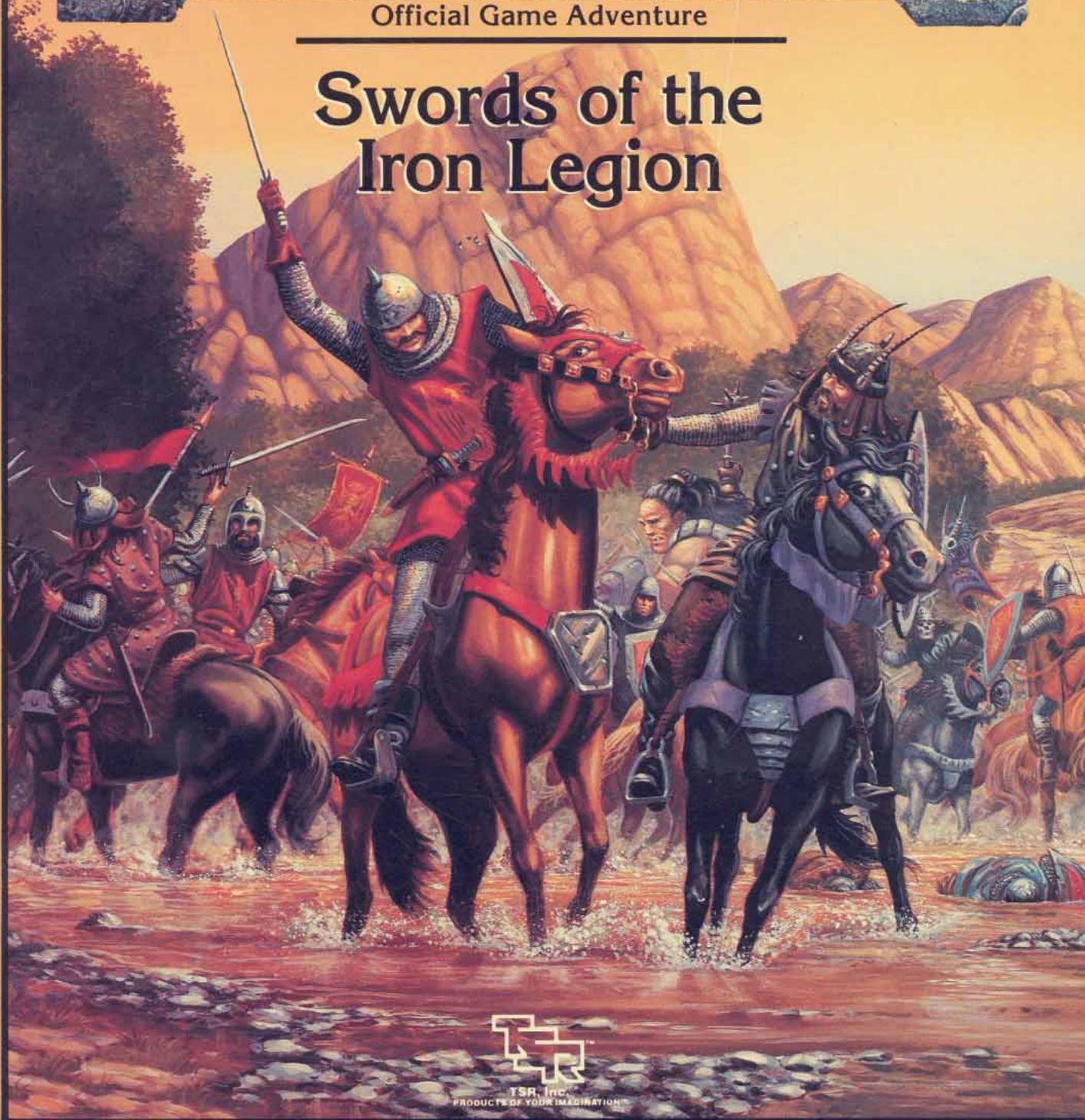


# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



Official Game Adventure

## Swords of the Iron Legion



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# Infinity Train

Scale: 1 square = 3"

7 Iron Cylinder



Entry from Bridge

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



OFFICIAL GAME ACCESSORY



## Swords of the Iron Legion

A BATTLESYSTEM™ GAME ANTHOLOGY

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This product provides the referee with eight interrelated battle/adventures. Each scenario includes a BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat Supplement miniatures battle and an AD&D® game role-playing adventure related to the battle. In some cases the adventure leads to the battle, in others the adventure takes place during the battle.

Although each scenario is designed to stand alone, all eight can be played together as a mini-campaign. The scenarios are presented in chronological order and get progressively more difficult for both players and characters. This will give players and referees time to become familiar with the BATTLESYSTEM Fantasy Combat Supplement rules and the challenges of battlefield command.

This product also includes three smaller scenarios—Firefights. The Firefights are of median difficulty and can be played separately or inserted into a campaign.

If you decide to use this product as a mini-campaign you will have some work to do, adding material to bridge the gaps between scenarios. Most importantly, you will have to provide your PCs with reasons for being where the action is. The locations are provided for you, but you will have to get the

PCs there. Perhaps just as importantly, you will have to pace your campaign so the PCs do not find themselves involved in adventures they can't handle. Be sure to read the entire product before you start play.

## Background for the DM

The dread, brooding citadel of Khin-Oin towers 20 miles above the diseased plains of Oinos, the uppermost Gloom of Hades.

The Khin-Oin, or Wasting Tower, is the seat of the oinodaemon, Anthraxus, ruler (nominally) of the Middle Planes and all of daemonkind. Anthraxus's rule is not easy or quiet. The oinodaemon must discourage or oppose invasions from the Abyss or the Hells, keep order among his unruly, vainglorious subjects, and resist endless attempts to unseat him. Anthraxus, jealously guarding his power, is always wary of ambitious vassals who might acquire enough power to usurp his rule, just as he usurped the oinodaemon who preceded him.

One such vassal is the arcanadaemon Yrkhetep, who has shown unusual interest in the Prime Material Plane—specifically the lands of the Forgotten Realms which surround the Vilhon

Reach. Whatever Yrkhetep is up to in the Forgotten Realms, Anthraxus reasoned, it would be best if the effort failed.

Anthraxus has reasoned correctly. Yrkhetep, like all powerful daemons, has coveted Anthraxus's power for millennia, and he means to have it. Yrkhetep has plans to build an invincible army spearheaded by an indestructible weapon—the *Infinity Train*. Yrkhetep believes that such an army can do the hitherto impossible: lay siege to the Khin-Oin and win.

To provide souls to power the *Train*, and to train veteran troops for the siege, Yrkhetep is exhorting evil creatures living in the Turmish/Chondath area to go to war. Anthraxus has determined to stop Yrkhetep before he can become a threat, but he is initially unaware of the *Train* or Yrkhetep's desire for souls. Anthraxus intervenes by subtly manipulating events to aid the side of good (and the PCs). Of course, Anthraxus won't mind if the forces of good are decimated while opposing Yrkhetep.

When Anthraxus finally learns the full extent of Yrkhetep's plans, he lures the PCs into Hades itself to confront Yrkhetep directly.

# The Storm of Greshlyrr



## Overview

This adventure is designed for a group of 4 to 8 characters of 2d to 3d level. The entire party should be of good alignment, although they may be lawful, neutral, or chaotic as desired. The members of this party should represent a wide variety of character classes.

All of the events in this adventure are set in the land of Turmish. The adventure begins with the party traveling through the region on business. The exact nature of this business is up to the referee. It should be important enough to insure that the players will undertake the journey, but not so pressing as to make it impossible for the party to stop for a brief period while enroute.

The party is forced to seek shelter from a fierce storm. Coming across a small cave, they duck inside, only to discover that it is the entrance to a kobold lair. Moving into the nest, they find that it is defended by only a handful of guards, women, and children. With no difficulty, they overcome the resistance offered and loot the warrens.

Unbeknownst to the party, the kobold nest is so poorly defended only because the majority of the inhabitants have gone to attack a nearby band of goblins.

Upon leaving, they resume their trip and eventually come to the small town of Gildenglade. The folk of Gildenglade do not greet the news of the characters' raid on the kobolds with delight, as expected, but are instantly scornful.

It is explained to them that a truce has existed for years between the kobold clan and the townsfolk. The actions of the adventurers may well bring this period of peaceful coexistence to a sudden end.

The characters are ordered to return all of the treasures which they have looted to Greshlyrr, the kobold chief. The gnomes of Gildenglade will supply a messenger to transport the goods.

The return of the valuables makes no difference to the kobolds, who send their armies to Gildenglade with orders to raze it to the ground. For them, there

can be no response to this great insult but war.

## The Storm Builds

The party is traveling through the rich fields of Turmish. The referee is free to use any means desired to bring them to this point. Some suggestions: the delivery of a message to a noble in the area, rumors of a dangerous monster which needs to be defeated, or simple tourism.

As they travel, the party sees the impressive efforts of local farmers, the fields are in excellent shape, and the harvest promises to be most plentiful. The people of the land seem to be kind and honest, providing food and water for the party whenever they stop and request it. The only fee for these services is a few hours of conversation and the telling of some stories about their past adventures.

As they ride onward, the fields gradually give way to light woods, which are dotted with occasional fruit trees, and the road becomes less well used. Just as the territory around them changes, so does the weather. A wind begins to pick up and the skies begin to turn gray.

By the time the trees about them have thickened into a heavy wood, a gentle rain has begun to fall. Within minutes, the rain has become a veritable cascade and the wind batters the characters with sudden, powerful gusts.

No matter how great their desire to press on, the weather quickly makes travel impossible for the party. Although the protection offered by the trees reduced the ferocity of the storm, they are quickly drenched, leaving them with no option but to seek shelter.

Luck is with them, for they quickly spot a small trail which leads farther into the woods. Following this promise of protection, they come to the mouth of a cave. It looks to be large enough to hold the entire band of adventurers with only a little crowding.



## Greshlyrr

Greshlyrr is an unusually strong and intelligent kobold. He is cunning and cruel, taking great joy in the suffering and hardship which he brings upon others. However, he feels a responsibility to his tribe.

During his ten-year rule as chief of the Scything Claw tribe, Greshlyrr has brought his people to a level of civilization unknown to other kobolds. Although individual members of the nest are every bit as savage and vicious as their peers elsewhere in the Forgotten Realms, the group behaves far better as a whole.

Greshlyrr has managed to accomplish this feat through his strong personality and his people's belief that he has been granted a special position in the eyes of Kurtulmak, the kobold deity. They believe this because Greshlyrr once found a masterfully crafted (by kobold standards) figurine of Kurtulmak in an abandoned den. Only seconds after he had recovered it and left the area, the caves collapsed in an earthquake. The fact that he emerged unharmed from this near-fatal encounter was ample proof of Greshlyrr's divine favor.

Shortly after Greshlyrr came to power, the tribe encountered the gnomes of nearby Gildenglade. As is the norm in such meetings, violence



broke out. For several years, the two groups exchanged futile attacks and skirmishes which resolved nothing. In the end, they settled into an unofficial, but mutually accepted, truce. To this day, the agreement has remained unbroken.

Greshlyrr always carries his prized shield, *Blade Turner*, a sturdy construct of wood and wicker with the bloody talon glyph of his tribe painted on its center. He normally fights with a small scimitar or axe.

Greshlyrr: AC 5; Move 6"; HD 1; hp 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; AL LE); AR 34; Rank Army; CR 9"; CB 0.

### The Scything Claw

Greshlyrr's tribe is, by kobold standards, quite civilized. Of course, that isn't saying much in human terms, but it is significant, and the referee should take it into account. This doesn't mean that the individuals are unusual kobolds, only that Greshlyrr's influence over them has been beneficial.

The Scything Claw tribe has roughly 700 kobolds. Of these, about 250 are woman and children who do not normally become involved in the tribe's military affairs.

### The Storm Rises

As the characters enter the mouth of the cave, they find a trio of kobold guards standing watch there. Actually, "standing watch" is an exaggeration. Two are playing a dice game in one corner while the third snores restfully next to a small fire which has been started to keep out the storm's chill.

Upon spotting the characters, the guards move to resume their duties as quickly as possible. Two of them attack, while the third produces a key and runs for a door set into the wall at the back of the cave. If he can get through it, he will flee into the lair and alert the others that they are under attack. That is not likely to make much difference, however, because of the cal-

iber of the kobold forces within.

After the characters have dealt with the guards at the entrance, they will find that the large rusty key carried by one of them fits into a lock on a heavy stone door at the shadowy back of the chamber. When the key is inserted and turned, the door can be pushed aside with a minimum of grinding and scraping.

Once beyond this portal, the characters will find themselves in a long tunnel. Its rough construction is typical of the kobold craftsmen who built it, as is the foul stench in the dank air. The slick floor and poor air will make the descent very uncomfortable for the characters, but their most pressing problem will be the size of the corridor. Its height varies from 4 to 5 feet along its entire length. Similarly, the width is minimal, ranging from 3 to 4 feet.

The party can only hope that the inner chambers will be more spacious, as anyone fighting in such confined quarters will be greatly handicapped. This is not the case, however; the entire complex is similarly cramped. Doors in the caves are even more uncomfortable, being about 6 inches lower and narrower, on the average, than the corridors.

As the party explores the tunnels which are home to the Scything Claw tribe, they find them to be almost deserted. Here and there, periodic resistance will be offered by small bands of kobolds, but this will be minimal and easily overcome. The warriors encountered will be older and in poor physical condition. Often, they will have been badly injured previously and are clearly unfit for normal military operations, for example; a kobold with a missing hand, a bad limp, or one who has lost an eye. The referee should go to some lengths to make it obvious to the players that they are fighting the second string.

After several encounters with pathetic kobolds the characters come across the only well-organized defense in the caves. A force of 11 kobolds has assembled outside of the center of the nest and

fights boldly to drive off the invaders. It should be a far more even battle than the others, but still fairly one-sided.

The referee should draw up some simple maps of the cavern complex. For the most part it is quite basic, but there are a few rooms which must be included:

**The Temple:** This is a large chamber with a high ceiling (almost 6 feet). A crude etching, depicting a large kobold with a long tail that ends in a stinger and with a slender spear clutched in his hands, has been crafted on the northern wall. A small stone altar stands before the carving and holds two black candles set atop gnomish skulls.

Standing on the center of the altar, between the candles, is a figurine. It is only about 6 inches tall and is carved of pure obsidian. The statue is of *Kurtulmak*, the kobold god, whose image also adorns the northern wall. This object is of no great value and will bring only about 100 gold pieces on the open market, but it is the single most important object in the entire lair.

**The Hatchery:** At the core of the caverns is a large room which is kept very humid and warm by a hot spring bubbling up in one corner. The walls are covered with moisture and the air is thick with fog. In the center of this chamber are mounds of kobold eggs. At any given time there are roughly 150 of them in here. It is here that the surviving kobolds have erected their final defense. They have gone to great lengths to protect this room and its precious contents.

A single tunnel leads into the room from the rest of the complex, and it has been rigged with a variety of improvised traps (see DMG, appendix G for examples). Any thief can spot and disarm them easily (+25% to Find/Remove Traps ability). Only half the traps actually work, and none inflict more than 1d6 points of damage. Each affects only a single character.

Once the players have fought their way through the 11 guards who have



stationed themselves as a last line of defense for the eggs, they are free to destroy or take as many of them as they like. Kobold eggs have little or no market value and weigh about 2 pounds each. They are fragile, and care must be taken if they are to be taken out of the nest intact.

**The Barracks:** There are three barracks in the tunnels which are home to the warrior population. When the characters find these, it should be obvious that the majority of the kobolds are elsewhere. There are numerous racks which look to have been designed for the storage of arms and armor, but they are mostly empty. A few broken or badly maintained items remain behind.

The barracks contain an assortment of personal belongings, including a modest amount of treasure—2,000 cp and 1,000 sp. This is made up of small ingots of precious metal, and various coins. The only other item of value in the entire complex is the figurine of Kurtulmak from the temple.

### The Storm Breaks

Greshlyrr and his forces return to the nest only an hour after the characters have left. The triumph of his forces over the goblin raiders has done wonders for morale, and all are eager to return and display their newly acquired trophies.

When they enter the nest, it quickly becomes obvious that their home has been attacked and ransacked. Rage quickly spreads through the warriors as they hear stories of the invaders and the looting of the caverns.

The last straw, however, is the theft of the figurine from the temple. There can be no other course of action, the thieves must be hunted down and destroyed, no matter what the cost. All eyes turn to Greshlyrr for guidance.

Greshlyrr looks around the caves and examines the various scenes which mark the adventurers' visit. He makes a careful study of the evidence and comes to a conclusion: the trust has been betrayed.

The gnomes, Greshlyrr reasons, must have hired these mercenaries and sent them to destroy his people. They have been watching, no doubt, and waiting for a time when the attack could be made.

Within hours, Greshlyrr leads his troops to another battle. This time, the grim determination which inspired them against the goblins has been replaced by the traditional racial hatred which all kobolds feel for gnomes.

### Eye of the Storm

Upon leaving the kobold warrens, the characters will find that the storm has passed. The sky is still dotted with gray clouds, but they are breaking up and the sun is visible through the thick trees overhead.

Although the ground is slick and the way is broken by large puddles, the party is able to resume their travels and make fairly good time.

They have only been on the road for an hour or so when the trees about them thin slightly. In a few miles, the road has once again become well tended and shows signs of frequent use. Shortly thereafter, they come upon a few scattered farms and small homes at the outskirts of a small village.

The town of Gildenglade is a quiet settlement of gnomes who make their livings mostly by farming or as craftsmen. The village is composed primarily of earthen mounds and burrows which house individuals and small businesses. There are a few above-ground structures, like the Tallstrider Inn and Public House which seems to be the social center of the area.

The travelers are greeted with looks of curiosity as they enter town, but also with smiles and waves. For the most part, the people of this community are friendly and open to those on the roads.

Lodging at the inn is easily obtained, as is a hearty meal in the public house, at moderate rates. Dinner consists of a good stew made from lamb and vegetables, which is seasoned with local herbs. Fresh bread is served with the

meal. The wholesome repast quickly fills the hall with its aroma. Following the meal, a fine dessert of fruits and pies is brought forth.

Afterward, as pipes begin appearing around the room, the travelers are urged to tell of their adventures on the road. Their stories are eagerly and intently taken in by the crowd; until they tell of the kobold nest. As they explain the events which preceded their coming, the mood of the crowd turns dark. By the time the characters have finished their tale, there is not a smiling face in the room.

### Thunder in Gildenglade

The people of Gildenglade confront the poor travelers fiercely. They explain, in no uncertain terms, that the characters have done a horrible thing. As the party listens, Benjin Earthforger steps forward and identifies himself as the patron of the clans who dwell in Gildenglade.

He explains that there is no choice in the matter; the characters must return all of the items removed from the kobold lair. It is hoped that these measures will be enough to satisfy Greshlyrr. The characters have no choice but to obey, as the entire populace of Gildenglade will be against them if they refuse.

As the sun sinks from sight, Benjin recruits a gnomish soldier from the town militia to carry the treasure back. The soldier is a brave-looking fellow with defiant eyes who rides a swift pony. The party's treasure is stored in his saddle bags, and, as the sun vanishes for the night, he sets out upon the road. Minutes later, the moon breaks above the horizon and spreads its cold, pale glow across the village.

### The Storm Rages

Several hours pass as the characters and townsfolk wait for the messenger's return. In Gildenglade, the tension mounts. Throughout the village, gnomes make ready for battle. In the event that Greshlyrr should turn down



their apologies, they do not wish to be wholly unprepared.

Across the town, those with military experience are gathering to bolster the local militia. Weapons are handed out when they can be found, and improvised when they cannot. By the time the moon has reached its zenith, the good folk of Gildenglade are as ready as they can be for the battle which might await them.

In the early hours of the morning, the watch spots a single rider. A pair of militiamen move forward to help down the returning messenger. Greshlyrr's answer is quite clear.

The body of the gnome rider has been pierced with a score of black-feathered arrows. He is quite dead and has been lashed to his pony. The saddle bags, and all that they held, are missing.

In a matter of seconds, the deadly calm of the night is broken by a shrill horn. The armies of Greshlyrr have gathered at the edge of the woods. Their arms and armor glisten in the thin moonlight.

Without a word, Greshlyrr sounds the horn again and signals for an advance. The battle has begun.

After Greshlyrr's battle with the goblin raiders, his forces have been weakened. Still, because of the outrage which the kobolds feel over the attack on their nest, their morale is good. The fatigue which might ordinarily lessen their prowess has been driven from them by their long restrained hatred of the gnomes of Gildenglade.

### Order of Battle

#### Greshlyrr's Forces

The Claw Raiders are a unit of infantry who wear light armor and metal breastplates. They are armed with small scimitars and daggers. Their commander, Heggahst (CR 6"), is a veteran of several campaigns and a faithful follower of Greshlyrr.

The Dark Breakers are a team of fierce fighters who battle with small, but dangerous, war hammers. Like the

other units, they wear metal chest pieces and helms, but do not carry shields. The Breakers are led by Frenger (CR 6"), a cruel and violent kobold who hopes to follow Greshlyrr as chief of the Scything Claw.

The Black Stingers are a unit of archers who use short bows to provide supporting fire for the melee units. They draw their names from the ebony arrows which they employ in combat. Their leader is Estalex (CR 6"), a lithe but hardy kobold whose quick wits have brought down many foes.

The Night Stalkers are Greshlyrr's pride. He commands these fierce kobolds himself. Far superior to the average kobold unit, the Stalkers wear light mail armor and carry keenly sharpened scimitars. They carry short bows and can augment the Stingers' attacks. Greshlyrr's powerful personality and their faith in his leadership make the Stalkers one of the most fearsome kobold units in the Forgotten Realms.

#### The Defenders of Gildenglade

The Town Militia is made up of brave souls who have had varying degrees of military experience. Some are currently members of the town watch, but most are simply retired army veterans. They wear whatever armor could be found around town and wield various weapons, many of them no more than farming implements. If one of the player characters does not take charge of them, their leader is Benjin Earthforger (CR 9"). He is brave and fierce in combat and fights as a member of the unit.

The Citizenry is just that. The good folk of Gildenglade have taken up whatever arms they might and gathered together make-shift armor. For the most part, they are a curious lot who look almost comical compared to the steady ranks of the militia and the vicious kobold units. One of the characters should be assigned to command this bunch. If that is not done, they will be led by Haggath Alebringer (CR 8"), the keeper of the inn and public house.

They are a mob unit.

The Huntsmen are gathered from all of the farms around town. They are gnomes who have been trained, both formally and informally, in the use of bows. What armor they have is primarily of leather with bits and pieces of more solid metal scattered about. If one of the adventurers wishes to command this unit, he may. Otherwise, their leader is Tyrradin Woodshaper (CR 7"), a farmer who is well known for his wood-working skills. He is much respected and loved by the people of Gildenglade. Although not all of the Huntsmen are veterans, they are better disciplined than the common citizenry.

### The Field of Battle

For the most part, the battle is fought in the fields just outside of town. A small stream runs roughly through the center of the battlefield, dividing the forces as the contest opens. The village lies at the center of the board's western edge, a road runs away from the village to the north. A one-yard high stone wall has been laid along the side of the road.

Most of the fields have been harvested already, but the eastern third has not. The grain which grows there runs only about 4 feet high, but that is well over the heads of most of the soldiers on either side. For all troops under 4 feet tall, this area is treated as woods.

### Perspectives

As this adventure begins, the characters have no idea that their fates will, sooner or later, bring them to the attention of both Yrkhetep and his rival, Anthraxus. The daemons themselves have no reason to be aware of the party's existence.

Greshlyrr, however, has provided Yrkhetep with some minor amusements in the past. The arcanadaemon has considered the possibility of future contacts with him and the potential recruitment of the kobold lord.

When the adventure draws to a close, things will have changed little. Yrkhe-



tep will be mildly upset over the loss of a being with Greshlyrr's potential displayed by Greshlyrr, but he will place no significance on it. Still, he is vastly intelligent and has a long memory.

Anthraxus will have gotten a slight chuckle over the efforts of the characters and their actions in Gildenglade. He has noted their potential and has come to the conclusion that they may be of some use in the future. He will,

most certainly, keep an eye on them.

The characters, if they survive, will be able to help the gnomes pick up the pieces after the battle. Win or lose, the people of Gildenglade will have mixed feelings for the adventurers.

On one hand, they are thankful for the assistance which the characters provided in the battle with Greshlyrr's hordes.

However, none have forgotten the fact

that it was the characters who brought the kobolds down upon them. Now, their kinfolk have been slain and injured and the truce which they once enjoyed with the kobolds has been shattered.

Once things have settled down in Gildenglade, the characters will be asked politely to be on their way. Their presence amongst the gnomes will only serve to remind them of that dark night when the storm broke.

### Greshlyrr's Forces

UNIT NAME	TYPE	LVL	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	DMG
Claw Raiders	Infantry	Kobold	6	5	6"	20	10	10	12	1d6
Dark Breakers	Infantry	Kobold	6	5	6"	20	10	10	12	1d6
Black Stingers	Infantry	Kobold	7	5	6"	20	10	10	10	1d6
Night Stalkers	Infantry	Kobold	5	1	6"	20	10	10	6	1d8

### The Defenders of Gildenglade

UNIT NAME	TYPE	LVL	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	DMG
Town Militia	Infantry	F 1	6	10	6"	20	13	14	10	1d6
Citizenry	Infantry	F 1	7	10	6"	20	12	13	18	1d6
Huntsmen	Infantry	F 1	6	10	6"	20	13	14	6	1d6



This is an adventure for a well-balanced party of 4th-5th level. The adventure is set in the southern land of Chondath, and involves the church of the war deity Tempus.

### Background for the DM

Theodoric, patriarch of Tempus, smiled broadly as he poured his guest another glass of wine. "Your lordship knows I don't get many visitors, this shrine being far from the major trade routes. You said you're a pilgrim?"

Lord Yrkhetep accepted the glass graciously. "Of a sort. This shrine looks positively ancient. Surely it was built before your tenure here?"

"Surely! These walls once stood as an outpost for the Chessentan Empire. When my duties have allowed, I've made quite a study of those times."

"Do say."

"Why, yes. For example, after exhaustive research, I've concluded that their war god, Tchazzar, was actually a..."

As Lord Yrkhetep drained his wine, his gaze, and more, fixed on Theodoric, who fell insensate under his guest's mental assault.

"Rise, Centurion," Lord Yrkhetep bade in flawless Old Chessentan, "and see these troubled lands about us. The people rebel in their pride, and the strong arm of the Empire must again take up sword and shield.

"Take my staff, praefectus, and gather your forces. I will return in a fortnight with my men, and we will show these upstarts what it means to challenge Chessenta."

Lord Yrkhetep, a powerful arcanadaemon in human guise, has gained possession of the *Staff of Skulls*, a powerful necromantic item. His innate magic resistance prevented him from using the staff himself, so he sought a human agent.

He found Theodoric, an 8th level cleric serving Tempus. Theodoric's skill in military matters was typical of Tempus's followers; his interest in the dim

history of the Chessentan Empire was not; together they made Theodoric an ideal pawn for the arcanadaemon.

As the adventure begins, Lord Yrkhetep has psionically driven Theodoric insane, and has given him the *Staff of Skulls* and compelled him to raise the dead and from them fashion an undead army modeled on the old Chessenta Imperial Guards.

Lord Yrkhetep already has gathered a force of gnomish brigands, intending to join them with Theodoric's sepulchral legions.

However, the PCs find themselves involved with powers moving to counter the daemon's bold moves. The oinodaemon Anthraxus, suspicious of Yrkhetep's ambition, instructs his earthbound agents to alert the region's militia. And Tempus, irritated that his servant is being used, sends his faithful an omen to set things aright.

### The Adventure

The skies above Hlath have roiled, dark and threatening, since midmorning, and the waves at the docks crest high and white. But the druids, who know nature's moods, are conspicuously preparing for a dry day. The PCs are making their way through the wide market square, dodging laughing children who roll a hoop along the cobbles, when they hear a horse shriek. Turning, they see a magnificent white mare, her nostrils flared and her eyes wide with fright, pull free of her owner's grasp. Still harnessed to a small cart, she rears and charges into the square.

A PC with the Animal Handling (horse) non-weapon proficiency (see *Wilderness Survival Guide*) could try to calm the horse before she injures anyone in the crowd. To do so, the PC must get alongside the mare, a difficult task requiring a Dexterity check each round calming is attempted. Then the character may attempt an Animal Handling roll, with the standard +4 "panicked" penalty. A PC druid with *Speak with Animals* could also attempt to quiet the horse. Again, the character must

get near her, and a successful charisma check will calm her.

Or the party may decide that it would be safest to kill the mare. If injured, the mare will attack blindly, biting any character unfortunate enough to be in front of her. The cart will also sweep side-to-side, menacing those in the rear.

Once the danger is passed, a middle-aged figure approaches the party. He is short, but muscular, dark skinned, balding, and has a thick graying beard, cut squarely in the Turmish fashion. He carries no weapons but wears leather armor, studded decoratively in brass, stained and dented as though it had been through many battles. In a rumbling bass, the man says, "Her master took her too near the embalmer's workshop. She has been skittish all day, and the smell of the grave alarmed her. But your part in this fulfills a prophecy, one which hints of rich rewards for those of bold and hearty spirits. My name is Ulliam. Would you care to follow me?"

He turns on his heel and leads the party three blocks to a small and simply ornamented building at the edge of Hlath's dark side. "Warriors, I bid you enter in the name of the Lord of Battles. Tempus."

### The Offer

The building is a chapel devoted to Tempus. It is clean and without frills. The walls of the main chamber are oak, decorated with weapons and armor. At the base of the altar is a blood-red shield bearing the blazing sword of Tempus. A young acolyte stands in a side doorway, nervously twisting the sleeves of her scarlet vestments.

Ulliam bends his left arm and salutes her with a smart slap to his left forearm. "Elsbeth, would you fetch the vial I prepared this morning?" The acolyte bows and disappears into another room, and Ulliam offers benches to the party.

"I serve Tempus Foehammer as his chaplain here. An omen accompanied the spells he granted me this morning. I believe our meeting was heavy with



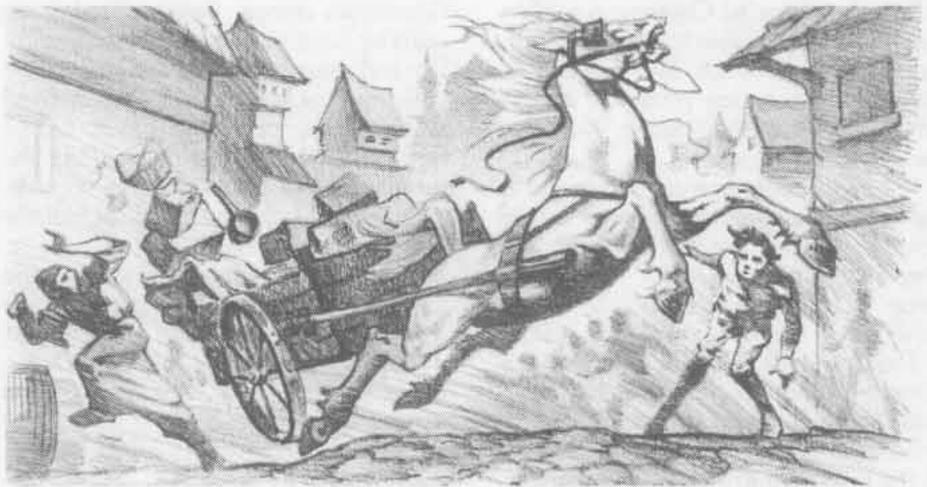
fate, and I mean to persuade you to accept a mission holy to the Lord of Battles. We are poor here and can offer little in the way of gold, but if you agree to this undertaking, I'll place myself and this shrine in your debt." Specifically, Ulliam is prepared to credit the party 7,500 gp worth of clerical services, redeemable at any time, but only in Hlath.

Elsbeth returns, gliding to Ulliam's side, a white clay vial in her hands. Ulliam speaks, "I admit, my interpretation of the omen is dim and ill-defined in its particulars. I do know, however, that you must first seek out a man I know as Theodoric, a humble priest who tends a small shrine some 15 leagues south of here. The shrine is outside the small town of River's Run, where the Nun River sweeps near the Chondalwood. And you must give him this." He hands the vial to a PC. "This is a *potion of health*, an elixir possessing the power to restore both body and mind. Although I get the impression that his needs are urgent, I cannot speak of any particulars." If pressed, Ulliam will admit a vague impression that the party should find many allies on the way, but that's all he might venture to guess. If the party asks, he will also claim that Theodoric is a shy man, well suited for his solitary duties. Ulliam knows of Theodoric's historical avocation, but would not think such information germane to the situation.

Ulliam sternly recommends that the party leave at dawn the next day. If necessary, he can buy them riding horses.

### Solara, and First Signs of Trouble

Deep storm clouds pour from the southeast like a great overhead ocean. Late in the third day of travel, lightning cracks the heavens, and rain can be seen to the north, perhaps 10 miles behind the party. The horses have grown skittish, and they are difficult to settle down for the night. The setting sun paints the clouds purple and scarlet, the wind howls through the tall grasses,



and the Nun river splashes noisily in its bed.

Through the night, characters who are awake will sometimes feel as though they are watched by something hiding in the darkness, unheard over the wind.

However, there will be no visible sign of any such thing until noon on the forth day, when the party is only a few hours away from River's Run. Then, any character making an Intelligence check will glimpse shadowy figures in the distance, sometimes ahead, at other times on either side.

Shortly after the figures are noticed, the party comes over a hill to see one woman, her spear held low and her right hand raised in greeting. Behind her stand at least five score men, in rough leather armor, all with long swords resting at their sides. As the woman takes three steps toward the party, the sound of light mail is heard from beneath her red-brown tunic. She throws back her shoulder-length blond hair and says, "Greetings, travelers, on behalf of these lands. I am Solara, and I lead my people in battle. Who are you, who go so proudly through these twice-cursed plains?"

