

SHE5-04

A Cup O'erturned

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™ Sheldomar Valley Metaregional Adventure

Version 1.0

by Will Dover

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Merchants are heading to Hochoch, the future home of the Knights of the Watch and Dispatch, coming from different lands and bringing all sorts of different problems. Can you help them out? A Sheldomar Valley metaregional adventure for APLs 6-12 and Part One of the *Turf Wars* series.

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

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Details and maps of the town of Pest's Crossing are excerpted from: *Against the Giants: The Liberation of Geoff* by Gary Gygax and Sean K. Reynolds.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at www.rpga.com.

For questions specific to this document and your metaregion please e-mail your metaregional point of contact (POC) at scon40@aol.com. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

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

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

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PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on

running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the Appendices.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Metaregional adventure, set in the Sheldomar Valley. Characters native to the Sheldomar Valley pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

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

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Followers of Vecna who call themselves the Triumvirate have learned of a secret ritual that might give the Whispered One greater influence on Oerth, and possibly even return him to the Prime Material Plane. The Triumvirate needs three items to bring this together: the complete text of the ritual for which they have only a fragment (albeit a large one), a preserved portion of Vecna's undead flesh, and the *Cup Insidious*, a minor evil artifact used as a magical container for mixing liquid components together during certain evil rituals. The artifact was buried deep in the Sea of Dust after the fall of Vecna.

A Yeomanry Dustdigger named Blake Ovan, a man somewhat fallen from the ideals of that institution, found the Cup in the Sea of Dust in a dig sponsored by Trevor ap Tryvan, the public face of the Triumvirate. Unaware of the true nature of either ap Tryvan or the artifact, he was to take the Cup to Hochoch, which recently came under control of the Knights of the Watch and the Knights of Dispatch. Ap Tryvan hired Ghant and Vilya, twin members of The Corporation, the organization behind the Gran March underworld (the twins managed to escape the purges of that organization), to act as his agents in picking up the Cup. By using the twins, he does not have to pay Ovan and hides his involvement further.

Ovan decided that, being so close to an area recovering from a war, he will pose as a merchant named Blake Sampleson and hire some bodyguards (the PCs) to protect him until the deal is complete. Unfortunately, members of the Midnight Ravens, a Geoff's thieves guild still operating secretly in Hochoch, got wind that this "merchant" was being lightly guarded and promptly stole the Cup. Ovan then asks the PCs to find the Cup.

A "turf war" is developing between the Midnight Ravens, who still treat Hochoch as Geoff, and thus their territory, and the Corporation, who are just beginning to establish rackets there when the Commandant ceded the area to the Knights. In trying to find the Cup, the PCs become targets of both groups.

THE MIDNIGHT RAVENS

Very little is known about the Midnight Ravens except that which has been reported by a few brave adventurers. The Midnight Ravens seem to be a thieves guild of some sort, but suspicions are that their influence goes beyond that of a simple thieves' guild. The few reported contacts with the guild indicate that they have a great deal of information, and they demand gold or favors in exchange for sharing it. The leader of the guild is unknown, but reports indicate dealings with someone

using a female voice and identifying herself as the Aspect of Knowledge.

The Midnight Ravens claim to be interested in knowledge, apparently to use for future power grabs. When asked, they do not admit to committing the normal nefarious acts of a thieves' guild, but they do not deny those acts either. The only thing that the Midnight Ravens vehemently denied is being engaged with murder or other violent activities. As a result, many suspect that they are mainly into smuggling, protection rackets, and burglary. Unfortunately, no concrete evidence has ever surfaced regarding the group's involvement in a crime.

Their base of operations is rumored to be in Hochoch. If this is indeed the case, then the changes in city governance no doubt affect them as well. Any perceived weakness on their position will no doubt be exploited by the neighboring criminal elements.

THE CORPORATION

The Corporation is a group of rogues and other like individuals working inside Gran March. Because of the lawful and militaristic nature of their nation's government, The Corporation takes great pains to keep their existence the subject of superstition and legend. The group is itself a lawful organization with numerous different tiers. At the lower levels are (in ascending importance) associates, members, and senior members. PCs who are members of the Corporation are typically from these lower ranks.

Recently, a faction of the Corporation, led by their head of security, engaged in risky and public ventures, such as trying to assassinate Commandant Vrianian, which brought light to the organization. The main body subsequently allowed that arm to be discovered and to take the fall for all of their activities. Thus, the authorities believe that they destroyed the Corporation, while the majority of the organization remained secretly intact. Members (but not associate members) should know this operation as the Second Divestiture.

The Corporation has since gone back to its behind-the-scenes illicit activities. While Hochoch has changed hands yet again, they see the changes as an opportunity for them to gain some territory that would free them from Gran March interference. They are thus interested in taking over most, if not all, of the Hochoch underworld.

SITUATION IN HOCHOCH (LATE CY 595)

In CY 594, Commandant Magnus Vrianian claimed the Gyri city of Hochoch and the rest of the region known as "the Cup" by right of conquest from the giants. The Cup consists of the Gyric cantrev of Arweth and half of the cantrev of Rhwng yr Coed. Vrianian reasoned that the giants took the city and the land from Geoff and that Gran March forces subsequently liberated the area from them. Geoff's Regent, Sierra Blackblade, at the time

reluctantly agreed to Vrianian's terms and, due to the chaos in the Keoish court, this action went unchallenged.

In early CY 595, however, Hugo of Geoff, Grand Imperial Wyvern and head of the Knights of the Watch and the Knights of Dispatch, asked Commandant Vrianian to turn over the Cup to the Knights for their use. Vrianian, himself a Watcher and by oath subordinate to Hugo, had little choice but to grant Hugo his wish. While the new Regent of Keoland voiced her displeasure, there was little that the Court of the Land could do until the previously recognized noble that ruled the area, Padrig ap Bedwin, provides a timely challenge to the change. This change in leadership thus has stood so far.

Gaining a city, however, is not the same as helping it to grow and flourish. Thus, Hugo and his Knights are working towards establishing Hochoch as a strong trade and defensive center. To this end, the Knights have invited many merchants from all over the Sheldomar Valley to establish businesses and commercial traffic in Hochoch. Hugo knows, however, that the economic future of Hochoch and the Cup depend on his Knights establishing law and order in a region only recently freed from the threat of attack from the war and full of freedom-loving Gyri. Whether or not the lawful Knights can succeed in helping Hochoch to flourish, while keeping their own agendas and frayed reputations afloat, is the question.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Introduction

The PCs start out at the River Gate in the city of Hochoch, awaiting entry. This is an opportunity for the characters to introduce themselves and to learn more about the changes in the city since the Knights have taken it over.

Encounter 1

At the River Gate, the PCs notice a human male and an elven male in traveler's clothing. They are separately looking for adventurers to help them with a simple task. The human is a Yeoman merchant named Blake Sampleson. He pushes his way past the elf to get to the party to offer them a guard job. The elf, Parwyn Amastacia, interrupts with a counteroffer. The two merchants argue, but eventually (either on their own or with the PCs help) agree that the PCs could be shared, with Amastacia hiring them in the morning and Sampleson getting them in the evening. If the PCs agree, Sampleson wants them to meet him at the Boar's Other Knuckle Tavern this evening.

Encounter 2

Amastacia quickly gets the party through the River Gate and leads them to the Market Quarter where they must disarm a series of simple and nonlethal prank traps

placed by an elven wizard from the Duchy of Ulek who thinks he is funnier than he really is.

Encounter 3

The PCs have the afternoon to try to find out more about Sampleson and his patron. Observant PCs notice that an attractive woman is showing up in a lot of the same places they are during their information gathering. She is Bethany Grenda, a member of the Corporation.

Encounter 4

The PCs head back to the tavern, only to find Sampleson was mugged. He tells the PCs who he really is, as the point of subterfuge is done now. The PCs may think to *detect evil* on him now once he mentions an artifact and find a trail created by the lingering evil aura of the Cup.

Encounter 5

On the trail of the artifact, the party meets Bethany Grenda, a member of The Corporation. If there is at least one lawful character in the party, Bethany poses as a bard negotiator for another buyer interested in the artifact. Otherwise, she identifies herself as a member of a rival gang. Either way, she informs the party that the artifact was stolen by the Midnight Ravens, identifying them by name, and that two other ex-members of her organization are trying to steal it back for an unknown client. The party, of course, can choose to ignore her and go on, but they will not understand what is happening.

Encounter 6

The party, either from directions from Grenda or by following the artifact's aura trail, reaches a small alleyway with a taxidermist's shop. There is apparently only one entrance to the shop: a front door with a pit trap just on the other side that dumps the targets into a compacting room trap where the wall eventually blocks access from those above. The secret door to the next encounter is at the bottom of this trap so the party must deal with it.

Encounter 7

After getting past the trap, the party finds a large room with a set of double doors on the opposite side. They can hear snarling and snapping sounds behind the doors, wherein four to six watchdog creatures attack them.

Encounter 8

Past the watchdog creatures, the party finds another double door. Behind it is a small meeting room with a single halfling male inside. He is Xavier Riverbend, a mid-level associate of the Midnight Ravens. He calmly states that his companions are in hidden chambers surrounding the room and armed with all sorts of nasty weapons and spells and that the party should forget about the item in question. His group acquired it in honest thievery and no upstart bunch of rogues is going to take

it from them. If the party thinks to try to negotiate with him and mention the fact that the Ravens have a minor evil artifact, Riverbend will eventually come around to their way of thinking and yell out for one of his associates to bring the item.

Encounter 9

Riverbend's associate returns and says the item is gone. However, the aura is still leaving its trail and the party can follow it to the final encounter. If they do not have a *detect evil* available, there will be other clues to lead them in the same direction.

Encounter 10

The PCs find their way to the clearing where the ex-Corporation members Ghant and Vilya have just delivered the Cup to their patron and are sitting around counting their money. In frustration for being attacked after getting paid, they attack the party at the first opportunity. Their animal companions are on watch so the chance for surprise is slight.

Conclusion

The PCs learn from evidence found on Ghant and Vilya that there is someone in or around Hochoch wanting evil artifacts. Now, that someone has one.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

In preparation for playing this adventure, you may want to give additional background information to give each group an experience more appropriate to their region. These regional and organizational hooks are listed below:

BISSEL

The Bissel Free Companies, as well as a small company of Bissel regulars, are still operating in Geoff and will be there for a while to assist in security and reconstruction. Given that Hochoch has served as a rear area for the conflict with the giants, it is reasonable for PCs in these armed forces to find rest and recreation in the city. This would be considered as part of the mandatory military service for those PCs.

PCs who are members of the Thieves Guild of Dountham may want to report to their guild about what they find out about the changes in the Hochoch underworld. The Guild is too involved in Dountham affairs to expand their operations into Hochoch. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary, if these PCs do make such a report.

During the course of the adventure, PCs who are Mist Chameleons may find out about the strong evil nature of the Cup. Knowing that this might be of interest to Evard the Necromancer and, subsequently, to Regent Saralind, they may want to make a report to a Bissel noble on these events. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary.

GEOFF

As Hochoch was, until recently, Gyri territory, many Geoff PCs will have various reactions to the city's new government. Many soldiers will be here on leave from the front. This adventure thus counts for any service obligation that Geoff military PCs have.

PCs who are members of the Midnight Ravens have an all-together different interest in this situation once they discover that their organization is involved. It is generally understood within the group that unnecessary conflict is bad for business. Thus, Midnight Ravens PCs should expect that the group is planning to leave Hochoch. What they find in Hochoch, however, will appear to contradict this. If they choose to report what they find out, this should be noted on the Critical Event Summary.

GRAN MARCH

There are many military PCs from the Armies of Judgment and Retribution that come to Hochoch for rest and recreation. The war front has been far away from the Cup for some time now, and the city serves as a rear area for planning new strikes against the giants. The Gran March military would have little interest in any of the events in this adventure at this time; Commandant Vrianian has instructed all military commanders that Hochoch's problems are now Watcher and Dispatcher problems. Also, as the front pushes further west, members of the School of Hard Knocks are heading out to see if there are any giant items that would be worth displaying in their Great Hall in Shibolet.

Corporation PCs, on the other hand, may be here looking for new territory for Corporate interest. The shift in leadership from Gran March to the Knights has caused only a small wrinkle in their plans to control the criminal rackets in Hochoch. Corporation PCs can make a Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) check at a DC equal to the APL to know this (this is more difficult for higher level PCs as they are more than likely off adventuring and less involved in regional affairs). If the PCs make the check by 10 or more, they get the name of Bethany Grenda as one of the point-takers in the various operations to gain control of the underworld.

