where the body of a second boy lies doubled over claspng his stomach. Unmoving, the second boy stares at you with open, dead eyes.

Aftermath

If Manny survives, he is weak but able to speak. Victor and Manny tells the party that they each stole a bowl of stew from the kitchen when the chef and his assistants had their backs turned. They hid here so they could eat the stew without being caught. Victor was just about to take his first mouthful when Manny was doubled over with pain. That was when Victor ran for help.

If Manny dies or is already dead, then a Diplomacy check (DC 15) is needed to calm Victor down. If successful he is able to relate the above to the PCs. If they fail then he is too upset to be able to speak. If the PCs use a spell such as *charm person*, Victor gets a +4 to his save due to his state. A *calm emotion* spell will automatically work (Victor unconsciously fails his saving throw voluntarily)

If the party is unable to calm Victor, then they can use the following skill checks to investigate the incident.

- Heal check (DC 15) – Manny was poisoned
- Heal check (DC 18) – Manny was eating seafood
- Search check (DC 12) – PCs find a bowl of seafood stew
- Profession (cook) check on Stew (DC 15) – The seafood has a funny smell, suggesting poison
- Knowledge (nature) check on stew (DC 15) – The stew has been poisoned
- Knowledge (nature) check on stew (DC 25) – The stew has been poisoned with Dark Reaver Powder

Development: Once the PCs have determined that the stew was poisoned, they hear...

Suddenly, reverberating up the corridor from the feasting hall is the announcement, "Your Excellency, Lords and Ladies, honoured guests. I present the second remove for tonight's banquet. Beginning with a medley of seafood in a cream sauce."

NPCs

♣ **Victor:** male human commoner 1 (Fort+2, Reflex +2, Will +2).

♣ **Manny:** male human commoner 1 (Fort+2, Fort (currently)-4)

ENCOUNTER 8: THE CHEF'S ASSISTANTS

The poisoned seafood medley is about to be dished out in the hall. If the party wants to stop it, they will need to go directly there.

Assuming that the PCs head directly to the banquet hall to stop the dish being served:

As you race down the corridor towards the banquet hall, desperately hoping to stop the poisoned stew before it is consumed, you see three figures dressed as kitchen workers step out to block the way. Each holds a rapier in their hand and they look at you grimly.

The PCs may interrupt the box text at any time. Initiate combat if they do so.

If the PCs state that they head towards the hall while Moving Silently and Hiding, then they can do so. Use the assistants' opposed Spot and Listen checks to determine the outcome. However to get to the hall in time, they will need to be moving at a speed of at least 20 ft. per round. This will require most PCs to take the penalty associated with moving at full speed. The DM should make this clear to the players.

If the PCs have some other way of bypassing the encounter (Dimension Door etc), then that is allowable.

Should the encounter be bypassed, then adjust the box text as appropriate. The PCs will get full XP for the encounter, but the assistants will have quietly left, so no treasure is gained.

If combat takes more than 10 rounds, or if the PCs move at less than full speed, then the stew is consumed.

DM's Note: Halflings or gnomes in heavy or medium armour can run down parts of the corridor, giving them an effective speed of 20 ft. for this encounter only. However they will suffer all penalties for running (ie no Dex for AC).

Creatures:

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛ **Kessel:** male human fighter 1 / rogue 1; hp 14; Appendix 1.

☛ **Milinda:** female human fighter 1 / rogue 1; hp 14; Appendix 1.

☛ **Morgra:** male half-orc fighter 1 / rogue 1; hp 14; Appendix 1.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Kessel:** male human fighter 1 / rogue 3; hp 29; Appendix 1.

☛ **Milinda:** female human fighter 1 / rogue 3; hp 29; Appendix 1.

☛ **Morgra:** male half-orc fighter 1 / rogue 3; hp 25; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Kessel:** male human fighter 1 / rogue 5; hp 42; Appendix 1.

☛ **Milinda:** female human fighter 1 / rogue 5; hp 42; Appendix 1.

☛ **Morgra:** male half-orc fighter 1 / rogue 5; hp 36; Appendix 1.

Tactics: Their primary function is to delay the PCs 10 rounds and will do so by blocking the corridor and mak-

ing use of their Improved Feint and Combat Expertise. They will not break the line to flank etc.

They will fight to the death as they know that they will be interrogated (tortured) and then executed if caught; and they have no information with which to bargain.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot – 22gp, Coin – ogp, Magic – Sleep Arrow- (11gp each).

APL 4: Loot – 182gp, Coin – ogp, Magic – Sleep Arrow- (11gp each).

APL 6: Loot – 182gp, Coin – ogp, Magic – Sleep Arrow- (11gp each).

Detect Magic Results: Sleep Arrow (faint enchantment).

Development:

If the PCs are successful in stopping the poisoned food from being served, Sir Edmous will quickly and quietly request that they go immediately to the kitchen in the vain hope that Chef has not yet fled the estate. If asked, he will explain that this needs to be done discretely and that he requires the guards here so that order can be maintained.

If the PCs refuse then he will send guards instead and the adventure is over.

If they ask for time to grab their equipment, he will tell them that there is not time, but hands one of them his dress sword (Axiomatic longsword+2) to borrow. Additionally he will quickly order some guards to hand over non-magical longswords to other PCs.

One of the guards is a cleric and can cast a *cure moderate wounds* spell and two *cure light wounds* spells for the PCs.

If the PCs fail, then the assistants will flee (as well as the chef). They will not take the time to coup de grace. Help will arrive in 3 rounds after the combat is over. PCs will need to roll self stabilisation checks in the meantime. (Go to Conclusion D).

If they fail to stop the stew from being served then chaos will erupt as people start to succumb to the poison. Sir Edmous can be seen knocking the spoon out of the archbaroness' hand. In the chaos, enough time will pass for the chef to have escaped.

It is possible that the PCs may realise that Jarimous Manque was involved. In that case the GM can play out encounter 10, and adjust Conclusion D as necessary. (It is possible for the PCs to find the copper brooch.)