Solara: AC 2; Move 9"; R4; hp 21; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THACO 18; ST 16 IN 14 WI 18 DX 15 CN 15 CH 15 CM 13; AL LG.

Solara is 5'6" tall and weighs 150 pounds, most of that muscle. She has a confident air about her, mostly for the benefit of her troops. She will not take kindly to anyone questioning her orders without a particularly good reason. She wears chain mail under her tunic, she carries a *shield +1*. Her favored weapon is her *spear +2* (she has weapon specialization in spear). She also carries a bow, for which she has 12 normal arrows, 6 *arrows +1*, and one treasured *arrow +3*, which casts an eerie green trail behind when shot. Solara also keeps three potions with her; two of them are *healing*, and the third is her ace in the hole, a *potion of heroism*.

At the moment, Solara isn't looking for battle, but she is curious why armed characters such as the PCs are riding here. And she's nervous enough to be edgy. If the party explains their mission, Solara will return the favor:

"As you are passing through, you should know then the events of the past two weeks. It began when a farmer in the town of Orbesh (a day's journey west across the Fields of Nun) witnessed something I can only consider fantastic; one of the *numeri peditatae*, or local infantry, of the ancient Chessentan Empire, marching east in the distance. Since then, there have been a score of similar rumors, and some of them appear reliable. Now, I don't actually



believe that Imperial Chessentan soldiers are still wandering about the countryside, but there does seem to be some sort of major military action going on, and so my Company of the Singing Dawn has decided to investigate.

"We would welcome your company as we travel, and perhaps your aid should troubles arise. We will rendezvous tomorrow morning with two other forces, Llandrydd's Steel and the Will of Enhanen, in the village of River's Run."

The Company of the Singing Dawn is a small mercenary company that occasionally performs charity work, which in Solara's opinion, promotes the cause of the group's patron deity, Lathander. It is divided into three units, each of fifty fighters:

Solara's Elite, commanded by Gwyndion the Bald; a tight-lipped human who is suspicious of the PCs. If the PCs and Solara disagree, Gwyndion will suggest that they should leave if they don't like Solara's ideas. Gwyndion's aide, Edmund, is a spy. He is one of Anthraxus' human agents and perhaps the party's most valuable ally.

Forester Guards of Nun are commanded by Miebhair, an elf. He is friendly enough, but prefers to keep himself busy rather than hobnob with the PCs.

The Spears of the Dawn are commanded by Randwulf Doorbane, a scarred veteran of more battles than he can count.

If the party wishes to leave the Company of the Singing Dawn behind and travel on horseback to River's Run, Solara advises against it. As battle-tested as the PCs are, they would be little match for a large, well-run military group. Traveling with the Singing Dawn will cost the party only two hours, and Solara suggests that they travel together.

## River's Run and the Rain of Terror

Theodoric's studies showed that the village of River's Run was built almost directly atop a mass grave of Imperial

Chessentan troops. Earlier this day, he came by River's Run with a force of zombies and chased the half-dozen frightened villagers into the woods. He then invoked an ability particular to his *staff*, calling forth great numbers of undead, but the summons was not answered immediately. Only when daylight fades will the Earth give up her dead.

Anthraxus anticipated this, and bade his pawn Gwyndion to suggest River's Run as a rendezvous place in hopes that the Company of the Singing Dawn might prevent these exhumed recruits from reaching Theodoric.

Yrkhetep is ignorant of such machinations. But he did feel it best to dispatch some guardians to watch over the macabre garden. These agents, a dozen *vargouilles*, promptly slew the residents of River's Run and now patrol a forested area near where the skeletons lie.

When the PCs arrive (alone or with Solara's forces), the hamlet of River's Run is deserted. As this place serves as a meeting place for the few local farmers and trappers, there are but five buildings: a mill, a stable, a general store, a tavern with a few rooms, and a private residence. Nothing worth more than a few silver can be found, and the only obvious clues indicate that the people left recently, quickly, and without violence.

Solara or PCs with Tracking skill can locate the villagers' corpses by following their trail, searching the woods for half an hour, and making three successful tracking checks.

Most of Solara's men-at-arms are spooked by the villagers' disappearance. Because of this Solara suggests camp be set a few hundred yards away from the village. Her troops are amenable.

The clouds grow red and dark as the sunlight fades, and the Forester Guards patrol a large perimeter around the camp. Solara has asked Gwyndion and Randwulf (as well as any PC who insists on accompanying them) into her tent to discuss tactics. The Spears of Dawn gather firewood, and some of the

soldiers prepare to cook dinner.

For a moment, the entire sky flares with lightning, and a thunderclap explodes above the camp, echoing in the distance. The rain has begun at last, promising a drenching by morning. It seems as if things couldn't get worse. Then the hands of four score skeletons break the ground, grabbing onto anything that might help pull them free.

There are two mobs of eighty skeletons each springing up on opposite sides of the camp. Another ten skeletons exhume themselves into Solara's tent. These creatures will first attack Gwyndion and Randwulf, and then attack opportune targets as the battle progresses.

The skeletons will have initiative the first round, but cannot move other than to unearth themselves. Their instructions are to join with Theodoric's other forces in the woods, and they will attempt to do so at the first opportunity. However, the mobs will turn to attack any creatures (except other undead) within 6" if a Discipline Check fails. They also will return any attacks made upon them.

The surprised units are considered in open formation and out of command. In these extreme circumstances, they suffer a -2 penalty to both discipline and morale on the first round. This penalty falls to -1 on the second round, and remains at -1 until the unit is put under command.

The Forester Guards are not surprised and are in command. They will rush to their comrades' aid. They begin 20" away from camp, in any direction the PCs like.

In any fair fight, the skeletons would be a minor inconvenience, but the situation is ripe for units to rout. If this happens, the units will flee into the forest, where the *vargouilles* will easily kill them within minutes. This is a battle of attrition: can the PCs assume command over their forces, or otherwise keep them from routing? Gwyndion and Randwulf will almost certainly be killed, and Solara might be busy for a long time.



The firewood may be used as clubs by any PC or unit in command which moves adjacent to the woodpile next to the campfire.

On the third round of combat, six *vargouilles* sweep in from the woods 15" north of the camp. These horrid creatures will attack any single figure, such as a unit commander or hero. (Remember that three rounds of individual combat occur for each round of BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat Supplement.)

After the battle is over, Solara tallies her remaining forces, sets watch, and tries to settle the camp. The rain and the storm continue until the early morning.

The PCs might allow some of the skeletons to escape, then track them to their destination. Neither Solara nor any of her troops are in any condition to accompany the PCs, but her objections to their going will be weak.

Skeletons which escape soon reach a path that runs perhaps twelve miles through the woods. Characters following the path to its end see a small building, indistinct in the rain and darkness. Small fires burn inside, their light reveals the silhouette of a terrible regiment of skeletons and zombies, all immobile, all sleek in the rain, all armed and armored in the archaic battle garb of old Chessenta. The wind whistles shrilly through the bones of three hundred skeletons, carrying the smell of carrion. This is a sight which ought to dissuade most parties from attacking immediately. The PCs will probably perish if they attack before getting help.

### Reinforcements

The clouds are scattered in the sky the next morning, and when the dawning sun peeks out, the light reflects playfully off the river, which runs high and fast. Puddles are everywhere, and the air smells fresh and damp.

Minutes after dawn breaks, marching can be heard in the west, and the banners of friendly troops come into view around the edge of the Chondalwood.

These are the allies Solara spoke of earlier, Llandrydd and Enhanen.

Llandrydd commands two units, Llandrydd's Steel, a crack unit of swordsmen garbed in green chain mail, and Llandrydd's Auxiliary, a pike unit.

Enhanen is a man of high charisma and cunning ways, who gathered to him a small, semi-permanent horde of followers he calls The Will of Enhanen. Enhanen has agreed to join the cause for the challenge of fighting legendary Chessenta, for glory, and for fame, rather than over concern for the safety of the region.

To Solara's surprise, there is also a company of Hybsils. Their leader is a Hybsil named Marcabruk. Llandrydd has been hard-pressed to keep the little fellows from charging into the woods for the last several days, and they will make their impatience known as they wait of the Company of the Singing Dawn to ready itself to join the arriving forces.

Solara, Llandrydd, Enhanen, Marcabruk, and any PC who so wishes will meet together to discuss the events of the past few days and make battle plans. Unless the PCs investigated after the battle last night, no one knows just how strong Theodorick's undead legions are.

During the discussions, Marcabruk is eager to move on immediately, and suggests making any necessary plans on the way. His scouts have detected a large group of gnolls somewhere in the area. He says if his hybsils found out about the presence of their most hated foes, he's not certain how well he could keep them from blindly charging to attack. He feels it's better to move on as soon as possible to reduce the chances of running into such troubles.

Solara then explains (or asks one of the PCs to explain) about the attack on her forces last night.

Llandrydd reports that the walking dead have been reported from lands to the south and east. "I'm afraid we ought to expect a force not only directly controlled by a tactically-competent intelligence, but also considerably larger than

you fought last evening, Milady."

Enhanen glares at Llandrydd. "You speak needlessly, as is your habit. Did you expect us to be stupid enough to miss that conclusion? We're here to prepare strategy, not marvel at your grasp of the obvious."

Also this morning, a thief or monk in the party will find a small bag in his belongings. The bag contains a vial of smoked glass filled with a milky liquid, and a note reading "I hope you find this *potion of wraithform* useful." One of Anthraxus's agents deposited the vial sometime after the fight last night. The potion acts just as the third level illusionist spell of the same name, except it works for 3-12 (3d4) rounds. If it lasts for a full 12 rounds, there is a 5% chance that the potion will permanently change the imbiber into a wraith.

### The Battle

After the planning session, the forces move out. There is an easily traveled path in the Chondalwood which leads to Theodorick's shrine. If the PCs did not find this place the night before, Solara (or a PC with tracking skill) will be able to find tracks in the wet earth directing the army down the path.

The shrine is located on high ground, facing a clearing the party must pass through. The area off the map is heavily wooded. The shrine itself was designed as a citadel for Imperial Chessenta and was taken over and modernized by the clerics of Tempus. It is detailed more carefully below. Theodorick's spectral legions surround the building.

Theodorick's strategy in battle is to break the center of the enemy line and then wipe up the isolated remains. One tactic he might use is to charge the center of a unit with a large frontage, using the war shields and spears in the second rank (see unit descriptions) to cause immediate damage. It would be likely that the enemy would wrap around the skeletons to avoid the effects of a shield wall. The zombies will attack any ene-



my who moved around the skeletons. After a short, bloody fight, the undead should split the enemy line.

Non-charging units will use their positional advantage, moving just to the edge of a contour line so that the enemy will suffer disadvantages for attacking uphill.

On the sixth turn of combat, a force of gnolls (see Order of Battle), accompanied by six hyaenodons will appear in the southwest corner of the board and advance to join in battle. The hyaenodons will attack single figures or heroes, especially spell casters.

### Theodoric's Fortress

The PCs and their allies are out-classed. Although the humans might have a chance against the undead, the gnolls attacking from behind could overwhelm them. Clearly, the time is ripe for decisive action. By now, the party should have pieced together the clues that lead to a meeting with (and ideally the curing of) Theodoric.

The shrine is two stories high, with the western half of the roof open and level, providing a large patio. It is an old building, the stone walls discolored and moss-covered in places (doubling a thief's chances of slipping). It has been holy to Tempus for over four hundred years and has seen a number of curates. Its current caretaker assumed his duties ten years ago, and like his predecessors has remade some of the rooms according to his personal taste.

#### First Floor

The entrance into the shrine is a set of double doors on the east wall, resplendent with brass etchings depicting the deeds of Tempus's warriors. This portal is open, and the shrine is dark and silent.

**1. Parlor** Light from outside shows that this foyer is tiled in coral and yellow. It is two-stories high, with a railed balcony eight feet above the ground floor. The walls give a hollow echo to the PCs' footsteps. Four doors can be

seen, as well as two curving staircases which join in a landing leading to the level above.

**2. Sitting Room** This room is a conservatory where Theodoric might join guests in conversation. There are comfortable chairs with side benches, and unremarkable landscapes painted on the walls.

**3. Strategy Chamber** The center of this room holds a large table, 5 feet by 10 feet, covered with miniature military figures. Theodoric tests his strategy in simulations of historic battles here. Currently, the figures on the table are in the midst of a siege of a river city.

**4. Kitchen** Rats scurry away from anyone who enters. It is otherwise unexceptional.

**5. Breakfast Room** When not entertaining guests, Theodoric eats alone in this room.

**6. Dining Room** This room hasn't been used for quite some time, except as access to other rooms. The walls display examples of archaic armor, the table seats eight.

**7. Museum** Immediately before the party enters this room, a shuffling sound and a loud bump can be heard. Inside is Theodoric's collection of historical relics, most of them military. Tables hold delicately carved swords and spent wands. There are displays of great battles and also great historical events. There is a closet at the far end of the room. The guardian of this treasure, a necrophidius, lurks nearby. The monster will attack any intruders.

**8. Sun Room** This room is pleasant, with a number of handsome, but unwatered, plants and a high-back chair.

**9. Library** The books on these shelves are old but common, most are thick with dust.

#### Second Floor

**10. Landing** The balcony provides an impressive view, the acoustics here produce remarkable echoes.

**11. Guest Rooms** These are neatly kept, with a bed, a desk, a chair, and a small altar to Tempus in each room,

however it is obvious that these have not been used for long time.

As this area is investigated, a huecuva approaches from behind. Although it is not too bright, it has decided to *polymorph* into a rust monster, hoping to attack a PC who is afraid to use magical weapons against it. It will run away after two rounds. It can inflict no wound damage, but can cause disease. It will reappear in three rounds, *polymorphed* to resemble a PC. In this form, it can only do 1-6 points of damage, but its disease power is still effective. It will attack until destroyed.

**12. Theodoric's Chamber** The door into this room is locked. Inside is a room much like the guest rooms, but with personal effects scattered about. There is a delicate silver candelabra (weight 8gp, value 25gp) holding two votive candles which act as *Incense of Meditation* when burning. They are unlit, and Theodoric is not currently under their effects.

**13. Chapel** The second floor is mostly devoted to the chapel on its west side. The large stained-glass window casts a tranquil amber light over the room, with its martial decorations. Several small anterooms contain spare religious and military paraphernalia, some of these rooms have been emptied to provide gear for the armies of skeletons and zombies outside.

**14. The Staircase** A long and narrow hallway with a wide window to the south leads to an old metal staircase helixing up to the roof. The battle below is visible from the window.

#### The Roof

This area covers only the western half of the building. Two ballistas, in the southeast and northwest corners, rest unused. Although they are operational, and there are three bolts for each, Theodoric refuses to use them, as they were not invented in the time of the Empire. In the center of the roof is a raised platform, and on the platform is a man in bronze plate mail wielding an



ebony staff tipped with an ivory skull.

Theodoric: ST 12; IN 14; WI 16; DX 13; CN 16; CH 13; CM 13; AC 1; Move 6"; CL 8; hp 57; #AT 1; Dmg staff; THACO 16; AL CN; *ring of protection +2*, under the effects of a *potion of speed*.

Spells: *bless*, *cause fear*, *command*, *curse*, *penetrate disguise*, *dust devil*, *hold person*, *silence 15' radius (x2)*, *spiritual hammer*, *dispel magic*, *magical vestment*, *prayer*, *cure serious wounds*, *spike stones*

Theodoric is quite mad. If a PC approaches from the air, Theodoric will assume the PC is an enemy and attacks with all his might. If, however, a character comes from below, Theodoric will take the PC to be a comrade and will salute. Anyone playing along with Theodoric's delusion might have a chance to persuade him to give up the staff (and command over the undead), or to join the PC in a toast to victory, or some other ruse to get him to drink Ulliam's potion.

Assuming the PCs can either kill Theodoric or (better) cure him, they will affect the outcome of the battle. If the *Staff of Skulls* is left without an owner, the undead immediately become a mob and attack any unit within 6". (This is an exception to BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat System rules [2.8] and [13.9].)

Only evil characters can control the staff. (Theodoric has been given a *schizophrenia* in which his second personality is an evil cleric from the time of Imperial Chessenta.) If the staff is broken all undead it has summoned immediately return to their original resting places.

## Order of Battle

### Yrkhetep's Forces

The Skeleton Turmae Peditis wear the trappings of the ancient infantry of Chessenta. They carry large, spiked shields. The spikes can be used as weapons in a charge. The spikes inflict 1-12 points of damage, but at a +2 AR penalty. After

the charge, this unit will form a shield wall (see BATTLESYSTEM Fantasy Combat System rule [11.6], page 20).

The Skeleton Spearmen also wear ancient garb. This unit can join the Turmae Peditis in melee, attacking from the second rank.

The Zombie Auxiliaries are elite corpses armed with tridents and small shields.

The Gnoll Elite are armed with halberds.

The Gnoll Cowards are armed with battle axes.

Both Gnoll units have unnamed unit commanders (CR 6") Hybsils are their hated enemies.

The Hyenas are a mob unit. They attack Hybsils that come within range of a charge. Either gnoll unit can attempt to give them orders.

The six Hyenodons fight as heroes. They attack other heroes and spell casters.

### Human Forces

The Spears of Dawn. Each fighter wears chain mail and wields a silver-tipped spear. When the Spears of Dawn are being paid for their trouble, their Morale and Discipline rise to 11. The unit is commanded by Randwulf Doorbane (CR 10"). If he is with any other unit, Randwulf's Command Radius drops to 6".

Forester Guards of Nun. These charismatic fighters from the towns bordering the Chondalwood dress in studded leather and carry long swords and simple wooden shields. They are recruited for their chivalry as well as their bravery, and for their grace and battle-skill. There are no brutes among them. The Forester Guards are practiced scouts, possessing the elven ability to hide in natural terrain. These fighters are the cause of the PCs' jitters the night before the first battle. Their unit commander is Miebhailar (CR 11").

Solara's Elite. These are fighters from the Plains of Nun whom Solara personally recruited and trained. They wear scale mail and carry shields blazoned:

Argent, a phoenix rose between three keys vert. The long swords they carry each have a dusty pink stone in the hilt. This unit is commanded by Gwyndion the Bald (CR 10").

Llandrydd's Steel. This unit's standard is vert, a sword between two maunches in fess, or. This mercenary company is slightly larger than Solara's, and is renowned for precise and often unconventional military tactics. The soldiers wear chain mail of an unusual (but non-magical) green tint, and each soldier is skilled in the use of short sword and dagger simultaneously. Llandrydd's Steel can make two attacks per combat round, once with each weapon. The second AR reflects the penalty for attacking in such a manner. The unit is commanded by Llandrydd Wyvernheart, whose epithet hints at his speed in battle and his reputation for a deadly sting. Llandrydd is a large and powerful-looking man, 35 years old, wearing a worn and stained tan tunic with the company's arms displayed over the heart. His authority is palpable, and he has won many allies during his career. He always remains with his unit, and has a CR 14", a Charisma of 18, and 15 hit points.

Llandrydd's Auxiliary. This a company of pikemen who dress in leather armor. Since they can attack from the second or third rank, Llandrydd's Steel will often wrap around the pike unit and face outward, a lethal block of steel. Nevertheless, the pikemen are treated as second-class members of the company, cowards who must hide behind the *real* men. Their unit commander Cercamon (CR 8") is the butt of many jokes in the swordsmen's camp.

The Autnak Tribe is a group of hybsils. These hardy little fellows get +4 on all saving throws. They are armed with daggers and short bows. Their arrows are coated with a sleep poison (-4 to save). Their commander is Marcabruk (CR 10").

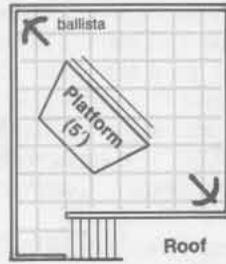
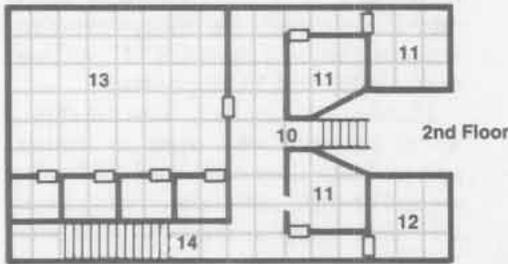


### Human Forces

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
The Spears of Dawn	Inf	F1	5	10	9"	20	10	9	5	1d6
Forester Guards of Nun	Inf	F1	5	10	9"	19	11	10	5	1d8
Solara's Elite	Inf	F3	5	30	9"	18	11	12	5	1d8
Llandrydd's Steel	Inf	F2	5	20	9"	19/21	12	11	15	1d6/1d4
Llandrydd's Auxiliary	Inf	F1	8	10	12"	20	10	10	8	1d6
Will of Enhanen	Inf	B1	4	10	12"	17	16	8	14	1d8
Autunak Tribe	Inf	Hyb	7	10	15"	20	9	10	6	1d4/1d3

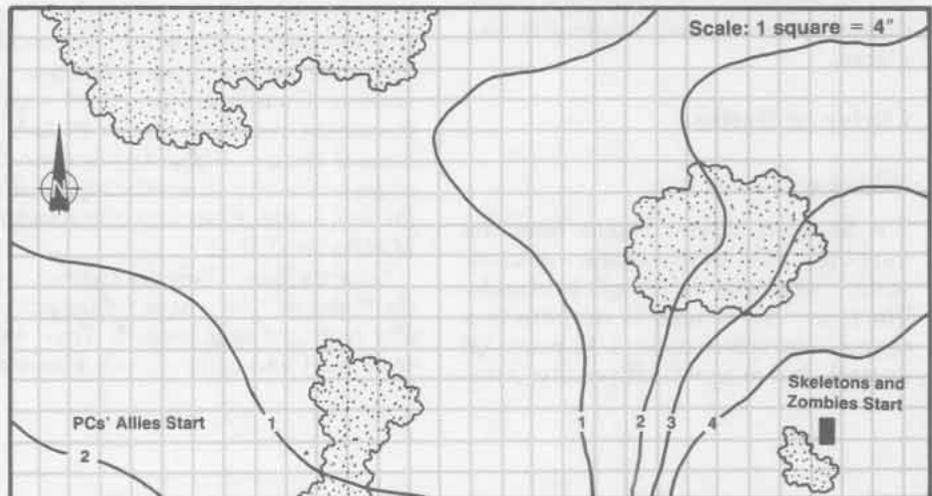
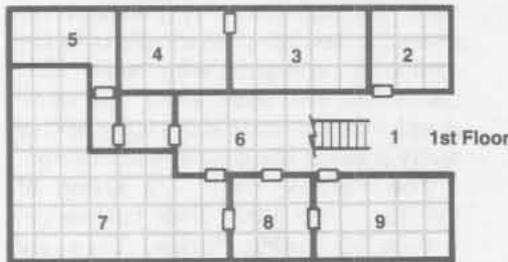
### Yrkhetep's Forces

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Skeleton Mob	Inf	Ske	7	10	12"	24	11	10	8	1d6
Skeleton Turmae Peditis	Inf	Ske	6	10	12"	22	9	11	4	1d6
Skeleton Spearmen	Ske	M1	7	10	12"	22	9	8	6	1d6
Zombie Auxiliaries	Zmb	M2	7	20	6"	16	11	8	16	1d8
Gnoll Elite	Inf	Gnolls	5	20	9"	16	12	8	10	1d10
Gnoll Cowards	Inf	Gnolls	5	20	9"	17	8	8	10	1d8
Hyenas	Inf	Hyenas	7	30	12"	18	11	8	6	1d10
Hyenadons	Inf	Hdon	7	5	12"	30	10	9	6	3d4



### Theodoric's Fortress

One square = 10 feet





## The Battle of Urml

*In thunder they came  
The hordes of war  
And rent the hills  
With the cries of bloodlust  
On steel-shod beasts  
That beat a tattoo  
Of death and destruction  
On innocent breasts*

*The horns were blown  
The clarion calling  
And men left their wives  
And children crying  
To mount their steeds  
To meet the invaders  
Whose numbers seemed endless  
From the foothills streaming*

*Then white-robed clerics  
Fell down on skinned knees  
And prayed to Tyr  
The God of justice  
To right the scales  
To stop the swinging  
Of goblin axes  
Slippery with gore*

*'Twas then a hush  
Fell o'er the village  
And all eyes together  
Goblin and mankind  
In the space of a heartbeat  
Turned towards the mountains  
A tall stony finger  
The peak named Tyr's Watch*

*For there standing proud  
At the top of the summit  
A man in white armor  
With white horse beneath him  
Right hand extended  
Raised toward the heavens  
Sunlight reflecting  
From a fist of bright steel*

*Then swiftly he galloped  
Into the battle  
And pointing his hand  
The hand of bright metal  
He called down the lightning  
To strike the invaders  
And goblin screams mixed  
With cheers of the townfolk*

*And fear filled the faces  
Where once there was bloodlust*

*As goblin smote goblin  
And steed attacked steed  
The air filled with smoke  
And green droplets flying  
As the battle was turned  
And the raiders repelled*

*The battle was ended  
And slowly the victors  
Emerged from their quarters  
To search for survivors  
Or bury the dead  
But no sign could be found  
Of the man in white armor  
'Cept a fist of bright steel  
In a puddle of blood*

(A recounting of the Battle of Urml as penned by Galenous the Bard and taught to all children of the Church of Tyr)

## Background (100 years ago)

The small settlement of Urml, nestled in the southwestern corner of the Orsraun Mountains had long been a haven for artisans and scholars of every ilk. Those wishing to escape the hustle and



bustle of the larger cities and desiring a quiet haven to study and create found Urml to be ideal.

Sculptors, painters, poets, architects, metal smiths, wood workers, glass-blowers, potters, and stone masons together with the scribes and clerics of the new religion of Tyr combined their skills and erected buildings that would symbolize the artistic and religious freedom of the village. A large school and library, dubbed the "Keep of Knowledge," was established to instruct young apprentices in the finer arts. Across the street, a beautiful cathedral to the god Tyr was built, where those of any religion could come to pray and meditate.

Thus it was that many travelers from Ormath to Hlondeth made an out-of-the-way stop in Urml either to acquire a high quality object of art at one of the indoor or outdoor shops, or to marvel at the twin structures.

As word of the village spread throughout the area, Urml found itself in a unique position. Merchants from the north offered high prices for all the items the residents could produce, and the swelling ranks of applicants for the school and church threatened to turn the small community into a major metropolis.

A meeting of the town council was held to discuss Urml's fate. Should the village be allowed to expand and perhaps become that which most of the inhabitants had escaped from, or should it retain its small town size and flavor? As one, the townfolk voted to keep Urml as it was. Only those students who showed the most skill or religious fervor were allowed to study at the church and school, and anyone desiring to reside in Urml had to first be approved by the council.

But with one problem solved, another appeared. A large goblin band, calling themselves the Bloodier Teeth, had heard stories of the town's wealth and prosperity. Down from the mountains came No-Nose, their leader, and several of his henchmen to demand that the town pay them a tribute for "protection." When the council unanimously

rebuked his offer, No-Nose spat at their feet and threatened to level the town. Urml had nothing in the way of a militia, but with this threat the citizens decided that something should be done to protect the town which they had worked so hard to create. Mercenaries and horses were called from Westgate to instruct the villagers in the arts of riding and fighting. But before the lessons could be completed, the goblins struck.

No-Nose, hearing of the arrival of men and horses in Urml, hastily contacted all the goblin, orc, troll, and kobold tribes in the area. Lured by the promise of vast wealth and easy pickings, the tribes forgot their petty differences and banded together for a raid on the town. Sweeping down from the mountains on horses, mountain goats, dire wolves, and wild boars the goblin army swiftly overran the village. Those villagers who could ride and fight made a valiant effort to repel the attack, but they were overcome by sheer numbers.

Then something happened. Abruptly, a hush fell over the town as if all sound had been sucked from the air. Man and monster fearfully turned toward the mountains to behold a lone fighter, dressed in shining white armor and mounted on a pure white horse, descending into the village; his raised right hand was encased in gleaming metal that painfully reflected the sun's rays into the combatants' eyes.

Reaching the village, the stranger kicked his horse into action and charged directly into the midst of the goblins. Bolts of lightning seemed to fly from his steel gauntlet, striking and killing the invaders without mercy. So great was the goblins' fear that in their haste to escape they were soon attacking and killing each other. Inspired by the appearance of the stranger, the villagers soon sent the remaining creatures scurrying back to their lairs. Although the casualties had been heavy, the town had been saved.

The clerics of Tyr, who had been praying for deliverance during the battle, rushed from the church when they heard cheers of victory.

As the story of the savior in white armor was repeated, all began searching for the warrior to offer their thanks. But no sign of man or horse could be found. Devron, a scribe of the church, happened to notice something gleaming in a pool of blood and gore. He gingerly retrieved the object, a shiny metal gauntlet.

This was all the proof the clerics of Tyr needed. The savior, they said, was in actuality the god Torm sent by Tyr to deliver justice in answer to their prayers. He left the gauntlet as a sign that the town was under his protection.

As the rest of the townspeople spent the next few weeks repairing the damage and beefing up their militia, the clerics built an ornate glass shrine to house the gauntlet. Months passed and the impact of the white warrior's assistance dimmed in the eyes of some and grew in the hearts of others, causing a rift to develop. On one side were those who had lost husbands, sons and fathers in the battle and insisted on a strong and well-armed militia to prevent further raids on the town. On the other side were the clerics who insisted that such a show of force was not needed, as Tyr would send Torm to reclaim his gauntlet and again intervene if the need arose.

## Introduction

The Hand of Tyr is designed for a group of 4-8 characters of 6-7th level. The group should consist of several fighters and at least one cleric. Magic-users, while helpful, are not necessary. The action centers around a festival and battle reenactment to be held in the town of Urml, located at the southern base of the Orsraun Mountains on the Forgotten Realms map. At the start of the adventure it is the referee's job to play up the festival as much as possible. The object is to generate excitement so the PCs will believe this is one event they will not want to miss.



## The Beginning

The adventurers, newly arrived in Ormath, are seated at a low oval table in the Inn of Seven Stars. The inn is one of several fine establishments in this bustling municipality. It caters to the needs of travelers and city dwellers alike. Hot meals, strong drink, hot baths, clean sheets, and an appreciative ear for boasts and complaints can all be had at the Inn of Seven Stars.

As the party sets about devouring their noonday meal of roast mutton, stewed potatoes, candied yams and sweetbread, the bell over the entrance rings, and a slight man carrying several rolled up parchments under one arm enters. He pauses at the doorway to beat the dust from his simple woolen garments, and his eyes scan the interior, settling on Ethran, the proprietor. He quickly makes his way to the horseshoe-shaped bar, drops his bundles, unrolls one of the parchments and shoves it in Ethran's face. After several seconds of fast talk and animated gestures, Ethran gives a nod of consent and the stranger, handing over the parchment, tips his hat and settles himself on one of the stools.

Ethran turns and tacks the parchment to a wall behind the bar. The parchment advertises an upcoming festival. Several patrons cluster around, excitedly pointing to the colorful advertisement, and talking animatedly with the stranger and each other. If the PCs manage to squeeze through the crowd they will be able to read:

"Come One! Come All! In Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Urml We Are Pleased to Announce For Your Amusement and Gratification a Festival to be Held in the Town of Urml This Feast of the Moon Day of Uktar! A Wonderful Time is Guaranteed For All Who Attend! Purchase Beautiful and Exotic Items at Our Many Shops and Bazaars! Partake of Foodstuffs and Delicacies Most Delicious! Quench Your Thirst With Wines and Ales Brewed to Perfection! Enjoy Jugglers, Clowns, Magicians, Acro-

bats, Puppeteers, and Story Tellers! Marvel at Strange and Fearsome Beasts Caged and Displayed! As a Very Special Event We Will be Presenting a True Re-creation of the Battle of Urml! All Those Skilled in Horsemanship and Weaponry are Invited to Participate! This is Not to be Missed!"

With much bragging and boasting, the bar patrons make plans to attend the event. Play up this in a big way, as the PCs should be caught up in the excitement and want to attend as well. The stranger, who introduces himself as Emric of Urml can relate the following information. The festival will begin in one week and last for four days. From Ormath to Urml is about a 2 1/2 day ride, but the countryside is flat grasslands and the going is very smooth. There are several boarding houses set up in Urml just for the event, as well as a huge campground for those who prefer to sleep under the stars. The Battle of Urml, which took place one hundred years ago between the town forces and bands of goblins will be recreated on an expansive field next to the festival site. Anyone can participate, playing the part of the town militia or the goblin hordes. Real weapons and horses will be used, but everything will be carefully staged to prevent bloodshed.

Emric, who is a member of the current Urml militia, will try to answer any questions the characters have. If they ask him about the Battle of Urml, however, he will not mention the white warrior or relate anything about the Hand of Tyr. During the intervening years, the official story of the battle has changed(see below). After talking with the party, Emric will beg their leave to resume putting up posters. For the next few days, the entire town of Ormath will be abuzz with talk of the festival.

## The Road to Urml

The distance between Ormath and Urml is approximately 270 miles. Assuming that the party is traveling light and does not make unnecessary stops, they should average 60 miles a

day on horseback. The road, winding through the Shining Plains, is little more than a path, worn down over the years by the weight of horses and wagons. Because of a drought during the past months, the grassy plains are brown and very dry. The following encounters might take place during the characters' trip. DMs should use their own judgment in deciding which encounters to use, and where and when they occur.

