

DM'S KIT

ON THE TRAIL OF TYRANNY



**A TOOLBOX FOR DUNGEON MASTERS RUNNING
A TYRANNY OF DRAGONS CAMPAIGN**

TROY E. TAYLOR

On the Trail of Tyranny

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FIRST IN A SERIES OF SUPPLEMENTS FOR DMs

A TOOLBOX FOR DUNGEON MASTERS RUNNING A TYRANNY OF DRAGONS CAMPAIGN

BY TROY E. TAYLOR

Description: This is a collection of props, handouts, improvisational prompts and side quests a Dungeon Master might find useful when running a Tyranny of Dragons campaign using the Hoard of the Dragon Queen and Rise of Tiamat campaign books.

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Table of Contents

<i>Pg.</i>	<i>Contents</i>
4	Welcome
6	Help! We need a healer!
9	Frulam Mondath must not die (yet)!
15	What a country!
17	No Mister Bond, I expect you to die
20	Delegate scorecard for Council of Waterdeep
24	All that is true and fit for print, for 1 nib
32	Silverhand's ploy to unify the alliance
36	The Last Battle of Men and Elves (and dwarves and tieflings, too)
38	Why Don't They Ever Write?
43	Statistically, flying wyverns is safer than driving a cart
46	Lurid headlines, sensational side quest

Illustration list

Page 5, Photograph by author.

Page 12, Hand drawn outline of Baldur's Gate by author based on published Forgotten Realms maps.

Page 21, "Saskia in Red Hat," wife of artist, Rembrandt van Rijn, circa 1635; "Mann mit dem Goldhelm," credited to Rembrandt van Rijn, 1650; "The Falconer," portrait of William Russell, Sir Edwin Henry Landseer, 1830; "The White Hat, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, circa 1780; "Portrait of a Man I," Frans Hals, circa 1650-52; "Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts," Rembrandt van Rijn, 1631; Forgotten Realms faction shields, Fan Site Kit download, May 5, 2015.

Page 22, "Portrait of a Man in Military Dress," Rembrandt van Rijn, 1650; "Apollo and Marsyas," Bartolomeo Manfredi, 1616-20; "An Experiment on a Bird in an Air Pump," Joseph Wright of Derby, 1768; "A Cavalier: Time of Louis XIII," by Jean Louis Ernest Meissonier, 1861; "The Matchmaker," Gerard van Honthorst, 1625; "Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window," Johannes Vermeer, 1657; Forgotten Realms faction shields, Fan Site Kit download, May 5, 2015.

Page 23, "Man in Oriental Costume," Rembrandt van Rijn and Workshop (probably Govaert Flinck), 1635.

Page 26, 27., "Portrait of a Man in Military Dress".

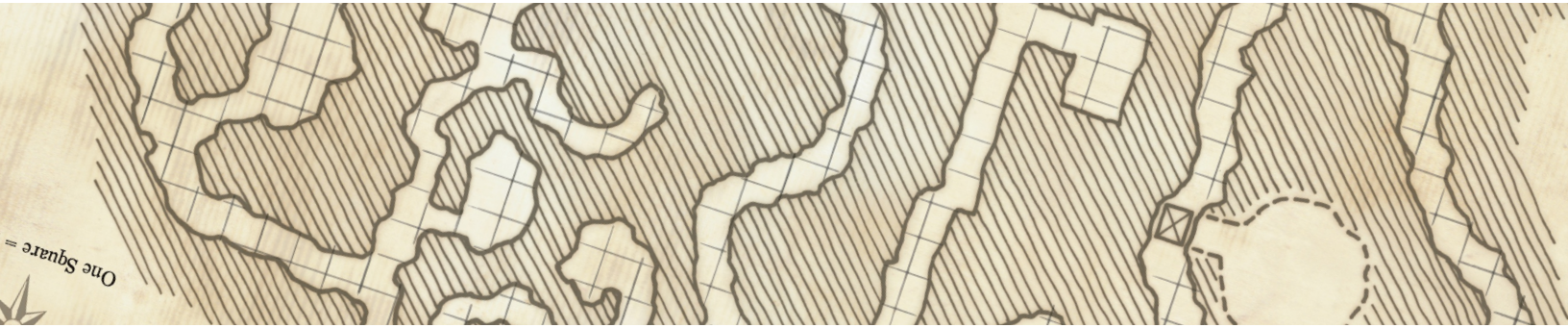
Page 28, "Self Portrait at Age 63," Rembrandt van Rijn, 1669.

Page 29,30, "The White Hat, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, circa 1780;

Page 31, "The Meagre Company," Frans Hals, 1637; "The Girl in the Picture Frame," Rembrandt van Rijn, 1640.

Page 37, Hand drawn copy of the Well of Dragons and environs of the Western Heartlands by author based on published Forgotten Realms maps.

Pages 47-48, National Police Gazette, u1896., in public domain, fulton.com and other sources.



Welcome

Running a published roleplaying game can be a daunting project, even for an experienced Dungeon Master.

No written campaign is without gaps in the narrative. Sometimes they are an oversight by the authors, sometimes they are the result of an editor's decision-making process. Sometimes the text contains only a hint or a suggestion at something more expansive, something omitted in the creative process.

The rule at my table is the **fun comes first**. I'm sure that the authors and editors of published adventures would agree. No matter how much they've labored over a particular project, they know that a published adventure should be to a DM what clay is to a crafter's hands, something that can be molded and shaped into something that suits a particular gaming table.

That's the primary reason DMs are encouraged to read and prepare when running from a published adventure. A DM has an opportunity to spot those gaps, consider the best ways to exploit them, and brainstorm a way to bring them to their table.

Sometimes it means coming up with a side quest. At others, it might be crafting a handout, tweaking an NPC, or finding a simpler way of doing things.

A Word About Spoilers

A work of this nature, which expands on two published products, is loaded with them, naturally.

So players, please take a pass.

Dungeon masters, dive right in.

On the Trail of Tyranny

Those might seem like little things. But those small touches indicate thoughtfulness on the part of the DM, and players pick up on that effort. It engages their imagination, which in turn, generates even more wonderful ideas that can be explored in roleplay in a way that presenting an adventure on a cold read just can't duplicate.

Here, then, is my collection of improvisational prompts, handouts, side quests and tools I used when running Hoard of the Dragon Queen and The Rise of Tiamat adventures. Their value to a DM about to run a Tyranny of Dragons campaign depends on many factors. Primarily, though, a campaign can veer off in many interesting directions based on player and DM decisions. No two tables will ever have the exact same experience.

So even when your game diverges from mine, I hope, it inspires you to create your own materials.

My best to you. My group had a blast running Hoard and Rise, and I hope yours will too.

Troy E. Taylor
February 2016



To the Creators of the Tyranny of Dragons

I find credits pages interesting. Mainly, I look for names I might recognize.

I've come to know some through correspondence and from meeting them at GenCon, such as designer **Wolfgang Baur** and editor **Miranda Horner**, both of whom I have since come to admire for their tireless work at Kobold Press.

Others are some that social media has allowed connections with, such as illustrator **Bryan Syme** and designer **Steve Winter**.

To them, the playtesters and the many folks at Wizards of the Coast, I say thanks for producing an engaging adventure campaign. Neither Greenest nor the Well of Dragons will ever be the same again.

Help! We need a healer!

Our stalwart band of heroes from Greenest was fortunate. We had a player willing to portray a cleric. In fact, his story, prompted by the Background roll for Bonds in the appendix, became a key component to the adventure.

That said, no DM should plunge into a campaign without a plan for an NPC healer.

(As it turned out, our group, over the course of events, relied on help from NPC wizards, fighters and commoners, which the Monster Manual provided. But we never needed an additional cleric.)

Here was the matrix I kept close at hand should the need arise to generate a cleric on the fly. Hopefully, it will find service in your toolkit.

On the Trail of Tyranny

Roll a d20 on the chart to determine NPC level, or select from level desired. Roll d2 for NPC gender and the d20 for name. Roll d20 for distinguishing feature, characteristic and favorite nonhealing spells.

Low level Cleric NPC Matrix

Lv - hp - Prof	Male	Female	Distinguishing feature	Characteristic	Favorite nonhealing spells
1 - 10 (+2)	Noah	Sophia	Wears gold stole	Carves holy symbols in spare time.	blesse, aid
1 - 10 (+2)	Liam	Emma	Holy symbol affixed to shield	Has a nagging cough	command, aid
1 - 10 (+2)	Jacob	Olivia	Prayer book is worn, dog eared	"If (name of god) wills it."	detect magic, aid
1-10 (+2)	Mason	Isabella	Left eye is center of starburst tattoo	"Be easy and rest."	guiding bolt, augury
2-16 (+2)	Arav	Saanvi	Lace kerchief tied to armor	Nervous tic: hand washing	healing word, hold person
2 - 12 (+2)	Vivaan	Aanya	Head shaved or in tonsure	Loves to give hugs.	inflict wounds, hold person
2 - 18 (+2)	Aditya	Aadhya	Does not cut hair, long and braided	Voice seldom rises above whisper	sanctuary, hold person
2-13 (+2)	Vihaan	Pari	Shield adorned with relief of world tree	Loves to sing hymns, off key	shield of faith, lesser restoration
3 - 21 (+2)	Kacper	Lena	Wears fine robes of deep blue	Sings bawdy songs	blesse, lesser restoration
3 - 21 (+2)	Filip	Maja	Wears simple brown robe	Helps with chores, cheerful early riser	command, lesser restoration
3 - 13 (+2)	Szymon	Zuzanna	Simple rope serves as belt	Stomach gurgles at wrong time	detect magic, silence
3 - 16 (+2)	Jan	Wiktoria	Silk sash ties robe	Easygoing, likes to skip	guiding bolt, silence
4 - 19 (+2)	Enzo	Chloe	Wears hood or habit	Has a friendly smile	healing word, silence
4 - 21 (+2)	Gabriel	Ines	Adorns self with powders, perfumes	Blushes easily	inflict wounds, spectral weapon
4 - 23 (+2)	Jules	Manon	Book of order kept in pristine condition	Easily shocked. "Oh my!"	sanctuary, spectral weapon
4 - 17 (+2)	Leo	Camille	Wears stole and collar of white	Compares meals to those at the abbey	shield of faith, spectral weapon
5 - 27 (+3)	Francesco	Guilia	Holy symbol designed as an ear cuff	Quick to offer a compliment	blesse, war bond
5 - 34 (+3)	Matteo	Aurora	Has an embroidered prayer rug	Quick to scold, a finger-pointer	command, war bond
5 - 30 (+3)	Lorenzo	Giorgia	Has a dead eye or ear	Frugal, to a fault	detect magic, war bond
5 - 41 (+3)	Riccardo	Martina	Bleaches hair white	Generous, to a fault	guiding bolt, augury

Spells_ 1st cure light wounds, 2nd prayer of healing (spell save DC 12)

On the Trail of Tyranny

Roll or choose other NPC information from these charts.