ENCOUNTER 9: THE ASSASSIN

After the poisoned stew has been intercepted, the PCs are sent to apprehend the chef if he has not already escaped. Lucky for the PCs he is still there. Assuming that they do

as Sir Edmous asks they catch him as he is just about to leave.

Unlike most kitchens at an event like this, the Baronial kitchen is extremely quiet. This is because there is but a single occupant. A grey haired man dressed in a leather apron and a meat cleaver in his belt. He is currently searching through a backpack for something. There are two empty vials on the table.

If the PCs have attempted to sneak into the kitchen, make opposed skill checks. If the party is successful, let their actions dictate the flow of the encounter.

If the PCs were spotted or did not attempt to enter the kitchen using stealth then:

The man looks up at you and immediately brings his hand up as if requesting to parlay.

If the PCs give Chef a chance to talk, he will explain that this is nothing personal. He was simply hired to do a job. If the PCs agree to let him go, he will give them each APL x 100gp and the name of the person who hired him.

If the PCs agree, Chef will slowly pull out a bag of gems (worth the agreed amount) and a scroll of *teleport*. He will use the scroll to teleport out, leaving the bag of gems and a slip of parchment with the name 'Jarimous Manque'.

If the party does not accept Chef's deal, he draws his cleaver (hand axe), grabs a heavy pot lid (treat as a buckler) and prepares for an attack.

He has already drunk potions of *Fox's Cunning* and *Eagle's Splendour* to boost his stats so that he can use his Use Magic Device skill to activate the scroll of *teleport*. These are included in the stat block. He has also had *undetectable alignment* cast upon him at the beginning of the day.

Creatures:

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛ **Chef:** male human fighter 4/ rogue 1; hp 44; Appendix 1.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Chef:** male human fighter 4/ rogue 3; hp 57; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Chef:** male human fighter 4/ rogue 5; hp 70; Appendix 1.

Tactics: If Chef's attempt to bribe the PCs fails, then he will draw his meat cleaver (treat as hand axe) and attack. He will attempt to concentrate on one PC until they drop. He will also position himself so that he can't be flanked and will be able to claim cover from the majority of the PCs.

If he is reduced to 5 or less hit points, then he will surrender.

Treasure:

Chef has the following treasure in his possession

APL 2: Loot – 27gp, Coin – 37gp, Magic – *Studded Leather Armour +1* – (98gp each), *Hat of Disguise* – (150gp each), *Scroll of Teleport* – (94gp each).

APL 4: Loot – 39gp, Coin – 67gp, Magic – *Studded Leather Armour +1* – (98gp each), *Hat of Disguise* – (150gp each), *Scroll of Teleport* – (94gp each), *Hand of the Mage* – (75gp each).

APL 6: Loot – 26gp, Coin – 100gp, Magic – *Studded Leather Armour +1* – (98gp each), *Hat of Disguise* – (150gp each), *Scroll of Teleport* – (94gp each), *Hand of the Mage* – (75gp each), *Buckler +1* – (97gp each), *Brooch of Shielding* – (125gp each).

Detect Magic Results:

Hat of Disguise (faint illusion),
Studded Leather Armour +1 (faint transmutation),
Buckler +1 (faint transmutation),
Scroll of Teleport (faint conjuration [teleportation]),
Hand of the Mage (faint transmutation),
Brooch of Shielding (faint abjuration)

Development:

If Chef wins he will teleport out immediately and does not take the time to loot the PCs or coup de grace them.

If Chef surrenders then he will give up Jarimous Manque in exchange for him being spared from execution. If asked Sir Edmous will reluctantly agree to this. If the PCs do not ask permission to accept the deal, Sir Edmous and the Archbaroness will honour the agreement.

If the party lets Chef go and accept his bribe, then they will gain the agreed amount and the name of Jarimous Manque. However if they try to cover things up and fail a DC 20 Bluff check then Sir Edmous will know that they have let Chef go. He will not say anything, but they will not get his favour at the end. If they tell Sir Edmous that they let Chef go in return for the information of his employer, he will tell them that he is disappointed in their judgement, but they will still get his favour at the end. Assists are allowed for this check.

Regardless of the outcome with Chef, Sir Edmous will arrive 5 rounds after the fight is concluded and send the PCs to the house of Jarimous Manque while he continues to clean up the mess with the guests that the assassination attempt has caused.

If the PCs do not discover the connection between Chef and Jarimous Manque, Sir Edmous will realise it and inform the PCs that he thinks Jarimous may be involved as it was he who recommended Chef.

ENCOUNTER 10: A BODY DISCOVERED

The PCs have been given directions to the townhouse of Jarimous Manque by Sir Edmou and have no trouble reaching their destination. They have time to reequip before they got to the townhouse, should they wish to. When outside the PCs see

The townhouse of Jarimous Manque is smaller than you would imagine for a courtier of the Baronial court, suggesting either a man at the lower rungs of the social ladder or a noble that has fallen on hard times. A wooden door stands at the front of the building, bracketed by two windows. From the street, the second floor also contains two windows while the third floor has only one. But it is that one window that has a light burning in it.

The back of the townhouse is similar in layout as the front, except that the back door is not as ornate. The doors and windows of the town house are not trapped but are locked.

☛ **Front Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; AC 5; Break DC 20, Open Locks DC 15.

☛ **Back/internal Doors:** 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; AC 5; Break DC 18, Open Locks (back door only) DC 10.

☛ **Windows:** 1/4 in. thick; hardness 0; hp 5; AC 5; Break DC 10, Open Locks DC 10.

Let the PCs devise a way into the townhouse. They should achieve entry easy. Once they have made their way up to either the door of the attic or the window, read or paraphrase the following. If paraphrasing ensure that it is clear that the person is obviously dead.

The room at the top of the townhouse is definitely an attic that has been converted into a storage space. It is lit by a single lantern placed on the ground near the front window. In the middle of the room, lying in a pool of dried blood is the body of an obviously dead young man dressed in noble's clothes. From this distance, it appears that his throat has been cut.

