

GEO1-06

THE RETURN OF THE GRAND DUKE

A Two-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Geoff Regional Adventure
Version 2

ROUND 1: MAELSTROM OF INFORMATION

by Sholom West and Eric Menge

The Grand Duke of Geoff has returned to Hochoch, but foul magic may be afoot. Is the Grand Duke in danger? What nefarious plots swirl beneath the surface of the Court? Can you discover the true threat to the Grand Duke before war engulfs the Sheldomar Valley? A Geoff Regional Living Greyhawk adventure for characters level 1-6.

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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 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. 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 seven players participating in the game.

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

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

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

SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its

games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

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

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

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

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a Living™ adventure, it is expected that players will 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, a character sheet, and a LIVING GREYHAWK log 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 TIER STRUCTURE

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK campaigns, this adventure is tiered. Basically, the challenges in this adventure are proportioned to the average character level of the characters participating in the adventure. To determine the tier that you will use to run this adventure, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any cohorts or animals according to the values on their certificates. Cross-reference the total and the number of players participating in the game using the chart below to determine the tier used for this adventure.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4 nd
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 th

The level cap indicated is the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier	
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

DM'S BACKGROUND

This is a two-round Regional Greyhawk event for the Grand Duchy of Geoff (Mid-Atlantic Region). The module explores what has befallen Grand Duke Owen over the last eight years since the invasion of Geoff by the Giants. Powerful magic and fell plots threaten the Grand Duchy from within.

The assassination attempt on Owen during the Fall of Gorna was never meant to kill him. Rather, the assailant was a Seelie Fey and the purpose was to spare him. Divinations by the druids revealed that Owen was fated to die on that day. To spare the Brenin (*bray-nin*, tr. Grand Duke), the Seelie of the Court of Dark Summer at the Caves of Twilight Resplendent agreed to work their magic on him, and the faerie arrow put Owen into a form of suspended animation. Owen's comatose body was taken to a secret refuge in the Stark Mounds.

Realizing that Owen would be out of commission for some time, as the fey could not give a precise time when he would recover, the High Chancellor Galimar Withington activated the Owen's clone. Unfortunately, since Owen was still alive, the clone never truly held the soul of Owen. Instead, it operated on memory and guidance and was never stable. It suffered from physical sickness and insanity.

Galimar Withington hired an illithid to stabilize the clone and to keep it from going completely insane. This plan worked with some success for several years, but the clone still suffered from periods of mania and fainting.

About two years ago, Withington's plans fell apart. The mind flayer was murdered, but the clone continued to function. In fact, it functioned even better than before. Withington desperately cast about for the reason, but he never did come across the truth.

The assailant was the clone itself. An Unseelie Faerie from the Court of Dark Summer at the Glades of Shadows Lurking has charmed Karl Neumann, the Grand March's provisional governor of Hochoch. This Unseelie faerie made Governor Neumann give a very special sword to the Grand Duke's clone as a gift. This sword is able to possess the wielder and control its body. All seemed lost as the cloned duke exiled Withington from Court and started placing fools and incompetents into high positions.

Then the real Owen awoke. Withington was there, waiting for him, as were a few other important people, including Elspeth and Darlon Lea. Together they needed a plan to ferret out what had happened to the clone and who was behind it. Owen returned to Hochoch but did so under the identity of Mabon of Istivin. He would start the operation by finding some adventures to do the legwork for them.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The party is hired by Mabon to uncover the intrigue that has occurred in the court surrounding the Grand Duke. They speak to several people in court. During the investigation the PCs will discover that the Brenin sitting court is a clone and that Chancellor Withington used an illithid to control the clone. They will also learn that the illithid was slain and something has taken control of the clone. They will have to find the elusive Withington to learn the true extent of the plot. The round ends when the PCs meet Withington and take him back to meet with the Mabon.

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In the second round, the PCs continue their investigation to discover the identity of the illithid's assassin and who is really controlling the Grand Duke's Clone.

INTRODUCTION

(15 - 20 minutes)

This encounter assumes that the PCs are all living separately. If they are rooming together, tailor the descriptions to fit the situation.

Late summer in Hochoch is not pleasant. The pleasant spring is a distant memory, leaving you with the stench and heat of an overcrowded city in late summer. The crowded conditions have forced you to find lodging where you can. The inns only cater to the richest patrons who can afford their services. Coin is rare, and times are hard, but you make the best of it you can—renting spare rooms and eating what and where you can.

This morning started strangely as you awoke to a light tapping. When you made it the door you find a small piece of paper was tacked with a pin to the wood. No one is in the hallway. When you read the paper, you find it to be an invitation.

Give PCs Player's Handout #1, which is an invitation from the merchant Mabon (*mah-bon*) of Istivin. It appears to hold the prospect of a job. If they agree to meet with Mabon, proceed below. Otherwise, the adventure ends here.

If the party wishes, they can seek some information about Mabon. If a PC spends the morning asking around and makes a successful Gather Information check (DC 10), the individual learns that Mabon is a wealthy merchant from Sterich. He has made his wealth from importing iron and owns a house in the Market Ward of the city. If the PC makes a more difficult check (DC 15), they learn that he came to Geoff about a year ago and travels back and forth from Istivin often.

Gathering yourself and belongings, you make your way to the address on the invitation—the Griffon's Reach, a large upper class boarding house in the Market Ward. Looking again at the paper to make sure the address was correct, you notice other people in front of the building holding pieces of paper identical to yours.

The other people are the other PCs. If all the PCs came as a group (i.e., they were living together), then they are the only group in front of the boarding house. The PCs can now interact with the other players at the table. Let the PCs interact as a minute so that they can introduce themselves. When the PCs are finished, mention that time is passing, and they should keep their appointment.

You knock, and a manservant in immaculate clothing opens the door and greets you. "May I take your coats and" <he pauses> "weapons" pointing to a sign on the wall that reads "No weapons allowed!" "I can assure you that you are perfectly safe here

within the Griffon's Reach and there is no need for weapons of any type."

If the PCs hand over their weapons and coats if any he will gladly give them each a tag listing the container that contains their items. If anyone wishes to sneak in a weapon, the PC must roll a Slight of Hand check against the Manservant's Spot, which is +10. If the manservant spots the weapon, he politely reminds the person about the item in question as if they forgot the weapon. Once all spotted weapons have been put in a safe place, continue with the text below.

The manservant leads you down a hall and into a private dining room set for <number of players plus one> with one seat already taken by a man in exquisitely embroidered clothing. What draws your attention are the three platters of meats, breads and vegetables that sit in the middle of the long table. There is more food on that table than any of you have seen in a week. You catch scent of succulent warm honey mead of the like only dreamed of in recent days. The man seated a far end of the table rises at your entrance and waves for you to sit. It is obvious from his appearance that he is of Gyrice descent as he has the wavy brown hair and deep brown eyes. Once everyone has been seated, he speaks in a strong and confident voice.

"I am Mabon, and I am sure you have many questions about why I asked you to join me for this meager breakfast. Let us just say that you all came with excellent recommendations. Please help yourself to the food. It is spectacular!"

Mabon refuses to talk about business further until the PCs sit and enjoy themselves. He says that he would be a poor host to discuss business before the meal. Mabon joins them in eating—partially because he is hungry and partially to assure the PCs that the food is not poisoned. When all is done, he continues.

"I have asked to meet with all of you because I, being a loyal citizen to Gyruuff and our Brenin—may his wisdom always prevail—have a great fear. Being as I am in a position of moderate influence and a certain degree of wealth, I have heard a terrible rumor that I fear is true. It has been brought to my attention that there is foul magic being used in the court, and I fear for the Brenin, his entire court, and all of Gyruuff.

Please hear me out before you write me off. I have been a loyal servant of the Brenin my entire life and wish no harm to him or any of his allies. A colleague that I trust with my life gave this information to me personally. But alas, he did not know from whence this fell magic came. Only that it was present. If you worthy heroes of Gyruuff would be willing to investigate on this information, I can reward you greatly."

Mabon is actually Owen, the Grand Duke of Geoff (or the Brenin in Flan), under a *veil* spell of his own casting with a DC 24 to detect it is an illusion. The PCs only get this check if they are actively trying to see through the illusions. You should not give the PCs any hints on this. Owen has also cast Nondetection on himself, so *detect magic* and other divinations must make a caster level check of DC 26 to function on Owen and his disguise.

Owen will remain in Mabon disguise until the end of the adventure. Owen is very thorough in this disguise. Everything is thought through so there are no holes. The PCs should not be able to determine that Mabon is an illusion.

Mabon is not willing to pay the PCs at this time. However, he is willing to write several notes to merchants around the town. These notes will allow the PCs to shave, bath, and get new clothes, while the bill is sent to Mabon. If any of the PCs took destitute or poor lifestyle, Mabon comments that the PCs can't go to court looking like beggars. The PCs can each get one set of courtiers' outfits from the tailors. If the PCs wear the clothes and bathe, their effective lifestyle (and its charisma adjustment) is improved by one step for the purposes of this adventure (this includes both rounds).

Mabon promises additional rewards if they are successful, depending upon the time the PCs spend and the threat that they face. He will not be specific at this time.

Mabon suggests that the PCs start their investigation with Llwyres (la-weer-ess, tr. countess) Sierra Blackblade as she will be the easiest of the nobles and courtiers to approach. Mabon is unsure of what the magic at the court is, only that it has been determined to be of an evil or disruptive nature. His fears are that the court and all of Geoff may be affected if the user of the magic is not found and stopped soon. Under no circumstance will he give out the name of his informant. He also wishes to make it clear that nobody is to know that he hired the party, as it could be dangerous for him.

If the PCs ask him about who recommended them he will say that he received their names by either Darlon Lea (if they played Gifts of the Fey), a small gnome that wishes to remain nameless (if they played Cat and Mouse), or Cadofyth Parn (if they played the Gonfalon of Gyruuff or Runaway).

If the PCs return at some point to find him at the Griffon's Reach, the manservant tells them that he is attending to business and it is not known when he is to return, but the PCs can leave a message for him if they wish.

ENCOUNTER 1: IMPORTANT PEOPLE ARE HARD TO REACH.

(15-20 minutes)

Although Mabon recommended that the party begin by meeting with Blackblade, they certainly don't have to follow his advice. If they go to Caer Dwr Gwyldy (*kigher door gweel-deh*, tr. Castle Waterwatch) first, they will not be able to gain entry without a writ from someone important. They can bluff their way past. The Castle Guards statistics are in Appendix A. However, they will have to do this repeatedly as they wander around the caer.

If the party visits other people besides Blackblade, skip to Encounter 2. If the person is not listed in Encounter 2, then that individual is out of town or otherwise unable to meet with the party.

The PCs must meet with Sierra Blackblade in order receive a writ to gain entrance to the court. Sierra Blackblade is a very busy person but is always willing to meet with the people she represents in the court.

You approach the two-story field stone manor house that is the current residence of Llwyres Sierra Blackblade. You see a line of people stretch out the door and down the steps. Asking the person at the end of the line, he informs you that everyone is here to meet with Llwyres Blackblade.

The party can wait in line, bribe their way to the front of the line, intimate their way to the front of the line, or skip the line and sneak inside the manor. If they simply walk to the front door, a guard asks them their business. If they ask to speak with Llwyres Blackblade, he points to the line. The guard does not admit them to the manor house unless they wait in line.

It is possible for the party to sneak into the manor house and try to meet with Blackblade, but it is risky to do so. The house is busy with guards and servants. It takes 30 rounds (3 minutes) for the PCs to find Blackblade once they enter the house. Every three rounds, the PCs must make an opposed Hide or Move Silently check (their choice) against a servant's or guard's Spot or Listen roll with a +5 modifier. If the PCs are spotted, the alarm is raised. The guards arrive every other round and try to subdue the PCs. Use the Castle Guard statistics in Appendix A. If the PCs flee immediately, the guards do not chase them beyond the house grounds and are not able to get a good look at them to identify them later. If the PCs fight and then flee, they are recognized and a warrant is issued for their arrest. All guards for the rest of the module recognize the PCs on a successful Spot check (DC 15). If the PCs are either subdued or arrested, go to Conclusion A.

If the PCs try to bribe their way past the ten people in line, it will cost them 15 golden lions to get to the front of the line.

Buying your way to the front of the line, you are greeted at the door by a halfling that must be a scribe. There are ink stains on her fingers and a smudge on the side of her nose. She admits you to the manor and leads you down the hall and into a large waiting room where she sits on a stool placed next to a swine that snores quietly as it rests on the floor. The halfling reaches into a side pouch and retrieves a piece of parchment and places it on the flat desk type surface that rests on the back of the swine. "Your names and what business you have with the Llwyres?"

If the PCs try to intimate their way past the ten people in line, they can do so with an Intimate check (DC 11). Read the following:

You loom over the person in front of you in line, while you finger your weapons. One by one, the people in front of you find a reason for you to go in front of them. You are greeted at the door

by a halfling that must be a scribe. There are ink stains on her fingers and a smudge on the side of her nose. She admits you to the manor and leads you down the hall and into a large waiting room where she sits on a stool placed next to a swine that snores quietly as it rests on the floor. The halfling reaches into a side pouch and retrieves a piece of parchment and places it on the flat desk type surface that rests on the back of the swine. "Your names and what business you have with the Llwyres?"

If the PCs decide to stand in line, read the following:

As your group falls into line behind the last person, more people begin to take places at the end of the line. Your wait is not as long as expected. Within an hour you are ushered inside by a halfling that must be a scribe. There are ink stains on her fingers and a smudge on the side of her nose. She leads you down a hall and into a large waiting room where she sits on a stool placed next to a swine that snores quietly as it rests on the floor. The halfling reaches into a side pouch and retrieves a piece of parchment and places it on the flat desk type surface that rests on the back of the swine. "Your names and what business you have with the Llwyres?"

Whatever way the PCs get into the building, continue here. There are two ways for the PCs to meet with Llwyres Blackblade immediately. Otherwise they have to wait until a meeting later in the week, when she has free time. If the PCs leave and plan to return later in the week, they receive a note from Mabon asking for a meeting the next morning. During the meeting he again describes the importance of the mission and that it should be completed as soon as possible as he fears something terrible may be brewing.

The first way to gain immediate entrance is to bribe the halfling scribe. She admits them to the receiving room of Llwyres Blackblade for a donation of 25 golden lions that will go to feed the refugees outside the city walls. The second is for the PCs to mention that they need to speak to the Blackblade because foul magic is being used in the court. If the PCs state an equally urgent reason for them to meet with Blackblade, allow it. It is important for the PCs to realize that nobles are busy people who don't have time to meet with PCs just because the PCs feel like it. Read the following boxed text when the PCs gain admission.

The halfling rises from the stool, excuses herself and walks from the room. She returns in about ten minutes and asks you to follow her. You are shown further down the hall to a room near the end. The door is flanked by two guards bearing the device of Cymeravon (kigh-mer-ah-von) on their tunics—a blue "Y" that runs from left to right with a black sword imposed above it all of this on a field of light green.

The scribe leads you into the chamber. Two guards also with the device of Cymeravon stand against the wall. Sitting in a high-backed chair at a small table, which has several letters on it, is the Llwyres Sierra Blackblade. It is not hard to imagine how this beautiful woman in her late 40s could have inspired an entire country to follow her into battle to defend the falling city of Gorna. She nods as you enter and motions for you to sit in the few hardback chairs spread around the room. In a strong but

sweet and commanding voice Llwyres Blackblade speaks “I have been informed that you wish to speak with me?”

She listens in quiet patience while the PCs speak. If they mention foul magic being used in the court and that they have been hired to find out the source, she becomes concerned. She asks who hired the PCs. If they do not tell her, she acknowledges that sometime it is best not to know, but that it is important to discover if the rumor is true or not. She tells the PCs about a couple of people that they might be able to speak with. In order to make sure that the party gets to speak with members of the court she gives them a letter of introduction to the High Chancellor. This writ gets them into the castle.

If Blackblade is asked about the Brenin, she states that she is very worried, as he has been forced to cancel court on several occasions due to bouts of illness. During the last year his illness has taken a turn for the better but he has been acting different. She cannot describe the difference other than he has become colder and more aloof. She also makes it clear that if they need other help from her, she will do what is in her power. Blackblade knows the following about other important people at court.

High Mage Abinar (*ab-in-nar*)—He has been the High Mage since the disastrous Fall of Gorna, where many of the more powerful wizards died. At this remembrance, Blackblade becomes very quiet and brooding. She is only distracted for a couple of seconds, but the party notices that she wipes a tear from her left cheek when she looks back at the party. He was an apprentice at the time and escaped just before the Giant’s army blocked the southern gate. Any of the servants should be able to escort you to him.

Briallen the Heatherdown (*breh-ahl-en*)—An elderly Beory Druidess that has been in the court for as long as she can remember and has been overseeing the Brenin’s ill health. Briallen has taken residence with in Caer Gwyldy and keeps some gardens on the rooftop.

Colwyn ap Ffagan (*kohl-win ap fah-gan*)—This young man is new to the court and has only been high chancellor to Owen the Brenin for six months. He replaced High Chancellor Galimar Withington, when he was removed from his position. Blackblade is unsure why Chancellor Withington was removed. Perhaps the new Chancellor will have some information.

Emlyn the Manservant (*ehm-lin*)—Should I know him?

Galimar Withington—If you can find him he must have some information. He always managed to have more information than anyone else about what was occurring in court. Unfortunately, nobody has seen him since his dismissal and his subsequent journey into Sterich.

Governor Karl Neumann (*noi-man*)—Neumann is necessary, and he has the Brenin’s support. He is an

efficient and effective administrator. However, he has a heavy hand and little compassion.

ENCOUNTER 2: FOLLOWING THE THREADS

(0-10 minutes)

The PCs now have to decide how they want to proceed. It doesn’t matter overly which members of the court the PCs talk to first, but they should try to talk to as many people as they can. Persons important to the plot are given in separate encounters. If they are not crucial, they are listed here, in Encounter 2, along with a brief description of what that person knows. If the person is not listed in Encounter 2, then that individual is out of town or otherwise unable to meet with the party.

CRUCIAL THREADS

High Mage Abinar

Once the PCs have a writ they can gain entry to the Caer and meet Abinar. Go to Encounter 5.

Briallen the Heatherdown

Once the PCs have a writ they can gain entry to the Caer and meet Briallen. Go to Encounter 3.

