

BIS3-06

Loyal to a Fault

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Bissel Regional Adventure

Version 1.1 – Use at AnonyCon 2003 Premiere only

by Adam Morse

A Bissel regional adventure for APLs 2-12, and Part Three of the Council Of Barons Series.

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

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Introduction

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

Preparation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this

type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

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	

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

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

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

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

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

Time Units and Upkeep

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

Adventure Background

"Loyal to a Fault" is the third and final scenario in the Council of Barons Arc. In the first two scenarios, the barons of Bissel begin aligning in two factions. One faction, led by Baron Zafar of Parulla, seeks to use the Council of Barons to ask the Margrave to abdicate because of his misrule. They are not, however, traitorous, seeking to work through Bissel's traditional assembly of lords. The other faction, led by Baroness Elina of Burning Stalks, supports the Margrave, partially out of loyalty but primarily because they believe that Evard the Necromancer poses an imminent threat that Bissel must present a united front against.

In the last days before the Council, the tensions within Bissel are mounting rapidly. Each faction is determined to recruit the undecided barons to their cause and is working hard to gather information that could persuade the undecided. The undecided barons are also looking for information to base their choice on. Meanwhile, nefarious forces have attempted to engineer a civil war by planting information to persuade each faction that the other faction is working for some of Bissel's worst enemies. This scenario is about the PCs being fed the false information and then determining that the opposing faction is not as bad as they briefly thought.

When "Loyal to a Fault" premieres, it will lead directly into an interactive that will resolve the arc.

After the premiere, a conclusion wrapping up the arc based on the results of the interactive will be added to the end of the scenario.

PCs who have played "First Comes Marriage" and "Divide and Conquer" are generally members of one of the factions within Bissel. In particular, they may be loyal to Baroness Elina of Burning Stalks, to Baron Zafar of Parulla, or they may be unaligned. Because this adventure is part of the arc where the factions are relevant, it changes somewhat depending on who the PCs are aligned with. The changes do not change the gameplay dramatically; in general, only a few details change. Whenever possible, things are kept precisely the same. However, it is essential to the arc that DMs use the right set of names and information.

If all of the PCs are loyal to Baroness Elina, use the "Baroness Elina" encounters. If all of the PCs are loyal to Baron Zafar, use the "Baron Zafar" encounters. If the PCs are not loyal to either faction, or if they are mixed, use the "Baron Alron"

encounters, which are frequently the same as the "Baron Zafar" encounters.

Adventure Summary

Introduction: The PCs arrive in Pellak and are summoned to a meeting with the head of their faction (or Baron Alron, if they are unaligned or mixed). Their leader tells them about an intelligence lead that could lead to them identifying an elite group of operatives for the opposing faction.

Encounter 1: The PCs meet with an informant, who after some convincing tells them how to make contact with the opposing faction's operatives. Unbeknownst to the PCs, the informant got his information from an agent seeking to engineer a civil war.

Encounter 2: The PCs make contact with an operative of the opposing faction, Serena, and must get the location of her group's hideout from her. This could involve magic, intimidation, fast-talking, or stealth.

Encounter 3: The PCs find the hideout of the other faction's operatives. Eventually, they fight the operatives, having to attack a defended building.

Encounter 4: Within the hideout, the PCs find a trapped box containing a journal entry. The journal entry reveals that the other faction is treasonous and plotting to destroy Bissel. The journal was secretly planted by the agent in his effort to build hostility between the factions.

Encounter 5: The PCs report to their leader. Their leader tells them that they need to rescue Coryn Cherek, the person who wrote the journal, because he is seeking to defect and could denounce the opposing faction before the Council of Barons. A group of soldiers are sent with the PCs to assist them.

Encounter 6: The PCs fight the guards who are holding Coryn Cherek. The soldiers with them have received false orders to kill Coryn, and the PCs must defeat them as well in a three-way free-for-all.

Encounter 7: The PCs find out the truth from Coryn Cherek. If they ask the right questions and investigate well, they may also receive a description of the agent who arranged for the deadly misunderstandings.

Introduction

With the Council of Barons set to meet less than a week away, a huge influx of visitors has swept into Pellak, the ordinarily sleepy capital of the March of Bissel. All of the barons and baronesses, lord mayors, and many of the lesser nobility and knights of Bissel have arrived or will arrive soon for the Council. Beyond the nobility, hundreds of merchants, craftsmen, and others have also flocked to the town. Every inn is packed, every tavern floor has guests sleeping on it, and crowds clog the streets.

The meeting of the Council of Barons is always momentous, but this Council is particularly important. If you believe the rumors, some of the Barons plan to bring a vote asking the Council to declare that it does not support the Margrave. In an effort to unite the March behind him, the rumors continue, the Margrave has agreed to abide by the Council's vote, whatever it brings. And so in addition to all of the more ordinary visitors in the city, each Baron has agents seeking to gain a political advantage by any means they can, or at least to gather information about the rival factions.

Baroness Elina

You have all demonstrated your loyalty to the Margrave and your support for the effort, led by Baroness Elina of Burning Stalks, to unite the March behind its rightful ruler. Your support has led you to Pellak, where you were luckily able to get some of the last rooms left in the inns before the township became completely swamped with visitors. After you have had time to settle in, a messenger in Burning Stalks livery requested that you attend an audience at Baroness Elina's townhouse.

The servants show you in to a small audience chamber. Burning Stalks is a poor barony, still struggling to recover from the losses inflicted by Ket during the war, and the townhouse reflects that. The Baroness cannot afford empty displays of wealth; the only decorations are a few trophies of war earned by Baroness Elina's prowess at arms, and the furnishings are sparse and functional. The Baroness looks up as you enter. She is an attractive brunette, with somewhat lighter skin than would be common among pure Oeridians. Even in her

own townhouse, her sword is slung over the back of her chair.

Give the PCs an opportunity to introduce themselves.

"I'm glad you received my message. As well you know, not all of the barons take their oaths of fealty as seriously as I do. Earlier today, an informant brought one of my knights information that may, with a little development, provide us with enough evidence to discredit the opposing faction and reveal their base motives publicly. I want you to follow up on this lead. Baron Alron Helbek is a good, thoughtful man, but he has not yet taken sides. I think that if you succeed in gathering this information, we will be able to bring him into the fold. Baron Alron is well known for his thoughtfulness and judgment; convincing him to support us may affect many other barons' votes as well.

"My knight was told that the forces who would overthrow the Margrave have an elite group of operatives running their more nefarious schemes. If you can identify their hide-out, you should be able to find out their plans. The informant who spoke to my vassal knows a recognition signal that these traitors use to identify each other. You should go and speak to him, learn the recognition signal, and use it to locate their base. He is a dwarf named Thorbard Ironfist. He spends most of his time at the Drunk Fish, a tavern in the Old Town by the docks."

If the PCs ask Baroness Elina, they could bring prisoners back to the townhouse, where she will arrange for them to be held until after the Council is over.

Baron Zafar

You have all recognized that the Margrave's rule is too oppressive to be allowed to continue. You have travelled to Pellak to support Baron Zafar of Parulla's efforts to organize the Barons' Council to remove the Margrave from power. Shortly after you rented some of the last rooms left in Pellak's inns, a messenger in Parulla livery requested that you attend an audience at Baron Zafar's townhouse.

The servants show you in to a small audience chamber. Parulla is a prosperous barony, even under the Margrave's misrule, and Baron

Zafar's townhouse reflects that wealth. Baron Zafar looks up as you enter. The Baron is an old Baklunish man, but still strong, clear-minded, and vigorous.

Give the PCs an opportunity to introduce themselves.

"I'm glad you received my message. As well you know, not all of the barons take the threat of the Margrave's tyranny as seriously as I do. Earlier today, an informant brought one of my knights information that may, with a little development, provide us with enough evidence to discredit the opposing faction and reveal their base motives publicly. I want you to follow up on this lead. Baron Alron Helbek is a good, thoughtful man, but he has not yet taken sides. I think that if you succeed in gathering this information, we will be able to bring him into the fold. Baron Alron is well known for his thoughtfulness and judgment; convincing him to support us may affect many other barons' votes as well.

"My knight was told that the forces defending the Margrave's corrupt rule have an elite group of operatives running their more nefarious schemes. If you can identify their hide-out, you should be able to find out their plans. The informant who spoke to my vassal knows a recognition signal that these villains use to identify each other. You should go and speak to him, learn the recognition signal, and use it to locate their base. He is a dwarf named Thorbard Ironfist. He spends most of his time at the Drunk Fish, a tavern in the Old Town by the docks."

If the PCs ask Baron Zafar, they could bring prisoners back to the townhouse, where he will arrange for them to be held until after the Council is over.