This is the body of Jarimous Manque. He has been killed by his associates so that he can not disclose what he knows about them.

If the PCs move closer they can tell that his throat has been cut and that his tongue has been removed (to stop *speak with dead*). Any other information will require a physical examination of the body.

Unfortunately the killer has trapped the body, so that as soon as it is touched, a trap is set off, destroying any evidence that may exist.

If the PCs manage to disarm the trap, then a DC 15 Heal check will show that the cut was made from right to left with the attacker standing behind Jarimous. There are also no defensive wounds, suggesting that he was either surprised, knew his attacker or immobilised by a spell or similar effect (there is no sign of poison).

Trap: The trap set on Jarimous Manque varies by APL and is centred on the body. Its primary purpose is to destroy evidence; its secondary is to kill anyone investigating the assassination attempt that may have reached this conclusion. It can also be set off by moving a hand etc with a *mage hand* spell. It can be detected with a *detect magic* and will detect as faint evocation.

Besides being disarmed by a rogue, it can be suppressed by a successful *dispel magic* long enough to allow the PCs to find the brooch.

APL2 (EL 2)

☛ **Burning Hands Trap:** CR 2; Magical; proximity trigger; no reset; spell effect (*burning hands*, 3rd-level wizard, 3d4 fire, DC 11 Reflex save for half damage); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

APL4 (EL 4)

☛ **Fireball Trap:** CR 4; Magical; proximity trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fireball*, 5th-level wizard, 5d6 fire, DC 14 Reflex save for half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL6 (EL 6)

☛ **Empowered Fireball Trap:** CR 6; Magical; proximity trigger; no reset; spell effect (*Empowered fireball*, 9th-level wizard, (9d6)x1.5 fire, DC 16 Reflex save for half damage); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

Development:

If the PCs manage to disarm the trap without setting it off, then they are able to search the body. The only item that they find is a small broken copper brooch in the shape of a dog or wolf.

If the PCs set off the trap, then this evidence is destroyed.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION A

If the PCs stopped Chef and his assistants from sending out the poisoned food, but fail to connect Jarimous Manque to the plot, then use this conclusion.

It has definitely been a night to remember. Through your efforts you have foiled an assassination attempt on Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh. While the nefarious assassin chef and his crew were stopped, the one behind the

scheme has not been identified. Perhaps someday the truth will make itself clear.

PCs gain

- Padded or Leather court doublet
- Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine;
- Disfavour of an Unknown Merchant
- Notice of the Archbaroness
- Chef's cleaver and saucepan lid (If Chef was defeated)

NOTE: Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine is not received if the PCs let Chef go and attempted and failed a Bluff check.

CONCLUSION B

If the PCs stopped chef and his assistants from sending out the poisoned food and connect Jarimous Manque to the plot, but fail to recover the copper brooch, then use this conclusion.

It has definitely been a night to remember. Through your efforts you have foiled an assassination attempt on Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh. While the nefarious assassin Chef and his crew were stopped and Jarimous Manque was identified as the middleman, the explosive trap destroyed any evidence on who killed him and may have been behind the whole affair. Perhaps someday the truth will make itself clear.

PCs gain

- Padded or Leather court doublet
- Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine;
- Disfavour of an Unknown Merchant
- Notice of the Archbaroness
- Chef's cleaver and saucepan lid (If Chef was defeated)

NOTE: Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine is not received if the PCs let Chef go and failed their Bluff check.

CONCLUSION C

If the PCs stopped chef and his assistants from sending out the poisoned food, connect Jarimous Manque to the plot and recover the copper brooch, then use this conclusion.

It has definitely been a night to remember. Through your efforts you have foiled an assassination attempt on Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh. While the nefarious assassin chef and his crew were stopped and Jarimous Manque was identified as the middleman.

A broken copper brooch in the shape of a dog or wolf was the only evidence found that may reveal who was behind the whole affair. Perhaps someday,

with the help of this bauble, the truth will make itself clear.

PCs gain

- Padded or Leather court doublet
- Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine;
- Disfavour of an Unknown Merchant
- Notice of the Archbaroness
- Broken copper brooch
- Chef's cleaver and saucepan lid (If Chef was defeated)

NOTE: Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine is not received if the PCs let Chef go and failed their Bluff check.

CONCLUSION D

If the PCs fail to stop chef and his assistants from sending out the poisoned food, then use this conclusion.

It has definitely been a night to remember. Unfortunately your efforts have failed to foil an assassination attempt on Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh. It was only through the quick thinking and skill of Sir Edmous, that the baroness survived the poisoning attempt.

Unfortunately other members of the court were not so lucky. Whoever was behind the scheme has still not been identified. Perhaps someday the truth will make itself clear.

PCs gain

- Padded or Leather court doublet

Unreliable PCs

PCs who proved themselves to be unreliable by ignoring orders from authorities, attempting to sneak weapons in to the dinner, assaulted NPCs without regard to consequences and so on should receive the Unreliable item on the AR.

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 8

Stop poisoned food from going out to banquet (either defeating or bypassing the assistants)

APL 2	150 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP

Encounter 9

Defeat chef

APL 2	150 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP

Encounter 10

Survive or disarm booby trap on body

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP

Story award (RP XP)

Saving the kitchen boy Manny from the poison

APL 2	45 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	45 XP

Discover Copper Brooch

APL 2	15 XP
APL 4	15 XP
APL 6	15 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	75 XP
APL 6	120 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

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

the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

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

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the Gained field of the adventure certificate.

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

Encounter 8: The Chef's Assistants

APL 2: Loot: 20gp; Coin: 0gp; Magic: 33gp – *Sleep Arrow* (11gp each)

APL 4: Loot: 180gp; Coin: 0gp; Magic: 33gp – *Sleep Arrow* (11gp each)

APL 6: Loot: 180gp; Coin: 0gp; Magic: 33gp – *Sleep Arrow* (11gp each)

Encounter 9: The Assassin

APL 2: Loot: 40gp; Coin: 200gp; Magic: 342gp – *Studded Leather Armour +1* – (98gp each), *Hat of Disguise* – (150gp each), *Scroll of Teleport* – (94gp each).