High Chancellor Colwyn ap Ffagan

Once the PCs have a writ they can gain entry to the Caer and meet Colwyn. Continue with Encounter 2.

Galimar Withington

The party will not be able to meet with Withington until they learn some key information from the Midnight Ravens in Encounter 6.

OTHER THREADS

Alicia Helenasdotter

Knight Field Marshal Dispatch er Alicia Helenasdotter commands the Army of Retribution. She is out of town at the time of this adventure, inspecting the border keeps and repairing damage from the Battle of Bloody Ridge. She maintains a small office at the Chapter House of the Knights of the Watch.

Governor Karl Neumann

Karl Neumann is the provisional governor of Hochoch, appointed by the commandant of the Gran March. He lives in a manor house near Caer Dwr Gwyldy in Hochoch. He knows much about what is going on with Owen the Brenin but will not discuss it with the PCs at this time. In fact, he refuses to see them at all. If the PCs try to break in, use the same rules as described in Encounter 1 for breaking into Blackblade’s manor, but they will be spotted. If that occurs, got Conclusion A.

Old Faith Druids

Lowen Oakroot is a druid of Beory and a leader of the Old Faith Druids in and around Hochoch. He can usually be found at Beory's Teeth, along with the druids of Obadhai, Nerull, and Ehlonna. He knows nothing about events at the caer or the plots surrounding the Brenin. He recommends that the PCs speak with Briallen the Heatherdown.

Owen the Brenin

Owen is the Grand Duke of Geoff. His title in Flan is "Brenin," which means warlord. Owen is a very busy man these days. He is constantly moving about trying to rally his countrymen, bring allies to his cause, and plan the liberation of Geoff. Owen's staff grants the party a brief audience if they have something specific and important to speak with him about. Otherwise, Owen's staff directs the party to Parn, Briallen, Abinar, Colwyn, or Neumann. Owen refuses to discuss foul magic as he considers it a waste of time. He brusquely informs the party that they should speak to Abinar about this, if they wish to discuss magic.

Cadofyth Parn

Cadofyth (kah-doh-fith, tr. colonel) Parn is the current leader of the Army of Liberation. He spends most of his time at the Army of Liberation camp about a mile to the southwest of Hochoch. He never met Owen before the Fall of Gorna and has only met him a few dozen times so far. He has noticed that the Brenin still suffers from the poison attempts and gets headaches frequently and sometimes says that strangest things.

Rhodri Morningmist

Rhodri Morningmist (roh-dree) is the high priest of the Church of Pelor in Hochoch. He is an old man who has risen high in the service of the Skyfather. He knows nothing of the illithid, but he is concerned by recent actions of Owen. The war must have scarred Owen deeply. Before the invasion, Owen would never have approved of the Governor's actions or been so lax in his duties to liberate Geoff.

Siwan merch Llyneth

Siwan merch Llyneth (siwan merch ligh-neth) is the elder of the Town Council of Hochoch. The Council effectively disbanded when the town was overrun during the invasion. Only last year did Owen re-charter the Town Council by waiving its charter fee. However, he reduced it to an advisory role. Siwan is unaware of anything wrong with Owen, but is very angry with Neumann. She blames him for everything. Siwan can be found at the Town Hall, which is in poor repair and leaks badly in the rain.

ENCOUNTER 3: OF COURTS AND COURTIER

(10-15 minutes)

Read the following if this is the first time the PCs make it into the Caer Dwr Gwyldy. Otherwise, skip down to after the block text.

Caer Dwr Gwyldy rises above you in wet gray stone that blends with the cloudy summer sky. It is a small castle with a modest bailey before a large keep that dominates the crest of the hill. Presenting the writ given to you by Llwyress Sierra Blackblade made gaining entrance into the castle possible. Apparently Sierra Blackblade carries a lot of influence within the Court of the Grand Duke of Geoff. You were still required to leave any weapon larger than a dagger at the guardhouse just past the gate.

If the party has any half orcs in it, the guards are very suspicious. They make it known that they do not like the idea of a half orc getting inside the wall of the castle and hold the rest of the party responsible for the half orc's conduct.

You cross the muddy bailey to the narrow steps up to the keep's door. The bailey is a riot of commotion and activity as horses trot by you and wagons lumber pass. Once through keep's massive door, you are in short hallway that opens into the great hall of the castle. The two-story chamber is just as busy as the bailey. Servants scurry back and forth, and courtiers come and go on their business.

The PCs need to ask for a servant to guide them to the High Chancellor. This is easily done. Servants are almost always around. Owen the Brenin has provided work for many war orphans by taking them into his court as servants.

If the PCs show the writ from Blackblade, a page guides them to the High Chancellor's chambers immediately. Otherwise, the PCs must wait while a servant goes to the High Chancellor to see if he will meet with them. Colwyn agrees to meet them and sends a page to get them.

If there are any half orcs in the party, the servants look at him or her with either fear or loathing. It is much more difficult to get a servant to help the party but eventually one helps them.

Armed with the writ from Blackblade, a page guides you to the High Chancellor's chamber on the first floor near the great hall where the Grand Duke holds court. The door has an immaculate and brightly painted sign that states "High Chancellor Colwyn ap Efgan—knock to gain entrance." The page steps aside.

Allow the PCs to decide how they wish to proceed. If they try to enter without knocking they find that the door is barred. This is a magical effect that Colwyn had cast on his door for his convenience. If the PCs tried to just enter without knocking, Colwyn knows and be very short and rude with them. If the PCs knock, he will be short but not rude. Colwyn is a vain man and rather

overwhelmed with his new position. He does not wish to deal with people that barge in on him and do not follow protocol.

Knocking on the door, you hear a slight click and a servant slowly swings the door open. Seated directly across the room is a short human scribe with glasses on the end of his nose. He appears to be squinting at your side of the room as you enter. "May I help you?" He says in an old, crackling voice.

Allow the PCs to respond in any way they wish. As long as they are courteous and respectful, Orig the scribe is helpful. Once the PCs mention and hand him the writ from Blackblade, he excuses himself and goes through the door behind his desk. He returns a moment later and asks the PCs to enter. Orig knows nothing of the foul magics being used in the court.

Entering the chambers of the High Chancellor, it is like entering a grand palace. Expensive tapestries, rugs and artwork are displayed about the room. High Chancellor Colwyn ap Ffagan is reading the writ given to you by Sierra Blackblade. Somehow you would have thought he would be older. He appears to be in his late twenties with short cut brown hair and a moustache. "It appears that you need to speak with me?"

Colwyn listens with visible impatience if the PCs state that they are investigating foul magic in the court. Once he hears the gist of their inquiry, he interrupts them. He says that he does not think that there is any foul magic occurring in the court and that this meeting is a waste of his time. If there were any problems along these lines, it would be the responsibility of the High Mage Abinar or the druid Briallan's job to discover and solve a problem of that nature. Colwyn then asks them to leave as he has more important matters to attend to.

PCs may make a Spot check (DC 15) to see that he is working on place settings for the nobles' rededication ceremony next week. He does not talk about anyone else in the court. He knows nothing of the illithid. If the PCs will not leave when asked, he will threaten to call the guard.

ENCOUNTER 4: A GARDEN IN THE SKY

(10–15 minutes)

If the PCs visit Briallen first, tailor the boxed text on the PCs entering the caer from Encounter 3 to suit. Briallen will gladly see the PCs if a page is sent to her.

You climb the circular stairs to a small chamber at the top of a small tower. You push open the door and walk out onto the roof of Caer Dwr Gwyldy. The castle is built on the crest of the hill, and from the roof you can see miles in every direction. It is an overcast day and threatens rain. Large bands of dark clouds hang heavy in the sky, but breaks in the clouds allow large shafts of light to stream through, creating moving spots of sunlight on the fields around the city of Hochoch.

The center portion of roof is taken up by a garden. Narrow paths wind their way through the shrubs and flowers. On the far side of the garden are two towers. The southern tower is a bit lower than the other. The other one is taller and is an observation tower. The top floor has many wide windows so that the sentries' view is not blocked. An arrow could never reach this high so cover and protection are not so important. There is a sentry up there now. Slowly walking around while looking for signs of trouble. In the center of the tower hangs a large warning bell that the sentry will ring if he spies danger.

Near the center of the garden, you can see the robed figure of a druidess. Her robe's sleeves are pushed up as shavorks in the soil. You can see the crisscross of scars on her arms from the ritual blooding of the druidic ceremonies. She is an older woman and her long hair is now almost completely gray. Her skin is weathered and wrinkled from long years out in the sun, but she moves with a grace and ease that belies her apparent age. She stands as you approach and wipes the dirt off her hands. Her large brown eyes flicker over each of you, taking everything in, tucking it away for use later. "Bore da (boor-eh da)." She says in Flan. "I am glad that you have come by. I was hoping to get a chance to talk." The druidess waves her hand and vines growing in the nearby garden beds shift and move and rearrange themselves to form chairs on the edge of the pathway. "Please..." she gestures. "These old bones need to sit whilst we talk."

Briallen is always happy to receive company. If the PCs have visited anyone else in the caer first, word quickly reached her that the PCs were about asking questions. She wants to know what the PCs are after. She does not come out and ask this directly. Instead, she tries to get the party to confide in her. If the party comes to her first, she is still curious as to their intentions and tries to learn all she can from them.

Briallen is the representative of the Old Faith to the Brenin. She is wise and knowledgeable and regularly in communication with the Archdruid Arwyn at the Isle of Rhun. She has been the court advisor for the past 15 years and it is her responsibility to convey the wishes to the Archdruid to the Brenin and to provide counsel to him on matters involving religion, nature, and spirits of the land.

Not only is she an advisor to the Brenin, she is also responsible for dealing with the Brenin's health problems. She has tried every spell she knows on him and nothing has worked. Even the Archdruid is unable to provide further ideas. She maintains this garden on the roof to grow herbs that might prove beneficial to Owen's health.

Briallen is deeply concerned about Owen's health and his inability to get better. She is convinced that the arrow has not poisoned Owen, as she has used every type of antidote known and tested him for all types of poison. She has noticed that there have been many changes in Owen's personality and does not think all of them are related to his near-death experience. Briallen has seen Owen speaking to himself and occasionally to the very walls of his room.

Briallen is likely to be one of the PC's greatest allies in their search for what has happened to Owen. While she does not know anything about the illithid or the

Unseelie sword, she is sure that some malevolent spirit is lurking at the court. She tells the party about her observations of Owen and the lack of any traces of poison or disease to cause his fits. She mentions that:

“He is different than the Owen before the Fall of Gorna. Perhaps the calamity and suffering have changed him. Perhaps not. What I do know is that this is not the same Brenin of your parents.”

She answers any question the PCs ask with a smile and a nod. If they ask any questions not relevant to this story, she will spout off some nonsense statement about the changing of the cycles of nature or the coming of the fall colors.

High Mage Abinar—He has been around since before the Fall of Gorna and the attack on Owen. Perhaps he knows something. He is far too young for the responsibilities given to him, and he is not doing well under the pressure. I like him, but he lacks the confidence that is required for the job.

Colwyn ap Ffagan—He is young and still has plenty of time to learn what is going on in the world. He is not the best person for the position of High Chancellor and he covers his inadequacy with bluster and a rigid adherence to protocol. He was sent to Keoland when he came of age to learn the ways of war and government. This was a terrible mistake, because he is to set on following the Keoish theories on war and government now.

Galimar Withington—He was and still is a powerful man in Geoff. Do not think that his removal from his High Chancellor position has weakened his abilities or affect any. That new young fool, Colwyn, had best watch what he does or he might learn that he is not as safe as he thinks. Withington has plots within plots and always has a scheme up his sleeve.

Emlyn—A fine man and a conscientious servant. Owen is lucky to have him.

Karl Neumann—He is a cruel and devious whoreson who seems intent on making life miserable for the Gyri. While he is efficient and effective at managing supplies, he has no respect for the ways of the people or the Druids. For some reason, Owen has taken a liking to Neumann and supports his actions and defended him against the wrath of the Commandant of the Gran March who wanted to remove him from his post last year.

Sierra Blackblade—Wonderful woman and a powerful paladin, or she used to be before the Fall of Gorna. It appears that she gave up her Calling and will not even carry a weapon now. She keeps the holy days of the druids and respects the voice of nature. She has stepped into the void left by Owen’s illness.

ENCOUNTER 5: A SERVANT THIS WAY WILL COME

(10-15 minutes)

Run this encounter after the PCs have spoken with at least two of the following three: Briallen, Colwyn, and Abinar.

As the page leads you through the narrow corridors of the castle, you see a man moving toward you at a hasty step. “Sirs and madams. Pardon my intrusion. I have an important message for you and your companions.” From his clothes he appears to be a well-dressed manservant. He motions for you to follow him toward a side door in the hall.

If the PCs ask what the message is or why they should follow him, he will respond by saying “The message must be delivered with discretion.” The manservant is about 45 years old and has no apparent weapons or armor. Once the PCs enter the room behind him, he shoos the page away and closes the door.

“I am Emlyn, the Brenin’s personal manservant. I must first apologize and ask for your forgiveness, because I have no message, but some information that might be important to you. I have heard a rumor that you are investigating the possibility of strange goings on here in the court.”

If the PCs respond in the negative, he excuses his intrusion into their time and leave. He stops and returns if the PCs respond in the affirmative before he gets out the door. If the PCs physically do not let him leave, he feels threatened. He will scream for the guards. Four guards reach the door in 3 rounds, and there are no exits from the room the PCs occupy. Three rounds later, another group of four guards arrive and engage the PCs. The guard’s and Emlyn’s statistics can be found in Appendix A.

If the PCs respond in the affirmative, Emlyn looks relieved and says the following.

“Good, what I have to tell you is most strange indeed. I worry about the safety and well being of His Radiance so I hope this will help you. And now that that tyrant Withington is gone, I can tell you what I know without fear of disappearing in the night.

I lost track of my lord briefly after the Fall of Gorna. All was chaos in those days as the final stand against the giants collapsed. I managed to meet up with the ducal party, but my lord was still suffering from the attempt on his life and only Withington and a few others were allowed to see him. After we arrived in Shibolet, Withington said that the Brenin was well enough that I was allowed to serve him again.

But my lord was not well. He would have the most terrible fits: He would scream and rage. We had to strap him down to keep him from hurting himself. The fits got fewer as time went on. I guess my lord finally broke free of what ailed him.

About six years ago, High Chancellor Withington returned to Shibolet from Keoland with a man named Garnak. Garnak was appointed Vice Chancellor and assisted Withington in his duties. He stayed with us at the Court in Exile in Shibolet for many years. Garnak was disturbing. He was haughty and mean to all those around him. When he disappeared suddenly about a year ago, the servants did not shed any tears.

This is the strange part of my story. Another servant, Lorna, she's a chambermaid, entered Chancellor Garnak's quarters to clean his room and found a hideous monster lying dead on the floor. From what she told me it was sickly light purple and had 4 long tentacles coming from the face where a mouth should have been. She screamed when she saw it and the nearest person came running. It happened to be Chancellor Withington, and he told her to tell no one of what she had seen. But Lorna was so terrified that she had to tell someone, so she told me about the creature. She disappeared two days later. Word among the servants was that her family had resurfaced and that she went to live with them. But I don't think that's true. Chancellor Garnak disappeared about the same time.

Around the same time, my lord's health improved vastly. He no longer seemed to suffer from the fainting spells that had plagued him since the fall of our great country."

Emlyn is as helpful as possible and answers any questions the PCs ask. Lorna discovered the monster's body about a year ago. He does not know what the monster was or what happened to the body. If the PCs ask about Owen's illness, he says that Owen seems to suffer from bouts of the fever.

High Mage Abinar—Abinar is an easy man to serve, but very disorganized and messy. He knows everything about magic, since he has all the resources of several previous high mages at his disposal.

Briellan the Heatherdown—Briellan the old Druidess might be able to tell more about the Brenin's illness. She lives in his small garden on top of the keep. She is good and wise.

High Chancellor Colwyn ap Ffagan—Colwyn is not as dangerous as Withington, but more temperamental. He is quickly making a lot of enemies with people at the court.

Galimar Withington—If I have a walking nightmare, it is Withington. His heart was the blackest I ever knew. People who crossed him died. I am so glad that my Lord came to his senses and dismissed him from his service and sent him into exile.

Karl Neumann—I never had to deal with him, and I thank Pelor for that. He has quite a reputation for being mean and haughty.

Sierra Blackblade—Blackblade is a great and honorable noble. With her on our side, how could we lose? May the gods keep her safe.

ENCOUNTER 6: BOOKS AND DECEPTIONS EVERYWHERE.

(10—15 minutes)

If the PC's visit Abinar first, tailor the boxed text on entering the caer from Encounter 3 to suit. Abinar reluctantly agrees to see the PCs if a page is sent to inform him. If the party went elsewhere first, they need to find a page to lead them to High Mage Abinar.

Entering the small room that serves as the library of Caer Dwr Gwyldy, you cannot help but notice the room is cramped with tall stacks of books and parchments. Scurrying about the piles are young men in robes looking for something. A loud male voice rings out from the rear of the room behind the stacks "What did you do with it? I can't believe that you did not file the book the way I showed you." Moving carefully toward the sound of the voice, you begin to catch glimpses of a man with a long brown beard and black robes with silver trim. When you catch a full glimpse of the man, he matches the description of the High Mage Abinar, but he can't even be 40 years old. Strange. You always thought High Mages tended to be old gray men. He is speaking quietly now with a young boy and pointing to a list of some type. Finishing, the boy scampers past you and out the door. Finally realizing that he has visitors, Abinar turns his attention to you. "What can I do for you?"

He allows the PCs to ask any questions they wish. If they do not mention the illithid, he responds as such:

"I know nothing of this foul magic you speak of. I routinely check for things of that nature and have yet to discover any within the court. If that is all, I am a very busy man and do not have time to waste."

With that he makes it apparent the he no longer wishes to speak to the PCs. If they do not leave, he offers to summon the guard to show them the door. Abinar speaks with an air of confidence until the PCs mention the illithid at which point he, he will respond:

Staring wide-eyed at you when you mention the illithid, the High Mage begins to stammer and look around nervously. "I...um...I...ummmm." He is head drops and he begins to shake. Recomposing himself, he gestures for you to follow him into a small room at the back of the library. In a trembling voice, he says, "Please close and bar the door. What you are about to hear must not go beyond this room."