KEOLAND

Those PCs with strong ties with the Keoish nobility (and, in particular, ties with the new Regent Jessa Skotti) are in Hochoch to observe the transition of power to the Watchers and Dispatchers. It is no secret that the Regent does not like them being in control of Hochoch and would be very interested in anything that would undermine the Knights' claim on the city. Evidence of strong underworld activity and evil influences would be very useful at court. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary.

Also, Regent Jessa recently sent 15,000 soldiers into Geoff to defeat the giants and make the nation stable. PCs who are in the Royal Army would likely find their way to Hochoch for rest and relaxation like the other foreign soldiers assisting Geoff.

If the PCs discover that the Cup is a magical artifact, they may want to inform the Silent Ones of its existence. The Silent Ones will not take immediate action, but will start doing research. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary, if the PCs make reports.

The Niole Dra Thieves Guild, being information brokers, are very interested in what's going on in Hochoch. Even if they do not act on it directly, they could sell the intelligence to someone else. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary, if any PC sends word to this organization on the Critical Event Summary.

KNIGHTS OF THE WATCH/DISPATCH

This group is taking over Hochoch after Commandant Vrianian gave it to them earlier in CY 595. Thus, Knight PCs may be here on business related to the establishment of a new city government or out looking for a new home (particularly if these PCs are from Bissel or Keoland). There is plenty of work to be done, especially tasks befitting a Squire or Senior Squire. They can stay at the Knights of the Watch Chapterhouse located in the Old City located at O3 on the players' map of Hochoch (*see Player Handout #1*). If any Knight PCs choose to report what they find during the course of this adventure to their superiors, this should be noted on the Critical Event Summary.

THE PRINCIPALITY OF ULEK

While Hochoch is far from the Principality, there is at least one group who is paying attention to the situation. PCs who are members of the Society of Shadows are contacted by Allinel Nightshade, Matron of the Thunderstrike Shadows. Nightshade tells these PCs that the Society is very interested in information about the new government and any criminal groups operating within Hochoch. They cannot pay anything at this time, but will not forget PCs who provide that information. A Sense Motive check against Nightshade (DC 35) indicates that she is interested more for her own interests than the best interests of the Society as a whole.

THE YEOMANRY

Once Blake Ovan reveals himself to be a Dustdigger, PCs from that organization should be on their guard as this might have some negative impact. They, at a minimum, will want to report Ovan's activities to the Academy. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary.

The Rascals have more than enough to do in the Yeomanry than to work to acquire more criminal

territory. However, they would be interested in any intelligence concerning who controls the Hochoch underworld. This should be noted on the Critical Event Summary, whether or not PCs contact the Rascals.

PCS OUTSIDE OF THE METAREGION

Most PCs from other regions are in Hochoch just passing through. If a PC is a member of a thieves' guild organization, they may choose to report the state of affairs in Hochoch. If they do, this should be noted on the Critical Event Summary.

For PCs that do not fit in with one of these hooks, just find some explanation that makes sense for the character, even if it is only just vacationing away from their home region.

INTRODUCTION

The PCs have arrived in Hochoch for whatever reasons found in the Preparation for Play section above. They are at the River Gate, a major entrance to the city.

ENCOUNTER 1: SIMPLE TASKS

At the River Gate, the PCs meet two merchants trying to get the attention of adventurers entering the city:

The River Gate is busy this late fall morning with various groups trying to enter the city. The line to get past the city guard is especially long and noisy. To make matters worse, a strong wind blows the refugee smells from the group of shanties and hovels known as Lean-to-Town. Somehow, above the din, you hear two male voices shouting.

The first voice belongs to a bronze-skinned human male with dark hair bleached by many hours under a hot sun. He is a lean man, but not emaciated. His face, marked by overexposure to the elements, does not betray his actual age. He could be in his late twenties, his early forties, or any age in between. From the look of his traveling clothes, he appears to be a well-traveled man with many miles past his feet.

The second voice is that of a male elf of impressive stature, stockier than most of his kind. It is clear from the cut of his fine clothes to the slight paunch of his waistline that life has been very good to him. Even while he is shouting, he still maintains the air of one rich, noble-born, or both.

The human, spotting you in the crowd, pushes his way past the elf to get to you. "Good morning, travelers! My name is Blake Sampleson from the Yeomanry and new to this city. You appear to be adventurers. If so, you and I might have some business together if you would but listen."

At this, the elf shouts, "Now, why would they want to work for a dusty bag of bones as yourself when they can be in the gainful employment of me, Parwyn Amastacia, trader and broker extraordinaire?" Amastacia's grin is wide and confident.

Both men need the help of the party and are willing to go for hard negotiations to gain it. Be prepared to ad-lib and adjust the following:

Sampleson: *"Mine is a simple task. I need someone to guard me and an important package that I have this evening. I am going to be meeting with other clients during the day in pretty secure quarters so I am not worried for either the package or me during the day. However, I have only been able to get lodging at the Boar's Other Knuckle and it does not appear to me to be the most secure of establishments. If you can watch over my room while I sleep, I shall reward you handsomely for your trouble."*

If pressed for details, Sampleson says that he is about to make a sale to a collector named Trevor ap Tryvan tomorrow and only needs the party's services for one evening. The item is an old goblet that ap Tryvan wanted Sampleson to acquire while in the Yeomanry. It is valuable for the collectors of antique goblets, but has little street value otherwise.

"Sampleson" is really Blake Ovan, a Dustdigger from the Yeomanry who typically obeys the letter instead of the spirit of that organization's doctrines. Most of what he says to the party is true, as Ovan really does not know what he has. He thinks it is some old Suel goblet he found in the Sea of Dust, although he is somewhat disturbed by the number of evil runes found on the cup. PCs may want to use the Sense Motive skill on him. If so, the check is DC 19 + APL (though his skill level does not change, he gets luckier at higher APLs). If successful, the PCs get an idea that he is not being completely honest, but not certain where the dishonesty is.

Amastacia: *"Come now, my job is simpler, but more immediate. I am not only paying for skill, but quick response. I have a problem with a shipment brought in from Keoland through the Duchy of Ulek. I am to deliver this to another merchant in the Market Square, but cannot complete the delivery while this problem is around. I need someone with skills in either the arcane arts or in trap detection. Please, we need to get these goods on the market soon, and I can certainly reward you better than this dirty one."*

Amastacia is who he says he is. A Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) check or an appropriate Profession (Merchant, Teamster, etc.) check, as long as the PC has at least one rank in it, at DC 12 verifies his reputation as a leading merchant. Elves and half-elves get a +5 circumstance bonus to the check due to his

extensive connections in the elven communities in the Valley. He is also being truthful, but not complete, about his task; all Sense Motive checks indicate his honesty. If pressed for more details, he says his problems with the shipment are more annoying than destructive, but he cannot get the goods to market in their current state.

Both men are willing to pay 20 x APL in gp to each party member, but start out negotiations at half that number. Diplomacy, Appraise, or Sense Motive checks against their Bluff checks indicates that both men are generally underbidding for their services and can also indicate when they are at their maximum bid. Amastacia also has the ability to get items for the PCs, but he only uses this as a bonus for success. He does not mention this during the negotiations.

Clever PCs notice that the two jobs do not appear to overlap, and Amastacia confirms that they should be done by late afternoon. Thus, the PCs should be able to do both tasks without any trouble. If the PCs don't come up with it on their own, have "Sampleson" come up with the idea.

If PCs make a successful DC 15 Spot check, they notice an attractive auburn-haired woman waving from the walkway on the wall of Hochoch. If PCs try to interact with her at this point (by waving back or trying to signal with her), she waves her hands in disgust in their direction and leaves the wall. This is Bethany Grenda, whose purpose is to get a good look at whoever Amastacia is hiring to assess how they resolve Amastacia's problem.

Creatures: All of the NPCs in this encounter are described in *Appendix 5*.

♣ **Blake Ovan a.k.a. Blake Sampleson:** male human Exp8/Rog2; hp 60; see *Appendix 5*.

♣ **Parwyn Amastacia:** male elf Brd15; hp 68; see *Appendix 5*.

♣ **Bethany Grenda:** female human Rog10; hp 60; see *Appendix 5*.

Development: Given that Amastacia's task is more immediate and does not interfere with the Sampleson contract, the PCs should go with Amastacia to Encounter 2. "Sampleson" expects the party at the Boar's Other Knuckle by eight in the evening. A Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) or Knowledge (geography) check at DC 10 indicates that the Boar's Other Knuckle is in the area of the city known as The Commons, a short distance from the Market Quarter where Amastacia will lead them.

PCs lose track of the woman as soon as she leaves the wall, so approaching her without breaking into Hochoch, is going to be difficult. Amastacia informs the characters that his business comes first and chasing after some woman isn't what he is paying the characters for.

ENCOUNTER 2: BOXES, BOXES, AND MORE BOXES

Having successfully negotiated two contracts for work in Hochoch, the PCs go with their first patron, Parwyn Amastacia, to the Market Quarter.

After you agree to work for Amastacia, he quickly pulls you out of the line and guides you to the gate. He says to the guards, "These are the helpers I was waiting for. Can we pass now?" The guards nod, and Amastacia smiles and nods as well. You all quickly pass through the gate, much to the consternation of those remaining in line.

Amastacia quickly leads you through Hochoch's Low Quarter and into the city's inner wall. After a few minutes, you reach a bustling marketplace that could only be the Market Square. He takes you over to one stall with a sign labeled "Alan's Exotic Goods and Trinkets." The storekeeper is a medium-sized human male of Flan descent wearing a motley colored robe consisting of various shades of red and green patches. He says to Amastacia, "You need to hurry and fix this problem. I want these toys out for sale today as we agreed." Amastacia responds "Don't worry, Alan. I have the situation in hand." With that, Alan goes back to setting up his stall for the day's business.

Amastacia then turns to the party, "Okay, here is what I need you to do. I got these magical toys in from a merchant in Keoland, but I wanted one of my contacts to check them out to see if they were working. Unfortunately, the only one available was Welby of Tringlee in the Duchy of Ulek. Welby and I have a long relationship and occasionally he likes to play little tricks on me and leaves me a little note telling me that so I won't get into serious trouble. Well, he picks this cargo to pull a little stunt. Here is his letter:

"Dear Parwyn, It is time once again for us to match wits and wizardry. I surely would like to see the color of your cheeks when you open your little toys. Have fun, Welby. P.S. The toys work fine, and my little surprise will not stop them from working."

"I know he has put some sort of prank on the boxes, but I have neither the time nor the skill to solve this particular puzzle. I need someone who can deal with this problem quickly. Can you do this?"

While they are waiting, have the PCs make Spot checks (DC 25). If successful, they notice the same attractive auburn-haired woman from the city wall taking notice of their handiwork. This is Bethany Grenda, an operative of the Corporation, who is doing reconnaissance work in Hochoch. The fact the PCs are about to deal with a bunch of traps is enough to warrant

her attention, albeit discreetly. If PCs approach Bethany, she chats with them but leaves shortly after they disarm or set-off one of the boxes. She is posing as a bard negotiator for a merchant interested in investigating potential business ventures in the City of Hochoch. If pressed, Bethany will say that her employer resides outside of Hochoch, but wishes to remain anonymous at this time so as not to jeopardize any future dealings.

Members of the Corporation may want to try to establish contact with Bethany. She does not respond to any overt and clumsy attempt at contact. If the player of a Corporate PC thinks to make a Bluff check to communicate with her by delivering a secret message as described in the Bluff skill description in the *Player's Handbook*, she identifies herself as a member who is conducting an intelligence assessment of the Hochoch underworld so that the Corporation can expand its operations here.

Trap: Each of the ten boxes is trapped with heightened *prestidigitation* spells. The effect of the spell is that the opener and all of the opener's possessions (including the box and what is inside) get completely colored bright, nearly nauseating, pink from head to foot. All the boxes radiate magic so *detect magic* can gain some idea of what the spell is. A rogue of sufficient skill can detect and disable them. If the party does not have a rogue capable of the task, a readied counterspell (either *dispel magic* or *prestidigitation*) can deal with the problem when a box is opened. If the party does not have enough spells to do this, they can buy *prestidigitation* scrolls to use in cleaning up the cargo. They can find scrolls at the appropriate caster level for counterspelling.

