

ONW7-01

# The Scars of War

## A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK® Onnwal Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

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The War of Liberation may be over, but the long years of conflict have left their scars, both on the landscape, in the shape of the terrible shell of burned Scant, and on the shattered lives of the people. Will you enter the former in an attempt to save the latter? And if you do, will you survive the fell power that still dwells in Scant, wielding an artefact from Onnwal's past? An adventure for characters level 1 – 10 (APLs 2-8).

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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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, players 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, 2008.

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### PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

### PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix 1 for full information on NPCs and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix 1 is split by APL

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

this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

## 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), use the table below to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Animals with different CRs are determined separately using the chart below; then, take the highest CR animal (or animals), and add 2 (drop fractions). A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type.

	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	5	6	7
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
7	7	9	10	11	

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round 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.

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

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

## TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one round Regional adventure, set in Onnwal. Characters native to Onnwal pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

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

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

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

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In 595CY the army of the Free State of Onnwal, with the aid of many mercenaries and adventurers, finally stormed the great fortress city of Scant, the last redoubt of the hated Scarlet Brotherhood. Casualties were dreadful, as the Brotherhood poured all their magic and troops into the defence of the city, but the Onnwallons persevered. Just as it seemed that they would triumph, some fell power was released from the ancient caverns beneath the city. A wave of ebon flame swept the city, consuming the defenders and burning the very stone of the buildings themselves. Forewarned of the danger by brave heroes, Szek Destron

ordered a retreat, claimed victory, and interdicted the city for the safety of the nation. The dead were hastily buried, and the blackened shell of Scant abandoned. What was left behind, however, was a story for another day, and that day has arrived.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs encounter a woman and her companion who are attempting to recover the body of the woman's husband who fell before the walls of Scant. Hopelessly out of their depth, they beseech the PCs for aid. Venturing up to the city walls, the PCs discover the graves empty - some force is raising the bodies of the fallen, and drawing them into the burned city. If the PCs follow the trail, they must fight their way past several ambushes by undead, before discovering information that could be vital to the safety of Onnwal. Along the way, they may be able to bring some comfort to the distraught widow.

## PREPARATION FOR PLAY

### The Szek and the Rod

Throughout this scenario, the players may have cause to ask what their characters know about the previous Szek of Onnwal, or the Rod of Onnwal. Let them make the appropriate knowledge checks, and consult the information below. Characters native to Onnwal will automatically know the DC 15 results.

**The Previous Szek** – Knowledge (local: Splintered Suns) or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks will reveal the following information. Residents of Onnwal get a +5 circumstance bonus and may attempt the check untrained.

DC 15 – The previous Szek was Eward Destron, father of the current Szek, Jian.

DC 16 – The Szek was presumed killed during the Scarlet Brotherhood invasion.

DC 20 – The few survivors who escaped Scant brought rumours of great magical battles in the palace. The Szek's body was never found.

**The Rod of Onnwal** – Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (local: Splintered Suns) checks will reveal the following information.

DC 15 – The Rod of Onnwal was a powerful magical staff that served as the symbol of authority of the Szek.

DC 20 – Some say the archmage Bigby had a hand in its construction, but others claim that it had existed for centuries before Bigby came to Onnwal.

DC 25 – The Rod had the power to control winds, and had been used in great sea battles to aid victory for the Onnwal navy.

## INTRODUCTION

The adventure begins with the PCs on their way back from Harman, the rich town across the bay from Scant. Perhaps they have been working as caravan guards, or have had other business in the town. Read the following to the players:

*The long months since the Liberation have almost been an anticlimax after so many years of war. Instead of a triumphal march through the city of Scant, the people of Onnwal have returned to their cities and farms, and tried to get on with their lives. The Scarlet Brotherhood are gone, the Ahlissans are here, and everyone waits for the reckoning that must surely come as the old order tries to reassert itself after years of expedient alliances.*

*Still, there is no lack of work for adventurers, even with the war over. The Brotherhood left plenty of surprises in their wake, while some of the mercenary bands who came for the Liberation have turned to banditry. And even before the war, Onnwal was a wild, dangerous land, with its own share of native dangers. So, although it may not exactly be slaying dragons, there is plenty of work escorting the rich caravans carrying materials into Harman, the rich suburb across the great bay from Scant. The town suffered great damage during the Liberation, and the merchants and nobles, having reclaimed their villas, are spending much of their remaining family wealth restoring them to their former glory.*

*The gleaming roofs and rich towers of Harman will rise again, and there is the scent of prosperity and wealth in the air. But all the time there is a spectre at the feast - the great, blackened scar of Scant, brooding across the bay, a constant reminder of the great price Onnwal paid for its freedom. Your business complete, it is a relief to get away from Harman, heading back inland with a group of companions, some familiar, others perhaps unknown to you.*

Have the players introduce and describe their characters. The group is travelling on an established road that leads inland from the bay to the fortress of the Gates of the Gildenlea. The terrain consists of low hills with small patches of woodland.