He takes a deep breath and begins to speak again "Yes, I knew about the illithid. I even helped to destroy the body once it perished, but it was only doing what was asked." Abinar takes a deep breath.

"Let me start at the beginning, the Brenin suffered greatly after the assassination attempt on his life during the Fald Gorna. At times, he was barely able to speak a complete sentence. He would have spasms, mutter, and froth at the mouth. He was constantly trying to kill himself. Whatever the poison the assassin used on that arrow was potent.

"High Chancel... ex-High Chancellor Withington brought Garnak to Shibolet. Garnak was an illithid. I have no idea

where Withington found the thing, or how he managed to convince an illithid to help us, or even how the thing was paid. There are some things I just don't want to know about Withington. Withington intended to use the illithid to maintain the fractured mind of the Brenin. I was asked to hide the thing's real appearance from the remainder of the Court through magic. I did as I was asked."

"Withington's gamble paid off. The Brenin's ailments lessened until Owen was able to function normally except when Garnak rested." Abinar again pauses as if in contemplation. "Everything was fine until last year when someone assassinated the illithid. The identity of the killer was one mystery that quickly was compounded with another. The Brenin was in better shape after the creature's death than before. Perhaps the creature was actually keeping the Brenin from recovering fully and its death freed him the Brenin completely."

"Withington and I destroyed the illithid's body and managed to keep the entire affair a secret. I don't know how you found out. I'm not like Withington. I won't kill you outright. However, if you breathe a word of this to anyone, you will regret it."

Abinar is purposefully holding back some information from the PCs. He knows that the person ruling Geoff is a clone, but he won't tell the PCs that under any condition. He does not know about the *Unseelie Sword* which is dominating the clone. If the PCs ask more questions about the illithid, Abinar says that only Withington really was directly involved with the creature. Perhaps they should speak with him.

Abinar knows that Galimar Withington is in Hochoch but doesn't know exactly where. He recommends speaking with the Aspect of Knowledge, the head of the eyes and ears of the Midnight Ravens. Abinar hands them a small stone with a raven engraved on the side. He tells them to seek out the Midnight Ravens and that the stone will grant them access. If asked where to look, Abinar says that one of the Raven's hideouts is a warehouse that has a sun painted above the door.

When Abinar mentions the Midnight Ravens, the PCs may make an Area Knowledge roll. If they beat a DC 10 they have heard rumors of an underworld group known as the Midnight Ravens. At DC 15, the PC knows that they are the prominent thieves guild in Hochoch. At DC 20 the PC knows that the Midnight Ravens make their means primarily from smuggling, illicit alcohol, gambling, prostitution, and fighting contests. They rarely burgle or rob, as few people in Hochoch have anything worth stealing.

If asked how he became the High Mage, Abinar tells the PCs that out of all the wizards to the Brenin before the Fall of Geoff, he was the only one remaining after. Hence he became the successor of all those before him.

Briallen the Heatherdown—She is an old Beory Druidess that has been in the court for as long as I can remember and has been overseeing the Duke's ill health. It eludes me that so powerful of a Druid has been unable to cure the Brenin's ailments.

High Chancellor Colwyn ap Ffagan—He is so caught up in planning grander and grander events that he will never amount to anything of use. I do not understand why Owen appointed him as a chancellor, let alone as high chancellor.

Emlyn—Never really paid that much attention to him.

Galimar Withington—The ex-High Chancellor is a dangerous man. Those who knew him well knew enough to fear him. He was and still is a powerful man in Gyruff. Withington may not be in charge any more, but his reach goes far.

Karl Neumann - Neumann has been working effectively with the Brenin for the last year and he seems glad that the Brenin has returned to Hochoch. I do not trust the Governor's motives, mostly because he is from the Gran March, and they control everything entering and exiting Hochoch.

Sierra Blackblade—She is a great and powerful noble. One of the last and it is a shame what happened to her during the Fall of Gorna. Geoff will need powerful leaders like her in the future.

ENCOUNTER 7: A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE CAN COST A LOT

(15-20 minutes)

It becomes clear that the PCs need to speak with Withington. Abinar directs them to the Midnight Ravens who know a great deal about the comings and goings of everyone. If the PCs don't go to see the Midnight Ravens, then they never find Withington and must return to Mabon empty handed. Go to Conclusion B.

Most of the warehouses in Hochoch are in the Low Quarter. You walk down Wagon Street, the main road in the Low Quarter, toward the River Gate. You can't help but realize that the number of town militia patrols has increased. It must be to prevent the theft of the precious food stores here, in case Hochoch is attacked or in preparation for the long and hard winter to come.

After searching for some time, you find a warehouse with the sun painted above the door on a smaller street off of Wagon Road. As you approach, you notice an old beggar dressed in rags with only one leg. He sits halfway down the wall past the door and has a collection plate on the ground in front of him.

The beggar is one of the Midnight Ravens and is on watch. He has hold of a string that runs into the wall behind him and rings a bell inside the building. He announces all people coming down the street with one ring and rings 3 times if there is danger. If the PCs speak to him, he appears to be around 40 years old, and he claims to have been injured in the war by an orcish axe

took his leg. He does not know anything about the people in the building as he has only seen a few people enter and exit. His collection plate holds a lone copper piece. He is very thankful for any donations the PCs give him. If he is threatened, he rings the bell three times and run on his two good legs using mobility to escape from the PCs. After turning the corner he darts through a small secret passage in the wall.

If the PCs force their way into the building they will be confronted by 15 of the Midnight Ravens. The interior of the building is strewn with boxes and the only light comes from cracks in the walls. The Midnight Ravens use their Thief Skills to attack the PCs from surprise with range weapons. If possible and necessary, they close for sneak attacks. Their statistics can be found in the Appendix. The Ravens are very upset by their hideout being exposed and try to slay the party to a person, chasing them through the streets, if necessary.

If the PCs look for a way into the warehouse, they notice a service bell next to the front door. If they ring it, read the following.

As you reach for the cord attached to the bell a small piece of the door opens and exposes a meaty face. "What do you want!" the face says in a deep and gruff voice.

This is the doorman of the Midnight Ravens. He disavows any knowledge of the thief group and will not let the PCs into the warehouse unless they present the small raven etched stone given to them by Abinar. He takes the stone and says "Wait here", and closes the small hatch. A few minutes later, the PCs hear the sliding of bolts and the door opens. Read boxed text below.

As the door opens, the bulk of the man behind it becomes apparent. He is easily 6'8" and 300 pounds of muscle. He steps aside letting you enter and then bolts the door behind you. As the door shuts, the room plunges into near total darkness except for the thin streaks of light coming from the cracks in the walls. A bright light flares as the doorman unsheathes a torch that burns without giving off heat. He leads you back through piles of boxes to a small 4-foot high door in the back wall. He turns to your party and says "From here on, no light." He drops the torch into a bucket that immediately extinguishes the light.

You can hear the door open and you grope your way through the opening. You stand up cautiously in case the ceiling is low. A voice floats through the darkness. The voice is feminine and is like soft velvet. "Who are you, and what is it that you want?"

The torch is an everburning torch, and the bucket that contains a permanent darkness spell inside. The small room is also filled with a darkness spell so darkvision is useless.

The voice is that of the Catrin, the Aspect of Knowledge for the Midnight Ravens. She is in charge of a network of spies located throughout the city. She is willing to broker information with anyone, including the PCs. She uses this little warehouse as a place to meet inconspicuously with people. She insists on total

darkness so that no one can see who she is. She has cast Ventriloquism and is disguising her voice.

Catrin is actually standing on the far side of a 3-foot wide pit across the room from the PCs. If the PCs do anything that might harm her, she only has to step forward and she falls to safety 10 feet below (assume that she makes her Jump check). There is a small escape tunnel that she crouches and runs through that leads to a nearby warehouse. Once she has escaped, the 15 Ravens in the main part of the warehouse wait for the PCs to exit the chamber and attack them. If the PCs follow Catrin down into the tunnel they find it ends in a trapdoor in the ceiling. Catrin has pushed some large heavy crates over the trapdoor and it requires a Strength check (DC 25) to open. The Ravens attack the party when they come back out of the tunnel into the warehouse.

Catrin ruthlessly questions the PCs, attempting to learn their names, occupations, and their purpose for wanting to meet with her. When the PCs disclose that they are looking for Galimar Withington, she responds as below.

"Ahhhhhh. So you seek for the elusive Galimar Withington. He doesn't want to be found, you know. But I am the Aspect of Knowledge. I know where he is."

"But this is very touchy information you have requested. You see, he does not like visitors and likes even less those that give out information about him. Information of this value has a high price. I am not interested in coin. You must tell me the name of your employer, or you can each owe me a favor somewhere in the future. For either one of these, I will consider the payment paid in full."

Once the PCs have either told the name of their employer or promised a favor to the PCs, the Aspect of Knowledge tells the PCs that they can find Galimar Withington in the Commons at a boarding house named the "Cackling Crow". Once this is done, Catrin rings a small bell. The doorman without a word leads out the PCs.

If the PCs lie to Catrin and gave her another name besides Mabon, she finds out their untruth sometime before the beginning of Round 2. When the PCs come back to her, she wants to know the truth.

ENCOUNTER 8: TO BE STOPPED AT ALL COSTS

(30—40 minutes)

This encounter happens right after the PCs leave the warehouse hideout of the Aspect of Knowledge.

You leave the warehouse and walk through the narrow streets of the Low Quarter as you head toward the Commons in search of the elusive Galimar Withington. It is late afternoon and the sun is hidden behind heavy banks of clouds. A slow drizzle starts to fall, pitter patting on the thatch roofs and the dirt streets. It won't be long before they are nothing but mud.

Over the sound of the light rain, you cannot help but hear the sound of swords leaving sheaths. Stepping out in the middle of the street in front of you, stand two mercenaries, each with a long sword and shield. From their armor and dress, they are from Keoland. You quickly look behind you and see two more mercenaries are behind you too.

One of the mercenaries in front of you smiles and points his sword at the party, the rest move toward you with malice in their eyes.

Refer to DM's Map #1 for the lay out of the ambush.

These are members of the Blood Claws Mercenary Group. They have come up from Keoland to find work in war-torn Geoff. The Blood Claws number in the dozens, but only these four are in on the attempt to kill the PCs. While waiting for an assignment, these four were approached by a halfling scribe who was being followed closely by a pig. The scribe hired them to kill a group of people matching the PCs' description exactly. He paid them in 50 freshly minted golden lions (coins from Keoland).

If they are captured, they tell the PCs about the halfling. He hired the mercenaries to stop the PCs by killing or severely wounding them. They do not know the name of the halfling or where he can be found as he met them in the Boar's Tusk Tavern. The Boar's Tusk Tavern is a large alehouse in the Commons of Hochoch. The halfling scribe is Kensel. The party will learn more about him when they meet Bolnik.

Once the PCs have spoken to the remaining mercenaries for a short period of time a Town Watch group approaches the PCs cautiously and ask what occurred. The group is led by Watch Sergeant Orig. After a short discussion with the PCs and any of the remaining mercenaries, he lets the PCs go free with a warning to stay out of trouble. The mercenaries will be taken to jail and tried in a court of law (Gran March). The PCs can pocket the money but the Watch will not allow the PCs to take the mercenaries' weapons and armor all of which are too big for the PCs to hide.

This combat is very straightforward. The mercenaries wish to kill the PCs if possible. They gang up on fighters in the beginning and then move to the spell casters. If it becomes hopeless, they flee. If that is impossible, they drop their weapons and surrender.

TIER ONE (EL 4)

☛ **Mercenaries, male humans Ftr1** (4): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 1d10; hp 10; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (Touch 10, Flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +2; Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, scale mail, large shield

TIER TWO (EL 6)

☛ **Mercenaries, male humans Ftr3** (4): CR 3; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 3d10; hp 25; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.;

AC 16 (Touch 10, Flat-footed 16); Atks +6 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +3; Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, scale mail, large shield

TIER THREE (EL 8)

☛ **Mercenaries, male human Ftr5** (4): CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 5d10; hp 40; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (Touch 10, Flat-footed 16); Atks +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +5. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, scale mail, large shield

ENCOUNTER 9: THE DOORMAN IS THE STRONGEST JAM

(15 - 20 minutes)

Moving quickly so as to not encounter any more obstacles, you reach the steps of the Cackling Crow boarding house. Reaching to the door and turning the handle, you find it locked. It is strange that a boarding house would be locked at this time of the day. With little warning a front window beside the door opens and an old woman pokes her head out. "I have no more rooms and need no more boarders" She points to a sign next to her in the window that reads "No Vacancies".

This is Melina merch Sanant, the owner of the Cackling Crow. She is a good friend of Galimar Withington and does not allow anyone into the building that she thinks wishes to cause him harm. The PCs must convince her that they mean Withington no harm and that Withington wants to meet with them.

Let the PCs be inventive and sweet-talk her if they wish. She cannot be bribed with money. If they volunteer to hand her all of their weapons to her through the window for safekeeping, she is more receptive to letting them in. Once they successfully convince her, she will unlock the door and let them enter.

If the PCs attempt to sneak in:

The only obvious way to enter is through a window or the back door, both of which are locked. If the PCs attempt to break into the building a small boy will see them and cry out thieves and then run. Within 3 rounds the Town Watch will appear to investigate the accusation. The PCs will have to wait several hours before it will be safe to approach the Cackling Crow again. They can still try to gain entrance by speaking with Melina.

If the PCs wait for someone to leave:

The PCs will have to wait until the next morning before Melina will leave to purchase supplies for the next day, locking the door when she leaves. If the PCs try to gain entrance while she is gone, the same event will occur as if the PCs tried to break into the building.

If the PCs are unsuccessful and cannot find a way in, go to Conclusion B. Otherwise continue below.

Melina opens the door and points to the chairs around a large table in the center of the room. "Wait here while I tell Galimar he has guests." She then turns and climbs the stairs with a slow limping gait. After about five minutes you hear two sets of footsteps coming down the stairs. Melina comes around the corner first and behind her is a man in his early fifties wearing a set of plain brown and black clothing. As he crosses the room and begins to sit calmly at your table he speaks in a calm self-assured voice, "You wish to speak with me?" Hearing him speak you can only imagine how much power and influence he must still hold even without his former post. You notice as he sits, that Melina quickly leaves the room.

The PCs can now speak to Galimar Withington and ask him any questions they wish. When speaking as Withington, make sure to maintain eye contact with the Players as he does this to unnerve people. He wants to know how they discovered everything they ask him about and who hired them to begin the investigation. He answers almost all of their questions with one of his own. He does not deny anything if they accuse him of bringing and then disposing of the illithid. After all, he did hire the illithid to help maintain the spirit of the Grand Duke. If they ask about Lorna, he denies killing her. He says that he sent her off to work for a family in southern Keoland.

Withington continues turning the questioning around of the PCs until he is certain that they mean the Grand Duke no harm. Then read the boxed text below.

Galimar Withington meets all of your eyes one more time and it is as if he is peering directly into your soul. "I have heard enough and believe that you may be of some use. As you have figured out most of the story you should hear the rest so as to not ask any more questions that could draw attention."

"The Grand Duke did indeed die from the assassin's crossbow bolt during the Fall of Gorna. As such, it was necessary to activate his clone. It was hidden in the Stark Mounds just in case such a situation should occur. The body of Grand Duke Owen I was placed in a secret crypt for safekeeping. Shortly after awakening, the clone began to suffer terribly. It was a necessary evil to hire the illithid, as it could stabilize the clone. The creature was able to keep the clone from suffering terrible headaches and loss of control. About a year ago, the illithid was found murdered, and it was necessary to keep the event quiet."

"Since then, I lost control of the Grand Duke's clone. It acted contrary to the good of the country and ignored the plans that we had worked out. I have been busy trying to figure out what happened to the illithid and who was behind it. When it became obvious that the clone was going to dismiss me and perhaps order my arrest, I decided to step down as High

Chancellor and disappear for a time. Since my release I have been on a relaxing sabbatical, but it now appears that somebody is interested in my doings, so..."

Galimar Withington rises from his chair and starts to cross the room. "Let us go and meet your employer. You might as well take me there. I will find him on my own. I promise that I mean him no harm and only wish to find out what he knows. Shall we?" He motions toward the door as he removes his cloak from a peg on the wall.

If the PCs refuse to take Galimar Withington to meet their employer, go to Conclusion C.

If they agree and take Galimar Withington to meet their employer, go to Conclusion D.

CONCLUSIONS

(5—10 minutes)

CONCLUSION A

Those of you that survived the battles with the Guards awoke in a deep dungeon lit faintly by a torch somewhere outside the door to your cell. As you shift, you realize that you have been shackled and your remaining companions line the walls around the room.

The adventure is over for the PCs and they are incarcerated until further notice from the Geoff Regional Triad. Please send their names and contact information to the Triad.

CONCLUSION B

Returning to speak with Mabon, you cannot help but feel that you could have done more to find Withington. Entering the Griffon's Reach, you see Mabon in the front hallway speaking with a manservant. Upon noticing you, he motions for you to follow him to the back room of your prior meeting. Sitting quietly he looks at your group and speaks "I fear from the expressions on your face that you learned of something dire?"

Let the PCs give a short explanation of what they tell Mabon, then continue with the text below.

"I thank you for the information you have obtained and I must dwell on what you have told me. Please return here tomorrow morning as I may have further work for you."

The first round of the adventure is now over. Mabon does not pay the PCs until the investigation is concluded.

CONCLUSION C

Returning to speak with Mabon, you feel as if a dark shadow sits upon your shoulders. No matter how many times you look over your shoulder and to the darkened roofs under which you walk, that someone or something is following you. Trying to lose the feeling you find yourselves in front of the Griffon's Reach, unsure of how you made it here. Entering the building, you see Mabon in the front hallway speaking with a manservant. Upon

noticing you, he motions for you to follow him to the back room of your prior meeting. Sitting quietly he looks at your group and speaks "I fear from the expressions on your face that you learned of something dire?"

Let the PCs give a short explanation of what they tell Mabon, then continue with the text below.

"I thank you for the information you have obtained and I must dwell on what you have told me. I also think that I should prepare for a visit from Galimar Withington. Please return here tomorrow morning as I may have further need of your services."

The first round of the adventure is now over. Mabon does not pay the PCs until the investigation is concluded.