Race	Skills	Domain	Deities
Human or ...	Religion plus ...	Life or ...	Reference DMG Appendix B, Deities of the Forgotten Realms or listing of nonhuman deities
1 dwarf	1 history	1 knowledge	Select one corresponding to domain
2 elf	2 insight	2 light	
3 halfling	3 medicine	3 nature	
4 human	4 perception	4 tempest	
		5 trickery	
		6 war	

Gear	Weapon	Armor + Shield (AC)
Holy symbol plus ...	Mace 1d6+1 or ...	1 padded (13)
1 priest's pack	1 club 1d4 +1	2 leather (13)
2 explorer's pack	2 great club 1d8+1 (2H)	3 studded leather (14)
	3 handax 1d6+1	4 hide (14)
	4 javelin 1d6+1	5 chain shirt (15)
	4 light hammer 1d4+1	6 scale mail (16)
	5 quarterstaff 1d6+1 (V, 2H 1d8+1)	7 breast plate (16)
	6 sickle 1d4 +1	8 half plate (17)
	7 spear 1d6 +1	
	8 light crossbow 1d8 (2H)	
	9 dart 1d4	
	10 sling 1d4	

Characters with 2H weapons lose shield (-2 to AC); Melee attacks are d20 +1 (Str) + Prof. mod; Ranged attacks are d20 +0 (Dex) + Prof. mod.

Frulam Mondath

Must Not Die ... (Yet)!

In Episode 3: Dragon Hatchery, the boxed text of Room 11, Frulam Mondath's Chamber, ends curiously:

“Other papers are of less interest; most of them have bad poetry about dragons.”

It immediately electrified my interest in Frulam. Was she another purple-clad baddie, or was she something more? Was she an immature soul who moons over dragons the way some modern teen adolescents have a fascination with unicorns and ponies? Did she have a diary filled with scribbles of hearts and dragons? I was intrigued.

Frulam is the sort of NPC that allows a DM to explore themes in their roleplaying adventure. She would serve as the bait on the adventure hooks I would present to the PCs, allowing them to deal with the themes of revenge and redemption. She also allowed me to use her as a catalyst to prompt action when things slowed down.

Revenge

Certainly, I didn't want her to simply die in a sword fight as the PCs cleared out the lair of the Cult of the Dragon. So I devised another use for her.

Basically, I had Langdedrosa Cyanwrath take charge of the Greenest operation, blaming Frulam for incompetence, tying her up and tossing her down into the hatchery for the newborn dragons to gobble on.

We were still in the early stages of the campaign. I was curious to see if the PCs would retain their honor. In the hatchery they would discover their foe at their mercy. How would they react?

To entice them, I had Frulam state her new purpose in life, should they let her live. “Free me and I'll help you defeat Rezmir!” She would be a useful prisoner, at least as far as the Carnath Roadhouse.

Prisoner Dilemma and Catalyst

Episode 4, On the Road, has an armload of NPCs. But the PCs might require a prod to interact with one or another. Here's where Frulam comes in. Forcing the characters to cope with the “prisoner dilemma” — while also interacting with the various persons and factions within the caravan — enlivened these encounters.

On the Trail of Tyranny

Redemption

Many of the PCs' own backstories mentioned redemptive episodes. Would the players extend to Frulam the second chance that several of them had fictionalized for themselves? Would the PCs allow Frulam some freedom during the encounters at the roadhouse and the hunting lodge? Could she exhibit a willingness to reform? How far would the PCs trust her?

Letting go of Frulam

One thing I didn't want to do was create a DM-NPC, so I had to figure a way to extricate Frulam from the party at the right point. As it turned out, circumstances at the hunting lodge proved fortunate. That encounter ended in a stalemate, with Frulam held as a hostage by Talis until the PCs could exchange her for the White Dragon Mask (which they were unable to retrieve).

In the meantime, I got more use out of Frulam offstage. She is mentioned in a letter Talis sent to the PCs reminding them of their obligation to exchange the White Dragon Mask for her prisoner.

Yet, Frulam did not return to the scene until the Well of Dragons, where she was still Talis' prisoner. But her journey of redemption was complete. Now a faithful follower of Bahamut, she provided a backup healing to the party as it fought Severin, the Red Wizards and the summoned Aspect of Tiamat.

Tools for the DM

On the following pages are two episodes where Frulam was allowed to demonstrate good faith with the party.

The first is a side quest, a chase through Baldur's Gate. I improvised this encounter before we had a copy of the Dungeon Master's Guide and its chase rules. Basically, it gives the PCs a chance to chase Rezmir's palanquin through the city, maybe take out some of her allies and allow Frulam and the PCs to have a showdown with a cult lackey, Dretch. If Frulam doesn't run off when given the chance in the bustling streets of Baldur's Gate, then she can earn the trust of the party members.

The second is the handout letter from Talis to the PCs, a taunt that really got under their skin. In it, Talis hints that she's trying to entice Frulam, referenced as "F." in the letter, to come back into the cult. If the PCs are interested in Frulam's quest for redemption, then this is intended to be another spur encouraging them to act faster.

Palanquin Chase Through the City

PC are spying on traffic through the city from an inn room overlooking the street at Selebon's business in the Blackgate District of Baldur's Gate. All traffic, even if it doesn't use Selebon's business, must pass through at this point.

Rezmir will travel through the city in a curtained palanquin. There are eight **Dragon Knights** acting as four bearers, four **bodyguards** and **Asper Dretch**.

Dragon Knights (AC 18, hp 52, greatsword +5 2d6+3 plus multiattack and parry to AC 20).

Dretch is a dragon cleric (use Frulam's stats).

Bodyguards are guards.

If pursued, the Knights will carry Rezmir's palanquin through the city's winding maze-like streets. Their victory condition, elude or defeat the pursuers. Rezmir will not engage unless Dretch is defeated.

To run the chase

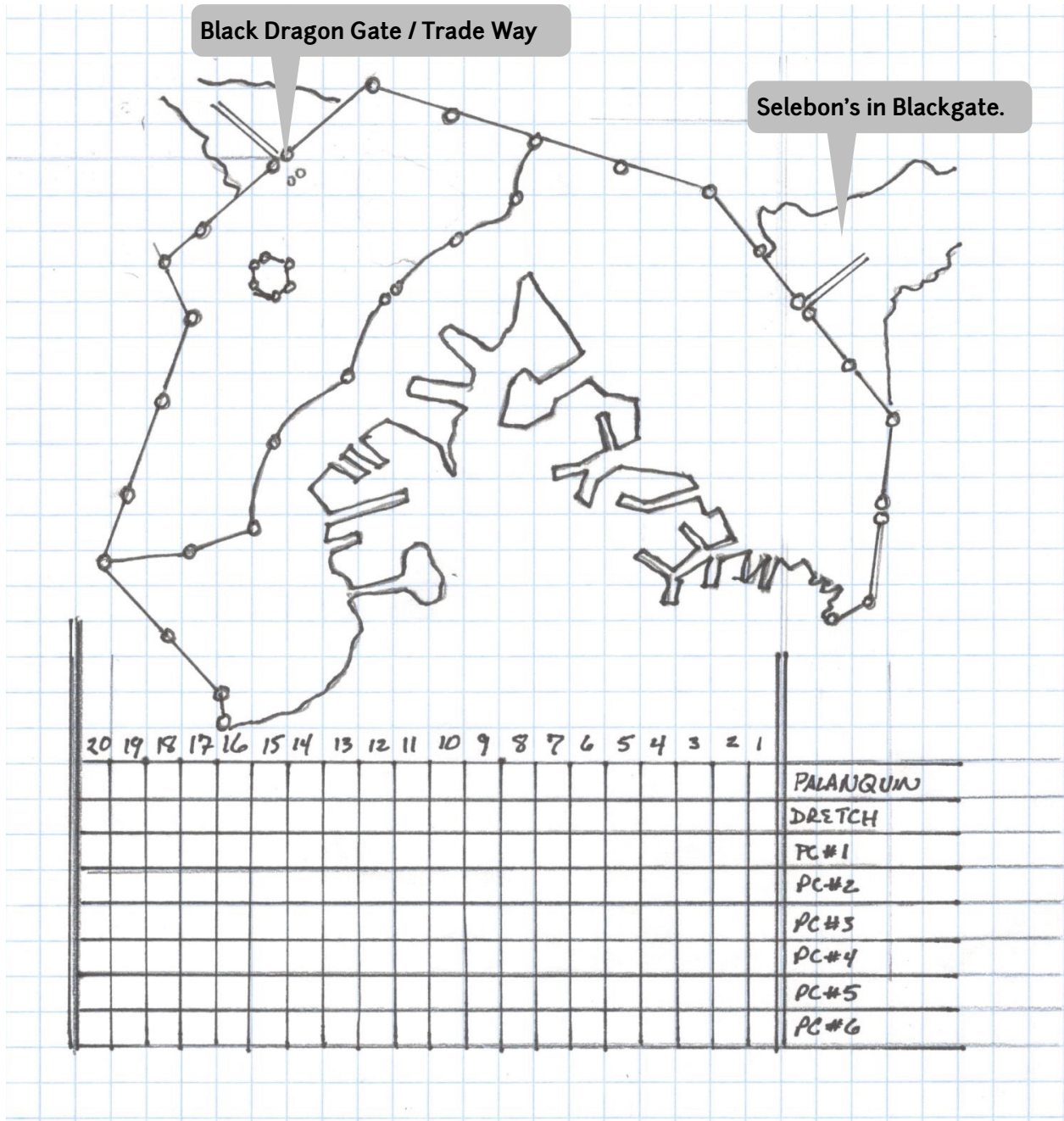
1. Track progress through the city on a grid, an abstract representation of Baldur's Gate. Fix the "distance" of the city at between 10 and 20 squares (DM's choice). 'X' out squares as each character moves through them.