## Encounters

### Daylight

#### 1. Drunken Horsemen

Loud shouts and galloping horses come from the road behind. Six men on horseback are bearing down on the party, waving swords and ale bottles. The men are very drunk and sway alarmingly in their saddles as they fight a tribe of delirium-induced goblins. They ride directly down the center of the road, oblivious to the party, shouting war cries and urging their mounts to go faster. There is a 45% chance that one of the riders will fall from his horse within 10 yards of the party. The fallen drunk will lay sprawled on the road while his fellows continue on their merry way. The party can revive the unconscious fellow with a *neutralize* or *slow poison* spell. If they do so, he will belligerently tell the PCs he is on his way to the festival to fight goblins, then order them to get out of his way. This said, he will stagger down the road, holding his head and shouting "Wait for me!" If the party attempts to stop the others before they can do any damage, they must first rein in the horses and bring them to a stop. All the drunks will be hostile, and some might even attack. Any lecture on the evils of drinking the party might deliver to the men will be met with downcast eyes and mumbled curses.

Drunks (6): AC 10; Move 12" (24" when mounted); HD F0; hp 3 each; #AT 1; Dmg Knife; THAC0 2d 20; AL N; SA greatly intoxicated (see DMG page 82).



## 2. Alfrendo

At the side of the road are a string of four gaily painted wagons. The words, "Alfrendo's Mythical Menagerie" are painted in huge letters on the side of each wagon. A beefy, red-faced man squats next to the last wagon, shaking his fist at a broken wheel. The man is Alfrendo Galona. The wagons contain the mythical creatures from his show. Alfrendo was on his way to exhibit his creatures at the festival when a rut in the road caused him to lose a wheel. If the party stops to help him fix his wagon, he will thank them profusely and offer them a free look at his creatures.

All four wagons are barred in the front and covered with tarps to keep out prying eyes. The first contains a chimera, which has been declawed, defanged, and deprived of its ability to breathe flame; it is fat, lazy, and harmless.

The next wagon contains a gargoyle. When it sees the party, the gargoyle will go berserk, screaming and shaking the bars of his cage. There is a 55% chance that it will pull loose the already weakened bars and attack the group.

The next wagon contains a sleeping harpy. The harpy is gagged and her wings have been clipped.

The last wagon contains a frightened baby copper dragon named Cueperia. Alfrendo will pet the creature and talk to it in a soothing voice in an attempt to calm it. After a while the creature will lick his hand, curl up in a ball and close its eyes.

## 3. Thieves

Seven pickpockets, headed to the festival to ply their trade, are walking down the road. They will hail the party as they approach. While some of the members innocently ask for directions and make small talk, two of the thieves will try to rifle the characters' saddle bags, taking any valuables that they can get their hands on. If they are caught in the act, they will claim that the item(s) fell out of the bags and they were just putting them back. Then they will quickly walk away.

Pickpockets (7): AC 7 (dexterity bonus); Move 12"; HD T3; hp 10 each; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 2d 20; AL N; SA pick pockets 45%, other thief abilities.

## 4. Stampede

A herd of 25 wild cattle, grazing next to the road, will be frightened into a stampede by the appearance of the party and their horses. There is a 25% chance that they will run directly at the party. If this occurs, roll 2d4 for each member of the party in the path of the stampede to find out how many cattle trample each party member. Mounts cannot be trampled, but their riders must make a dexterity check or lose their seats and be trampled. A cavalier or other character with riding skill may check his skill instead of his dexterity if he wishes.

## Night

### 1. Fire

As the PCs prepare to settle in for the night, they will see a plume of thick gray smoke appear over the horizon. A few minutes later, one of the drunks from Daytime encounter #1 will ride into their camp screaming "Fire! Fire!" When the drunks made their campfire, they neglected to ring it with stones and the dry grasses went up in flames. They are too inebriated to put it out and will just run around in circles yelling and screaming.

The party has three turns to take action. If they fight the fire they will be able to smother the flames before they spread too far (using blankets, shoveled dirt, water, etc.) If they fail to fight the fire it will devastate a circle 25 miles across, moving outward at a rate of 36" a turn. Anyone caught in the blaze suffers 3-24 (3d8) points of damage.

### 2. Rats

During the night, four curious pack rats will infiltrate the camp looking for food and any small shiny objects (buttons, buckles, and jewelry being favored). If they are not detected, they

will make off with their prizes and leave rocks or small sticks in return.

## 3. Runaway

While eating their evening meal, one PC will see a small figure standing a few yards from the camp. If the PCs are friendly, the young boy will gladly approach and ask to share some of their food. Reluctantly, he will tell the group that his name is Rudox, he is 11 years old, and that he ran away from his home in Ormath to see the festival because his parents were "too mean" to take him.

Rudox will beg the group to let him go to the festival with them, promising to be on his best behavior. If the group declines his offer, Rudox will go on his own. If the party tries to take him home, he'll threaten to just run away again. If the party allows Rudox to go with them, they'll be sorry. Rudox will want to stay up all night talking and asking questions, play with the characters' weapons, bother the horses, and make a general nuisance of himself. The party should be all too happy to finally get rid of him.

Rudox: AC 10; Move 12"; HD F0; hp 2; #AT none; Dmg none; THAC0 2d 20; AL N.

## 4. Ogre

During the night an ogre, recently banished from his tribe in the Orsraun Mountains, will sneak up on the campsite in an attempt to kill the group and steal their possessions. The ogre is armed with a spear and stone club and is mean-tempered enough to fight to the death. If subdued, the ogre will reveal some important information in exchange for his life: He was banished from his tribe for accidentally killing the chief's brother during war practice. He has no love for his former tribe and will tell the party that they are planning something big to teach Urml a lesson. This is all the information he'll give them, except to say that the big plan will take place during the festival.



## Urml Today

Urml is a small community of about 800 nestled in the southwestern foothills of the Orsraun Mountains. Most of the villagers are craftspeople, specializing in weapons, armor, and other military items. The rest are students at the college or farmers. The main attractions in Urml, apart from the high-quality merchandise, are two large twin buildings built well over a hundred years ago. The first is a school and library dubbed the Keep of Military Knowledge (formerly the Keep of Knowledge). Here students from all over come to train in the use of weaponry and hone their fighting skills. Across the street is the Temple of Tyr. This building is in a state of disrepair, and those who attend the services are few; possibly due to the fanatical nature of the church elders (see below).

Urml maintains a 300-man militia composed of townspeople, farmers from the small wheat farms that surround the community, and students at the military college. Raids from the goblin gangs that dwell in the Orsraun Mountains are almost nonexistent as a result of this force.

## The Festival

There is no doubt that the town of Urml is in a festive spirit. Paper banners and streamers decorate all the streets and shops; push carts filled with delicious smelling delicacies compete with street merchants hawking their wares. Almost any item the characters wish to purchase can be found at one of the shops or booths, often at greatly reduced prices. Signs advertising "Room, Board & Bath" are prominently posted in front of the four inns as well as at several of the larger dwellings.

A campground has been set up in a large field to the north of town. Next to the campground, large colorful tents have been erected to hold the shows and attractions.

To the south of the fairgrounds, a large open area has been roped off.



Inside the ropes, demonstrations of riding and fighting skills are being conducted under the supervision of Creosoe, a militiaman. Creosoe is also in charge of the battle of Urml reenactment. If the party loiters here for more than a few minutes, or begins asking questions or making comments about the demonstrations, Creosoe approaches them.

Creosoe, a crusty old white-mustached general, whose craggy face bears the scars of many battles, will explain to the party that he wants to make the mock battle look as realistic as possible, but he does not want anyone to get hurt. He will be in charge of the militia forces, but he needs some people with good leadership qualities to keep the untrained volunteers who will play the goblin forces under control.

Creosoe will ask PCs if they would be willing to organize the volunteers and run them through their paces. This would also be a good time to weed out any potential troublemakers or those that might hurt themselves.

If the PCs agree, he will ask the PCs to meet him here on the battlefield two days before the reenactment. He will have their troops ready. If the characters have not yet secured lodging, he will invite them to make use of one of the dormitory rooms in the keep. If the players gained any information from the ogre (see Night Encounters #4) and mention anything about it to Creosoe, he will dismiss it as utter nonsense. Creosoe is very hard-headed and is sure the goblins wouldn't dare try anything with his militia around.

## The Keep of Military Knowledge

Several young men in highly-polished plate mail stand in front of this beautiful three-story stone and glass building. The men will conduct tours of the keep for any interested visitors.

Inside are several displays of weaponry in glass cases, a huge library of military tactics and history, several classrooms, dormitory rooms where out-of-town students stay, shops and



forges where the making of weapons and armor is taught, and a large room containing a simulated battlefield. As Thomas, the tour guide, points out the various items of interest in the building, he will relate the story of the Battle of Urml. The currently accepted version has the brave villagers, under the guidance of the then newly formed militia, rising up to turn back the hordes of goblins that threatened to overrun the town. No mention is made of the intervention of a white-armored stranger or the Hand of Tyr. This story is now believed to be nothing more than a folk tale.

After the tour, Thomas will ask the PCs if they are interested in participating in the mock battle of Urml. Experienced men are needed to lead the opposing forces, and being a good judge of men, he thinks the party will do nicely. If they agree, he will take them out to the field behind the college (see above) where mock battles and displays of horsemanship are being conducted for the tourists, and introduce them to Creosoe.

### The Temple of Tyr

At first glance, this three-story stone structure across the street from the Keep of Military Knowledge seems to be an identical twin. Closer examination, however, reveals cracks in the walls, crumbling mortar, broken windows, and a weed-choked yard. In front of the temple, an elderly, bald priest of in threadbare white robes is trying to interest passersby in one of the papers he is holding.

When he sees the characters, he will beg them to take one of his pamphlets and read the "true story" of the Battle of Urml, zeroing in on the party cleric if there is one. The pamphlet is a printing of the poem "The Battle of Urml" and whether the PCs take it and read it, he will launch into his version of the battle (see **Background**).

Ponton, the cleric, will end his recitation with the statement that he has had visions in which Tyr appeared to him

and told him he would punish the blasphemers for besmirching his deeds. Ponton delivers his speech in a high, thin voice verging on hysteria. He seems to be a religious nut, but he knows the truth and is extremely frustrated that over the years the town has turned its collective back on his teachings in favor of weapons and armor. Ponton took his training under Devron, a cleric at the time of the original battle. As he grew up within the church, he watched the membership steadily decline and the visitors to see the Hand of Tyr dwindle to a trickle. He believes this to be the cause of death of his mentor, and will do anything to right what he feels is an injustice.

If the characters show any interest in his story, he will invite them in to see the Hand of Tyr. Making his way through a conspicuously empty worship room, Ponton climbs a set of rickety stairs to the second floor.

Taking a brass key from a fold in his robes, he will unlock a narrow wooden door at the top of the stairs. It opens into a small, dusty room, in the center of which sits a beautifully etched glass case containing a shiny metal gauntlet. Ponton will bow before the display and in hushed, reverent tones bid the party to examine it. However, he will not under any circumstances open the case and allow them to touch it. Every square inch of the gauntlet's outer surface is covered with strange runes. (Any magic-user can see that the runes are magical, but they are unreadable even with a *read magic* spell.)

If the party shows interest in Ponton's story, he will invite them to stay at the church if they wish. The third floor contains several unused bedrooms and a large library of religious tomes.

If the PCs tell Ponton they plan to take part in the mock battle, he will be very disappointed and try to talk them out of it. Ponton is a kindly old man who takes his religion very seriously. His main problem is in the overzealous manner in which he preaches, which tends to alienate most people.

### The Fairgrounds

Many large colorful tents have been pitched here to house the festival's exhibits and attractions. Acrobats, clowns, puppeteers, illusionists, freaks, wild animals, and demonstrations of strength and derring-do can be found within their canvas folds. The admission to most of these attractions is 2 sp. Other tents are set up to display crafts, domestic animals, and culinary skills. Admission to these is free.

### Basic Training

Arriving at the practice field in the morning, the PCs find a rag-tag group of about 250 men and horses waiting for them. The PCs should divide the men into units, deciding whether they wish to take the parts of unit commanders, deputy commanders or heroes during the battle, and begin their training. All the men have their own swords, although their expertise varies widely.

The units commanded by the PCs are playing the part of the goblin forces. They are supposed to charge from the extreme east of the battlefield near a group of low foothills at the base of the mountains (see map). They are to meet the militia, charging from the west, in the center of the field. After a fierce mock battle, the pseudo-goblins are to rout back to their starting point.

The next few hours should try the patience of even the most saintly characters. Although most of the volunteers are able to ride a horse without falling off, some are obviously suffering the effects of hangovers. Near misses, both in riding and weapon wielding should be the order of the day. As the players run their troops through their paces, they will notice a crowd gathering around the edges of the field, laughing and pointing at the antics of the pseudo-goblins.



## Lord Yrkhetep's Plot

For a long time, Lord Yrkhetep has been aware of the existence of the Hand of Tyr and longed to add it to his arsenal. Because of the holy nature of the building in which it is kept, he was unable to enter and steal it as he would have liked. However, when news of the festival and the re-enactment of the battle reached his ears, he saw his chance.

Knowing of the bitter resentment the goblin tribes in the area harbored towards the town of Urml, he visited each in turn, and using whatever means necessary (i.e. coercion, blackmail, or violence), got them to listen to his plan.

As soon as the reenactment began, the goblin tribes, divided into four main armies, would attack. Two groups would confront the militia, keeping them occupied, while the others would ride through the town and the fairgrounds, looting, destroying, and creating general confusion. Before the militia had a chance to regroup their forces, Lord Yrkhetep would make his appearance on Tyr's Watch in the guise of Torm (white horse and armor) and ride to the Church of Tyr and demand his gauntlet from Dioseus the cleric.

The cleric, thinking that his god Tyr had again sent an emissary to save the town, would turn over the artifact. Yrkhetep would then use the artifact to destroy the militia so the goblins could have their way with the town. Yrkhetep stressed that all he wanted was the hand. The goblins could have everything else. Appealing to their greed, he also mentioned all the rich tourists who would be in town for the festivities.

All the goblin leaders, thirsty for revenge and loot, committed their tribes to the plan, put aside their differences, and called a council of war.

Lord Yrkhetep, however, has no intention of following this plan. Once he gains possession of the Hand of Tyr, he will disappear, leaving the goblins to their fate. He has no desire to waste the device on the town of Urml. He will, however, retreat to one of the mountain peaks to watch the battle.

## Nocturnal Visitors

The night before the reenactment, four white robed figures enter the town from the east and make their way to the Temple of Tyr. The PCs might see them, depending on where they are staying. These newcomers are Yrkhetep's servants, sent to prepare the cleric for his appearance.

If the PCs eavesdrop on the conversation between Ponton and the figures, they will hear the following:

The four claim to be pilgrims of Tyr who have journeyed to Urml to relate an important message. Three days ago they had a vision that Tyr would again send his emissary to Urml. Their vision told of something terrible happening during the reenactment of the Battle of Urml, and that once again, Tyr would have to intervene to save the town. They ask that Ponton heed their message well, and be ready to turn over the Hand of Tyr to the savior when he appears. They will then take their leave of Ponton.

Once the servants are away from town, they will throw off their robes, mount four horses they have tied up near the foothills, and ride cross-country toward Timindar (see Rumors of War). The four pseudo-clerics are actually fighters in Yrkhetep's employ.

Fighters (4): AC 6; Move 9" (18" when mounted); HD F4; hp 34 each; #AT 1; Dmg footman's mace; THAC0 16; AL NE.

If the PCs challenge or attack the fighters, they will expose their true nature. Any who are taken prisoner will reveal, under threat of torture or the offer of a huge bribe (at least 200 gp), Yrkhetep's plan to gain the gauntlet and attack the town. They think it is too late for the characters to do anything about it anyway. They do not know the locations of the goblin camps, except that they are scattered throughout the mountains. They add that if the party found one of the camps they would just be killed by the sentries (a very real possibility).

Gaining this information, the PCs should try their best to inform Ponton or Creosoe of the plot, to keep Yrkhetep from getting the hand.

If the PCs try to convince Ponton, he will simply dismiss them as heretics and pay no heed to their warning. He will never surrender the gauntlet to the PCs and plans to honor the "clerics" request. To secure the hand, the PCs probably will have to steal it.

Creosoe will be more receptive to a warning, but it will still take a lot of convincing (a live prisoner would help). If they can get him to believe their story, plans can be made to be ready for the goblin hordes when they attack. Creosoe will not commit any of his troops to try to raid the goblin camps. He views this as suicide, as the goblins would have the definite advantage in the mountains.

## The Battle

The reenactment of the Battle of Urml is set to take place at noon. However, people begin arriving quite a bit earlier, lugging blankets and picnic baskets, to claim a good viewing area. Sections of ground along the north and south edges of the battlefield have been roped off for spectators.

Promptly at noon, the Urml militia takes its position along the west edge of the field, accompanied by cheers and clapping. Then the PCs' units, dressed in dirty rags to simulate goblin garb, may set up on the east end of the field. Their arrival is met by boos and catcalls.

After a long-winded speech by the mayor of Urml, the battle may begin. The players' units should charge first, accompanied by the appropriate yells and curses. They will be met by the defending Urml units in the approximate center of the field. At this point, no actual damage should be meted out by either side.

If the PCs have not uncovered Lord Yrkhetep's plot, or alerted the Urml militia to any suspicions they may have, both sides will be ill-prepared for what occurs next.



Sweeping down from the low hills east of the battle grounds, a large army of goblins and orcs (Units #1, 2, 4 & 6) will charge the field, slashing and hacking at anyone in their way.

At the same time, a group of hobgoblins (Unit #3) will charge the fairgrounds from the northeast. They spend three game rounds causing as much destruction as possible, hoping to divide the Urml forces. They will then circle around to the south and attack the battlefield from behind.

While all this is going on, a group of gnolls (Unit #5) and a group of kobolds (Unit #7) will sweep into the town from the southeast. After spending five game rounds causing as much destruction, looting and loss of life as possible, they will circle back and attack the forces on the field.

### Lord Yrkhetep Makes His Move

Lord Yrkhetep, who has been watching the battle from the summit of Tyr's Watch, waits until he feels the time is right (the Urml forces seem to be losing). He will *shape change* into the White Warrior, mount a white horse, and make his appearance.

A pregnant silence accompanies his ride into the field of battle. As the participants turn to watch his approach, he raises his right arm to the sky, revealing a missing hand.

Ponton, who has been watching the proceedings from the steps of the church, will cry out in joy and run inside to retrieve the gauntlet. Unless Yrkhetep is hindered in some way, he will ride to the church and receive his prize.

Once the hand is in his possession, Yrkhetep will give an evil laugh and trample Ponton with his horse. Then he will ride back to the mountains to observe the rest of the battle. If Yrkhetep is kept from obtaining the hand, he will still vent his rage on the cleric and retreat. He has no desire to take part in the battle and will avoid fighting at all costs.

This abandonment by their mentor will be a serious blow to the goblins' morale. Whether they continue fighting, retreat, or choose to follow Yrkhetep is at the DM's discretion. If any of the player characters attempt to pursue Lord Yrkhetep, they will quickly lose his trail at the point where he entered the mountains. No amount of searching will reveal his path, though they might find his horse (he has *teleported* to safety.)

### Aftermath

Several endings are possible to this scenario, depending on the outcome of the battle and the player characters' intervention.

If the goblin forces win the battle, they will loot everything in sight, and then burn the town. If the DM wishes, the town can be saved by the timely arrival of reinforcements from Ormath (responding to a call from Creosoe, perhaps).

If the goblins are defeated, whether by loss of numbers, low morale caused by Yrkhetep's retreat or any other factors, they flee back to the mountains. The townspeople and visitors will band together to take care of the dead and wounded. The PCs will be honored as heroes for their intervention.

Whether or not Yrkhetep gets the hand, Urml's citizens, realizing that the entire battle was staged to get the hand (after questioning prisoners, etc.) gains a new respect for the church's teachings. They vow to help restore the church to its former glory and to live in greater harmony.

### The Hand of Tyr (Gauntlet of Lightning)

This artifact is a realistically crafted metallic hand. When worn by a fighter or cleric, the hand improves AC by +2. In addition, the wearer receives a bonus of +2 to hit and damage with all weapons wielded by the hand. By itself, the hand strikes for 2-8 (2d4) damage.

When charged (see below) the hand is

capable of delivering a 6d6 *lightning bolt* (as the the 3d level magic-user spell) at a cost of two charges. In addition, the hand has the ability to call an 8d8 *lightning bolt* (as the 3d level druid spell) once per day, at a cost of one charge. To wield the hand, the owner must first cut off his own right hand and then press the Hand of Tyr to the wound. If the person desiring the hand is worthy (DM's discretion), the hand will adhere.

The hand can store 2-24 charges. Before the last charge is expended, the owner must raise the hand in the air and call lightning to strike the hand. When lightning strikes, the wearer must make a saving throw vs. spell. If the save fails, the owner dies; if the save is successful the hand is recharged. Legend has it that the hand was a gift from the god Tyr to his worshippers. However, another story is that the hand was crafted for the paladin Mythera whose own hand was lost in battle. Mythera is said to have perished during the first Battle of Urml while attempting to recharge the hand.

If Yrkhetep gets the hand, he drains all its charges to power his Infinity Train (see The Final Battle). If he fails to gain the hand, completion of the train will be more difficult, but not impossible. The Final Battle will not be affected either way.

### Order of Battle

#### Urml Forces

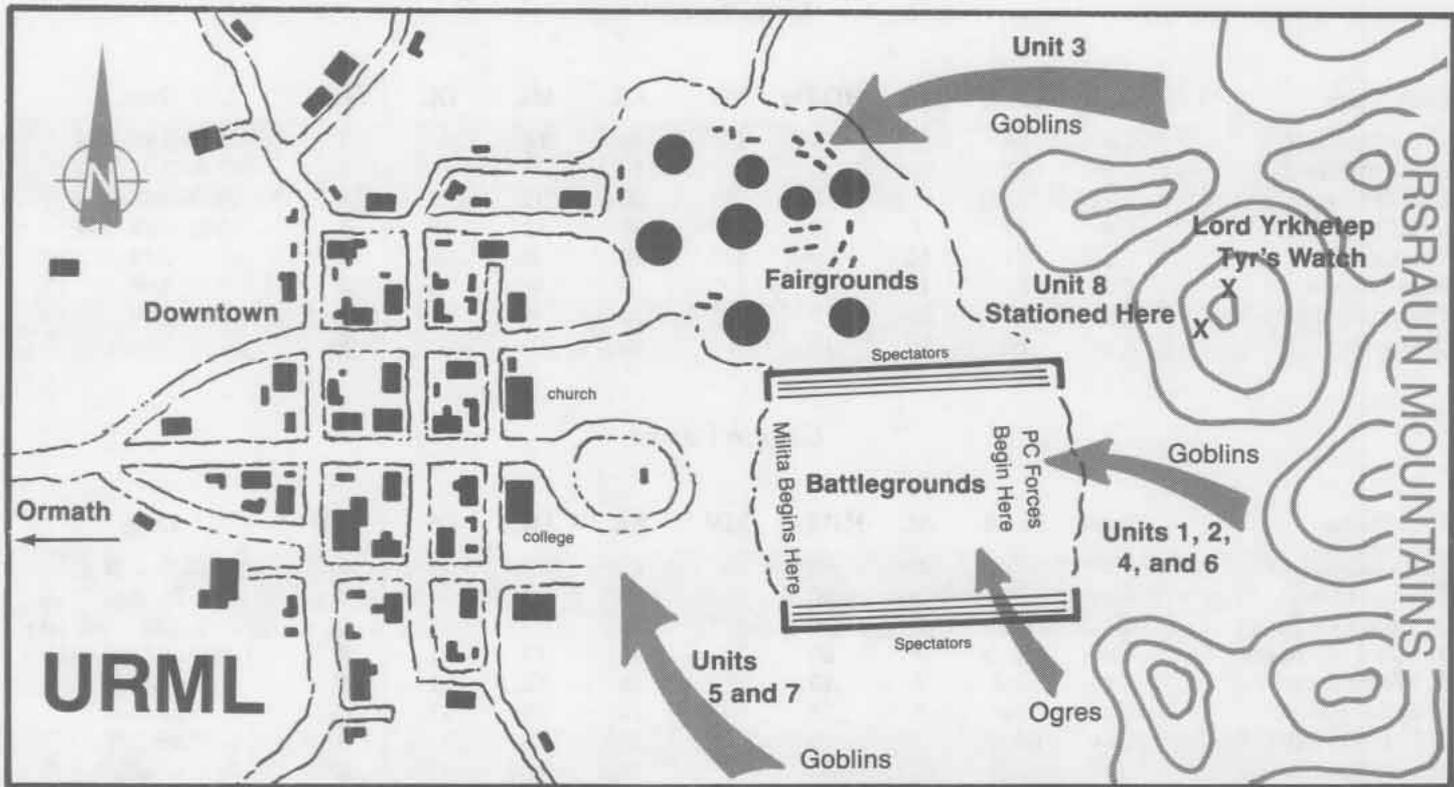
Urml Militia A is an elite unit of 50 4th Level fighters riding armored light warhorses and armed with long swords.

Urml Militia B is an elite unit of 50 4th Level fighters riding armored light warhorses and armed with spears.

Urml Militia C is a unit of 50 2d Level fighters riding light warhorses and armed with long swords.

Urml Militia D is a unit of 50 2d Level fighters riding light warhorses and armed with broad swords.

The Tourists are a regular unit of 100 1st Level fighters riding draft horses



and armed with broad swords.

The Hired Hands are a mob unit of 80 1st Level fighters riding mules and armed with pitchforks.

The Drunks & Thieves is a mob unit of 30 0 Level fighters riding draft horses and armed with clubs and bottles.

The Bystanders are a mob unit of 50 0 Level fighters riding draft horses and armed with spears.

### Goblin Forces

The Bloodier Teeth is a unit of goblins riding dire wolves and armed with broad swords.

The Scab Eaters is a unit of goblins riding dire wolves and armed with spears.

The Back Crackers is a unit of hobgoblins riding medium warhorses and armed with flails.

The Spine Snappers is a unit of hobgoblins riding medium warhorses and armed with maces.

The Worm Eaters is a unit of gnolls riding wild boars and armed with battle axes.

The Scum Patrol is a unit of orcs riding mountain goats and armed with clubs.

The Night Fright is a unit of kobolds riding giant weasels and armed with short swords.

The Grunts are a unit of ogres armed with long swords.

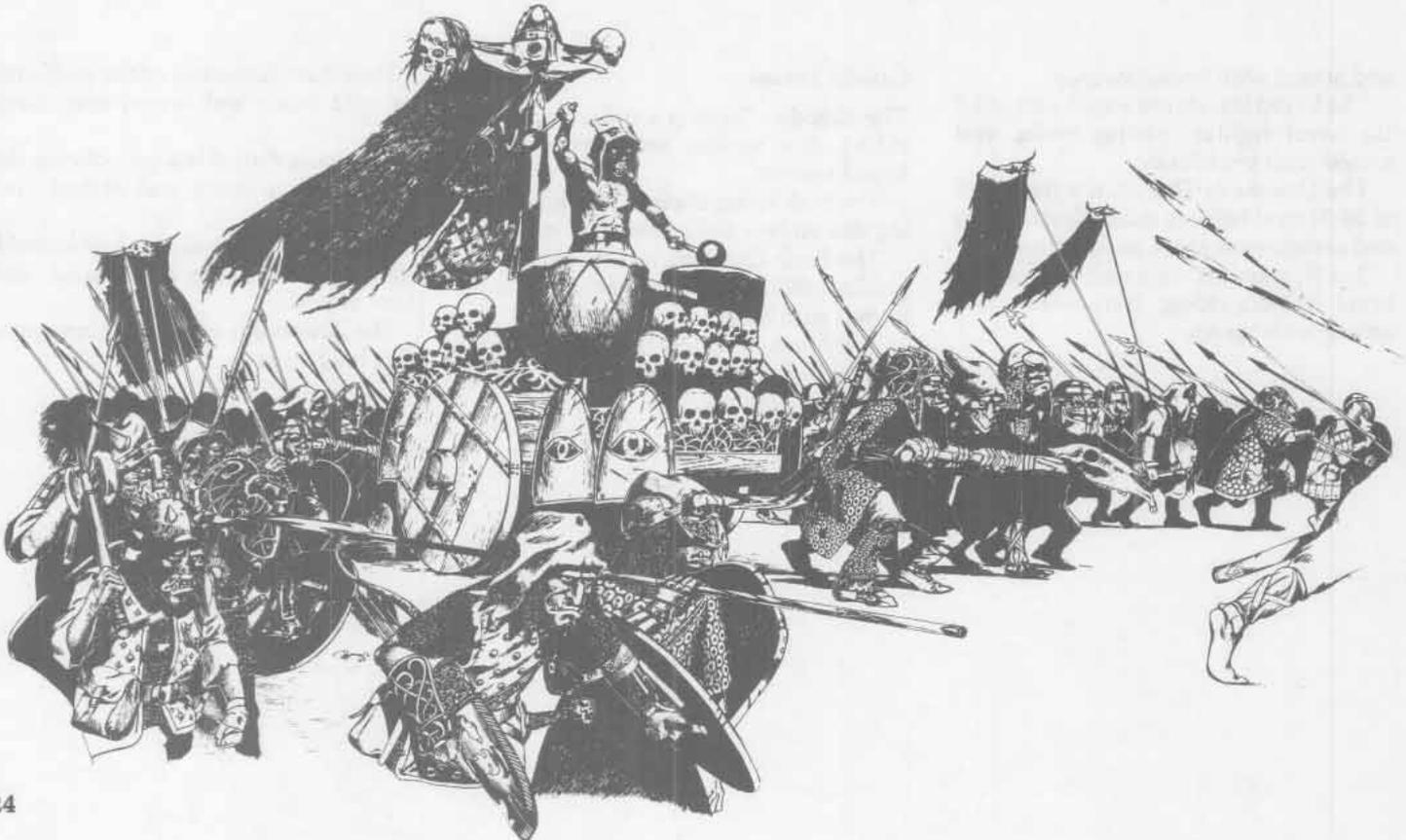


### Urml Forces

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Urml Militia A	Cav	F4	4	40	18"	18	14	16	5	1d8/1d4/1d4
Urml Militia B	Cav	F4	4	40	18"	18	14	16	5	1d6/1d4/1d4
Urml Militia C	Cav	F2	7	20	14"	20	12	12	5	1d8/1d4/1d4
Urml Militia D	Cav	F2	7	20	24"	20	12	12	5	2d4/1d4/1d4
Tourists	Cav	F1	10	20	12"	20	9	9	10	2d4
Hired Hands	Cav	F1	10	20	12"	20	9	9	8	1d6
Drunks & Thieves	Cav	F0	10	10	12"	21	9	7	3	1d6
Bystanders	Cav	F0	10	10	12"	21	9	9	5	1d6

### Goblin Forces

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
1. Bloodier Teeth	Cav	Gbn	6	30	18"	20	13	11	6	2d4/2d4
2. Scab Eaters	Cav	Gbn	6	30	18"	20	13	11	8	1d6/2d4
3. Back Crackers	Cav	Hgbn	7	20	18"	18	13	11	5	1d4 + 1/1d6/1d6/1d3
4. Spine Snappers	Cav	Hgbn	7	20	18"	18	13	11	4	1d6/1d6/1d6/1d3
5. Worm Eaters	Cav	Gnl	7	30	15"	16	13	11	4	1d8/3d4
6. Scum Patrol	Cav	Orc	7	20	18"	19	13	11	15	1d6/1d3
7. Night Fright	Cav	Kbld	7	20	15"	20	13	11	3	1d6/2d6
8. Grunts	Inf	Ogr	5	20	9"	15	13	11	10	1d10L





## Thurgabanteth

Upon his discovery of the Realms, Bane held a great feast of blood, in celebration of the bloodletting to come. His talons were red and dripping with venom as he descended for the first time into the new lands, and he placed his iron foot, which burned with pillaging fire, on Burgateth, highest mountain of Chondath. And he crushed it, and burned it, so that afterwards it was but a lifeless hill of black glass, burning crystal.

Then Bane, seeing the lifelessness and ruin in the middle of such beauty smiled, and spoke with a voice like that of carrion: "Let this place resonate with new songs; the cries of the warrior, the melody of clashing swords, the harmony of iron shod boots marching in unison over the stones, the crescendo of the death wail, and the chorus of the widow's lament. Let this place be a tapestry upon which I shall paint new scenes, and blood and ash shall be my pigments. These are the things that I cherish, and they shall dominate this place, as they do wherever the hearts of men are weak and quick to desire. The four winds shall spread these things to every corner of this land, and no creature shall evade them. This place is a special symbol of my domination, and I shall name it Thurgabanteth, the Hill of Black Ruin. It is my footstool, a portent of my final victory."

Satisfied, Bane retreated to his domain, and watched with hateful eyes as his terrible seed began its work.)

From the Black Tome of Chondath

## Introduction

In this adventure, for characters levels 8-9, the players once again confront the forces of the arcanodaemon Yrkhetep, who has camped by the dreaded hill Thurgabanteth.

This scenario takes place in the town of Timindar in Chondath. Nine years ago, a wicked woman, Durissa, was cast out of the town for many crimes and evil acts. At the time, she vowed to



get even. To exact her revenge, she has become an agent of Yrkhetep, who has promised to destroy the town and everyone in it, except for the one person Durissa loves, her twin sister Morissa, the town archivist.

To enact her scheme, she is posing as Morissa and spreading dire rumors. The real Morissa, who believes that her sister has suffered enough, is sheltering her. She will not reveal the deception. She is allowing Durissa to use her indentity because she believes the rumors Durissa is spreading—particularly the one about the Black Skull (see below).

Durissa's rumors will cause trouble among various mercenary groups in the town, problems that the PCs will have to solve. Morissa's most elaborate rumor is about the Black Skull, the remains of an aspect of Bane. She claims to have uncovered documents that say the artifact is buried in Thurgabanteth. She also says that enemies are struggling to unearth the artifact. Unless Timindar and its allied mercenaries strike quickly, the forces of darkness will acquire a power that will enable them to win any battle. She has authentic-looking documents to prove her claim, documents that have fooled even her sister.