CONCLUSION D

Returning to the Griffon's Reach with Galimar Withington in tow, you cannot help but think there is much more going on than you have discovered. Entering the building, you see Mabon in the front hallway speaking with a manservant. Upon noticing you he begins to smile, then the color drains from his cheeks as his eyes fall on Galimar Withington. He clears his throat and motions your group to the back room of your prior meeting. He moves back out into the hallway when Galimar does not enter the room. A few very hushed sentences pass between them and Mabon re-enters the room. "I wish to speak with Galimar alone and will no longer need your services today. Please return tomorrow morning and all will be explained."

The End of Round 1

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One

Getting the writ from Sierra Blackblade 50 xp

Encounters Two through Six

Learning about events at Court. 200 xp

Encounter Seven

Meeting with the Aspect of Knowledge 50 xp

Encounter Eight

Defeating the mercenaries sent to stop the party. 50 xp

Encounter Nine

Meeting with Withington. 100 xp

Total experience for objectives 450 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-50 xp

Total possible experience 500 xp

TREASURE SUMMARY

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items that are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter Seven

- Cert for Favor Owed to the Midnight Ravens (Cost: n/a; Item Size: n/a; Uses: n/a; Tradable: No; Rarity: n/a; Weight: n/a): Due to a deal made with the Night Ravens, you owe them a favor in the future. (Need 1 per player)

Encounter Eight

- 50 golden Lions (gp)

APPENDIX A

NPC STATISTICS

☛ **Castle Guard, male human War3:** CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 28; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 14); Atks: +6 melee (1d10+2/x3, glaive), or +6 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Listen +5, Spot +5, Knowledge (Heraldry) +2; Alertness, Weapon Focus (glaive), Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: masterwork glaive, masterwork longsword, scale mail

☛ **Midnight Ravens, male human Rog5:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 5d6+5; hp 27; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (Touch 13, Flat-footed 13); Atks +6 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword), +6 ranged (1d6/x3], short bow); SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; AL Varies; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +13, Bluff +9, Climb +9, Escape Artist +11, Hide +11, Jump +11, Move Silently +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +9, Tumble +13, Listen +5, Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Keoish); Dodge, Point Blak Shot, Weapon Finesse (short sword).

Possessions: Studded leather, short sword, short bow, 20 arrows, 2 daggers.

☛ **Emlyn the Manservant, human male Exp10:** CR 9; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 10d6; hp 41; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atks +7/+2 melee (1d3 subdual, fists); AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (Heraldry) +16, Profession (Manservant) +15, Appraise +17, Diplomacy +14, Sense Motive +14, Listen +16, Spot +16, Bluff +14, Ride +12, Gather Info +6, Speak Language (Common), Speak Language (Elven), Speak Language (Dwarven), Speak Language (Gnomish), Speak Language (Halfling), Speak Language (Keoish), Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Druidic), Speak Language (Giant); Alertness, Leadership, Iron Will, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Appraise).

☛ **Grand Duke Owen, Human male Ill15/Ftr5:** CR 20 Medium-size Humanoid (humanoid); HD 15d4+5d10+20; hp 96; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 25 (Touch 12, Flat-footed 23); Atks +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+1d6+5/15-20, Owen's Blade), +16/+16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+1/x3, longbow); AL alignment; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +14; Str 10 (12), Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Knowledge (Fey) +14, Knowledge (Heraldry) +14, Knowledge (Nobility) +14, Concentration +16, Spellcraft +15, Ride +16, Diplomacy +12, Sense Motive +12, Bluff +8, Intimidate +8; Combat Casting, Dodge, Extend Spell Heighten Spell, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Quicken Spell, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: Duke's Armor, Grand Duke's Shield (buckler +2), Owen's Blade, gauntlets of ogre power, +2 cloak of resistance, ring of evasion, poison bane ring, bracers of archery, +1 longbow of speed.

Spells Prepared (5/7/6/6/6/6/4/3/2; Spell DC = 15 + Spell Level): 0 lvl—daze, daze, resistance, ray of frost, ghost sound; 1st-lvl—protection from evil, shield, mage armor, magic missile, expeditious retreat, shocking grasp, color spray; 2nd-lvl—protection from arrows, still magic missile, still magic missile, still shocking grasp, still shocking grasp, mirror image; 3rd-lvl—quicken still magic missile, quickened still magic missile, displacement, hold person, dispel magic, major image; 4th-lvl—stoneskin, charm monster, minor globe of invulnerability, nondetection, rainbow pattern, still protection from fire; 5th-lvl—still charm monster, wall of iron, wall of force, still ice storm, teleport, nightmare; 6th-lvl—disintegrate, still nightmare, repulsion, greater shadow evocation; 7th-lvl—delayed blast fireball, Mordenkainen's sword, shadow walk; 8th-lvl—maze, screen.

☛ **Galimar Withington, male human Rog13/Asn2:** CR 15; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 15d6+15; hp 77; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 19); Atks +2 Rapier +15/10 melee (1d6/15-20, +2 rapier), or +14/9 melee (1d4/19-20/x2, masterwork dagger), or +14/9 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork dagger); SA Sneak Attack +8d6, Opportunist, Death Attack; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge, Slippery Mind, Slippery Mind, Poison Use, Save vs Poison +2; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +22, Bluff +22, Sense Motive +19, Move Silently +13, Hide +13, Disguise +13, Gather Information +15, Read Lips +14, Search +14, Spot +11, Listen +11, Appraise +14, Ride +10, Climb +7, Balance +10, Tumble +11, Use Magic Device +17, Knowledge (Royalty and Nobility) +9, Knowledge (Geoff) +9, Speak Languages (Flan, Common, Keolander, Elven, Dwarven, Halfling, Gnomish, Giant, Draconic). *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Quickdraw, Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Dagger), Improved Critical (Rapier).

Special Attacks: Opportunist (Ex)— Once per round, Withington can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as his attacks of opportunity for that round;

Death Attack (Ex)— If Withington studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (Withington's choice). While studying the victim, he can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the assassin or recognize the assassin as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails her Fortitude saving throw (DC 16) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim's mind and body become enervated, rendering her completely helpless and unable to act for 1d6+2 rounds. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once Withington has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds. If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save) or if Withington does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 3 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Special Qualities: Slippery Mind (Ex)—If Withington is affected by an enchantment and fails the saving throw, 1 round later he can attempt the saving throw again. He only gets this one extra chance to succeed.

Poison Use (Ex)—Withington is trained in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a blade.

Possessions: Mithral chain shirt, +2 Rapier of Speedy Wounding, Amulet of Natural Armor +2, Ring of Protection +2, Ring of Mind Shielding, Cloak of Charisma +4, Boots of Elvenkind, wand of Stoneskin (17 charges), Potion of Glibness, Arcane Scrolls (shield, comprehend languages sleep, magic missile).

Spells Prepared (2; Spell DC = 14+ spell level): 1st lvl—*change self, detect poison*.

MAGICAL ITEMS

Duke's Armor: This full plate armor was a gift from Queen Lhiannon of the Seelie Court upon Owen's coronation as Brenin. It is the armor that he wears into battle. This +2 *glamered, ethereal, fairy-mithral full-plate*, in its normal appearance, is gleaming silver, with the heraldic device of Gyruuff carved and lacquered upon the breastplate. Any stains or blood that get on it are almost immediately wiped away. Its fairy construction gives the mithral an even lighter weight than most mithral. The armor only weighs 20 pounds, has an armor check penalty of -2, and a spell failure of 15%. It is considered light armor. The armor will not function for anyone who is not of the Brenin's blood.

Caster Level: 15th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *alter self, ethereal jaunt*; **Market Price:** 69,550 gp.

Owen's Blade: This longsword was a gift from Owens father upon Owen going to the Gnomish Illusory College. It is a +2 *keen, shocking burst longsword*. It has a threat range of 17-20, and deals an addition d6 of damage on a successful strike. On a critical hit, the weapon does an additional 1d10 of damage (not multiplied).

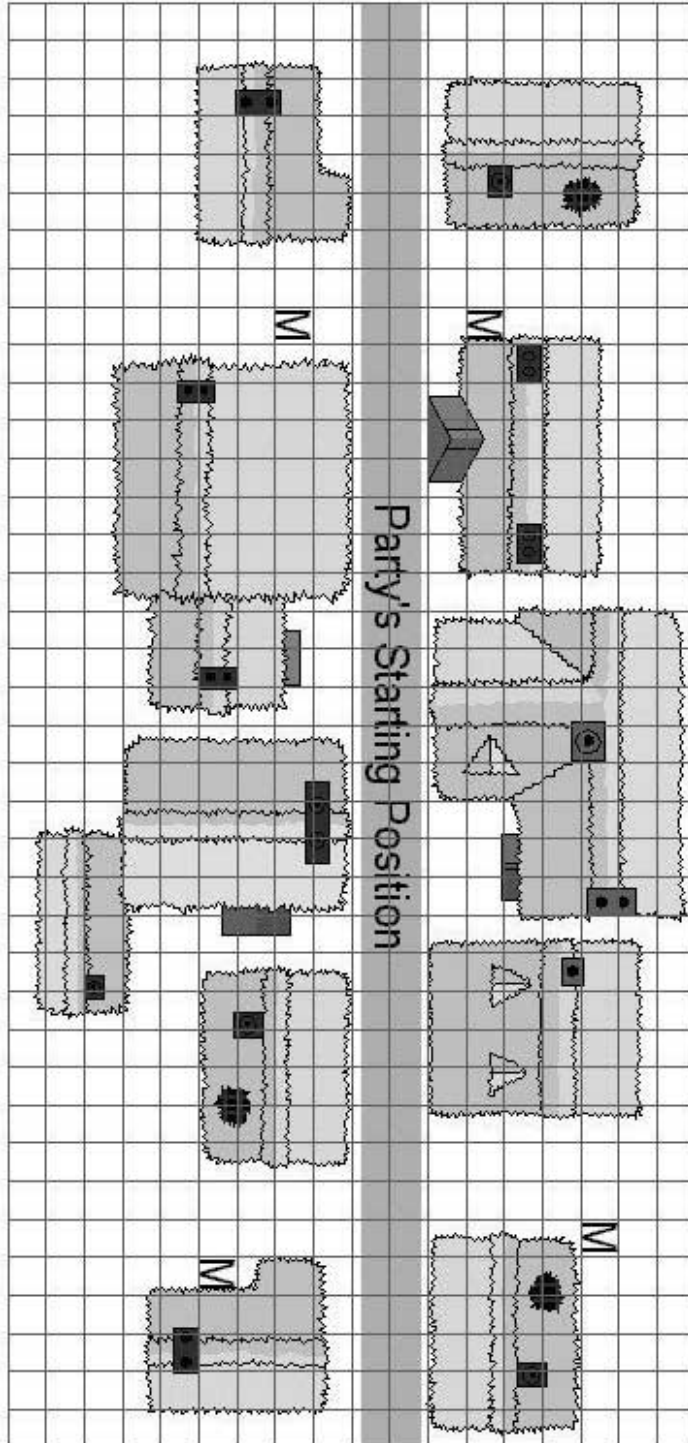
Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *keen edge, call lightning or lightning burst*; **Market Price:** 50,315 gp.

Poision Bane Ring: This ring informs the wearer of poison in his immediate presence and protects its wearer from poison. The wearer is silently aware of any poison that is within his immediate vicinity (i.e., within 2 ½ feet from the wearer, or within the 5-foot cube the wearer inhabits), as *detect poison* cast by a 7th-level cleric. Any poison that touches the wearer's person is neutralized as if a *neutralize poison* were cast by a 7th-level cleric.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Forge Ring, *detect poison, neutralize poison*; **Market Price:** 70,000 gp.

MAPS

DM's Map #1



M = The starting position of the mercenaries Each square is 5 feet.

PLAYER HANDOUT # 1

<PC's Name>,

I have need of your services and have a task suitable to your skills. If you are interested, please come to the Griffon's Reach in the Market Ward on Ivory Way this morning. A meal will be served, so please come hungry.

May Pelor's Light illuminate us all,

Mabon of Istivin

GEO1-06

The Return of the Grand Duke

A Two-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]

Geoff Regional Adventure

Version 2

Round 2: Peril to the Grand Duchy

by Sholom West & Eric Menge

The Grand Duke of Geoff has returned to Hochoch, but foul magic may be afoot. Is the Grand Duke in danger? What nefarious plots swirl beneath the surface of the Court? Can you discover the true threat to the Grand Duke before war engulfs the Sheldomar Valley? A Geoff Regional Living Greyhawk adventure for levels 1-6.

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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 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. 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 seven players participating in the game.

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

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

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

Scoring

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

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

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

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

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a Living™ adventure, it is expected that players will 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, a character sheet, and a LIVING GREYHAWK log 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 Tier Structure

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK campaigns, this adventure is tiered. Basically, the challenges in this adventure are proportioned to the average character level of the characters participating in the adventure. To determine the tier that you will use to run this adventure, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any cohorts or animals according to the values on their certificates. Cross-reference the total and the number of players participating in the game using the chart below to determine the tier used for this adventure.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4 nd
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 th

The level cap indicated is the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

Is it a Full Moon?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

Lifestyle

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	14 sp -2
Poor	43 sp -1
Common	12 gp 0
High	250 gp +1
Luxury	500 gp +2

DM's Background

This is a two-round Regional Greyhawk event for the Grand Duchy of Geoff (Mid-Atlantic Region). The module explores what has befallen Grand Duke Owen over the last eight years since the invasion of Geoff by the Giants. Powerful magic and fell plots threaten the Grand Duchy from within.

The assassination attempt on Owen during the Fall of Gorna was never meant to kill him. Rather, the assailant was a Seelie Fey and the purpose was to spare him. Divinations by the druids revealed that Owen was fated to die on that day. To spare the Brenin (*bray-nin*, tr. Grand Duke), the Seelie of the Court of Dark Summer at the Caves of Twilight Resplendent agreed to work their magic on him, and the faerie arrow put Owen into a form of suspended animation. Owen's comatose body was taken to a secret refuge in the Stark Mounds.

Realizing that Owen would be out of commission for some time as the fey could not give a precise time when he would recover, the High Chancellor Galimar Withington activated the Owen's clone. Unfortunately, since Owen was still alive, the clone never truly held the soul of Owen. Instead, it operated on memory and guidance and was never stable. It suffered from physical sickness and insanity.

Galimar Withington hired an illithid to stabilize the clone and to keep it from going completely insane. This plan worked with some success for several years, but the clone still suffered from periods of mania and fainting.

About two years ago, Withington's plans fell apart. The mind flayer was murdered, but the clone continued to function. In fact, it functioned even better than before. Withington desperately cast about for the reason, but he never did come across the truth.

The assailant was the clone itself. An Unseelie Faerie from the Court of Dark Summer at the Glades of Shadows Lurking has charmed Karl Neumann, the Gran March's provisional governor of Hochoch. This Unseelie faerie made Governor Neumann give a very special sword to the Grand Duke's clone as a gift. This sword is able to possess the wielder and control its body. All seemed lost as the cloned duke exiled Withington from Court and started placing fools and incompetents into high positions.

Then the real Owen awoke. Withington was there, waiting for him, as were a few other important people, including Elspeth and Darlon Lea. Together they needed a plan to ferret out what had happened to the clone and who was behind it. Owen returned to Hochoch but did so under the identity of Mabon of Istivin. He would start the operation by finding some adventures to do the legwork for them.

The party is hired by Mabon to uncover the intrigue that has occurred in the court surrounding the Grand Duke. They speak to several people in court. During the investigation the PCs will discover that the Brenin sitting court is a clone and that Chancellor Withington used an illithid to control the clone. They will also learn that the illithid was slain and something has taken control of the clone. They will have to find the elusive Withington to learn the true extent of the plot. The round ends when the PCs meet Withington and take him back to meet with the Mabon.

In the first round, the PCs began their investigation and discovered that the Owen currently ruling the country was a renegade clone. They learned that Withington was instrumental in creating the clone and was using an illithid to maintain its stability. They also learned that the illithid was slain and the clone is under the control of another entity.

Now, the PCs must learn the identity of the illithid's assassin and who is really controlling the Grand Duke's Clone.

Adventure Summary

Withington and Mabon summon the PCs to continue their investigation. Withington gives the PCs a lead that

the Midnight Ravens might have some knowledge. The PCs must broker a deal with the Raven's Aspect of Knowledge to learn that one of the Raven's thieves saw something interesting regarding Governor Neumann, the Gran March's provisional governor of Hochoch. The PCs speak to the thief and learn that the Neumann's halfling scribe is using magic to control his actions.

When the PCs confront Neumann and his halfling scribe, they discover that the halfling is in reality an Unseelie Faerie from the Court of Dark Summer at the Glades of Shadows Lurking, who has charmed Neumann. This Unseelie faerie made Governor Neumann give a very special sword that was given to the Grand Duke's clone as a gift. This sword is a fey Construct able to possess the wielder and use all of their knowledge. The sword also has the ability to move from one wielder to the next when the first dies or it chooses to break the connection.

Once the PCs are able to free the Governor from the control of the Imp, he explains the Sword's ability to control the Grand Duke's clone. He also tells the PCs that the Sword can only be destroyed by striking it on the large iron warning bell in the observation tower of the castle in Hochoch. The PCs then enter the castle, retrieve the Sword, and carry to the rooftop where it can be destroyed. There, the PCs find the Grand Duke's clone who attacks them. If the PCs are victorious, they can destroy the sword and setting the Grand Duke's clone free from its control. Mabon then arrives on the scene and reveals himself as the Grand Duke. He tells the PCs to not tell anyone what they have seen here.

Introduction

(15 minutes)

You awake the next day to the sound of rain beating on the thatch above you. The air is already thick with the smell of wet straw. Dampness permeates the air, and the wood and tinder fights you when you try to get a small fire going to warm some water. You have a feeling that it is going to be a long day.

As you begin your journey back to the Market Ward to meet with Mabon, you hear the yelling of a crier. "Hear ye! Hear ye! By the power and authority of Governor Neumann, it is hereby unlawful to use the Flan tongue in the protectorate of Hochoch and the reclaimed territory. Use of Flan is punishable by a week of forced labor."

The crier knows nothing other than this the message he is paid by the Governor's office to proclaim. The native Gyri of Hochoch take the news very poorly. The PCs overhear a great deal of complaining and grumbling by the common folk.