Baron Alron

Although you do have not committed to either of the factions vying to control Bissel's fate, you have still come to Pellak for the historic Baron's Council. Shortly after you rented some of the last rooms left in Pellak's inns, a messenger in the livery of the Baron of Helbek requested that you attend an audience at Baron Alron Helbek's townhouse.

The servants show you in to a small audience chamber. Helbek is a prosperous barony, even in these hard times, and Baron Alron's

townhouse reflects that wealth. Baron Alron looks up as you enter. The Baron is a middle-aged Oeridian, with an expressive face and an open manner.

Give the PCs an opportunity to introduce themselves.

"I'm glad you received my message. As well you know, Bissel is at an important crossroads. Soon, the Baron's Council will need to decide whether to back the Margrave or to seek a change. Earlier today, an informant brought one of my knights information that may, with a little development, provide us with inside information about the motivations of the faction supporting the Margrave. I want you to follow up on this lead. I need more information to determine which side I should support.

"My knight was told that the forces defending the Margrave's rule have an elite group of operatives handling their more significant plans. If you can identify their hide-out, you should be able to find out their plans. The informant who spoke to my vassal knows a recognition signal that these agents use to identify each other. You should go and speak to him, learn the recognition signal, and use it to locate their base. You must find out what their plans are; I have other agents investigating those who oppose the Margrave. The informant is a dwarf named Thorbard Ironfist. He spends most of his time at the Drunk Fish, a tavern in the Old Town by the docks."

If the PCs ask Baron Alron, they could bring prisoners back to the townhouse, where he will arrange for them to be held until after the Council is over.

Encounter One: Thorbard Ironfist

This encounter is the same for all factions.

You easily find the Drunk Fish, a run-down tavern near some of the fisher's docks in Old Pellak. You push your way in to the tavern; even the worst places are crowded today, with the local crowd of fishers swollen with every manner of traveller. Fortunately, dockside taverns do not attract many dwarves, so you easily spot Thorbard, alone in a back booth. Thorbard Ironfist is a fat, middle-aged dwarf

with a scraggly beard and more than a few missing teeth. As you push your way over to him, you can see why he's alone: Thorbard is singing dwarven drinking songs as he waves his mug of ale about, and his singing is rather appalling. As you approach, he stops mid-chorus. "Who are you?" he growls out suspiciously.

Thorbard Ironfist, male dwarf Rog 3: Medium humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 3d6+3; hp 16; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (+2 armor, +1 Dex); Atks +5 melee (1d8+2 [crit 20/x3], battleaxe); AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +8, Hide +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Local) +6, Move Silently +7, Sleight of Hand +9, Sense Motive +5.

Feats: Weapon Focus (Battleaxe); Iron Will.

Class Abilities: Sneak Attack +2d6, Trapfinding, Evasion, Trap Sense +1

Thorbard isn't a bad sort, but he's a little drunk, and he's looking forward to having a little fun. As soon as the PCs tell him why they want to talk with him, he knows that he can make them jump through some hoops to get him to cooperate.

If the PCs try to use the name of their sponsor to get him to cooperate, he laughs and blusters, "It's almost the Council of Barons! Everybody and their brother is 'on an important mission from a Baron.' Why should that matter to me?" As he responds, some curious heads begin to turn.

Thorbard tells the PCs, "Among my people, you don't really know someone until you know their family. So you had best start telling me about your families." Thorbard wants the PCs to go through a big production of describing their ancestors and the famous deeds they've done. Depending on whether he's satisfied by their performances, Thorbard may also force them to sing some drinking songs with him while they have a few rounds of ale.

Once the PCs have convinced Thorbard to help, he tells them the recognition signal. "What I know is the way that new arrivals from out of town are supposed to get in contact with the operatives. There's a board for posting notices at the Dented Tankard, which is an inn and tavern near here. A couple of times each day, one of them comes to check the board. To get in touch with them, you're supposed to post a message where the first letters

of each line spell out 'For the March.' When they read the message, they'll take it down and wait at a table for the person who posted the message to contact them. I should warn you, they'll expect you to know more passwords to confirm that you're who you say you are. I don't know what those passwords are and you're not likely to be able to find them out. Once you have identified one of the operatives, you'll need to figure out some way to get the location of their hide-out from them."

Some PCs may not want to participate in Thorbard's little game. He can be intimidated into cooperating, although not easily because he's pretty sure the PCs won't risk losing the information source (DC 20 + APL). If he's intimidated into cooperating, he won't tell the PCs about the existence of additional passwords. Thorbard can also be magically compelled to cooperate.

The PCs may ask Thorbard what the source of his information was. He refuses to tell. "If I give away my trade secrets, how am I going to get any business?" No amount of nonmagical persuasion convinces him to give up his source. If he is magically compelled to tell, he admits that he was paid to pass on the information. He describes the man who paid him as a middle-aged man of mixed Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry who is missing one of his front teeth.

The PCs can come back and gather this information at the end of the adventure if they think to.

When the PCs have written a message that spells out "For the March," go to Encounter 2.

Encounter Two: Finding the Base

This encounter is the same for all factions.

It has been several hours since you posted your message on the Dented Tankard's wall. As you begin to worry that Thorbard's information may have been wrong, a young woman dressed in leather armor takes the message down. The woman appears to be in her twenties and is attractive and athletic. Based on her looks, she probably has a mix of Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry. She carefully folds it and places it in a pouch. She crosses the room to a booth with a good view of the room and settles in with her back to the wall.

The PCs need to use the operative, Serena, to locate the enemy base. They have several options. The most straightforward approach is to intimidate or otherwise interrogate her after capturing her. They could also attempt to bluff the information out of her, although that is difficult. They could use magic to compel her to reveal the location of the base. Finally, they could trail her back to the base. Each of these options is described below. Note that the ELs are lower than normal because she is a rogue without support.

APL 2 (EL 1)

Serena, female human Rog 2: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 2d6; hp 9; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +2 melee (1d6+1 [crit 18-20/x2], rapier); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +3.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +8, Hide +8, Knowledge (Local) +5, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +6.

Feats: Iron Will

Class abilities: Trapfinding, Sneak Attack +1d6, Evasion.

Equipment: Leather Armor, Rapier (figure out whether she can have additional stuff).

APL 4 (EL 3)

Serena, female human Rog 4: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 4d6; hp 16; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +8 melee (1d6+1 [crit 18-20/x2], rapier); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +4.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +11, Hide +10, Knowledge (Local) +7, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +8.

Feats: Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Iron Will

Class abilities: Trapfinding, Trap Sense +1; Sneak Attack +2d6, Evasion, Uncanny dodge (Dex Bonus to AC).

Equipment: Leather Armor, Masterwork Rapier

APL 6 (EL 3)

Serena, female human Rog 4: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 4d6; hp 16; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +8 melee (1d6+1 [crit 18-20/x2], rapier); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +4.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +11, Hide +10, Knowledge (Local) +7, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +8.

Feats: Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Iron Will

Class abilities: Trapfinding, Trap Sense +1; Sneak Attack +2d6, Evasion, Uncanny dodge (Dex Bonus to AC).

Equipment: Leather Armor, Masterwork Rapier

APL 8 (EL 5)

Serena, female human Rog 6: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 6d6; hp 24; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +9 melee (1d6+1 [crit 18-20/x2], rapier); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +5.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +15, Gather Information +13, Hide +12, Knowledge (Local) +9, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +14, Spot +10.

Feats: Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Dodge, Iron Will

Class abilities: Trapfinding, Trap Sense +2; Sneak Attack +3d6, Evasion, Uncanny dodge (Dex Bonus to AC).

Equipment: Masterwork Studded Leather Armor, Masterwork Rapier.

APL 10 (EL 7)

Serena, female human Rog 8: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 8d6; hp 32; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 armor, +4 Dex); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d6+2 [crit 18-20/x2], rapier); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +5.

Str 12, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +15, Hide +15, Knowledge (Local) +11, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +17, Spot +12.

Feats: Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Dodge, Iron Will

Class abilities: Trapfinding, Trap Sense +2; Sneak Attack +4d6, Evasion, Uncanny dodge (Dex Bonus to AC), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked).

Equipment: Masterwork Studded Leather Armor, Rapier +1

APL 12 (EL 9)

Serena, female human Rog 10: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 10d6; hp 39; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d6+2 [crit 18-20/x2], rapier); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +6.

Str 12, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +15, Diplomacy +19, Gather Information +17, Hide +16, Knowledge (Local) +13, Move Silently +16, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +18, Spot +14.

Feats: Weapon Focus (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility

Class abilities: Trapfinding, Trap Sense +3; Sneak Attack +5d6, Evasion, Uncanny dodge (Dex Bonus to AC), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked), Defensive Roll.