Rezmir in the palanquin moves on

the Dragon Knights' rolls and stats. Dretch moves with the palanquin, unless the DM wants him to engage with a pursuer.

2. Roll initiative. This is the order for this encounter.
3. Roll d20. This sets the DC target number for the PC's turn.
4. Roll a d100, then reference the chart below, which indicates obstacles that must be cleared to advance that round.
5. The PC makes a skill, ability or save check with a d20 roll as described against the condition described on the chart.
6. Success, the character gains advantage on next check.
7. Failure, the character must roll with disadvantage next check. On a failure, there is no movement forward.
8. On consecutive successes, the PC may engage the target with combat, skills or spells.
9. If Rezmir and/or his party reaches the end of the grid first, they have navigated through the city successfully and arrived at Black Dragon Gate and the caravan that will take them north along the Trade Way.

Baldur's Gate



On the Trail of Tyranny

d100	Effect	d100	Effect
1-2	Acrobatics: Navigate crowd	51-52	Acrobatics: Avoid a spill
3-4	Animal Handling: Loose mount	53-54	Animal Handling: Rats!
5-6	Arcana: Alchemical	55-56	Arcana: Random Wiz Cantrip
7-8	Athletics: Climb over	57-58	Athletics: Long jump
9-10	Deception: Look alike	59-60	Deception: Fast talk
11-12	History: Navigate by landmark	61-62	History: Good tactics
13-14	Insight: Intuitive direction	63-64	Insight: Crowd is thinning
15-16	Intimidation: Frighten people	65-66	Intimidation: Guards
17-18	Investigation: Ask for help	67-68	Investigation: Signs of passing
19-20	Medicine: Fix bump or bruise	69-70	Medicine: blood on the trail
21-22	Nature: Real bush	71-72	Nature: Birds scatter
23-24	Perception: Reacquire target	73-74	Perception: Spot problem
25-26	Performance: Shout for help	75-76	Performance: I'm not the one
27-28	Persuasion: Tell a story	77-78	Persuasion: Work with guards
29-30	Religion: Church procession	79-80	Religion: Cut through church
31-32	Sleight hand: Palm something	81-82	Sleight hand: Slip past
33-34	Stealth: Sneak up on target	83-84	Stealth: Hide
35-36	Survival	85-86	Survival: Urban obstacle
37-38	Save vs. Str: Push em aside	87-88	Save vs. Str: Push em aside
39-40	Save vs. Dex: Duck!	89-90	Save vs. Dex: Duck!
41-42	Save vs. Con: Dont' stop now!	91-92	Save vs. Con: Dont' stop now!
43-44	Save vs. Int: Get yer bearings	93-94	Save vs. Int: Get yer bearings
45-46	Save vs. Wis: Lost in the noise	95-96	Save vs. Wis: Lost in the noise
47-48	Save vs. Cha: Blending in	97-98	Save vs. Cha: Blending in
49-50	Save vs. Player's Choice	99-100	Save vs. Player choice

On the Trail of Tyranny

My dearest friends,

I hope this missive reaches you in Waterdeep. A little bird reported you'd been seen there, in the council chambers of the Lord's Alliance of all things. You are associating with powerful people. How grand for you.

Do be careful. If I can find you, so can our other friends.

Speaking of our friends in purple, they were much distressed to learn that B. has taken Skyreach Castle back to his people. They were also quite perturbed that their Thayan associates cannot be found. I think they blame you.

Our mutual friend, F., has been a most enjoyable guest. Such a sweet young woman, so tender-hearted. She 'deeply grieved' upon learning that R. had died, I can assure you. We all respond to news of departed loved ones differently. She whooped and laughed and wept tears of joy. It must have been to hide the fact she was crying deep inside.

F. continues her studies into draconic lore. Learning that there is now a vacancy among the leadership only intensified her interest, I must say. I have made sure she is well supplied with scholarly works, especially those on the black dragons.

But we both grow anxious for news from you. I hope you are pursuing V. with all diligence. My interest in his white mask has only intensified.

There was a rather nasty rumor going around that V. had lost his white mask.

Distressing, if true, that he could be so careless with it. Supposedly, V. informed his master, S., the rumor was false. Of course, V. immediately left on a journey and has not been seen since.

Please make haste.

Cordially yours

Talis

What a country!

Keeping track and portraying more than 20 NPCs during the caravan trek from Baldur's Gate to Waterdeep was one of the most daunting and rewarding experiences I've had in a long time.

To keep it all straight, however, I needed a crib sheet, which I've provided. To give each NPC a distinctive voice, I stole liberally from characters from old movies.

In addition, I felt the need to supply Rezmir with more allies. So I came up with an "adventuring party" of cultists who had cut their teeth during the Greenest campaign. They were an arrogant group of mercenaries that called themselves the "Green Sashes." Each one was devised to be a personal rival to another of the PCs, and in game terms, was about the same level or slightly better.

However, the real gems to come out of that trip were the over-the-top characterization of Azbara Jos and the identical twins Arietta and Zelina Innevar, who along with Jamna Gleansilver, are intended to be interlopers meant to augment the random Trade Way Events.

The PCs never took a shine to Jamna. But the Innevar twins were popular even though the PCs saw through their ruse from the get-go. I guess the PCs were just delighted to have these doppelgangers from Roadside Hospitality along for the journey. I roleplayed them as inquisitive and overly-friendly. "Ya! Ve are sisters, ya! Ve are barmaids, ya! Vere are you headed? Can ve go with you?" As it turned out, they proved helpful as a distraction at the roadhouse.

Azbara Jos, though, got the voice of Ukrainian-born comic and Branson, Mo., entrepreneur Yakov Smirnoff, and his catch-phrase: "What a country!" He was so popular a villain the PCs never had the heart to kill him, though they did ask him to step off Skyreach Castle at an altitude of several hundred feet, once. But when they were reunited at the Well of Dragons, the spirit of Glasnost prevailed: "Let's let bygones be bygones, eh?"

Here's is Azbara's introduction. (Remember, he says this while dressed as he appears in the illustration in the book, bald, with a tattooed forehead and wearing voluminous red robes.) "No, I am not Red Wizard of Thay. That is preposterous! I am Thayan, that is true. I am refugee from tyranny of Szass Tam and the undead that ravage the land. But I am not Red Wizard. I come to Sword Coast for new life! What a country!"

On the Trail of Tyranny

Merchants				
Name	G	Race	Goods	Personality
Achreny Ulyetin	m	human	2 wagons, cured furs, uncured hides	borish
Beyd Sechepol	m	half-elf	ale, beer, stocks	diplomatic, but careless about gear, horses,
Edhelri Lewel	f	moon elf	exotic wood from Chult	impatient, exacting, dotes on animals
Lai Angesstun	m	gold dwarf	scented cooking oil, perfumes of Amn	Talks about money, how he will spend it, but he is stingy
Lasfelro "the Silent"	m	human	Secret, guarded by brooding gargoyle tethered by a silver chain	Tenor who tells great jokes, followed by sulen, silent, brooding moods
Noohar Serelim	m	moon elf	exquisite wood carvings by Elves of Cormyr	Articulate, speaks to his brother Selvek through sign language
Neyerhite Verther	m	human	Calishite silk (invested with worms)	When worms are discovered, will become unhinged in anger and grief
Oyn Evenmor	m	human	Exotic birds	Stubborn, argumentative; will provide liquor in exchange for conversation
Samardag the Hoper	m	human	crates of fragile porcelain	Eternal optimist; soft touch for hard luck cases

Other				
Name	G	Race	Personality	
Aldor Urnoplehurst	m	human	Leaving Baldur's Gate because of scandal	
Green Imsa	f	human	Green skin from head to foot, looking for a remedy, friendly, quiet, flustered if anyone asks about past	
Radecere Perethun	m	rock gnome	Eats alone, seldom speaks, rides in the back. Gambles loudly.	

Guards				
Name	G	Race	Personality	
Eldkin Agetul	f	shield dwarf	flaunts experience about route, perfectionist	
Leda Widris	f	human	honest and courageous, spent many years in south and now wants to experience snow and frozen seas	
Orvustia Esseren	f	human	First trip away from farm, smart, tough, good with bow, but knows nothing of the world; talks of an aunt who says this trip will be good for her.	
Sulesdeg the Pole	m	human	7-foot-5 tribesman, talks rarely	
Tyjit Skesh	f	shield dwarf	Quick to anger, honest; won't tolerate bullies	

Teamsters				
Name	G	Race	Personality	
Enom Toburn	m	lightfoot halfling	Font of stories, legends, tall tales, can turn sullen vengeful	
Losvius Longnose	m	lightfoot halfling	Big nose, nosy, overly curious about people's secrets, belongings	
Werond Torohard	f	human	Quiet mule handler, "horse-whisperer", starry-eyed romantic, tells stories of lost loves	

THE GREEN SASHES

Leofrick
Veteran

Leader of the Green Sashes.

Brash, bold, fearless with a swagger.

Rival: Dwarf monk

Sadon
Cult Fanatic

Cultured, educated, aficionado of dragons.

Only "true believer" among the Green Sashes. The others are in it for the mayhem.

Rival: Cleric of Lathander

Tybalt
Druid

Embraces the untamed aspects of nature.

Admires "beasts" for their "purity" of killing.

Rival: Warlock

Cedany
Scout

Longbow sharpshooter. Bow is everything. Always feels she has to prove herself the best.

Rival: Human fighter (archer)

On the Trail of Tyranny

No, Mister Bond, I expect you to die!

Since the PCs' arrival at the Carnath Roadhouse, the adventure had played out like a spy movie. In fact, there is even a suggestion in the text to run that scenario that way.

When I saw one of the showdowns in Hoard was against an egomaniac (Talis) in an alpine hunting lodge with a village below, my mind immediately went to the classic James Bond film, "On Her Majesty's Secret Service," in which 007 has a showdown with Blofeld at his research institute Piz Gloria in the Swiss Alps. And this film features a fantastic and thrilling chase on snow skis down the mountain (with John Barry's soundtrack providing the perfect pace and mood.)

So I renamed the Hunting Lodge the Talis Finishing School for Young Ladies, filled it with her female agents in training, and created the showdown that ended with the PCs making a quick escape down the mountain — pursued by Talis' dwarf allies on snow skis armed with crossbows.