Continuing to the Griffon's Reach at the request of Mabon of Istivin, you ponder all that you discovered yesterday. It was stranger than even the wildest rumors you had heard concerning the Brenin and his court in Shibolet. As you reach the large upper class boarding house, you wonder what awaits you inside.

Opening the door and stepping into the boarding house you are greeted by the same manservant wearing the same if not identical immaculate clothing. "May I take your coats and

weapons?" He says with a smile obviously remembering you from yesterday.

If the PCs hand over their weapons and coats, the manservant gladly accepts them and places them in a coatroom for safekeeping. If anyone wishes to sneak in a weapon, they must make an opposed Pick Pocket check against the manservant's Spot Check with a +5. If the manservant notices, he politely reminds the person about the item in question as if they forgot the weapon. Once all weapons have been put in a safe place, continue with the text below.

The manservant leads you down a hall and into the same private dining room as yesterday, only it is set for <number of players plus two>. Already seated in the room are Mabon and Galimar Withington. At some deep level, you had hoped Withington would not still be here for this meeting. There is just something unsettling about the man.

Mabon is dressed in another exquisitely embroidered set of clothing, but Galimar Withington appears to be wearing the same clothes as yesterday. From the bags under their eyes, they had a very long night and do not appear rested. Again, the long table is set with three platters of meats, breads, and vegetables. If Mabon can afford a meal like this for the last two days, he must be wealthy indeed. Once everyone has taken a seat, he encourages you to break your fast as he starts to help himself.

After you are finished, Mabon speaks in a tired but strong voice. "I have been in discussion with Galimar throughout the night, and it is our conclusion that something most dire is occurring in the court. As such, I will pass this discussion over to him." Mabon turns and looks at Withington who begins to speak.

"I find it quite amazing that you were able to discover what you have so far. Therefore, I wish for you to continue the investigation and find out who has usurped control of the Grand Duke's clone. Mabon and I fear that if this person is a servant of the giants or the Scarlet Brotherhood or even of the Valley of the Mage, the Grand Duchy itself could very well be in dire danger.

This morning I received a whisper of promised information. It appears that persons in this city have a lead that we can pursue. Do you wish to continue with this investigation for the Grand Duke and Country?"

Allow the PCs to respond in any way they wish. If the PCs insist upon payment Galimar Withington is willing to pay the PCs each 200 gold lions if they complete the task he has set before them. If requested, he pays 100 gold lions in advance. Withington is very unimpressed by such requests and revealing of the PCs' mercenary nature. He makes a few withering comments.

Withington believes that the clone is being controlled, because it has not suffered from the prior ailments after the illithid was murdered. He does not know who murdered the illithid or who could be controlling the clone, only that he has heard there might be a lead. He has no other information about the possibility of control. If the PCs agree to go on the investigation and stop the user of the foul magics, read the following.

Withington reaches into his pocket and tosses onto the table a small black stone with a raven carved into it. "I believe you know where to go with that stone?"

The PCs should know that this stone gains them entrance to the Aspect of Knowledge of the Midnight Ravens from Round 1. The Aspect is in a warehouse in the Low Quarter of Hochoch near the River Gate.

If the PCs suggest that Withington could be responsible for the control of the clone, he points out that he is no longer at the clone's side and would not have left if he were in control. Mabon tells the PCs that they can rest assured that Withington is not the enemy of the Grand Duke and is not the lurking danger at the court.

If a PC does not wish to continue, Withington gives the PC their share of 100 gold lions for their silence and ask him to leave. At that point the player should score his voting form and leave the table. If the entire party does not wish to continue, go to Conclusion A.

If the PCs attack Mabon (Owen in disguise) and Galimar Withington, their stats are in the appendix. They both try to escape as quickly as possible. At the end of the fight, the Town Watch is alerted and they hunt the PCs. If they manage to confront the PCs and the PCs resist, more the Town Watch continues arriving until the PCs are all out of commission or they give up. Use the Castle Guard stats in Appendix A. Go to Conclusion B.

Encounter 1: A Little Bit of Information.

(10 - 20 minutes)

Heading once again toward the warehouses near the River Gate, you can't help but think that you are retracing yesterday's steps. Approaching the building with the sun painted above the door, you notice an old beggar dressed in rags with only one arm. He sits halfway down the wall past the door and has a collection plate on the ground in front of him. It is a miserable day for sitting outside on a roadside. The rain has eased up a little bit, but the everything is damp and the sky is threatening to start raining again any moment.

The beggar is one of the Midnight Ravens and is on watch. He is a different watchman than yesterday and will not know anything about the beggar from the day before. He has hold of a string that runs into the wall behind him and rings a bell inside the building. He announces all people coming down the street with one ring and rings three times if there is danger. If the PCs speak to him, he appears to be around 40 years old and will claim to have been injured in the war by an orc's axe took his arm. He claims that he does not know anything about the people in the building as he has only seen a few people enter and exit. His collection plate holds a lone copper piece. He will be very thankful for any donations the PCs give him. If he is threatened, he will ring the bell three times and run using mobility to escape from the PCs. After turning a corner he will dart through a small secret passage in the wall. Use the Midnight Raven stats in Appendix A.

Next to the door is a service bell. As you reach for the cord attached to the bell a small piece of the door opens and exposes a meaty face. "What do you want!" the face says in a deep and gruff voice.

If the PCs force their way into the building they will be confronted by 15 of the Midnight Ravens. The interior of the building is strewn with boxes and the only light comes from cracks in the walls. The Midnight Ravens will use their Thief Skills to attack the PCs from surprise with range weapons and if necessary close. Their statistics can be found in the Appendix A.

The person answering the door is the doorman of the Midnight Ravens. He disavows any knowledge of the Midnight Ravens, and he also disavows any knowledge of the PCs having been inside the building or speaking with the Aspect of Knowledge the day before. He does not let the PCs into the warehouse unless they present the small raven carved stone given to them by Galimar Withington. Read the boxed text below.

As the door opens, you once again see the bulk of the doorman. He is easily 6 foot, 8 inches tall and 300 pounds of muscle. He steps aside letting you enter and then bolts the door behind you. As the door shuts, the room plunges into almost total blackness except for thin streaks of light coming from the cracks in the walls. A bright light flares as the doorman removes a torch from the bucket next to the door and the large warehouse room explodes into light. He leads you back through the piles of boxes to the same 4-foot high door in the back wall. He turns to your party and says "From here on, no light." He drops the torch into a bucket that immediately extinguishes the light without a sound. You can hear the door more than see it open. A voice floats through the small opening. "Please enter."

The torch is an everburning torch, and the bucket that contains a permanent darkness spell inside. The small room is also filled with a darkness spell so darkvision is useless. If the party enters, continue below.

You stand up cautiously in case the ceiling is low. A voice floats through the darkness. The voice is masculine and is rough and full of gravel. "Ah, you have returned to learn more. What is that you wish to know?"

The voice is that of Catrin, the Aspect of Knowledge for the Midnight Ravens. She is using her abilities to change her voice. She is in charge of a network of spies located throughout the city. She is willing to broker information with anyone, including the PCs. She uses this little warehouse as a place to meet inconspicuously with people. She insists on total darkness so that no one can see who she is. She has cast Ventriloquism and is disguising her voice.

Catrin is actually standing on the far side of a 3-foot wide pit across the room from the PCs. If the PCs do anything that might harm her, she only has to step forward and she falls to safety 10 feet below (assume that she makes her Jump check). There is a small escape tunnel that she crouches and runs through that leads to a nearby warehouse. Once she has escaped, the 15 Ravens in the

main part of the warehouse wait for the PCs to exit the chamber and attack them. If the PCs follow Catrin down into the tunnel they find it ends in a trapdoor in the ceiling. Catrin has pushed some large heavy crates over the trapdoor and it requires a Strength check (DC 25) to open. The Ravens attack the party when they come back out of the tunnel into the warehouse.

If the PCs lied to her in round 1 about how hired them, Catrin has since learned the truth. She wants to know the name of their employer. In addition, she demands 100 golden lions for wasting her time. The PCs can promise to owe the Midnight Ravens a favor instead of telling her Mabon's name.

When the PCs state that they were told he has some information that may be of importance to them, Catrin responds as below.

"That information is very interesting indeed and because of its interest it is worth quite a lot. For that information I will require a hefty sum on money or you can each owe me a favor somewhere in the future. For either one of these, I will consider the payment paid in full."

The Aspect of Knowledge will request 200 gold lions per tier of the party (1st tier – 200 gp, 2nd tier – 400 gp, 3rd tier – 600 gp). Catrin is also willing to accept a favor to be paid later. Note: this will be a favor in addition to the favor owed from learning Withington's whereabouts. If the PCs do not wish to pay either gold or favors, then she proudly states that "he" is the only place to receive this particular information. She will not negotiate.

When the PCs have agreed, Catrin tells them to find a man named Bolnik. He lives in Hutville south of the Low Quarter outside of the walls. He lives on the second floor of a shanty that has cobbler's shop on the first floor. The Aspect says that if they Bolnik tell that "he" sent them, Bolnik will tell them what he saw.

If the PCs flatly refuse to her terms, the Aspect declares the audience at an end and that the PCs can come back when they've come to their senses. She has the Midnight Ravens escort the PCs from the warehouse. The adventure is over for them unless they return to her. If they do not, go to Conclusion A.

Encounter 2: Death from Above

(30 minutes)

As the PCs walk from the warehouse to Bolnik's rented room, the PCs are beset by a group of half-orcs. They are waiting in ambush on top of the nearby houses just after the PCs pass through the River Gate.

A walk down the wretched, narrow streets of Hochoch is always an adventure. The damp mud has mixed with other soft things and squishes beneath your boots. And the smell is almost unbelievable. The sky is heavy and leaden, and a slow summer rain drizzles down on you.

Have the party make Listen checks (DC 15). If they fail, they don't hear the half-orcs climbing across the roofs of the buildings near them.

If the PCs successfully make Listen checks read the following:

You hear the sound of something moving above you, and when you look up, you see several hunched figures climbing down the support beam of thatch-roofed building. When they see that you have noticed them, they give up all pretense of sneaking and let forth guttural growls and leap off the building.

If the PCs don't make their Listen checks read the following:

Without warning, you are attacked! Large men leap off the rooftops of the buildings to either side of you. They smash into you before you have a moment to prepare yourself.

PCs who failed their Listen checks are surprised. The half-orcs get a surprise round partial action on them and use it to jump down onto them and then attack. If the PCs heard the half-orcs, they are not surprised. The half-orcs first action is to do a charging leap onto the PCs.

See DM's Map #1 for the layout of the ambush.

If they are captured, the half-orcs tell the PCs on a successful Intimate check that they were hired by a halfling followed closely by a pig. The halfling wished for the PCs to be killed if possible. They do not know the name of the halfling or where he can be found as he met them in the Cracked Cup. The Cracked Cup is a lowbrow ale house just off the Sunken Road in Lean-To Town. The scribe hired them to kill a group of people matching the PCs' description exactly. He paid them in 50 freshly minted golden lions (coins from Keoland). The PCs get the same information with a successful Diplomacy Check (DC 20)

The halfling scribe is Kensel and isn't a halfling at all. The party will learn more about him when they meet the thief Bolnik.

Since the PCs are outside the town walls, the Town Watch never comes to investigate the disturbance. The half-orcs' equipment is in such bad condition that no one will pay the PCs anything for it.

Tier One (EL 4)

➤ **Half-orcs Ftr1** (4): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (orc); HD 1d10+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (Touch 10, Flat-footed 14); Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, club); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +0, Spot +1, Climb +5; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack.

Possessions: Club, Studded Leather, Small Wooden Shield

Tier Two (EL 7)

➤ **Half-orcs Ftr3** (4): CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (orc); HD 3d10+6; hp 31; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (Touch 10, Flat-footed 14); Atks +7 melee (1d6+3, club); SQ

Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +2, Climb +5; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Club).

Possessions: Club, Studded Leather, Small Wooden Shield

Tier Three (EL8)

➤ **Half-orcs Ftr4** (4): CR 4; Medium-size Humanoid (orc); HD 4d10+8; hp 40; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (Touch 10, Flat-footed); Atks: +9 melee (1d6+4, club); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +2, Climb +5; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Club).

Possessions: Club, Studded Leather, Small Wooden Shield.

Encounter 3: For a Larger Closet

(10 - 15 minutes)

Once you reach the road out of the River Gate, you enter the shantytown affectionately referred to as "Hutville." The Low Quarter looks prosperous compared to this part of Hochoch. The people have a starving look about them, and sanitation is non-existent. Refuse is piled along the streets, and rats and bugs crawl all over it. The buildings are so rickety and dilapidated that they look like they will collapse at a moment's notice. The smell is unbelievable. You put a cloth over your nose to block some of the stench, but it doesn't help much.

You find the cobbler's store with little trouble. It is one of the few two-story buildings in this area. The cobbler has left the window open so you can see him working at his workbench putting thin soles onto worn boots. Since leather is so expensive and demanded by the army, the cobbler is using rabbit hide to repair the boots.

There is a creaky stairway along the outside of the building leading up to the second floor.

Bolnik is home and asleep. Since he is a burglar, most of his work is at night. He answers the door if the PCs pound on it hard enough. If the PCs burst into his room, he is very indignant at being awakened like this.

However, Bolnik is a rather cowardly man and buckles to any pressure or intimidation that the PCs might inflict upon him. Also, he talks to the PCs about what he has seen if they mention that the Aspect of Knowledge told him to.

Although Bolnik's tale is listed below as a monologue, Bolnik does not tell it this way. He starts and stops and answers the PC's questions. Use the boxed text as a good example of Bolnik's style of speech and as a guide to what information he knows.

Right. Yeah, I thought it was a might bit queer mehself. It was less than a week ago. I was doin' meh thing, yeh know. Gettin'

into places that I don't belong. Well, anyway, I was up on the Hill Top, and I gets mehself into the Guv's mansion. Not that hard, really. Yeh just gotta pick yer time right. As I was sayin', I was in the Guv's mansion picking out a few choice items to help me cover this month's rent. Then the Guv and his little 'un came back home without any warning. I didn't have the time to get out o' the house so I hids mehself in a small closet and waited for 'em ta bugger off. Well, that's when things got really weird.

Cracked the door and peeked out and saw deh Guv sit down at his desk. He looks like he's dead drunk or somepin'. The little 'un, he starts ta tell the Guv what he supposed ta do the next day. I was thinkin' that this is strange. Ain't it supposed ta be the other way? So I listened again ta make sure I hears right. Sure enough, the little 'un tell the Guv that he's going ta ban the old tongue in Hochoch. The guv says he ain't gonna do it. That that's wrong. And the little 'un says that the Guv will do it.

The little 'un den climbs up into the Guv's lap and holds some pretty bit of stick up ta the Guv's forehead and says somepin real strange-like. Never heard anything like it before. Not even by the Marchers. Once he do that, the little 'un tells the Guv again that he will ban the old tongue in town. And this time the Guv agrees.

The little 'un then starts gives deh Guv a stack o' papers ta sign. The Guv never reads a one. He just signs 'em. A bits later I leave. And I high tail it out o' there.

To explain this in plain English, Bolnik broke into the governor's mansion about three days ago. While in there, Governor Neumann and his halfling scribe Kensel returned, surprising Bolnik and forcing him to hop into a closet and wait for they to leave. A curious man, Bolnik peaked out and saw Neumann resist a command by Kensel. Kensel then hopped up onto Neumann's lap and used a charge from a Wand of Dominate Person to make Neumann do his bidding. After a while, the two left the room and Bolnik slipped out of the closet and the house.

Bolnik has no more information. If a PC starts to ask around town about Neumann's halfling scribe, have them make a Gather Information check. On a check that beats DC 10, the PC learns that the halfling's name is Kensel and he is the scribe to the governor. Most nobles in Hochoch have halfling scribes to assist them. On a check that beats DC 15, the PC learns that Neumann hired Kensel about three years ago.

At this point, the PCs should want to go see Neumann and Kensel to learn a bit more about them.

Encounter 4 – Going to See the Governor

(10 - 15 minutes)

The next step in the investigation is up to the PCs. However, they should seek out Governor Neumann and Kensel, his halfling scribe. Try to subtly steer the PCs toward this goal if they don't seem to be heading there on their own.

Also, it has started to rain again during this encounter. So please add in descriptions of the wet weather as needed.

If the PCs head back to Mabon and Withington, they remind the party that they asked them to stop whatever is behind the clone's actions and send the PCs back out to investigate some more. If the PCs refuse, go to Conclusion A.

When the PCs realize that they need to see Neumann and his halfling scribe Kensel, they are faced with a choice as to how to do that. If the PCs go straight to the Governor's mansion, they are not admitted.

They can try to sneak in. If they do so, they must avoid the guards and servants. Like Llwyres' Blackblade's mansion, the Governor's Mansion is busy with guards and servants. It takes 30 rounds (3 minutes) for the PCs to find Neumann's study once they enter the house. If they come up with a means of finding out where in the house the study is located (such as asking Bolnik), they can get there within 10 rounds (1 minute) of entering the house.

Every three rounds, the PCs must make an opposed Hide or Move Silently check (their choice) against a servant's or guard's Spot or Listen roll with a +5 modifier. If the PCs are spotted, the alarm is raised. Three guards arrive every other round and try to subdue the PCs. Use the Castle Guard stats in the Appendix. If the PCs flee immediately, the guards do not chase them beyond the house grounds and are not able to get a good look at them to identify them later. If the PCs fight and then flee, they are recognized and a warrant is issued for their arrest. All guards for the rest of the module recognize the PCs on a successful Spot check (DC 15). If the PCs are either subdued or arrested, go to Conclusion B. If the PCs are successful in making their way to the Governor's study, skip to Encounter 5.

If the PCs wait to intercept the governor when he leaves the mansion, they find out that he only leaves the mansion about once a day and only does so to visit the castle. He travels by carriage and is surrounded by eight guards on horseback. They will not halt for the PCs, and the guards push the PCs aside to make way for Neumann's carriage.

If the carriage and the guards are attacked, the surviving guards scream for assistance. Another four guards arrive every other round until the PCs flee or are subdued. If they flee, a warrant is issued for their arrest. All guards for the rest of the module recognize the PCs on a successful Spot check (DC 15). If the PCs are either subdued or arrested, go to Conclusion B. Use the Castle guard statistics from Appendix A.