Equipment: Studded Leather Armor +1, Rapier +1

Intimidation or interrogation

The PCs may attempt to intimidate Serena into giving them the information that they need. If they do so, she immediately attempts to flee the tavern.

This may trigger a fight. If the PCs fight Serena in the Dented Tankard, 2d6 1st-level Commoners will attempt to come to her rescue. The tavern patrons are completely ineffectual, but may flank PCs, allowing Serena to make sneak attacks. The PCs may also attempt to take her prisoner outside the tavern. If the PCs take Serena prisoner (and presumably move to an area where the township guard is less likely to interrupt them), they can convince her to talk with a difficult (DC APL+12) Intimidate check. They could also attempt to persuade her with magic. If they have taken

Serena prisoner and try several means to convince her to give them the information, they should eventually be able to succeed.

If Serena is killed, then the PCs can cast *Speak with Dead*. She will get a Will save because she is opposed to them. If the PCs fail with a *Speak with Dead* or are incapable of casting *Speak with Dead*, they have lost the information. The next day, their faction's leader summons them and informs them that another informant has given them a lead on a hide-out the other side is using that they should investigate. They proceed to Encounter 3, except that the box inside the hideout is empty. The scenario ends when they turn up no further leads at the end of Encounter 3.

Bluffing the information out

If the PCs approach Serena openly, she expects them to exchange passwords with her. The correct password sequence begins with someone saying, "Excuse me, did we meet in the 2nd Thornward Battle?" to which Serena would respond, "No, I'm in the 3rd Thornward. But I have a cousin in the 2nd." The password combination finishes with the next statement, "Ah, that must be why you look familiar." If the PCs manage to successfully run through the passwords, Serena immediately start leading them back to the hideout. However, this is basically impossible unless the PCs use some clever divination magic.

Assuming the PCs greet her with anything except the password, Serena responds coldly and asks the PCs to find someone else to bother. She is dismissive unless the PCs indicate that they are trying to meet up with her faction. When the PCs make that clear, she becomes suspicious but more willing to talk. She does not say anything openly admitting to working for one of the factions, but tries to get information from the PCs. She is very suspicious, because the PCs should know the password if they are actually allies. She may try giving the PCs the first part of the sequence to see if that reminds them of the password sequence.

The PCs must come up with a plausible story to have any chance of bluffing her. If they do, they need to make a Bluff check opposed by Serena's Sense Motive. Serena receives a bonus of +5, +10, or +15, depending on how plausible the PCs' story is. If she initially does not believe the PCs, they can continue with the bluff for a second try at -5, by responding to her skepticism with further explanations. If they fail the second time, she

immediately tries to leave, believing that the PCs are attempting to infiltrate.

Spellcasting

The PCs can use spells to make Serena cooperate. The most obvious possibility is *Suggestion*; a well-worded *Suggestion* will result in her revealing the location of the safehouse if she fails her save. Perhaps the best suggestion is "I just gave you all the passwords." *Charm Person* is not in itself sufficient to get her to reveal the hideouts location, but it does eliminate entirely the bonus to her Sense Motive check if the PCs attempt to bluff the information out of her. Other similar spells may also work effectively.

If Serena knows that spells are being cast on her, she treats the spells as an attack. If practical, she attempts to flee back to the hide-out. Otherwise, she fights to kill.

In addition to the location of the hideout, Serena can describe the guards who are there. She can also describe the two people she knows higher in the organization: Coryn Cherek and a man of mixed Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry who is missing one of his front teeth. Coryn Cherek is her direct superior; he has been to the hideout many times. The other man is another leader in the faction and came to the hideout the previous day, after giving her the right passwords.

Trailing her

After waiting about a half-hour, Serena puts the message back on the message board and leaves the tavern. She then travels quickly but alertly back to the hideout. If the PCs are skilled, they can trace her back.

Unless Serena knows she's being followed, she does not attempt to hide her route back. If one or more PCs want to follow her, they may make Hide checks, opposed by her Spot, to attempt to avoid her notice. She uses a single Spot roll against the Hide checks of every PC following her. If she notices someone following her, that person may make a Bluff check against her Sense Motive to attempt to "look casual." If a PC succeeds in the Bluff check, she spots the PC, but does not realize that she's being followed. After 3 successful Hide or Bluffs, they see Serena entering an alleyway. Go to Encounter 3. Invisible PCs can follow Serena fairly trivially.

If Serena realizes that she's being followed, or has a reason to worry about being followed, she attempts to lose any pursuers. PCs trying to

follow her need to Spot her as she attempts to Hide. In addition, they still need to Hide from her efforts to Spot them. Any Bluff checks are at a -5 circumstance penalty, because she's looking actively for people following her. Because Serena will not return to the hideout if she thinks someone might be following her, the PCs need to keep her in sight while avoiding being identified as people following her 4 consecutive times.

The PCs could also track her, but that is difficult, because the streets are hard-packed and somewhat well-travelled. Three Wilderness Lore checks at DC 20 (DC 25 if Serena has some reason to suspect pursuit) allow the PCs to follow her trail back to the hide-out.

If something goes wrong

If the PCs fail to find out the location of the hide-out on their first attempt, Serena returns to the Dented Tankard a few hours later. After all, she does need to check for legitimate members of her faction. The PCs thus get a second opportunity to attempt to find out the location of the hide-out from her. Give the PCs some latitude on the second try; while it should be possible for the PCs to fail, it would be frustrating, so give them the benefit of the doubt.

If the PCs botch completely, their faction's leader summons them the next day and informs them that another informant has given them a lead on a hide-out the other side is using that they should investigate. They proceed to Encounter 3, except that the box inside the hideout is empty. The scenario ends when they turn up no further leads at the end of Encounter 3.

Treasure:

APL 2: 15 gp (L)

APL 4: 165 gp (L)

APL 6: 165 gp (L)

APL 8: 252.5 gp (L)

APL 10: 87.5 gp (L); 1160 gp (Rapier +1) (M)

APL 12: 1747.5 gp (Studded Leather Armor +1, Rapier +1) (M)

Encounter Three: The Hideout

This encounter is the same for all factions

The base that Serena led you to is at the end of an alley inauspiciously labeled as Walgar's Way. The building is a two-story structure, with a heavy door in the front, and a slate roof that appears to be in disrepair on top. The only windows are on the first floor, and they are boarded up. The building looks to be about twenty feet square. There is no gap between the building and the adjacent warehouses.

The PCs need to get inside the building and recover the letters from the locked chest inside. This probably involves assaulting the building, but it's possible for the PCs to get inside the building without violence. The guards do not allow the PCs to open the chest under any circumstance, so a fight is basically inevitable.

The guards expect any new arrivals to be travelling with Serena. There is a small window slot on the heavy, iron-barred door to the building. When the PCs approach, the guards open the slot to tell them to go away, unless Serena is with them. If Serena vouches for the party, the guards open the door. Note that because the guards rely on recognizing Serena, the PCs can get inside by using an illusion (or even a particularly good disguise) to convince the guards that they are with Serena.

If the PCs are not with Serena, the guards attack if the PCs attempt to force their way in using any method or if the PCs refuse to leave after repeated requests. If Serena is present and not magically coerced, she will fight on the side of the guards.

If the PCs are inside, then they have a fairly straight forward fight. If they are outside, they face a tactically difficult situation. The guards are all behind arrow slits, the gaps in the boarded up window. They have improved cover (PHB, p. 152) against the PCs, while the PCs have no cover against them. The improved cover provides a +8 bonus to AC, a +4 bonus to Reflex Saves, and Improved Evasion, and prevents Attacks of Opportunity. Remember that attempts to cast Fireball from outside the hideout through an arrow slit need to make a ranged touch attack at AC 13 (+8 size, -5 no Dex) to get it through the gap.

The PCs presumably attempt to break in. They have several options. The door is locked, but can be picked (DC 18 + APL). The PCs could also attempt to force it open (Strength Check DC 26) or chop it down (AC 4, Hardness 6 (mostly wood but some iron), hp 25). They could also try to chop through the boards over the windows, producing

Small openings into the hideout (AC 6, Hardness 5, hp 15, Break DC 18). If the PCs climb the wall (DC 25), they can easily find holes in the roof which would allow them to enter. The building is 20' tall but only one floor, so simply jumping down would involve falling damage. Finally, the PCs may use spells to get inside.

Guards (APL 2; EL 3)

Warrior 1 male human War 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+7 armor); Atks +3 melee (2d6+3 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +2 ranged (1d8+2 [crit 20/x3], composite longbow); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1.

Str 14, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Ride +6. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow).

Equipment: Half-plate, Composite Longbow, Greatsword

Warrior 2 female human War 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+7 armor); Atks +3 melee (2d6+3 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +2 ranged (1d8+2 [crit 20/x3], composite longbow); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1.