The chase was on (and of course, I played the movie soundtrack in the background during the encounter).

By this time we had the DMG in our hands. So I created chase cards based on that system. The pursuers were a bunch of dwarf **thugs** on skis.

A version of the small chit cards appear on the next two pages. Print and cut them out. Card stock works best..

Alpine Chase Cards

Chase rules:

Designate quarry, pursuers. Roll initiative. Determine starting positions, distance between participants.

Dashing:

Each PC has 3+Con mod. dash actions. Dash is x2 movement. Additional dashes require DC 10 Con check or gain level of exhaustion. At 5, the PC the drops out.

Spells and attacks:

Spells are normal. Chasers can't make opportunity attacks, but may be subject to them from bystanders they pass.

Escape factors:

Quarry makes Dex (Stealth) check vs Pursuers' Wis (Perception). Quarry has Advantage if places to hide, it's crowded or noisy; Disadvantage if it is open, quiet or lead pursuer is ranger or has Survival proficiency.

On the Trail of Tyranny

<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Your path goes through a rough patch of low hanging pine branches.</p> <p>Clear it with a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.</p> <p>Fail: 5 ft of difficult terrain.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No Complication.</p> <p>Roll d20.</p> <p>19-20 gain free Dash.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Snow pack is uneven.</p> <p>Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to navigate through.</p> <p>Fail: 10 ft of difficult terrain.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p>
<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Pass through a pelting spray of sharp icicle crystals.</p> <p>The spray makes a +3 attack and does 4d4 piercing damage.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p> <p>Roll d20.</p> <p>19-20 gain Advantage.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Pass over a frozen stream bed.</p> <p>Make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.</p> <p>Fail: Treat as 10 ft of difficult terrain.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p>
<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Boulder in your path.</p> <p>To avoid, make a DC 10 Strength (athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.</p> <p>Fail: Treat at 10 ft difficult terrain.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p> <p>Roll d20.</p> <p>19-20 gain free Dash.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Momentary whiteout.</p> <p>Make DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check to navigate through.</p> <p>Fail: Entire turn is at half speed.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p>

On the Trail of Tyranny

<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Surprise drop!</p> <p>Make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to navigate.</p> <p>Fail: Fall 1d4 x 5 feet and take 1d6 bludgeon damage / 10 feet fallen.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p> <p>Roll d20.</p> <p>19-20 gain Advantage.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Snagged by a snare or trap set by a hunter.</p> <p>Make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to avoid.</p> <p>Fail: You are caught. Escape requires a Dc 10 Strength check or cause 5 damage to the snare (AC 10).</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p>
<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Spooked herd crosses path. Make DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to avoid, Fail: Caught in stampede and take following damage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Badgers 1 pt 2 Mountain Goats 1d4 bludgeon 3 Deer 1d4 piercing 4 Boars 1d6 slashing 5 Elk 2d4+3 bludgeon 6 Mastiffs 1d6+1 piercing 7 Wolfpack 2d4+2 8 Giant goats 2d4+3 	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p> <p>Roll d20.</p> <p>19-20 gain free Dash.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Hidden fencing.</p> <p>Make DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 ft of movement to avoid posts.</p> <p>Fail: take 1d10 bludgeon damage.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p>
<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Alpine creature gives chase:</p> <p>Black Bear, p. 318 Boar, p. 319 Brown Bear, p. 319 Dire wolf, p. 321 Snow ape (ape), p. 317 Giant boar, p. 323 Giant Elk, p. 324 Giant owl, p. 327 Panther, p. 333 Winter wolf, p. 340</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>No complication.</p> <p>Roll d20.</p> <p>19-20 gain Advantage</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>PC hits ice-packed chute. DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or lose control.</p> <p>Fail: Spin out of control at full speed in 1d8 direction.</p>	<p>ALPINE CHASE CARDS</p> <p>Bogged down by slushy surface.</p> <p>PC needs DC 10 Strength saving throw.</p> <p>Fail: Move at half speed.</p>

Delegate scorecard for the Council of Waterdeep

Rise of Tiamat prominently features the Council of Waterdeep and a host of NPCs delegates that can add layers of political intrigue to a campaign.

What follows is a version of the scorecard I used to keep track of the NPCs and their representative factions, including using images of paintings from the baroque to colonial periods so the PCs could associate names to faces. It hangs from a DM screen nicely.

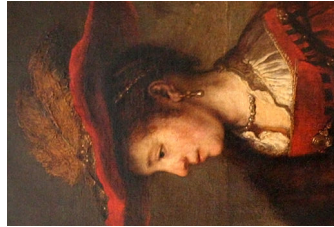
A landscape version of this document appears as part of an article I did on the KoboldPress.com website.

It should be noted this version includes references to deviations my campaign made from the book.

On the Trail of Tyranny



"Our failure would spell an end to all beautiful and honest things."



REMALLA 'REMI'
HAVENTREE

female moon elf

Pledge: Harper mages and scouts



"The strong must defend the weak, whatever the cost."



ONTHARR
FRUME

male human

Pledge: Paladins, healing clerics



"In all good hearts is a spot of darkness, and in all tragedy is a glimmer of light."



DELAAN
WINTERHOUND

male half-elf

Pledge: Druids, treants, good and neutral aligned lycanthropes
Treatant **Turlang** of High Forest.



"We cannot stop what we do not understand."



LADY LAERAL
SILVERHAND

female human

Pledge: Waterdeep's army and conscript troops.

"The commoners need strong leaders to protect them, and to do what must be done even when it is distasteful."



LORD DAGULT
NEVEREMBER

male human

Pledge: Neverwinter conscripts, Mintarn mercenaries

"A sturdy ax, a strong hand to hold it, and a straight fight are all we dwarves need to end this little problem."



AMBASSADOR
CONNERAD
BRAWNAVIL

male shield dwarf

Pledge: Dwarf soldiers, dwarf-forged armaments, siege weapons.

On the Trail of Tyranny

"I am trusted with protecting thousands of lives, and I will not betray that trust no matter what my personal desires."



MARSHAL ULDER RAVENGARD
male human

Pledge: Flaming Fist warriors of Baldur's Gate, advisers to train conscripts.

"We elves were once the greatest civilization to grace Faerun, and my people are heir to that history. I will not squander our waning strength."



KING MELANDRACH
male wild elf

Pledge: Elven eldritch knights of the Misty Forest.
Will present legendary hero **Cylanestriel**, female elf ranger, recently escaped from Well of Dragons

"Calculated risks are necessary to win this war, and no one is likely to emerge unscathed."



TAERN THUNDERSPELLS' HORNBLADE
male human

Pledge: Army of Silvermoon (Knights in Silver) and Silvermoon conscripts.

"Against Tiamat, we either stand together or fall alone. Who will stand with Cormyr?"



SIR ISTEVAL
male human

Pledge: Might of Cormyr, Purple Dragon Knights, War Wizards

ZHENTARIM



"I'm certain we can come to an agreement that all parties will favor. But if not, we have other means of settling the issue."



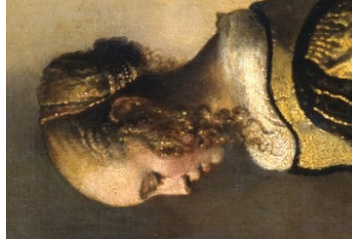
RIAN NIGHTSHADE
female tiefling

Pledge: Assassins and mercenaries.

WATERDEEP



"It's impossible to say what the sounding means, but the dragons hear it clearly and will eventually answer its call."



LADY DALA SILMERHELVE
female human

Pledge: Information about metallic dragons.

METALLICS

Protanther	male gold	Nymmurh	male bronze
Ileuthra	male brass	Tazmikella	female copper
Otaaryliakkarnos	female silver		

DRAGONS

CULT OF THE DRAGON

WYRMSPEAKERS

- Red** Severin male human
- Blue** Galvan male human
- Green** Neronvain male moon elf
- Black** Rezmir* female half-black dragon
- White** Varram male dwarf

* — deceased



SEVERIN

OLD GUARD / DISSENTERS

- Naergoth Bladelord** wight, former commander of Well of Dragons
- Jorgen Pawl** dragonsoul mage, Xonthal's Tower co-commander
- Iskander** human wizard, Xonthal's Tower co-commander
- Sandesyl Morgia** vampire, formerly assigned to Skyreach Castle

FREE AGENTS

- Talis the White** female half elf wizard, Greypeak Finishing School for Young Women
- Frulam Mondath / aka Ricenda** Reformed cultist, presently Talis' hostage in Greypeak Mountains
- Tatiana Valegra / aka Corrine** Succubus assassin, posing as a maid in home of House Haventree

THAYAN ALLIES / RESURRECTIONISTS

- Rath Modar** male human illusionist deceased
- Azbara Jos** male human mage whereabouts unknown
- Tafela Drom** male human necromancer Modar's lieutenant
- Bey-alina** female Thayan knight Tafela's bodyguard / lover
- Others** Lesser mages accompanied by wight bodyguards

DRAGONS

CHROMATICS

- Arauthator adult white
- Lennithon adult blue
- Voaraghamanthar adult black
- Waevaerendor adult black

MISCHIEF MAKERS

- Uprising** Half-red dragon veteran
- 21 kobolds
- 7 lizard folk

GOON SQUADS

8 Protection crews

- 1 dragonsoul on warhorse
- 4 dragonclaws
- 3 guard drakes

Devil delegation

- Lord Volmer (bone devil)
- 5 cultists
- 2 cult fanatics

Captive cultist

- 4 ogres
- Yggran, half-red dragon veteran
- Held: Cheela
- Flegsteel, dwarf wearer of the purple

CULTISTS

First Attack	XP
Dragonclaw	200
Dragonwing	450
Dragonfang	1,100
Half-blue dragon gladiator	1,800
Young blue dragon	5,000

Second Attack	XP
Dragonwing	450
Dragonsoul	1,800
Mezsoloth	1,800
Nycaloth	5,000
Adult black dragon	11,500

Third Attack	XP
Dragonwing	450
Dragonfang	1,100
Half-red dragon gladiator	2,300
Mage	2,300
Young red dragon	5,900

**All that is true and fit
for print, for 1 nib**

One thing I did to help the PCs keep track of the background politics at the Council of Waterdeep, especially when they were away adventuring in other parts of the Sword Coast, was to produce a broadsheet of the Waterdeep News.