APL 6 (EL 4)

↗ **Heightened *Prestidigitation* Trap:** CR 4; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*prestidigitation* (heightened to 3rd level), 5th-level wizard); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL 8 (EL 6)

↗ **Heightened *Prestidigitation* Trap:** CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*prestidigitation* (heightened to 5th level), 9th-level wizard); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 10 (EL 8)

↗ **Heightened *Prestidigitation* Trap:** CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*prestidigitation* (heightened to 7th level), 13th-level wizard); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 12 (EL 10)

↗ **Heightened *Prestidigitation* Trap:** CR 10; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*prestidigitation* (heightened to 9th

level), 17th-level wizard); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

If the first one is disabled, the others should go very quickly. It takes about two hours to disable each of the other boxes without having to roll for the check. If the party uses counterspelling, it will take time to find scrolls once they decide to use them.

Creatures: The merchant is Alan the Fair. A Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) check (DC 10) indicates that he is a respected businessman specializing in novelty items. He wears brightly colored attire, mainly in red and green, that goes with the novelties that he sells.

♁ **Alan the Fair:** Male human Exp5; hp 22; Appraise +10, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Sense Motive +8.

Treasure: Each box contains one flag with the symbol of the Knights of the Watch and Dispatch. It is a finely made flag with small gems sewn in at points on the emblem. Because of the gems and the craftsmanship, each flag costs 500 gp each. As a side note, the flags turn out to be a huge success and Alan the Fair will have sold out of them by nightfall. Thus, the flags are not available on the AR.

If the PCs are successful in disabling the traps or cleaning off the merchandise before the end of the day, Amastacia will pay them the agreed price. As the traps are not damaging, however, defeating them does not give any xp. Finally, Amastacia reimburses the party for any *dispel magic* or *prestidigitation* scrolls they bought as long he gets to keep any they do not use; those who bought them will not have to pay for them unless they keep them for themselves.

Development: Once Amastacia's task is complete, the party should have some time before meeting "Sampleson" at the Boar's Other Knuckle. They may want to go to Encounter 3 to find out more about Hochoch, "Sampleson", or Trevor ap Tryvan. Otherwise, skip ahead to the evening and Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 3: WHO ARE WE WORKING FOR AGAIN?

With Amastacia's task behind them, the PCs have some time to find out more about their next client. Each PC can buy any gear to which they have either access from the LGCS, Regional Access, Any Access, or Adventure access within three adventures. They may also cast spells or do anything else they choose with their two hours. Once they decide to either get dinner (often known as casting *heroes feast*) or go to meet "Sampleson", go to Encounter 4.

The PCs may want to make Gather Information checks or Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion). Gather Information checks can be assisted

by other PCs; Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) checks can only be assisted by PCs having ranks in that skill. Use the information below in giving answers:

BLAKE SAMPLESON

Members of the Yeomanry Academy of Lore have a +5 circumstance bonus to these checks (Gather Information DC/Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) DC):

DC 25/DC 20: No one has ever heard of Sampleson, but his description matches that of a Dustdigger from the Yeomanry named Blake Ovan. He is supposed to be some sort of expert on the Suel and the Sea of Dust.

DC 20/DC 25: Ovan is not well respected in the Academy. There have been rumors that he has engaged in smuggling artifacts, though nothing has been proven.

TREVOR AP TRYVAN

Geoff PCs, Gran March active-duty military PCs, and Yeomanry Militia PCs have a +5 circumstance bonus to these checks (Gather Information DC/Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) DC):

DC 10/DC 10: Trevor ap Tryvan is a bard who is quite wealthy from his profession. He has been in retirement for years and is a recluse. No one knows where he lives.

DC 15/DC 15: He is known to be a collector of antiques and typically uses an intermediary to handle negotiations.

DC 20/DC 20: He is willing to engage smugglers and rogues to obtain pieces he wants for his collection, though he has never been known to kill anyone in the process.

THE SITUATION IN HOCHOCH

Members of any Sheldomar Valley thieves' organization have a +5 circumstance bonus to these checks (Gather Information DC/Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) DC):

DC 10/DC 10: The transition of government appears to be going very smoothly. The Knights have not taken full control over the city, but will in a few months. They have started assisting in patrolling the streets.

DC 15/DC 15: There are tensions within the Hochoch underworld. Many rogues and ruffians are thinking of moving to greener pastures.

DC 25/DC 25: Their concern is not over the Knights' lawful governance, but over the power

vacuum in the city. Right now, several criminal organizations are looking to gain territory in the city during the power transition, following the idea that chaos brings opportunity.

KNIGHTS OF THE WATCH/ DISPATCH

This information is only available to PCs who are members of either organization and only if they choose to check in at the Knights Barracks in Hochoch. Knights (not Squires or Senior Squires) get a +5 circumstance bonus to these checks (Gather Information DC/Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) DC):

DC 10/DC 10: The transition of government appears to be going smoothly. Hugo has already arrived and is taking residence in Caer Dwr Gwyldy (known in Common as Waterwatch Castle).

DC 15/DC 15: Preparations are being made both for the final transition of Hochoch and for the purges that Hugo spoke of earlier.

DC 20/DC 20: The Knights are aware of the potential shift in the Hochoch underworld, but lack intelligence on the actual structure of the various factions. Anything that the Knights can find out about the current situation would be greatly rewarded.

BETHANY GRENDA

Members of any Sheldomar Valley thieves' organization have a +5 circumstance bonus to these checks (Gather Information checks only):

DC 15: The woman is here to investigate potential business ventures in the City of Hochoch. She has talked to several merchants already.

DC 20: She is from Gran March. Rumor has it that she is a licensed member of the Keoland Guilds and is capable of acting on behalf of the Keoland Guilds.

DC 25: She is very curious about the changes in Hochoch and the potential of using Hochoch as a trade city.

While the party is doing their research, have the PCs make Spot checks (DC 25). If successful, they notice Grenda again checking them out. Their success in Encounter 2 has convinced her that they need to be followed and observed.

Development: Again, once they decide to either get dinner or go to meet "Sampleson", go to Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE HUNT IS ON

The party may or may not be in the Boar's Other Knuckle when this encounter starts. If they are on their way close to the time of their meeting with "Sampleson", read the following:

As you work your way through The Commons and close in on the Boar's Other Knuckle, you hear a loud moan from a nearby alley.

If the PCs turn towards the moan, read the following:

In the alley you find the prone and beaten form of Blake Sampleson.

If the party is already at the Boar's Other Knuckle or some other inn eating dinner such as a *heroes feast*, read the following (and yes, this interrupts the *heroes feast*):

As you are enjoying your meal, a man enters the establishment and staggers toward your table. He collapses across the table, spoiling your meal. The severely-beaten man is Blake Sampleson.

In either case, "Sampleson" is down to 1 hp and is struggling to remain conscious. He tells his story to the party in a very melodramatic fashion.

"I was on my way to meet you when two men attacked me. They beat me down, opened the box, and took the cup. I should have known better than to deal with that cursed cup once I saw the evil Suel and Flan symbols on it. That's why I used the Sampleson name; my real name is Blake Ovan, and I am a member of the Yeomanry Academy of Lore. Still, I need food on the table, and a gold piece is still a gold piece."

Ovan knows that the cup is magical and only suspects that it might be evil. He is more than willing to lead the party to the alley where he was ambushed if they are not already there. Anyone who has *detect magic* or *detect evil* notices that there is a distinctive aura both on Ovan and on the area where he was attacked. The aura is rated as Strong and lingers in an area for 60 minutes (maximum duration), though don't reveal the exact duration time to the players. Allow players to refer to the *Player's Handbook* and use the spell description to aid in their decision making process. Regardless of how they get to the scene of the crime, they can estimate that the cup has been out in the open for at least thirty minutes.

Ovan remembers the appearance of the two men who attacked him. He can give their description to the party if they ask. Give the party the physical descriptions of Ghant and Vilya as shown in their stat blocks.

There is nothing Ovan can really be charged with in Hochoch for bringing the *Cup Insidious* to town. However, to smooth his departure, Ovan will honor his

original agreement whether or not the PCs follow the aura trail to the Cup. He will have their money to them the next morning.

Finally, allow the PCs a Spot check (DC 27). If they make it, they notice Bethany Grenda following them.

Development: The party now must decide whether or not to follow the trail. If they choose not to do anything or do something that takes longer than thirty minutes, such as contact the Knights, they will not have the trail to follow and will have to go to Encounter 5 to follow the trail. Otherwise, they can follow the trail directly to Encounter 6, unless they choose to confront Grenda, who is following them.

ENCOUNTER 5: EYES IN THE SHADOWS

This encounter is a result of either the party noticing Grenda and confronting her after the theft of the *Cup Insidious* in Encounter 4 or because the party has no way of tracking the Cup to Encounter 6.

Bethany has shown up again, at this auspicious moment. She smiles and waves you down in her dirty dress. "I saw a couple of men running off towards the merchant quarter. They had a goblet in their hands and felt creepy when they knocked me down. I followed them for a ways to get reimbursed for the damage they did to my dress, but when I saw them enter the Taxidermist's shop, I got scared and came to find you. Perhaps, you could help me out?"

If PCs ask, she describes the cup exactly. She continues to act in a benevolent way in the hopes to get the PCs to deal with the two rogue members of the Corporation. Ideally, she does not want to get her hands dirty with any of this and has no intentions to blow her cover in a city controlled by the Midnight Ravens.

If the party contains at least one lawful character, Bethany will maintain her ruse that she is a negotiator for a merchant outside of Hochoch, but she will say that one of the items she was investigating for her employer was the possible purchase of the Cup. Otherwise, she apparently comes clean as she identifies herself as a member of a rival gang interested in stealing the Cup for themselves. Either way, she informs the party that the artifact was stolen by local thieves and that two other ex-members of her organization are trying to steal it back for an unknown client. She believes that the thieves have taken it to a taxidermist shop in the Market Quarter and gives the party directions if asked.

If asked about getting the Town Watch to help, she can say that the thieves are getting away and, while the city is still transitioning the authority, the Town Watch is really slow. They lost some people when the Geoff government left, and the Knights have not been able to refill those positions. As for the Cup itself, Bethany only

knows that it is old, that it is valuable to some collectors, and that it was stolen from the man from the Yeomanry (she does not even know his true name). Unless there is a member of the Corporation in the party, this is all she reveals.

Members of the Corporation may want to try to establish contact with her. Again, she does not respond to any overt and clumsy attempt at contact. If the player of a Corporate PC thinks to make a Bluff check to communicate with her by delivering a secret message as described in the Bluff skill description in the *Player's Handbook*, she can give three pieces of information. First, she acknowledges her membership if the Corporation PCs had not previously confirmed this in a prior conversation. Second, she tells them that she believes the thieves were members of the Midnight Ravens. Finally, she says that the two thieves who are trying to steal it from the Midnight Ravens are members who escaped the Second Divestiture. She does not give them any direction as to what the Corporation wants done with them, but it is obvious that they should be silenced.

Development: Grenda wants to find out more about the theft and is willing to help the party find its way to the safe house in Encounter 6.

ENCOUNTER 6: FINDING THE NEST

Refer to *DM Aid: Map #1* for Encounters 6 to 8.

The party eventually comes to the taxidermist shop in the Market Quarter, either by following the aura trail of the *Cup Insidious* or by following Grenda's directions from Encounter 5. Once the party begins to move, read the following:

Your quest for the missing cup has led you to the Market Quarter. Before you stands a simple storefront with a brown awning, a dire boar's head on the front door, and a sign saying in Flan and Common "The Taxidermist House of Wedros the Skillful." The street is quiet with no observable traffic, as it is well past the time for legal business. The shop is obviously closed.

The front door has an average lock on it:

🔒 **Locked Wooden Door:** 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; Break DC 18; Open Lock DC 25 (steel lock: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 10; Break DC 24).

Those using *detect evil* or *detect magic* to track the aura find that it stops just inside the doorway. There is enough wood in the trapdoor of the pit trap to block the rest of the aura.

Trap: Stepping on either of the two five foot squares at the front door indicated on *DM Aid: Map #1* sets off the 100-ft. spiked pit trap. The impact of the fall triggers a hidden switch that retracts the spikes and engages the

compacting/crushing room trap. The spikes' retraction does no additional damage to those already impaled on them. The trap door stays open until the wall in the room trap retracts to its original position. The wall stays in position for the same amount of time as its onset delay and then retracts in the same amount of time as its onset delay.