In truth, Thurgabanteth is a death trap for a force the size of Timindar's. The majority of Yrkhetep's forces are hidden in underground tunnels dug around Thurgabanteth. It will be up to the PCs to discover the truth and bolster their forces, or they will surely be defeated.

## Getting Involved

Timindar will send riders towards Arrabar and Hlath. In both of these cities, word of the Skull of Bane can spread to the PCs ears.

If the PCs are not altruistic, then word may go out that the Lord Tymin will pay good money to mercenaries who wish to fight against the evils descending upon Timindar. If the PCs are following from the previous scenario, the pseudo-clerics might tell the PCs that they were to meet their employer in Timindar or supply other information that will lead them to Timindar and the battle at Thurgabanteth.

## Timindar

Timindar is located on the Chondath Road between Arrabar and Hlath, about one hundred and fifty miles east of Arrabar. A large area of farmland surrounds the walled town. Over the past fifty years, it has prospered from merchant traffic, and grown from a small hamlet to a prosperous, if quiet, little town.

The area has one black spot, Thurgabanteth, or the Evil Eye of the Dark Gods (or simply the Evil Eye), as it is known to the locals. This hill of black glass is located about fifteen miles southeast of Timindar, on the edge of Chondalwood. There are many dark legends about spirits of war rising from the hill to slay anyone who is foolish enough to come near, and any local disaster is always blamed on the hill. As



one might expect, the locals usually shun the hill.

Timindar is a place where merchants buy produce to take to markets in larger cities (usually Arrabar). The farmers in this region are prosperous. They must pay tithes to any of the town's recognized churches, and to the Lord of the estate, Lord Drumath Tymin, but they are allowed to keep most of their incomes. People bringing goods into the city must pay a small tariff (usually about 2% of the value of the goods), which does not discourage merchants.

The city is divided into two sections, the market section, and the Lord's manor, a small castle. There are four recognized churches near the market; listed in order of importance to the locals, these are devoted to Chauntea, Waukeen, Tempus, and Gond. New churches may be built with the permission of the Lord, but the builder must buy a 10,000 gold lion construction permit. Timindar typically uses Arrabar's currency, but most merchants will accept currency of other types.

Timindar has a large hostel for sheltering large merchant caravans. There is one tavern, the Black Eye, which is owned by Tallanna Fhyord, a feisty and efficient middle-aged woman. The inn and the hostel will be full when the player characters arrive, due to the number of mercenaries in town.

The most noteworthy residents of this town are:

Durissa: ST 11; IN 17; WS 9; CN 11; DX 16; CH 13; CM 12; AC 4; Move 12"; I10; hp 21; #AT 1; Dmg N/A; THAC0 19; AL NE; *potion of invulnerability, potion of polymorph self, wand of negation, ring of protection +3; boots of striding and springing.*

Spells: *change self, chromatic orb, gaze reflection, phantom armor, wall of fog, blur, mirror image, misdirection, ventriloquism, non-detection, spectral force (x2), improved invisibility, phantasmal killer*

Durissa Thornion was one of the daughters of the town mage, who died

when she was a girl. Durissa, a mischievous child, had more interest in the art of deception than normal magic, so she became an illusionist. As she became more skilled as an illusionist, her deceptions became more dangerous, and she finally killed someone. Had the townspeople caught her, they would have executed her. Durissa did not regret the killing, but she was forced to leave Timindar. Durissa enjoys creating dissonance, and seeing people at each other's throats because of her illusions. Durissa never uses weapons. Durissa is about thirty years of age, tall, with braided raven black hair and brown eyes.

Morissa: ST 11; IN 18; WS 14; CN 11; DX 16; CH 13; CM 12; AC 7; Move 12"; MU5; hp 13; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 2d 20; AL NG; *ring of protection +1*

Spells: *comprehend languages, friends, mending, read magic, rope trick, shatter, tongues*

Morissa Thornion is Durissa's sister, and keeper of the Thornion archives, which are adjacent to the Lord's manor in Timindar. Morissa is as kind as her sister is malicious; she would not willingly harm a fly. Morissa is the most trusted person in the village, Lord Tymin often calls upon her to help settle disputes. She has one weakness, she talks too much, typically about things that interest her (ancient legends, magics), but no one else in Timindar really wants to hear about, aside from a few children. The rumor of the Skull of Bane, which Durissa passed on to her sister, has, however, interested people greatly. Morissa looks exactly like her sister. They dress alike and even their hair style is identical.

Araband Tymin: ST 17; IN 11; WS 11; CN 14; DX 18; CH 14; CM 15; AC 2; Move 12"; F6; hp 39; #AT 1; Dmg long sword; THAC0 13; AL NG; *ring of protection +2, long sword +2*

Araband is Lord Tymin's only son, and considered to be very irresponsible. He often gets drunk and carouses with friends, much to his family's disappointment. He is very competent in times of need (although no one realizes this). Araband likes to talk with strangers about adventures in far-off lands, which fuels his wanderlust. Araband would love to be an adventurer, but can rarely sneak away from home. Araband dislikes metal armor, which he refers to as "the walking rack," and typically wears worn leather armor without the emblem of his station, which is also a matter of shame to him. Araband is commander in chief of the Timindar forces (his father is lame). Araband is in his mid 20s, slightly taller than average, handsome, and slim.

Zerbin Gethrik: ST 16; IN 12; WS 16; CN 15; DX 15; CH 12; CM 10; AC 3; Move 9"; CL5; hp 34; #AT 1; Dmg F Flail; THAC0 18; AL CN; *footman's flail +1, chain mail +1*

Spells: *bless, create water, cure light wounds, (x2), protection from evil, augury, chant, resist fire, speak with animals, spiritual hammer, dispel magic*

Zerbin Gethrik is the priest of Tempus in Timindar and Araband Tymin's most trusted friend, although they spend most of their time arguing. Zerbin was originally a murderer in a city of the Sword Coast who fled into a church to escape justice, and ended up becoming a priest. In spite of his odd conversion, he is devout and follows the principles of the Church of Tempus faithfully—few though they be. Zerbin complains about everything, especially the fact that nobody (Araband Tymin in particular) pays any attention to his advice. Zerbin overeats and drinks too much, but is a doughty fighter and true companion. Zerbin is in his late 30s, taller than average, bald, and overweight.



Lord Reland Tymin: ST 14; IN 11; WS 14; CN 11; DX 10; CH 13; CM 12; AC 10; Move 6"; F4; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg long sword; THAC0 15; AL LN; long sword +3)

Reland Tymin has been Lord of Timindar for eighteen years. He is a somber man and absolutely serious when governing his manor and surrounding lands. Reland came to the manor seat when his brother, the previous ruler, was poisoned. Reland's nephew was blamed for the death and executed, although at the time many said the wrong man was killed. Reland was once a mighty warrior, but is lame now and leaves fighting to his son, Araband, despite his irresponsible nature. Reland is close friends with Morissa Thornion (some say that her mother was his mistress, and blame him for her father's death). Reland is a fair ruler despite his stern nature. Reland is in his early 50s, tall, and gray haired. His pain-racked body is scarred from the numerous battles he fought in his youth.

### Evil in the Black Eye

The gates of Timindar shut at dusk, especially when evil is gathered at Thurgabanteth. The night creatures are aroused, cloaked by fog. As the characters enter the Black Eye, they realize that this is a night when the might of their enemies is waxing.

The town is currently hosting the Gray Doom, a newly-formed mercenary company, survivors of many skirmishes on the Sword Coast. They are a long way from home. Lord Tymin is waiting for another mercenary company, the Sailors of the Crimson Sea, to arrive before he marches against the enemy. The people of Timindar are restless; rumors have been circulating that the mercenaries are planning to sack the town and the farms after the battle. Meanwhile, rumors are circulating among the mercenaries that Lord Tymin will not pay them once the battle is over.



At the Inn, several mercenaries, including their leader, Olway Lezard, are seated but a few tables away from the town's stoutest troops, including Araband Tymin and Zerbin Gethrik. In the meantime, Durissa has disguised herself as a barmaid and has put a very powerful drug into the inn's ale; those who drink but a single mug will become very drunk, and prone to violent words and rash deeds. (Player characters may make a Wisdom check; if successful, they will recognize the ale as being extraordinarily strong). The mercenaries, who have remained in town for several days and have endured uncounted suspicious stares, will be ready for a fight.

Olway Lezard: ST 15; IN 13; WS 9; CN 15; DX 14; CH 15; CM 11; AC 4; Move 9"; F5; hp 38; #AT 1; Dmg long sword; THAC0 16; AL N.

Gray Doom mercenaries (7): AC 4; Move 9"; F1; hp 7 each; #AT 1; Dmg long sword; THAC0 20; AL N

Town Militia (5): AC 9; Move 12"; F0; hp 4(x4),3; AT 1; Dmg 1-8; THAC0 20; AL LN

Once he is drunk, Olway Lezard will start insulting Timindar, trying to goad Araband. Initially, Araband will agree; indeed he will drunkenly accuse Olway of being flattering. Then, Olway will start insulting the people of Timindar. Araband will accuse him of being rude, even if his words are true. Then Olway will start insulting Araband. Araband replies by accusing Olway of stealing his (Araband's) father's tongue.

If the PCs try to intervene at this point, Olway and Araband will start insulting adventurers, and the militia and the mercenaries will find common ground insulting the PCs. Olway will start insulting Zerbin, calling him Tempus's fat pig, or is it a sow? If this happens, Araband will draw his sword.

The party must find a way to prevent the NPCs from killing each other. If Olway is slain, the Gray Doom mercenaries will go berserk, raze the town,



and there will be no troops left to attack Yrkhetep, save the Sailors of the Crimson Sea, who have troubles of their own.

If Araband is slain, the grief-stricken Lord Reland will attempt to arrest Olway, and the Gray Doom will storm the manor and the Lord will be murdered, with much the same effect as listed above; Timindar will be in ashes, and Yrkhetep's troops will be unopposed, free to join its legions in Hades for the final battle.

A drastic means that the PCs can use to prevent either eventuality is to start a fist fight before a sword is drawn. Grabbing at either Olway or Araband before they strike a blow will suffice. In this case, combat will be non-lethal; there will be injuries (and even more aching heads), but Olway and Araband will have earned each other's respect, and there will be no more trouble from the Gray Doom in Timindar.

### Hanging Trees Are Judges Too?

The day following the trouble in Timindar, a messenger will come from the Sailors of the Crimson Sea. They were ambushed as they marched along the edges of Chondalwood. Their leader was slain by sniper's arrows, and his body was burned by flasks of burning oil; no cleric can raise him now. Furthermore, their food supply was destroyed. They need a cleric to help feed them, to help them to get battle ready, and to perform last rites for their fallen leader. All priests in Timindar will be unavailable (unless the PCs have no cleric, then Zerbin will go if the PCs agree to accompany him). The messenger will escort them to the Sailors' camp.

The messenger is genuine; the ambush took place a day and a half from town. When they get to the camp, they will find many wounded men, and quite a few dead mercenaries, buried but awaiting funeral rites. The ambushers were eventually slaughtered. However, another disaster has befallen the mercenaries; a hunting party

of ten men went into the forest to get firewood and food. They have not returned, and it has been over a day since they left. The PCs will have to find them.

The forest in this section of the Chondalwood is thick and nearly impassable. There are no paths that the mercenary party could have used to travel. It seems impossible that ten men could enter the woods to hunt and then disappear without a trace. If the party spends at least two hours searching the woods they will find a piece of torn red cloth belonging to the leader of the hunting party, Lherk Jareth. After this cloth is found, the party will find a narrow, concealed path leading deeper into the forest. A ranger or character with tracking abilities can confirm that this is the path the hunters took. Anyone can follow the path.

The forest is very musty, as if rain and the wind never got past the treetops to clean out the woodlands. Game does not appear to be thriving here, and it is very dark, even during the day. Those with woodland backgrounds (ie. rangers, druids) will get the impression that this forest is ancient.

After a half-day following the path, the party will come to a huge glade, where they will find ten men tied up with strong vines. They are gagged, but a look of fear in their eyes gives warning of a trap.

A figure steps out of the undergrowth. "Go back. The trial is about to begin, and outsiders are not welcome," it croaks.

It is a tall, thin, gray-bearded, wild man who looks as though he has spent his entire life in these woods; he is wearing ragged, filthy green robes that appear too small for him. He is Variath, a powerful druid who governs this section of Chondalwood. His words are almost a whisper. If asked about the trial, he replies: "These ones have committed serious crimes. They are to be tried, and executed."

If he is told this is unfair, he will get angry, but a tree will stir, move from its place, and address him: "He has a

point. It is not fair." It is a large treant.

"You are the ones that were wronged," Variath declares. "Do you not want vengeance?"

"No, justice," the treant replies calmly.

Variath will at this point convene a trial of the mercenaries. At the treant's suggestion, the PCs are allowed to watch, and even to testify on behalf of the mercenaries.

Variath: ST 16; IN 15; WS 16; CN 16; DX 18; CH 15; CM 9; AC 0; Move 12"; DR11; hp 78; #AT 1; Dmg scimitar; THAC0 12; AL N; *bracers of defense AC 5, scimitar +2*

Spells: *animal friendship, entangle, faerie fire, locate animals, pass without trace, predict weather, speak with animals, barkskin, cure light wounds, find traps, heat metal, locate plants, trip, warp wood, protection from fire, summon insects, call lightning, cure serious wounds, dispel magic, plant door, control winds, insect plague, weather summoning*

Variath was born and raised in the Chondalwood and left it only once. He hated what he saw of the rest of the world and returned to the wood as soon as possible. Variath believes that the world outside of Chondalwood is evil, that man is evil, and only by becoming a druid can a man be purified. (Druids who travel outside the woods can become impure, however.) Variath is full of petty hatreds, and he intends to vent his wrath on the mercenaries.

The treants of Chondalwood are much more patient than Variath. They are not happy with the mercenaries, but are willing to listen to their side of the story. The treants fear the power of Thurgabanteth, which they call the Blackwold, more than anything; the treants have not forgotten how it was created, they never forget.

The mercenaries currently on trial are the elite of the Sailors of the Crimson Sea. They entered the forest, killed a deer, cut off some branches from an old dying tree, and burned them. To Variath, this is a horrible crime. ("How



would you feel if we slaughtered your children, cut off your right arm, and burned it!") The mercenaries argue that they had every right to feed themselves and keep themselves warm.

Lhrek Jarsyn: ST 18/36; IN 12; WS 12; CN 16; DX 14; CH 15; CM 13; AC 4; Move 9"; F7; hp 38; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword; THACO 14; AL LG; chain mail, *long sword* +3

Lhrek is the current commander of the Sailors of the Crimson Sea. He is normally a friendly man, but during the trial he will be frustrated, angry, and arrogant. His men came to save the people of this region—is this the thanks they get? He will be grateful if the PCs help rescue them.

Iurnan Chall: ST 10; IN 16; WS 11; CN 14; DX 16; CH 12; CM 11; AC 3; Move 12"; MU7; hp 23; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THACO 19; AL LN; *bracers of defense AC 5, dagger +1, elven cloak and boots*

Spells: *charm person, feather fall, magic missile (x2), ESP, invisibility, knock, fireball, fly, polymorph self*

Iurnan is the magic-user of the Sailors of the Crimson Sea, and Lhrek's rival for leadership of the group. He considers himself older and much wiser than the young fighter. He is treacherous, and while he will not betray or backstab Lhrek, he has said some nasty things about him behind his back, and the company is demoralized (-1 from their ML). If the PCs help Lhrek resolve the crisis with Variath, Lhrek's popularity will increase and their morale level will return to normal.

The treants are demanding some compensation (1,000 gold crowns, since these humans have an attraction for this odd shiny metal) and an apology. Lhrek is not willing to give either. Variath argues that if they cannot see the error of their ways, they are beyond redemption and must be punished (executed).

For the PCs to resolve the trial, they

should appoint a single speaker, who will address the treants. Roll a reaction roll (see DMG p. 63), adding appropriate bonuses for charisma, and applying the following modifiers:

- 5% if speaker is a half-orc
- +10% if speaker is elven or half-elven
- +10% if speaker is a ranger
- +20% if speaker is a druid
- +10% if Lhrek is persuaded to apologize
- +25% if speaker tells the entire story truthfully (especially about Thurgabanteth)
- +/-10% for role-playing

To judge how effective the role-playing was, the GM should consider: Was the player uncertain or out of character? (-5%) Did the character use empty flattery? (-5%) Was the player in character during the entire speech? (+5%) Did the character emphasize the importance of defeating the evil in Thurgabanteth? (+5%)

If the result of the reaction roll is 55% or greater, the treants will agree to let the mercenaries go (if they apologize). If the result is above 75%, then the treants will agree to join in the attack on Thurgabanteth.

Following this encounter, the party will find a woman on a horse, riding away from town. Her horse is lame, and she has been shot with several goblin arrows. This is the real Morissa, who took Durissa's advice to leave town in secret before the battle, lest the worst come. Durissa did not want to see her sister come to harm, but goblin archers had other ideas. Morissa is not dying, but thinks she is. As the party tends her, she will tell them what she thinks is the truth—that Durissa is trying to reform and is doing her best to take care of her—and asks them to give their most sacred word that Durissa will not come to any harm.

### A Stranger in the Knight

When the Sailors of the Crimson Sea enter Timindar, there will be a great celebration, if only to bolster the towns-

folk's morale against the battle to come. However, Durissa now will be aware that the party is a force to be reckoned with, and will take steps to deal with them.

Her agents will secretly kill Lord Reland Tymin and his bodyguard. She will take his place, disguised by illusions, and two of Yrkhetep's nycadaemons will accompany her, disguised as guards.

Durissa, disguised as Lord Reland, will call the party to a private conference late at night. When they come her bodyguards will turn to their true forms and attack. "Lord Reland" will appear to be startled. If it looks like the nycadaemons need help, she will help them, but only if she can get surprise.

Once Durissa has revealed herself, her true nature should be clear. If the PCs mention that Morissa got ambushed, she will be shocked and uncertain. The nycadaemons will laugh and say that a single life is insignificant against the triumph of Yrkhetep and the power that awaits her. If the PCs give Durissa any encouragement at all, she will turn against Yrkhetep.

If Durissa switches sides and survives, she will tell the characters the truth about Thurgabanteth; half Yrkhetep's strength is concealed; while scouts from the town have identified orcs, ogres, and, there are also mezzodaemons and yagnodaemons in the host. The party must awaken the mound, the power of Bane, who will destroy any who try to defile Thurgabanteth. She will claim that Morissa will know how it is done. Morissa does know.

The town of Timindar has an ancient seal, given by a black-robed priest who said it would protect the town against Thurgabanteth. The priest, if priest he was, has never been seen since, and no one believed his claim. If the seal is broken against the black glass of the hill, then Bane's Skeleton Knights will be unleashed to defend the hill. However, it is said that he who breaks the seal of Blackwold will die.



## The Battle of Thurgabanteth

Both sides will be using artillery in this battle. The forces of Timindar have three portable light catapults. The forces of Yrkhetep have four heavy catapults, each stationed at a different corner of the hill.

The damage listed in the forces tables for artillery units is the figures' hand-to-hand weapon damage.

To set up the battle, draw a 9" radius circle on the battle table. This is Thurgabanteth. Hidden units will appear at the base of the hill, emerging from tunnels dug at the bottom of the hill.

Yrkhetep will be stationed at the top of the hill. As soon as his position is attacked, he will *teleport* away, not to return confident that his minions will win the battle for him.

In addition to the Timindar forces, the treants, and the mercenaries, there will be another force marching on the hill. Anthraxus, worried about Yrkhetep, has slaughtered some elves of Chondalwood and planted evidence implicating Yrkhetep. The elves have roused their forces in response and are marching against the Blackwold. They will arrive two turns after the Timindar forces appear, from the opposite direction. If contacted, they will cooperate in any reasonable way with the human attack.

The elvish units have +1 magical weapons.

The battle begins when the Timindar forces are 36" away from the outer edge of Thurgabanteth (and have entered heavy catapult range). On the third turn, the elven forces appear, also 36" away, on the other side of the map.

Timindar commanders are set up as follows: Araband Tymin with Timindar #1, Zerbin Gethrik with Timindar #3, Olway Lezard with Gray Doom #1, Lhrek Jarsyn with Sailors #3, Iurnan Chall with Sailors #3. Variath is not present at this battle.

Yrkhetep's initial forces are the goblins, orcs, and ogres. He will try to draw the Timindar forces toward the

hill, and then bring out the real menace: the daemons. When the troops have come within 24" of the hill, they will emerge, appearing at the base of Thurgabanteth. Yrkhetep will not be expecting either the elves or the treants, and this will make him nervous; he will direct catapult fire at the treants.

If Durissa is still alive and realizes that Yrkhetep used her, she will attempt to make recompense for her misdeeds by stealing the seal, and, invisibly, making her way to the hill and smashing the seal. Smashing the seal does 20d6 damage (no saving throw) in a 2" radius, which will also apply to units, regardless of magic resistance (Bane's power is greater than that of daemonkind). So she might eliminate a few units, although it will cost her life. One round after the seal is smashed, the skeleton knights appear, rising from the ground. They get a free attack on the first round that they appear (ie. they cannot be attacked), and then will attack normally. They will not attack the Timindar forces, but must make a Discipline check to avoid attacking the elves.

If Timindar wins, the surviving mercenaries will be paid, and stronger alliances will be formed between the farmers, elves and the creatures of the wood. The region will become even more prosperous. If Yrkhetep's forces win, then they will burn the area, destroy Timindar, burn much of the northern forests (killing the sulking Variath), and leave to the greater battles that await in Hades.

## After Thurgabanteth

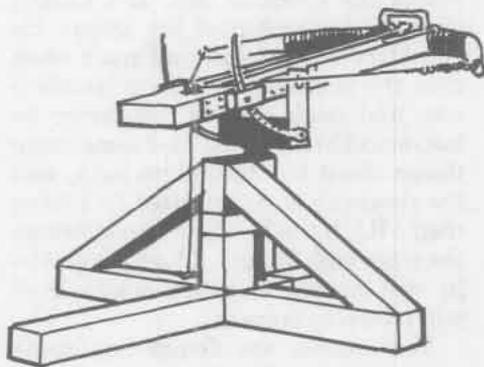
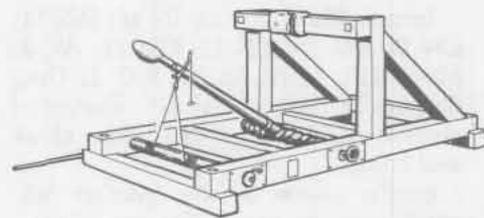
*In his dark home of misery, Bane looked upon the slaughter and laughed. He heard the cries of the dying and quivered with delight. He saw the carriage circle around his dark footstool, and sighed contentedly.*

*"Behold!" he shouted at his seneschal. "Look at the beauty created by but a single seed of darkness, the color of destruction, the music of death. See how these little creatures, humans,*

*dance at my command. How can I not triumph?"*

*The seneschal shook his head. He knew that his job was to play the deva's advocate at such moments. "Some would say that this is a triumph of heroism, of the human spirit. The fact that these men will overthrow their fears to battle great odds indicates the triumph of hope, courage, wisdom, and dare I say it—even love?"*

*At that final dreadful word, Bane shuddered, and gave his servant a hateful glance. "Love! Slaughter is slaughter! Misery is misery! Courage is but a word that these humans use to try to hide the pain. A feeble effort. They are mine. They always shall be."*





## Timindar Forces

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Gray Doom 1	Inf	F1	0	10	9"	20	11	11	6	1d8
Gray Doom 2	Arch	F1	7	10	12"	20	9	9	3	1d6
Sailors 1	Reg	F1	4	1	9"	20	11	11	6	1d8
Sailors 2	Reg	F2	2	20	6"	20	11	11	2	1d8
Sailors 3	Cav	F2	2	20	15"	20	12	12	6	1d8/1d8/ 1d8/1d3
Sailors 4	Arch	F1	8	10	12"	20	9	9	4	1d6
Timindar 1	Reg	F0	9	5	12"	20	8	8	6	1d8
Timindar 2	Arch	F0	9	5	12"	20	7	7	5	1d6
Timindar 3	Artl	F1	8	10	12"	20	8	8	3	1d8
Elves 1	Reg	F3	5	30	12"	18	14	13	12	1d8+1
Elves 2	Arch	F3	5	3	12"	18	14	13	12	1d6+1
Treants	Trea	8	0	8	12"	17	14	13	12	2 d 1 6 / 2d16

## Yrkhetep's Forces

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Goblins	Inf	Gobl	6	10	6"	20	10	10	15	1d6
Orcs 1	Inf	Orc	6	10	9"	19	12	12	18	1d8
Orcs 2	Arch	Orc	6	10	9"	19	11	11	9	1d6
Orges 1	Inf	Orge	5	20	9"	18	14	14	8	1d10
Orges 2	Art	Orge	5	20	9"	20	14	14	4	1d10
Mezzodaemons	Inf	MD	-3	20	15"	20	15	16	5	1d6+6/ 1d6+6
Yagnodaemons		YD	1	26	18"	19	14	14	3	1d10+12

## Bane's Forces

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Skeleton Warriors	Inf	SW	0	18	6"	19	15	16	10	1d10



## The Battle of the Five Crowns

The PCs are traveling through Chondath for reasons mutually agreed upon by the DM and PCs.

When visiting the city of Arrabar, the party hears whispered in all the inns rumors of ominous, daemonic happenings in the east. The party decides to investigate and takes the Highway of the Sunrise toward Hlath.

Sixty miles up the road, where Chondalwood is at its closest point, the party finds the Inn of the Five Crowns. It is a most welcome sight since the sun is beginning to set.

Clearly an impressive establishment, the inn has a large central three-story building with wings to the left and right and a large stable in back, along with a fenced area for guests' mounts to exercise.

Even more impressive is the host gathered around it. Scores of armored troops mill about the inn. Banners representing different companies flutter in the breeze. Cooking fires and sentry posts have been hastily assembled on the perimeter.

This host has unusual mounts. Amid the elves and knights are griffons and pegasi, the soldiers keeping both species well away from each other.

To the left of this winged army are soldiers from the city guard of Arrabar, and a group of female warriors in green/gray cloaks run through combat drills.

As the party draws closer, a man and a woman emerge from the crowd and approach the party. They are a handsome, blond couple in their thirties, both dressed in simple robes made of spun gold and belted with bands of solid gold. They wear gold circlets on their heads. They carry wooden staves shod with gold ornaments and topazes.

The man introduces himself as Auricose and his wife, Auriathalius. They are kind folk, very polite, and they invite the party into the inn for refreshments. Auricose dismisses all questions with a casual wave of his hand, "All will be answered in due course, my brave friends. Come inside and refresh yourselves."

Inside the tavern's common room, the party sees two evidently experienced human knights, an elf lord, and a female warrior talking animatedly over a map. Ignoring them, the couple ushers the party to seats and calls for food and ale. There are no other customers in the place.

Auricose stands and begins to speak. "I suppose we owe you an explanation of who we are and what we are doing here. These forces are assembled here for a war against a host most sinister. This evil approaches on both wings and feet and includes an evil cloud giant's floating castle. Scouts tell us they advance even now. We know not why they come, but we guess they wish control of the road, the inn, and of the city of Arrabar.

"It is not the castle itself that is the true problem, but rather the gate to Hades that has been set-up beside it. This gate is meant to allow daemonic armies to cross back and forth, and allow a powerful daemon lord to exert control of the land."

Auricose's tale is interrupted by the four commanders, who roll up their map and saunter over to the party. One of the knights, dressed in pure white plate mail, looks intently at the party then whispers to his friends. The knight is a paladin, and he is detecting for evil in the party.

"So, Auricose, will they do it?" the knight in pure white plate mail asks, as the others look on expectantly.

Auricose shakes his head. "I have not even asked them yet, Justin, be patient. We still have some time before the foe closes in."

The knight known as Justin flushes red. "I apologize for my abruptness, good folk, but urgency dampens my manners. I am Justin Ironedge, a holy warrior, or paladin, as some call me. I command the unit called the Lightblades, which is made up of pegasi-riding knights such as myself. I am also considered the overall commander of this army.

"My other knightly companion here is Bren Wingblade, he who commands

the Windriders, griffon-mounted knights.

"This noble elf to my left is Lotherius Goldentree, commander of the Sunshafts, an elfin archer unit that rides pegasi.

"Finally, this lovely lady is Adrienne-dar Valgarien, commander of the Sisterhood of the Oaks. She and her women are rangers."

These four sit down and join the party as the innkeeper brings the ale. He seems concerned that his precious inn could be destroyed in the ensuing conflict.

Auricose, slightly perturbed at this interruption, resumes the story.

"We have other allies. As you can see, the 6th Municipal Guard of Arrabar has been mustered for ground support. Others are arriving later. But we still lack one thing. We need a group to enter the cloud giants' castle. The gate must be destroyed and the cloud giants rendered harmless. A unit flying up to the castle for a direct assault would fail. Ah, but a small talented group such as you may succeed."

If the party expresses concern about Auricose knowing who they are, he just smiles and replies, "I know much. That is my and my mate's contribution to this noble effort."

The four leaders will add that some of the party could even lead a unit or two in battle if they are qualified and willing. However, they recommend that the majority go to the castle. Transport to the castle, incidentally, will be provided by the golden couple, who smile enigmatically, clearly enjoying being mysterious.

The innkeeper has been listening as he cleans beer mugs at the bar. Unknown to everyone, he is an ultrodaemon who has killed the real innkeeper and has taken his form. The real innkeeper is buried behind the stables. This ultrodaemon is working for Yrkhete. During the night, he will attempt to kill the party, since they are an unexpected power.

Auricose says the armies are expected to reach this area at sunrise. They are



marching/flying from the east, and the foul host is hoping to have the advantage of the sun at their backs and in their opponent's faces. He suggests that the party stay the night at the inn and start at dawn.

The party at this point may be overwhelmed about all this and might not have yet agreed to go. Justin will appeal to any good-aligned PCs, and especially to any paladins or cavaliers, from whom he will demand help.

If the thought of doing good is not reward enough, Aurianthalius will disgustedly say the party can keep any wealth or magic found in the castle "And giants certainly have enough of both to satisfy even the most avaricious people," she will add caustically.

Night falls, and the armies have tents pitched all around the area of the inn. Grimslaak will *gate* in three yagno-daemons to attack the party. This will occur around two in the morning. Grimslaak himself will not take part, keeping his identity secret.

After the melee, or when the party is getting badly beaten, the army commanders arrive, alerted by the noise. They will be impressed by the PCs' combat skills and will aid in the fight if the daemons are not yet dead. However, they are also very worried, since this attack clearly means that the enemy is aware of the party and its plans. Their mission becomes more urgent.

The next morning is clear, with no clouds or breeze, almost as if nature itself is aware of what will transpire and is holding its breath. The armies suit up. Their mounts, anxious to fly, paw the ground nervously.

The party is awakened by Auricose, who tells them it is time to go. When the party ventures outside, they see that during the night some lammasu and centaurs, the latter from Chondalwood, have joined the host.

The couple grin at the party, then *polymorph* into their true forms, that of huge adult gold dragons. The PCs who are attacking the castle are told to climb aboard and hold on tight. The PCs remaining behind can lead the 6th

Municipal Guards, the lammasu, who call themselves The Winged Law, or the centaurs. Though the latter will not be too happy being led by a human. A griffon or pegasus will be available to any PC who wishes to command or even just to accompany the armies, acting as deputy commanders.

As the PCs and the dragons race closer to the castle, they disappear. The dragons have cast invisibility on themselves and invisibility 10' radius on the PCs. The dragons explain this only if asked, saying that stealth is necessary.

After a half hour's ride, the group sees dozens of specks on the horizon, most of them barely visible against the rising sun. Between the party and the distant evil hordes sits a large square castle nestled on a fluffy cloud. An odd doorway, 10' wide and 25' high, sits on the same cloud. The doorway glows an angry red. It is 90' to the right of the castle and guarded by six yagno-daemons. This is the gate to Hades.

The castle itself is a simple square stone structure with sides 170' long and 40' high. The roof is graced with stone parapets. Four 50' wide towers are attached, one in the middle of each wall rather than at the corners. The tower facing west contains the main entrance. Eight cloud giants patrol the parapets, each with a griffon on a leash. Boulders for throwing are within the sentries' reach. A spiral staircase set in the middle of the roof goes down into the castle.

The party can be dropped either on the roof near the staircase or at the front door. Auricose stresses that they cannot aid the party any further, since they must save their breath (literally) and spells for the enemy armies. If the party is dropped on the roof and lingers there for more than three rounds, the giants will smell them and realize that there are invaders on the premises, sounding the alarm and searching for the PCs.

The dragons also explain that in order to destroy the gate, the party must find the object that anchors it to this plane. It may well be in the castle.

Two rounds after the dragons leave,

the party sees the evil hordes begin their fly-by. Wyverns, harpies, orcs riding manticores, and humans on hippogriffs race by. Bringing up the rear are a pair of huge red dragons. The sentries on the roof salute them as they pass.

## The Forces Collide

The defending commanders realize that positioning is difficult with air units. Their goal is to halt the advance of the evil host, especially not allowing them to gain control of the road and the inn.

## Order of Battle

### Forces of Good

The Windriders are 5th level cavaliers mounted on griffons. They have medium lances and long swords. They can assume closed formation on the ground. They are led by Bren Wingblade: ST 17/70; IN 14; WS 14; CN 17/34; DX 17/09; CH 16; CM 14; AC -3; Move 12"; CA7; hp 60; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword or lance; THAC0 13; AL LG; Rank Unit; AR 28; CR 15"; CB +1; *long sword* +3.