Str 14, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Ride +6. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Equipment: Half-plate, Composite Longbow, Greatsword

Tactics: The fighters try to fire as many arrows from cover as possible, preferably at the softest targets available. They also concentrate on anyone who is attempting to breach the hideout.

Cleric of Heironeous female human Clr 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+6 armor, +2 shield, -1 Dex); Atks +2 melee (1d8+1 [crit 19-20/x2], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +7.

Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +4; Knowledge (religion) +4; Heal +7. Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword) (domain); Weapon Focus (Longsword) (domain); Lightning Reflexes; Iron Will.

Domains: War, Law

Spells (3/2+1):

0th: Resistance, Guidance, Virtue.

1st: Bless, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon.

Equipment: Banded Mail, Large Wooden Shield, Longsword

Tactics: The cleric casts her spells before attacking herself. She starts with Bless and works her way down in effectiveness.

Guards (APL 4; EL 5)

Fighter 1 male human Ftr 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex); Atks +4 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +6 ranged (1d8+3 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Ride +6. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow).

Equipment: Breastplate, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Greatsword

Fighter 2 female human Ftr 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex); Atks +4 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +6 ranged (1d8+3 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Ride +6. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow).

Equipment: Breastplate, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Greatsword

Tactics: The fighters try to fire as many arrows from cover as possible, preferably at the softest targets available. They also concentrate on anyone who is attempting to breach the hideout.

Cleric of Heironeous female human Clr 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+7 armor, +2 shield, -1 Dex); Atks +2 melee (1d8+1 [crit 19-20/x2], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +7.

Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +4; Knowledge (religion) +4; Heal +7. Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword) (domain); Weapon Focus (Longsword) (domain); Lightning Reflexes; Iron Will.

Domains: War, Law

Spells (3/2+1):

0th: Resistance, Guidance, Virtue.

1st: Bless, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon.

Equipment: Half-plate, Large Wooden Shield, Longsword

Tactics: The cleric casts her spells before attacking herself. She starts with Bless and works her way down in effectiveness.

Wizard male human Wiz 1: Medium humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 1d4+7; hp 11; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks none; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (Alchemy) +7; Concentration +5; Knowledge (Arcana) +7; Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7; Spellcraft +7; Spot (cc) +4. Feats: Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation)

Spells (3/2)

0th: Ray of Frost, Daze, Daze

1st: Magic Missile, Shield

Toad Familiar

Guards (APL 6; EL 7)

Fighter 1 male human Ftr 3: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 3d10+6; hp 27; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +7 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +8 ranged (1d8+3 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Ride +8. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword).

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Greatsword

Fighter 2 female human Ftr 3: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 3d10+6; hp 27; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +7 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +8 ranged (1d8+3 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Ride +8. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword).

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Greatsword

Tactics: The fighters try to fire as many arrows from cover as possible, preferably at the softest targets available. They also concentrate on anyone who is attempting to breach the hideout.

Cleric of Heironeous female human Clr 3: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 3d8+6; hp 23; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+7 armor, +2 shield, -1 Dex); Atks +4 melee (1d8+1 [crit 19-20/x2], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +8.

Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +6; Knowledge (religion) +6; Heal +9. Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword) (domain); Weapon Focus (Longsword) (domain); Spell Focus (Enchantment); Lightning Reflexes; Iron Will.

Domains: War, Law

Spells (4/3+1/2+1):

0th: Resistance, Guidance, Virtue, Virtue.

1st: Bless, Command, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon.

2nd: Hold Person, Sound Burst, Spiritual Weapon.

Equipment: Half-plate, Large wooden shield, Longsword

Tactics: The cleric primarily relies on her spells. She starts with Spiritual Weapon and works her way down in effectiveness.

Wizard male human Wiz 3: Medium humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 3d4+9; hp 18; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks none; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (Alchemy) +9; Concentration +7; Knowledge (Arcana) +9; Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9; Spellcraft +9; Spot (cc) +6. Feats: Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Combat Casting.

Spells (4/3/2)

0th: Ray of Frost, Ray of Frost, Daze, Daze

1st: Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Shield

2nd: Scorching Ray, Flaming Sphere

Toad Familiar

Guards (APL 8; EL 9)

Fighter 1 male human Ftr 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 5d10+10; hp 42; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +10 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +10 ranged (1d8+5 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +7, Ride +10. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Longbow).

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Masterwork Greatsword

Fighter 2 female human Ftr 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 5d10+10; hp 42; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +10 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +10 ranged (1d8+5 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +7, Ride +10. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Longbow).

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Masterwork Greatsword

Tactics: The fighters try to fire as many arrows from cover as possible, preferably at the softest targets available. They also concentrate on anyone who is attempting to breach the hideout.

Cleric of Heironeous female human Clr 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 5d8+10; hp 36; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+8 armor, +2 shield, -1

Dex); Atks +6 melee (1d8+1 [crit 19-20/x2], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +9.

Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +8; Knowledge (religion) +8; Heal +11. Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword) (domain); Weapon Focus (Longsword) (domain); Spell Focus (Enchantment); Lightning Reflexes; Iron Will.

Domains: War, Law

Spells (5/4+1/3+1/2+1):

0th: Resistance, Resistance, Guidance, Virtue, Virtue.

1st: Bless, Command, Command, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon.

2nd: Hold Person, Hold Person, Sound Burst, Spiritual Weapon.

3rd: Dispel Magic, Magic Vestment, Magic Vestment

Equipment: Full-plate, Large Wooden Shield, Longsword

Tactics: The cleric primarily relies on her spells.

Wizard male human Wiz 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 5d4+16; hp 30; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks none; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (Alchemy) +11; Concentration +9; Knowledge (Arcana) +11; Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +11; Spellcraft +11; Spot (cc) +7. Feats: Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Combat Casting.

Spells (4/4/3/2)

0th: Ray of Frost, Ray of Frost, Daze, Daze

1st: Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Shield

2nd: Scorching Ray, Flaming Sphere, Touch of Idiocy

3rd: Fireball, Haste

Toad Familiar

Guards (APL 10; EL 9)

Fighter 1 male human Ftr 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 5d10+10; hp 42; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +10

melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +10 ranged (1d8+5 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +7, Ride +10. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Longbow).

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Masterwork Greatsword

Fighter 2 female human Ftr 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 5d10+10; hp 42; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex); Atks +10 melee (2d6+4 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +10 ranged (1d8+5 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +9, Ride +12. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Longbow), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Precise Shot, Power Attack.

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Masterwork Greatsword

Tactics: The fighters try to fire as many arrows from cover as possible, preferably at the softest targets available. They also concentrate on anyone who is attempting to breach the hideout.

Cleric of Heironeous female human Clr 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 5d8+10; hp 36; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+8 armor, +2 shield, -1 Dex); Atks +9 melee (1d8+3 [crit 19-20/x2], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +9.

Str 16, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +8; Knowledge (religion) +8; Heal +11. Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword) (domain); Weapon Focus (Longsword) (domain); Spell Focus (Enchantment); Lightning Reflexes; Iron Will.

Domains: War, Law

Spells (5/4+1/3+1/2+1):

0th: Resistance, Resistance, Guidance, Virtue, Virtue.

1st: Bless, Command, Command, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon.

2nd: Hold Person, Hold Person, Sound Burst, Spiritual Weapon.

3rd: Dispel Magic, Magic Vestment, Magic Vestment

Equipment: Full-plate, Large Wooden Shield, Masterwork Longsword

Wizard male human Wiz 5: Medium humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 5d4+16; hp 30; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks none; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18 (20), Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (Alchemy) +11; Concentration +9; Knowledge (Arcana) +11; Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +11; Spellcraft +11; Spot (cc) +7. Feats: Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Combat Casting.

Spells (4/5/3/2)

0th: Ray of Frost, Ray of Frost, Daze, Daze

1st: Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Mage Armor, Shield

2nd: Scorching Ray, Flaming Sphere, Touch of Idiocy

3rd: Fireball, Haste

Toad Familiar

Items: Headband of Intellect +2

Guards (APL 12; EL 11)

Fighter 1 male human Ftr 7: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 7d10+14; hp 57; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +1 deflection); Atks +13/+8 melee (2d6+8 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+6 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3.

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +9, Ride +12. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Longbow), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Precise Shot, Power Attack.

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Masterwork Greatsword, Ring of Protection +1

Fighter 2 female human Ftr 7: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 7d10+14; hp 57; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +1 deflection); Atks +13/+8 melee (2d6+8 [crit 19-20/x2], greatsword) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+6 [crit 20/x3], longbow); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3.

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +9, Ride +12. Feats: Point-blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Longbow), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Precise Shot, Power Attack.

Equipment: Breastplate +1, Masterwork Composite Longbow, Masterwork Greatsword, Ring of Protection +1

Tactics: The fighters try to fire as many arrows from cover as possible, preferably at the softest targets available. They also concentrate on anyone who is attempting to breach the hideout.