If any of the players do not know the story of the Liberation of Scant and the burning of the city, give them the information contained in the adventure introduction.

## ENCOUNTER 1: OUT OF THEIR DEPTH

As the group passes through a small patch of woodland, they come across a couple of humans pursued by a group of undead. Those scouting ahead or surveying the route with animals or magic can easily spot the chase - adapt the text below appropriately. Otherwise, read the following:

*The trees are heavy with foliage, and the bushes on either side of the road grow thickly. Pushing through them would take an effort, but that is exactly what someone off to your left appears to be doing. You can hear yelps of terror and pain over the snapping of branches. At least two people appear to be heading towards you with some urgency. And there is a curious trundling sound that you can't quite place...*

Allow the PCs to take a round's worth of action, then read the following:

*Bursting onto the road come two figures, both human. One is a middle-aged brown-haired woman, wearing a cheap travelling cloak, with a look of terror on her face. The other is an older man, wearing a faded and stained uniform of a soldier in the Onnwal army. He is pushing before him a rickety wheelbarrow. The woman's face contorts from fear to confusion as she takes in the unexpected site of travellers. Panting heavily, she manages to croak out "Behind us...they're coming...things!" Indeed, even as she speaks, you can hear more crashing in the undergrowth, as several more forms rapidly approach.*

The two humans are being pursued by undead. Give the PCs another round to prepare, and then have the undead emerge from the woods. They attack all targets without hesitation, and fight until destroyed. The two humans take no part in the battle. If necessary they cower beneath the upturned wheelbarrow. Fudge things as necessary to allow them to survive the fight.

[Note, because the PCs cannot be surprised, and have two rounds to prepare, this encounter has been given an EL adjustment of -1]

**Terrain:** 15' wide dirt road with thick undergrowth and trees on either side. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 87 for the terrain effects on combat. The bushes are considered a medium forest.

**Creatures:** The undead are described as per the MM for their type. Some may wear rotting remnants of military uniform, Onnwal, Ahlissan or Brotherhood.

**APL 2 (EL2)**

☛ **Ghouls (3):** hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

#### APL 4 (EL 4)

🔥 **Wights** (2): hp 28 each; see *Monster Manual* page 255.

#### APL 6 and 8 (EL 5)

🔥 **Wights** (3): hp 28 each; see *Monster Manual* page 255.

**Treasure:** The undead have no treasure.

**Development:** After the battle, the two humans thank their saviours profusely. They introduce themselves as Mara and Nebbit, commoners from Longbridge. Mara describes herself as a barmaid in the Leaping Salmon inn, while Nebbit proudly brings himself to a semblance of attention, salutes with an arm missing a hand, and describes how he is an old soldier in service to the Szek - "Not the new Szek, sir, but the old Szek, Szek Eward, gods rest his bones." Characters who played ONWS5-07 *Season of Gifts* may have met them before.

#### Mara's Story

Mara's husband, Mikkel, like most able-bodied men, was drafted into the Levy for the previous year's assault on Scant. He fell before the Great Gate, one of hundreds of soldiers slain by a terrible fire trap. Mara was left a widow with a young son, without even the consolation of being able to bury her husband's body, which had been buried in haste on the field. Recently, however, a soldier in the Leaping Salmon had noticed the distinctive gold half medallion Mara wore. He claimed that he had buried a body wearing its counterpart in the aftermath of the battle of Scant. He remembered it distinctly, because it was still clutched in the badly burned man's hand, as though grasping it had been his dying act. The soldier was able to describe to Mara exactly where the body was buried. Armed with this knowledge, Mara became determined to recover her husband's body for proper burial, and managed to bully Nebbit into accompanying her.

#### Nebbit's Story

A hopeless drunk who is a more or less permanent fixture of the Leaping Salmon's taproom, Nebbit survives by cadging food and drink from amused regulars and gullible visitors. He proudly acts the old soldier, spinning endless tales of fictional campaigns where he fought alongside the Szek himself. In reality he was never a soldier - his uniform was stolen years ago from a drunk soldier, and his injuries are the result of his drinking. Anyone listening to his tales can make a DC 15 Knowledge (history) or Profession (soldier) check to realise that his tales cannot possibly be true, although he has been telling them for so long that he has come to half-believe them himself; "How I fought at the Battle of a Fortnight's Length" and "How I survived the slaughter at Steelbone Meadows" are favourites. When Mara announced her intention to travel to the walls of Scant itself, no one would go with her. It was only by promising him free drinks and meals that she managed to persuade a reluctant Nebbit to accompany her, a decision he is now severely regretting.