The Lightblades are paladins mounted on pegasi. They wield medium lances and *long swords* +1. They are allowed to enter closed formation when on the ground. They are led by Justin Ironedge: ST 17/70; IN 13; WS 16; DX 16/04; CN 16/04; CH 18/18; CM 15; AC -2; Move 6"; PA8; hp 70; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword or lance; THAC0 13; AL LG; Rank Army; AR 28; CR 16"; CB +2; *long sword*, +5 *holy avenger*.

The Sunshafts are elven archers mounted on pegasi. They attack 3/2 with their swords. They are allowed to enter closed formation on the ground. Their leader is Lotharius Goldentree: ST 16; IN 13; WS 13; CN 10; DX 18; CH 15; CM 15; AC 0; Move 9"; F7; hp 40; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword or long bow; THAC0 14; AL CG; Rank Unit; AR 29; CR 14"; CB +1; *long sword*, *flame tongue*.

The Sisterhood of Oaks are all female



rangers with high Dexterity scores. They carry long swords and long bows. They begin in open formation. They are led by Adriennedar Valgarien: ST 17; IN 14; WS 16; CN 16; DX 18; CH 17; CM 15; AC 1; Move 9"; R5; hp 54; #AT 1; Dmg long sword or long bow; THAC0 15; AL CG; Rank Unit; AR 30; CR 14"; CB +2.

The 6th Municipal Guard are among the best of Arrabar's city guard. The city leaders, with remarkable foresight, sent them to stall the evil forces so the city may have time to organize a good defense. They begin in closed formation.

The Winged Law is a group of lammasu who wish to help protect good. They cannot enter closed formation.

The centaurs are locals from Chondalwood and are here to protect it from invasion. They have long swords in addition to their bows. They begin in open formation.

The two huge adult gold dragons are here because they heard the evil host recruited two red dragons. They think this is hardly fair and have joined the good forces.

### Evil Forces

The Dark Watch are elite air archers on hippogriffs, all with high Dexterity, and neutral evil. They are armed with long bows and long swords. They can enter closed formation on the ground. They are commanded by Thurindar Pelamar: ST 17; IN 17; WS 11; CN 16; DX 16; CH 18; CM 15; AC 3; Move 9"; F8; hp 72; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword or long bow; THAC0 13; AL NE; Rank Unit; AR 28; CR 16"; CB +2;

The Arrowflighters are 2d level orc archers mounted on manticores. Not only do the orcs fight, but the manticores launch two volleys of six spikes, one volley per round. Elves are their hated opponents. The Arrowflighters may enter closed formation when on the ground. This is an elite unit, commanded by Gluuvesh: ST 16; IN 9; WS 10; CN 18; DX 17; CH 6; CM 4; AC 2; Move 9"; F7; hp 40; #AT 3/2; Dmg

long sword or long bow; THAC0 14; AL LE; Rank Unit; AR 29; CR 6"; CB -1.

The Skykillers are air cavalry riding hippogriffs. They are armed with *long swords* +1. The unit can enter closed formation on the ground. Their leader is Sir Lehakin: ST 16/79; IN 17; WS 14; CN 16/65; DX 16/34; CH 18; CM 16; AC -2; Move 6"; CV8; hp 66; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword or lance; THAC0 14; AL LE; Rank Unit; AR 29; CR 16"; CB +2; *long sword* +4.

The Cloudwarriors are cloud giants from the floating castle. They wield great clubs and hurl rocks. They begin in open formation.

The Sisterhood of Carrion is a group of harpies that will attempt to charm the enemy. They can never enter closed formation.

The wyverns were summoned by Yrkhetep to supplement the dragon force.

Yrkhetep's Devoted are 4th level neutral evil clerics. They are fanatics that never need to check morale. They begin in closed formation. The DM is free to choose their spells. They are led by Kara Godslave: ST 14; IN 18; WS 18; DX 16; CN 16; CH 16; CM 12; AC -1; Move 6"; CL8; hp 60; #AT 1; Dmg footman's mace; THAC0 13; AL NE; Rank Unit; AR 28; CR 12"; CB +1; *footman's mace* +3.

Spells: *cure light wounds* (x2), *curse* (x2), *darkness*, *silence 15' radius* (x3), *resist fire*, *hold person*, *dispel magic* (x3), *feign death*, *cure serious wounds*, *protection from good 10' radius*, *sticks to snakes*

### Set Up

It is a calm, cloudless morning. The terrain around the inn is flat grasslands with Chondalwood to the southwest. The forces of good set up first. Air units should start out no further than 120' (4") from the Inn.

The Windriders and the gold dragons start at medium altitude, the Lightblades, Sunshafts, and lammasu at low altitude. The good forces will

fight at +1 penalty to their AR due to the sun in their eyes.

The evil armies gain a +1 to their morale due to the sun at their backs. Yrkhetep will accompany the Dark Watch.

The Dark Watch, Skykillers, and wyverns start out at medium altitude, the Arrowflighters, red dragons and harpies at low altitude.

Victory conditions for the evil host are the capture of the inn and the road while having at least ten figures left. Control of the road is defined as one side having the only non-routed units on the control locations. The control locations are: the eastern- and western-most road edges, the stretch directly in front of the inn, and the point where the forest meets the road.

All advanced rules are in effect. Remember that all airborne units must be in open formation while they are in the air. The board should be 16 feet by 8 feet.

**Special Rules:** Bren Wingblade and Sir Leharkin are mortal knightly enemies. They will seek each other out and fight a duel to the death. All units commanded by the loser must immediately make a morale check with appropriate penalties. If they succeed, they get a -1 AR bonus—the death of such a popular leader has whipped them into a battle fury. If the morale check fails, they rout.

Any evil units that enter Chondalwood are attacked as soon as they proceed more than 2" into the woods. Their attackers are centaurs and satyrs using guerrilla tactics. For game play, use an abstract AR of 18, and 1d8 damage. The guerrillas do not need to check morale or discipline and cannot be attacked. Evil units must make a morale check every round after the initial guerrilla attack. Failure means they bolt out of the woods as quickly as possible. The guerrillas will continue to attack until the enemy units leave the woods.



## The Giants' Castle

The castle is very simply constructed. It is a two story structure, each story is 20' high. A 30'-wide hallway splits each level into four large rooms of equal dimensions. A spiral staircase located at both of the hall intersections connects the first and second levels and gives access to the roof. The first floor halls end with doors leading to the towers.

Each tower is three levels high, the only entrance is at ground level. The four towers house ten giants each, though currently 16 giants are on the ground participating in the war. Out of the remaining 24 giants, eight will be asleep, two in each tower. Each tower has the same layout: the first floor is the living area, the upper floors are sleeping quarters. There is no treasure in the towers. Doors to the towers are 10' wide and always locked.

The west tower's first floor contains the castle's main doors. The doors are 30'-wide double iron doors. They are locked. Even when unlocked, it takes a creature with cloud giant strength (23) and mass to open them, or a group of at least three man-sized creatures with a combined strength of at least 50. The doors will open to a *knock* spell or *chime of opening*.

All rooms measure 70' square with 20'-wide double doors, always locked. They also require a 23 strength to open.

The castle is made of granite, and sits atop a puffy cumulus cloud that floats at an altitude of 600'.

### Room Descriptions

Since all the rooms are the same size and of the same configuration, it does not matter which quarter of the level it occupies.

**Ground floor, Dining hall:** This room is empty except during dinner time (sundown) or parties. There are two tables of solid oak, 50' long and 20' wide, with 14 giant chairs around each. There are 28 gold plates, mugs, bowls, and eating utensils stacked in cabinets.

The entire set is worth 28,000 gp. Banners from armies the giants have defeated hang from the ceiling. Two tapestries hanging on the walls show cloud giants building the castle and fighting other (good) cloud giants. Each tapestry is 20' square and is worth 5,000 gp.

**Grand study:** Carpeted in sky blue deep shag, this is among the most comfortable rooms in the castle. A massive fireplace lies opposite the door; a two-handed *sword of sharpness* hangs over the mantle. The sword's *dweomer* is hidden by a reversed *Nystul's magic aura* spell. Bookcases hold tomes of all shapes, sizes, and languages. Three large sofas and four large (even by giant standards) easy chairs are scattered haphazardly about the room. A spotted lion stalks about in this room. When it hears the door open, it hides behind a sofa and peeks at the intruder. If the intruder is not a giant, it lies in wait. When the intruder is close enough, it pounces, automatically gaining at least one segment of surprise.

**Kitchen and storage:** Before the party enters, they smell meat roasting and bread baking. This room has a vast pantry with sides of meat from many sorts of creatures. In addition, there are sacks of spices and dry goods. There are casks of ale, brandy, and wine, three of each, stacked in a far corner. Each cask is giant-sized and holds 100 gallons. The kitchen proper has two ovens, four fire pits, and three work tables. A large sink and pump produce one gallon of hot or cold water per round upon command. Many cooking and cutting utensils hang from the walls. There are several cookbooks, including one called, "The Best Ways to Serve Man." Three cloud giants work in here, their clubs within easy reach. Before attacking, they will use pots and pans as makeshift gongs to warn the rest of the castle. There are also two spotted lions skulking about, gobbling up scraps the cooks let fall.

**War Room.** The most impressive feature of this room is the massive map of the area set into the wall opposite the door. Little pins show the armies of

good and evil, white for good, orange for evil. One orange pin has the word "Yrkhetepe" printed on it. Another orange pin is on the Inn, with the phrase "Grimslaak-innkeeper." A notation on one corner of the map says "Best of Hades." There is a large, oak table and eight seats. Scattered documents and scrolls give the exact strengths of the evil hosts (with a profile on each unit commander and the tactics he plans to use in the battle), an account of Grimslaak's deception, the PCs' names and classes with estimates of their powers, and a final scrap saying "Next: Orient?!"

The room is guarded by four derghodaemons.

**Upper Level, The chief's room** This vast chamber is carpeted in mink pelts worth 50,000 gp. The bed is solid pine set with 24 emeralds worth 500 gp each. A chest under the bed is locked and trapped with a poison needle (save at -3 or die). The chest is eight feet long and four feet wide. Inside is the wealth of the castle: 17,500 pp, 19 gems worth 1,000 gp each, a *ring of shooting stars*, a *ring of truth*, a *bastard sword*, +2 *giant slayer*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, a *staff of the magi*, a *staff of the woodlands*, and a *cloak of elvenkind*. These items are man-sized and useless to the giants. They plan to sell them soon.

The Chief, Fracto-Nimbuli, and his three spotted lion pets/guards are also here. The chief is sitting in his chair, admiring himself in his mirror. He can see the exact position of each PC as they enter the room, courtesy of his mirror.

Fracto-Nimbuli: AC -2; Move 15"; HD 12 +7; hp 90; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36 +4; THAC0 9; SA hurl rocks 2d12 hp; SD surprised only on a 1; MR 30%.

Fracto is the vain, greedy owner of this castle. Yrkhetepe has promised him power and wealth if he helps in the battle. Fracto wears a silver headband which confers 30% magic resistance to the wearer, shrinking or expanding to fit. His massive club is enchanted to +4.



**Spotted Lions (3):** AC 5/6; Move 12"; HD 6+2; hp 50; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-12; THAC0 13; SA rear claws for 2-8/2-8; SD surprised only on a 1; AL N.

Fracto has personally trained these lions since birth. They obey his orders exactly, and receive a +4 bonus vs. any *charm* spells due to their intense devotion to Fracto.

**Prison:** A good cloud giant and a silver dragon are chained in this room, guarded by evil two cloud giants. If released, the prisoners will help the party escape the castle. They might even aid in fighting the denizens of the castle if the party deals politely with them.

The cloud giant is called Cirrus Thunderhead, the dragon is Agrelia. Both were scouts for the good host but were captured. They were being saved for a sacrificial offering.

Agrelia is a female adult silver dragon. She has no spell casting ability but wishes she did.

**Gate Conjunction Room:** A platinum thaumaturgic circle is set into the floor, dominating the room. Replicas of the castle and gate hover above it. There is a golden compass rose set in the ceiling. This controls the direction of drift for the cloud castle. The replica's front is pointed to the compass heading that the giants wish to steer. It takes Strength of 23 to move the replica.

An ultrodaemon maintains the *gate* through heavy concentration. There are four yagnodaemons and a cloud giant assigned to protect the ultrodaemon and make sure his concentration is not broken. They will attack any intruders immediately.

The ultrodaemon cannot fight while concentrating on the gate. If he is injured, the gate winks out of existence. Yrkheteep will be immediately aware of this, but will remain in the battle below. The ultrodaemon will attack if the gate is broken.

If the castle replica is smashed, the whole castle lurches and topples earthward, crashing in three rounds. All inside will die on impact.

**Griffon/Lion Den:** Eight griffons and eight spotted lions occupy this room. They will attack any non-daemon or non-giant who enters.

**The Roof:** Eight cloud giants with griffons on leashes always patrol this area. There is an alarm gong here which is used to alert the rest of the castle.

### Leaving the Castle

There are several ways to leave the castle. The party can get a ride on Agrilea's back, or try and ride one of the griffons. The latter will be nearly impossible unless the griffons *charmed*. Cirrus will offer to *levitate* earthward, carrying three PCs with him.

If the evil host is victorious, the leaders, the giants and the red dragons will return to the cloud castle. Due to the quick and especially violent nature of the battle, an outcome can be expected in less than two hours. If the party is still in the cloud castle, they may have a bit more to deal with than they bargained for. Yrkheteep will also probably return to the castle before continuing his campaign of terror.

### The Gate

The six yagnodaemons that guard the gate will attempt to throw any approaching non-giant or non-daemon into it. It leads to Hades, specifically to the foot of Yrkheteep's castle. A group of six yagnodaemons that patrol the grounds will immediately accost the reluctant travelers.

The *gate* can only be destroyed by ruining its model counterpart in the cloud giants' castle.

If the party assails the *gate* and its guardians, the yagnodaemons will automatically summon one derghodaemon each round as reinforcements. If the party flees, the yagnodaemons will not give chase, but the derghodaemons will.

### Aftermath

If the party went through the entire castle, they have some idea of some of the goings on at the battle. They can certainly deal with the false innkeeper if the place is still standing.



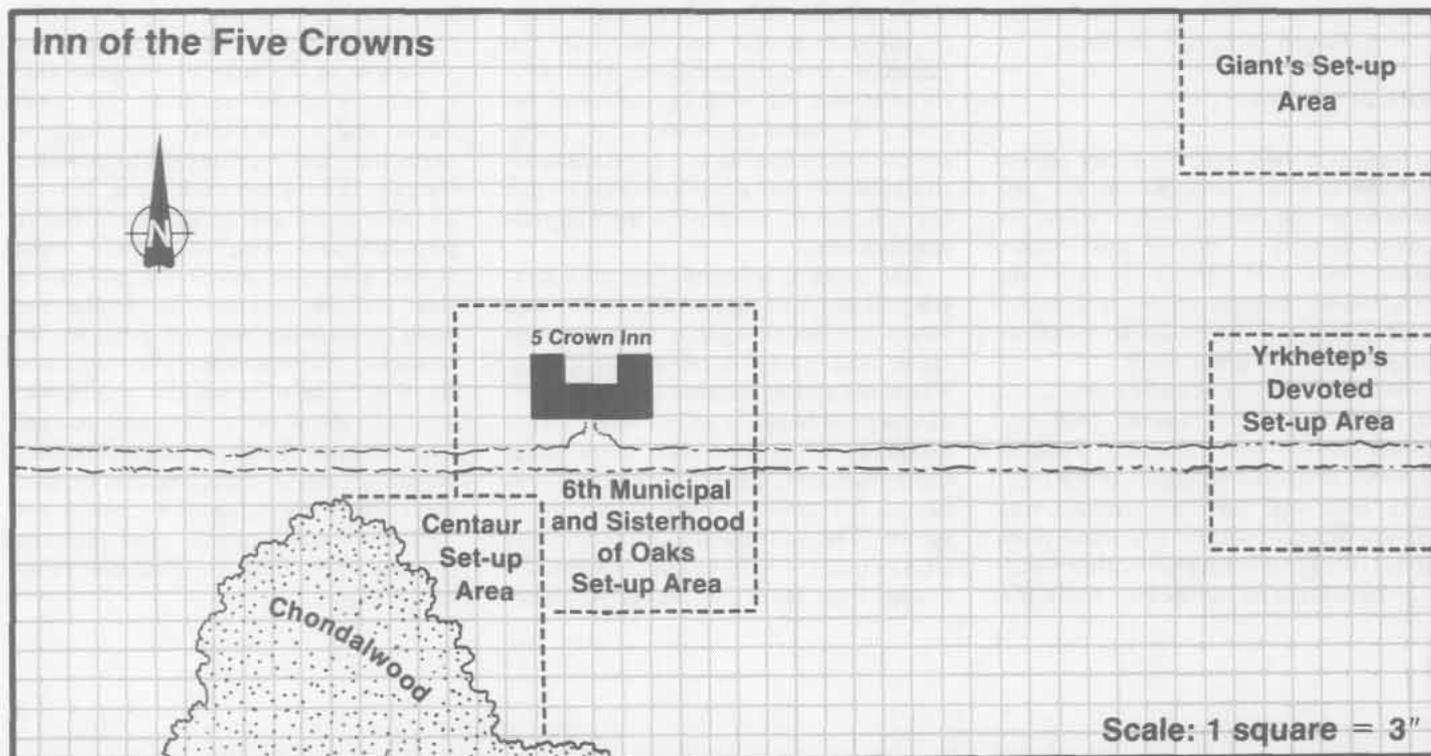


Forces of Good

UNIT NAME	TYPE	LVL	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	DMG
Windriders	Cav	Cv5	3	25	12" / 30" (MC D)	20	15	17	6	1d6 + 1 / 1d4 / 1d4 / 2d8
Lightblades	Cav	P3	6	30	24" / 48" (MC D)	16	14	16	6	1d8 + 1 / 1d8 / 1d8 / 1d3
Sunshafts	Cav	F7	6	35	24" / 48" (MC D)	18	17	17	16	1d8 / 1d8 / 1d8 / 1d3
6th guards	Inf	F3	2	30	6	18	13	13	10	1d8
Sisterhood of the Oaks	Arch	R3	3	30	12	18	13	13	6	1d6
Winged Law	Air	Lam	6	35	12" / 24" (MC C)	17	12	14	6	1d6 / 1d6
Centaurs	Archers	Cen	5	40	18	15	13	12	6	1d8 / 1d6 / 1d6
Gold Dragons	Air	GD	-1	11	12" / 30" (MC E)	25	16	16	2	1d8 / 1d8 / 6d6

Evil Forces

UNIT NAME	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Dark Watch	Arch	F6	5	30	18" / 36" (MC D)	21	14	14	6	1d6 / 1d6 / 1d6 / 1d10
Arrowflighters	Arch	F2	6	20	12" / 18" (MC E)	20	14	14	6	1d6 / 6d6
Skykillers	Cav	F7	4	35	18" / 36" (MC D)	18	17	17	10	1d8 + 1 / 1d6 / 1d6 / 1d10
Cloudwarriors	Inf	CGi	2	24	15"	19	13	13	8	6d6
Sisterhood of Carrion	Air	Harp	7	30	6" / 15" (MC C)	16	10	8	8	1d3 / 1d3 / 1d6
Yrkhetep's Devoted	Inf	C4	2	40	6 / 24	17	13	12	6	1d6 + 1
Wyverns	Air	Wyv	3	35	9" / 24" (MC E)	25	15	15	2	2d8 / 1d6 +
Red Dragons	Air	RD	-1	11	9" / 24" (MC E)	25	16	16	2	1d8 / 1d8 / 3d10





## The Khan's Mighty Army

It begins with rumors in Hlath—a huge army has been sighted in the eastern wastelands, marching west into Unther. Soon peasants and refugees begin pouring in from the southeast, telling horror stories of a barbarian horde, of demons and monsters, of riders with bloody scimitars. The people tell of a mysterious “Khan” who leads this deadly army. His warriors number thousands, swollen with slaves from every city that falls to him.

It seems that an unstoppable army threatens to overwhelm Chondath, and the good folks of Hlath are getting scared.

This adventure is for PCs level 10-12. The role-playing adventure can be started in many different ways: the PCs can begin by wandering into the barbarian army and meeting Szuma (see *The Bushido Warrior*). If they serve Hlath or Chondath already, they can be recalled from another front to defend the homelands. The PCs could be passing through Hlath, traveling by boat to Hlondeth or Arrabar, or to Alaghon in Turmish, or they could be traveling the Arrabar-Hlathian highway when they hear that mercenaries are being hired. With their qualifications and skills, the PCs could easily gain command posts in the Hlathian armed forces. Whether their hearts are filled with altruism or avarice, they'll be drawn to Hlath.

### Hlath of Chondath

Hlath is a rich merchant city set on the waters of the Vilhon Reach, just 130 miles from the Sea of Fallen Stars. Its largest import is timber and exotic woods, raw and carved. Many long warehouses brimming with lumber stand along the highway to Arrabar outside the city's great walls.

No novice to pirates and raiding armies, Hlath has fifty-foot walls, well buttressed and set with ramparts. Each of the city's land-locked gates to the east, south, and west, have a portcullis outside the main structure. Six stone piers extend forty feet from the northern wall into the waters of the Reach. Only the

center two have gates opening into the city; these gates are protected by drawbridges. The population numbers about 2,000, mostly merchants and local fishermen (the latter are renown for their long and durable nets). The people are packed into a small area, cramped but safe inside the thick walls.

Visitors are greeted by a lot of commotion. People of all races rush from place to place. Merchants pack their wares and close up shop, groups of poorly trained locals march the streets and call for their neighbors to join the militia and defend the homeland. A group of Turmish men are hurriedly patching a longboat in the street, ignoring the curses of inconvenienced travelers. Cattle and goats wander the dirty cobblestones, and pigeons flutter and coo, scattering before the adventurers. The streets wind between four- and five-story buildings lined up wall to wall, like tipsy rakes leaning on one another for support. Every store-front teeters over the dim lanes. Young boys distribute handbills to everyone—proclamations by the authorities covering preparations for a siege and a call to arms. The notices promise generous mercenary wages and give instructions on enlisting.

If the PCs follow the instructions on the handbills, they will come to a large building near the eastern wall, the Hlathian Armory and Great Hall. It is three stories tall with barred windows and a flagstone courtyard. The party will be recognized as seasoned warriors immediately, and a militiaman will rush them inside to meet with the community leaders.

The party is ushered through a simple hall and lead into a wide conference room furnished with a heavy oaken table and many surrounding chairs. There are rich tapestries and ceremonial weapons hanging on the walls (value 20,000 gp). Five men stand around the table discussing a map. One man keeps notes. All activity stops as the party enters. The Militiaman announces the PCs as more who have come to join the cause, then takes his leave. A portly

man steps forward in greeting. His name is Lord Fior Botpur, and he is the “duly elected representative of the people of Hlath.”

Forgetting to introduce the others with him, Botpur immediately quizzes the party about their past fighting experience. If the party has been through the other scenarios in this book, Botpur will be impressed. While the PCs talk, Botpur nervously wrings his hands. When they finish, he will explain that he is very worried about his people's safety. Clearing his throat, the Lord proclaims:

“The safety of the people is what matters here! While many would die rather than see Hlath fall to barbarians, we must think about the children and the women and those too old to fight. I must say it is important that we make correct decisions, whether to flee, whether to fight, and we're so woefully lacking in the truths! We need the truth! I am impressed by your list of accomplishments, and our need is great. Gentlemen, you could take a high post in my army by responding to this, my challenge: Ride like the wind three hundred miles to the south and collect the truth of this barbarian army and bring it back to me. I will see that you have the finest horses and the best supplies for your mission. As duly appointed leader I shall see to your award, and place you at the helm of our armada!”

Botpur's speech surprises his confidants, and a small bald man begins to argue with him over his right to make this bargain. But the lord continues, “No, no, all your maps are bought from fleeing peasants, and none we have commissioned have returned to aid us! Look at this,” and the lord snatches up the map from the table and waves it in the air, “It's nonsense, it's impossible! We must know the truth! The offer stands—return with the truth about our enemy and you will lead our army. I will not argue anymore, we are not mighty warriors, and we can't leave this in the hands of a mason's son! This is no war council!” And throwing the map to the floor, the lord stomps out of the room.



The small bald man will address the players, and tell them that they have an offer to join the ranks as mercenaries at 4 gp per day, or they can take the lord's challenge and take high level posts at 75 gp per day plus bonuses for victories. If the PCs want to spy and claim the highest ranks in the army, they must leave immediately. The bald man is Minister Thorn. He carries lists on scrolls and tally books: reports to support his call to abandon the city. He explains that ordinarily Hlath is governed by a triumvirate council, the Three Lords of Hlath, but Lord Warkas and Lord Nybahn are in the Turmish Courts for negotiations and a wedding. Botpur's word rules, even though Thorn considers Lord Botpur a wind-bag and a buffoon. He is very angry that the lord has used this offer to stall a painful decision, and he distrusts the PCs. He will try to discourage the party with stories of others who have been commissioned as spies and never returned. They probably died at the hands of vicious barbarians. He warns the PCs that the army is only 300 miles to the south, so one week is all he will allow for their "mission" before he calls for an evacuation.

The PCs can question others (various members of the community are outlined below), to learn more about the situation. True to his word, Lord Botpur will provide good warhorses and one week's supply of food for all those who go on the mission. He will see the party off and wish them well.

If the PCs return, Thorn will be genuinely happy to see them, but he will be wary of Szuma (see below). He is glad to let the PCs take control of the defense of the city because it relieves him of the responsibility, and he will quietly slip away in a small sail boat if an attacking force arrives. Upon their return, a grateful Lord Botpur will allow the PCs free reign over the troops and the defenses of the city, and will support any plan his new generals put forth. Not too lion-hearted himself, Botpur will be terribly frightened by the battle and will hide until it is over.

#### Influential Hlathians:

Baron Krondac is a 4th level fighter, age 50, who witnessed Botpur's offer to the PCs. He is a loud talker who has brought a force to join the defenders (see Order of Battle). He wanted Pohidge, the mason's son, to lead the troops in battle because he had influence with the younger man. The baron will want to attack the enemy before they reach the city. He is a poor combat leader. His strategy is short-sighted, and he takes orders belligerently, yet he adds +2 to the morale of his unit. In the BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat System that follows, Baron Krondac can only act as a hero or commander when he leads his own men. If the party returns with Szuma, the baron will demand that he be imprisoned and questioned. If the PCs refuse, the baron will sulk and hurl racial insults at Szuma.

Pohidge Plam is 6th level fighter who is known about town by his father's reputation, masonry. Pohidge spent 15 years chasing fortunes. He wields a *long sword* +2. For the last three years he has lived a settled, domestic life with a wife, living off past earnings. Pohidge is apt at leading his own people. He loves them and hopes for few casualties. Pohidge is sensitive and proud of his name and will quarrel with anyone who teases him or laughs. He was offended by Botpur's offer to the PCs, as he had been the logical choice for general, considering his combat experience and the fact that he is a citizen. However, he will loyally serve his lord and will respect the PCs for their accomplishments. He will judge any war plans strictly by their merits, but Baron Krondac will sway his opinions in other matters. Plam can fight with any unit and can act as an NPC hero.

Dak Zarre also witnessed Lord Botpur's challenge. He is an 8th level fighter with extraordinary strength (18/78), hired to fight in the armed forces. His long black hair is tied into a braid, and he is marked with a bright scar under his left eye. Zarre's band of many Turmish warriors is called the Blood Hawks. Their

standard is a blood red hawk on a field of white. Zarre was hired to fight under Pohidge. He believes the PCs are seasoned warriors better qualified to command. He will support the PCs' mission and will invite them to stay at the Blue Roan, Mira Satra's lodging house (see below), where he and some of his more important men are lodged. He has a good knowledge of tactics, but as he would put it, "Me and my men are paid to fight, not think." He's not worried—the Hawks negotiated special wages and they make good money sitting and waiting. Zarre will take orders well in the field, and his men are courageous by mercenary standards. He will scoff at any plan that calls for passive defense. He fights with his unit and cannot act as a NPC hero in the BATTLESYSTEM Fantasy Combat System.

Ulliam, the High Priest of Tempus, is a striking fellow wearing a gleaming steel skullcap, his head is shaved except for one lock growing from his left temple and pulled back behind his ear. He will see the wisdom in a sneak attack and support any such plan wholeheartedly. Ulliam believes that the PCs were sent in answer to his prayers to Tempus, and he has faith that the PCs can lead them to victory. He cannot (or will not) advise strategy or get any information to help the PCs. As a priest, he knows very little about the city and its defenses.

Mira Satra owns and runs one of the local boarding houses, the Blue Roan. It is well known for its Cormyr-style fare and its well-kept stables. The Blue Roan is really a series of four buildings in the center of the cramped city. Mira will not run from the enemy or enlist in the army. He would prefer not to hear about war. His rates are high, but the Blue Roan has feather beds and no rats!

Mericrom, Sturkoss and Benelcreth are three prominent magic-users of Hlath. They can be convinced to join in defending the city by a serious fellow magic-user, or they can be bribed into joining the fray.



## The Mission

It will take the PCs three days on horseback to reach the enemy. The trip will be uneventful. The roads are filled with people and domestic animals running from the on-coming forces. On the third day, the refugees slowly dwindle in number until by mid-morning there is no one in sight. At noon they see the Khan's army, a sprawling force numbering 2,450 warriors and slaves, including weird beasts and at least 50 engines of war.

While the party watches the army, a bushi in full battle armor will approach the PCs. His helmet is a black-enameled demon face. He will call to the PCs in the common tongue, but with a strange accent.

"I am Szuma Li, bushido warrior, and I am honorable and learned man. A slave teach me your talk for this land. I am not traitor but you must help me stop Khan! You must take me to your capital and let me tell your prince how to defeat this evil thing. I have followed the mighty Khan for four years because I saw him strike bargain with the ogre magi, and I saw the tamed foo beast that he rides and we have never been defeated... All his predictions came true, so we believe he is chosen one... until night before last I come with message to tent of Khan, and enter unannounced. I find a most horrible jackal-faced demon there who changes back into Khan Kertep! The demon calls for my death by beheading and my kinsmen obey. But I bribe two guards and escape into unconquered land, and I find you. It is my duty to free my brothers from this demon that rides them in bondage. Only way is to trick them, and I know how!"

If someone decides to attack, Szuma does not attack to kill, he *feints*, then strikes to disarm; calling on the PCs to stop fighting. If the party fights and inflicts more than 15 points of damage, Szuma uses his ki power, but will not attack to kill. If the party is foolish enough to kill Szuma, they will lose a valuable ally.

If the PCs decide to trust Szuma, they must return to Hlath with his volunteered information and sell it to the citizens. Szuma will give an accurate timetable of events and will describe the exact siege formation that the Khan will employ in attacking the city. He will tell the party that the Khan has predicted a mighty battle at a city on an inland sea. Most important, Szuma will offer this plan of attack:

"With large opponent, it is best to use surprise. The Khan like siege attack, so he surround and then send traditional delegation to offer terms of surrender at sunset. If no surrender by dawn, he attack, but is routine and men are lax during night of terms. Every town falls same way. How do we defeat the Khan? First, city spokesman must say "We no fear you because we protected by dragons!" My countrymen fear ancient wyrms and such boast is sure to scare them. We tell the people of the city that the Khan cut the nose off all slaves and send them to pull the war machine. This will make them strong like metal, ready to fight. We collect a coin from all in the city and give, in secret, to the generals of the attacking army, saying "we will only fight a little, so we are not called cowards, then we surrender." This will make them sure of victory in their hearts and they will sleep well.

"After midnight, we gather all the bulls and dress them in silks and paint them as dragons, and we tie a torch soaked in oil to their tails. All the city's troops must dress in black clothes and gag themselves so they do not make a noise, while all those who don't fight, the old and young must get noise makers and climb silently to the rooftops and high walls. At two hours past midnight I will light the torches and send mad bulls into sleeping eastern army, and I shout "dragon, dragon!" in my people's talk. This is the time for the women and old people to make a great noise, a wailing and banging to scare the Khan's army and confuse. And following the bulls come our warriors, silent like angel of death—it will disturb my people, I know this. Then we send

our cavalry also dressed in night. They will run, all but the bravest, and we can overpower those few to kill the demon and set by sworn brothers free. Surprise will give us what we lack in size. It is the way of wisdom, as written in the clouds for me alone to read. All other paths are lost!"

Szuma's plan will work, up to a point (see **The Dragons are Coming!**).

## The Defense of Hlath

Szuma predicts 3 weeks until the Khan's legions arrive at Hlath, and he's only off by two days, so the PCs have time to prepare a defense.

Hlath has five ballistas and three heavy catapults, all trained on the Vilhon Reach. It will take 40 men one week to re-orient the weapons toward the land.

All strategy should be left to the PCs. If they decide to stay in the city and wait-out the siege, the Khan will send ninja into the city each night for two weeks. The assassins poison water and foodstuffs, and murder soldiers and civilians. These attacks lower the defenders' morale -1 each night. If any unit's morale reaches zero, Botpur surrenders the city. If Szuma is with the PCs, he has a 40% chance to catch these assassins as they slip over the walls each night.

Ninja (20): AC 3; Move 12"; N3; hp 20 each; #AT 1; Dmg ninja-to + tanto + poison; THAC0 18; AL NE

Ninja Abilities: HS 20%; MS 27%; F/RT 30%; CW 87%; DI 28%; OL 33%; TW 30%; PV 9.5'; F 10'; ES 18%; BS x2

Szuma will also describe the initial deployment of the Khan's forces and give an idea of the skills of each group, speaking reverently of the mystical "ki" powers. Szuma will persistently argue against any attempt to weather the siege, and will reiterate his plan to anyone who'll listen.