Cleric of Heironeous female human Clr 7: Medium humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 7d8+14; hp 49; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+8 armor, +2 shield, -1 Dex); Atks +11 melee (1d8+3 [crit 19-20/x2], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +12.

Str 16, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18 (20), Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +10; Knowledge (religion) +10; Heal +15. Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (Longsword) (domain); Weapon Focus (Longsword) (domain); Spell Focus (Enchantment); Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment); Lightning Reflexes; Iron Will.

Domains: War, Law

Spells (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1):

0th: Resistance, Resistance, Guidance, Guidance, Virtue, Virtue.

1st: Bless, Command, Command, Shield of Faith, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon.

2nd: Hold Person, Hold Person, Sound Burst, Sound Burst, Spiritual Weapon.

3rd: Dispel Magic, Dispel Magic, Magic Vestment, Magic Vestment

4th: Summon Monster IV, Divine Power

Equipment: Full-plate, Large Wooden Shield, Masterwork Longsword, Periapt of Wisdom +2

Wizard male human Wiz 7: Medium humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 7d4+20; hp 39; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks none; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18 (20), Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (Alchemy) +13; Concentration +11; Knowledge (Arcana) +13; Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +13; Spellcraft +13; Spot (cc) +8.

Feats: Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Combat Casting.

Spells (4/6/4/3/2)

0th: Ray of Frost, Ray of Frost, Ray of Frost, Daze, Daze

1st: Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Magic Missile, Mage Armor, Shield

2nd: Summon Swarm, Flaming Sphere, Touch of Idiocy, Scorching Ray

3rd: Fireball, Lightning Bolt, Haste

4th: Stoneskin, Fire Shield

Toad Familiar

Items: Headband of Intellect +2

Treasure:

APL 2: 1086 gp (L)

APL 4: 1361 gp (L)

APL 6: 1350 gp (2 Breastplates +1) (M); 1161 gp (L)

APL 8: 1350 gp (2 Breastplates +1) (M); 1611 gp (L)

APL 10: 3350 gp (2 Breastplates +1, Headband of Intellect +2); 2061 gp (L)

APL 12: 7350 gp (2 Breastplates +1, 2 Rings of Protection +1, Headband of Intellect +2, Periapt of Wisdom +2); 2061 gp (L)

After the PCs defeat the guards, they find a small iron bound chest in the back of the hideout. If the PCs interrogate any of the guards, they find that the guards are totally loyal to the other faction and were just following orders. They do not know what is in the chest, and do not know how to contact other groups. Serena is in command of this group. Besides Serena, two other leaders have been to the hideout recently; both arrived with Serena, and

both opened the chest. The first, who all of the guards have seen several times, is Coryn Cherek. He is Serena's direct commander. The second was a middle-aged man, probably of mixed Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry, who was missing one of his front teeth. None of the guards, including Serena, knows his name. He arrived yesterday, put some things in the chest, and then left.

Encounter Four: The Journal

Use Players' Handout 1 for Baroness Elina, Players' Handout 2 for Baron Zafar or Baron Alron. Otherwise, this encounter is the same for all factions.

The chest is a small iron-shod wooden box, about 8 inches by 6 inches by 4 inches. The chest is unadorned, but seems to be of high quality. There is a latch set into the front.

The chest does not detect as magical. It is also not locked. It is, however, trapped.

APL 2 (EL 2)

Weak Poison Gas Trap: CR 2; no attack roll needed; Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15. Trap releases a 10' cloud of poison gas, DC 14, 1d4 Str initial damage, 1d6 Str secondary damage.

APL 4 (EL 2)

Weak Poison Gas Trap: CR 2; no attack roll needed; Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15. Trap releases a 10' cloud of poison gas, DC 14, 1d4 Str initial damage, 1d6 Str secondary damage.

APL 6 (EL 4)

Weak Poison Gas Trap: CR 4; no attack roll needed; Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20. Trap releases a 10' cloud of poison gas, DC 14, 1d4 Str initial damage, 1d6 Str secondary damage.

APL 8 (EL 4)

Weak Poison Gas Trap: CR 4; no attack roll needed; Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20. Trap releases a 10' cloud of poison gas, DC 14, 1d4 Str initial damage, 1d6 Str secondary damage.

APL 10 (EL 6)

Poison Gas Trap: CR 6; no attack roll needed; Search DC 23; Disable Device DC 25. Trap releases a 10' cloud of poison gas, DC 16, 1d6 Str initial damage, 1d6 Str secondary damage.

APL 12 (EL 6)

Poison Gas Trap: CR 6; no attack roll needed; Search DC 23; Disable Device DC 25. Trap releases a 10' cloud of poison gas, DC 16, 1d6 Str initial damage, 1d6 Str secondary damage.

Inside the chest, there is a sheaf of papers. The interesting papers are Players' Handout 1 (for parties working for Baroness Elina) or Players' Handout 2 (for parties working for Baron Zafar or Baron Alron). It is absolutely crucial that you hand the players the correct handout!

The PCs presumably head back to report in on what they've discovered. If they want to pursue other leads first, such as going back to Thorbard to find out where he got his information, that's fine.

If the PCs show the letters to the guards, they are shocked and appalled to find out their faction's ultimate goal. Go to Encounter 5 when they report back in.

Encounter Five: Debriefing and Reassignment

Baroness Elina:

You return to Baroness Elina's townhouse. Guards quickly usher you in to a private audience with the Baroness. The Baroness looks up at you and smiles. "I hope your investigation was productive. What have you discovered?"

Allow the PCs to describe the information they have found.

The Baroness shakes her head slowly. "Baron Zafar is more treacherous than I had feared. We must stop this plot, whatever the cost. The very survival of the March depends on it." The Baroness pauses. "You said that this journal was written by Coryn Cherek? One of my knights, Sir Yeron, just told me that he had received word that Cherek wished to switch his loyalty to defending Bissel, but that Baron Zafar had sent some of his troops to keep him from reaching us. I asked Sir Yeron to send a group of loyal soldiers to rescue Cherek. You

should join them. Cherek is the only person we know who can confirm the details of this vile plot. If the traitors know that Cherek would reveal their goal, they will surely have him killed. The Council of Barons must hear him reveal Zafar's treason!"

You quickly meet up with the troops Sir Yeron has assigned to rescue Coryn Cherek and head to where they were told he could be found.

Sir Yeron does not accompany the PCs. Roll a Sense Motive in secret for each of the PCs against a DC of 20+APL. Any PCs who succeed, notice that the troops with them seem very nervous about the PCs joining them. If the PCs use *Detect Thoughts* or some similar spell, they may be able to find out why the soldiers are nervous: because Sir Yeron was under the effect of *Dominate Person*, he did not give them the orders he was supposed to. Instead, he told his troops that they were being sent to kill a member of the other faction who was planning a variety of nefarious things. Furthermore, they were told that, while there might be other faction members assigned to help, the other faction members were somewhat unreliable and might be following their own agenda. They thus distrust the PCs. If the PCs discover that their orders are different quickly, they may be able to double back to get the Baroness to countermand Sir Yeron's orders, in which case the soldiers fight loyally alongside the PCs. This should be difficult, however. Go to Encounter 6.

Baron Zafar:

You return to Baron Zafar's townhouse. Guards quickly usher you in to a private audience with the Baron. The Baron looks up at you and smiles. "I hope your investigation was productive. What have you discovered?"

Allow the PCs to describe the information they have found.

The Baron shakes his head slowly. "The Margrave and Baroness Elina are more dangerous than I had feared. We must stop this plot, whatever the cost. The very survival of the March depends on it." The Baron pauses. "You said that this journal was written by Coryn Cherek? One of my knights, Sir Yeron, just told me that he had received word that Cherek wished to switch his loyalty to restoring a just Margrave to Bissel, but that Baroness Elina had sent some of his troops to keep him from reaching us. I asked Sir Yeron

to send a group of loyal soldiers to rescue Cherek. You should join them. Cherek is the only person we know who can confirm the details of this vile plot. If the Margrave's thugs know that Cherek would reveal their goal, they will surely have him killed. The Council of Barons must hear him reveal the Margrave's treason!"

You quickly meet up with the troops Sir Yeron has assigned to rescue Coryn Cherek and head to where they were told he could be found.