This turned out especially useful as the PCs tracked the political decline of Lord Neverember and the ascension of Lady Silverhand.

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib

Masked lord mourned

Dock workers, nobles alike view casket of shipping magnate Arthagast Ulbrinter

'There will be justice!' declares Lord Neverember as search for killer continues

AT THE LORD'S PALACE — Showing solidarity, nobles from all quarters of the city waited their turn in the long queue alongside dockworkers, shipwrights and others in the employ of the Ulbrinter family as they all viewed the casket of Arthagast Ulbrinter.

Revealed only yesterday to be a Masked Lord by his widow, Lady Remi Haventree, and confirmed by Open Lord Dagult Neverember, Ulbrinter was hailed as visionary leader who had guided the city through its many travails.

(Continued on Page 2)

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

In grief, Ulbrinter's widow explains why she revealed husband's secret position

AT LORD'S RESPITE IN DOCK WARD — Accompanied by attendants touring the tomb that will soon house the still form of her husband, Lady Remi Haventree, explained to this reporter why she revealed his membership among the masked lords.

"He was killed because he was a Masked Lord. Of that I am certain," said Lady Remi.

Dabbing away tears, Lady Remi turned away to compose
(Continued on Page 3)



Council of Waterdeep will still convene, delegates vow

AT THE LORD'S PALACE — Marshal Ulder Ravengard of Baldur's Gate said the death of Lord Ulbrinter, though tragic, must not delay the work of the council.

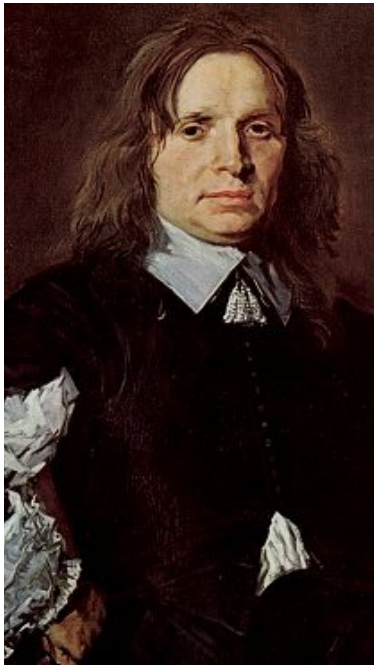
"The threat of the Cult of the Dragon is evident to all," he said. "We cannot be deterred even as we grieve for the man who had the vision to convene the council."

(Continued on Page 4)

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib

Lord's Alliance in disarray



As Council fractures along old lines,
blame falls on Open Lord Neverember

AT THE LORD'S PALACE — Delegates to the First Council of Waterdeep, convened to discuss the threat posed by the Cult of the Dragon, fell to bickering.

"I say, this affects cities and nations across the Sword Coast," said Comyr's most celebrated paladin, Sir Isteval. "We must have unity. Too often, all that matters is what Waterdeep wants."

Open Lord Dagult Neverember, who presided

over the session, chafed at the criticism.

"This is a council of equals," Lord Neverember said. "All voices are heard."

Old disputes surfaced during an evening session, prompting another day of inaction.

"While we bicker, my ax blade's getting dull," said a disgruntled Connerad Brawnnavil, envoy for the dwarves of the north.

(Continued on Page 2)

Lady Silverhand: 'We must not falter. We must have resolve'

AT BLACKSTAFF TOWER — Lady Laeral Silverhand made a simple plea to the citizens of Waterdeep, calling on them to rally behind the city's Masked Lords.

"We must not falter. We must have resolve," said the famed wizard and acknowledged leader of her late husband's Harper faction.

She was joined by rival Harper leader the Lady Remalia Haventree, who was

still mourning the death of her husband, Masked Lord Arthagast Ulbrinter.

Neither would not comment on reports that the Harpers factions, without Council approval, had launched a joint expedition to confront the Cult of the Dragon. But Silverhand did say, cryptically: "We cannot stop what we do not understand."

Civic and business leader Durnan of the Yawning Portal

Inn said Silverhand's announcement was intended to galvanize the Masked Lords.

"Clearly, by healing the rift with Remi, then Laeral's demonstrating her knack at consensus building," Durnan said. "Don't be surprised if she next calls for a vote of 'no confidence' to oust Dagult with the intention of replacing him."

(Continued on Page 4)

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib

Neverember's rule falters

Lady Silverhand calls for vote of no confidence

Lord Ulbrinter's killer is at large and delegates ignore the Open Lord's summons to reconvene Council of Waterdeep

Some have asked: Why can't the Harpers find Lord Ulbrinter's killer?

Both Lady Haventree and Lady Silverhand said all available agents have been deployed to gather intelligence on the Cult of the Dragon. There are none available in the city.

AT THE LORD'S PALACE — Beset by an unsolved murder and a fractured alliance of Sword Coast nobles, Dagult Neverember now finds himself challenged as Waterdeep's Open Lord.

In her role as a "leading citizen," Lady Laeral Silverhand has called for a vote of "no confidence."

"Lord Ulbrinter's killer is still at large," she said at a rally at Blackstaff Tower. "Delegates to the Council of Waterdeep are ignoring a summons to reconvene. We must have a change."

"This is not the time for a transition of leadership," Neverember said on the steps of the Lord's Palace. "Too much is in play."

The City Watch continues to search for the persons responsible for killing Masked Lord Arthagast Ulbrinter, Neverember said. "Rest assured, there will be justice," he said.

Ulbrinter's widow, Harper leader Remalia Haventree, said she believed the City Watch was earnest in searching for the assassin. Yet, "it is of little consolation," she said.

"My husband was slain because he formed an alliance of



lords, unified in purpose and cause, the the defeat of the Cult of the Dragon. Our Lord Neverember has squandered this chance to defeat the cult and secure peace for all our peoples."

Should the Masked Lords consider the question, as many think they will, no one has yet put forth a candidate to replace Neverember.

Lady Silverhand declined to nominate herself.

"I am not a candidate," she said. "That is a matter for the Masked Lords. Like my late husband, Lord Blackstaff, however, I would answer any call to serve this city I love."

Feast at the Three Pearls Nightclub in Dock Ward. Specials Nightly. Dancing Girls. Good Food.

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib

Masked Lords to convene

Open Lord Neverember's reign will be considered during a full assembly

AT HEROES GARDEN — Four Masked Lords of Waterdeep, accompanied by Open Lord Dagult Neverember, said they would soon convene a full session of their body to consider a “no confidence” petition.

With the statue of the greatest Open Lord, Baeron Silmaeril, looming in the background, the Lords made an unannounced appearance, then addressed those citizens gathered there.

“The position of Open Lord provides a window by which the people of Waterdeep can view the reign of the Masked Lords, who have ruled this city

uninterrupted for three centuries,” one of the Masked Lords said. “A question of confidence in the Open Lord must be weighed carefully and deliberately.”

Another Masked Lord said: “For the Open Lord to manage the affairs of the city with authority, he or she must know their decisions will not be scrutinized against the mood of the city. Political winds change, the city moves from left to right and back again. The Open Lord is above these whims.”

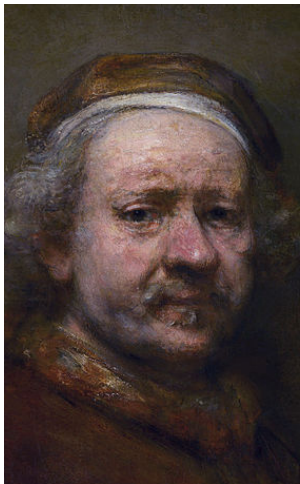
“These are extraordinary times,” a third Masked Lord said. “We believe Open Lord Neverember has always acted

with the best interests of the city at heart. But the threat to the city, to all the Sword Coast, is monumental, and requires an examination.”

The fourth Masked Lord then spoke: “We call for a convention of all the Masked Lords with the greatest reluctance and reservation.”

“I thank the Masked Lords for the opportunity to serve,” Neverember said. “I hope after an examination of the record, I will be permitted to continue in this capacity.”

There is conjecture if by making this announcement at Heroes' Garden, the Masked Lords intended to send a message favoring continuity.



Mirt the Moneylender calls 'no confidence' vote ill-advised

AT MOUNT WATERDEEP — A notable voice of dissension came from Mirt the Moneylender, himself long rumored to be a Masked Lord.

“This is ill-advised,” Mirt said. “And I think the Masked Lords ought not to be dancing to the tune played by the Moonstars, the

Harpers, who whomever is behind Laeral Silverhand these days.”

Danilo Thann, a former Masked Lord, said Mirt's comments were not productive. “My Aunt Laeral only wants what's best for the city. Unlike some, like Mirt, who use their position to line their own pockets.”

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib

Masked lords declare for Laeral Silverhand

Neverember storms out when captured Wyrmspeaker is presented to Council

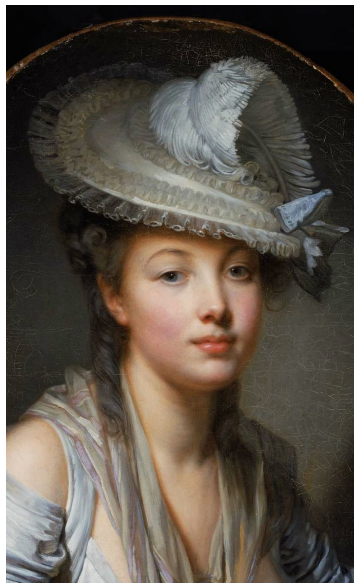
AT LORD'S PALACE — Anamanue Laeral Silverhand Arunson — the Lady Mage of Waterdeep — was named Open Lord by the assembly of Masked Lords, who by standing in groups, showed themselves to be divided over the decision to change leadership.

Ousted Open Lord Dagult Neverember, lord of Neverwinter, agreed to keep serving on the Council of Waterdeep, which is trying to forge an alliance of Sword Coast nations to confront the threat posed by the Cult of the Dragon.

The transfer of power appeared to go peacefully. Silverhand's first action was to call a session of the Council.

During which, the Order of the Gauntlet's Ontharr Frume, introduced adventurers who presented a captured wyrmspeaker to the council.

The wyrmspeaker, Varram, was said to be from



the Cult's white dragon faction. There was a minor disturbance in which Varram tried to sow dissent in the council, but he was silenced and taken away.

Even so, the mere evidence that the council had struck a blow to the cult by capturing one of its leaders galvanized the often fractious body.