The PCs can also tap into their relationship with other powers in the Hochoch to gain an audience with Neumann. If the PCs are stumped and you need to give them a nudge, a successful Knowledge (nobility) (DC 10) gives them the idea that other people could get them in to see the Governor.

Both Llwyres Blackblade and Briallen of the Heatherdown are willing with a successful Diplomacy Check (DC 5) to give the PC a letter that gains them an audience with the Governor. Colwyn and Abinar do so on a successful Diplomacy Check (DC 15) as well.

Withington refuses to help the PCs since he isn't supposed to be in town.

Roleplay out the encounter when the PCs try to get the letter. All of these powers want to know what the PCs have learned. Blackblade and Briallen try to persuade the PCs. Colwyn and Abinar try shake it out of them. Make the PCs work a little bit to hold onto their information.

If the PCs start telling people that the Grand Duke is a malfunctioning clone (except Abinar, of course) or that Neumann's halfling scribe is controlling him, the news is met with surprise and shock, but none of important people believe any of this. Make a note of this though. Spreading rumors like this gets them in hot water with Withington.

Encounter 5: To Catch a Mind Thief

(15 - 20 minutes)

When the PCs gain entry to the Governor's mansion, they have several options. They can meet with Neumann in his study, they can attack him either in his study or elsewhere in the Mansion, they can attack Kensel while Kensel is alone, or they can search through the mansions and look for clues.

If the PCs search and look for clues.

They will be very disappointed. Kensel leaves no hints in his personally belongings as to his true nature. Also, sneaking around the mansion is impossible if they gained entrance with a letter from another noble, as guards escort them to Neumann's study. If the PCs sneak into the mansion, there is still the chance every three rounds that they are discovered as described in Encounter 4.

If the PCs attack Kensel while he is alone.

Kensel runs. He runs fast and hard to Neumann, screaming all the while. Guards come running to see what the noise is about. When they see the PCs, they order them to halt and drop their weapons. Two guards arrive every other round. Use the Castle Guard statistics in Appendix A. Keep in mind that Kensel has regeneration 2. Even if the PCs put him down to under 0 hit points, he slowly recovers. Kensel is cagey enough to play dead and wait for the PCs to leave or to turn invisible and fly away when they aren't looking.

If the PCs run after Kensel immediately, they can follow him before the guards catch up. Kensel runs to Neumann who is either in his study or in his bedroom. When Kensel gets there, Neumann demands to know what is going on. If the PCs start telling Neumann that Kensel has charmed him, skip down to Neumann's reaction below under the audience with the governor choice. This leads to the rest of the encounter.

If the PCs attack Neumann.

Neumann screams for his guards while trying to defend himself. Guards come running to see what the noise is about. If the PCs attack Neumann while he is in his study,

there are two guards just outside the door, and they react to the PCs immediately. The guards order the PCs to halt and drop their weapons. Two additional guards arrive every other round. They try to subdue and arrest the PCs. Use the Castle Guard statistics in Appendix A. Neumann's statistics are in Appendix A.

If the PCs start telling Neumann that Kensel has charmed him, skip down to Neumann's reaction below under the audience with the governor choice. This leads to the rest of the encounter.

If the PCs use a letter to get an audience.

Read the following:

You are shown in to the Governor's study in his mansion. It is a room with wood beams exposed in the low ceiling. The walls are paneled and the windows have glazed glass – a luxury in war-torn Hochoch. Governor Neumann is sitting at a large desk that is covered with papers organized into neat files. He looks worn and tired, as if he hasn't been eating or sleeping properly in some time. His halfling scribe is perched on a stool next to him at a writing desk and is carefully writing a letter.

The guard escorting you brings you to a halt before the Governor, who continues to look over the papers on the desk in front of him. You steal a quick glance and it seems to be lists of supplies and provisions. Governor Neumann finishes the report he is reading and places it beside him on top of a neat pile. He then sits back in his chair and folds his hands. "Countess Blackblade insisted that I see you. Well, what do you want?"

Neumann listens with impatience to anything the PCs say to him. If they are from the Gran March, he is more indulgent. When the PCs tell Neumann that they know about him and Kensel, read the following.

Neumann's composure slips away as you talk. His hands fidget nervously. Beads of sweat form on his forehead. By the time you are finished he is shaking uncontrollably.

"This is a brazen lie. Kensel is my assistant and scribe. He is incapable of the claims you make. I..." Neumann starts gasping for breath. "I will not sit idly by while these baseless..." Each word is a struggle, and he starts pulling at his hair. "groundless..."

"Master, are you okay?" Kensel says. "Perhaps you should lay down. You don't look well." Kensel turns to you and says "I think this audience must be postponed. Perhaps you can come again on..."

In a massive burst of strength Neumann overturns the desk, sending the stacks of papers sliding across the floor. "No, I will not lay down! I will not do your bidding! AARRRRGGGGHHHHH!" The last is a scream in agony and pain as Neumann collapses to the floor. He shakes and spasms violently and grips his head between his hands. "KILL HIM!" Neumann screams. "He's an Unseelie monster. For Saint Cuthbert's sake, kill him!"

Kensel looks bewildered and frightened. He claims that Neumann is delusional. He does his best to try to convince the party that he is just a hapless halfling. If the PCs attack him or seem about to attack him, Kensel figures that the game is up and turns himself and his "scribe's swine" (which is actually a giant dragonfly) invisible. He then hops on the back of his dragonfly and flies around while

mocking the party. He does his best to stay moving and out of melee range up near the ceiling of the room.

The two Gran March guards standing in the room are in complete shock. They have no idea what is going on and spend most of the time staying out of the way until they can make sense of the situation. They go come to the protection of Neumann if the party attacks him. Use the Castle Guard statistics from Appendix A.

When Kensel is invisible and flying around the room, he starts mocking the party. His torment is below.

You hear a voice echo from different parts of the room “I suppose it had to come to an end eventually. Oh, but it was a fun while it lasted. You mortals are so gullible; so easily duped; so quick to hate each other. You know what the hardest part of my plan was? Not laughing out loud. I really was busting a gut trying to hold it in.”

“I am a little sad though. In another year, I would have had a war going. I have poisoned your pathetic little mortal minds against each other to that point that this city is a heap of tinder ready to go up in flames. I had Gyruff and the Gran March at each other’s throats. Did you like my little alcohol ban? Oh yes, it was my idea. Nothing like taking away a man’s liquor to make him really mad. It also created all these secret gatherings where illegal spirits could be had. Once men share one secret, it won’t be long before they start making other secrets. Whispers in the dark and hiding give way so quickly to whispers of violence and rebellion.”

“The spark I needed to light this bonfire would be Keoland. When they came to “save Geoff”, that would have infuriated the Gran March. A few “accidents” and the ill will would have led to outright bloodshed. And then all of the Sheldomar Valley would have been at war! It would have been positively delightful to see – the killing, the maiming, the pillaging. Oh dear, I’m getting all weepy just thinking of the fun that I will miss.”

“But now that you know, the fun is gone. It’s okay. I’ve done my part. Think of my little jaunt here as a present to you from the Sakhut (sahk-hoot). It makes things easier on them if you humans are killing each other for them. I have filled the terms of the bargain with them. I have poisoned this little well.”

“I’m off now. Other games to play. But I want to leave you with one last thought. When you lie alone in the dark, waiting for sleep to come, don’t forget that I played all of you like a harp.”

After boasting to the players about his prowess, Kensel flies away out of one of the open windows in the office. His stats will be listed below if the PCs can see invisible creatures. If attacked, Kensel flies just out of reach or range and continues mocking the PCs.

Tier One (EL 3)

➤ **“Kensel” (Unseelie Imp), advanced:** hp 24, see *Monster Manual* page 48. Iron weapon bypasses damage resistance.

Possessions: fey Domination Stone.

➤ **Dragonfly, Giant (as giant bee):** hp 20; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Tier Two (EL 3)

➤ **“Kensel” (Unseelie Imp), advanced:** CR 2; Tiny Outsider; HD 4d8; hp 30; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 18 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 15); Atks +8 melee (1d4 + poison, sting); SA Spell-like abilities, poison; SQ damage reduction 5/silver, SR 5, poison immunity, fire resistance 20, see in darkness, polymorph, regeneration 2 (iron does normal damage); AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Search +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5; Dodge, Weapon Finesse (sting).

Special Qualities—Poison (Ex): Fortitude Save (13); initial damage 1d4 temporary Dex; secondary damage 2d4 temporary Dex.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – detect good, detect magic, and invisibility (self only); 1/day – suggestion.

Possessions: fey Domination Stone.

➤ **Dragonfly, Giant (as giant bee):** hp 20; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Tier Three (EL 3)

➤ **“Kensel” (Unseelie Imp), advanced:** CR 2; Tiny Outsider; HD 6d8; hp 44; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 18 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 15); Atks +8 melee (1d4 + poison, sting); SA Spell-like abilities, poison; SQ damage reduction 5/silver, SR 5, poison immunity, fire resistance 20, see in darkness, polymorph, regeneration 2 (iron does normal damage); AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Search +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5; Dodge, Weapon Finesse (sting).

Special Qualities—Poison (Ex): Fortitude Save (13); initial damage 1d4 temporary Dex; secondary damage 2d4 temporary Dex.

➤ **Dragonfly, Giant (as giant bee):** hp 20; see *Monster Manual* page 206.

Encounter 6: The Metal Truth

(10 - 20 minutes)

If the PCs capture Kensel.

If the PCs are able to catch somehow capture the Unseelie Imp, they can threaten him with an iron weapon. When the party does this, Kensel tells everything that he knows in order to save his life. Because he is in the real world, Kensel can be killed here, and he knows it. In addition, Kensel agrees to return to the Faerie Lands and not enter the mortal world for 101 years.

Assuming the PCs ask Kensel who or what is controlling the Grand Duke’s clone, he says the following:

“It’s not so much a who as a what. That was a one of our masterstrokes, if I do say so myself. I had our good, dear friend, Governor Neumann give the Hollow Man a present – a beautiful

silver sword. It was a sword brought here from the Glades of Shadows Lurking just for the Hollow Man. The sword is a special one—a very special one indeed. It fills the Hollow man with a purpose and controls his actions. Too bad for you, that purpose is to make your lives miserable.”

If (AND ONLY IF) the PCs ask how to destroy the sword, Kensel gives the following information.

“Destroy it?! Why would we want to do that? It’s a sweet wonderful thing. AH! Keep that iron blade away from me! Uncle! I give! You can destroy the sword by striking it against the large iron warning bell that is on top of the castle. There, I told you. Now let me go!”

The PCs still need to find a way into the Castle to retrieve the sword. After Kensel is slain by the party or he flees, Neumann provides the means as detailed below.

If Kensel escapes or is slain.

If the Imp gets away, the Governor Neumann knows some of the knowledge that the Unseelie Imp knew. Kensel controlled him for more than over two years, and Neumann learned a lot of things. After Kensel flies away, Neumann says the following to the PCs. Neumann is exhausted and fatigued. His speech is slow, slurred, and filled with pauses.

“He’s gone. Praise every god above, he’s gone. It was a living nightmare. One that lasted for two long years. He made me do horrible things. Not once, but repeatedly. I’m amazed that I’m still alive. I can’t believe that the town isn’t in open revolt.”

“You must hurry. Kensel was just part of the plan. Shortly after he first came to me, he brought a silver sword. He directed me to give it to the Grand Duke as a present. The thing is evil. It is woven through with some fey enchantment that controls anyone wielding it. When I gave it to the Grand Duke, it immediately possessed him and started controlling him. You must go to Castle Waterwatch immediately and destroy the thing.”

“Destroying it won’t be easy. While that monster enthralled me, I learned a thing or two. The sword can only be destroyed by striking it against the large iron warning bell in the observation tower of the castle.”

“You will need to gain entrance to the castle. That I can provide.”

Neumann gives the PCs a letter that authorizes them to attend Owen in his personal chambers on a matter of great importance. Neumann is too weak to travel with the party, and Neumann’s guards are too shaken and concerned for their lord to leave his side. Also, Neumann has some proclamations that he needs to rescind. He has a long night of trying to undo the damage that Kensel caused.

Neumann also warns the PCs that they may want to ward themselves against the power of the Unseelie sword and possibly Kensel if he returns. Several things will help the PCs. Abjuration magic effective against fey will help nicely. Protection from Chaos or Evil will help ward them as per the spell descriptions.

Neumann does not suggest this, but if any of the players have Knowledge: fey, they could make wards

against the Unseelie Sword’s power. If a PC makes a successful Knowledge: fey check (DC 10), the PC knows that a wreath of white birch branches worn on the head will give some protection. (This gives the PC a +2 on saving throws against the sword’s domination power.) If a PC makes a successful Knowledge: fey check (DC 15), the PC knows that a stone with a hole worn through the center by the natural flow of water gives even better protection when worn on a leather cord around the neck. (This gives the PC a +4 on saving throws against the sword’s domination power.) Birch branches are easy to find, but a stone with a hole is harder. The PCs can find one (and only one) in a small knick-knack shop after several hours of looking if they make a Gather Information Check (DC 20).

If the heroes walk to Caer Dwr Gwyldy to destroy the Unseelie Sword, continue below. If they return to Withington and Mabon to report and they are unwilling to pursue this lead, go to Conclusion C.

The following description assumes that the PCs have chased off Kensel and have a letter from Neumann that gains them entrance to Owen’s chambers. Alter the descriptions as necessary if this is not the case.

You hurry through the rain to Caer Dwr Gwyldy. It is mid-afternoon, but the light is dim from the clouds and rain. Even here on the Hilltop and in the Old City, the roads have turned into a mire of mud. When you get to the caer the guards stop you. You show them the letter from Governor Neumann, and they let you pass without any further questions. You rapidly cross the courtyard to the stairs and doors to the main stone keep.

Once inside the main keep itself, the PCs need to get a servant to show them to Owen’s chambers. The guards will not allow them to wander around unescorted. However, Neumann’s letter allows the PCs to easily get a page to show them to Owen’s chamber.

The page holds the oil lamp and guides you through the corridors and up the stairs of the caer. She leads you to a finely built door flanked by two guards. The page says to the guards “They are here to see the Brenin. They come from the Governor.” The guard on the right nods curtly, and the page opens the door admitting you to a well-appointed chamber.

The page asks the party to wait here while she lets the Brenin’s servant know that you are here. She goes through the door leading deeper into Owen’s chambers. The PCs have about a minute to themselves. The room is small but the furnishings are of fine quality. The PCs see no sign of the sword or anything else of any great interest.

A minute later, Emlyn enters the room with the page. That page goes quietly outside to wait in the hall. Emlyn says:

“Good afternoon, to you. I’m afraid that His Radiance is not present, and... oh, it’s you.”

Emlyn is a little concerned that the PCs are here and what they intend to tell Owen. He does not want Owen to know that he saw the dead illithid. Emlyn cautiously asks them

what they want with Owen. He is relieved if they tell him that they are not here to tell Owen about the illithid. If they tell him about the silver sword, Emyln recognizes it immediately. It is the Brenin's favorite weapon, and he never leaves the caer without it.

The PCs can either push past Emyln and search through the Brenin's chambers for the sword, they can explain the situation to Emyln and get his permission, they can try to sneak past Emyln, or they can try to bluff Emyln with a story as to why they need the sword.

If the PCs push past Emyln.

He is very insulted and demands that they leave Owen's chambers immediately. He begins to call for the guards if they do not do so. The guards come running to see what the noise is about. The guards order the PCs to halt and drop their weapons. Two additional guards arrive every other round. They try to subdue and arrest the PCs. Use the Castle Guard statistics in Appendix A. Emyln also tried to grapple the PCs to force them out of the chamber. Emyln's statistics are in Appendix A. If the PCs are all subdued, go to Conclusion B.

If the PCs explain the situation to Emyln and get his permission to search Owen's chambers.

At first, Emyln doesn't believe them and refuses to let them in. But assuming that they mention "faerie magic" or unseelie, Emyln turns as white as a ghost and allows them to enter and search Owen's chambers. They find the sword in its sheath hanging over the bed post.

If a PC try to sneak past Emyln.

Have Emyln roll a Spot against the PC's Hide to see if the PC can slip in unnoticed. If another PC is distracting Emyln, the sneaking PC gets a +2 circumstance bonus. Once in the chambers, the PC must make Move Silently checks when she does something that would make noise. The PC finds the sword in its sheath hanging over the bed post. To get the sword out of the chamber past Emyln, the PC must make a Hide check to slip out into the outer room where the PG and Emyln are. Then the PC must make a Sleight of Hand check opposed by Emyln's Spot to hide the sword while getting out of the room.

If Emyln catches the PC sneaking in, he is offended and yells at the PC not to do that. He then asks all the PCs to leave. He eventually calls the guards unless the PCs find a way to assuage him. If Emyln catches the PC sneaking out with the sword, he is very offended and accuses the PCs of stealing from the Brenin. He begins to shout for the guards who enter and try to arrest the PCs as detailed above.

If the PCs bluff Emyln.

If the PCs try to lie to Emyln as to why they need the sword, allow the PCs to make a Bluff role opposed by Emyln's Sense Motive. Give the PCs or Emyln a circumstance modifier appropriate to the plausibility of their lie. Emyln either agrees with them and lets them get the sword or he refuses to let them into the chambers, depending on if he believes their lie.

When the PCs have the Unseelie Sword, they must find their way to the rooftop. If the PC shove Emyln in their confidence, he can show them how to get to the rooftop. If Emyln is not with them, the page is waiting in the hallway. She can take the party to the rooftop. Neither the page nor Emyln go onto the roof during this pouring rain. When the PCs get to the rooftop, proceed to Encounter 7.

The Unseelie Sword has been left in Owen's chambers on purpose. Kensel has already visited the Clone and the Unseelie Sword and let them know that the PCs would soon be coming. The Sword is setting a trap which will be sprung on the PCs in Encounter 7.

Encounter 7: Battle of the Thousand Wielders

(60 minutes)

You climb the circular stairs to a small chamber at the top of a small tower. You push open the door that opens onto the roof and walk out. The dark angry clouds make the day into night. Lightning lances overhead and the wind and the rain lashes at you as you clamber onto the slick stone roof.

Hunched against the rain and wind, you make your way across the castle rooftop. You pick your way through the druid's roof garden toward the observation tower that holds the great iron warning bell.