Sir Yeron does not accompany the PCs. Roll a Sense Motive in secret for each of the PCs against a DC of 20+APL. Any PCs who succeed, notice that the troops with them seem very nervous about the PCs joining them. If the PCs use *Detect Thoughts* or some similar spell, they may be able to find out why the soldiers are nervous: because Sir Yeron was under the effect of *Dominate Person*, he did not give them the orders he was supposed to. Instead, he told his troops that they were being sent to kill a member of the other faction who was planning a variety of nefarious things. Furthermore, they were told that, while there might be other faction members assigned to help, the other faction members were somewhat unreliable and might be following their own agenda. They thus distrust the PCs. If the PCs discover that their orders are different quickly, they may be able to double back to get the Baroness to countermand Sir Yeron's orders, in which case the soldiers fight loyally alongside the PCs. This should be difficult, however. Go to Encounter 6.

Baron Alron:

You return to Baron Alron's townhouse. Guards quickly usher you in to a private audience with the Baron. The Baron looks up at you and smiles. "I hope your investigation was productive. What have you discovered?"

Allow the PCs to describe the information they have found.

The Baron shakes his head slowly. "This is worse than even Baron Zafar fears. We must stop this plot, whatever the cost. The very survival of the March depends on it." The Baron pauses. "You said that this journal was written by Coryn Cherek? One of my knights, Sir Yeron, just told me that he had received word that Cherek wished to seek asylum with me, but that Baroness Elina had sent some of his troops to keep him from reaching us. I

asked Sir Yeron to send a group of loyal soldiers to rescue Cherek, since I wished to learn why he sought to leave Baroness Elina's faction. You should join them. Cherek is the only person we know who can confirm the details of this vile plot. If the Margrave's thugs know that Cherek would reveal their goal, they will surely have him killed. The Council of Barons must hear him reveal the Margrave's treason!"

You quickly meet up with the troops Sir Yeron has assigned to rescue Coryn Cherek and head to where they were told he could be found.

Sir Yeron does not accompany the PCs. Roll a Sense Motive in secret for each of the PCs against a DC of 20+APL. Any PCs who succeed, notice that the troops with them seem very nervous about the PCs joining them. If the PCs use *Detect Thoughts* or some similar spell, they may be able to find out why the soldiers are nervous: because Sir Yeron was under the effect of *Dominate Person*, he did not give them the orders he was supposed to. Instead, he told his troops that they were being sent to kill a member of the other faction who was planning a variety of nefarious things. Furthermore, they were told that, while there might be other faction members assigned to help, the other faction members were somewhat unreliable and might be following their own agenda. They thus distrust the PCs. If the PCs discover that their orders are different quickly, they may be able to double back to get the Baroness to countermand Sir Yeron's orders, in which case the soldiers fight loyally alongside the PCs. This should be difficult, however. Go to Encounter 6.

Encounter Six: Three Way Free For All

Baroness Elina

You quickly make your way across Pellak. After a short walk, you reach a warehouse that has been converted into a make-shift inn to handle some of the excess people arriving in the capital. A group of guards, wearing the arms of the Barony of Parulla, are standing in a semi-circle around a well dressed man with his hands tied in front of him and an empty scabbard at his side. He must be Coryn Cherek. One of the guards glares at you. "There's no room here. Why don't you just move along?"

Baron Zafar or Baron Alron

You quickly make your way across Pellak. After a short walk, you reach a warehouse that has been converted into a make-shift inn to handle some of the excess people arriving in the capital. A group of guards, wearing the arms of the Barony of Burning Stalks, are standing in a semi-circle around a well dressed man with his hands tied in front of him and an empty scabbard at his side. He must be Coryn Cherek. One of the guards glares at you. "There's no room here. Why don't you just move along?"

A fight presumably breaks out. The key dynamic to this fight is that it is a three-way fight. Initially, the PCs and the soldiers from their faction are allied together against the enemy guards. However, when the soldiers have a good opportunity to, they attack Coryn. If the PCs don't intervene, the soldiers eventually kill Coryn. In general, the soldiers should attack Coryn at the end of the third round of combat. Presumably, however, the PCs fight the soldiers on their side, triggering a three-way fight, with each group fighting both other groups. The soldiers generally fight foes who threaten them rather than attacking Coryn Cherek. It is important that the soldiers and the guards not be used as a united force against the PCs, because there are too many foes for that to be a fair fight. If about half of the soldiers and half of the guards are attacking the PCs, you probably have the balance about right, but play it by feel to get an exciting but not overwhelming fight.

Treasure: The PCs can loot the guards, but not the soldiers, who are after all on their side. Coryn Cherek will also give them a small cash reward for rescuing him.

APL 2: 584 gp (L), 715 gp (C)

APL 4: 1842 gp (L), 232 gp (C)

APL 6: 1842 gp (L), 100 gp (4 Potions of Cure Light Wounds) (M), 182 gp (C)

APL 8: 3642 gp (L), 600 gp (4 Potions of Cure Moderate Wounds) (M), 44.5 gp (C)

APL 10: 3642 gp (L), 1200 gp (8 Potions of Cure Moderate Wounds) (M), 1099.5 gp (C)

APL 12: 684 gp (L), 5900 gp (4 Full-plate +1, 4 Potions of Cure Moderate Wounds) (M), 257.5 gp (C)

APL 2 (EL 6)

The Soldiers: 6 1st level characters

Soldiers (6) human Ftr 1: Medium humanoids; HD 1d10+2; hp 12, 12, 12, 12, 12, 12; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield); Atks +5 melee (1d10+3 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0.

Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3; Ride +5. Feats: Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Power Attack

Equipment: Banded mail, bastard sword, large wooden shield

The Guards: 4 2nd level characters

Guards (4) human Ftr 2: Medium humanoids; HD 2d10+4; hp 21, 20, 19, 18; Init 0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+6 armor, +2 shield); Atks +6 melee (1d10+3 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +0.

Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Ride +5. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword).

Equipment: Banded mail, bastard sword, large wooden shield

Coryn Cherek

Coryn Cherek, human male Ari 3; HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks NONE (unarmed, hands tied); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +7.

Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +6, Sense Motive +8. Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (long sword), Alertness.

APL 4 (EL 8)

The Soldiers: 6 3rd level characters

Soldiers (6) human Ftr 3: Medium humanoids; HD 3d10+6; hp 30, 29, 28, 27, 26, 25; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield);

Atks +8 melee (1d10+3 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +3.

Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +5; Ride +7. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Iron Will.

Equipment: Banded Mail, Masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield

The Guards: 4 4th level characters

Guards (4) human Ftr 4: Medium humanoids; HD 4d10+8; hp 35, 34, 33, 32; Init 0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+7 armor, +2 shield); Atks +9 melee (1d10+6 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +3.

Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +6, Ride +7. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword), Iron Will.

Equipment: Half-plate, Masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield

Coryn Cherek

Coryn Cherek, human male Ari 3; HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks NONE (unarmed, hands tied); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +7.

Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +6, Sense Motive +8. Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (long sword), Alertness.

APL 6 (EL 10)

The Soldiers: 6 5th level characters

Soldiers (6) human Ftr 5: Medium humanoids; HD 5d10+10; hp 45, 44, 43, 42, 41, 40; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield); Atks +10 melee (1d10+5 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +3.

Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +7; Ride +9. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard sword),

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword).

Equipment: Banded mail, masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield

The Guards: 4 6th level characters

Guards (4) human Ftr 6: Medium humanoids; HD 6d10+12; hp 50, 49, 48, 47; Init 0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+7 armor, +2 shield); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d10+6 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4.

Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +8, Ride +9. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Equipment: Half-plate, Masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield, Potion of Cure Light Wounds

Coryn Cherek

Coryn Cherek, human male Ari 3; HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks NONE (unarmed, hands tied); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +7.

Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +6, Sense Motive +8. Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (long sword), Alertness.

APL 8 (EL 12)

The Soldiers: 6 7th level characters

Soldiers (6) human Ftr 7: Medium humanoids; HD 7d10+14; hp 60, 59, 58, 57, 56, 55; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d10+5 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +4.

Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +9; Ride +11. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword).

Equipment: Full-plate, masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield

The Guards: 4 8th level characters

Guards (4) human Ftr 8: Medium humanoids; HD 8d10+16; hp 65, 64, 63, 62; Init 0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+8 armor, +2 shield); Atks +15/+10 melee (1d10+6 [crit 19-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +4.

Str 19, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +10, Ride +11. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Equipment: Full-plate, Masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield, Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds

Coryn Cherek

Coryn Cherek, human male Ari 4; HD 4d8+4; hp 26; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks NONE (unarmed, hands tied); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +8.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +9, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +7, Sense Motive +9. Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (long sword), Alertness.

APL 10 (EL 14)

The Soldiers: 6 9th level characters

Soldiers (6) human Ftr 9: Medium humanoids; HD 9d10+18; hp 75, 74, 73, 72, 71, 70; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield); Atks +16/+11 melee (1d10+6 [crit 17-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +5.

Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +11; Ride +13. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword), Greater

Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Improved critical (Bastard sword).