Each trap has one point where PCs can use Disable Device. The pit trap can be disabled at the trap door; this both disables the trap door and retracts the spikes. The room trap can be disabled at the bottom of the pit trap by disabling the floor panels.

If your party does not have someone who can use Disable Device, they can search for the hidden switch. This switch is on a knothole on the frame of the front door. It disables both traps. There is a ladder in the pit trap for climbing out, but PCs must jump to it before the second round of closure. *Feather fall* obviously negates the falling damage and allows the victim to miss the spikes, but causes the room trap to work once the weight is reestablished on the pressure plate.

Spellcasters also have the option of using magical transportation such as *teleport*, *dimension door*, or *rope trick*. They should be able to see anyone in the room trap for the first two rounds of the onset delay and thus be able to target them or their location.

Fighter types and damage-dealing spellcasters can try to destroy the wall in the compacting/crushing room trap. Doing so disables both traps. Remember that only acid and sonic energy do full damage to objects while ignoring hardness, fire and electricity do half damage before applying hardness, and cold does quarter damage before applying hardness. Adamantine weapons wielded by someone capable of doing massive damage are also very useful in this situation.

🗡️ **Stone Wall:** 12 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; Break DC 50.

If PCs try to destroy the secret exit door, they must first find it with a Search check, which takes one round. It is a wooden door with a stone facade and can be easily breached; anyone trapped has until the end of the cycle to break it. Breaking the door takes those in the trap into Encounter 7, which would be a bad thing, since they would not have the other party members in support.

🗡️ **Secret Wooden Door:** 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; Break DC 18; Search DC 10 + APL.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🔪 **Spiked Pit Trap** (100 ft. Deep): CR 7; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 18.

↗ **Compacting Room:** CR 6; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); walls move together (1d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by- 10-ft. room); never miss; onset delay (4 rounds); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 25.

APL 8 (EL 10)

↗ **Spiked Pit Trap** (100 ft. Deep): CR 9; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 18.

↗ **Compacting Room:** CR 8; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); walls move together (1d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by- 10-ft. room); never miss; onset delay (4 rounds); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 10 (EL 12)

↗ **Spiked Pit Trap** (100 ft. Deep): CR 11; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 25.

↗ **Crushing Room:** CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); walls move together (1d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. room); never miss; onset delay (4 rounds); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 12 (EL 14)

↗ **Spiked Pit Trap** (100 ft. Deep): CR 13; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); DC 30 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

↗ **Crushing Room:** CR 12; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); walls move together (1d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. room); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 30.

Development: Using the secret door here takes the party to Encounter 7. They can take 20 on the Search check once the room trap has been disabled.

ENCOUNTER 7: WATCHDOGS

Refer to DM Aid: Map #1 for Encounters 6 to 8.

After dealing with the trap in Encounter 6, the party gets to deal with the Midnight Ravens' guardian creatures in the foyer:

The secret door from the room trap leads to a large entryway thirty feet wide by sixty feet long by ten feet high. The double doors at the end of the room are open.

Give all PCs in the room or just outside the secret door a Listen check (DC 15). Those who make the check are not surprised when the creatures make their surprise attack.

Powerful dogs with coal-black coats the size of draft horses snarl menacingly at you. Vile-looking chainmail barding with unwholesome designs engraved upon them gleams over their bodies.

Creatures: As their second line of defense, the Midnight Ravens have a number of creatures acting as guardians. They have released the creatures in anticipation of those who may follow behind. Unfortunately for the PCs, one of the ex-Corporation members decided to sprinkle a little *dust of illusion* upon the creatures to make them look like Nessian warhounds. Lawful citizens and members of the Midnight Ravens realize that possession of such evil creatures is illegal in Hochoch (DC 11 Will save to realize the creatures are under an illusion).

APL 6 (EL 6)

➤ **Wolverines** (4): hp 30 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 283.

APL 8 (EL 8)

➤ **Dire Wolverines** (4): hp 48 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 66.

APL 10 (EL 10)

➤ **Girallons** (4): hp 68 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 126.

APL 12 (EL 12)

➤ **Dire Tigers** (4): hp 132 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 65.

Tactics: The creatures use any surprise they have to close with the party to set up for their first attacks. All combatants use pack tactics when possible, ganging up on the closest target and attacking it mercilessly. They will maneuver to flank where possible.

Treasure: In the next room, hidden in one of the piles of animal dung in the pens for the guard creatures, is a set of six small, marble-sized gems, which was in a now-digested bag consumed by one of the guard creatures' previous victims. The gems are of increasing

value and various types; they are listed in the Treasure Summary. This can be found with a Search check at DC 20; the party can take 20 on this check.

Development: Defeating the creatures allows the party to proceed past the creatures' pens to Encounter 8. The aura does go on past the pens if anyone is checking for this.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE RAVEN'S NEST

Refer to DM Aid: Map #1 for Encounters 6 to 8.

Past the creatures' pens is a set of double doors. As you search the area, the doors open wide. Through the doorway you see a twenty-foot square room with ten-foot high stone walls, a stone floor, and stone ceiling. A male halfling with a scowl on his face sits behind a metal desk on the opposite end of the room. He tells you calmly, "You have trespassed here. State your business before I decide that we need to kill you."

The halfling is Xavier Riverbend, a mid-level associate of the Midnight Ravens. He is unwilling to part with the cup as he sees it as major swag. If the party asks for the cup, Riverbend calmly states that his companions are in hidden chambers surrounding the room and armed with all sorts of nasty weapons and spells and that the party should forget about the item in question. His group acquired it in honest thievery, and no upstart bunch of rogues is going to take it from them.

Riverbend knows who is running the show for the Midnight Ravens here in Hochoch. If Midnight Raven PCs tell him that they are supposed to be withdrawing from Hochoch, he simply shrugs and says that there are other plans at work. If the PCs try to force him to talk about those plans or if any Midnight Ravens try to get him to talk by any means, he sets off the traps as noted below.

In terms of Diplomacy checks, Riverbend is Indifferent at APLs 6 and 8 and Unfriendly at APLs 10 and 12. If the party thinks to try to negotiate with him and mention the fact that the Ravens have a minor evil artifact, this adds a +5 circumstance bonus on the Diplomacy check. The party must get him to Friendly before he will help them by trying to give them the Cup. If he detects that they are lying to him in any way (an opposed Sense Motive check versus the PC's Bluff check), this confers a -5 penalty. The party is allowed one retry on Diplomacy. After that, his position is fixed.

One character with influence with the Midnight Ravens may use it to automatically succeed on the Diplomacy check with Riverbend. Any member of the Midnight Raven who identifies himself/herself to Riverbend may automatically succeed on the Diplomacy check with Riverbend.

Trap: If Riverbend feels threatened, he triggers the trap for this room as he was only lying about the nature of the danger, not that the room is dangerous. He triggers the trap by a control at his feet. When he does this, the floor beneath his chair opens and closes, dropping Riverbend out of sight. The magic devices in the desk then start throwing out nonlethal *fireballs* on the party. These devices pop up from the desktop and act like turrets. As the attacks are nonlethal, all objects (such as the desk or the door) are unaffected. Although each trap has automatic reset, each trap can only go off three times.

Device-disablers have a chance to defeat the traps as long as they are conscious as the magic devices throwing the spells are easily accessible. They can also try to pick the lock on the front door. The lock is complex with an Open Lock check at DC 20 + APL required for opening it.

If the party has no one that can defeat the traps, there are alternative exits. Spellcasters can attempt to counterspell the spells being cast by the traps. Magical means of exit such as *dimension door* and *teleport* are also appropriate.

Fighter types and others who can do massive amounts of damage may want to try to destroy the door, the trap, or the trap door in the floor. The door and the lock have the following stats:

🔒 **Locked Strong Wooden Door:** 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 18; Open Lock DC 25 (steel lock: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 10; Break DC 24).

The trap devices are surrounded by adamantine cases. These cases do not interfere with Disable Device checks against the traps, but do add to the hardness of the trap:

🔒 **Magic Device with Adamantine Case:** 1 in. thick; hardness 20; hp 40; Break DC 18.

Finally, the trap door appears to be stone, but is actually adamantine. It takes much longer to breach this door:

🔒 **Adamantine Reinforced Trap Door:** 3 in. thick; hardness 20; hp 120; Break DC 28.

APL 6 (EL 10)

🔪 **Nonlethal Delayed Blast Fireball Trap (1):** CR 10; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); spell effect (nonlethal substitution *delayed blast fireball*, 17th level wizard, DC 22 Reflex save, 17d6 nonlethal); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

APL 8 (EL 12)

🔪 **Nonlethal Delayed Blast Fireball Traps (2):** CR 10; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); spell effect (nonlethal substitution *delayed blast*

fireball, 17th level wizard, DC 22 Reflex save, 17d6 nonlethal); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

APL 10 (EL 14)

↗ **Nonlethal Maximized Empowered Fireball Trap (1):** CR 14; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); spell effect (nonlethal substitution maximized empowered fireball, 17th level wizard, DC 23 Reflex save, 90 nonlethal); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

APL 12 (EL 16)

↗ **Nonlethal Maximized Empowered Fireball Traps (2):** CR 14; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); spell effect (nonlethal substitution maximized empowered fireball, 17th level wizard, DC 23 Reflex save, 90 nonlethal); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Creatures: Riverbend is a shrewd and observant negotiator. He uses Sense Motive checks to try to detect any duplicity by the party. If he senses trouble, he sets off the trap and bails.

♣ **Xavier Riverbend:** male halfling Rog10; hp 60; see Appendix 5.

Development: If the party succeeds in winning Riverbend's trust, he calls for one of the other Ravens to bring the Cup to them. This leads to the discovery of the Cup's disappearance in Encounter 9.

If the party decides to leave Riverbend and look for another way into the complex to steal the item, they can pick the trail after about five minutes of using *detect evil* or *detect magic*. If they are able to pick it up in this manner, they can follow it to Encounter 10.

If the party manages to survive the trap, they can try to regain the trail by some other means. Use of *detect evil* or *detect magic* to regain the trail succeeds after about ten minutes and leads them to the grove in Encounter 10, but Ghant, Vilya, and Servilyn will have already done their business and left the area. The trap slowed down the party just enough for the villains to leave the scene. They therefore have no clue as to what was really going on. Go to Conclusion: Too Late for the wrap-up.

If the whole party is incapacitated by the traps or leaving any unconscious party members behind, the victims awaken to find themselves in rooms in the Boar's Other Knuckle. Upon a search of their belongings, they notice that their most valuable item has been stolen (this will more than likely be their most valuable magic item). However, they have been bathed, their regular garments cleaned, and their bill at the Boars' Other Knuckle paid for the week. No one at the inn knows who brought them in or who paid for their accommodations. All anyone recalls is that the party was brought in unconscious and rooms were paid for them. If the party

tries to regain the trail, it will have been too long, and the aura will have faded. Do ~~NOT~~ strikethrough the **Loss of Valued Goods** section on the Adventure Record. Go to Conclusion: Too Late for the wrap-up.

ENCOUNTER 9: WHAT ITEM?

Having gained the trust of the Midnight Raven member Xavier Riverbend in Encounter 8, the party awaits the return of the Cup to them. As always, however, there is a complication. Read the following:

Riverbend moves his chair and knocks on the floor. A section of the stone floor opens up, and he yells down, "Bring up the swag; it looks like it's something we really don't want." After a moment, a voice yells back, "It's gone! Someone snuck in here and got it!"

At first, Riverbend is suspicious of the party, but a Diplomacy check (DC 10) calms him down. Riverbend then yells down the trap door to have his people search the premises; under no circumstances does he allow the party access to the lower level. After about two minutes, someone yells back that they left through the South entrance. Riverbend then escorts the party through the traps, frowning at the ineffectiveness of his guard animals, and leads the party to the southern part of the city block where he says the thieves trail should be around in this area. He also suggests that, if this is an evil item, then it may possess a strong aura so that *detect magic* or *detect evil* should be able to follow it. They will be able to pick up the aura in this case, and it will lead them through the Market Quarter to the North Gate and out towards the grove in Encounter 10.

If the party does not have the magical means to track the rogues, a Gather Information check (DC 10) reveals that two men and a woman were seen running from the block in the direction of the North Gate and in fact heard one of them mention heading for that gate. The two men match the description that Ovan gave the party in Encounter 4. If the party does not have anyone skilled in Gather Information, they can ask Riverbend to ask around the block, and he quickly comes up with the same answer. The guards at the North Gate also mention the same two men and a woman passed through the gate shortly before the party got here. From there, tracking with a Survival check (DC 10) finds their trail to Encounter 10.