However, the prisoner's appearance did not sit well with Neverember, who must have perceived the timing one day too late to have saved his chance to retain his position as Open Lord.

During an exchange in which Neverember said that the contributions of nonmagical members of the council were not as valued as those of spellcasters, he stormed off.

As proxies campaigned for Silverhand and Neverember in the preceding weeks, the mudslinging from the two camps had grown increasingly volatile.

Still, Silverhand's ascension was not unwelcome even among Neverember's political allies.

"The Lady Silverhand is a true champion, who has risked her life on the field of battle many a time. I trust she will provide good leadership," said Sir Isteval of Cormyr.

Feast at the Three Pearls Nightclub in Dock Ward. Specials Nightly. Dancing Girls. Good Food.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib

Silverhand summons combined councils

In unprecedented move, newly elected Open Lord requests Masked Lords attend session with Sword Coast allies

BLACKSTAFF TOWER — Acting boldly during her first week as Open Lord, Anamanue Laeral Silverhand Arunson — the Lady Mage of Waterdeep — has called a combined session of the often fractured council dealing with the threat posed by the Cult of the Dragon and the Masked Lords, who by appearances, were not unanimous in her election.

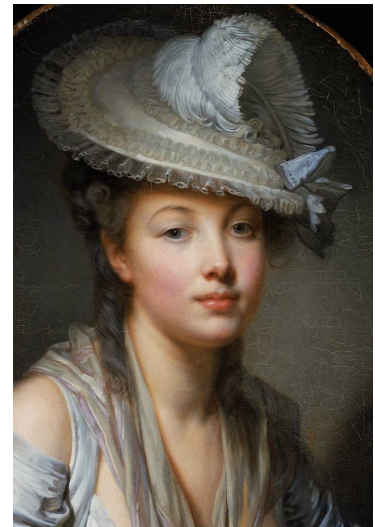
“My aunt says that Waterdeep’s stake in the outcome of the council requires the Open Lords be in attendance,” says Lord Danilo Thann, who has been acting as Silverhand’s minister without portfolio.

The move brought immediate reaction from some

of the most vocal elements of Waterdeep’s power structure and the diplomats representing the city-states of the Sword Coast.

“The shine’s not even off her appointment and Lady Silverhand is already bossing the Masked Lords around as if they were apprentices in her wizard’s tower,” said longtime Waterdeep mover and shaker Mirt the Moneylender. “It’s a power grab, pure and simple. I warned ye.”

“Bold and brash, I’ll give you that,” said Dagult Neverember, protector of Neverwinter and Silverhand’s immediate predecessor in the office of Open Lord. “But I don’t see the point. She’s squandering what political



advantage she has from her recent appointment.”

“I’m alarmed, frankly,” said Emerald Enclave representative Delaan Winterhound. “Waterdeep already is over-represented on the council. The voice of the needs of the woodlands was already diminished, and now this? It doesn’t bode well.”

Feast at the Three Pearls Nightclub in Dock Ward. Specials Nightly. Dancing Girls. Good Food.

Waterdeep News

HARKEN AND HEAR, GOOD NEWS AND GRAVE, ALL THAT IS TRUE AND FIT FOR PRINT for 1 nib



Cormyr's Purple Dragon Knights range in front of Army of Waterdeep

Elite cavalry heads army



Editor's note: Retired Harper agent **Arilyn Moonblade** is providing dispatches as she travels with the Army of Waterdeep toward its confrontation with the Cult of the Dragon. By agreement, Moonblade will not disclose the location of the army nor the strength in numbers of specific units.

WITH THE ARMY OF WATERDEEP — In the command tent of Field Marshal Ulder Ravengard, field reports provided by Cormyr's Purple Dragon Knights are eagerly received.

"They are the point of the spear," Ravengard has said many times. The mounted unit ranges far ahead of the main body of the army, scouting out enemy positions, providing the field marshal with the lay of the land he will have to march the rest of his army through.

Each of the cavalry units is led by a member of Cormyr's nobility and is supported by a detachment of war wizards.

However, one need not be an experienced observer of military matters to see that the Purple Dragon Knight held in highest esteem is the retired captain Sir Isteval. He has left his

comfortable estate in Daggerford to join with his comrades in this fight.

"These young knights, they see the world differently than I do," says Isteval. "I have boots older than some of them. But what, ho, they are a loyal group and as skilled mounted combatants as you'll ever see."

Continued on Page 2

Army of the North in good spirits

Editor's note: Talantra Bowgentle is providing reports as she travels with the Army of the North.

WITH THE ARMY OF THE NORTH — In normal circumstances, the dwarves of Mithral Hall would find difficulty being allies with the many giants under Lord Neverember's command. But we have a common enemy, and so accommodations are made on both sides.

The Knights in Silver serve as a model of **Continued on Page 4**

Silverhand's ploy to unify the alliance

Even after Silverhand was named Open Lord, the alliance to fight the Cult of the Dragon remained divided.

Before the vote was called, the PCs were dispatched to members of the alliance and asked to use persuasion to convince them to vote for Silverhand's unity measure. Mechanically, this meant they had to make Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

This made additional use of the factional scorecard mechanic that appears in the appendix of Rise of Tiamat. Each of the faction scores up to that point of the adventure were used in computing each faction's reaction to Silverhand's proposal.

What follows is an explanation of how this scenario works. As a sidetrek, it was a great way to wrap up all the political intrigue that had been playing out during our play sessions.

(In our game, the vote tally was close. Silverhand's unity measure carried by only one vote. Who knows how the adventure would have turned had it failed. Maybe in your game, you'll find out.)

On the Trail of Tyranny

Silverhand's first play

Laeral Silverhand intends to call a special session of the council, hoping to capitalize on the momentum gained from the capture of the wyrmspeaker, Varram the White, and the “honeymoon” feeling of her own recent appointment to carry the day.

She is calling this her “put up, or shut up” ordinance. Each member of the council will be asked to make a pledge of resources, even a token one, else lose a voting seat on the assembly. In a political sense, she is prepared for the fallout should the council disband for good. But she won't waste anymore time with a council if they can't come to even the simplest agreement to work together. If Waterdeep must go on alone, it will.

Of course, she thinks that enough of the members will stay on, and she would rather work with a smaller group that is unified in purpose than a large one that remains divided.

As the group responsible for Varram's capture, she asks each one of the adventurers to visit one of the council members. Acting as her advocate, she wants each PC to make as persuasive or passionate an argument as possible asking them to support her first measure before the council. She won't reveal her “put up, or shut up” ploy, but her advocates are told to say that Waterdeep is fully prepared to combat the Cult of the Dragon on its own, if need be.

The PCs can't know the exact disposition of each faction on the council, but they can get a sense of their level of support.

Supportive	Wavering	Antagonistic / Unconvinced
Cormyr	Order of the Gauntlet	Harpers
Baldur's Gate	Neverwinter	Emerald Enclave
	Mithral Hall	Zhentarium
	Misty Forest	
	Thayan Red Wizards	
	Silverymoon	

Because the PCs can't reach out to all the delegates, they must decide which factions they should reach out to. Silverhand only needs a simple majority for the measure to carry (and she can cast a decisive vote, if need be), so she needs five factions to vote with her.

On the Trail of Tyranny

A personal appeal

The PCs might be surprised to learn how tenuous the support from the Harpers is, given that Laeral Silverhand is a Harper leader and that Remi Haventree, who is presumed to be deceased, is working behind the scenes and basically doing everything she can to aid the PCs in their efforts to fight the Cult of the Dragon.

If the PCs make their visits to the faction leaders, and based on their interactions feel the outcome of the vote is still in doubt, they might implore Silverhand to make a personal appeal to Remi, who would then direct her proxy on the council to vote in support. However, Silverhand will likely have to strike a bargain for this level of support, which will be costly to her.

How this works

At this time, each council faction has a support score based on events in the adventure. Each PC is reaching out, hoping to “lay the groundwork” to make each faction receptive to Silverhand’s first measure. This will be accomplished by the PC making a Charisma (Persuasion) check. The difference (+/-) of the result to a DC of 15 is recorded. This is the bonus or penalty that will be applied to the faction leader’s Wisdom check. Each faction leader then rolls a d20 Wisdom check, adjusted by the faction support score and the PC’s bonus or penalty. That result is recorded.

Remember, the faction score represents the sentiments of the group represented by the council delegate, not the delegate’s personal feelings.

(The faction scores were arrived at by their current scores based on major actions taken by the PCs thus far in the adventure, subtracted 10, the number of opportunities the PCs have had to influence faction members).

Council Faction	Leader (Wisdom bonus)	Faction Adj.	PC Per. check	Leader's Wis. Adj.	Diplo. Result
Open Lord	Laeral Silverhand	(20, +5)		(-3)	
Harper	(*Remi Haventree)	(14, +2)		-8	
Order of the Gauntlet	Ontharr Frume	(11, +0)		-6	
Emerald Enclave	Delaan Winterhound	(13, +1)		-9	
Neverwinter	Dagult Neverember	(15, +2)		-7	
Mithral Hall	Connerad Brawnnavil	(11, +0)		-7	
Baldur's Gate	Ulder Ravengard	(11, +0)		-4	
Misty Forest	King Melandrach	(15, +2)		-5	
Silverymoon	Taern Hornblade	(18, +3)		-5	
Cormyr	Sir Isteval	(11, +0)		-3	
Zhentarim	Rian Nightshade	(12, +1)		-9	
Thayan Red Wizards	Nyh Illmichh	(15, +2)		-7	

On the Trail of Tyranny

A call for a vote

Once the faction visits are concluded, the Waterdeep Council meets in session. Silverhand presents her measure for consideration.

There is debate.

Marshal Ravengard voices support, saying the warriors of the Flaming Fist are ready to meet any challenge.

Taern Hornblade says this is a bold action by the Open Lord, but is uncertain if he can commit the Knights in Silver so long as Silverymoon has not been directly threatened.

Delaan Winterhound is openly skeptical and scoffs — how many times has he pleaded for assistance knowing the Cult of the Dragon is at work in the forests of the world and so far his requests have gone unanswered, and now *Waterdeep* wants a pledge of his resources?

The vote is called. The roll is answered in alphabetical order. Each delegate rolls a d20. The result is added to the Faction adjustment and the PC's Diplomatic result, if any). Any result 10+ is a "yea", below is a "nay."