The Khan Kertep is really Yrkhetep the arcanadaemon using his shape-



changing abilities to masquerade as a man and leading the oriental army into the Forgotten Realms. He rides an enslaved foo lion into battle. A magical golden harness keeps the lion from escaping into the astral or ethereal planes. An iron muzzle keeps it from biting or roaring. The creature can turn invisible at will. It will not fight for Yrkhetep. If released, it escapes to the astral plane and returns in 1-10 rounds with 1-4 more foo lions to avenge his slavery.

The daemon has two blue-skinned ogre magi as body guards, and they fight with heavy naginatas and are always at the Khan's side.

The Khan has fireworks which he detonates during battle, causing all opposing forces not familiar with these noise-makers to lose morale (-1) and discipline (-1). The Daemon's preferred strategy is the siege, where his massive force surrounds the city and he can bring his siege engines into play. In an open field confrontation, Khan Kertep will attempt to out-flank his opponents and again surround them.

When the oriental army surrounds Hlath, the Khan will position his men as follows: The Westwind brigade 140 yards (14") from the west gate of Hlath, the North and Southwind the same distance from the south gate and the Eastwind the same distance to the east of the eastern gate. Yrkhetep will be with the Eastwind brigade. The warriors will be sporting horrible masks and disgusting trophies on long poles to demoralize the on-lookers from the walls.

### The Dragons are Coming!

If the PCs follow Szuma's advice, the surprise attack will cause all barbarian troops to rout. These groups have a terrible superstitious fear of dragons, and prefer to run first and question later. All other non-elite units' morale are lowered by -2 and discipline is lowered until Yrkhetep or one of his deputy commanders can rally it. All non-routed units will be surprised for 1d20

rounds, unable to move or attack until attacked or rallied. If Yrkhetep is not neutralized, he will circle to the south and rally as many units as possible, then charge the south gate. The Eastwind unit, initially deployed with Yrkhetep, suffers no ill effects from the surprise attack.

### Victory Conditions

Hlath receives a victory if the oriental forces are destroyed or routed from the field.

The Khan's army is victorious if the city is overrun.

### Order of Battle Defenders of Hlath

The Blood Hawks are cavalry armed with long swords and javelins. They are lead by Dak Zarre: ST 18/78; IN 10; WS 10; DX 14; CN 15; CH 14; CM 15; AC 2; Move 9"; F8; hp 52; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword; THAC0 14; AL CG; Rank Unit; AR 29; CR 16"; CB 0.

The Riders of Kron are cavalry armed with long swords. They are lead by Baron Krondac: ST 16; IN 10; WS 10; CN 13; DX 12; CH 16; CM 11; AC 3; Move 9"; F4; hp 22; #AT 1; Dmg long sword; THAC0 18; AL NG; Rank Unit; AR 35; CR 10"; CB +2.

The Hlath Guards are regular infantry armed with short swords and shields. Their commander is Naylor Wright (CR 7").

The Hlondethan mercenaries fight with short swords and shields. Their commander is Armand bois Gilbert (CR 8").

The Kingfishers are local fishermen, they have bows and daggers. The Woodsmen are craftsmen and loggers, also armed with bows and daggers. Both of these local infantry units were organized by Plam: ST 17; IN 13; WS 9; CN 16; DX 12; CH 16; CM 14; AC 4; Move 9"; F6; hp 43; #AT 1; Dmg long sword or long bow; THAC0 16; AL NG; Rank Unit; AR 31; CR 11"; CB +1; long sword +2. Either gets a +2 to morale if he is in command, but a -5



if he falls while commanding. Plam has two deputies: Nestor (CR 6"), deputy commander of the Kingfishers, and Galan (CR 7"), deputy commander of the Woodsmen.

The Volunteers are armed with short swords and shields. They are a mob unit, but three weeks of training will bring them to regular status.

### The Mighty Khan's Legions

The Southwind are elite 2d level oriental steppeland barbarians mounted on light horses and armed with horse bows and light lances. They can split-move. Their commander is Ting-tok (CR 5").

The Northwind are elite 3d level oriental forest barbarians mounted on light war horses and armed with battle axes. Their commander is Ning-wu (CR 8").

The Eastwind are elite 3d level bushi mounted on medium horses and armed with katanas. They can use their ki power once per day to raise their effective level for one game round. During this round their AR improves by -2, and each figure gains 20 hit dice. When the temporary hit dice disappear on the following round, any wound markers placed the previous round are removed. Their commander is Tocha Mura (CR 9")



The Sword Saints are 3d level kensai armed with katanas. They can use their ki power to cause maximum damage three times per day. The controlling player simply announces that the power is being used, and the unit's attack roll is automatically assumed to be a "2". Their commander is Sakagi Tabito (CR 7")

The Korobokuru are dwarven 2d level oriental jungle barbarians. They fight with battle axes and get +1 on saves versus magic. Their commander is Chu-qua (CR 10")

Westwind #1 are elite 2d level bushi infantry. They wear individual flags on their backs with solid colors denoting their brigade and unit. They fight with katanas and straw shields. They have the same ki powers as the Eastwind unit. Their commander is Tocha Saigo (CR 8")

Westwind #2 are 3d level oriental forest barbarian infantry, armed with spears. Their commander is Song-chen (CR 8")

The Slaves pull the army's siege machines, supplies, and plunder. The engines of war include 15 massive rams on wheels (Dmg 1d6 vs. fortifications), 10 heavy catapults which can throw flaming loads (+1d6 fire dmg), 20 towers on wheels to scale walls, 5 light catapults, and 20 ballistas. Each engine is crewed by 1st level bushi.

### Hlath's Heroes and Spell Casters

Szuma Li: ST 17; IN 13; WS 15; DX 15; CN 17; CH 16; CM 14; AC 4; Move 9"; BU8; hp 68; #AT 3/2; Dmg katana, daikyu or karate; THAC0 14; AL LN; SA *feint, ki power*; Rank as assigned; AR 29; CR 12"; CB +1.

Ulliam: ST 11; IN 13; WS 17; CN 10; DX 13; CH 12; CM 10; AC 4; Move 9"; CL10; hp 42; #AT 1; Dmg staff; THAC0 14; AL CN; Rank as assigned; AR 29; CR 11"; CB 0.

Spells: *flame strike, cure critical wounds, sticks to snakes, cure serious wounds, protection from evil 10' radius, cure blindness, dispel magic, feign*

*death, prayer, hold person, resist fire, chant, slow poison, spiritual hammer (x2), bless, command, cure light wounds, resist cold, remove fear, light*

Mericom: ST 9; IN 17; WS 13; CN 9; DX 10; CH 10; CM 11; AC 9; Move 12"; MU 6; hp 27; #AT 1; Dmg none; THAC0 19; AL CG; *ring of protection +1*

Spells: *shield, magic missile (x3), detect invisibility, stinking cloud, fireball (x2).*

Sturkoss: ST 8; IN 18; WS 12; CN 11; DX 16; CH 13; CM 10; AC 3; Move 12"; MU8; hp 38; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 19; AL CG; *cloak of protection +2, bracers of defense AC 7*

Spells: *shield, magic missile (x3), detect invisibility, stinking cloud, strength, fireball (x2), lightning bolt, wall of fire, confusion*

Benelcreth: ST 6; IN 18; WS 15; CN 10; DX 14; CH 10; CM 12; AC 10; Move 12"; MU6; hp 28; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 19; AL CG.

Spells: *shield, magic missile (x3), detect invisibility, stinking cloud, lightning bolt (x2).*

### The Khan's Heroes and Spell Casters

Khan Kertep (Arcanadaemon): AC -2; Move 12"/18"; HD 13+39; hp 104; #AT 4; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-16/1-6; THAC0 8; AL NE; Rank Army; AR 13; CR 16"; CB 0; SA/SD See MMI page 28.

Spells: *detect magic, charm person, magic missile (x3), invisibility, weakness, dispel magic, clairvoyance (x2), ice storm (x3), minor globe of invulnerability, dimension door, disintegration (x2), power word blind, maze, meteor swarm*

Ogre Magi (4): AC 4; Move 9"/15"; HD 5+2; hp 32 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; THAC0 15; AL LE; Rank Deputy Army; AR 30; CR 6"; CB 0.

Ho Lan: ST 10; IN 16; WS 13; CN 8; DX 10; CH 15; CM 14; AC 10; Move 12"; MU7; hp 19; #AT 1; Dmg none; THAC0 19; AL LN

Spells: *accuracy, magic missile, shield, wall of fog, whip, woodshape, protect from normal missiles, dancing blade*

Chirath: ST 9; IN 17; WS 15; CN 12; DX 13; CH 13; CM 15; AC 10; Move 12"; MU5; hp 16; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 20; AL NE

Spells: *confusion, melt metal, fire, rain, fire wings, fire shuriken, blind, pyrotechnics, wizard lock, magic missiles, know history, fiery eyes, melt, spider climb*

Mazrahn: ST 11; IN 18; WS 12; CN 13; DX 14; CH 13; CM 13; AC 4; Move 12"; MU5; hp 17; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 20; AL CE; Rank Deputy Army; AR; CR 9"; CB 0

Spells: *hypnotism, cloud ladder, elemental burst, wall of fog, secret signs, fog cloud, smoke shape, stinking cloud, wind breath, omen, dispel magic, face, shout, emotion*

Nag the Mysterious: ST 13; IN 18; WS 13; CN 11; DX 14; CH 15; CM 16; AC 2; Move 12"; MU9; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg none; THAC0 18; AL LE; Rank Deputy Army; AR 33; CR 12"; CB +1

Spells: *accuracy, hail of stone, ghost light, magic missile, wizard mark, message, locate object, invisibility, blind, rope trick, disguise, magnetism, power-word stun, statue, dimension door, confusion, metal skin, wall of iron, metal to rust, warp stone*



### Defenders of Hlath

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Blood Hawks	Cav	F5	2	25	15"	21	9	10	20	1d8/1d8/1d8/1d3
Riders of Kron	Cav	F3	4	30	15"	18	10	11	10	1d8/1d8/1d8/1d3
Hlath Guard	Inf	F3	4	30	9"	18	10	11	10	1d6
Mercenaries	Inf	F4	5	40	9"	16	11	12	10	1d6
Kingfishers	Inf	F1	7	10	9"	20	11	12	15	1d6
Woodsmen	Inf	F1	8	10	9"	20	11	12	20	1d8
Volunteers	Inf	F1	9	10	9"	20	12	13	20	1d6

### The Mighty Khan's Legions

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Southwind(x2)	Cav	F2	5	20	15"	20	10	11	10	1d6/1d8/1d8/1d3
Northwind(x2)	Cav	F3	4	3	15"	18	10	11	10	1d8/1d8/1d8/1d3
Eastwind	Cav	F4	3	40	15"	18	9	10	10	1d10/1d8/1d8/1d3
Swordsaints	Inf	F3	5	30	9"	18	8	8	10	1d10
Korobokuru	Inf	F2	5	2	9"	20	9	10	15	1d8
Westwind 1(x2)	Inf	F2	6	2	9"	20	10	11	20	1d10
Westwind 2	Inf	F3	5	3	9"	18	9	9	20	1d6
Slaves	Inf	0	10	15	9"	N/A	20	18	100	N/A





### The Opening Scene

The south wind promised spring, but the ice in the shadows told of winter's remaining strength. The season of flowers was late in Golconda's hills, but for once there were few who wished for the return of spring's warmth. Spring this year meant red war. The prospects for this war cast fear into the hearts of King Samakay and his council. This past season the foe continued the war that had raged across the southern Turmish hills for the past three years. The self-styled King of Muktar had pursued his dream of empire with demonic obsession. Golconda had no quarrel with anything that could end the centuries of petty wars that had plagued Turmish, but forced membership in Muktar's empire seemed too high a price to pay. And so the king and council met in grim conclave.

Joining the council were the heroes of this past year's campaign, a group of adventurers who had sought revenge upon Muktar's King Hetep. This had been provoked by the permanent destruction of several of their companions by Hetep. Though not from Golconda, they had won a place in the council by their valiant deeds.

For weary hours the council had searched for some means of negating the foe's numerical advantage, but answers were as scarce as hope. Even the stalwart adventurers revealed their doubts about their ability to stop the enemy army. They swore that before the foe breached Golconda's red sandstone battlements he would pay dearly in blood.

This brave vow brought scant consolation, and the council was debating the merits of the same unworkable plans for the seventh time. The arguments were frequent, and at several points King Samakay the Wry was forced to speak sharply to stop duels. The pressure of trying to solve the unsolvable was making tempers short and sharp. Then, the chamber's ebony doors flew open. In rushed the gray-robed chief of spies. Without regard to rigid court

protocol, he shouted, "Golconda is saved!"

There were several raised eyebrows and a harumph at this breach of etiquette. The king said, "You have our permission to address the throne, Boubakar."

That man, realizing his error, fell to his knees and said, "Forgive me, sire, these times have driven all from my mind. And the news that has just now reached my ears is so wonderful that joy made me forget protocol."

The king nodded, then replied, "You are forgiven, but we entreat you to share this joy with us, for in sooth good tidings have been as scarce as hens' teeth these past three years."

"Oh, sire, one of my agents has returned in this hour from Muktar. He killed four horses in the passes to bring us the seeds of victory. He has discovered the location of Hetep's battle plans for the coming campaign. If we had these in our hands we could use that knowledge to nullify their numbers," Boubakar answered breathlessly.

Surly old Count Belim spat out, "And why didn't your sneak fetch out the plans instead of slaying innocent steeds?"

The chief of spies tartly replied, "The plans are defended by one hundred ogres and the champions of Muktar."

Belim muttered *sotto voce*, "Never heard of a spy with courage."

He might have said more, but the king said, "Silence, Belim, it takes great nerve to enter the foes' camp. So cease your slights, for Boubakar and his spies serve even as the stoutest fighter."

Then, Saamakay turned back to the spy and inquired, "Why are these plans so important? Belike Muktar could change them as I might change my plans not to hunt when a sudden rain arises."

Boubakar sighed. The king, though just and kind, had never in the fifty years of his reign shown even the faintest glimmering of comprehension about military matters. Lord Daud had served as military advisor to Golconda for nearly a century, but he was one of the

many casualties of this past season's fighting. Since his death Samakay had trusted no other to decide these matters, except himself. It wasn't that he would not listen to expert opinion but rather that each principle of military science must be explained from the lowest level upward to make each salient point. It was quite taxing at best. And, so, like a weary teacher speaking to a rich but obtuse student, Boubakar explained, "Sire, an army on the march requires much in the way of provender, which must be in position. The movement of troops requires orders, or else they will not be where their commander desires when he desires them to be there. The orders sent to each force must be sent in good time so that the commander can in turn dispatch his subordinates. At this time Muktar's arm has received their marching orders, and any change in plans would cause great confusion.

"Furthermore, if we could seize these plans unbeknownst to the foe we would be able to strike at the weakest links in the chain. And should Muktar realize the loss, he would perforce change his plans, granting us time to seek allies, or he would retain his original plans for expediency's sake, leaving us the stronger. In both events we would benefit, and he would suffer."

The king stated, "Seems to be rather a lot of bother, this army business. But you've made your point, Boubakar."

At this point debate erupted anew. One council member wanted to march with the entire army to the fort that held the plans. He was reminded of the mud and snow that slowed travel. Another council member thought that sending an arsonist to burn the fort would be the ticket, but it was pointed out that this would simply destroy the plans to no benefit to Golconda. At last somebody suggested that a raid by a small, but powerful, group would be the efficacious tactic. All eyes turned toward the adventurers.

Samakay said, "We need heroes in this time of greatest need. It is true that you are not of Golconda, but we



entreat you to strike us this blow against your foe and ours, Hetep."

Before any could say yea or nay, Count Belim leapt to his feet, shouting, "'Tis rankest folly to send our strongest and most potent force into the maw of death. These folk should be held in reserve."

Samakay ignored him, and repeated his question. Count Belim stormed out of the room, nearly unhinging the ebony portals in his fury, while Boubakar stifled a grin.

If the PCs refuse this mission, then accusations of cowardice and treason will fly. The king will turn against them, and they'll be imprisoned or worse. In character, they should jump at the chance to strike a blow, but if they are hesitant, the king could offer them titles and land as an inducement.

Once the party has accepted the mission, the urgent need for haste should be stressed. To simulate the urgency, the DM should sharply restrict the time given players to make any preparations or hold discussions.

## The Briefing

Shortly after the council meeting adjourns, the PCs are gathered in Boubakar's study. This room is cluttered with papers, books, maps, and a variety of paraphernalia suited for thieves. Boubakar, a slight, very intense male of half-elven descent, gives the party the information detailed below:

Fort Blood is a square, palisaded log fort perched atop a steep hill about six days' ride south of Golconda. The fort is approximately two hundred feet on a side. The walls, made of pointed logs, are ten feet tall, with catwalks for guards at the top. At each corner a crude, wooden tower rises twenty feet above the walls. The centers of the northern and southern walls are pierced by rough gates. More or less in the middle of the fort is a square central tower. The walls are 60' long, and the tower is 40' tall. The ground floor is the barracks for the fort's garrison of 100

ogres. An armory occupies the entire second floor. The third floor contains quarters for the champions of Muktar. There is a guardpost on the roof. The floors are connected by stairs. The spy said that among the champions there were two powerful fighters, a potent cleric, and some type of a spell caster. He heard about, but did not see, two giants that are based at the fort.

This is all of the information available to the party unless they use spells or magical items. If they do so, then more specific data is available below.

## DM's Information

A deep plot is afoot in this adventure. The king of Muktar is actually Lord Yrkhetep. He wants to destroy or capture the adventurers, and to further this aim he has devised a plan. Lord Yrkhetep has captured the Golcondan spy, and he has used psionic *hypnosis* to convince the spy that he had been able to penetrate Fort Blood and learn of the battle plans. In reality, Yrkhetep has no need for written plans. The whole ploy is a trap. There are documents in Fort Blood, but they are bogus. Even if the adventurers are able to get the plans it will not aid Golconda—the plans will actually lead them astray.

Furthermore, the party is being carefully observed at frequent intervals, and the garrison of Fort Blood will be ready for the raid.

## Treachery or Noble Action?

During the party's journey to Fort Blood there will be no random encounters, although the DM may wish to pretend to roll or add some minor event. During the third night of the trip, however, Count Belim and a few of retainers attack the party.

Crusty old Count Belim truly meant what he said during the council meeting, and being obstinate and headstrong he has decided that for the good of Golconda he must forcibly stop the PCs from riding into what he sees as certain death. He has developed a

plan—his forces will attack when the weakest characters are on watch. (He is quite familiar with the capacities of each character, and he has a general idea of what magic items they possess.) The cleric in his party will cast *hold person* on any characters who are awake. If successful, Belim and his men will gain automatic surprise. They attack, attempting to subdue and bind the sleeping characters. Should the characters resist, an all-out fight will ensue. The attackers will attempt to pummel or overbear the characters into submission.

Count Belim: ST 15; IN 10; WS 9; DX 16; CN 14; CH 15; CM 15; AC -1; Move 6"; F8; hp 64; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword; THAC0 14; AL CG; *long sword +2, ring of protection +3, field plate armor.*

His ten men at arms have the following identical attributes: AC 2; Move 6"; F5; hp 38; #AT 1; Dmg long sword; AL CN; THAC0 16.

Cleric: ST 13; IN 10; WS 12; DX 16; CN 11; CH 13; CM 11; AC 2; Move 6"; CL5; hp 20; #AT 1, Dmg footman's mace; THAC0 18; AL CG

Spells: *sanctuary, cure light wounds, command, hold person (x3), prayer*

Count Belim has his men at arms to do his dirty work. He will remain in the background with his cleric during the fight. If more than one of his men are slain or rendered unconscious, he will call out to the party. He will surrender his arms, but he will display his usual arrogance. If the party questions him, he will be quite frank about his motives. The count bears the party no ill will at the moment, and in fact he respects them highly. Play up his air of pompous condescension, though.

If Belim wins, the party awakes with weapons held to their throats. They will be taken to Belim's castle, and placed under heavy guard in moderately comfortable rooms. They will, however, be stripped of their posses-



sions. Spell casters will be bound and gagged, while other characters simply will be bound. Each character will be in a private room.

Very soon, however, they will have a visitor, Bassana, the agent hypnotized by Yrkhetep. He will tell the party that he overheard Belim's plan the day that the count stormed out of the meeting. Also, he says that he is totally loyal to the king, and has come to liberate the adventurers. In fact, Yrkhetep is still manipulating him. Yrkhetep wants the party freed so that he can have his fun with them. Bassana drugs the party's guards and frees the PCs. He leads the party out of the castle via an appropriately musty secret tunnel. Bassana has recovered all of the PCs' possessions as well. The PCs are now able to continue on their interrupted journey. There will be no further encounters until they reach their destination.

### Raid on Fort Blood

As the party arrives in the vicinity of the hostile fort, a cold north wind begins to blow. There is the smell of snow in the air. A snowstorm has begun by the time they have found a secure place for their mounts and completed any final preparations. In a matter of minutes the weather has deteriorated into a howling blizzard. Visibility is reduced to about twenty yards, and the temperature has fallen to below freezing. This presents them with a fine opportunity to reach the fort under the cover of the storm. The storm will continue to rage until the party has entered the tower.

Despite the storm, those inside the fort have been well-briefed and are ready for anything. Muktar's champions have a clear plan which they have spent a great deal of time preparing.

Their plan is as follows: Yrkhetep has cast *mass invisibility* upon 30 of the ogres. These ogres wait inside the walls of Fort Blood. They don't realize it, but their job is to force the party to use spells and reveal some of their magic. The ogres aren't expected to cause very

much damage. The two cloud giants, who are also invisible, attack at this time as well, but their duty is to take out spell casters, especially clerics.

During this melee the champions make preparations for the next phase of the battle. The illusionist, Lana, has cast the following spells upon herself: *mirror image*, *improved invisibility*, *true sight*, and *misdirection*. She has also cast *improved invisibility* on Basil, and *invisibility* upon the two fighters, Hank and Lazlo. The cleric, Kalia, has cast *sanctuary*, *protection from good* 10' radius, *true seeing*, and *prayer*. The five heroes wait inside the tower on the ground floor, since they know that flying or climbing to the top of the tower is impossible during the storm. Their plan is quite simple—blast the party after they enter the room. The assassin, Basil, will attempt to slay any magic users first. Lana Mara will hit the party with a *prismatic spray*, while the fighters will defend the two spell casters. After his attack, Basil will retreat upstairs to prepare a contingency ambush on the second floor.

Hank the Double-Bitted: ST 18/54; IN 12; WS 9; DX 13; CN 13; CH 16; CM 17; AC -1; Move 12"; F15; hp 103; #AT 2; Dmg battle axe; THAC0 5; AL LE; Rank Army; AR 16; CR 15½"; CB +1; *chain mail* +3, *shield* +2, and *battle axe* +2.

Hank is a veteran of the bloody campaigns of the Turmish. He favors axes, hence his name. Rumor has it that he once killed a black dragon all by himself. His helm is decorated with black scales.

Lazlo Lunk: ST 17; IN 9; WS 8; DX 12; CN 15; CH 13; CM 14; AC 0; Move 9"; F10; hp 88; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword; THAC0 12; AL CE; Rank Deputy Army; AR 24; CR 11½"; CB 0; *plate mail* +2, *long sword*, +2 *cursed berserking*.

Lazlo won his cursed sword in a game of chance. He kept it since it suits his personality—Nordic and battle crazy. His companions give him a wide berth in combat.

Basil Arness: ST 14; IN 14; WS 7; DX 18; CN 14; CH 12; CM 10; AC 3; Move 12"; A11; hp 56; #AT 1; Dmg short sword + poison; THAC0 16; AL NE; Rank Deputy Brigade; AR 29; CR 11½"; CB 0; *leather* +2, *short sword* +2 with deadly poison.

Basil likes to become "friends" with his victims before he kills them with a swift backstab. He claims this makes the kill more poignant. In this encounter, however, poignancy has to give way to practicality.

Kalia: ST 10; IN 10; WS 18; DX 12; CN 13; CH 17; CM 15; AC -2; Move 9"; CL15; hp 79; #AT 1; Dmg footman's mace; THAC0 12; AL NE; Rank Brigade; AR 25; CR 16"; CB +2; *plate mail* +2, *shield* +2, *mace* +2.

Spells: *detect good*, *protection from good*, *cure light wounds* (x4), *cause light wounds* (x3), *silence 15' radius* (x3), *hold person* (x3), *resist fire*, *detect charm*, *know alignment*, *cause blindness* (x2), *cure critical wounds*, *raise dead*, *heal*, *word of recall*

Kalia is a high priestess of Myrkul, God of Death. The last thing many innocent beings have seen is the lovely Kalia in her black robes bearing a finely-embroidered skull.

Lana Mara: ST 9; IN 18; WS 11; DX 18; CN 16; CH 15; CM 15; AC 3; Move 12"; I15; hp 50; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 16; AL NE; Rank Deputy Army; AR 31; CR 15"; CB +1; *cloak of protection* +3, *ring of feather falling*, *ring of spell storing* (3 fly spells cast at 12th level), *wand of fire* 19 chgs). Spells: *color spray* (x2), *darkness*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *rope trick*, *fear* (x2), *continual light*, *shadow monsters*, *dispel exhaustion*, *shadow magic* (x2), *shades*, *prismatic spray* (x2)



Lana is a petite, red-headed powerhouse. She was the last, and perhaps the greatest, apprentice of the famed illusionist, Yhelva the Wicked.

Muktar's Champions will retire to the next floor if the PCs are winning. If the PCs follow and continue to win, Kalia will use her *word of recall* to retire to a nearby chapel, and Lana will *fly* there using her ring. The fighters and the assassin are expected to cover the retreat. The fighters fight to the death, and the assassin will attempt to escape to the roof where 10 more ogres are waiting.

Any PCs who are captured will be imprisoned and stripped of all possessions, but not harmed (for the moment). Lord Yrkhete, in human form, will attempt to recruit any prisoners. Should any try to swear fealty to him, Kalia will cast *detect lie* to determine their intentions. If they refuse, they will be killed.

If the party wins the second encounter, they will be able to search the tower. Nothing will happen until they reach the third floor.

The third floor contains the champions' bed chambers and a meeting room, with Lord Yrkhete waiting inside for the party. He has made some preparations to welcome the adventurers to his tower. He has cast *invisibility*, *protection from good 10' radius*, *protection from normal missiles*, *globe of invulnerability*, and *mirror image*.

When the party enters, Yrkhete will be flying near the ceiling, ready to deliver a *psionic blast* at short range. Afterwards, he uses his spells to wreak as much havoc as possible. If he is any danger, however, he will *teleport* to safety. Yrkhete sees this encounter as a "friendly" test of strength, he has no desire to fight to the end. Also, he has a back-up plan—the bogus plans.

Yrkhete has taken the form of a stately, black man for his physical manifestation as the King of Muktar. His voice is cultured, and he acts as if he is weary of life on this plane. He has memorized the following spells: *detect magic*, *charm person*, *magic missile* (x3),

*invisibility*, *weakness*, *dispel magic*, *clairvoyance* (x2), *ice storm* (x3), *minor globe of invulnerability*, *dimension door*, *disintegration* (x2), *power word*, *blind*, *maze*, *meteor swarm*

Before Yrkhete retreats, he will say, "By the beard of my father, I should have burnt the pl..." then *teleport* to safety.

After searching the party will find a small chest bound with brass. It is locked and trapped. When the chest is opened, an *iron flask* containing a styx devil is uncorked. The devil has been imprisoned for a thousand years, and it is very angry when released. The trap is nearly impossible to locate and disarm (-40% to find/remove traps rolls).

Once the party has dealt with this surprise they will find the plans in the chest. They detail Muktar's plans to use a cauldron that transforms water into *potions of flying* to turn his entire army into air mobile units. (The cauldron does not exist). The flying army will attack the Golcondan forces at Wilna Pass, where the Muktaran army will use vertical envelopment, and crush their opponents.

Twenty ogres will follow the party when they leave Fort Blood, attacking when the party camps during the night. This is calculated to lend verisimilitude to the phony plans.

Sometime before the party reaches Golconda they will run into an old man. This human calls himself the Sage of the Hills. He claims that he has great powers and greater knowledge. If asked to demonstrate his powers, he will. This is Anthraxus. He will use his psionic power of *molecular arrangement* to turn lead into platinum.

Anthraxus asks the party about the documents they are carrying, and pretends to be amused by their answer (whatever it is). He will tell them that the plans are false. He explains that Muktar has found the lost tunnel of Phraz, first King of Golconda. This was dug to skirt Wilna Pass, and allow the king to avoid following the bed of the meandering Niola River. (Phraz was

noted for his patience.) For many decades the tunnel has been abandoned, and few have ever heard of it. However, the Sage of the Hills claims that it is documented in the Golcondan royal archives. Muktar plans to make the expected frontal assault upon the pass to pin the Golcondan army. While the army is pinned, large elements of the Muktaran host will strike the Golcondan rear about a half hour after battle is joined.

Anthraxus will be persuasive and friendly, even going so far as to grant a *wish* for the PCs. Should the party doubt him or make any hostile actions he will disappear instantly.

### Surprising Allies

After the meeting with the Sage of the Hills, the party proceeds toward Golconda. Late in the next afternoon they behold an awesome sight—10 wyverns mobbing a small gold dragon. The wyverns have the dragon trapped in a copse of trees too dense to allow flight. When the dragon spots the party he calls for help. It speaks Common, although with a lisp.

The copse is roughly 250 feet in diameter. The terrain around it is rocky with many gullies. Half the wyverns are on the ground chasing the dragon, the other half are flying above the trees. All the wyverns are aware of the party, but will ignore them unless they approach the trees. (Wyverns and dragons have a deep animosity, and these wyverns would rather kill a dragon, especially a good one, than attack any number of more succulent humans.)

The dragon, a sub-adult male named Frizzerfraz, will assist the party if they attack the wyverns. Otherwise, he will curse them for cowardice. If the party ignores Frizzerfraz's predicament they can proceed to Golconda without further incident.

Frizzerfraz is a teenager in dragon terms. He got himself into the predicament by chasing a large stag into the woods. He had already frittered away his spells doing trivial things. He is



holding back his breath weapons in fear of wasting those, too. He is very frightened, and wishes his parents were here. However, he will try to use his breath weapon on the wyverns if he can use it without endangering the PCs.

The wyverns will attack in a disciplined, cohesive fashion. Yrkhetez has *charmed* them, and given them some training. They will fight to the death.

At the first opportunity the young dragon will escape to the air, shouting, "Hang on, I'll go get my folks." He will return in five rounds with his parents, Wizzerrazz and Izzerazz.

The older dragons have the following spells memorized: *protection from evil*, *magic missile*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *protection from normal missiles*, *haste*, *dig*, *hallucinatory terrain*

The two adults will cast *haste* on themselves, then attack furiously.

When the wyverns are defeated, the dragons will introduce themselves. After the pleasantries, Wizzerazz will say, "Muktar has mobilized by some magical means many more of these fell beasts," pointing a talon at the nearest wyvern corpse.

The dragons are grateful for the party's assistance, and eager to slay more wyverns. They tell the PCs they will meet them at Golconda three days hence.

As the party finishes their journey, spring will be erupting vigorously. Flowers, trees and shrubs are starting to bloom. In another time it would be a sight to bring smiles to the grimmest of campaigners, but many will die amidst this beauty.

## Preparations for Battle

Under normal circumstances the return to Golconda would be triumphant, but the party is greeted solemnly. In their absence the king has died the final death and passed beyond the ability of the most powerful cleric to call him back. Since he died without issue and was the last of his line, the throne is vacant. The sages have traced back the generations

in search of an heir. Unfortunately, they have found two candidates with equally good, albeit feeble, claims to the throne. One is the poor Baron Asakia and the other is Count Belim. Neither had been aware of their connection to the royal family, since it occurred four hundred years ago. At once, Belim began campaigning vigorously. Baron Asakia would have waived his rights, but in his long life Belim had stepped on many toes, and his enemies banded together to back Asakia. Under the most ancient of laws, a gathering of all noble heads of household must meet to elect a new king.

Those laws state that a majority of three-quarters is required to elect a king. This is beyond the capacity of either side. Furthermore, Count Belim has refused any offers of compromise. He has been heard to say, "I'll be King of Golconda, and no damn hedge knight who is too poor to own a chamber pot will say me nay!"

No provision was made in the laws to deal with such an impasse. The kingdom is locked into factional dispute, and since the backers of Belim emulate his arrogance, tempers are getting quite short. Almost all of the citizens have forgotten the threat from Muktar.

All except Boubakar, that is. He comes to the PCs and presents them with a parchment signed by King Samakay on his deathbed. It allows Boubakar to nominate a temporary commander of the Golcondan army. He tells the party, "I waited to see if my fellow nobles could pick a king, but they are embroiled in their politics. Meanwhile, my scouts have brought me word that Muktar's forces are but three days' march away from the pass. I must act. Will you serve Golconda once more?"

If answered in the positive, Boubakar will nominate the fighter with the highest combined intelligence, charisma, and level to be the Army Commander. If he is asked about possible adverse reactions, he will say, "In our land a king's writ is law. Only another king can overturn it. We seem quite unlikely

to have a king before the fight is resolved, one way or another. We must prepare quickly for the hourglass is also our foe."

## The Battle

The Golcondans deploy first, at the pass, within 6" of the woods. The Muktarans deploy within 4" of the board's southern edge. In the tunnel, the first Golcondan unit starts on the west edge, while the first enemy unit starts on the eastern edge. (Both sides are deployed in columns off the map.)

The stream on the Wilna Pass map is fordable anywhere, but there is a 4" movement cost to cross it.

## Order of Battle

### Golcondan Forces

The Noble Levy is a group of younger sons and other noble offspring who are not involved with the electoral convention. They believe that attack is the only honorable tactic. The unit must make a discipline check whenever an enemy figure is in sight. If the check fails, they will charge. The unit is mounted on heavy warhorses and armed with heavy lances.