#### What Next

Once she has told her story, Mara begs the PCs to accompany Nebbit and herself to the walls of Scant, to help retrieve her husband's body. She stresses that she is just a barmaid, and cannot hope to survive if undead attack her again. She simply wants to recover her husband, "who gave his life for Szek and Onnwal". She appeals especially to any priests of good gods, or those who wear openly military insignias (Military, Glaives, Order of the Sea and Star etc.) to help her in this.

If the PCs do not help this damsel in distress, then the adventure is over. Mara makes bitter comments about how Onnwal's inhabitants were not worthy of her Mikkel's sacrifice, and trudges off to her doom, with a reluctant Nebbit in tow. If they agree, she weeps genuine tears of gratitude, and promises that the trip will not take long. Proceed to Encounter 2.

## ENCOUNTER 2: ONNVAL'S FINEST

The approach to the ruins of Scant is down the Long Neck, an isthmus that links the city to the mainland. The Szek has posted soldiers here to prevent explorers entering the ruins. However, the soldiers on duty are both resentful of being there and terrified of roving undead, so they do not put up much of resistance if the PCs force the issue. Read or paraphrase the following:

*Ahead, the isthmus known as the Long Neck stretches out from the mainland to the great spur of rock that holds the ruins of Scant. At the mainland end, a simple wooden stockade has been erected, and a number of bored looking soldiers can be seen standing guard on its walls. The Green and the Gold, the flag of Onnwal, flaps lazily in the breeze on a pole in the middle of the stockade.*

If the group advances, they are hailed from the stockade. The soldiers inform them that this area is 'off limits, by order of the Szek', and instruct them to leave immediately. If the PCs refuse to withdraw, the troops threaten to 'report them to the authorities', and insist on taking their names. However, the troops are much too scared of the undead roaming the area to actually leave the safety of the palisade.

This is mainly a role-playing opportunity. Allow the players to be inventive in talking their way past the sentries. A DC 20 Bluff check convinces the troops that the PCs are meant to be there, while a DC 18 Forgery check is enough to fake up some orders to allow the PCs through. Of course, any PC with a rank in any military organisation can order the soldiers simply to let them through.

If the characters make it clear that they will approach Scant anyway, the soldiers demand that they identify themselves "in the name of the Szek". Those who comply gain the Reported to the Authorities cert on the

Adventure Record. Refusing a request in the name of the Szek is not a lawful action.

Alternatively, the PCs can pay a charge of 5 gp × APL each, which you can frame as an admission fee (which they say is authorised by the Szek, although it isn't). In reality this is just a bribe. This allows them access for ten hours and the soldiers will look the other way and not report the PCs.

## ENCOUNTER 3: BEFORE THE GATES

The PCs approach the walls of Scant. If any of the PCs fought in the liberation of the city, read the following:

*For those of you who have been here before, the march down the Long Neck, the great strip of land that leads out from the coast to the fortress city of Scant brings back unpleasant memories. The last time you were here, it was as part of a great army, and your overwhelming recollection is that of noise - weapons crashing against armour, the creaking of mighty siege engines, and the screams of the burned and dying. Now, the only sound is of the waves crashing against the shore and the wind whistling dryly across the scarred ground where so much blood was shed. Then, the great walls of Scant rose like impregnable cliffs before you. Now, though breached in several places, they seem even more daunting, stained black with the arcane fire that destroyed the city. It seems that death has seeped into the very fabric of the land here - every site, every sound, every breath reminds you of it. And that sense of death seems to flow from the blackened, twisted corpse of Scant itself, festering like an obscene cancer ahead of you.*

If none of the PCs fought in that battle, read the following:  
*As you march down the Long Neck, the great strip of land that leads out from the coast to the fortress city of Scant, you realise that the seasons' passing have not obliterated the stench of death from this place. You have all heard of the titanic battle that was fought here, how hundreds of men fell before the gate, how finally the city was breached, the terrible slaughter of its inhabitants effected by the Scarlet Brotherhood, and how, finally, just as the green and gold banner of Onnwal was to be raised above the high citadel, ebon fire burst from the Szek's Palace, overrunning the city, burning the very stone itself, and leaving Scant a charred shell. Death seems to permeate the air here. And that sense of death seems to flow from the blackened, twisted corpse of Scant itself, festering like an obscene cancer ahead of you.*

Ask the PCs for Spot and Listen checks to keep them jumpy. Roll a few dice. Make sure the PCs are aware of the enormity of what happened here, and how this is still a dangerous place.

Finally, as the PCs approach the Walls themselves, read the following:

*The great black cliffs of the Walls of Scant loom above you as you approach. The huge gates, taking which cost so many lives, lie twisted and shattered on the scorched ground, leaving the empty gateway which leads into the dead city itself, yawning like the open mouth of a skull.*

*Mara swallows hard, and points with a trembling hand. "Over there, forty paces right of the gate. That's where they... that's where my husband is." Her hand unconsciously goes to the half-medallion around her neck.*

The PCs can easily find the area where the ground has been dug up to provide a number of mass and individual graves. Read or paraphrase the following:

*What should be the peaceful resting places of fallen Onnwal heroes are nothing more than muddy pits. Clumps of earth and piles of loose soil are scattered around. The graves appear empty.*

If informed of this development, Maria throws herself to the ground weeping, believing she has lost all chance of recovering her husband's body.