If all else fails, Bethany shows up and tells the party that she saw the ruffians leave through the North Gate. She does not join in the pursuit – since she has a feeling that the party will be able to handle the group. From the North Gate, proceed with the conversation with the guards and continue on as noted above.

Development: If the party has gotten this far, they should have no problem getting to Encounter 10.

ENCOUNTER 10: THE END OF THE TRAIL

Refer to DM Aid: Map #2 for this encounter.

By whatever means available to them, the party should reach this encounter from Encounter 9.

The trail you follow leads you into a dense grove of oak trees. You eventually work your way through the trees to a small meadow. A tall, thin, woman is standing in its center, counting gold pieces back into a small bag on the ground. She has the look of one whose avarice is temporarily sated.

The woman is Servilyn, a displaced Sterich noble who was an ally of the now-dispatched rogue faction of the Corporation. She is the brains and support for this crew. The money she is counting is their payment for getting the Cup from the Midnight Ravens. The transaction has already occurred; the Cup has already been teleported away from the meadow to parts now unknown.

Also with her are two ex-Corporation members named Ghant and Vilya. While they are fraternal twins, they could not be more different in appearance. They are in the woods on either side of Servilyn and watching her count the gold.

Their ability to be hidden varies at each APL. At APL 6, they are using *elixirs of hiding* and *sneaking*. These are already accounted for in the stat blocks; each twin has three more vials of each *elixir* left. At APLs 8 and 10, they are using *invisibility* as cast from a wand by Servilyn in addition to the *elixirs*. At APL 12, along with the *elixirs*, the twins are currently *greater invisible* thanks to a wand in Servilyn's possession. In all cases, they will have five rounds left of whatever magic they are using.

At this point, you should make Spot and Listen checks for Ghant, Vilya, and Servilyn. If they spot the party, they launch a surprise round with Servilyn casting the first spells on her list below (see Tactics section) and the twins moving into flank on any target they see, preferably spellcasters.

Creatures: The three are professional thieves and killers with little mercy.

APL 6 (EL 10)

☛ **Ghant and Vilya (2):** male human Rog7; hp 42 each; see *Appendix 1*.

☛ **Servilyn:** female human Rog1/Sor6; hp 28; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 12)

☛ **Ghant and Vilya (2):** male human Rog9; hp 54 each; see *Appendix 2*.

☛ **Servilyn:** female human Rog1/Sor8; hp 36; see *Appendix 2*.

APL 10 (EL 14)

☛ **Ghant and Vilya (2):** male human Rog11; hp 66 each; see *Appendix 3*.

☛ **Servilyn:** female human Rog1/Sor10; hp 43; see *Appendix 3*.

APL 12 (EL 16)

☛ **Ghant and Vilya (2):** male human Rog13; hp 78 each; see *Appendix 4*.

☛ **Servilyn:** female human Rog1/Sor12; hp 51; see *Appendix 4*.

Tactics: Ghant and Vilya have five rounds left on their *elixirs* (or *invisibility* or *greater invisibility* depending on APL). They use that time to flank a PC spellcaster and sneak attack him or her before anyone casts *glitterdust*, see *invisibility*, or the like. Afterward, they try to catch opponents in sneak attacks, either by flanking or by using Improved Feint to deny targets their Dexterity bonus to AC.

Servilyn already has *mage armor* up (as a use of the *metamagic rod – lesser extend*) and *freedom of movement* cast from a scroll at APLs 10 and higher. Her sequence of attacks varies by APL:

- **APL 6:** *fireball*, *fireball*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *ray of enfeeblement*.
- **APL 8:** *Evard's black tentacles*, *fireball*, *fireball*, *ray of enfeeblement*.
- **APL 10:** *Evard's black tentacles*, *cloudkill*, *fireball*, *fireball*, *ray of enfeeblement*.
- **APL 12:** *Evard's black tentacles* along with quickened *ray of enfeeblement*, *fireball* along with quickened *ray of enfeeblement*, *fireball* along with optional quickened *glitterdust*, *ray of enfeeblement*.

She, of course, changes her spellcasting as needed. For example, she casts *glitterdust* if she is aware of invisible opponents or *expeditious retreat* if she needs mobility on the field.

All three of them suspect that the Corporation sent the PCs to wipe them out. Thus, they give and take no quarter. They fight as if their lives depend on it. If they see an opportunity to escape, they will take it.

Treasure: In addition to the equipment found on them, Servilyn has the payment made for the *Cup Insidious*. They were paid such that each PC's split will equal 50 gp x APL. This payment and their gear are listed in the Treasure Summary.

Development: If the party is successful, they will have up to three dead bodies to return to authorities in

Hochoch. Either the city watch or the Knights will take custody of the bodies for further investigation and thank the party for their efforts. If the party loses the final fight, they wake up in the grove with all of their gear intact as the villains will escape rather than try to loot the bodies of the PCs. Go to Conclusion: On Time.

CONCLUSION

ON TIME

This assumes that the party came out of Encounter 10, successful or not. Read the following:

The battle at the grove was intense, but this evil cup still escaped your grasp. You know that someone wanted it bad enough to send someone to kill for it. The search for now is at a dead end. Perhaps you will have a chance to get it back in the future.

PCs may want to report to various parties about what happened. They have enough information that would be valuable to certain parties as noted on the Adventure Record. Also, Ovan honors his word and pays the PCs; this is noted in the Treasure Summary.

TOO LATE

This conclusion is for those parties who have managed to fail in their negotiations with Xavier Riverbend in Encounter 9 and get attacked by the magic traps in that encounter.

You lost the trail, and the cup has escaped your grasp! Such evil should not remain intact; however, the search is at a dead end for now. Perhaps you will have a chance to redeem yourselves in the future.

Anyone in the party who was not left behind in the Ravens' lair should have the **Loss of Valued Goods** section on the Adventure Record struck through. In addition, if the party tries to tell the authorities, they will be told that what they have is insufficient for further investigation; strikethrough all sections of the Adventure Record that reward information with item access, etc. Finally, Ovan will honor his word and pay the PCs; this is noted in the Treasure Summary.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the

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

Encounter 6

Survive or disarm the trap.

APL 6: 240 xp.

APL 8: 300 xp.

APL 10: 360 xp.

APL 12: 420 xp.

Encounter 7

Defeat the guardian creatures.

APL 6: 180 xp.

APL 8: 240 xp.

APL 10: 300 xp.

APL 12: 360 xp.

Encounter 8 OR 10

Defeat or survive the trap OR defeat the ex-Corporation members.

APL 6: 300 xp.

APL 8: 360 xp.

APL 10: 420 xp.

APL 12: 480 xp.

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 6: 180 xp.

APL 8: 225 xp.

APL 10: 270 xp.

APL 12: 315 xp.

Total possible experience

APL 6: 900 xp.

APL 8: 1,125 xp.

APL 10: 1,350 xp.

APL 12: 1,575 xp.

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10

minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

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

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

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

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

Encounter 2:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 120 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 160 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 200 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 240 gp, M: 0 gp.

Encounter 6:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 60 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 80 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 120 gp, M: 0 gp.

Encounter 10:

APL 6: L: 63 gp, C: 300 gp, M: 2 *mithral bucklers* (85 gp each), 2 *mithral chain shirts* (92 gp each), 6 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 6 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2

tools of disarming and opening (425 gp each), +1 *mithral buckler* (168 gp), +1 *rapier* (194 gp), *metamagic rod – lesser extend* (250 gp).

APL 8: L: 10 gp, C: 400 gp, M: 3 +1 *mithral bucklers* (168 gp each), 2 +1 *mithral chain shirts* (175 gp each), 6 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 6 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2 *tools of disarming and opening* (425 gp each), 3 +1 *rapiers* (194 gp each), *metamagic rod – lesser extend* (250 gp), *cloak of charisma +2* (333 gp), *wand of invisibility* (CL 3rd, 10 charges) (75 gp).

APL 10: L: 10 gp, C: 500 gp, M: 3 +1 *mithral bucklers* (168 gp each), 2 +1 *mithral chain shirts* (175 gp each), 6 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 6 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2 *tools of disarming and opening* (425 gp each), 3 +1 *rapiers* (194 gp each), *metamagic rod – lesser extend* (250 gp), *cloak of charisma +2* (333 gp), *wand of invisibility* (CL 3rd, 10 charges) (75 gp), 2 *rings of release* (667 gp each), *ring of protection +2* (667 gp).

APL 12: L: 10 gp, C: 600 gp, M: 3 +1 *mithral bucklers* (168 gp each), 2 +1 *mithral chain shirts* (175 gp each), 6 *elixirs of hiding* (21 gp each), 6 *elixirs of sneaking* (21 gp each), 2 *tools of disarming and opening* (425 gp each), 3 +1 *rapiers* (194 gp each), *metamagic rod – lesser extend* (250 gp), *cloak of charisma +4* (1,333 gp), *wand of invisibility* (CL 3rd, 10 charges) (75 gp), 2 *rings of release* (667 gp each), 2 *amulets of natural armor +2* (667 gp each), 2 *boots of striding and springing* (458 gp each), *ring of protection +2* (667 gp), *wand of greater invisibility* (CL 7th, 5 charges) (175 gp).

Conclusion:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 120 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 160 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 200 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 240 gp, M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 6: L: 63 gp, C: 600 gp, M: 2,068 gp – Total: 2,731 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 10 gp, C: 800 gp, M: 3,196 gp – Total: 4,006 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 10 gp, C: 1,000 gp, M: 5,197 gp – Total: 6,207 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 10 gp, C: 1,200 gp, M: 8,622 gp – Total: 9,832 gp (3,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

🔑 **Tools of Disarming and Opening:** This set of tools appears indistinguishable from a masterwork set of thieves' tools. Once in use, however, they grant the user a +5 competence bonus on Disable Device and Open Lock checks, in addition to the standard +2 circumstance bonus masterwork thieves' tools normally offer. The tools, however, do not grant the ability to disarm magical traps.

Faint transmutation; CL: 5th; Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous item, *cat's grace*, *fox's cunning*; Market Price: 5,100 gp; Weight: 2 lbs.

🔑 **Ring of Release:** This silver ring allows the wearer to act as if under the effect of a *freedom of movement* spell, once a day, if attacked by any magic that restricts movement. Once activated, the wearer can move and attack normally for 70 minutes. The ring must be worn for 24 hours before the wearer gains the benefit of the ring. Going underwater does not activate the ring; it only activates when the wearer is attacked as noted above.

Moderate abjuration; CL: 7th; Prerequisites: Forge Ring, *freedom of movement*; Market Price: 8,000 gp; Weight: 0 lbs.

👤 **Favor of Parwyn Amastacia:** You have performed a valuable service for the elven merchant Parwyn Amastacia, who has connections with every elven noble house and enclave in the Sheldomar Valley. Through his connections, he can grant you access (Frequency: Adventure) to one of the following items immediately (circle the item selected): *boots of elvenkind*, *cloak of elvenkind*, *elven chain*. If this PC is an elf or half-elf and belongs to a regional elven metaorganization, this access is upgraded to Frequency: Metaregional.

Name of Organization: _____

👤 **Favor of the Knights of the Watch/Dispatch:** By reporting the events of this adventure to the Knights, you have gained their favor. If you are not a member and are a human, dwarf, or half-elf, the Knights will grant a recommendation for membership into their ranks and grant you access (Frequency: Adventure) to purchase the following item immediately: *wand of cure light wounds* (CL 1st). In addition, members of the metaorganization gain these additional (cumulative) benefits:

If this PC is a Squire, this access is upgraded to Frequency: Metaregional. If this PC is a Senior Squire, you gain access (Frequency: Metaregional) to *eyes of the eagle* as well. If you are a full Knight, you get access (Frequency: Metaregional) to *ring of sustenance* as well.

👤 **Thick as Thieves:** For reporting the events of this adventure to a thieves' guild metaorganization to which you are a member, you gain one Influence Point with that organization. Furthermore, if you provide that

organization with a set of *tools of disarming and opening* (found in this adventure), you gain access (Frequency: Metaregional), after 3 TUs have passed, to purchase those tools. If you instead buy the tools via the Frequency: Adventure access below, you do not gain the Frequency: Metaregional access.