APL 4: Loot: 39gp; Coin: 400gp; Magic: 417gp – *Studded Leather Armour +1* – (98gp each), *Hat of Disguise* – (150gp each), *Scroll of Teleport* – (94gp each), *Hand of the Mage* – (75gp each).

APL 6: Loot: 26gp; Coin: 600gp; Magic: 639gp – *Studded Leather Armour +1* – (98gp each), *Hat of Disguise* – (150gp each), *Scroll of Teleport* – (94gp each), *Hand of the Mage* – (75gp each), *Buckler +1* – (97gp each), *Brooch of Shielding* – (125gp each).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Loot: 60gp; Coin: 200gp; Magic: 375gp; Total: 635gp (Max: 450gp)

APL 4: Loot: 219gp; Coin: 400gp; Magic: 450gp; Total: 1069gp (Max: 650gp)

APL 6: Loot: 206gp; Coin: 600gp; Magic: 672gp; Total: 1478gp (Max: 900gp)

Special

Favour of Sir Edmous Tralleine: Sir Edmous has opened his home to you. For any adventure set in Marnar, you gain the benefits of one lifestyle higher than what you paid for.

In addition, he offers you the position of Squire. Taking up his offer has the following effect.

- Access to the Knights of the Silk Garter meta-org (Squire tier)

- Regional access to the following items: *Mithral chainshirt*, +1 *defending longsword*, *Sacred Scabbard*.

This position requires an oath of fealty requiring you to come to the aid of Sir Tralleine and his household, or the archbaroness if requested. Failure will result in a *bestow curse* (-4 to attack rolls, saves, ability and skill checks, no saving throw) until atoning and gain forgiveness from Sir Edmous (special mission required).

Cross off this section of the favour if the PC decides not to become a Squire of Sir Edmous.

Disfavour of an Unknown Merchant: You have foiled the plans of someone within the circles of power in the merchant guilds. At the beginning of each regional set in Ratik, roll a d10. On a result of 1-2, favours have been called in and you find all goods (magic or mundane) cost an additional 10%.

Notice of the Archbaroness: You have gained the Archbaroness' public gratitude and been given access to the open areas of the court. This will give a +1 circumstance bonus to Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) checks pertaining to Ratik. In addition, you gain one Influence point with the Archbaroness and her allies.

Broken copper brooch: This broken copper brooch in the shape of a dog or wolf was found on the body of Jarimous Manque. At the moment it is the only evidence in the assassination attempt on the Baroness.

Padded or Leather court doublet: You may purchase a padded or leather doublet (acts as masterwork padded or leather armour) from the tailor Dasu, friend of Dame Tralleine. This armour may be worn at court.

Chef's cleaver and saucepan lid: This hand axe and buckler appear as a kitchen cleaver and saucepan lid respectively. These items will pass for kitchen utensils under inspection.

Unreliable: Your actions have shown you to be too unreliable to be trusted, even in a place as individualistic as Ratik. For a period of one calendar year from the date the Adventure Record was issued, all items purchased in Ratik regional adventures by the PC incur a 10% increase in price. This increase is cumulative with any other such penalties. This includes items purchased specifically for the PC by other characters.

- *Scroll of Teleportation* (Adventure; DMG; 1,125gp)
- Masterwork saucepan lid buckler (See description above; 165gp)
- Masterwork cleaver shaped handaxe (See description above; 306gp)

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

- Masterwork Quickblade Rapier (Adventure; CV; 375gp)
- *Hand of the Mage* (Adventure; DMG; 900gp)

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

- *Brooch of Shielding* (Adventure; DMG; 1,500gp)
- *Saucepan lid buckler* +1 (See description above; 1,165gp)

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

APL 2:

- *Sleep Arrow* (Adventure; DMG; 132gp)
- *Hat of Disguise* (Adventure; DMG; 1,800gp)

APPENDIX 1: APL 2

ENCOUNTER 8: THE CHEF'S ASSISTANTS

Kessel: male human fighter 1 / rogue 1; CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+1d6+2; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +1; Grp +3;

Atk +3 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, rapier)] or +3 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +3 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, rapier)] or +3 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ;

AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Handle Animal +3, Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Profession [Cook] +4, Ride +4, Search +3, Spot +4, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +3. Combat Expertise (1st); Improved Feint (human), Improved Trip (1st Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Rapier, Leather armour, Buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), Sleep Arrow.

Milinda: female human fighter 1 / rogue 1; CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+1d6+2; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +1; Grp +3;

Atk +3 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, rapier)] or +3 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +3 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, rapier)] or +3 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ;

AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Handle Animal +3, Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Profession [Cook] +4, Ride +4, Search +3, Spot +4, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +3. Combat Expertise (1st); Improved Feint (human), Improved Trip (1st Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Rapier, Leather armour, Buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), Sleep Arrow.

Morgra: male half-orc fighter 1 / rogue 1; CR 2; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 1d10+1d6+2; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +1; Grp +4;

Atk +5 melee [(1d8+3 19-20 x2, longsword)] or +3 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +5 melee [(1d8+3 19-20 x2, longsword)] or +3 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ;

AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Climb +2, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +4, Hide +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Profession [Cook] +3, Ride +3, Search +1, Spot +4, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +2. Power Attack (1st), Weapon Focus [longsword] (1st Fighter).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: Longsword, Leather armour, Buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), Sleep Arrow.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE ASSASSIN

Chef: male human fighter 4 / rogue 1; CR 5; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d10+1d6+10; hp 44; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +4; Grp +6;

Atk +8 melee [(1d6+4 x3, hand axe)]

Full Atk +8 melee [(1d6+4 x3, hand axe)];

SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ;

AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13 (17), Wis 10, Cha 12 (16).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Handle Animal +6, Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Profession [Cook] +4, Ride +7, Search +3, Spot +3, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +8. Combat Expertise (1st Fighter); Dodge (2nd Fighter), Improved Feint (human), Skill Focus [Use Magic Device] (1st), Weapon Focus [Handaxe] (3rd), Weapon Specialisation [Handaxe] (4th Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork handaxe, Studded leather armour+1, Masterwork Buckler, Scroll of Teleport, Hat of Disguise, 225gp.