Units #2, 3, and 4 are identical. These are the First, Second, and Third Dwarven Foot. They wear chain mail and carry shields. They wield battle axes. Their commander (CR 7") fights with the unit.

Unit #5 is the String Section, a force of elves who recently appeared and offered their services. They are wearing elfin chain mail and are armed with long bows and long swords. Their commander (CR 8") fights with the unit.

Unit #6 is the Mosquitoes. It consists of halflings armed with short swords. They wear chain mail. Their commander (CR 6") fights with the unit.

Unit #7 is the Royal Guard—stout fighters clad in plate mail, and carrying large shields. At enormous expense these men have been equipped with



long swords +1, because they were a showpiece unit for the late king. He liked the way that the swords glowed—perfect for ceremonial occasions. Their commander (CR 9") fights with the unit.

Unit #8 is the Royal Foot, men in chain mail, shields, and armed with long swords. Their commander (CR 7") fights with the unit.

### Muktaran Forces

The Ogrish Guard, is a unit of normal ogres; they like being called guards, however. Their commander (CR 6") fights with the unit.

The Sluggers are hill giants armed with clubs. They can pick up rocks to throw anywhere in the pass. Their commander (CR 9") fights with the unit.

The Asbestos Troop are fire giants armed with swords, they are so named because they enjoy immunity to fire. They can pick up rocks to throw anywhere in the pass. Their commander (CR 9") fights with the unit.

The Grunts are orcs riding giant boars and armed with scimitars. Their commander (CR 6") fights with the unit.

The Sharp Fangs are goblins riding worgs and armed with short swords. Their commander (CR 4") fights with the unit.

The Ghastly Foes are ghosts. These fell undead creatures exude a terrible stench which causes adjacent creatures to make a saving throw. If it fails the enemy attacks with a +2 AR penalty. Furthermore, the ghosts can paralyze their opponents when they inflict damage (see BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat System rules, case [13.4] page 22).

Baz's Bashers are giant trolls. They can catch have a 25% chance of catching large missiles. They also regenerate (see BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat System rules, case [13.8] page 22). Baz (CR 9"), a giant troll, commands the unit.

Orcs 1-4 are infantry units. Orcs #1 has short bows, #2 carries spears, #3 and #4 have scimitars. The unit com-

manders (CR 6") fight with their units.

W Flight is a unit of wyverns.

### Commanders and Tactics

The Muktaran army is divided into two brigades, the Maneuver Brigade and the Heavy Brigade. The former consists of those units marked by an asterisk in the Order of Battle. All other units are in the Heavy Brigade.

Any of the Champions of Muktar that were slain during the raid of Fort Blood have been raised from the dead. If destroyed utterly, they were *resurrected* using teeth extracted previously and left in a safe place. Those killed lose a point of constitution.

Hank commands the army, but accompanies the Heavy Brigade. He is riding a heavy warhorse. Lana is a hero and Deputy Army Commander. She has the same spells as she had in the Fort Blood encounter.

Kalia commands the Maneuver Brigade She is riding a black mule. Her Deputy Brigade Commander is Basil.

Lazlo commands the Heavy Brigade.

Lord Yrkhetep is a Hero, but he simply flies point high above Wilna Pass, observing. He remains *invisible*. He will intervene only if the battle is going poorly for Muktar or he sees something surprising—such as dragons in the enemy ranks. It will take him six game turns to reach the field, plus time to cast preparatory spells. His spells are the same as he had in the Fort Blood encounter.

Muktaran will attempt a classic single envelopment. The Maneuver Brigade will turn the flank by marching through the Tunnel of Phraz to strike the Golcondan rear during the middle of the battle. It takes ten game rounds to reach the northern edge of the pass from the western edge of the tunnel, and it's the same for traffic going from the tunnel to the southern end of the Pass. Meanwhile, the Heavy Brigade will fix the enemy in position and press forward. In case of disaster, the standing orders are to retire if a brigade has lost three-fourths of its units (either

destroyed or routed from the field). No one expects this to happen, if it does, the heroes and commanders will save their own skins rather than their units.

If the PCs find a way to close the tunnel, the Maneuver Brigade will turn and march to the sounds of battle.

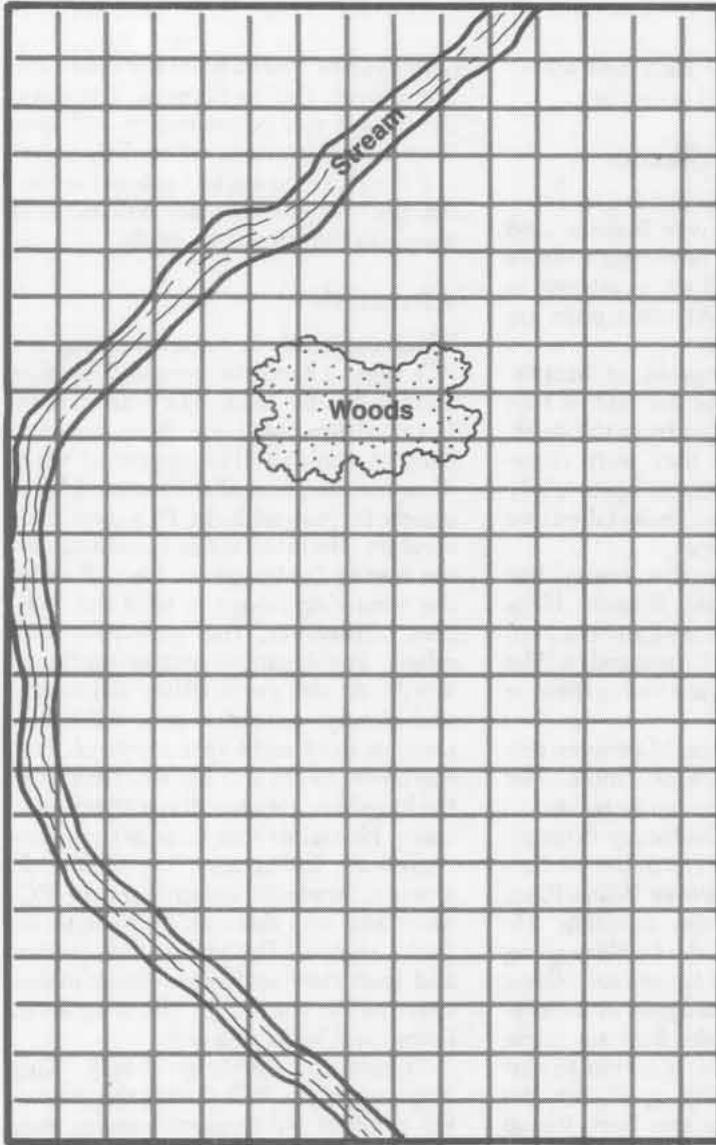
### Aftermath

When the battle is over, assuming the PCs win, a force of mounted knights arrives on the field. They are led by Count Belim, who has been crowned King of Muktar. (His opponent withdrew for the good of the nation.) He is utterly furious with the PCs over their conduct. He rants about casualties and the cost to the kingdom. He will order the remaining troops to seize the "traitors." However, the survivors will refuse, and begin to mutter mutinous words. At this point Belim will relent, and simply declare a new edict that revokes their right to command. Furthermore, Belim will banish them from the kingdom. He gives them 48 hours to leave. He claims that there is too many "foreign" influences in Golconda already. Actually, Belim fears the PCs now, and sees them as a threat to his shaky regime. The troops will mutter, and then they will begin spontaneous cheering for the party. The dragons (if living) will leave in a snit.

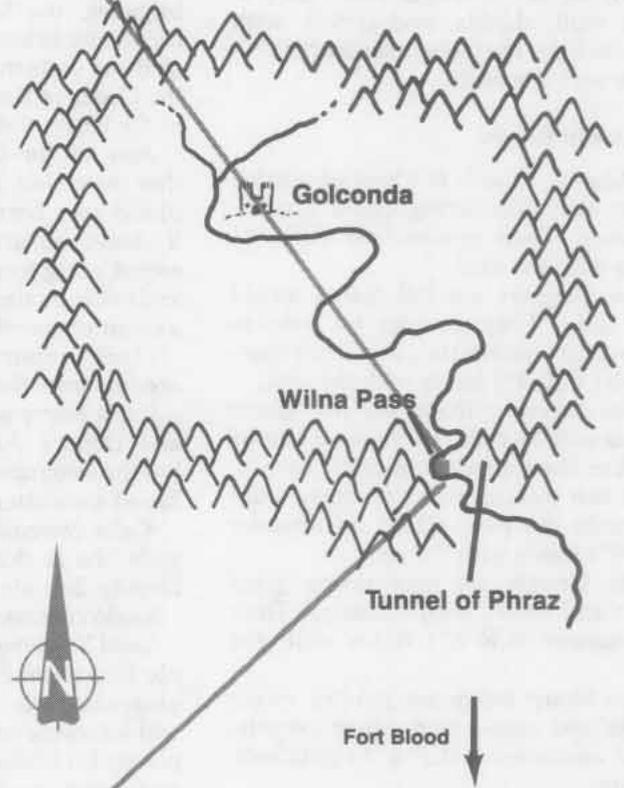
Should the battle go badly, King Belim meets the PCs during the retreat. His conduct will be much harsher. Any troops present will not support the characters, and so PCs either will be captured or forced to flee. If the party stops to fight, then any pursuing enemy forces will overtake them.

Either way, the adventure ends with the party leaving Golconda. But, as the PCs leave the land they fought so hard to save, they see Boubakar high on a hill. He raises his right arm in salute. Then he disappears as a spring rain begins.

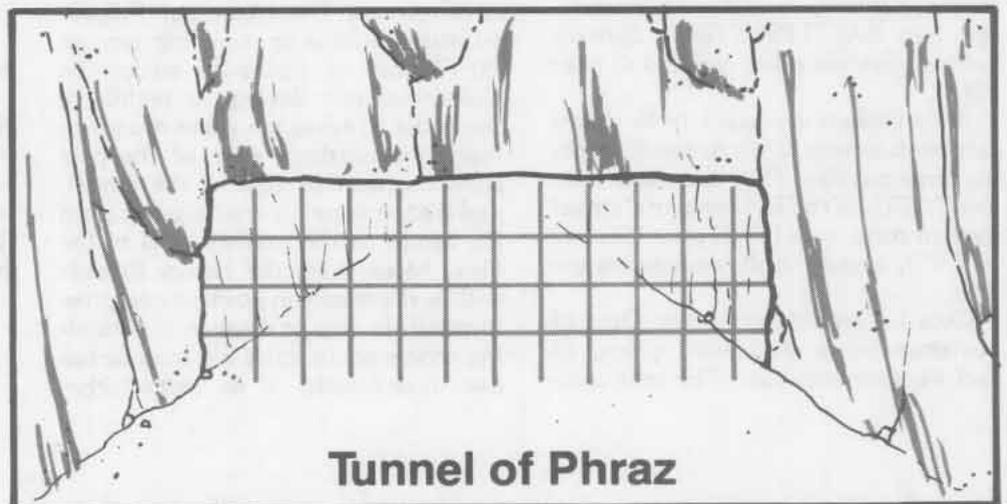
# Wilna Pass



## Golconda Sketch Map



Scale: 1 square = 1"



### Tunnel of Phraz



### Golcondan Forces

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Noble Levy	Cav	F4	5	40	15"	18	13	12	8	2d4+1/1d8/1d8/1d3
1st Dwarven Foot	Inf	F3	4	30	6"	18	13	14	10	1d8
2d Dwarven Foot	Inf	F3	4	30	6"	18	13	14	10	1d8
3d Dwarven Foot	Inf	F3	4	30	6"	18	13	14	10	1d8
String Section	Inf	F3	5	30	12"	17	13	12	10	1d6
Mosquitoes	Inf	F3	5	30	9"	18	13	14	10	1d6
Royal Guard	Inf	F5	2	50	6"	15	14	15	10	1d8+1
Royal Foot	Inf	F4	4	40	9"	18	13	14	10	1d8

### Muktaran Forces

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Ogrish Guards*	Inf	Ogr	5	40	9"	15	12	11	10	1d10
Sluggers	Inf	HGi	4	80	12"	12	13	11	10	2d8
Asbestos Troop	Inf	FGi	3	22	12"	20	15	16	10	5d6
Grunts	Cav	O&B	6	40	12"	19	14	13	8	1d8/3d6
Sharp Fangs*	Cav	G&W	6	30	18"	20	13	11	10	1d6/2d4
Ghastly Foes*	Inf	Ght	4	40	15"	15	N/A	N/A	10	2d4+
Baz's Bashers	Inf	GTr	4	80	12"	12	13	11	10	2d8
Orc 1	Inf	Orc	6	10	9"	19	11	10	10	1d6
Orc 2	Inf	Orc	6	10	9"	19	11	10	10	1d6
Orc 3*	Inf	Orc	6	10	9"	19	11	10	10	1d8
Orc 4	Inf	Orc	6	10	9"	19	11	10	10	1d8
W Flight	Air	Wyv	3	80	6"/24" (MC E)	17	13	12	5	2d8/1d6+

\* Members of Maneuver Brigade



This adventure is designed for three to five characters of level 15 or higher. The adventure takes place after all of the other scenarios in this book. Although familiarity with the previous adventures would be helpful, it is not necessary.

### Players Background

Two weeks ago the PCs received messages requesting their presence at an emergency meeting of Turmish and Chondath leaders. Maps included with the messages indicated a secluded woodland south of Arrabar as the meeting's location. No indication of the nature of the meeting was given, but the message sounded desperate.

The PCs arrive on the designated evening. When they near the woods, they are met by a squad of nervous guards who escort them through the brush to a clearing enclosed by dense trees. Seated around a smoldering campfire are about two dozen well-dressed men and women, some attended by servants and secretaries. It is clear from their apparel that these men and women are officials and dignitaries. If the PCs have participated in any of the previous adventures in this book, they recognize some of them—wealthy council representatives from Timindar, the mayor of Ormath, gnome officers from Gildenglade, even a regal delegation from distant Hlath.

Gloom hangs heavily over the campsite. Most of the people stare absently into the flames, but their faces lighten at the approach of the PCs. The PCs are offered seats near the campfire, then a stout man with a bushy red moustache rises to speak. This is Pachipol, the current mayor of Amah, chosen by lottery to be spokesperson for the group. He thanks the PCs for their promptness, then soberly addresses the group.

"That wars persist in this world is a fact of life," he says. "But I'm sure we agree that Chondath and Turmish have had more than their share the past few months. We know now that these wars

have a common link, one that could have devastating consequences if action is not taken soon. On that we have the word of Inata Eller."

Pachipol steps back and gestures to a figure lying on a bed of leaves. A thin woman about 35 years old dressed in a soiled black robe sleeps fitfully, tossing and twisting in the leafy bed. This is Inata Eller. Inata spent her youth studying the mysteries of the outer planes under the direction of her second cousin, Gustofsen Eller, perhaps the most renowned planar expert in the Forgotten Realms. Like her mentor, Inata's insights into the outer planes are extraordinary. All well-traveled PCs have heard of Inata and know her integrity is beyond reproach. (For more about Gustofsen Eller, refer to "The Sea of Screams" adventure in OP1—*Tales of the Outer Planes*.)

Pachipol asks the PCs not to disturb Inata, because her long journey from her home in Winterwood has left her exhausted. Pachipol explains that two weeks ago, Inata contacted the officials to tell them she'd received a disturbing vision originating from Oinos, the first layer of Hades. The vision revealed that an insane arcanadaemon calling himself Lord Yrkhetep was constructing a powerful weapon to destroy Oinos, the rest of the outer planes, and then the material planes, beginning with the Prime. Since Yrkhetep's device requires a massive supply of bodies and spirits to make it functional, he has been instigating and encouraging wars around the world, concentrating recently on Turmish and Chondath.

"The device must be destroyed before Yrkhetep completes it," explains Pachipol. "It will take an army of brave warriors and even braver leaders. The warriors already have been recruited and will arrive here tomorrow at dawn. Having heard many tales of your courage on the battlefield, we hope that you will agree to lead them."

The PCs will likely have many questions, but Pachipol has no more information. "Eller will provide answers in the morning. We need your decision

now. Will you help us?"

If the PCs hesitate, Pachipol loses his temper. "Don't you care about your own world?" He demands to know what they want. The mayor of Urml offers 100 acres of prime farmland. The council members from Timindar offer 4,000 gp and a guarantee of 4,000 more on the PCs' successful return. An elder from Hlath offers his six oldest children as slaves, but this offer is withdrawn after consultation with his advisors.

The PCs may accept any of the offers and are free to negotiate for more (these leaders have access to plenty of resources). Assuming they agree to lead the armies, the PCs are urged to get a good night's rest—details will be discussed in the morning.

### Dungeon Master Background

For centuries, the arcanadaemon Yrkhetep has longed to take away the title of Lord of the Middle Planes from Anthraxus. Although the power of Yrkhetep pales before that of Anthraxus, Yrkhetep has developed a plan to assault the fortress of Khin-Oin and destroy his hated enemy.

For months, Yrkhetep has been secretly inciting warfare throughout the Forgotten Realms. Choice warriors (both survivors and casualties) are returned to Hades. Some become soldiers in his hellish armies. Others are used to fuel his "infinity train," a weapon of potentially limitless power. When the armies and infinity train are at full strength, Yrkhetep will begin the siege on Khin-Oin.

These activities have not gone unnoticed. Anthraxus has always been aware of Yrkhetep's lust for power. He has also noticed Yrkhetep's increased interest in prime material warfare. Occasionally, Anthraxus assisted the opposition to defeat Yrkhetep's armies, but generally dismissed Yrkhetep's efforts as trivial.

However, Anthraxus now has reason to take his rival more seriously. Yrkhetep is assembling an army for an assault on Khin-Oin, and the assault will be



supported by some kind of secret weapon. Since Anthraxus has not seen this "infinity train" in operation, he does not know how to defend against it.

Anthraxus has devised a plan that will allow him to see the weapon in action and also to eliminate some of Yrkhetep's forces at the same time, all without his direct involvement. Anthraxus knows his layer of Hades is sometimes observed by a spell caster from the Prime Material Plane. Since the magic-user is harmless, Anthraxus has always ignored her, but during a recent observation he made contact, inducing a vivid vision of her world in ruins at the hand of Yrkhetep and his nightmarish armies. In a second vision, she was told of a devastating weapon Yrkhetep was developing in Oinos. If the weapon wasn't destroyed soon, the destruction foretold in the first vision would come to pass.

Anthraxus knew the gullible woman would believe these visions. Concerned for her pathetic world, she would find a way to rally the forces necessary to invade Oinos and destroy Yrkhetep, his minions, and his weapon. Anthraxus could find out everything he wished to know and would barely have to lift a finger to do it.

### An Audience with Inata

When the PCs arise at dawn the next morning, they find most of the officials and their attendants are already up, waiting for the armies to arrive. "We have scouts on the road," says Pachipol. "It shouldn't be long." Pachipol points out that Inata is awake, and the PCs may speak with her if they wish.

Inata is sitting alone in the grass beside a tall tree. She is pale and lost in thought. If the PCs approach, she smiles at them timidly.

Inata *Eller* ST 9; IN 15; WS 14; DX 9; CN 7; CH 12; CM 15; AC 7; Move 12"; CL6; hp 20; #AT 1; Dmg staff; THAC0 18; AL LG

Spells: *cure light wounds* (x2), *detect evil* (x2), *light*, *know alignment*, *detect*

*charm*, *resist fire*, *cure disease*, *create food and water*

Inata is smart, but she is also shy and naive. She believes her visions are accurate and has no idea Anthraxus is manipulating her.

If the PCs question Inata, she tells them what she knows, essentially repeating the story Pachipol told them last night. If asked how the visions were revealed to her, Inata explains that a magical crystal given to her by her cousin Gustofsen enabled her to peer into the outer planes. For the past few months she had sensed increased activity in an area of Oinos dominated by the cruel arcanadaemon Yrkhetep. The nature of this activity was unclear, but Inata sensed it foretold destruction and death.

"While attempting to clarify the images, the crystal rose from the table and glowed like a star," continues Inata. "Light flashed from the crystal and bathed my face. It was then I received the first vision. I spoke his awful name aloud—Yrkhetep. As soon as the word left my lips, the crystal shattered and burst into flames. It was then I received the second vision, and I knew what I must do."

The PCs' conversation with Inata is interrupted by a shout from Pachipol. "Come, friends!" he cries. "Your armies have arrived!"

### Reviewing the Troops

The PCs probably will be eager to get a look at the armies they've agreed to lead into Hades. Considering the importance of the mission and the resources available to these mighty nations, the PCs likely will be expecting soldiers of the highest caliber.

But as the troops straggle in, it's clear that they'll have to settle for something less. The first group of ragged soldiers looks frightened and confused. Another group appears to be made of farmers and teenagers. Yet another group leads griffons with tattered wings and graying fur.

"We did the best we could on such short notice," explains Pachipol sheepishly. "The wars have depleted our best forces. And we had a little trouble finding soldiers willing to, er, go to Hades."

The PCs may now review their troops. All the soldiers are of lawful good alignment. If the indicated NPCs have been killed in previous adventures or are otherwise unavailable, substitute similar NPCs.

### The Iron Legion

The Iron legion is so named because most of its members are hardened veterans of the wars. The name also refers, however, to the soldiers' ages—many sport more than a few iron-gray hairs.

The 1st Mercenaries are a unit of 200 civilians who have had only minor military experience. They agreed to participate because they need the money promised them if they successfully complete the mission. They are loyal fighters and are armed with long swords. Any PC may command them. Because of their inexperience, they must make a Morale Check the first time they come within 12" of each new non-human opponent (in addition to any other required Morale Checks). This is a militia unit.

The 2d Mercenaries are a unit of 200 farmers and other rural residents, including many teenagers. In addition to short swords, they are armed with pitchforks, hoes, and rakes sharpened to fine points. Any PC may command them. Like the 1st Mercenaries, they are militia and their inexperience requires a Morale Check the first time they come within 12" of each new non-human opponent.

If the PCs participated in the battle at Urml (see *The Hand of Tyr*), they recognize several of the fighters in Urml Militias A and B. Both units have been brought up to full strength. Urml Militia A is armed with long swords and rides armored light warhorses. Everon is their unit commander (CR 14"). Urml Militia B is armed with spears and rides armored light warhorses. Celchar is



their unit commander (CR 12"). Both units contain 50 soldiers. These are the most dependable and efficient regular units available to the PCs.

The next three units also might be familiar to the PCs (from the **Battle of the Five Crowns**). If they've met before, the PCs will notice a few disturbing differences.

The Windriders are elite cavaliers who ride griffons. But these griffons are old; their fur is gray and their wings are stiff and balding. If the PCs ask unit commander Bren Wingblade (CR 15") about this, Wingblade explains that the lives of prize griffons are more valuable than those of soldiers, and this mission promises to be deadly. Knowing that old griffons prefer to end their lives on the field of battle, the Windriders brought these mounts to ride into Hades. Because of their age, the griffons can only stay airborne for one game round and can go no higher than low altitude. They attack normally. The Windriders are armed with lances and long swords.

The 6th Municipal Guard is from Arrabar. They are armed with long swords and short bows. Any PC can command them. Because of their religious convictions, members of this unit loathe undead. Undead are considered hated opponents, requiring the appropriate discipline checks.

The Sisterhood of the Oaks are female rangers armed with long swords and short bows. Their unit commander, Adriennedar Valgarien (CR 14"), warns the PCs that her unit has vowed never to harm birds, fish, or any other "children of nature" including any they might encounter in Hades. (Adriennedar and the Sisterhood decide what constitutes "children of nature"—their specific objections are noted later in this adventure.)

The Royal Foot (from **Gratitude of Princes**) is back to their full strength of 100 men. They are armed with *long swords* +1 and wear chain mail with shields. Any PC may command them. The soldiers of this unit have an obsessive and adolescent sense of chivalry.

They see themselves as the protectors of the Sisterhood. (The Sisterhood doesn't encourage or enjoy this, but they tolerate it for the sake of the mission.) Any and all enemy units who attack the Sisterhood become hated opponents of the Royal Foot, requiring discipline checks where appropriate. Additionally, the Foot will always stay within 12" of the Sisterhood, regardless of orders to the contrary. (Measure this from the closest figures in the Sisterhood and Royal Foot units.) Finally, if the Sisterhood is eliminated, the Royal Foot will attack the unit which destroyed them, charging if possible, and will continue to attack regardless of orders.

Inata Eller will accompany the armies into Hades, as she is the only one who knows her way around. Inata will not participate in combat and must remain with one or more of the PCs for protection.

### Briefing

After the PCs review the troops, the officials bid them good luck and farewell; they must return home to attend to the business of governing their cities. When the officials are gone, Inata tells the PCs it is vital they leave for the outer planes as soon as possible. She suggests that the PCs instruct the units to make any final preparations.

If the PCs are curious how they will travel to the outer planes, Inata tells them there is a conduit not far away; this is why she suggested to the officials the meeting be held here. The conduit will take them within walking distance of Yrkhetep's domain in Oinos. If the PCs ask how she knows about the conduit, Inata tells them the information came to her in a dream. (It came courtesy of Anthraxus.)

If the PCs are unfamiliar with the outer planes, Inata answers any general questions they have. "It is an evil place," she says, "full of darkness and death." (This is a good time to review game mechanics that apply when visiting the outer planes. Prime planar spells that summon, communicate, or control

creatures of the outer planes are ineffective. A cleric and druid can only regain 1st and 2d level spells, unless in his deity's home plane. In Hades, clerics should be treated as 4 levels lower when attempting to turn evil undead. For more details, see pages 73-82 and 105-106 of the *Manual of the Planes*.)

When the PCs have completed the briefing with Inata, they may order the units to move out. They should distribute command assignments among themselves, determine a marching order for the units, and decide who will guard Inata.

### Into the Outer Planes

Inata leads the PCs and the units through the woods for about a mile to a meadow of wild flowers. She pauses before a still pond about 30 yards across. "Here we are," she says, gesturing toward the pond. "This is our gateway to Hades." Inata explains that the pond is actually a conduit. To cross the planes, all they need to do is jump in. She demonstrates by tossing in a flower. The flower vanishes before it hits the surface.

Adriennedar steps forward and volunteers for the Sisterhood to go first. A shocked soldier of the Royal Foot says his unit cannot allow a lady to go before them. This angers Adriennedar, and she demands an apology. The PCs may resolve this dispute any way they wish; the units will abide by the PCs' decision.

When it has been determined who will go first, the chosen unit (or character) steps to the edge of the pond, then dives or jumps in. Like the flower, the unit vanishes before hitting the surface. This is too much for the inexperienced 1st and 2d Mercenaries. Both units must make an immediate morale check. Failing the check means that 10% of the unit (two figures) refuse to go any further. No amount of coaxing or threatening will change their minds. (Remove these figures from play and adjust the record sheet accordingly.)

When the PCs jump into the pond,



their skin tingles, their heads throb, and they black out. When they regain consciousness a moment later, they have passed harmlessly into Oinos, the top layer of the Gloom of Hades.

### The Black Bridge

The PCs and the units find themselves on a smooth plateau of black stone. Any PC examining the stone and making a successful intelligence check determines that the plateau is made of coal.

The still air is cold and dry, and all is silent. Above is a dark gray sky—no stars, no moon, no clouds. Behind the party is a pool of white mist about 30 yards across. This pool is the Hades side of the conduit; because directions were reversed when the party crossed the planes, they fell “up” through this pool.

The sides of the plateau are featureless and sheer; climbing down is impossible. About a half mile down, the slope vanishes in a swirl of dense gray fog. Towering mountains extend as far as the eye can see, their bases all shrouded in the same dense fog.

At the edge of the plateau is a natural bridge which extends across the valley of fog to mountain about a mile away. The bridge is about 25 feet wide and is also made of black stone. Inata tells the PCs that the bridge leads to Yrkhetep’s domain.

The PCs should decide the order in which the units will march across the bridge. The surface of the bridge is smooth and flat. With caution, the party will have no trouble crossing it. Any character or unit careless enough to fall in will never be heard from again.

The atmosphere in Oinos is thick with microscopic spores and disease-carrying bacteria. Though higher-level characters are able to tolerate these organisms, less robust characters aren’t so fortunate. After traveling across the bridge for about 200 yards, some of the soldiers begin to complain of weakness and nausea. To simulate the effects of the disease organisms, make an attack on each unit whose members are 3rd

level or lower (1st and 2d Mercenaries, 6th Guards, and Sisterhood of the Oaks) at AR 20 on the D6 column of the combat results table. Place wound markers where appropriate, and remove any figures which have been wiped out by disease. (Some of these unfortunates may have fallen into the valley below.)

When the party has traveled halfway across the bridge, they notice dark clouds gathering on the horizon. The clouds are moving toward them. As the clouds draw closer, the party sees they are actually large groups of living creatures. The creatures fly directly over the army and hover there, about 100 yards up, then a single creature—recognizable as a rider and its mount—leaves the group and slowly descends towards the PC (or PCs) in the front of the line. The rider is a demonic woman with hideous purple skin, black hair, glowing red eyes, and long black talons. The mount is a gaunt horse with a huge head, black coat, glowing red eyes, and hooves which burn like embers.

The rider and mount float 20 feet in front of the chosen PC. “We come to make a trade,” rasps the rider.

The night hags and night mares spend most of their time roaming Hades searching for the human-headed worm spirit-larvae used as a medium of exchange and a source of nourishment in the lower planes. Lately, however, the pickings have been slim; Lord Yrkhetep has been snapping up all the choice larvae to power his mysterious device.

The night hags and night mares are cranky and hungry. Spotting the armies on the bridge below, they thought the horses might make an interesting meal and sent an emissary to negotiate. Ordinarily, the night hags would just take what they wanted, but they fear these armies might be affiliated with Yrkhetep; they’d just as soon avoid crossing him if possible.

The night hag tells the chosen PC that they want the horses and wish to make a fair trade. Specifically, they want the

horses ridden by the Urml Militia (they have no interest in griffons). If asked what they have to trade, the hag says “currency” and offers no elaboration. The hag adds that if they refuse to trade, they will kill them and take what they want.

If the chosen PC resists or if the party attacks, the hag withdraws and shrieks a signal to her companions. The clouds of hags and night mares draw closer, and the party sees there are thousands of them. Having made her point, the hag demands a decision from the PCs.

If the PCs agree to trade the horses, several dozen hags and night mares descend on Urml Militia A. They nudge away the riders, then fly away with the horses. The riders are unharmed. The hag negotiator tells the chosen PC that they’ll try these horses now, and if they’re satisfactory they’ll come back for the rest later. (All the horses are permanently lost from Urml Militia A. Adjust the unit’s statistics accordingly.)

When the horses are out of sight, the hags swoop overhead to drop their payment—human-headed larvae. These are rotted and deformed larvae which are of no use to the hags. After dumping thousands of the squirming larvae on the armies below, the hags and night mares ride away, disappearing in the distance. The larvae don’t do any damage to the units—it feels like they’re being rained on by jellyfish. Once again, this is more than some of the more inexperienced soldiers can handle. Both the 1st and 2d Mercenaries must make an immediate morale check. Failing the check means 10% of the unit (rounding up) races back across the bridge in panic to dive into the mist pool and go home. (Remove these figures permanently from play.)

If the party refuses to give up their horses or instigates an attack against the hags, the hag negotiator retreats to her group and orders them to attack with a few *magic missiles*. (The attack is made against a randomly chosen unit. The attack inflicts 8 dice of damage on the target unit.) The party is free to attack the hags and night mares any



way they choose, but there is such an overwhelming number of opponents that any attacks are futile.

The hags attack with *magic missiles* for two game rounds. After the second attack, the air suddenly fills with explosions of bright light, and sheets of flame flash across the sky. The hags immediately abandon their attack and soar away into the distance as fast as they can.

The PCs probably will be at a loss to explain this. If they ask Inata, she has no answer, but speculates that some demonic enemy of the hags frightened them away. (She's close—Anthraxus is responsible, wanting to make sure the armies reach Yrkhetep in good shape.)

## The Domain of Yrkhetep

The rest of the trip across the bridge is uneventful. The bridge ends in a cave in the side of a mountain. The circular entrance is about 15 feet in diameter.

After winding through the cave for 50 yards, the party enters a vast valley (see map) completely enclosed by sheer mountain walls rising a mile into the sky. The floor of the valley is flat and made of black granite laced with jagged cracks. A thin mist hangs over the entire area, and the party can dimly make out a few features—an immense metal cylinder in the northeast corner, several pockets of dense fog, and a glowing tube that winds like a serpent from one side of the valley to the other.

Once they've entered the battlefield, the units may set up in the designated area shown on the map. The appearance of the quasit in the **Guardian of the Realm** encounter below marks the beginning of the battle.

## Battlefield Features

Following are descriptions of key battlefield features. Remember that only their physical appearances are readily apparent to the PCs—they'll probably have to find out the details the hard way.

**1. Guardian:** This is where the quasit

appears (see the **Guardian of the Realm** encounter below).

**2. Craters:** These craters are about 4 feet wide and 6 feet deep; there is no damage if clumsy characters fall in. These craters are linked by an underground passage about 5 feet wide and 5 feet high. Drado Weny, a magic-user minion of Yrkhetep (see below), is cursed to remain in these passages.

**3. Conduits:** These dense fog pockets are actually conduits leading to nightmarish realms in the lower planes. Characters or units coming within 10 feet of these conduits will feel a powerful suction. Characters or figures coming within 5 feet will be sucked in, never to be seen again.

**4. Track:** This is the "track" for Yrkhetep's *infinity train*. It looks like a tube 1 foot in diameter, glowing with a soft white light. The tube begins and ends in the conduits on the west and east sides of the map. The tube rises and falls like the tracks of a roller coaster, the highest sections rising 100 feet in the air. The map indicates the sections that lie close to the ground.