Name of Organization: _____

👤 **Loss of Valued Goods:** By falling victim to the Midnight Ravens, you have had your most valuable item on your person stolen. An anonymous note then appears, offering to return your item for the item's sale price providing you send them the money some time between this AR and the AR three adventures hence. Alternately, you can agree to work for the Midnight Ravens doing menial tasks at the rate of 1 TU per 1,000 gp of the item's sale price (round all fractions up). A combination of TUs and gp is allowed. If you don't pay the TUs/gps in time, the item is forever lost.

Item stolen: _____

TUs Spent: _____ GP Spent: _____

Item Access

APL 6:

- +1 Mithral Buckler (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Elixir of Hiding (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Elixir of Sneaking (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Metamagic Rod, Lesser Extend (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Mithral Buckler (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Mithral Chain Shirt (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Tools of Disarming and Opening (Adventure; See Above)

APL 8 (all of APL 6 plus the following):

- +1 Mithral Chain Shirt (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Wand of Invisibility (CL 3rd; Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)

APL 10 (all of APLs 6, 8 plus the following):

- Ring of Protection +2 (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Ring of Release (Adventure; See Above)

APL 12 (all of APLs 6, 8, 10 plus the following):

- Amulet of Natural Armor +2 (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Boots of Striding and Springing (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)

- Cloak of Charisma +4 (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Wand of Greater Invisibility (CL 7th; Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)

ENCOUNTER 10

Ghant and Vilya: male human Rog7; CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 7d6+14; hp 42; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +1 shield); BAB/Grp: +5/+5; Atk: +8 melee (1d6+2/18-20, masterwork rapier); Full Atk: +8 melee (1d6+2/18-20, masterwork rapier); SA Sneak Attack +4d6; SQ Evasion (Ex), Trap Sense (Ex) +2 bonus to Reflex save and +2 Dodge bonus to AC vs. Traps, Trapfinding, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +1, Disable Device +17, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +5, Hide +13, Intimidate +1, Jump +3, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +18, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +12, Speak Language +1, Spot +10, Tumble +13; Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: mithral buckler, mithral chain shirt, #3 elixirs of hiding, #3 elixirs of sneaking, masterwork rapier, tools of disarming and opening, traveler's outfit.

Physical Description: Ghant and Vilya are of Oeridian descent and fraternal twins. While they have similar abilities, they have completely different descriptions. Ghant is a tall and obese male with dark, curly hair and brown eyes. Vilya is short with average build. His brown hair is balding, and he has brown eyes. Ghant is calm and quiet, giving people the impression that he is a simple oaf. Vilya has the darting eyes of a hunted rat, always looking for danger.

Servilyn: female human Rog1/Sor6; CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+6d4+7; hp 28; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 shield); BAB/Grp: +3/+1; Atk: +2 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +2 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ +4 to Concentration to use spell or spell-like ability on the defensive, Summon Familiar, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +12, Concentration +11, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Search +6, Spellcraft +14, Spot +4, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +7; Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Practiced Spellcaster*, Simple Weapon Proficiency. *Complete Arcane.

Sorcerer Spells Known: (6/6/6/4; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 - acid splash, dancing lights, detect magic, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st -

critical strike*, expeditious retreat, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement; 2nd - darkness, invisibility; 3rd - fireball. (one use of mage armor already accounted for). *Complete Adventurer.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, +1 rapier, noble's outfit, spell component pouch, metamagic rod - lesser extend, thieves tools.

Physical Description: Servilyn is a tall, slim, pale Oeridian woman. Her black hair is very short, cut like a young boy. Her gray eyes are piercing and haughty, as if she always expects to get what she wants.

ENCOUNTER 10

Ghant and Vilya: male human Rog9; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 9d6+18; hp 54; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+4 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield); BAB/Grp: +6/+6; Atk: +10 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +10/+5 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +5d6; SQ Evasion (Ex), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked except by a rogue of 13 level), Trap Sense (Ex) +3 bonus to Reflex save and +3 Dodge bonus to AC vs. Traps, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +18, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +1, Disable Device +19, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +8, Hide +16, Intimidate +1, Jump +3, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +21, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +14, Speak Language +1, Spot +12, Tumble +16; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 rapier, #3 elixirs of hiding, #3 elixirs of sneaking, tools of disarming and opening, traveler's outfit.

Physical Description: Ghant and Vilya are of Oeridian descent and fraternal twins. While they have similar abilities, they have completely different descriptions. Ghant is a tall and obese male with dark, curly hair and brown eyes. Vilya is short with average build. His brown hair is balding, and he has brown eyes. Ghant is calm and quiet, giving people the impression that he is a simple oaf. Vilya has the darting eyes of a hunted rat, always looking for danger.

Servilyn: female human Rog1/Sor8; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+8d4+9; hp 36; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 shield); BAB/Grp: +4/+2; Atk: +3 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +3 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ +4 to Concentration to use spell or spelllike ability on the defensive, Summon Familiar, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +17, Concentration +13, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +7, Hide +6, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +6, Spellcraft +16, Spot +4, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +9; Arcane Preparation*, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Practiced Spellcaster*, Simple Weapon Proficiency. *Complete Arcane.

Sorcerer Spells Known: (6/6/7/6/4; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0 - acid splash, dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt

undead, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st - critical strike*, expeditious retreat, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd - darkness, glitterdust, invisibility; 3rd - fireball, gaseous form; 4th - Evard's black tentacles. (one use of mage armor already accounted for). *Complete Adventurer.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, wand of invisibility (CL 3rd, 10 charges), cloak of charisma +2, +1 rapier, noble's outfit, metamagic rod - lesser extend, spell component pouch, thieves tools.

Physical Description: Servilyn is a tall, slim, pale Oeridian woman. Her black hair is very short, cut like a young boy. Her gray eyes are piercing and haughty, as if she always expects to get what she wants.

ENCOUNTER 10

Ghant and Vilya: male human Rog11; CR 11; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+22; hp 66; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+4 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield); BAB/Grp: +8/+8; Atk: +12 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +12/+7 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +6d6; SQ Evasion (Ex), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked except by a rogue of 15 level), Slippery Mind (Ex), Trap Sense (Ex) +3 bonus to Reflex save and +3 Dodge bonus to AC vs. Traps, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +20, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +1, Disable Device +21, Disguise +15, Escape Artist +10, Hide +18, Intimidate +1, Jump +3, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +18, Open Lock +23, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +16, Speak Language +1, Spot +14, Tumble +18; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, ring of release, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 rapier, #3 elixirs of hiding, #3 elixirs of sneaking, tools of disarming and opening, traveler's outfit.

Physical Description: Ghant and Vilya are fraternal twins and, while they have similar abilities and are of Oeridian descent, they have completely different descriptions. Ghant is a tall and obese male with dark curly hair and brown eyes. Vilya is short with average build. His brown hair is balding and he has brown eyes. Ghant is calm and quiet, giving people the impression that he is a simple oaf. Vilya has the darting eyes of a hunted rat, always looking for danger.

Servilyn: female human Rog1/Sor10; CR 11; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+10d4+11; hp 43; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +2 shield, +2 deflection); BAB/Grp: +5/+3; Atk: +4 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +4 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ +4 to Concentration to use spell or spelllike ability on the defensive, Summon Familiar, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +19, Concentration +15, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +7, Hide +6, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +6, Spellcraft +18, Spot +4, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +9; Arcane Preparation*, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Practiced Spellcaster*, Simple Weapon Proficiency. *Complete Arcane.

Sorcerer Spells Known: (6/6/7/7/6/4; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0 - acid splash, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st - critical strike*, expeditious retreat, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd - darkness, glitterdust, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow; 3rd - legion's curse of impending blades**, fireball, gaseous form; 4th - enervation, Evard's black tentacles; 5th - cloudkill. (one use of mage armor already accounted for). *Complete Adventurer; **Miniatures Handbook.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, ring of protection +2, cloak of charisma +2, +1 rapier, noble's outfit, metamagic rod - lesser extend, spell component pouch, thieves tools, wand of invisibility (CL 3rd, 10 charges).

Physical Description: Servilyn is a tall, slim, pale Oeridian woman. Her black hair is very short, cut like a young boy. Her gray eyes are piercing and haughty, as if she always expects to get what she wants.

ENCOUNTER 10

Ghant and Vilya: male human Rog13; CR 13; Medium humanoid; HD 13d6+26; hp 78; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+4 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield, +2 natural); BAB/Grp: +9/+9; Atk: +13 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +13/+8 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +7d6; SQ Improved Evasion (Ex), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked except by a rogue of 17 level), Slippery Mind (Ex), Trap Sense (Ex) +4 bonus to Reflex save and +4 Dodge bonus to AC vs. Traps, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +22, Bluff +15, Diplomacy +1, Disable Device +23, Disguise +17, Escape Artist +12, Hide +20, Intimidate +1, Jump +8, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +20, Open Lock +25, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +18, Speak Language +1, Spot +16, Tumble +20; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Light Armor Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, amulet of natural armor +2, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 rapier, #3 elixirs of hiding, #3 elixirs of sneaking, ring of release, tools of disarming and opening, traveler's outfit, boots of striding and springing.

Physical Description: Ghant and Vilya are of Oeridian descent and fraternal twins. While they have similar abilities, they have completely different descriptions. Ghant is a tall and obese male with dark, curly hair and brown eyes. Vilya is short with average build. His brown hair is balding, and he has brown eyes. Ghant is calm and quiet, giving people the impression that he is a simple oaf. Vilya has the darting eyes of a hunted rat, always looking for danger.

Servilyn: female human Rog1/Sor12; CR 13; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+12d4+13; hp 51; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +2 shield, +2 deflection); BAB/Grp: +6/+4; Atk: +5 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); Full Atk: +5/+0 melee (1d6/18-20, +1 rapier); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ +4 to Concentration to use spell or spelllike ability on the defensive, Summon Familiar, Trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 23.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +22, Concentration +17, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +8, Hide +6, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Profession (criminal) +2, Search +6, Spellcraft +20, Spot +4, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +10; Arcane Preparation*, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Practiced Spellcaster*, Quicken Spell, Simple Weapon Proficiency. *Complete Arcane.

Sorcerer Spells Known: (6/6/7/7/7/4/3; base DC = 16 + spell level): 0 - acid splash, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st - critical strike*, expeditious retreat, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd - blur, darkness, glitterdust, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow; 3rd - legion's curse of impending blades**, fireball, gaseous form, greater magic weapon; 4th - enervation, Evard's black tentacles, wall of ice; 5th - cloudkill, teleport; 6th - chain lightning. (one use of mage armor already accounted for). *Complete Adventurer; **Miniatures Handbook.

Arcane Spells Prepared: (0/0/0/0/0/2/1; base DC = 16 + spell level): 5th – quickened ray of enfeeblement (x2); 6th – quickened glitterdust.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, cloak of charisma +4, +1 rapier, noble's outfit, ring of protection +2, rod of metamagic - lesser extend, spell component pouch, thieves tools, wand of greater invisibility (CL 7th, 5 charges), wand of invisibility (CL 3rd, 10 charges).

Physical Description: Servilyn is a tall, slim, pale Oeridian woman. Her black hair is very short, cut like a young boy. Her gray eyes are piercing and haughty, as if she always expects to get what she wants.

APPENDIX 5 – ALL APLS

ENCOUNTER 1

Blake Ovan a.k.a. Blake Sampleson: male human Exp8/Rog2; CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 10d6 +20; hp 60; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +4 armor, +1 shield); BAB/Grp: +7/+7; Atk: +8 melee (1d6+1/18-20, masterwork rapier); Full Atk: +8/+3 melee (1d6+1/18-20, masterwork rapier); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ Evasion (Ex), Trapfinding; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +17, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +21, Disguise +2, Gather Information +13, Hide +1, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (local [Sheldomar Valley MR]) +9, Move Silently +1, Open Lock +10, Search +14, Sense Motive +1, Spot +1, Survival +2; Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Light Armor Proficiency, Nimble Fingers, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Knowledge (history)).

Possessions: chain shirt, goggles of night, masterwork buckler, traveler's outfit, masterwork rapier, masterwork thieves tools.