Power Up Suite: Fox's Cunning, Eagle's Splendour
Skills: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +7, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +5, Search +5, Use Magic Device +10

ENCOUNTER 8: THE CHEF'S ASSISTANTS

Kessel: male human fighter 1 / rogue 3; CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+3d6+8; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk +6 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +5 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +6 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +5 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Evasion;

AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +9, Handle Animal +3, Hide +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Profession [Cook] +5, Ride +4, Search +6, Spot +6, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +4. Combat Expertise (1st); Exotic Weapon Proficiency [Quickblade rapier] (3rd), Improved Feint (human), Improved Trip (1st Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork quickblade rapier, Masterwork leather armour, masterwork buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), *Sleep Arrow*.

Milinda: female human fighter 1 / rogue 3; CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+3d6+8; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk +6 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +5 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +6 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +5 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Evasion;

AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +9, Handle Animal +3, Hide +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Profession [Cook] +5, Ride +4, Search +6, Spot +6, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +4. Combat Expertise (1st); Exotic Weapon Proficiency [Quickblade rapier] (3rd), Improved Feint (human), Improved Trip (1st Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork quickblade rapier, Masterwork leather armour, masterwork buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), *Sleep Arrow*.

Morgra: male half-orc fighter 1 / rogue 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 1d10+3d6+4; hp 25; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +3; Grp +7;

Atk +8 melee [(1d8+3 19-20 x2, longsword)] or +5 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +8 melee [(1d8+3 19-20 x2, longsword)] or +5 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Evasion;

AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +4, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +8, Handle Animal +2, Hide +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Profession [Cook] +4, Ride +3, Search +1, Spot +4, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +2. Dodge (3rd), Power Attack (1st), Weapon Focus [longsword] (1st Fighter).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, Masterwork leather armour, Masterwork buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), *Sleep Arrow*.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE ASSASSIN

Chef: male human fighter 4 / rogue 3; CR 7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d10+3d6+14; hp 57; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +6; Grp +8;

Atk +10 melee [(1d6+4 x3, hand axe)]

Full Atk +10/+5 melee [(1d6+4 x3, hand axe)];

SA Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Evasion;

AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13 (17), Wis 10, Cha 12 (16).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +9, Handle Animal +6, Hide +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Profession [Cook] +6, Ride +8, Search +3, Spot +6, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +10. Combat Expertise (1st Fighter); Dodge (2nd Fighter), Improved Feint (human), Improved Initiative (6th), Skill Focus [Use Magic Device] (1st), Weapon Focus [Handaxe] (3rd), Weapon Specialisation [Handaxe] (4th Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork handaxe, *Studded leather armour*+1, Masterwork buckler, *Scroll of Teleport*, *Hat of Disguise*, *Hand of the Mage*, 400gp.

Power Up Suite: *Fox's Cunning*, *Eagle's Splendour*: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +7, Search +5, Use Magic Device +12

ENCOUNTER 8: THE CHEF'S ASSISTANTS

Kessel: male human fighter 1 / rogue 5; CR 6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+5d6+12; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +4; Grp +6;

Atk +7 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +6 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +7 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +6 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge;

AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Handle Animal +3, Hide +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Profession [Cook] +6, Ride +4, Search +7, Spot +8, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +6. Combat Expertise (1st); Exotic Weapon Proficiency [Quickblade rapier] (3rd), Improved Feint (human), Improved Trip (1st Fighter), Skill Focus [Bluff] (6th).

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork quickblade rapier, Masterwork leather armour, masterwork buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), Sleep Arrow.

Milinda: female human fighter 1 / rogue 5; CR 6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+5d6+12; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +4; Grp +6;

Atk +7 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +6 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +7 melee [(1d6+2 18-20 x2, quickblade rapier)] or +6 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge;

AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Handle Animal +3, Hide +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Profession [Cook] +6, Ride +4, Search +7, Spot +8, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +6. Combat Expertise (1st); Exotic Weapon Proficiency [Quickblade rapier] (3rd), Improved Feint (human), Improved Trip (1st Fighter), Skill Focus [Bluff] (6th).

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork quickblade rapier, Masterwork leather armour, masterwork buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), Sleep Arrow.

Morgra: male half-orc fighter 1 / rogue 5; CR 6; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 1d10+5d6+6; hp 36; Init +2;

Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +8;

Atk +9 melee [(1d8+3 19-20 x2, longsword)] or +6 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

Full Atk +9 melee [(1d8+3 19-20 x2, longsword)] or +6 ranged [(1d6 x3, shortbow)];

SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge;

AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +4, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +10, Handle Animal +2, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Profession [Cook] +5, Ride +3, Search +1, Spot +7, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +3. Arterial Strike (6th), Dodge (3rd), Power Attack (1st Fighter), Weapon Focus [longsword] (1st).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, Masterwork leather armour, Masterwork buckler, Shortbow, Arrows (20), Sleep Arrow.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE ASSASSIN

Chef: male human fighter 4 / rogue 5; CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d10+5d6+18; hp 70; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size, misc. mods); Base Atk +7; Grp +9;

Atk +11 melee [(1d6+4 x3, hand axe)]

Full Atk +11/+6 melee [(1d6+4 x3, hand axe)];

SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge;

AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14 (+18), Wis 10, Cha 12 (+16).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Handle Animal +6, Hide +9, Intimidate +5, Jump +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Profession [Cook] +10, Ride +8, Search +4, Spot +8, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +14. Combat Expertise (1st Fighter); Dodge (2nd Fighter), Improved Feint (human), Improved Initiative (6th), Magical Aptitude (9th), Skill Focus [Use Magic Device] (1st), Weapon Focus [Handaxe] (3rd), Weapon Specialisation [Handaxe] (4th Fighter)

Languages: Common, Flan.