Examining the disturbed graves reveals the following on a Search check (results are cumulative):

DC 10 - The earth in the graves has been recently disturbed, perhaps even in the last few days.

DC 15 - The graves do not appear to have been dug up. Indeed, it looks as though the inhabitants clawed their way out.

DC 20 - (also available on a Survival check to someone with the Track feat) A few muddy footprints show that the risen dead headed off through the gates and into the city.

### The Risen Dead

At a suitably dramatic point while the players are puzzling all this out, read the following.

*A deep, vibrating sound, like the note of a great trumpet, suddenly echoes from somewhere deep within the ruined city. As its rolling tone fades away, the ever-present breeze seems momentarily stilled. Yet the grass at your feet continues to twist and dance. It is only after a few moments that you realise that the very earth itself is churning. A rotted hand forces its way through ground, and then another. All around you the dead are rising!*

**Terrain:** The ground is muddy but not enough to have any game effect. There are open graves but these are shallow and should not hinder careful movement. Running or charging through the area requires a DC 15 Balance check. Failure by 4 or less results in the movement being reduced

to standard speed, and failure by 5 or more results in the character falling prone somewhere along their route.

**Creatures:** The undead are described as per the MM for their type. Some may wear rotting remnants of military uniform, Onnwal, Ahlissan or Brotherhood.

**APL 2 (EL 3)**

👁 **Human Commoner Zombies (5):** hp 17 each; see *Monster Manual* page 266.

**APL 4 (EL 5)**

👁 **Ghouls (6):** hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

**APL 6 (EL 6)**

👁 **Ghasts (3):** hp 31 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

**APL 8 (EL 8)**

👁 **Ghasts (6):** hp 31 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

**Tactics:** At APL2, the undead spend their first round digging themselves out of the ground, and their second round standing up, which will give the PCs some time to take some free attacks. At other APLs, the undead take a move action to free themselves, and a second move action to stand up.

Once free, the undead swarm the PCs, with the ghouls and the ghasts taking all opportunities for flanking, and even grappling heavily armoured PCs whom they cannot hit.

If the PCs have not discovered the tracks leading from the empty graves into the city, describe during the battle how a number of undead not involved in the battle ignore the PCs and head off through the great twisted gates and into Scant.

**Treasure:** The undead have no treasure.

**Development:** Mara and Nebbit avoid combat completely, and afterwards she is inconsolable. Not only has she lost her husband for a second time, but it is obvious that he has been transformed into some sort of undead creature. She has now lost all hope.

The existence of the undead should have piqued the PC's interest, and given them a reason to investigate the city. If not, Nebbit suggests that as powerful heroes they should, regretting only that he can't go with them "because of my bad leg, Sir". He offers to escort her back to the stockade and to wait for the PCs there.

If the PCs head into the city, proceed to the next section.

## ENCOUNTER 4: THE BURNED CITY

As the PCs pass through the ruined gates of Scant, read or paraphrase the following:

*The very air reeks of death here. Hundreds of soldiers fell to a dreadful trap here during the assault, before the brave heroes of the Golden Heart managed to storm and hold the walls. The great heat of the fire has buckled and twisted the mighty gates, which now hang half off their colossal hinges.*

The former great fortress city of Onnwal is now quite literally a ghost town. Many of those buildings that were not destroyed in the assault collapsed in the magical holocaust that followed. The streets are ankle-deep in a fine black soot, the remnants of anything in the city that could burn, that constantly swirls and drifts in the wind. It is a site of absolute devastation.

If the PCs enter or attempt to scale any building, warn them that the building seems unstable - have a few bricks or slates fall. If they persist, give them a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid taking 2d6 damage from falling masonry as the building collapses around them. Searching the buildings will find nothing of interest.

Whatever the APL, try to impress on the PCs that they are seriously out of their depth here, and their best hope is to get in and out quickly. Do not be shy about throwing a few roving undead at them (see below) if they dawdle or appear not to be in a hurry (by attempting to rest etc.).

**Following the Tracks:** The deep soot means that the PCs are able to follow the tracks made by the undead without difficulty, even if they lack the Track feat. If the PCs dawdle, mention how the wind is gradually erasing the tracks, and they may lose them. The tracks head inevitably upwards towards the grand buildings of the High City.

### Random Encounters

If the PCs insist on ignoring the tracks and exploring, feel free to throw some undead encounters at them to focus their minds. Use the statistics from Encounter 1 or Encounter 3, but do not award XP or gold for defeating these creatures.