Roll call of Factions	Delegate	Yea	Nay
Baldur's Gate	Marshal Ulder Ravengard		
Cormyr	Sir Isteval		
Emerald Enclave	Delaan Winterhound		
Harper	*Remi Haventree		
Mithral Hall	Connerad Brawnail		
Misty Forest	King Melandrach		
Neverwinter	Dagult Neverember		
Order of the Gauntlet	Ontharr Frume		
Silverymoon	Taern Hornblade		
Thayan Red Wizards	Nyh Illmichh		
Zhentarim	Rian Nightshade		
Waterdeep	Laeral Silverhand		

**The last battle
of men and elves
(and of dwarves and
tieflings, too)**

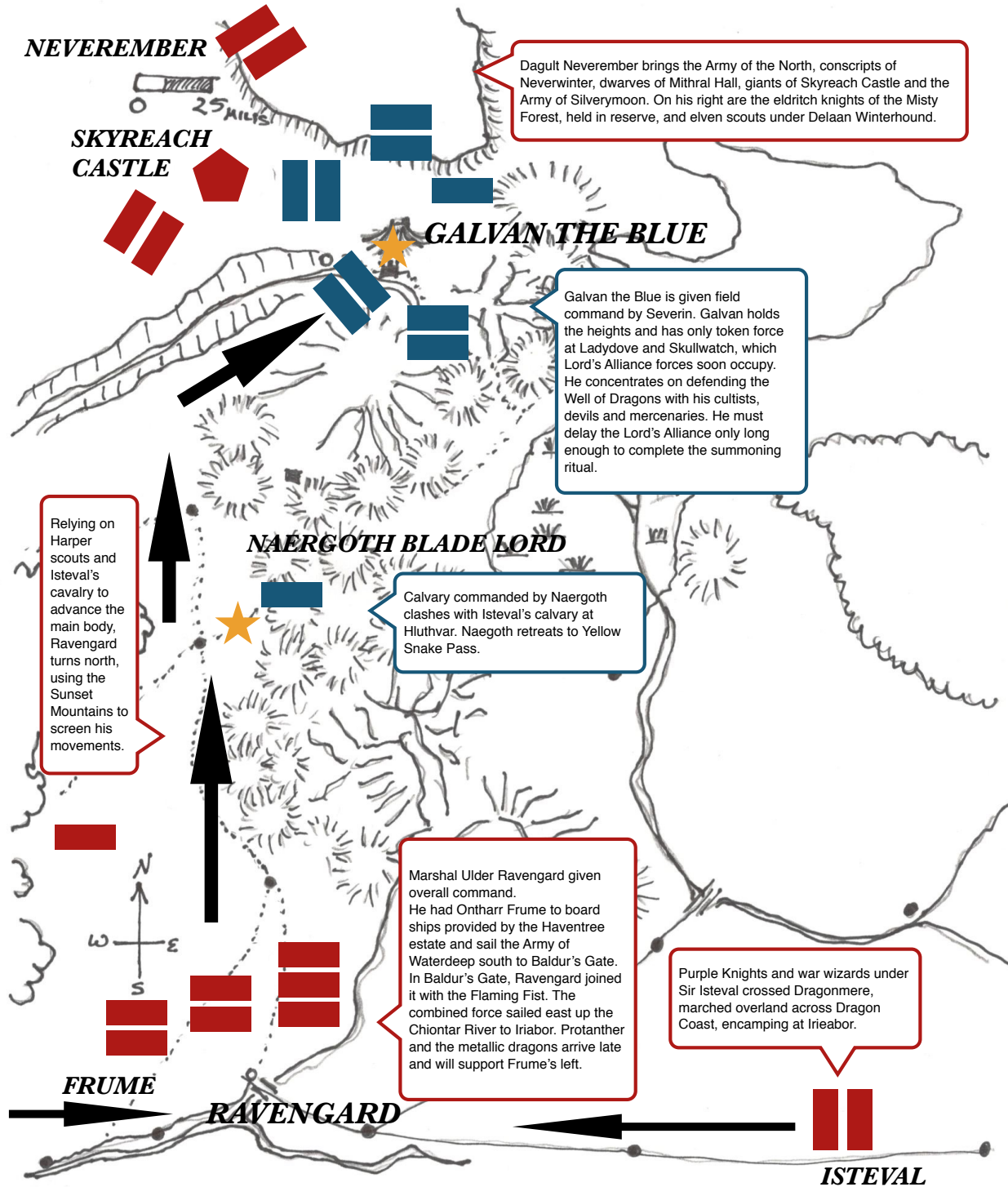
One of the things that's neat about the Fifth Edition rules of D&D is the fact you can incorporate past rules sets into your play.

One of the things we did, using The War Machine (Mass Combat) rules from the D&D Dungeon Master's Companion booklet, (c) 1984, was play out the final battle between the Lord's Alliance and the forces of the Cult of the Dragon.

While the PCs infiltrated the Well of Dragons and did their best to disrupt the summoning of Tiamat, we also set the stage by having each of the players control one of the faction armies of the Lord's Alliance.

On the following page was a map that showed the course of the battle. Hopefully it can inspire your play, even if these events occur in the background of your campaign.

On the Trail of Tyranny



Why don't they ever write?

Some of the most appreciated handouts are letters and letter-fragments.

Included in this batch is a re-creation of Iskander's letter to the Council of Waterdeep that appears in full in Rise of Tiamat.

But I've also included items wholly of my own creation. Some are uncoded Harper dispatches written to move the adventure along. (Some DM's may find the use of a typewritten font jarring, but I thought it was an interesting touch. It certainly evokes the sense of classified documents that come with spy thrillers that this adventure draws a lot of inspiration from. There's also something about the Harpers possessing some forbidden technology, even if it is the equivalent of a modern typewriter, that doesn't skew the setting too much.)

I also included a letter fragment from Severin to Talis, offering her leadership of the White. Again, this was used to create the sense of urgency by letting the PCs know the Cult of the Dragon had filled all its leadership positions, especially with an NPC who had, at the least, reached a stalemate with the PCs. It also was meant to give the PCs hope, based on the fact that Severin seems to have bad information on developments in Waterdeep. Maybe his spies aren't as reliable as he thinks.

On the Trail of Tyranny

To the most gracious lords and ladies of the Council of Waterdeep,

You don't know me, but we can help each other immeasurably. My name is Iskander, and I made a terrible mistake in joining the Cult of the Dragon.

The cult's horrifying plans are sure to bring doom to all, but I can stop those plans with your help.

Rescue me from the cult's clutches, and I will deliver to you the prize of prizes: The Blue Dragon Mask.

Without it, Severin faces an insurmountable setback in his effort to call Tiamat back to our world.

The mask is here in Xonthal's Tower, being studied and guarded by only a handful of wizards, including myself.

The danger of my treason becoming known grows with every passing day, and if I'm discovered, I'll surely be killed.

Please hurry, for the sake of everyone and everything you value.

On the Trail of Tyranny

but with the Draakhorn in our possession, the balance has shifted to us. Certainly you can see that. Any opposition represented by Protanther the Gold and the Council of Dragons is surely neutralized by the horn. Nor will the Council dare enter into an alliance with Waterdeep so long as Neverember leads the Lord's Alliance, a situation that will certainly continue. When have the Masked Lords of Waterdeep ever forced a change of leadership during a period of crisis? Never. And so I think we can count on the personal gulf between the old gold wyrm and Neverember to maintain the status quo. So long as Waterdeep and the Council of Dragons do not work together, I think our victory is assured.

And as I said earlier, I remain in short supply of capable leaders. You have proven yourself worthy of stepping to the head of your order. Lead the white as its wyrmspeaker. The white mask shall be yours.

So do I affirm and promise, His Excellency and Holiness, Severen Silrajin, First of the Dragon Faithful, Wyrmspeaker of the Red and Scarlet Pasha of the Calisham Clutch

On the Trail of Tyranny

HARPER CODED SENDING:

REDACTED

TO WATERDEEP.

CULTIST ACTIVITY IN PARNAST. FLYING CREATURES - - NOT NATIVE
PERYTONS - - IN VICINITY OF GIRLS SCHOOL. BE ADVISED: MY
POSITION IS COMPROMISED.
STOP.

On the Trail of Tyranny

FIELD REPORT

DECODED

HAIL AND WELL MET FROM THE SERPENT HILLS

CONTACT IN BOARESKYR BRIDGE SAW DWARF MATCHING DESCRIPTION OF WYRMSPEAKER VARRAM THE WHITE.

STORY CONFUSED, BUT CONTACT SAID DWARF DEFENDED TOWNSFOLK FROM HOODED STRANGER. LOCALS CALL VARRAM A HERO.

VARRAM LAST SEEN LEADING PARTY INTO SERPENT HILLS. VARRAM MADE NO SECRET HE WAS SEEKING SITE OF ANCIENT MAGIC.

WILL STAY IN BOARESKYR BRIDGE. AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS.

LEOSIN ERLANTHAR

Statistically, flying wyverns is safer than driving a cart

As the adventure progressed, the need for PCs to travel to adventure locations more quickly than on foot became apparent.

To that end, the Zhent contact Riam Nightshade came to the PCs with an offer to utilize the Wyvern Taxi Service.

As it turns out, the taxi service has a high-profile customer in Lord Neverember (supposing, of course that Neverwinter's lord protector prefers this method of transportation back and forth from his city to Waterdeep; clearly, he has other means, too).

Here is a background description of the Wyvern Taxi Service. Of course, that led to a short adventure. The Cult of the Dragon isn't going to just let the PCs waltz out to use the wyverns. They are going to attack them along the way. And when that doesn't work, they will try to intercept them in the air.

On the Trail of Tyranny

Wyvern taxi service

Byndaeth Estate is outside Waterdeep, about five miles beyond Southgate. The villa features stonework and lies within a wooded copse.

Brianne Byndaeth owns the estate. She is the widow of the famed crimelord, Carril Byndaeth. However, Brianne spends most of her days in the city, and only retires to the estate about every tenthday for rest and relaxation.

The estate's remoteness, and the fact there are rumors the late Carril buried a fortune of gems and magic on the estate, invites many rogues to try their hand at testing the estate's many considerable defenses.

However, Byndaeth has tired of the intrusions, especially when she is away. So she started a side business, the Wyvern Taxi Service, so the grounds were always occupied. The business is run in partnership with the Zhentarim.