Possessions: Masterwork handaxe, Studded leather armour+1, Buckler +1, Scroll of Teleport, Hat of Disguise, Brooch of Shielding, 600gp.

Power Up Suite: Fox's Cunning, Eagle's Splendour: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +13, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +7, Search +6, Use Magic Device +16

APPENDIX 3: ADDITIONAL RULES

NEW ITEM

Rapier, Quickblade (Complete Adventurer, pg116)

Quickblade rapiers are longer and thinner than normal rapiers, with specially tapered blades and carefully balanced pommels. The design makes the weapon more difficult to wield properly than a normal rapier, but it allows those skilled in the weapon's use to disarm opponents more easily and to feint more effectively in combat. Most quickblade rapiers are at least masterwork in quality.

If you are proficient with the quickblade rapier, you gain a +2 bonus on opposed attack rolls made to disarm an enemy (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if an attempt fails). You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Bluff checks made to feint in combat.

You can use the Weapon Finesse feat (see page 102 of the *Players Handbook*) to apply your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier to attack rolls with a quickblade rapier sized for you. You can't use a quickblade rapier in two hands to apply $1-1/2$ times your Strength modifier to damage.

Characters proficient with the quickblade rapier can treat it as a rapier for the purpose of any of the following feats: Greater Weapon Focus, Greater Weapon Specialisation, Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialisation.

NEW FEAT

Arterial Strike (Complete Warrior, pg96)

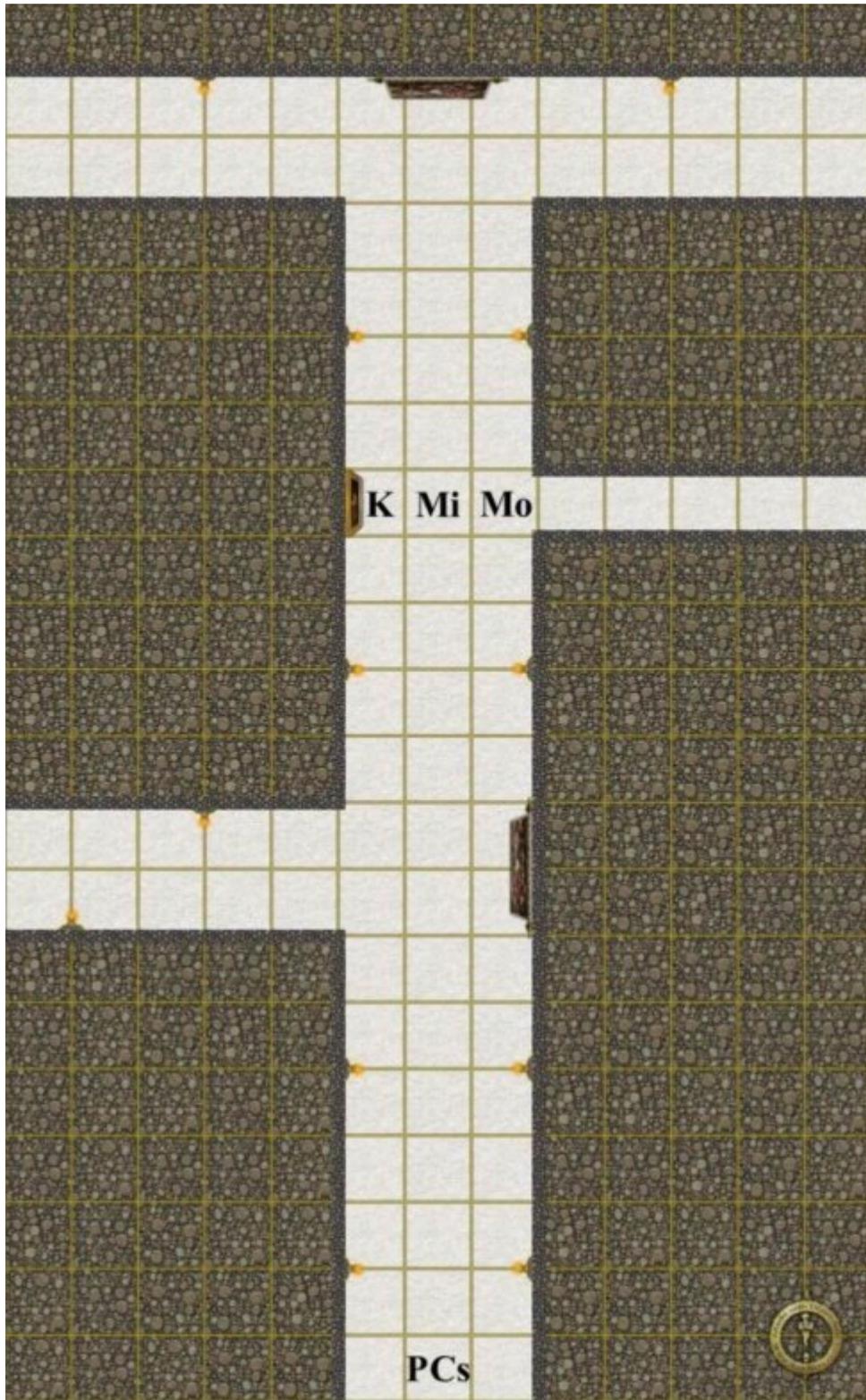
Your sneak attacks target large blood vessels, leaving wounds that cause massive blood loss.