### Scenes of Destruction

As the PCs progress through the city, the following vignettes can be introduced to them in any order. There is no real danger here, unless the PCs behave particularly stupidly, but they should help convey the atmosphere of the adventure. If you are running short of time, feel free to omit any of these.

**Scene A – Graffiti:** The PCs come across a message freshly written in the soot on the wall of a building.

*The monotonous black of the charred building walls is broken here. Someone has taken a blade and scored large letters into the wall of a shell of a building here. The thin, spidery letters spell out "The Szek shall rule*

*again". The writing has definitely been made since the fire consumed Scant.*

**Scene B - Roadworks Ahead:** A section of roadway has been weakened, and collapses underneath the PCs as they walk over it. Give the lead character a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid falling into the pit.

*Suddenly, the cracked stone of the roadway collapses beneath your feet. You flail your arms wildly in an attempt to keep your balance.*

A PC falling into the pit falls 10 feet to the bottom, which is knee-deep in soot, taking 1d6 nonlethal damage.

Note - this pit has no EL as it cannot really harm a PC. Use it to scare them - especially if you can make them think something is lurking in the deep soot. Ask for an initiative roll and a few Spot checks. If the PCs spend an inordinate amount of time searching the pit, or retrieving their comrade, give them a random undead encounter (as above) to encourage them to move on.

**Scene C - The Voices of the Lost:** The mass slaughter of the inhabitants of Scant by the Scarlet Brotherhood has given rise to a number of ghostly haunting effects, which you can use to spook and confuse the PCs. Attempting to investigate any of these phenomena will turn up nothing.

- A child's giggling echoes from a ruined building.
- A woman's weeping can be heard from under a pile of rubble - clearing the rubble reveals a burned out cellar.
- A man pleads for help from a blackened tower, but entering the tower causes a partial collapse, and the pleading turns to mocking laughter.

**Scene D - Shadowy Figures:** Have the PCs roll Spot checks. Inform the player with the highest result that his or her character spots shadowy figures flitting from doorway to doorway some way behind them. This should spook the PCs, especially as no matter how hard they look, they won't find anyone there.

**Scene E - Dutiful to the Last:**

*Ahead, a bizarre sight greets you. A desiccated corpse, dressed in a pre-war uniform of the Onnwal Navy, stands to attention at the road junction. Slowly, the shrunken head turns to look at you, and the figure gasps "I still serve the Szek".*

This zombie does not defend itself if attacked, and can easily be hacked to pieces. Otherwise it simply repeats the same phrase over and over again, not moving from its spot. The only thing that causes it respond differently is if someone mentions Jian Destron by name. In which case the zombie replies "No, not him. The Szek. I still serve the Szek". It does not elaborate further.

**Scene G - The Trumpet Sounds:**

*The deep echoing blast of a great trumpet sounds out like a clarion of doom over the whole city. It seems as if the very wind is momentarily silenced. After a few moments, the note dies away, but it seems as if you can still feel its trembling tone reverberating through the air around you.*

**Development:** After running any or all of the above scenes, as time allows, proceed to encounter 5.

## ENCOUNTER 5: THE LAST STAND OF THE COMPANY OF THE UNICORN

Read or paraphrase the following:

*From up ahead come shouts, curses and screams, and then the low rumbling detonation of a fireball. Then, with a final scream, all falls silent. Turning the corner, you find yourself at the entrance to a large square. Once, the buildings that stand around it must have been fine townhouses, occupied by merchants and nobles, but now they are just charred wrecks, like the rest of this dead city.*

*Four human bodies lie twisted in the deep, shifting soot that swirls around this wide plaza. Dressed variously in armour or robes, and wearing large backpacks, they look like archetypical adventurers. There are fresh wounds on their bodies, and their faces, contorted in death, are smeared with soot, but there is no sign of any assailants.*

*Already the fine soot, whipped up by the gusting wind, has begun to cover their bodies as it swirls and eddies around the square, forming small dust-devils as it goes.*

The PCs are not the first adventurers to breach the quarantine of Scant. The Company of the Unicorn, a group of Ahlissan mercenaries, had snuck past the palisade under cover of darkness, and spent a few days exploring the ruins, to very little profit. They have just been slain by the creatures in the square, having finally run out of luck and resources.

Among the dust devils are the creatures below. A DC 18 Spot check reveals them, as the PCs notice one or two dust devils (according to APL) moving against the wind. If the PCs venture into the square (as they must, to follow the tracks) they are attacked by the elementals.

**Terrain:** The square is 100 feet on each side. The soot is ankle-deep but does not impede movement other than as mentioned below.

At APL 6 and 8, the combination of the wind and combat in the square will stir up the soot into great clouds in the air. After 2 rounds of combat, this will have an effect identical to that of smoke (*Dungeon Master's Guide* page 304).

Each breathing character in the square must make a [DC 15 +1 per previous check] Fortitude save each round or spend the round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Smoke obscures vision, giving concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it. Note that elementals don't breathe, and so are unaffected by the soot, although they still suffer the miss chance.