Equipment: Full-plate, masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield

The Guards: 4 10th level characters

Guards (4) human Ftr 10: Medium humanoids; HD 10d10+20; hp 80, 79, 78, 77; Init 0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+8 armor, +2 shield); Atks +18/+13 melee (1d10+7 [crit 17-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +5.

Str 20, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +12, Ride +13. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Great Fortitude.

Equipment: Full-plate, Masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield, 2 Potions of Cure Moderate Wounds

Coryn Cherek

Coryn Cherek, human male Ari 5; HD 5d8+5; hp 31; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks NONE (unarmed, hands tied); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +8.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +8, Sense Motive +10. Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (long sword), Alertness.

APL 12 (EL 16)

The Soldiers: 6 11th level characters

Soldiers (6) human Ftr 11: Medium humanoids; HD 11d10+22; hp 88; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 22 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield); Atks +18/+13/+8 melee (1d10+7 [crit 17-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +5.

Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +13; Ride +15. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Sunder, Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword),

Greater Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Improved critical (Bastard sword).

Equipment: Full-plate +1, bastard sword +1, large wooden shield

The Guards: 4 12th level characters

Guards (4) human Ftr 12: Medium humanoids; HD 12d10+24; hp 94; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 22 (+9 armor, +2 shield, +1 Dex); Atks +20/+15/+10 melee (1d10+9 [crit 17-20/x2], bastard sword); AL LN; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +7.

Str 20, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +12, Ride +13. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (Bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (Bastard sword), Greater Weapon Specialization (Bastard Sword), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Endurance, Diehard.

Equipment: Full-plate +1, Masterwork bastard sword, large wooden shield, Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds

Coryn Cherek

Coryn Cherek, human male Ari 5; HD 5d8+5; hp 31; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks NONE (unarmed, hands tied); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +8.

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +8, Sense Motive +10. Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (long sword), Alertness.

Encounter Seven: The Aftermath

Do **not** simply narrate the aftermath. Whether the PCs understand the events of the scenario depends on how they respond to investigating the strange behavior of the soldiers.

Baroness Elina

After the fight is over, the PCs may interrogate any survivors. Yesterday evening, the guards were told to arrest and guard Coryn Cherek by Baron Zafar because he believed that Coryn was planning on defecting. The soldiers are just

obeying Sir Yeron's orders. If the PCs speak to Sir Yeron, he insists that he was simply following Baroness Elina's instructions, even if the PCs bring him to Baroness Elina, who contradicts his claim. If the PCs *Detect Magic*, they can see the aura of a moderate enchantment on him. If they dispel the *Dominate Person* effect (caster level APL +3, minimum of 9), he realizes that he was ordered to change Baroness Elina's orders to his troops by a middle-aged man of mixed Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry who is missing one of his front teeth. He is mortified by his failure, although Baroness Elina is understanding. He also realizes that that was the same person who told him that Coryn Cherek was interested in switching sides.

If Coryn dies during the battle and is not restored to life by the PCs, the PCs lose the opportunity to find out the truth about the letters.

When the PCs speak with Coryn Cherek, he denies having written the letters they recovered from the hide-out.

"I never wrote those letters, for indeed, the story that they tell is nothing but lies. Baron Zafar has no interest in becoming Ket's lackey. While I fear that the Baron is misguided, he is a good man, and loyal to the March of Bissel. He just views the Margrave as a dreadfully oppressive lord, as indeed he is. The Margrave is cruel and has made many a bad decision. Crops rot in the field, while farmers spend their time serving in an overly large army. Were times truly peaceful, I would think the good Baron right to seek a new, wiser ruler for the March. But times are not well."

"I have recently found out that as we speak, the foul Necromancer is rallying his undead forces in another bid to rule the March. I fear that the Margrave will not be an able commander against Evard's armies, but we need a united command nonetheless. Baron Zafar's efforts run too great a risk of leaving us divided when Evard moves openly. And that risk is too great."

Allow the PCs to investigate any loose ends that they wish to, such as the various leads pointing back to the agent with the missing tooth. Most groups are unlikely to make that connection and may simply conclude that there is someone trying to turn the factions more violently against each other. When the PCs have done any further investigating that they wish, end the game.

Baron Zafar

After the fight is over, the PCs may interrogate any survivors. Yesterday evening, the guards were told to arrest and guard Coryn Cherek by Baroness Elina because she believed that Coryn was planning on defecting. The soldiers are just obeying Sir Yeron's orders. If the PCs speak to Sir Yeron, he insists that he was simply following Baron Zafar's instructions, even if the PCs bring him to Baron Zafar, who contradicts his claim. If the PCs *Detect Magic*, they can see the aura of a moderate enchantment on him. If they dispel the *Dominate Person* effect (caster level APL +3, minimum of 9), he realizes that he was ordered to change Baron Zafar's orders to his troops by a middle-aged man of mixed Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry who is missing one of his front teeth. He is mortified by his failure, although Baron Zafar is understanding. He also realizes that that was the same person who told him that Coryn Cherek was interested in switching sides.

If Coryn dies during the battle, the PCs lose the opportunity to find out the truth about the letters.

When the PCs speak with Coryn Cherek, he denies having written the letters they recovered from the hide-out.

"I never wrote those letters, for indeed, the story that they tell is nothing but lies. Baroness Elina is a good woman and a wise ruler of her barony. The story of her cruelty and her alliance with forces that would betray the March to Evard is nothing but lies. She simply wishes to preserve the March under a united rule so that the armies of Bissel can fight off threats it may face from Evard.

"I have, however, decided that I must leave her alliance to support Baron Zafar's efforts. I have recently uncovered evidence that the Margrave has secretly turned to evil, under some foul magical influence. Baroness Elina wishes to protect us against Evard's threats, but she would preserve a rule that is just as evil. While she does not know of the Margrave's corruption, it must be opposed."

Allow the PCs to investigate any loose ends that they wish to, such as the various leads pointing back to the agent with the missing tooth. Most groups are unlikely to make that connection and may simply conclude that there is someone trying to turn the factions more violently against each other. When the PCs have done any further investigating that they wish, end the game.

Baron Alron

After the fight is over, the PCs may interrogate any survivors. Yesterday evening, the guards were told to arrest and guard Coryn Cherek by Baroness Elina because she believed that Coryn was planning on defecting. The soldiers are just obeying Sir Yeron's orders. If the PCs speak to Sir Yeron, he insists that he was simply following Baron Alron's instructions, even if the PCs bring him to Baron Alron, who contradicts his claim. If the PCs *Detect Magic*, they can see the aura of a moderate enchantment on him. If they dispel the *Dominate Person* effect (caster level APL +3, minimum of 9), he realizes that he was ordered to change Baron Alron's orders to his troops by a middle-aged man of mixed Oeridian and Baklunish ancestry who is missing one of his front teeth. He is mortified by his failure, although Baron Alron is understanding. He also realizes that that was the same person who told him that Coryn Cherek was interested in switching sides.

If Coryn dies during the battle, the PCs lose the opportunity to find out the truth about the letters.

When the PCs speak with Coryn Cherek, he denies having written the letters they recovered from the hide-out.

"I never wrote those letters, for indeed, the story that they tell is nothing but lies. Baroness Elina is a good woman and a wise ruler of her barony. The story of her cruelty and her alliance with forces that would betray the March to Evard is nothing but lies. She simply wishes to preserve the March under a united rule so that the armies of Bissel can fight off threats it may face from Evard.

"I have, however, decided that I must leave her alliance to support Baron Zafar's efforts. I have recently uncovered evidence that the Margrave has secretly turned to evil, under some foul magical influence. Baroness Elina wishes to protect us against Evard's threats, but she would preserve a rule that is just as evil. While she does not know of the Margrave's corruption, it must be opposed."

Allow the PCs to investigate any loose ends that they wish to, such as the various leads pointing back to the agent with the missing tooth. Most groups are unlikely to make that connection and may simply conclude that there is someone trying to turn the factions more violently against each other. When the PCs have done any further investigating that they wish, end the game.

Conclusion

TEXT

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter Two

Locate the enemy base

- APL 2 – 30 xp.
- APL 4 – 90 xp.
- APL 6 – 90 xp.
- APL 8 – 150 xp.
- APL 10 – 210 xp.
- APL 12 – 270 xp.

Encounter Three

Defeat the guards

- APL 2 – 90 xp.
- APL 4 – 150 xp.
- APL 6 – 210 xp.
- APL 8 – 270 xp.
- APL 10 – 270 xp.
- APL 12 – 330 xp.

Encounter Four

Disarm or survive the trap

- APL 2 – 60 xp.
- APL 4 – 60 xp.
- APL 6 – 120 xp.
- APL 8 – 120 xp.
- APL 10 – 180 xp.
- APL 12 – 180 xp.