Prerequisites: Sneak attack ability, base attack bonus +4

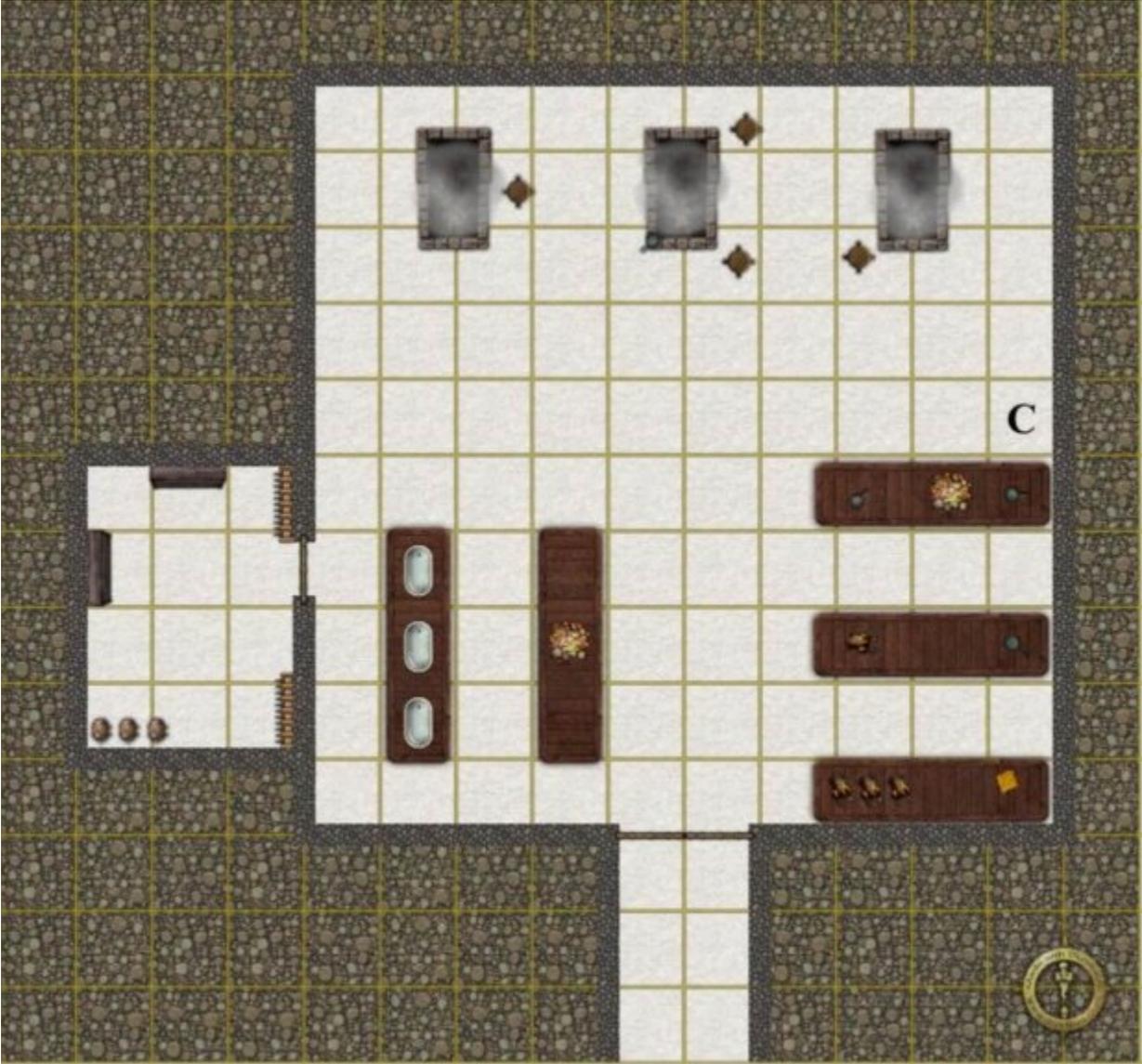
Benefit: If you hit with a sneak attack, you may choose to forgo +1d6 of extra sneak attack damage to deliver a wound that won't stop bleeding. Each wound caused in this manner saps an extra 1 point of damage per round from the victim, until the victim receives the benefit of a DC 15 Heal check or any *cure* spell or other magical healing. Wounds from multiple arterial strikes result in cumulative bleeding loss (two successful arterial strikes cause an extra 2 points of damage per round until healed). You may deliver only one bleeding wound per successful sneak attack.