Through the driving rain, a shadow in front of you becomes a shape. As it moves even closer, the shape becomes a man, and you recognize him as Owen the Brenin. His gray hair is lank from the rain, and his clothes are soaked. "How did I know that I would find you here?" He has to shout to make himself heard over the wind and rain. "You are persistent and extremely inconvenient. But it ends now."

More shapes appear out of the rain, flanking the Grand Duke—they are castle guard. Strangely, it is not the Griffon Guard—Owen's elite warriors. But you barely have time to register this fact when Owen stretches forth his hand. He gestures sharply, and the sword you are carrying rips out of your hands and flies to him. He catches it with a clean motion. "Guards," he shouts. "These men have stolen from me and are traitors to Gyruff. Kill them."

Metal scrapes against leather as swords are drawn.

See DM's Map #2 and DM's Map #3 for the layout of the rooftop and the towers.

Due to the stormy conditions, the following modifiers affect the combat. Because of the gusting wind, missile fire is at a -4 to hit. Also, the rain acts as concealment. Anyone over 10 feet away get 25 percent concealment. Those over 20 feet away get 50 percent concealment. Those 30 feet away get 75 percent concealment. Those 40 feet away get 100 percent concealment.

In addition, each time a person moves more than a 5-foot adjustment step that character must make a Reflex Save (DC 10) or slip and fall on the slick stones. He must spend a move-equivalent action to stand back up. If a PC takes a double move, the Reflex Save is DC 15. If the PC

runs, the Reflex Save is DC 20. The PC falls halfway through the move.

The guards are just following orders. If you have any paladins in the group, they must subdue the guards rather than kill them. Otherwise, they lose their paladinhood. You should read the following warning to paladin characters.

As you raise your hand to strike, you can't help but think that these guards are just following the orders of their lord. To strike them down for doing their duty might be unjust.

Other good and lawful characters should hesitate killing the guards. If they do not, they will not gain full experience for this encounter.

The *Unseelie Sword* forces the clone to attack the PCs to the best of its abilities. The sword has the Clone drop when it is under 10 hit points and pretend to be dead. If the Clone is hit with enough damage that puts him below 0 before he collapses from being at less than 10 hit points, modify the damage so that the Clone has 1 hit point remaining.

The *Unseelie Sword* then holds its action until the action of the strongest but least wise fighter. The Sword then attempts to dominate the PC and flies to that character's hand. It can telekinetically move itself 20 feet in a round as a move equivalent action. It then has the dominated PC attack her friends, starting with any wizards, then clerics, then druids, and then bards. If the original dominated PC is killed, the sword attempts to dominate the next strongest fighter. Once all the PCs are dead, the sword has the bearer throw herself off the roof onto the bailey below (10d6 points of damage from the fall). The PC drops the sword as she goes over the edge. The Grand Duke's Clone then rises to pick up the sword and slides it back into his scabbard.

When a player fails his Will save, read the following:

The sword flies through the air, tumbling end over end. Without a conscious thought you catch it deftly by the grip. You feel a dozen little pricks on your wrist, and you look down to see that tiny silver wires have protruded from the hilt, grip, and pommel and have sunk into your skin. You feel a cold metal sensation inside your arm as if the silver wires are working their way up. In seconds, the cold metallic feeling courses through your body. Your hand moves on its own, and you turn to attack your friends and companions. You watch helplessly as the sword moves in a blur of motion and death. All at your hand.

When a PC is dominated, make the player roll the attack and damage rolls against their own fellow players. The PCs are free to butcher the dominated party member or try to subdue them. Unfortunately, the *Unseelie Sword* jumps to a new wielder the next round.

The *Unseelie Sword* acts as a long sword. If the PC has weapon focus or specialization in the long sword then these apply. Also, the *Unseelie Sword* is magical and provides bonuses to hit and to damage (+2 at Tier 1, +3 at Tier 2, and +4 at Tier 3). This bonus is added to the PC's strength and base Attack bonus.

The sword can be held against its will. While it is held, it can only try to dominate the person holding it. It must break free to dominate another person. To hold the sword, use the grappling rules. First the PC must make a melee touch attack against the sword (AC 15) to grab weapon. This is assuming that the PC is grabbing the hilt. The AC drops to 10, if the PC grabs the sword along the blade. However, the PC then takes 1d3+the sword's bonus (depends upon the tier) in damage. A PC can use a heavy piece of cloth to prevent the damage and can still grab the sword without penalties.

Once grabbed, the PC makes an opposed Strength check against the sword. Assume that the sword has a strength modifier of +2 at Tier 1, +3 at Tier 2, and +4 at Tier 3 for this check. If successful, the PC has the *Unseelie Sword* pinned.

Tier One (EL 5)

➤ **Unseelie Sword, fey dominator:** CR 3; Small Construct (Longsword); HD 2d10; hp 15; Init +0; Speed: 0 ft.; AC 29 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 29)+; Atks: A sIt e m +2 (1d8+2+(wielder str)/19-20, longsword); SA Domination; SQ Construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 30/+2, limited flight, special weakness; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +2; Str: -, Dex -, Con -, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 18

Special Qualities—Construct: Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A fey dominator is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A Mind Blank spell cast directly on the fey Dominator will stop it from functioning for 1 day per level of the caster, with no saving throw.

Domination (Sp): A fey Dominator is able to cast *dominate monster* once per round. The normal will save to resist is (10 + Cha modifier + ½ HD of the dominator). Against the person the fey Construct was created to control it receives a situational modifier of +4 to the DN.

Limited Flight (Su): Once the fey dominator has successfully dominated a target, as a simple action it can fly 20 ft. to land in the target's hand. If the victim is farther than 20 feet, the fey Dominator cannot move to the victim until she is within 20 ft. This is the only time that it can move without being carried.

Special Weakness (Ex): Each fey Dominator must be created with a special weakness. This fey Dominator's special weakness is being struck against an iron bell. This action destroys it instantly with a blinding flash and explosion that leaves nothing behind.

➤ **Grand Duke Owen, male human clone Ftr3:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid (clone); HD 3d10+3; hp 25; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (Touch 12, Flat-footed 15); Atks: +6 melee (1d8+2/19-20, *Unseelie Sword*); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (heraldry) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Ride +6, Diplomacy +5, Bluff +4, Intimidate +4; Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: *Unseelie Sword*, masterwork chain mail.

➤ **Castle Guards, male human War1** (4): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 1d10+2; hp 10; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (scale mail); AC 17 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Atks: +4 melee (1d8+2/19-20/x2, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +2; Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, scale mail, large shield

Tier Two (EL 7)

➤ **Unseelie Sword, fey dominator:** HD 4d10; hp 25, See above.

➤ **Grand Duke Owen, male human clone Ftr4:** CR 4; Medium Humanoid (clone); HD 4d10+4; hp 32; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (Touch 12, Flat-footed 15); Atks: +7 melee (1d8+3/19-20, *Unseelie Sword*); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (heraldry) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Ride +6, Diplomacy +5, Bluff +4, Intimidate +4; Dodge, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: *Unseelie Sword*, masterwork breastplate, *potion of endurance*.

➤ **Castle Guards, Male human War2** (4): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 20; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 17); Atks: +5 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +2; Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, chain mail, large shield

Tier Three (EL 9)

➤ **Unseelie Sword, fey dominator:** HD 6d10; hp 40; see above.

➤ **Grand Duke Owen, male human Clone Ftr5:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (clone); HD 5d10+5; hp 39; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (Touch 12, Flat-footed 15); Atks: +10 melee (1d8+6/-20, *Unseelie Soward*); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (heraldry) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Ride +6, Diplomacy +5, Bluff +4, Intimidate +4; Dodge, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: *Unseelie Sword*, masterwork breastplate, *potion of bull strength*.

➤ **Castle Guards, male human War3** (4): CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 26; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 17); Atks: longsword +6 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) AL NG; SV Fort +5,

Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +2; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, breastplate, large shield.

To destroy the sword, the PCs must drag the weapon up the flight of stars to the observation tower. There they must strike it against the iron warning bell. The strike must be metal on metal. If the PCs have the *Sword* wrapped up, then it must be unwrapped first. Doing so while holding onto the blade requires another opposed strength check.

When the PCs manage to bring the *Unseelie Sword* strike the iron bell with the sword, read the following.

The Unseelie Sword struggles and twists in your grasp, but you hold it tightly and bring it down on the bell. The silver sword hits the iron bell with a metallic gong that can be heard over the wind. The sword vibrates from the blow and the ringing get faster and louder as the sword continues to shake violently. You are forced to release the blade as it hovers in mid-air vibrating so quickly that it is but a blur.

Then it explodes.

The sound is a solid force that flings you back and the flash of light blinds you for a moment. There is a scream of pain from something inhuman.

And then it is gone.

You are left with the sound of rain splattering on stone and the wind howling far around you. You pick yourself up when the door from the north tower opens again. Mabon of Istivin is the first onto the roof. Four people you recognize as Griffon Guard follow him closely.

Mabon walks through the druid's garden as if he knows the path well. He stops at the fallen clone. He kneels beside it and checks its pulse. "Poor broken image," he says. "You were doomed from the start." Mabon then stabs his dagger into the clone's chest.

Mabon picks up the crown from where it lies near the fallen clone. He looks at you and speaks. "The clone never existed. The sword was just a normal sword. And I..." He places the crown on his head and he changes appearance as the illusion melts away, revealing that he is Owen, the Grand Duke of Geoff. "I have always sat on the throne."

Owen's steel gray eyes focus on you in a way that you know that he has just given you a command. "Your purpose here is done. I suggest that you leave the caer with all haste. You may wish to speak with Withington."

The PCs can make Spot checks (DC 20) to notice that the revealed Owen looks much younger than the clone.

Owen and the Griffon Guard has nothing further to say to the PCs. He has two of the Griffon Guard put a cloak over the body of the clone, and they carry it away. The other two tend to the fallen guardsmen. Owen leaves the rooftop.

If the PCs search, they can find no trace of the sword. No piece of it remains behind.

The PCs should return to meet with Withington. He can be found at his rooms at the Cackling Crow. Go to Conclusion D for what happens there. The PCs can leave the caer without further incident.

Conclusions

(5-15 minutes)

Conclusion A

You find your way back to the Griffon's Reach, and you are admitted without fuss. A servant takes your dripping cloaks and ushers you into a small sitting room. There is a fire crackling in the hearth, and Galimar Withington and Mabon sit in chairs next to the fire.

You tell them what have learned so far. Withington says, "Thank you for the information you have gathered thus far. I am sure that I can find somebody to continue the investigation. However, you now know a few things that can never be spoken before others. If word about the clone got out, it would severely damage the Grand Duke's authority and the reputation of Geoff internationally. I expect you to keep this to yourself."

"As a little extra persuasion, the meal you shared with me this morning was laced with the first stage of a two-stage poison. If you so much as breathe a word of this, I will make sure that the second stage finds you. And you will die. Slowly and in agony."

"You can consider this part of your reward. I much prefer to tie off any loose ends, but Mabon may have a use for you in the future, and he insisted that you be allowed to live."

Leaving the Griffon's Reach, you can only wonder where the investigation would have led you and what strange things you would have found. The only thing you do know is that Galimar Withington may once again appear in your lives, and he is not a man to cross.

In the next day or so, you hear reports that a brave band of heroes brought a magical healing draught to Owen the Brenin from the faraway land of Zeif. The potion cures him of his infirmity and takes 10 years off of his age. You can't help but wonder if there is something more to this than what you hear.

Conclusion B

Those of you that survived the battles with the guards awake in a deep dungeon lit faintly by a torch somewhere outside the door to your cell. As you shift, you realize that you have been shackled, and your remaining companions line the walls around the room.

The adventure is over for the PCs, and they are incarcerated until further notice from the Geoff Regional Triad. Please send their character names and player names to the Triad.

Conclusion C

You find your way back to the Cackling Crow, and Melina lets you in without fuss. She takes your dripping cloaks and ushers you into a small sitting room. There is a fire crackling in the hearth and Withington sits in a chair next to the fire. He looks at you with a cross look on his face. "Thank you for the information, and I am sure that I can find somebody to destroy the sword and free the Grand Duke. However, you now know a few things that can never be spoken before others. If word about the clone and the sword got out, it would severely damage the Grand Duke's

authority and the reputation of Geoff internationally. I expect you to keep this to yourself."

"As a little extra persuasion, the meal you shared with me this morning was laced with the first stage of a two-stage poison. If you so much as breathe a word of this, I will make sure that the second stage finds you. And you will die. Slowly and in agony."

"You can consider this part of your reward. I much prefer to tie off any loose ends, but we may have a use for you in the future, and Mabon insisted that you be allowed to live."

You leave Withington's rooms. In the next day or so, you hear reports that a brave band of heroes brought a magical healing draught to Owen the Brenin from the faraway land of Zeif. The potion cures him of his infirmity and takes 10 years off of his age. You can't help but wonder if there is something more to this than what you hear.

Conclusion D

You find your way back to the Cackling Crow, and Melina lets you in without fuss. She takes your dripping cloaks and ushers you into a small sitting room. There is a fire crackling in the hearth and Galimar Withington sits in a chair next to the fire.

"Well done. Well done indeed. I'm glad that the Grand Duke's faith in you was not misplaced. You have done this country a service. And not one we are likely to forget. I think you are due a fine reward."

At this time, Galimar calls to a servant who brings in several small coffer s and items. One coffer contains 300 golden lions, another has a Potion of Vision, and a Potion of Blur, and a third has a Divine Scroll of Delay Poison, and the materials to copy a 1st level arcane spell into a spell book. In addition to the coffers, the servant puts down a Gyric Hornwood longbow and a Darkwood shield.

"However, you now know a few things that can never be spoken before others. If word about the clone and the sword got out, it would severely damage the Grand Duke's authority and the reputation of Geoff internationally. I expect you to keep this to yourself."

"As a little extra persuasion, the meal you shared with Mabon yesterday was laced with the first stage of a two stage poison. If you so much as breathe a word of this, I will make sure that the second stage finds you. And you will die. Slowly and in agony."

"You can consider this part of your reward. The Grand Duke insisted that you be allowed to live. So that is my reward to you – your life. I much prefer to tie off any loose ends."

The PCs may wish to ask some questions of Withington. Withington is indulgent for the moment as he is pleased with them. The most likely questions and their answers are below. If the PCs ask a question not listed, try to extrapolate from the information in this module. Otherwise, Withington informs them that he can't answer that question.

Q. Was Mabon the real Grand Duke?

Yes, he was.

Q. I thought you said the Grand Duke died?

I lied to you earlier. He never truly died. The assassination attempt on the Grand Duke during the Fall of Gorna was never meant to kill him. Rather, the assailant was a Seelie fey and the purpose was to spare him. Divinations by the druids revealed that the Grand Duke was fated to die on that day. To spare the Grand Duke, Queen Lhianno of the Caves of Twilight Resplendent agreed to work her magic on him, and the faerie arrow put him into deep magical slumber. I took the Grand Duke's comatose body was taken to a secret refuge in the Stark Mounds.

Q. So you knew Mabon was Owen all along?

Of course. I helped him create Mabon. I gave him the contacts he needed in Istivin and here in Hochoch.

Q. What was wrong with the clone?

Since the real Grand Duke still lived, the soul never transferred to the clone. As a consequence, it had no soul – it was just an automaton with the knowledge and appearance of the Grand Duke. It quickly went insane and started trying to destroy itself.

Q. Why the charade? If you knew who Mabon was and what happened to the clone, why us?

Because we needed you to find your way to the answers on your own. Whoever was affecting the clone would certainly be on the look out for me so I couldn't get close. The Grand Duke was in hiding and could not reveal himself, lest he cause confusion and panic – possibly causing the government to fall.

Q. Why was the Grand Duke hiding?

For the good of the nation. The commoner would never understand two Grand Dukes at once, and if we announced that one Grand Duke was false. It would weaken morale. People would realize that the Grand Duke can be replaced. We've been following a fraud for the past eight years. Think what that would do to the spirit of the people, to their confidence. This is why is crucial that you not tell anyone anything about this.

Q. How are you going to explain the Grand Duke's recovery and more youthful appearance?

We are going to introduce the rumor that a brave band of heroes brought a magical healing draught to the Grand Duke from the faraway land of Zeif. The potion cures him of his infirmity and takes 10 years off of his age.

Q. So what happens now?

The real Grand Duke assumes his throne as if nothing happened. We tell nobody about this. Slowly, we start to undo the damage that the Unseelie wrought. After that, we have a country to free. I think it's about time we get started. Don't you?

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One

Meeting with the Aspect of Knowledge 50 xp

Encounter Two

Defeating the half-orcs 50 xp

Encounter Four

Meeting with Neumann 50 xp

Encounter Five

Defeat or drive off the Unseelie Imp 50 xp

Encounter Seven

Defeat the Clone 100 xp

Destroy the Unseelie Sword 100 xp

Subduing but not killing the guards with the Clone 50 xp

Total experience for objectives 450 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-50 xp

Total possible experience 500 xps

Treasure Summary

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character

by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things that it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter One

- Favor Owed to Midnight Ravens (Cost: n/a; Item Size: n/a; Uses: n/a; Tradable: No; Rarity: n/a; Weight: n/a): Due to a deal made with the Night Ravens, you owe them a favor in the future. (Need 1 per player)

Conclusions A

- 50 gp from Galimar Withington

Conclusion C

- 150 gp from Galimar Withington

Conclusion D

- 250 gp from Galimar Withington
- Gyric Hornwood Mighty Longbow +2 (Cost: 675 gp; Item Size: large; Uses: n/a; Tradable: Yes; Rarity: Uncommon; Weight: 3 lbs): This longbow is constructed of a polished hornwood from the Hornwood forest. It acts in all ways like a masterwork mighty longbow except use of the bow requires a minimum strength modifier of +2 to use. If used in conjunction with Masterwork arrows the to hit bonus is cumulative.
- Influence with Grand Duke Owen (Cost: n/a; Item Size: n/a; Uses: n/a; Tradable: No; Rarity: n/a; Weight: n/a): This cert provides one influence point with Grand Duke Owen for services rendered to the country of Geoff. (Need 1 per player)
- Potion of Blur (Cost: 300 gp; Item Size: tiny; Uses: 1 dose; Tradable: Yes; Rarity: common; Weight: 1/2 lbs): This potion is slightly cloudy with a shimmer to it. It tastes bit like sugar. A 3rd level caster created this potion.
- Potion of Vision (Cost: 150 gp; Item Size: tiny; Uses: 1 dose; Tradable: Yes; Rarity: common; Weight: 1/2 lbs): This potion is crystal clear and tastes of carrots. A 1st level caster created this potion.
- Darkwood Shield (Cost: 257 gp; Item Size: medium; Uses: n/a; Tradable: Yes; Rarity: Uncommon; Weight: 5 lbs): This large non-magical shield is made out of darkwood. It has no enhancement bonus, but its construction material makes it lighter than a normal wooden shield. It weighs 5 pounds and has no armor check penalty.