Physical Description: Blake Ovan is a bronze-skinned man whose dark hair has been bleached by many hours under a hot sun. He is a lean man, but not emaciated. His face, marked by overexposure to the elements, does not betray his actual age, which is actually 28 years old. Ovan has always been guided by two things: his desire for history and his innate laziness. Though very talented in his knowledge of history and other cultures, he basically coasted his way through the Academy of Lore, doing only what he needed to do to graduate. Ovan does not concern himself with moral issues of good vs. evil or law vs. chaos. He has been known from time to time to fall in with the wrong crowd and has at times smuggled artifacts and other valuable items to desperate clients. Ovan is a very risk-averse individual who only does brave things when either his life or a large paycheck is on the line. He is fluent in Common, Ancient Suloise, Draconic, and Flan.

Parwyn Amastacia: male elf Brd15; CR 15; Medium humanoid; HD 15d6; hp 67; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+2 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield, +1 natural, +1 deflection); BAB/Grp: +11/+10; Atk: +11 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 merciful defending rapier); Full Atk: +11/+6/+1 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 merciful defending rapier); SQ +2 racial saving throw bonus against enchantment spells or effects., An elf who merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it., Bardic knowledge (+17), Bardic music 15/day, Countersong (Su), Fascinate (Sp), Immunity to magic

sleep effects., Inspire Competence (Su), Inspire Courage (Su) +3, Inspire Greatness (Su), Inspire Heroics (Su), Suggestion (Sp); AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +20, Balance +4, Bluff +28, Diplomacy +34, Disguise +10, Gather Information +26, Intimidate +12, Jump +2, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (local [Core]) +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12, Knowledge (local [Sheldomar Valley MR]) +13, Listen +2, Perform (oratory) +19, Search +4, Sense Motive +20, Speak Language +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +2, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +9; Combat Expertise, Improved Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Leadership, Light Armor Proficiency, Negotiator, Persuasive, Shield Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

Bard Spells Known: (4/5/4/4/4/3; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0 - detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic; 1st - alarm, charm person, comprehend languages, expeditious retreat; 2nd - blur, calm emotions, detect thoughts, glitterdust; 3rd - charm monster, daylight, gaseous form, see invisibility; 4th - dominate person, freedom of movement, hold monster, greater invisibility; 5th - greater blink (Complete Arcane), greater heroism, shadow evocation.

Possessions: +1 merciful defending rapier, circlet of persuasion, +1 mithral buckler, +1 mithral chain shirt, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of charisma +2, helm of comprehending languages and reading magic, noble's outfit, ring of protection +1, ring of sustenance, vest of resistance +3 (Complete Arcane).

Physical Description: Amastacia is a male high elf approaching middle-age. He stands 5' 5" tall and weighs 165 pounds. He has brown hair and brown eyes. His demeanor is both cheerful and confident. Amastacia carries himself as one accustomed to getting what he wants. He does not concern himself with religious issues; he treats all of his customers equally. Amastacia has a slightly lawful tendency as would be expected of one who deals in contracts and has been known to attend temples of Zilchus to further his business connections in the human world. He is not a coward, but sees violence as bad for business. Amastacia had ties with the Gran March organization known as The Corporation, but left after he heard that they were robbing military targets. He will defend himself with his rapier, but will try not to kill anyone as murder is also bad for business. Amastacia is fluent in Common, Elven, Gnome, Orc, Dwarven, CorporateSpeak, Flan, and Keoish.

Bethany Grenda: female human Rog10; CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 10d6+20; hp 60; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield, +1 deflection); BAB/Grp: +7/+6; Atk: +7 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +6 melee (1d6, sap); Full Atk: +7/+2 melee

(1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +6/+1 melee (1d6, sap); SA Sneak Attack +5d6; SQ Evasion (Ex), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked except by a rogue of 14 level), Slippery Mind (Ex), Trap Sense (Ex) +3 bonus to Reflex save and +3 Dodge bonus to AC vs. Traps, Trapfinding; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +19, Diplomacy +21, Disable Device +13, Disguise +12, Gather Information +19, Hide +15, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Knowledge (local [Sheldomar Valley MR]) +13, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +3, Search +16, Sense Motive +13, Speak Language +1, Spot +1; Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Investigator, Iron Will, Light Armor Proficiency, Persuasive, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, cloak of charisma +2, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 rapier, amulet of health +2, gloves of dexterity +2, hat of disguise, noble's outfit, ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +1, sap.

Physical Description: Grenda is an attractive female human of Flan descent. She is twenty-five years old, stands 5' 8" tall, and weighs about 125 pounds. She has red hair naturally and green eyes, though she can appear as anyone with her *hat of disguise*. Grenda is a mid-level member of The Corporation, specializing in reconnaissance and infiltration. She is an expert on the various organizations within the Sheldomar Valley and can infiltrate any of them. Her more recent missions have taken her to Hochoch to provide intelligence on the city for possible Corporate acquisition. Grenda is fluent in Common, CorporateSpeak, Flan, and Giant.

ENCOUNTER 8

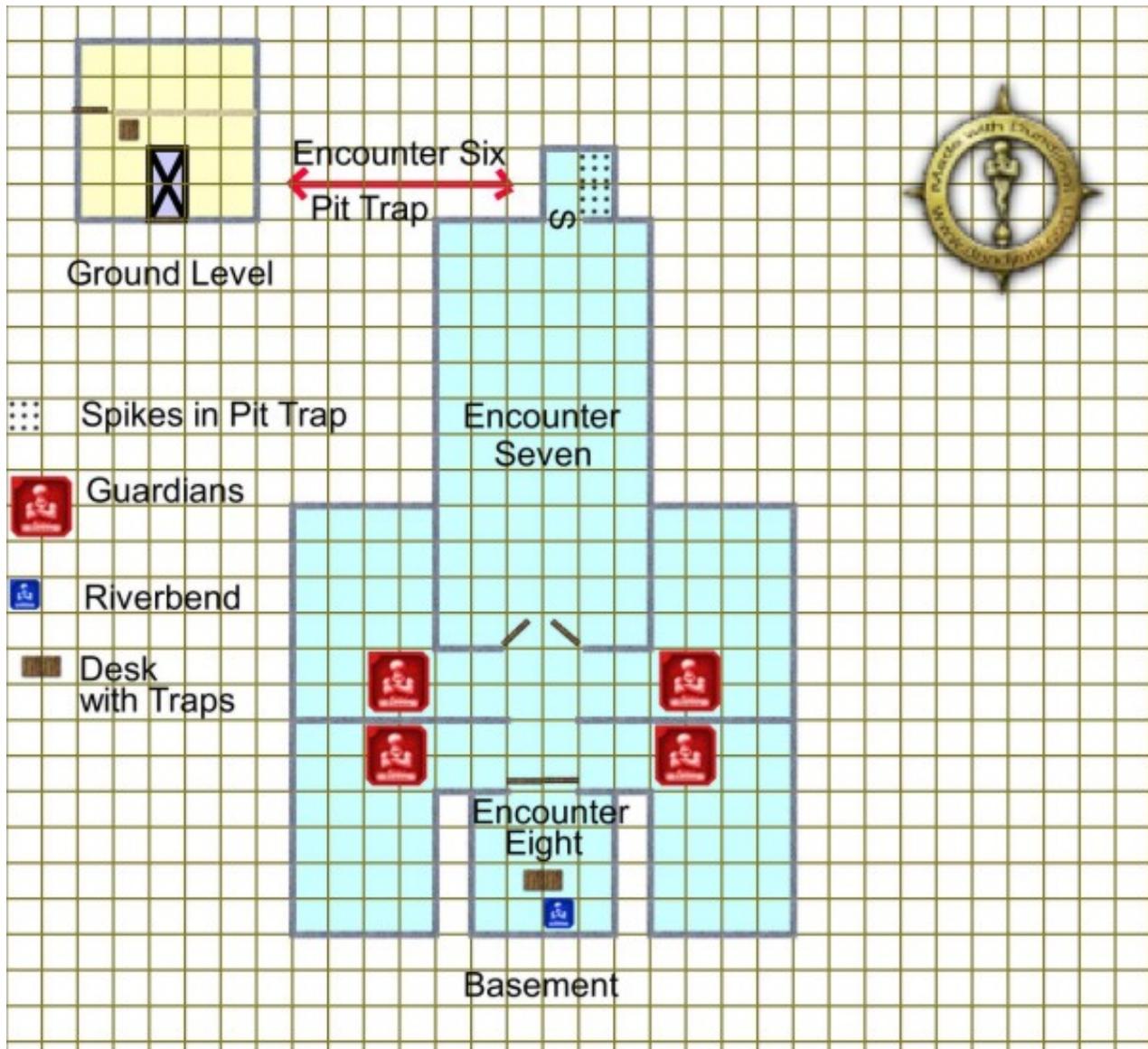
Xavier Riverbend: male halfling Rog10; CR 10; Small humanoid; HD 10d6+20; hp 60; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 16, flat-footed 24 (+1 size, +5 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield, +1 natural); BAB/Grp: +7/+2; Atk: +11 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +10 melee (1d6, sap); Full Atk: +11/+6 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +10/+5 melee (1d6, sap); SA Sneak Attack +5d6; SQ +1 racial bonus on all saving throws, +2 morale bonus on saving throws against fear, Improved Evasion (Ex), Improved Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked except by a rogue of 14 level), Trap Sense (Ex) +3 bonus to Reflex save and +3 Dodge bonus to AC vs. Traps, Trapfinding; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Balance +20, Bluff +15, Climb +4, Diplomacy +19, Disable Device +9, Disguise +17, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Intimidate +17, Jump +11, Knowledge (local [Sheldomar Valley MR]) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +12, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +20, Tumble +18; Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Light Armor Proficiency, Quick Draw, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: +1 mithral buckler, gloves of dexterity +2, +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 rapier, amulet of natural armor +1, boots of striding and springing, cloak of charisma +2, small peasant's outfit, ring of mind shielding, ring of release, sap.

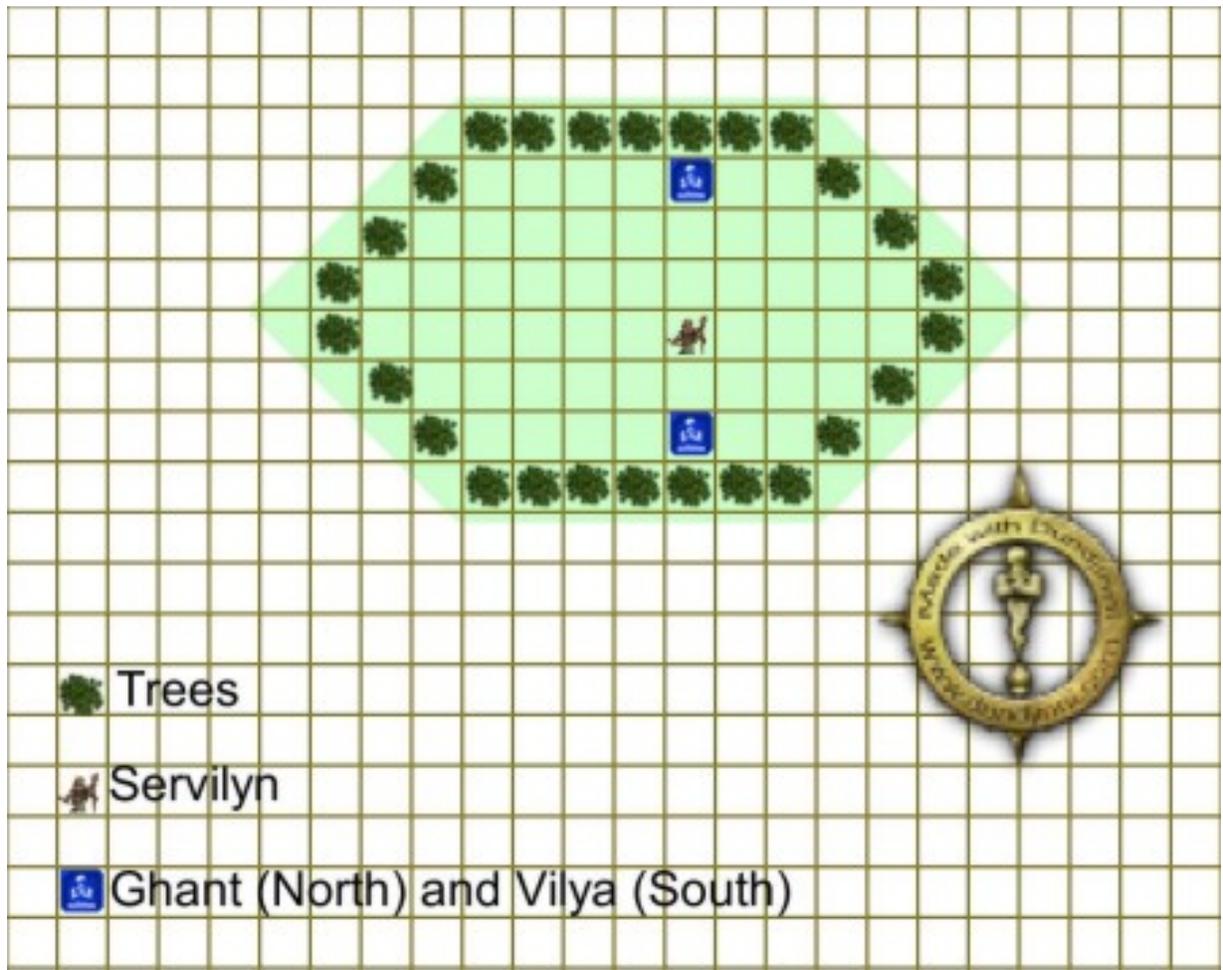
Physical Description: Riverbend is tall, slender, wiry halfling with darkly blond hair and brown eyes. He worked his way through the ranks of the Midnight Ravens, starting out as a simple guttersnipe pickpocket. He now leads enforcement teams who make sure that those who owe the Ravens pay the Ravens. Riverbend is a shrewd negotiator and has a keen sense for detecting lies as well as spreading them. He speaks Common, Flan, Giant, and Halfling.