APPENDIX 4: MAPS

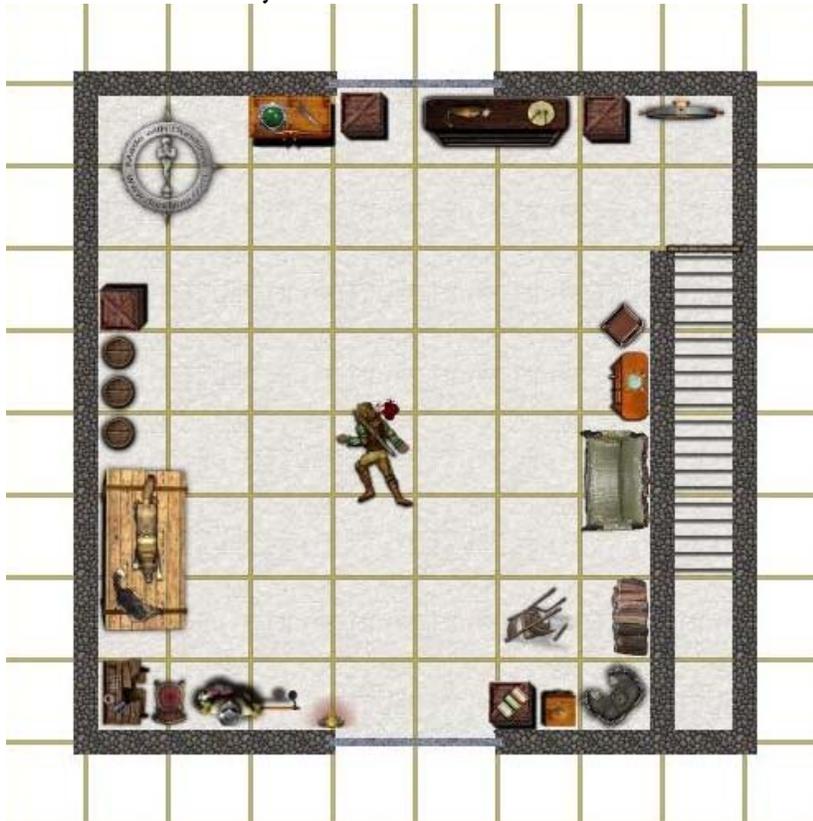
Encounter 8 – The Chef's Assistants



Encounter 9 – The Assassin



Encounter 10: A Body Discovered



Greetings and Salutations

Once again I wish to thank you for your assistance when my horse was taken lame. Your kindness allowed me to make an important appointment. In gratitude I would like to invite you to join me as my guests at the court of Her Valorous Prominence, The Lady Baroness Evaleigh, for a grand banquet.

Should you require accommodation while at Marner, I also invite you to be my guest for the week at my manor. My page will convey your response.

*Yours in service to the Crown
Sir Edmous Tralleine
Seneschal to Archbaroness Evaleigh*

PLAYER HANDOUT 2

Because the baronial banquet is a formal state occasion, it is deemed inappropriate to come armed for war. Baronial guards are in attendance to protect the Baroness and her guests.

For the guests the following weapons, armour and equipment restrictions apply.

- No armour heavier than padded & leather is allowed in the hall. Padded & leather armour should be in the form of a padded or leather doublet and as such will need to be of masterwork quality.
- No shields.
- Guests are allowed one dress weapon.
- 1-handed simple melee weapons except shortspear are allowed as a dress weapon
- Rapiers, longswords, scimitar or similar sized swords (Not bastard, falchions, two-bladed or greatswords), are allowed to be worn as a dress sword.
- A dress axe (hand axe or battle axe) are allowed for dwarves only
- No missile weapons are allowed.
- No spell component pouches are allowed. Spell casters are allowed to take in those materials required for non combative spells (healing, protection, transport etc). Magic items duplicating the effects of combat spells are likewise prohibited.
- No offensive – defence spells (ie fireshield), non personal spells (Globe of Invulnerability) or highly visible/garish spells (ie prismatic sphere) are allowed to be active.
- Familiars and dog, riding dog, eagle, hawk or owl animal companions are acceptable. All others animals are to remain outside.

Failure to abide by these rules will result in the cancellation of the invite.

PLAYER HANDOUT 3 – GUEST LIST

- Archbaroness Evaleigh – Archbaroness of Ratik and widow of Alain
- Teniel Rogesh – Young half-elf merchant and friend of the Archbaroness
- Vionelle Glidden – Guild mistress of the Worshipful Company of Broiders and Weavers
- Hayv the Tactful – Marner courtier and diplomat
- Corble Minket – Formerly Alain’s squire
- Dame Kasellia Brans – Knight commander of the Knights of the Silk Garter
- Abril Bresht – Lady of House Bresht, in Ratikhill.
- Sir Lothak Bresht – Son and heir to Lady Abril.
- Abrom Cormik – Lord of House Cormik
- Aramson Cormik – Son of Lord Abrom
- Gorym Strongkeel – Master of the Shipbuilders Guild in Fadric
- Baron Guy Sovét – A distant cousin of the Archbaroness and a military tactician
- Harden Azure – Master of the Navigators Guild in Cormik
- Sir Edmous Tralleine – Seneschal to Archbaroness Evaleigh
- Dame Annalise – Wife of Sir Edmous
- Sir Hengon Mogotten, War Wizard of Ratik
- Lord Mandris Ratik – Second cousin of Lexnol III
- Lord Brayen Fadric, master of House Fadric
- Lady Shelova Fadric, wife to Brayen
- Kitavia Bredivan – Daughter of Krevik Bredivan; late teens
- Aethlin Goldmantle – Kitavia Bredivan’s half-elven husband
- Krevik Bredivan – Lord of House Bredivan
- Phelgar – Lord of House Ulthek.
- Remorria Bazzik – Daughter of Lord Abrom, wife of Wyvel
- Silus Freeman – Head of the Marner temple of Trithereon.
- Sir Althen – Captain of the Ratikhill Guard.
- Sir Ardent Bentner – Head of security in Marner for the Archbaroness
- Sir Gatoril – Ratik’s general.
- Thek Ulthek – Half-orc half-brother of Lord Phelgar.
- Wyvel Bazzik – Master of the Shipbuilders Guild in Marner/Shiptown
- Ridderick Devonmeek – Administrator of Agriculture in Devonmeek, a most important position since agriculture is the houses’ chief resource.
- Jenaia Devonmeek – Magistrate of War for Devonmeek
- Allovale Devonmeek – Arbitrator of Law for Devonmeek.
- Isiva Devonmeek – A lady of House Devonmeek known as a skilled ranger, and a good friend of Lord Krevik Bredivan
- Vartuel Keth – Lord of Keth.
- Lady Katharna – Wife of Vartuel.
- Lord Merdick Loegrimm – Lord of Loegrimm
- Horm Ukakane: – The head of clan Ukakane
- Armat Ukakane – Dwarven warrior, leader of “Armat’s Rogues”
- Tormund Ukakane – Head of the Goldsmiths Guild in Marner. (Dwarf)
- Digwel Grosseschnozz: – Conductor for the gnomes of Ratik on the Council of Great Lords.

CRITICAL EVENTS SUMMARY

Was the poisoned food consumed?	YES	NO
Was the copper brooch found?	YES	NO
Did Chef escape?	YES	NO
Did the PCs accept Chef's bribe and let him go?	YES	NO
Did the Assistants escape?	YES	NO
Did Manny Die?	YES	NO
Did Vionelle discover Lady Gwynden's pregnancy	YES	NO
Did anything else of interest happen?	YES	NO

Please send these results to the Archbarony of Ratik triad at ratik-triad@rpga-apac.com.