**Creatures:** At APL4, the elemental is already wounded from its battle with the Ahlissans.

**APL 2 (EL3)**

☛ **Air Elemental, Medium:** hp 28; see *Monster Manual* page 96.

**APL 4 (EL 4)**

☛ **Air Elemental, Large:** hp 64 (currently 48); see *Monster Manual* page 96.

**APL 6 (EL 6)**

☛ **Belker:** hp 42; see *Monster Manual* page 27.

**APL 8 (EL 8)**

☛ **Belker (2):** hp 42, 42; see *Monster Manual* page 27.

**Treasure:**

The elementals have no treasure, but the bodies of the unfortunate Company of the Unicorn have a variety of loot and coin, as well as a number of unused magical items, according to APL:

At all APLs, the mundane loot consists of the following: chain shirt, chainmail, heavy steel shield, heavy mace, morningstar, battleaxe, 5x daggers, 3x vials of holy water, 2x tanglefoot bags, 4x backpacks, 2x sets of flint and steel, thieves tools, and a signet ring.

**APL 2:** Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 225 gp; Magic: 34 gp; 2x potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), arcane scroll of flaming sphere (13 gp), scroll of remove paralysis (13 gp); Total 302 gp.

**APL 4:** Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 99 gp; Magic: 310 gp; +1 longsword (193 gp), 2x potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), arcane scroll of flaming sphere (13 gp), scroll of remove paralysis (13 gp), phylactery of faithfulness (83 gp); Total 452 gp.

**APL 6:** Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 94 gp; Magic: 465 gp; +1 longsword (193 gp), 2x potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), arcane scroll of flaming sphere (13 gp), scroll of remove paralysis (13 gp), elixir of fire breath (92 gp), phylactery of faithfulness (83 gp), wand of enlarge person (63 gp); Total 602 gp.

**APL 8:** Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 18 gp; Magic: 881 gp; +1 longsword (193 gp), 2x potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), arcane scroll of flaming sphere (13 gp), scroll of remove paralysis (13 gp), elixir of fire breath (92 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp), phylactery of faithfulness (83 gp), ring of climbing (208 gp) wand of enlarge person (63 gp); Total 942 gp.

**Detect magic results:** +1 longsword (Faint Evocation), elixir of fire breath (Moderate Evocation), golembane scarab (Moderate Divination), potion of cure light

wounds (Faint Conjuraton), phylactery of faithfulness (Faint Divination), ring of climbing (Faint Transmutation).

**Development:** Regardless of how much the dust was stirred up, the PCs are able to pick up the tracks again on the far side of the square.

## ENCOUNTER 6: CALLED TO SERVE

The PC's reach the end of the trail - the former Szek's Treasury in the High City

*It seems that you have found your destination. Turning the corner, you see the end of a column of shambling undead, some still clad in the burned and rotting remnants of Onnwal military uniform, filing through the open double doors of an large building decorated with relief carvings. These carvings, showing trading shops at sea, miners hewing ore, and farmers reaping armfuls of grain, retain their impressive grandeur despite being blackened by fire.*

*As the undead pass through the door, a voice can be heard calling out from inside. "Come!" it calls. "Yes, come, brave sons of Onnwal. Answer the call of your rightful ruler. He shall rule again. Still he bears the Rod, the symbol of his office. Come to serve him. He shall rule again!"*

*The voice dies away as the last of the walking dead passes through the open doors. You can see that the last in line wears a golden medallion around its neck similar to that Mara wore.*

A DC 20 Knowledge (local: Splintered Suns) or DC 25 bardic knowledge check reveals the building as the former Szek's Treasury. The carvings represent the sources of Onnwal's wealth.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) or DC 20 bardic knowledge check reveal that the legendary Rod of Onnwal served as the Szek's symbol of office before the war, but has been considered lost since the Brotherhood invaded.

**Development:** If the PCs do nothing but watch, then the undead simply enter the building. Once the PCs approach the building, proceed to Encounter 7. If the PCs try to attack the undead (perhaps to retrieve Mikkel's body, or the medallion he wears) then have the undead in Encounter 7 (if any) emerge from the building and engage the PCs outside. In this case, the PCs only have 4 rounds after the combat ends before the undead horde emerges from the Treasury to pursue them (see Encounter 8 for details).

## ENCOUNTER 7: THE SZEK'S TREASURY

If the PCs approach the Treasury with stealth, they hear the first exchange below. If they simply storm in, proceed to the part where they are discovered.