Encounter Six

Defeat the guards

- APL 2 – 180 xp.
- APL 4 – 240 xp.
- APL 6 – 300 xp.
- APL 8 – 360 xp.
- APL 10 – 420 xp.
- APL 12 – 480 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Judge may allocate up to the following for good role-playing

- APL 2 – 90 xp.
- APL 4 – 135 xp.

- APL 6 – 180 xp.
- APL 8 – 225 xp.
- APL 10 – 270 xp.
- APL 12 – 315 xp.

Total Possible Experience

- APL 2 – 450 xp.
- APL 4 – 675 xp.
- APL 6 – 900 xp.
- APL 8 – 1,125 xp.
- APL 10 – 1,350 xp.
- APL 12 – 1,575 xp.

Treasure Summary

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

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

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

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

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and

coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter X:

APL X: L: X gp; C: Y gp; M: *magic item* (Z gp); *magic item* (Z gp); *magic item* (Z gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2 – L: X gp; C: X gp; M: X gp – total: 400 gp

APL 4 – L: X gp; C: X gp; M: X gp – total: 600 gp

APL 6 – L: X gp; C: X gp; M: X gp – total: 800 gp

APL 8 – L: X gp; C: X gp; M: X gp – total: 1,250 gp

APL 10 – L: X gp; C: X gp; M: X gp – total: 2,100 gp

APL 12 – L: X gp; C: X gp; M: X gp – total: 3,000 gp

Special

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 12:

- ❖ *Headband of Intellect +2 (Adventure, DMG)*
- ❖ *Periapt of Wisdom +2 (Adventure, DMG)*

Player Handout #1

Within the chest are a collection of notes, force reports, and the journal of Coryn Cherek. The most interesting excerpts of the journal are below:

Dated one month ago:

The Margrave's misrule continues to grow worse. While I don't think much of Baron Zafar as a man, at least he is willing to speak out against the Margrave's errors. If Lord Zafar can gather enough support in the Barons' Council, perhaps the Margrave can be convinced to follow a more moderate course. I fear placing Baron Zafar in such a position of power, but there is no cure for it.

Dated two weeks ago:

We succeeded in convincing another baron to support Lord Zafar today. If things continue going this well, we'll easily have enough support in the Council to force the Margrave to pay attention.

I wish I could be more confident about the progress we've made, though. As I've worked with and for Baron Zafar, I've watched one error of judgment after another. In his way, the baron is as destructive a leader as the Margrave is. I can only hope that even a poorly led Council of Barons will provide a useful check on the Margrave's actions. Too many fields lie fallow because the farmers are busy playing at soldiers. If Baron Zafar can convince the Margrave to reduce the burdensome military service before a bad year produces starvation, it will be worthwhile, even if he also pushes for other, less wise, changes.

Dated ten days ago:

I fear Baron Zafar is pursuing some secret agenda of his own. When strategy is discussed, he always seems to be considering how the outcome will affect his own plans, not just how it will affect our common efforts. I've begun trying to figure out what goal he truly seeks, but it will take time. Baron Zafar is vengeful and cruel to those who cross him. He must not suspect disloyalty.

Dated one week ago:

It is truly a dark time for Bissel. While I still believe that our cause is just, Zafar's evil is too great to ignore. I could support Zafar's decisions to work hard for the support of the other barons, even if occasional fights break out between our supporters and those of Baroness Elina. But Zafar's recent orders are unacceptable. I still find it hard to believe that he ordered me to assassinate one of Baroness Elina's knights. Baroness Elina is a hero, and if anything, those who have sided with her are better people than those I must work with. I suppose I must just be grateful that he gave me the order, so that I can "fail" to carry it out. I fear that most of Zafar's lackeys wouldn't have the strength of will to oppose him, even if they realized the error of his orders.

Dated three days ago:

Oh, what a fool I've been. Zafar must know that I am pulling away from him. While we were conversing today, some of his thugs came into the meeting with a heavy sack. He ordered them to show me the contents: the head of my friend Elgin. Elgin had also been questioning whether we were on the right side, and Zafar murdered him for it. What's more, it's now clear to me that Elgin and myself were among the few good people taken in by Zafar. The bulk of his followers are as rotten as he is.

I must plan my escape. Perhaps Baroness Elina can protect me. But I must be careful, for Zafar must have meant that display as a warning to me. And I still wish I knew what Zafar actually wants.

Dated yesterday:

My investigations have borne fruit! I finally had an opportunity to look through the secret letters Zafar keeps in a hidden drawer in his desk. I only had a few minutes, and I dared not take the letters, lest their absence reveal my disloyalty. But the letters revealed that the truth is even worse than I feared.

Zafar seeks to betray Bissel to the foul forces of Ket. He hopes to use the Council of Barons to throw down the Margrave and seize control himself. During the ensuing disorder and struggle, the troops of Ket will sweep in to support his claim. It will be bloody, to be sure, but the good people of Bissel cannot stand against both traitors within and attack from Ket. The Ketites and their treacherous lackeys would surely triumph. The letters between Zafar and the Beygraf of Ket reveal the depths of his treachery. In exchange for betraying his homeland, Zafar is to be made Emir of Bissel and be the instrument by which the Beygraf crushes us.

With this information, Baroness Elina may be able to rally the undecided barons to her banner. I must choose the opportunity to defect carefully. Even more important than my own safety, this news must reach Baroness Elina so that she will understand how great the stakes are and have a tool to convince undecided barons to stay true to the Margrave and the March.

Players Handout 2

Within the chest are a collection of notes, force reports, and the journal of Coryn Cherek. The most interesting excerpts of the journal are below:

Dated one month ago:

Baron Zafar has begun agitating for the nobles to remove the Margrave. While I don't think much of the Margrave or of Baroness Elina, who leads the faction to defend the Margrave, at least they understand the meaning of loyalty. If Lady Elina can gather enough support in the Barons' Council, perhaps the nobles can be reminded of their duties to their sovereign. The Margrave's rule is often foolish, but he is our ruler.

Dated two weeks ago:

We succeeded in convincing another baron to support Lady Elina today. If things continue going this well, we'll easily have enough support in the Council to preserve the Margrave's rightful rule.

I wish I could be more confident about the progress we've made, though. As I've worked with and for Baroness Elina, I've watched one error of judgment after another. And the Margrave's rule hurts all of Bissel. Still, there is no choice but to back the Margrave, and that means working with Elina.

Dated ten days ago:

I fear the Margrave and Baroness Elina have some secret agenda of their own. When strategy is discussed, the baroness always seems to be considering how the outcome will affect some secret plans, not just how it will affect our common efforts. I've begun trying to figure out what goal she truly seeks, but it will take time. Elina is vengeful and cruel to those who cross her. She must not suspect disloyalty.

Dated one week ago:

It is truly a dark time for Bissel. While I still believe that our cause is just, Elina's evil is too great to ignore. I could support her decision to work hard for the support of the other barons, even if occasional fights break out between our supporters and those of Baron Zafar. But Elina's recent orders are unacceptable. I still find it hard to believe that she ordered me to assassinate one of Baron Zafar's knights. Baron Zafar is a hero, and if anything, those who have sided with him are better people than those I must work with. I suppose I must just be grateful that she gave me the order, so that I can "fail" to carry it out. I fear that most of Elina's lackeys wouldn't have the strength of will to oppose her, even if they realized the error of her orders.

Dated three days ago:

Oh, what a fool I've been. Elina must know that I am pulling away from her. While we were conversing today, some of her thugs came into the meeting with a heavy sack. She ordered them to show me the contents: the head of my friend Elgin. Elgin had also been questioning whether we were on the right side, and Elina murdered him for it. What's more, it's now clear to me that Elgin and myself were among the few good people taken in by Elina. The bulk of her followers are as rotten as she is.

I must plan my escape. Perhaps Baron Zafar or Baron Alron can protect me. But I must be careful, for Elina must have meant that display as a warning to me. And I still wish I knew what Elina actually wants.

Dated yesterday:

My investigations have borne fruit! I finally had an opportunity to look through the secret letters Elina keeps in a hidden drawer in her desk. I only had a few minutes, and I dared not take the letters, lest their absence reveal my disloyalty. But the letters revealed that the truth is even worse than I feared.

Both Elina and the Margrave are in the thrall of the March's greatest enemy, Evard the Necromancer! The Margrave is little more than a puppet under Evard's command, and Elina is Evard's most important lieutenant. They wish to break any resistance to the Margrave's rule so he can prepare the March for his master's conquest.

With this information, Baron Zafar will be able to rally the undecided barons to his banner. I must choose the opportunity to defect carefully. It may even be safest to bring this information to a neutral baron, such as Baron Alron. Even more important than my own safety, this news must reach the Baron's Council so that they will understand how great the stakes are and free the March of the Margrave's corruption.