**5. Refuse Mounds:** From a distance, these look like 30-foot hills of garbage. They are actually piles of bones and decomposing bodies. Zombies and skeletons reside here.

**6. Lava Pool:** This is a steaming pool of molten lava 10 feet deep. It is the home of 100 mephits, currently *shape changed* into lava. Any character unfortunate enough to be immersed in the lava pool suffers 6d6 points of damage.

**7. Iron Cylinder:** This is a featureless cylinder made of solid iron. It extends 300 yards into the sky and is nearly 100 yards in diameter; only a portion of it is visible from the battlefield. This is the source of power for Yrkhetep's *infinity train*.

## Yrkhetep's Forces

There are 100 mephits lurking in the lava pool. Lava mephits attack twice, once with their claws (shift one column to the right on the combat results table for additional heat damage) and once

with a breath weapon, spewed blobs of lava which automatically hit any target within a 10-foot range for 1d6 points of damage. The mephits attempt to keep in contact with the lava pool at all times in order to *regenerate*. (Yrkhetep has enhanced their *regeneration* ability. A wounded unit recovers fully if it stays in contact with the lava for three game rounds. Eliminated units can't *regenerate*.) Contact with the lava also supplies them with ammunition for their breath weapons. Their touch destroys metal almost instantly (plate armor dissolves in one game round). Snox is their unit commander (CR 9).

The skeletons fight with short swords or short bows and bone arrows. They take 1/2 damage from edged weapons. The zombies always strike last, and their melee losses should be removed before their attacks. Both zombies and skeletons are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold-based spells. Neither need to check morale or discipline, but they always need to be in command to move or fight. If they go out of command, they continue following their last order regardless of circumstances. Both units are commanded by Multon Weny: ST 5; IN 10; WS 10; DX 8; CN 10; CH 9; CM 9; AC 10; Move 12"; MU5; hp 18; #AT 1; Dmg staff; THAC0 2d 20; AL CE; Rank Unit; AR 35; CR 9"; CB 0; *wand of lightning bolts* (60 charges).

Spells: *magic missile*, *burning hands*, *shocking grasp*, *dancing lights*, *pyrotechnics*, *darkness 15' radius*, *flame arrow*

Multon is a human magic-user who entered Oinos in search of his brother, Drado, and was enslaved by Yrkhetep.

The two units of hordlings are both commanded by a night hag in the service of Yrkhetep (CR 6", AR 35). The first unit is medium-sized, has low intelligence, has MR 5%, and attacks with two huge tusks. The second unit is large-sized, has high intelligence, has MR 30%, and attacks with talons.

Each of the three units of diakka has its own unnamed unit commander (CR



14" for unit A, CR 8" for units B and C). Unit A is the tall variety. They are large-sized, resemble huge storks with human heads and arms, attack with sharp bills, and bound in and out of melee combat using *jump* (once per day) and *weakness* (twice per day). Units B and C are the broad variety. They are medium-sized, resemble squat pelicans with human heads, and attack with clawed arms. If diakka surround their opponent (at least two units on opposite sides), they use *audible glamor* to make it sound as if more diakka were coming. If an intact diakka unit spends one game round hooting and dancing, the sounds and rhythm invoke a hypnotic *enfeeblement* which has an area effect identical to the *ray of enfeeblement* spell.

A year ago, an arrogant, evil magic-user named Drado Weny ventured into Oinos to declare himself an ally of Yrkhetep. Yrkhetep was not amused and cursed Weny to remain in the underground passage. Weny will be freed when he destroys a thousand enemies of Yrkhetep. He has a long way to go. Weny's brother Multon (see above) came to rescue him, but was made a slave in charge of Yrkhetep's undead troops.

Drado Weny: ST 15; IN 9; WS 9; DX 14; CN 15; CH 9; CM 10; AC 10; Move 12"; MU3; hp 12; #AT 1; Dmg staff; THAC0 2d 20; AL CE; Rank Unit; AR 29; CR 14"; *wand of lightning* (50 charges)

Spells: *magic missile*, *shield*, *stinking cloud*

Lord Yrkhetep is present on the battlefield, functioning as an army commander. (See the **Gratitude of Princes** adventure for Yrkhetep's spell list.) He will *fly* and become *invisible* to stay out of the battle as long as possible.

### The Infinity Train

The *infinity train* is a virtually indestructible weapon of enormous magnitude designed by Yrkhetep. Fortunately



for the PCs, the train isn't yet fully developed, but it will still pose a formidable problem.

The train resembles a series of large glowing carts. The carts have no wheels and are not visibly connected to each other. (To represent this on the battlefield, use five 1" x 2" counters laid end to end in open formation.) The carts all appear to be jammed with ghostly figures of humans and other creatures, writhing and howling in agony.

The train is a manifestation of the energies which make up the conduits in the outer planes. The "riders" are a form of worm-spirits developed by Yrkhetep to help power the train; many of these spirits were formerly evil war-

riors involved in the battles Yrkhetep has instigated in Chondath and Turmish. Additional power for the train is provided by the huge iron cylinder, actually a storage tank filled with choice worm-spirit larvae, many of which were also former Prime Material warriors. Yrkhetep plans to construct more of these storage cylinders and accumulate millions of worm-spirits and larvae to realize the full potential of his train.

When the *train* appears, it bursts from the conduit on the west edge of the map, races along the track, and vanishes into the conduit on the east edge, filling the entire battlefield with blinding light and the sounds of tortured



shrieks. The *train* moves at unlimited speed, but for game purposes, assume that in a game round in which it appears it is on and off the battlefield before either side moves their forces. The shrieking sounds precede the appearance of the *train* by one game round.

Each game round when the *train* appears, it makes a single attack on any one unit during the initial missile phase. The attack is an energy blast resembling a hail of glowing white pellets. The blast can come from any part of the *train* and can envelop any size unit anywhere on the battlefield. The blast always hits its intended target and has an AR of 10, doing 3d10 damage on the Combat results table. If a unit is foolish enough to remain on the track when the *train* is approaching, the *train* passes through them, doing 4d10 damage (AR 10) before attacking with its energy blast.

Attacking the *train* is useless. All physical objects, such as arrows or swords, are sucked into the aura of conduit energy surrounding the *train*, vanishing before they can do any damage. The *train* also resists all magical attacks. However, there is a way to destroy it, as explained below.

### Two Secrets

Diligent PCs may discover two important secrets about the battlefield.

**1. The Train Can Be Destroyed:** Although the *train* itself is indestructible, the track isn't. The spongy track is AC 10, and it can be cut when a section accumulates 25 HD of damage. The *train* can jump a single cut section, so the track must be cut in two places for derailment. When the *train* hits the second section of cut track, it vanishes in a shower of light, utterly destroyed. (The most accessible areas of the track for cutting are the ground level sections indicated on the map; cutting any two of these three sections will cause the *train* to derail.)

The party might discover this method of destroying the *train* by trial and error. However, both Drado and

Multon Weny know about this weakness from eavesdropping on Yrkhetep. If either Drado or Multon are defeated by the party, they will reveal this secret in return for their lives.

**2. The Floor Isn't What It Seems:** The floor of the battlefield isn't solid. It is only about 20 feet thick and covers a huge conduit spanning the entire battlefield. The conduit leads to the most dreaded depths of the lower planes.

This information isn't particularly helpful during the battle, but it could come in handy at the end (see Daemon Thunder below). Characters who pursue Drado in the underground passage may find out about the conduit if Drado makes a bad shot and blasts a hole in the passage floor with his *wand of lightning*. The quasit also knows about the floor and may tell the party as a result of their encounter.

### The Battle

When the units have been arranged in the set up area, but before any actions can be taken, the sky darkens with black clouds. A rumble of thunder soon becomes deafening, and the entire valley fills with swirls of black fog and howling wind.

Following a loud crack of thunder, the fog dissipates. Standing defiantly before the party (at point 1 on the map) is a tiny squat creature with a pointed tail and flickering black tongue. "I am master of realm," it bellows in a clipped voice. "Kill you all now!"

This quasit is one of Yrkhetep's servants, positioned here to size-up the invaders before the battle begins. To convince the quasit to perform this difficult job, Yrkhetep promised to make him invulnerable to all attacks. Yrkhetep lied; he considers the quasit expendable.

The quasit continues to badger the party into fighting him. If they hesitate, the quasit flings himself at the nearest PC and attacks ferociously. The party should have no problem dealing with the quasit. When the shocked quasit loses more than half his hit points, he

*polymorphs* into a frog and attempts to escape. If the quasit gets away, he will never be seen again. If captured, the helpless quasit tells the party what he knows in exchange for his life.

The only pertinent information the quasit has is that the floor conceals a gigantic conduit. Unfortunately, the quasit has trouble communicating this; he points to the floor and repeats, "Nothing down there! Nothing down there!" It is up to the PCs to make sense of this.

### Deployment

After the encounter with the quasit, the forces of Yrkhetep deploy as follows. All deploy in closed formation.

The skeletons and zombies emerge from the refuse piles. Multon Weny is with them. They position themselves in front of the piles.

The hordling units come from behind the refuse piles and position themselves anywhere in front of the lava pool.

All three diakka units appear from the conduit in the southeast corner of the battlefield facing the party.

The mephits remain in lava form until any enemy unit comes within 10 feet of the lava pool. The mephits then leap from the lava, automatically gaining the initiative. (At the DM's discretion, the mephits may deploy earlier if needed.)

### Yrkhetep's Strategy

Yrkhetep's goal is simple—total annihilation of the invaders. The mindless skeletons and zombies will likely conduct frontal assaults against the nearest enemy units, aided by occasional blasts from Multon's *wand of lightning bolts*. If possible, the hordlings will pick-off weaker units first. The diakka will attempt to take advantage of their special abilities by surrounding units from at least two sides. The mephits won't stray far from the lava pool, but will pursue weaker enemies if the opportunity arises. All evil forces will attempt to rout their enemies into the conduits and lava pool if possible.



Drado will scamper through the passages, popping up in the craters to blast PCs with his *wand of lightning* before disappearing again. Characters are free to enter a crater and pursue Drado, who cannot leave the passage. If things look bad for Drado, he tells his pursuer about the vulnerability of the train track in exchange for his life. It is possible that in the heat of battle, a stray *lightning bolt* from Drado will break a hole in the passage floor, revealing a portion of the conduit underneath.

The *infinity train* appears and attacks for the first time in the second game round, and every other round after that. At the DM's discretion, the *train* may follow a more irregular pattern, as long as the *train* doesn't appear in two consecutive game rounds. Remember that the *train* can be heard approaching the round before it appears.

### Good Guys' Strategy

The party's goal is to destroy the weapon Inata was warned about in her dreams. If the PCs don't realize the *train* is the weapon, Inata clues them in (courtesy of Anthraxus). The PCs may decide to destroy the giant iron cylinder, but this is impossible—the structure is impenetrable by any methods the PCs have at their disposal.

The PCs may decide to retreat and go home before the battle is resolved. If so, they see the hovering clouds of night hags and night mares lingering outside

the entrance to the battlefield, drawn by the sounds of combat.

### Daemon Thunder

When the outcome of the battle is clear, Anthraxus and his three ultrodaemon attendants appear about 200 feet in the air over the battlefield. If the good guys are winning, Anthraxus has appeared to destroy the iron cylinder, now that he has had a chance to analyze Yrkhetep's weapon. If the bad guys are winning, Anthraxus has appeared to intervene.

As soon as Anthraxus appears with the ultrodaemons, Yrkhetep appears to challenge them. Anthraxus accepts, and an aerial battle begins. If the PCs decide to become involved in this battle, all of the daemons turn on them to convince them to stay out of it.

Yrkhetep is hopelessly out-matched, and the battle goes quickly. When Yrkhetep's defeat seems imminent, Anthraxus abruptly orders two of the ultrodaemons to charge the iron cylinder; Anthraxus wants Yrkhetep to see it destroyed with his own eyes. The ultrodaemons crash into the cylinder and explode in a shower of flames. The explosion creates a deep crack in the side of the cylinder, and thousands of wriggling worm-spirit larvae begin to pour out.

The sundering of the iron cylinder causes an earthquake. Horrified, Yrkhetep *teleports* far away. Anthraxus follows. The earthquake causes the

floor of the battlefield to vibrate and crack, revealing the conduit beneath. Meanwhile, the hovering clouds of night hags and night mares swarm into the battlefield to scoop up the abundance of fresh larvae spilling from the cylinder.

The PCs and their units have five game rounds to escape from the battlefield before the entire floor collapses into the conduit below. If the PCs have already learned about the conduit, they should realize the danger as soon as the earthquake begins. Any characters or units who are left behind are swallowed into the conduit.

As the night hags and night mares are busy harvesting larvae, the PCs and their units are ignored as they leave the battlefield. The rest of the trip home is uneventful.

### Success

Regardless of the outcome of the battle, if the PCs didn't succeed in destroying the *train*, the mission has been unsuccessful. Even with the destruction of the cylinder, Yrkhetep's threat remains; he will be able to recover the *train* and rebuild.

If the PCs destroyed the *train*, they have effectively ended the schemes of Yrkhetep, at least for the time being. Warfare in Turmish and Chondath drops off noticeably, and the PCs are hailed as heroes.



### The Iron Legion

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FG	Dmg
1st Mercenaries	Inf	F1	7	10	12"	20	12	12	20	1d8
2d Mercenaries	Inf	F1	7	10	12"	20	12	12	20	1d6
Urml Militia A	Cav	F4	4	40	18"	18	14	16	5	1d8/1d4/1d4
Urml Militia B	Cav	F4	4	40	18	18"	14	16	5	1d6/1d4/1d4
Windriders	Cav	Ca5	3	30	12"/30" (MC D)	20	15	17	6	1d6 + 1/1d4/1d4/ 2d8
6th Guards	Inf	F3	2	30	6	18	13	13	16	1d8
Sisterhood of the Oaks	Arch	R3	3	30	12	18	13	13	6	1d6
Royal Foot	Inf	F4	4	40	9	18	13	14	10	1d8 + 1

### Yrkhetep's Forces

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/Fig	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Lava Mephits	Inf	Meph	6	30	12/24	16	12	12	10	1d8/1d6
Skeletons	Arch.	Skel	7	10	12	19	12	N/A	20	1d6
Zombies	Inf	Zombies	8	20	6	16	12	N/A	16	1d8
Hordlings A	Inf	Hordl	2	35	9	18	13	12	4	2d6
Hordlings B	Inf	Hordl	0	45	15	17	15	16	4	2d6
Diakka A	Inf	Diakka	0	35	21	18	15	14	3	1d12
Diakka B	Inf	Diakka	3	45	12	17	14	13	3	2d4/2d4
Diakka C	Inf	Diakka	3	45	12	17	14	13	3	2d4/2d4



## The First (and Last) Charge of the Dwarven Air Cavalry

Kallamos Var is an ore rich mountain. Veins of gold and mithral are plentiful and there for the taking. The dwarves who live at Kallamos Var eagerly mine their wealth.

Now, during a time when many of the dwarves are away observing a holiday with their families, a tribe of goblins called the Dwarfbanes is descending upon the mine. They have been aided by an anonymous evil magic-user who has supplied them with wyverns.

Fortunately, there was a lag between the time when the goblins learned to ride the wyverns and the actual invasion. During this period, dwarven scouts learned of the plan and dashed back to the mine with the news.

Because there was insufficient time to call back the rest of the dwarves, the leaders at the mine wracked their brains thinking of a good solution. Flying goblins would certainly have a great advantage over earthbound dwarves.

As luck would have it, a wandering brass dragon also spotted the wyvern-mounted goblins, and being a good sort, dropped-in at the mine to discuss the matter with the dwarves.

The dwarves, some who spoke brass dragon, tried to negotiate, hoping the dragon would assist them. Unfortunately, the dragon was more inclined to conversation than action. The dwarves got the dragon's attention briefly when they mentioned a reward, but it lost interest when the frugal dwarves offered only permanent lodgings in one of the played-out wings of the mine. Failing at their first attempt to recruit the dragon, the dwarves offered it a few small gems. The dragon, being a shrewd haggler accepted them in return for spreading word of the dwarves' plight to his "friends." The dragon promised to tell his "friends" that the dwarves of Kallamos Var would be generous to any who helped them. The dwarves reluctantly agreed, and the dragon flew off to his home in the Great Desert. A short time later, a flock of forty especially moronic dragonnes descended on the mine, their

otherwise empty heads filled with visions of dwarvish treasure. These were the dragon's "friends," and the only creatures stupid enough to be recruited on the promise of dwarven generosity.

So was created an impossibility: Stout dwarves mounted on dim-brained dragonnes, forming air cavalry. Part of the force would remain earthbound as ground support. After a few days of hasty training, the First Dwarven Air Cavalry was as ready as it would ever be.

## Order of Battle

### Dwarven Forces:

The 1st Dwarven Air Cavalry is an inexperienced unit. What they lack in experience they make up in ferocity. The dragonnes can only keep up flight for 20 game rounds, then they must land and rest for five game rounds. They cannot use their roar weapon in this battle, since friendly troops might be affected.

The unit has light lances and short swords, and are clad in chain mail. They may enter closed formation when they land.

The first time the air cavalry engages the enemy, the unit undergoes a discipline check. If they pass, nothing is amiss and this particular roll need never be made again. If they fail, they must land as quickly as possible. This reflects the dragonnes' stupidity and the dwarves' dislike of heights.

After spending one round on the ground, the air cavalry may fly back up and engage. Repeat the discipline check after the first round of combat, with the same results, until the unit passes the check.

The Air Cavalry is led by Bren Goldenbeard: ST 17; IN 12; W 12; CN 16; CH 11; CM 10; F7; AC 0; Move 9"; F7; hp 50; #AT 3/2; Dmg war hammer; THAC0 13; AL LG; Rank unit; AR 28; CR 12"; CB 0; *chain mail* +2, *shield* +2, *war hammer* +3

The defenders of Kallamos Var are basic dwarf infantry. They wear chain mail and carry shields. They are armed with hammers and short bows. All

dwarven units get a -1 bonus on their AR vs. goblins. Their unnamed commander has CR 7".

### Goblin Forces:

The Dwarfdeath is armed with spears and short swords. The wyverns are unable to use their poison stings, as their riders are too inexperienced to avoid being struck by them. They are led by a Verlmak Bonechopper (CR 6").

Neither army needs to check discipline because of seeing a "hated" opponent. Both sides are quite aware of what their enemies are and have taken measures to restrain themselves.

## Setup

The goblins attack after sunset. The sky is cloudy, and there is a light fog. Treat it as normal fog (See BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat System rules, page 21) except that flight is allowed. The terrain is rough, but the dwarves may enter closed formation.

The dwarves set up first. The Air Cavalry starts at low altitude and no further than 6" from the dwarf ground forces. The ground forces start out no further than 4" from the mine entrance.

The mine entrance is located on the face of a sheer cliff. This cliff marks the eastern edge of the battlefield and is only accessible via the entrance. The field itself should be 8' by 4'. The mine entrance is 3" wide.

The goblins start at medium altitude on the board's western edge.

## Victory Conditions

The goblins must eliminate all the dwarves and have at least three figures remaining in order to control the mine. They must accomplish this within 30 game rounds. The rest of the dwarves are assumed to have returned by that time, and the goblin force could not possibly contend with them unless they had a good defensible position. The only such place is the mine. The dwarves win by preventing the goblin victory conditions. If both sides wipe each other out, the dwarves win.



## Troll Bridge

### The Bridge

On the road between Hlondeth and Ormath, at the point where a narrow finger of water runs from the southern Orsraun Mountains into the Vilhon Reaches, stands a sturdy, 40' wide and 210' long wooden bridge.

There is no toll to cross the bridge, as the structure was built with the cooperation of the governments of Ormath and Hlondeth to encourage commerce. The bridge is inspected periodically, and any necessary repairs are taken care of immediately.

Thick wooden pilings wedged deep into the river bottom support the overlaid plank flooring, while heavy ropes draped from suspension beams at each end and in the center provide support and stabilization.

### The Ambush

Recently, a caravan of traders arrived in Hlondeth with disturbing news. While crossing the bridge, their six-wagon caravan was attacked by a gang of hideous green humanoid creatures. The monsters killed anyone in the party who resisted, and then looted the wagons, throwing everything of value into the river. Out of the original thirty travelers, only eight are left to tell the tale.

The merchants agree to put up a

reward of 3,000 gp for the extermination of the creatures. In addition, the mayor of Hlondeth will put his 60-man militia under the command of anyone who wants to take up the challenge. If the attacks continued, and word spreads, the results would be disastrous for Hlondeth economy.

### The Battle Site

The area around the bridge is mostly flat plains with several clusters of thick, wiry scrub brush growing along the banks to the river.

As the troops approach from the east, they see that the river is muddy and slow-flowing (maximum depth is 12'). The river cannot be forded. The bridge is empty at the beginning of the scenario.

There are 80 gnolls hiding in the bushes, 40 at each end of the bridge. Because of their green tint they are not noticeable until a unit or character passes within 10 yards (1") of them, and then only if they are actively searching. If not discovered prematurely, the gnolls will wait until the militia crosses to the center of the bridge, and then attack from each end.

In addition, there are 12 scraggs (marine trolls) living in the water under the bridge. The gnolls are in partnership with the scraggs, and dump all their ill-gotten booty into the water to be

stored in the scraggs' lair until such time as it can be divided.

If the gnolls seem to be doing poorly in the battle, the scraggs will climb up the wooden pilings and lend their support.

The battle ends in a victory for the militia if all the gnolls and scraggs are killed or routed, even if the bridge is destroyed (see below). The battle ends in a victory for the monsters if the militia is killed or routed and the bridge is unharmed.

### Order of Battle

#### Militia

The Hlondeth Militia are 4th level fighters wearing scale mail, riding light war-horses and brandishing broad swords and shields. Half the militiamen (3 figures) are equipped with two flasks of oil. Each man in the other half has two torches and a tinder box.

#### Humanoids

The Snivlers are gnolls armed with battle axes.

The Terror of the Deep is a clan of 12 scraggs which attack with fangs and claws. Like their kin the trolls, they have the ability to regenerate but only when immersed in fresh water. They can be killed only by fire or acid.



## Defense of Halfling Vale

While many large forces clashed during the war sometimes called Hades War, there were many smaller conflicts. Some of these battles had little to do with the war, but instead arose from long smoldering squabbles and grudges that came to the surface during the chaos that always arises from war. A typical battle of this sort was the Defense of Halfling Vale.

Tucked in a pleasant valley to the north of Hlondeth, the community of Halfling Vale was untouched by the fighting. The halflings had relied upon isolation for defense, but when a hunter sighted an army of orcs approaching many halflings began packing-up their belongings. When a second sighting by a more sober halfling confirmed the sighting, panic broke out.

At this point a party of adventurers entered town. One of them, a paladin, urged resistance, and the group offered its help in fighting the evil foe. The paladin spoke so eloquently about the necessity for good beings to thwart evil at every opportunity that the halflings elected him to lead their tiny army.

## The Adventurers

Richard Wynne (human male): ST 16/22; IN 12; WS 16; DX 14/34; CN 17/02; CH 17/10; CM 16; AC 0; Move 6"; P5; hp 40; #AT 3/2; Dmg long sword; THAC0 16; AL LG; Rank as assigned; AR 31; CR 11"; CB +2; long sword, +1; shield +2

Azalia Waft (elven female): ST 9; IN 18; WS 8; DX 10; CN 12; CH 12; CM 14; AC 5; Move 12"; P5; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg dagger; THAC0 2d 20; AL CG; Rank as assigned; AR 35; CR 8<sup>1/2</sup>"; CB 0

Spells: *protection from evil*, *sleep*, *magic missile* (x2), *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *fireball*.

Halli the Bold (dwarven male): ST 17; IN 8; WS 8; DX 16; CN 16; CH 10; CM 9; AC 1; Move 6"; F5; hp 37; #AT 1;

Dmg scimitar; THAC0 16; AL LN; Rank as assigned; AR 31; CR 7<sup>1/2</sup>"; CB 0; scimitar +2, ring of protection +1

Samm Brogunn (halfling male): ST 10; IN 10; WS 6; DX 17; CN 14; CH 9; CM 10; AC 5; Move 9"; T4; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg short sword; THAC0 2d 20; AL CN; Rank as assigned; AR 35; CR 6<sup>1/2</sup>"; CB 0; *potion of speed*, *wand of wonder* (9 charges)

Mirable Dictu (half elven male): ST 15; IN 14; WS 14; DX 14; CN 14; CH 14; CM 16; AC 2; Move 6"; C3/R3; hp 21; #AT 1; Dmg battle axe; THAC0 16; AL CG; Rank as assigned; AR 31; CR 9"; CB 0; battle axe +2, scroll: *cure serious wounds*, *raise dead*

Spells: *cure light wounds* (x3), *bles*, *hold person*

## The Invaders

Unbeknownst to the party, the orcs have secret allies and a secret weapon. The allies are two hill giants, and the weapon is the *smudgepot of dusk*, which causes dusk-like conditions in a one-mile square area. This will allow them to attack in daylight with no penalty. (It's not much of a secret weapon, but what do you expect, an artifact?) They also have a leader, Muck, a giant orc (his father gave a hill giantess a *philter of love*).

Muck: AC 4; Move 12"; HD 5; hp 37; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 +2; THAC0 13; AL LE; Rank Army; AR 28; CR 8"; CB +1.

Tiny and Tyke (hill giants): AC 4; MV 12"; HD 8 +2; hp 51, 49; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; THAC0 12; AL CE; AR 27.

## The Battlefield

The scene of this fight is 15" x 15" square. The town is just beyond the south edge of the map. A four-inch wide swath runs east to west along the south edge. This area is a field of ripe barley, which is four feet tall. The rest of the battlefield is plowed ground, which doubles movement costs.

## Deployment

The halfling force deploys first within four inches of the south map edge. Unless the party does something to remove the barley the halflings units will be effectively hidden amidst the grain; the halflings treat the standing grain as a woods. The orcs deploy second, within two inches of the northern edge.

## Order of Battle

### Halfling Forces

The two Badger units are armed with short swords.

The Bullets are armed with slings.

The Hornets are armed with short bows.

Each unit is commanded by a halfling who fights with the unit (CR 7"). All of halfling units receive a morale modifier of +1 if any orc unit routs, even if it is subsequently rallied.

### Orcish Forces

The Stingers are armed with short bows.

The Slasher units are equipped with scimitars.

The Jabbers are carrying spears.

All units are commanded by orcs (CR 6"). If the army commander, Muck, is slain all orcish units must make an immediate morale check with +4 on the roll. Failure means that the unit routs. If the unit rallies it retains the morale penalty for the rest of the battle.

## Victory Conditions

This is a simple fight to the death. The side that totally eliminates the other wins. Units that rout off the map are considered eliminated. If the halflings prevail, the adventurers are honored by the villagers and given the title of Halfling Friends. Also, they are rewarded with all the ale they can drink in a single evening, plus 100 gp each.



**The First (and Last) Charge of the Dwarven Air Cavalry**

**Dwarven Forces:**

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
1st Dwarven Air Cavalry	Cav	F4	5	40	15" / 9" (MC E)	18	15	16	8	1d6/1d8/1d8/3d6
Defenders of Kallamos	Inf	5	4	25	9	21	14	15	8	1d4 + 1

**Goblin Forces:**

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Dwarfdeath	Cav	1	6	10	6" / 24"	20	11	10	20	1d6/2d8/1d6

**Trollbridge**

**Militia**

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Hlondeth Militia	Cav	F4	5	40	18"	18	14	16	6	2d4/1d4/1d4

**Humanoids**

Unit Name	Type	Level	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#Fig	Dmg
Snivlers	Inf	Gnl	5	20	9"	16	12	10	8	1d8
Terror of the Deep	Inf	Scrag	3	12	3" // 15"	15	15	13	6	1d4 + 1 / 1d4 + 1 / 1d10 + 2

**Defense of the Halfling Vale**

**Halfling Forces**

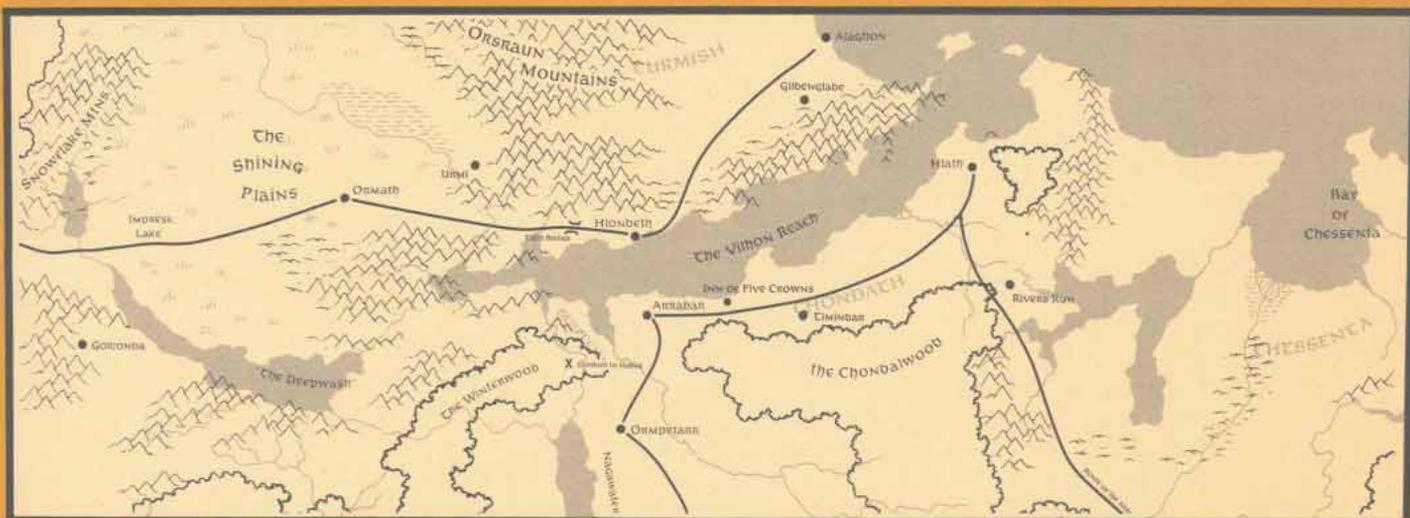
Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Badger 1	In	1	7	10	9	20	12	13	10	1d6
Badger 2	In	7	10	9	20	12	13	10	10	1d6
Bullets	In	1	7	10	9	20	12	13	10	1d4 + 1
Hornets	In	1	7	10	9	20	12	13	10	1d6

**Orcish Forces**

Unit Name	Type	Lvl	AC	HD/FIG	MV	AR	ML	DL	#FIG	Dmg
Stingers	In	Orc	6	10	9	19	11	12	10	1d6
Slasher 1	In	Orc	6	10	9	19	11	12	10	1d8
Slasher 2	In	Orc	6	10	9	19	11	12	10	1d8
Jabbers	In	Orc	6	10	9	19	11	12	10	1d6

## Combined Monster Statistics Table

Name	AC	MV	HD	hp	#AT	Dmg	THAC0	SA	SD	Book
<b>Arcanadaemon</b>										
(Yrkhetep)	-2	12"/18"	13+39	104	4	1-4/1-4/2-16/1-6	8	Y	Y	MMII
Cloud Giant	3	15"	12+1-8	62 each	1	6-36	9	Y	Y	MMI
Derghodaemon	0	12"	11+22	77 each	5	9-12 (x5)	10	Y	Y	MMII
Foo Lion	-1	21"	11+11	65	3	2-8/2-8/2-16	9	Y	Y	MMII
Gargoyle	5	9"/15"	4	20	4	1-3/1-3/1-6/ 1-4	15	N	Y	MMI
<b>Gold Dragon</b>										
Adult	-2	12"/30"	12	60 each	3	1-8/1-8/6-36	9	Y	N	MMI
Sub-adult	-2	12"/30"	12	36		1-8/1-8/6-36	9	Y	N	MMI
Griffon	3	12"/30"	7	35 each	3	1-4/1-4/2-16	13	N	N	MMI
Huecuva	3	9"	2	9	1	1-6	16	Y	Y	FF
Horse, Draft	7	12"	3	15	1	1-3	16	N	N	MMI
<b>Kobold</b>										
Guard	7	6"	1/2	3 each	1	1-6	20	N	N	MMI
Second String	8	6"	1/2	2 each	1	1-4	20	N	N	MMI
Necrophidius	2	9"	2	12	1	1-8	16	Y	Y	FF
Night Hag	9	9"	8	40 each	1	2-12	12	Y	Y	MMI
Night Mare	-4	15"/36"	6+6	36 each	3	2-8/4-10/4-10	13	Y	N	MMI
Nycadaemon	-4	12"/36"		96 each	2	9-16/9-16	9	Y	Y	FF
Ogre	5	9"	4+1	25 each	1	1-10	15	N	N	MMI
<b>Oinodaemon</b>										
(Anthraxus)	-6	18"	16+	233	2	2-12/2-12	7	Y	Y	MMII
Quasit	2	15"	3	14	3	1-2/1-2/1-4	16	Y	Y	MMI
Silver Dragon	-1	9"/24"	11	55	3	1-6/1-6/5-30	10	Y	N	MMI
Spotted Lion	5/6	12"	6+2	31 each	3	1-4/1-4/1-2	13	Y	Y	MMI
Treant	0	12"	8	48 each	2	2-16/2-16	12	Y	Y	MMI
Ultrodaemon	-5	15"/15"/15"	14+28	98	2	2-8/2-8	8	Y	Y	MMII
Yagnodaemon	1	18"	13+13	78 each	1	1-10+12	9	Y	Y	MMII
Vargouille	8	/12"	1+1	7 each	1	1-4	18	Y	N	MMII
Wyvern	3	6"/24"	7+7	42 each	2	2-16/1-6	12	Y	N	MMI



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