*In a grotesque parody of a military parade, the fallen soldiers of Onnwal, called from their graves by foul magic, are lined up in this vaulted, many-pillared room. They face away from the great double doors towards a smaller set of doors at the rear of the chamber. These stand slightly ajar, although you are unable to perceive what lies beyond them.*

*In front of these doors stands a figure in faded white robes. Its face is obscured by an ornate gold mask. Next to it, a large hulking rotting creature [at APL8: two large rotting hulking creatures] stands guard. You can see movement in the shadows around the outside of the room too.*

*The masked figure speaks again, addressing the troops with its impassive face. "Having answered his call, you are the true sons of Onnwal. Come, pass inside and renew your service to the bearer of the Staff of Green and the Gold."*

If the PCs do not intervene, then the undead file through the double doors at the back of the atrium, which is then solidly barred from the inside. The PCs have lost their opportunity to recover Mikkel. If they make a great deal of noise, or interfere with the rear doors, proceed to encounter 8. Otherwise proceed to the Conclusion.

Much more likely is that the PCs reveal themselves or are discovered by the lurking undead, in which case read or paraphrase the following:

*"Assassins!" screams the masked figure, pointing in your direction. "Brotherhood agents come to injure His Noble Authority. Stop them!" With that the masked figure steps back through the double doors, pulling them closed behind him.*

### APL 2 (EL4)

- ☠ Ghouls: hp 14; see *Monster Manual* page 119.
- ☠ Ogre Zombie: hp 59; see *Monster Manual* page 267.

### APL 4 (EL 5)

- ☠ Ghouls (2): hp 14 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.
- ☠ Minotaur Zombie: hp 87; see *Monster Manual* page 267.

### APL 6 (EL 7)

- ☠ Vampire Spawn: hp 31; see *Monster Manual* page 253.
- ☠ Grey Render Zombie: hp 143; see *Monster Manual* page 267.

### APL 8 (EL11)

- ☠ Mohrg (2): hp 98 each; see *Monster Manual* page 189.
- ☠ Grey Render Zombie (2): hp 143 each; see *Monster Manual* page 267.

**Tactics:** The soldier zombies do not engage in the combat, simply moving to block the doors that lead further into the building.

At APL2 and 6, the large undead wade into the nearest available targets, while the ghoul or vampire spawn use hit-and-run tactics, taking targets of opportunity as it finds them in the melee.

At APL4 and 8 the ghouls or mohrgs work as a team, seeking to flank targets the better to get their paralyzing attacks in. If they get the opportunity, and are not immediately threatened, they take coup-de-grace actions against paralysed targets.

### Treasure:

Depending on the APL, the ghouls, vampire spawn or mohrgs each wear a number of pieces of jewellery that can be recovered quickly. As it is a simple matter of grabbing the items, it does not take the usual 10 minutes per 5 enemies.

APL 2: Coin: 100 gp.

APL 4: Coin: 150 gp.

APL 6: Coin: 200 gp.

APL 8: Coin: 310 gp.

**Development:** Once the other undead are defeated, the soldier zombies put up no resistance, allowing the PCs to hack them to bits if they wish. The one that was Mikkel is easily identifiable by the half-medallion, the complement to that worn by Mara, it wears.

The PCs have 1 minute (10 rounds) after the end of the combat, i.e. when the undead listed above are destroyed. They are not be able to breach the inner doors, which are 6-inch thick magically-treated adamantine, in this time, but no matter — they open soon enough. Proceed to Encounter 8.

## ENCOUNTER 8: THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR

After 1 minute, giving the PCs just enough time to loot the bodies if they wish, read the following:

*There is the tramping of many booted feet, coming from the far side of the great inner doors. With a clash of weapons against shields, they begin to swing open, revealing a horde of undead Onnwalon soldiers. Some are little more than , while others are fresh from the grave, but all bear wickedly sharp weapons, and all seem intent on your destruction.*

The PCs are meant to RUN AWAY. Emphasise the size of the horde, the seemingly endless stream of undead, and

how any they destroy are immediately replaced. Throw squads of undead against them (use the stats from Encounter 3) until they get the message. If the PCs wish to hold the doors against the dead, have them make a DC [20 plus 2 per previous check] Strength check each round.

The undead pursue the PCs until they leave the city, although the PCs are in no real danger as long as they run and keep on running. Punish any attempt to stand their ground, or delay with squads of undead. This would be a good time to throw in some of the scenarios from Encounter 4, particularly Voices of the Lost, or Roadworks Ahead.

If the PCs are brave or foolish enough to attempt to fight the horde, they get no XP or gold for doing so.

## CONCLUSION

The adventure is finished as soon as the PCs leave the ruined city.

*The terrible sound of the pursuing undead horde fades away as you once more pass through the great gates of the burned city. It seems that whatever fell purpose the undead have, they are not ready to leave their necropolis yet.*

*What you have learned in the corpse of Onnwal's capital city has given you much to think about, but that will have to wait. Ahead, you see Mara and Nebbit, accompanied by a patrol of soldiers. Mara's face lights up with hope as she sees you.*

If the PCs have managed to recover Mikkell's body (preferably no longer still animated), or at the very least his medallion, read the following:

*Mara does not weep, nor does she smile. She stands for a moment, and it is as if a great weight is lifted from her shoulders. She stands taller, prouder, as though the past no longer still enslaves her. Finally, she turns to face you.*

*"You have given me hope", she says at last. "I can ask for no greater gift, and I will repay you as best I can with my humble means. Come, let us leave this place of death."*

*Without a single glance back at the horror that is the burned city, she turns, and heads towards the mainland, and the rest of her life.*

The PCs get the Favour of Mara on the AR.