Presently, there are wyvern paddocks and training grounds. Once the creatures have been broken and trained for riding, a dedicated flier can carry a single passenger upon specially made saddles.

To reduce the weight and burden on the creatures, the flyers are all forest gnomes. The chief gnome flyer is Shanil Windcrease, who in appearance is pretty much all goggles, heavy gloves and flight suit.

The taxi service's most prominent customer is Lord Dagult Neverember, who relies on the wyverns to quickly transport him to Neverwinter and back to Waterdeep at least once per week.

Typical for a Zhentarim enterprise, the service does not care to whom it sells fully trained wyverns, whether they fight upon the side of good or evil. It is likely the trained wyverns from Skyreach Castle came from here.

Come hither

Riam Nightshade, the tiefling warlock who is Neverember's associate, sends two messages to different PCs.

Both are an invitation to visit her at Byndaeth Estate and make use of the wyverns. Already, Riam has arranged for wyvern mounts and a trained flier for each. Each PC will have a parachute (safety, first!) and be shown how to use it.

Attack on the road

However, Riam's correspondence is not as secure as she would like to think. Someone within the Zhentarim is reading her messages and is selling/sharing that info with the Cult of the Dragon.

The cult has been poised to act against the player characters since they returned to Waterdeep, it has simply been waiting for an opportunity. The road to Byndaeth is filled with cart and foot traffic, but the assassins are counting on the crowd to blend in.

The assassins are two whitescale dragonkind, the dragonfang Milos Iceheart and his apprentice dragonwing, Inness Frostwing. The assassins have been instructed to focus their attack on a single member of the party and slay them, to send a message that it can no longer act with impunity against the cult. That target will be chosen at random.

The assassins are not suicidal. They will flee the moment the battle goes against them.

First Attack Cult Forces

Encounter Difficulty (9th level PCs)

Hard 1,600

Milos Iceheart, Dragonfang

Inness Frostwing, Dragonwing

On the Trail of Tyranny

That's a long drop down

The target for the wyvern taxi service is the wood elf settlement of Altant in the Misty Forest.

The wyverns' approach is going to be interrupted by an attack by Chefferthron, a young blue dragon, who was instructed to follow the characters from Waterdeep and strike if an opportunity presented itself. Chefferthron is a part of the cult, but unaware of the cult activities in the Misty Forest.

If the PCs are forced to use the parachutes, they can pull the chute with a successful Dex 10 check and control their descent with a successful Int 10 check.

Chefferthron, young blue dragon

Shanil Windcrease's wyverns

Name of Wyvern	Gnome Pilot
Razor	Shanil Windcrease
Torque	Amelia Direhart
Stinger	Basil Backbone
Rend	Lipsy Lindy
Strafe	Topsy
Barb	Frikker Nosebleed

The wyverns are flying at 1,000 ft. This affords the characters plenty of mobility. Any character who comes free of their saddle or who jumps, relying on the parachute, falls at different rates.

Without parachutes or some other magical assistance, the PCs fall at a rate of 100 ft. per round. A parachute reduces that to 50 ft. per round, but it is controlled and no cumulative falling damage is incurred.

Although the dragons and wyverns both fly at 80 ft. per round, they can increase that speed at the expense of any offensive action. It is possible, doing this, they can swoop down and snag PCs who fall out of the saddle, for instance.

Lurid headlines, sensational side quest

In Rise of Tiamat, there is a prompt for an improvisational investigation under the header “Death at the Council.”

It establishes that a succubus spy charmed Neverwinter’s aide to collect information. For my side quest, I had the succubus be the same assassin that struck down Arthagast Ulbrinter, as described under the header “Death of a Masked Lord.”

The succubus assassin was able to strike, and glean information, because she was the in the guise of Corrine, Lady Remi Haventree’s personal maid.

The investigation begins when the chief investigator thinks the culprit was a vampire because the Ulbrinter was savaged by claws, there was a lot of blood, and apparently the victim was enthralled.

The PCs receive a tip from the watch captain who followed up a missing person report. Corrine’s mother is worried, because the daughter no longer comes by the house to see her. But the watch went to the Haventree Estate and saw that Corrine was very much alive.

In the next scene, Railton, the aide to Neverember who is being charmed by the succubus, is also having an affair with a dwarven delegate, Poston of Mithral Hall. Poston confronts Railton about acting strangely. Railton, no longer in his right mind because of the charm and the pressure of keeping the affair secret, lashes out and kills Poston with a razor sharp blade, then in his grief, runs back to Neverember estate and hangs himself.

Speak with Dead or Commune revealed the nature of the affair and that Railton’s contact for passing information was another charmed agent, Lady Tarnish, a Knight of the Gauntlet, a champion of the lists at Field of Triumph.

Corrine and her allies know that their spy chain is compromised. Cultists, fanatics and a bone devil are sent to kill Lady Tarnish, because unlike Railton, the succubus appeared to Lady Tarnish disguised as Corrine. Again, interrogation of the dying and/or dead Lady Tarnish reveals that Corrine is the succubus spy.

Racing back to the Haventree Estate, the PCs battle the succubus, but not before she strikes a “fatal” blow.

In our adventure, healing by the party’s cleric restored Lady Remi to life. But to keep the cultists guessing, all agreed to fake Remi’s death, including having a huge, city-wide funeral. For the rest of Rise, Remi runs the Harper’s secretly, with only the PCs and Lady Silverhand the wiser.

Keeping with the lurid nature of the side quest, my handouts to the players did not come from the high-minded politically focused Waterdeep News. Instead, I built broadsheets more in the form of the lurid police gazettes of the 19th century, which were filled with salacious and sensational crimes, boxing and horse racing news. The Waterdeep Watchman covered the news as only it can, with an Extra! edition.

On the Trail of Tyranny

Friend of the Uniformed Officer and Those Who Enforce Good Justice



WATERDEEP WATCHMAN

THE ILLUSTRATED POLICE AND SPORTING NEWSPAPER

Did vampire kill Masked Lord?

By **Tristilla Rook**
Correspondent

No one knows who killed Masked Lord and shipping king Arthagast Ulbrinter, but one watch captain involved in the investigation says the crime scene was a "bloody, bloody mess."

His conclusion:
Vampire.

"Unlike the dime novels that thrill young ladies about vampire counts seducing their victims with a little puncture wound on the neck, actual vampires slaughter their victims," Watch Captain Josiah Clusoh said. "We saw a lot of blood at the Haventree estate. That would indicate to me a crime of supernatural origin and viciousness we've not seen hereabouts for a long, long time."

Captain Clusoh admitted there could be other explanations, but the vampire line of inquiry

Continued Inside.



FEAST HALL'S SERVICE WAS 'EXCEPTIONAL'

Things got out of hand at Mother Tathlorn's House of Pleasure. Two serving girls brawled over an overly generous tip left at a table by a group of nobles that had visited the feasthall out of "curiosity." They said the service was "exceptional." The City Watch responded, booking the pair on disorderly conduct. The arresting report said other circumstances may have been at the root of the dispute, but did not elaborate. Emir Voltan, boxing promoter, later signed the pair to a prize fight, saying it would really inspire the battling beauties.

'The wretch deserved to die!'

Special to the Watchman

How many times *can* a husband take his tendar day pay and fritter it away on drink and gambling before his wife finally declares, "Enough is enough!" and settles it?

Continued Inside.



Mirt keen on Vicar's Hope

By **Gavin Hoofbeat**
Correspondent

Mirt the Moneylender knows good money from bad and has a sixth sense about how the political winds of the city blows.

But at the Field of Triumph, he's struggled to own a horse that's brought home the big prize. His best chance came three seasons ago, when his Silk Shirt was leading after three turns, then threw a shoe heading into the home stretch.

Now Mirt is back, this time with a promising three-year-old, Vicar's Hope.

Continued Inside.

On the Trail of Tyranny

Friend of the Uniformed Officer and Those Who Enforce Good Justice

EXTRA! EXTRA!



WATERDEEP WATCHMAN

THE ILLUSTRATED POLICE AND SPORTING NEWSPAPER

DIPLOMATS SLAIN IN NIGHT OF BLOOD

By Tristilla Rook, Correspondent

Four members of the Council of Waterdeep and one of their servants were killed in a night and day of terror that left investigators baffled.

Witness accounts varied. But interviews with members of the City Guard, the City Watch, the Lord's Palace and servants at Haventree Estates left this reporter with only one conclusion -- the killer was a succubus assassin doing the bidding of the Cult of the Dragon.

A group of adventurers associated with Lady Remalia Haventree, who was the most prominent of the victims, were said to have done battle with the succubus in her own home.

The body of Lady Remi, as she was affectionately known, was taken to the temple of Mystra. But apparently, nothing could be done to save the Harper leader who had fallen victim to the fiend's enchanting kiss while the creature was in the guise of her lady's maid.

The other victims were Open Lord Dagult Neverember's personal secretary, Railton, Poston, a member of the delegation from Mithrall Hall, and Lady Tarnish, champion of the lists and a Knight of the Gauntlet.

Continued Inside.



Was Lady Remalia Haventree, Harper leader, the final victim of a succubus that terrorized Waterdeep?

A final word

One of the things this document can't replicate is the imagination and inspiration that a Dungeon Master brings to their own table.

You know your players better than anyone else. You know what parts of adventure they will have the most fun with, will engage their own enterprise and sense of play. Use what you will from this document, adapt it, "hack it" as they say, and discard those things that don't apply. The key thing is to make the game your own.

One thing I'd like to add is that I am an advocate for using miniatures, even though they are beyond the focus of the product. Using miniatures helps players focus on their characters. Whether you use them for grid combat or simply to say, "Hey, this is my character," miniatures heighten the sense of the roleplay. I encourage their use, as well as other tokens and mapping accessories in your game.

Thank you for purchasing this assortment of materials from my game. I do hope its comes in useful as you prepare to take down the Cult of the Dragon.

DM's KIT

ON THE TRAIL OF TYRANNY

Are you a Dungeon Master embarking on a Tyranny of Dragons campaign using the published adventures, Hoard of the Dragon Queen and Rise of Tiamat?

From the gaming table of an experienced DM to you, the DM's Kit provides material that can enhance the playing experience.

Included are player handouts, decoded messages, letters, broadsheets and even a battle plan for the assault on the Well of Dragons. There are chase cards and a DM screen for keeping track of the Lord's Alliance.