- Divine Scroll of Delay Poison (Cost: 150 gp; Item Size: tiny; Uses: 1; Tradable: Yes; Rarity: Uncommon; Weight: 1/2 lbs):
- Copy Wizard Spell (Cost: 200 gp; Item Size: n/a; Uses: 1; Tradable: n/a; Rarity: n/a; Weight: n/a): This allows a PC with at least one level in Wizard to scribe any 1st level Wizard spell free of charge at the end of the module. Indicate the spell chosen on the certificate.

NPC Statistics

☛ **Castle Guard, male human War3:** CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 28; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 14); Atks: +6 melee (1d10+2/x3, glaive), or +6 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword); AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Listen +5, Spot +5, Knowledge (Heraldry) +2; Alertness, Weapon Focus (glaive), Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: masterwork glaive, masterwork longsword, scale mail

☛ **Midnight Ravens, male human Rog5:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 5d6+5; hp 27; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (Touch 13, Flat-footed 13); Atks: +6 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword), +6 ranged (1d6/x3, short bow); SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; AL Varies; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +13, Bluff +9, Climb +9, Escape Artist +11, Hide +11, Jump +11, Move Silently +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +9, Tumble +13, Listen +5, Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Keoish); Dodge, Point Blak Shot, Weapon Finesse (short sword).

Possessions: Studded leather, short sword, short bow, 20 arrows, 2 daggers.

☛ **Emlyn the Manservant, human male Exp10:** CR 9; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 10d6; hp 41; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atks +7/+2 melee (1d3 subdual, fists); AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (Heraldry) +16, Profession (Manservant) +15, Appraise +17, Diplomacy +14, Sense Motive +14, Listen +16, Spot +16, Bluff +14, Ride +12, Gather Info +6, Speak Language (Common), Speak Language (Elven), Speak Language (Dwarven), Speak Language (Gnomish), Speak Language (Halfling), Speak Language (Keoish), Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Druidic), Speak Language (Giant); Alertness, Leadership, Iron Will, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Appraise).

☛ **Galimar Withington, male human Rog13/Asn2:** CR 15; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 15d6+15; hp 77; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 19); Atks +2 Rapier +15/10 melee (1d6/15-20, +2 rapier), or +14/9 melee (1d4/19-20/x2, masterwork dagger), or +14/9 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork dagger); SA Sneak Attack +8d6, Opportunist, Death Attack; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge, Slippery Mind, Poison Use, Save vs Poison +2; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +22, Bluff +22, Sense Motive +19, Move Silently +13, Hide +13, Disguise +13, Gather Information +15, Read Lips +14, Search +14, Spot +11, Listen +11, Appraise +14, Ride +10, Climb +7, Balance +10, Tumble +11, Use Magic Device +17, Knowledge (Royalty and Nobility) +9, Knowledge (Geoff) +9, Speak Languages (Flan, Common, Keolander, Elven, Dwarven, Halfling, Gnomish, Giant, Draconic). *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Quickdraw, Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Finesse (Dagger), Improved Critical (Rapier).

Special Attacks: **Opportunist (Ex)**—Once per round, Withington can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as his attacks of opportunity for that round;

Death Attack (Ex)—If Withington studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (Withington's choice). While studying the victim, he can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the assassin or recognize the assassin as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails her Fortitude saving throw (DC 16) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim's mind and body become enervated, rendering her completely helpless and unable to act for 1d6+2 rounds. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once Withington has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds. If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save) or if Withington does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 3 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Special Qualities: **Slippery Mind (Ex)**—If Withington is affected by an enchantment and fails the saving throw, 1 round later he can attempt the saving throw again. He only gets this one extra chance to succeed.

Poison Use (Ex)—Withington is trained in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a blade.

Possessions: Mithral chain shirt, +2 Rapier of Speedy Wounding, Amulet of Natural Armor +2, Ring of Protection +2, Ring of Mind Shielding, Cloak of Charisma +4, Boots of Elvenkind, wand of Stoneskin (17 charges), Potion of Glibness, Arcane Scrolls (shield, comprehend languages sleep, magic missile).

Spells Prepared (2; Spell DC = 14+ spell level): 1st lvl—change self, detect poison.

☞ **Governer Karl Neumann, male human Ftr2/Ari4:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 2d10+4d8+12; hp 48; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atks +9 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Climb +4, Diplomacy +10, Handle Animal +5, Jump +4, Knowledge (Royalty and Nobility) +9, Knowledge (Sheldomar Valley Geography) +6, Ride +8, Sense Motive +5, Speak Languages (Common, Keolander, Elven, Dwarven, Halfling), Spot +2, Swim +4; Expertise Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge Weapon Focus (Longsword).

Possession: Masterwork longsword.

☞ **Grand Duke Owen, Human male Ill15/Ftr5:** CR 20 Medium-size Humanoid (humanoid); HD 15d4+5d10+20; hp 96; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 25 (Tough 12, Flat-footed 23); Atks +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+1d6+5/15-20, *Owen's Blade*), +16/+16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+1/x3, longbow); AL alignment; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +14; Str 10 (12), Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Knowledge (fey) +14, Knowledge (Heraldry) +14, Knowledge (Nobility) +14, Concentration +16, Spellcraft +15, Ride +16, Diplomacy +12, Sense Motive +12, Bluff +8, Intimidate +8; Combat Casting, Dodge, Extend Spell Heighten Spell, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Quicken Spell, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: *Duke's Armor*, *Grand Duke's Shield* (buckler +2), *Owen's Blade*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, +2 *cloak of resistance*, *ring of evasion*, *poison bane ring*, *bracers of archery*, +1 *longbow of speed*.

Spells Prepared (5/7/6/6/6/6/4/3/2; Spell DC = 15 + Spell Level): 0 lvl—*daze*, *daze*, *resistance*, *ray of frost*, *ghost sound*; 1st-lvl—*protection from evil*, *shield*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *expeditious retreat*, *shocking grasp*, *color spray*; 2nd-lvl—*protection from arrows*, *still magic missile*, *still magic missile*, *still shocking grasp*, *still shocking grasp*, *mirror image*; 3rd-lvl—*quicken still magic missile*, *quicken still magic missile*, *displacement*, *hold person*, *dispel magic*, *major image*; 4th-lvl—*stoneskin*, *charm monster*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *nondetection*, *rainbow pattern*, *still protection from fire*; 5th-lvl—*still charm monster*, *wall of iron*, *wall of force*, *still ice storm*, *teleport*, *nightmare*; 6th-lvl—*disintegrate*, *still nightmare*, *repulsion*, *greater shadow evocation*; 7th-lvl—*delayed blast fireball*, *Mordenkainen's sword*, *shadow walk*; 8th-lvl—*maze*, *screen*.

Magical Items

Duke's Armor: This full plate armor was a gift from Queen Lhiannon of the Seelie Court upon Owen's coronation as Brenin. It is the armor that he wears into battle. This +2 *glamered*, *ethereal*, *faery-mithral full-plate*, in its normal appearance, is gleaming silver, with the heraldic device of Gyruff carved and lacquered upon the breastplate. Any stains or blood that get on it are almost immediately wiped away. Its faery construction gives the mithral an even lighter weight than most mithral. The armor only weighs 20 pounds, has an armor check penalty of -2, and a spell failure of 15%. It is considered light armor. The armor will not function for anyone who is not of the Brenin's blood.

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *alter self*, *ethereal jaunt*; *Market Price:* 69,550 gp.

Owen's Blade: This longsword was a gift from Owens father upon Owen going to the Gnomish Illusory College. It is a +2 *keen*, *shocking burst longsword*. It has a threat range of 17-20, and deals an addition d6 of damage on a successful strike. On a critical hit, the weapon does an additional 1d10 of damage (not multiplied).

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *keen edge*, *call lightning* or *lightning burst*; *Market Price:* 50,315 gp.

Poison Bane Ring: This ring informs the wearer of poison in his immediate presence and protects its wearer from poison. The wearer is silently aware of any poison that is within his immediate vicinity (i.e., within 2 ½ feet from the wearer, or within the 5-foot cube the wearer inhabits), as detect poison cast by a 7th-level cleric. Any poison that touches the wearer's person is neutralized as if a *neutralize poison* were cast by a 7th-level cleric.

Caster Level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *detect poison*, *neutralize poison*; *Market Price:* 70,000 gp..

APPENDIX B

Fey Domination Stone

The fey from the Court of Dark Summer at the Glades of Shadows Lurking have developed a way to create this magical stone that enables a fey to cast *dominate animal*, or *dominate monster* once per day as a 12th-level caster (Will save DC 22 to resist). The stone can only be used by a fey creature.

Caster Level: 12th; Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *dominate animal*, *dominate monster*; Market Price: 30,6000 gp.

Small Fey Dominator

Small Construct

Hit Dice: 2d10 (14 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 0 ft. (can't move by itself)

AC: 29 (+1 size, +18 natural)

Attacks: As Item +4

Damage: As Item (plus victim strength bonus)

Face/Reach: as item

Special Attacks: Domination

Special Qualities: Construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 30/+2, hardness, limited flight, special weakness

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +0, Wil +2

Abilities: Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: --

The fey from the Court of Dark Summer at the Glades of Shadows Lurking have developed a way to lock the soul of a fey creature into an essence lock that appears to be a normal item. This process completely destroys the body and essence of the fey that is converted, preventing them from ever being raised with anything but a wish spell. A fey that undergoes this process gains the ability to control people and monsters, but loses all other abilities they originally possessed. As a result, this process is usually only attempted on the weakest of the fey creatures as the more powerful are resistant to give up their bodies and original powers. Almost 25% of the fey that go through this process go insane and must be destroyed by their creator. In most cases a fey dominator is created in order for the fey to control a specific person or monster and the spirit of the fey is driven to complete that goal. Fey constructs are commonly shaped like weapons, broaches, pins or other jewelry. If the person carrying the fey Dominator is killed or knocked unconscious, the construct will dominate the nearest person or monster and move into their possession.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A fey dominator is immune to all spells, spelllike abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A *Mind Blank* spell cast directly on the fey Dominator will stop it from functioning for 1 day per level of the caster, with no saving throw.

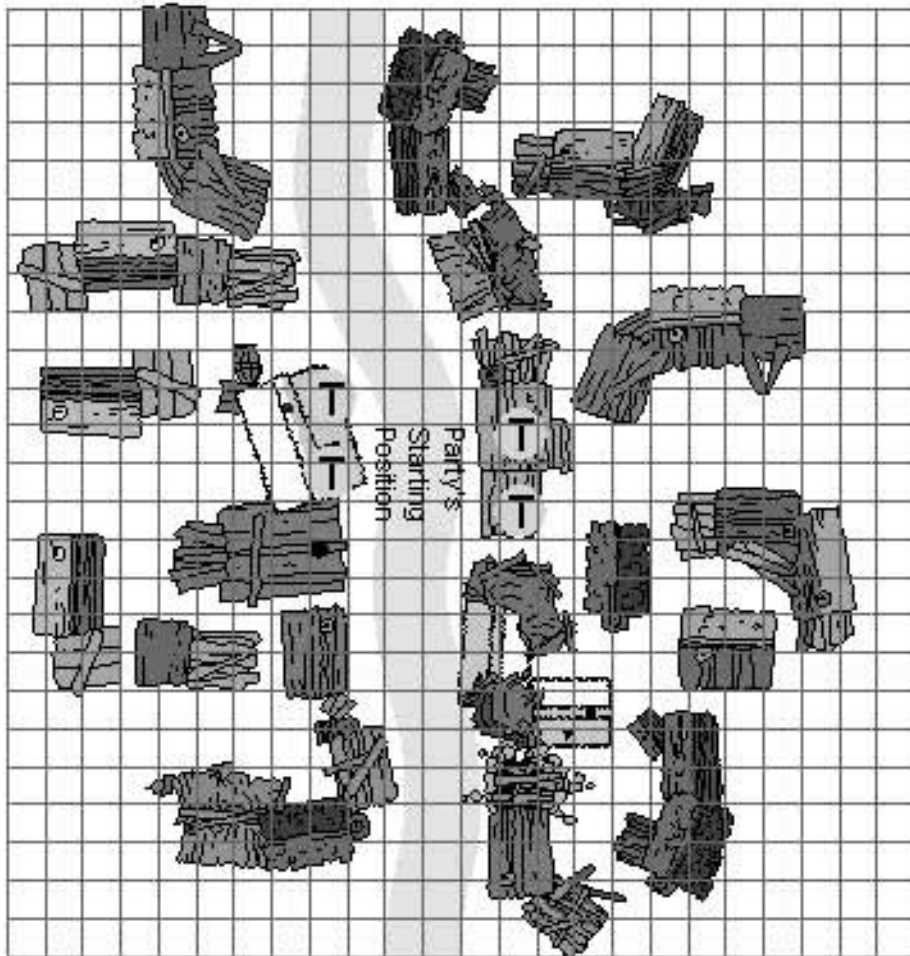
Domination (Sp): A fey dominator is able to cast *dominate monster* once per round. The normal will save to resist the domination is between 16 and 20 depending on the power level of the fey converted. Against the person the fey construct was created to control it receives a situational modifier of +4 to the DN.

Limited Flight (Su): Once the fey dominator has successfully dominated a target, as a simple action it can fly 10 ft. to land in the target's hand. If the victim is farther than 10 feet, the fey dominator cannot move to the victim until she is within 10 ft. This is the only time that it can move without being carried.

Special Weakness (Ex): Each fey Dominator is created with a special weakness. Usually the weakness is something very specific (i.e. struck against a loadstone, immersed in holy water) Each fey dominator has a different special weakness that destroys it instantly with a blinding flash and explosion that leaves nothing behind.

Maps

DM's Map #1



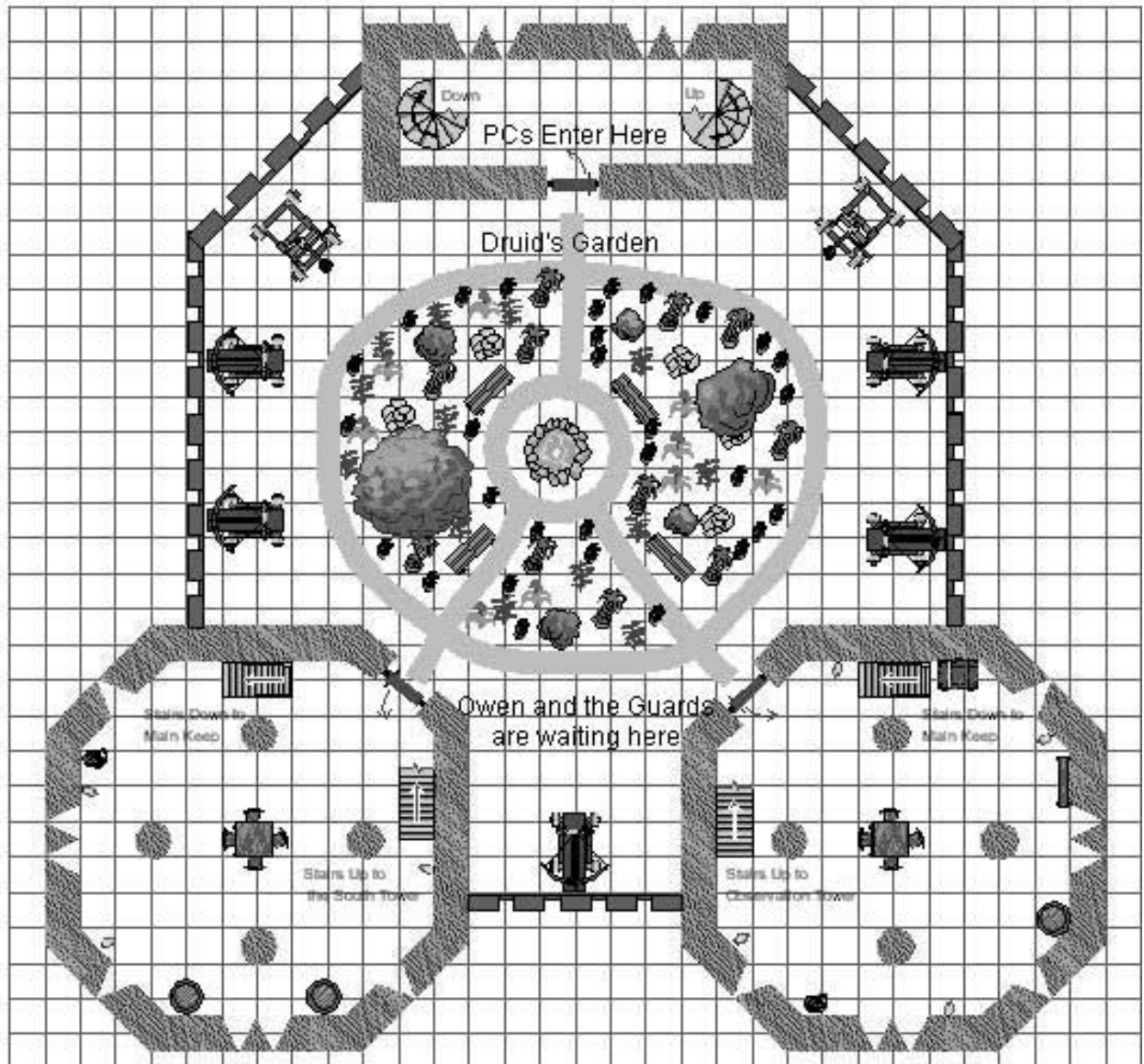
Each square is 5 feet.

T = Starting Position of Half Orc Thugs

Caer Dwr Gwyldy

Roof Top

Each square = 5 feet



Caer Dwr Gwyldy Towers

Each square = 5 feet