DM AID: MAP #1 – MIDNIGHT RAVENS NEST



Note: The guardians are different sizes at different APLs.

DM AID: MAP #2 – GROVE OUTSIDE OF HOCHOCH



DM AID – NEW RULES ITEMS

NEW FEATS

Arcane Preparation (*Complete Arcane*)

You can prepare an arcane spell ahead of time, just as a wizard does.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast arcane spells without preparation.

Benefit: Each day, you can use one or more of your spell slots to prepare spells you know, usually for the purpose of applying a metamagic feat to the spell – but without an increase in its casting time. Preparing a spell uses a spell slot of the appropriate level, and once prepared, that slot can't be used for anything else until the prepared spell is cast.

Normal: Spellcasters who cast arcane spells without preparation (such as sorcerers and bards) who apply a metamagic feat to a spell must cast it as a full-round action instead of a standard action.

Energy Substitution (*Complete Arcane*)

You can modify an energy-based spell to use another type of energy instead.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, any metamagic feat.

Benefits: Choose one type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, or fire). You can then modify any spell with an energy descriptor to use the chosen type of energy instead. An energy substituted spell uses a spell slot of the spell's normal level. The spell's descriptor changes to the new energy type – for example, a *fireball* spell composed of cold energy is an evocation [cold] spell.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times, choosing a different type of energy each time.

Nonlethal Substitution (*Complete Arcane*)

You can modify an energy spell to deal nonlethal damage.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, any metamagic feat.

Benefits: Choose one type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, or fire). You can then modify any spell with the chosen descriptor to deal nonlethal damage instead of normal energy damage. The nonlethal spell works normally in all respects except the type of damage dealt – for example, a nonlethal fireball has the same range and area, but since it deals nonlethal damage instead of energy damage, it will not damage objects or set fire to combustibles in the area. A nonlethal spell uses a spell slot one level higher than the spell's normal level.

Practiced Spellcaster (*Complete Divine*)

Choose a spellcasting class that you possess. Your spells cast from that class are more powerful.

Prerequisite: Spellcraft 4 ranks.

Benefit: Your caster level for the chosen spellcasting class increases by +4. This can't increase your caster level beyond your HD. However, even if you can't benefit from the full bonus immediately, if you later gain noncaster-level HD you may be able to apply the rest of the bonus.

For example, a human 5th-level cleric/3rd-level fighter who selects this feat would increase his cleric caster level from 5th to 8th (since he has 8 HD). If he later gained a fighter level, he would gain the remainder of the bonus and his cleric caster level would become 9th (since he now has 9 HD).

A character with two or more spellcasting classes (such as a bard/sorcerer or ranger/druid) must choose which class gains the feat's effect.

This does not affect your spells per day or spells known. It only increases your caster level, which would help you penetrate SR and increase the duration and other effects of your spells.

Special: You may select this feat multiple times. Each time you choose it, you must apply it to a different spellcasting class. For instance, a 4th-level cleric, 5th-level wizard who had selected this feat twice would cast cleric spells as an 8th-level caster and wizard spells as a 9th-level caster.

NEW ITEMS

Vest of Resistance (Complete Arcane)

These garments offer magic protection in the form of a +1 to +5 bonus on all saving throws. Faint abjuration; CL: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, creator's CL must be at least three times the vest's bonus; **Market Price:** 1,000 gp (+1), 4,000 gp (+2), 9,000 gp (+3), 16,000 gp (+4), 25,000 gp (+5); **Weight:** 1 lb.

NEW SPELLS

Blink, Greater (Complete Arcane)

Transmutation

Level: Brd 5, Sor/Wiz 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level (D)

This spell functions like *blink*, except you have control over the timing of your “blinking” back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane. You can also ready an action to *blink* away from any physical or magical attack, with the attack missing automatically unless it also affects ethereal targets (as a force effect does). While *blinking*, you have no chance of interfering with your own attacks or your own spells. When moving through solid objects, you do not risk materializing inside one unless you actually end your movement there, in which case you materialize and are shunted off to the nearest open space, taking 1d6 points of damage per 5 feet traveled in this manner.

Critical Strike (Complete Adventurer)

Divination
Level: Assassin 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 swift action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round

While this spell is in effect, your melee attacks are more likely to strike a foe’s vital areas. Whenever you make a melee attacks against a flanked foe or against a foe denied its Dexterity bonus, you deal an extra 1d6 points of damage, your weapon’s threat range is doubled (as if under the effect of *keen edge*), and you gain a +4 insight bonus on rolls made to confirm critical hits. The increased threat range granted by this spell doesn’t stack with any other effect that increases your weapon’s threat range. Creatures immune to sneak attacks are immune to the extra damage dealt by your attacks.

Curse of Impending Blades, Legion’s (Miniatures Handbook)

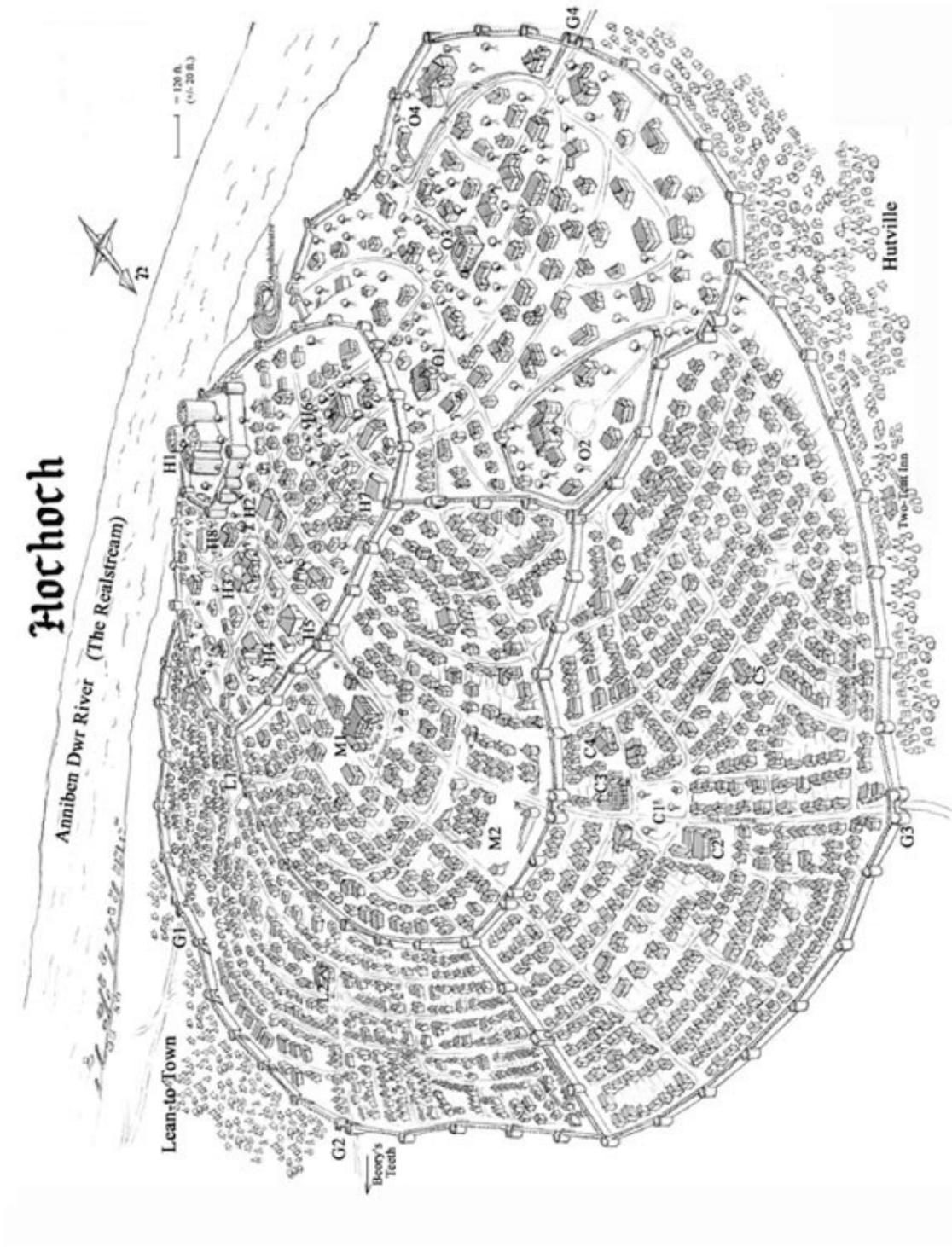
Necromancy
Level: Brd 3, Rgr 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: Enemies in a 20 ft. radius burst
Duration: 1 min./level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

The subjects of this spell have a hard time avoiding attacks, sometimes even seeming to stumble into harm’s way. The subjects of this spell take a -2 penalty to AC. The curse cannot be dispelled, but it can be removed with a *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse*, or *wish* spell.

Arcane Material Component: A nail through a piece of leather.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1: MAP OF HOCHSCH

(Created by Jose Ortiz)



PLAYER HANDOUT #2: KEY TO THE MAP OF HOCHOCH

Gates:

- G1 – River Gate
- G2 – Shalm’s Gate
- G3 – North Gate
- G4 – Oyt Gate

Low Quarter:

- L1 – The Broken Drum Inn
- L2 – The Cracked Cup

The Commons:

- C1 – Iowerth Square
- C2 – The Boar’s Knuckle (condemned)
- C3 – The Boar’s Other Knuckle
- C4 – Company of Giant Slayers Hall
- C5 – The White Stag Inn

Market Ward:

- M1 – The Giant’s Hearth Inn
- M2 – Market Square (“Broken Wall”)

Old City:

- O1 – Old Oak Tavern
- O2 – Bedwyn the Fat’s Estate
- O3 – Knights of the Watch Chapterhouse
- O4 – Sierra Blackblade’s Estate

Hilltop:

- H1 – Caer Dwr Gwyldy (Waterwatch Castle)
- H2 – Trevol Llys (Town Hall)
- H3 – Temple of Pelor
- H4 – Temple of St. Cuthbert
- H5 – Temple of Allitur
- H6 – Temple of Ehlonna
- H7 – Wayfarer’s Union House
- H8 – The Brenin’s Signet Inn

CRITICAL EVENTS SUMMARY

SHE5-04 A CUP O'ERTURNED

Please complete this form, for tables running before 11/15/2005, and return it to Will Dover at aeontrin@aol.com.

1. Did the party get to the final encounter?

2. If they did not, did any of them lose all of their possessions?

3. Were they successful in helping out the elven merchant Parwyn Amastacia?

4. Did the party recover the *tools of disarming and opening*?

5. Did any in the party give the *tools of disarming and opening* to a rogues' organization in the Sheldomar Valley?

6. Did the party do anything with Blake Ovan, the wayward Dustdigger?

7. Did the party inform any organization of the events in this adventure? If so, list which organizations were notified.

8. Did the party have fun with this adventure?

9. For players in Geoff and Gran March: were the city of Hochoch and its citizens represented accurately and how can its descriptions be improved for future adventures?