If the PCs have managed to recover neither Mikkell nor his medallion, read the following.

*Mara stands, her eyes vacant of all emotion as she hears your news. "Then he is truly lost to me" she whispers, before turning and walking, slowly, numbly, towards the mainland. Behind her, the horror that is the burned city stands, mockingly, a monument to the*

*horrors of the war that will leave scars long after those of the warriors have healed.*

## CAMPAIGN CONSEQUENCES

The author welcomes feedback on this scenario to the email address [waynemarkstubbs@gmail.com](mailto:waynemarkstubbs@gmail.com). In addition, please email the following questions and their answers to [onnwal@thomasralph.com](mailto:onnwal@thomasralph.com):

- 1) Did the PCs recover Mikkell or his medallion?
- 2) Did they get reported to the authorities?
- 3) Did the PCs alert the masked figure to their presence?
- 4) Did they ask questions about the Rod of Onnwal, or the previous Szek?

**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 1: Out of Their Depth

Overcome the undead:

APL2	60 XP
APL4	120 XP
APL6	150 XP
APL8	150 XP

### Encounter 3: Before the Gates

Overcome the undead:

APL2	90 XP
APL4	150 XP
APL6	180 XP
APL8	240 XP

### Encounter 5: Last Stand of the Company of the Unicorn

Overcome the elementals:

APL2	90 XP
APL4	120 XP
APL6	180 XP
APL8	240 XP

### Encounter 7: The Szk's Treasury

Overcome the undead:

APL2	120 XP
APL4	150 XP
APL6	210 XP
APL8	330 XP

### Story Award

Recovery of Mikkell or his medallion:

APL2	60 XP
APL4	90 XP
APL6	120 XP
APL8	150 XP

### Discretionary Roleplaying Award

APL2	30 XP
APL4	45 XP
APL6	60 XP
APL8	75 XP

### Total Possible Experience:

APL2	450 XP
APL4	675 XP
APL6	900 XP
APL8	1125 XP

## TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Encounter 5:

APL 2:	Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 224 gp; Magic: 33 gp.
APL 4:	Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 98 gp; Magic: 309 gp.
APL 6:	Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 94 gp; Magic: 463 gp.
APL 8:	Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 18 gp; Magic: 879 gp.

### Encounter 7:

APL 2:	Coin: 100 gp.
APL 4:	Coin: 150 gp.
APL 6:	Coin: 200 gp.
APL 8:	Coin: 310 gp.

### Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 324 gp; Magic: 33 gp -  
Total: 400 gp

APL 4: Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 248 gp; Magic: 309 gp -  
Total: 600 gp

APL 6: Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 294 gp; Magic: 463 gp -  
Total: 800 gp

APL 8: Loot: 43 gp; Coin: 328 gp; Magic: 879 gp -  
Total: 1200 gp

## ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

**Favour of Mara:** For helping Mara of Longbridge, and allowing her to find peace at last over her husband's death, this PC is forever welcome at the Leaping Salmon inn. Many traders pass through there, and Mara can help the PCs find bargains. After any Onnwal regional adventure, the PC may spend one extra TU, and then be able to purchase an item to which they still have access found in the bottom half of any Onnwal regional AR at a 10% discount. The PC may only purchase 1 discounted item per adventure.

**Reported To The Authorities:** This PC is known to have breached the quarantine around Scant. Now the War is over, the authorities look much less kindly on adventurers. This PC may no longer gain free upkeep in Onnwal from any cert, favour or membership of an organisation. The PC must now pay upkeep as normal

Any PCs who enter the city of Scant receive the following AR item.

**Scars of Scant:** This character entered the necropolis that is Scant and faced the undead that dwell there. Having been exposed to so much death, they are now better prepared should they face them again. On three occasions, this PC may reroll a Saving Throw against any effect originating from an undead creature. The results of the second roll are binding.

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### ITEM ACCESS

APL 4 (All of APL 2 plus the following)  
❖ *Phylactery of faithfulness* (Regional; DMG)

APL 6 (All of APLs 2-4 plus the following)  
❖ *Wand of enlarge person* (Regional; DMG)  
❖ *Elixir of fire breath* (Regional; DMG)

APL 8 (All of APLs 2-6 plus the following)  
❖ *Ring of climbing* (Regional, DMG)  
❖ *Golembane scarab* (Regional; DMG)

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## DM APPENDIX 1 : THE TREASURY

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