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Adventure

for 3 to 6 Characters of Levels 1-3

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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition

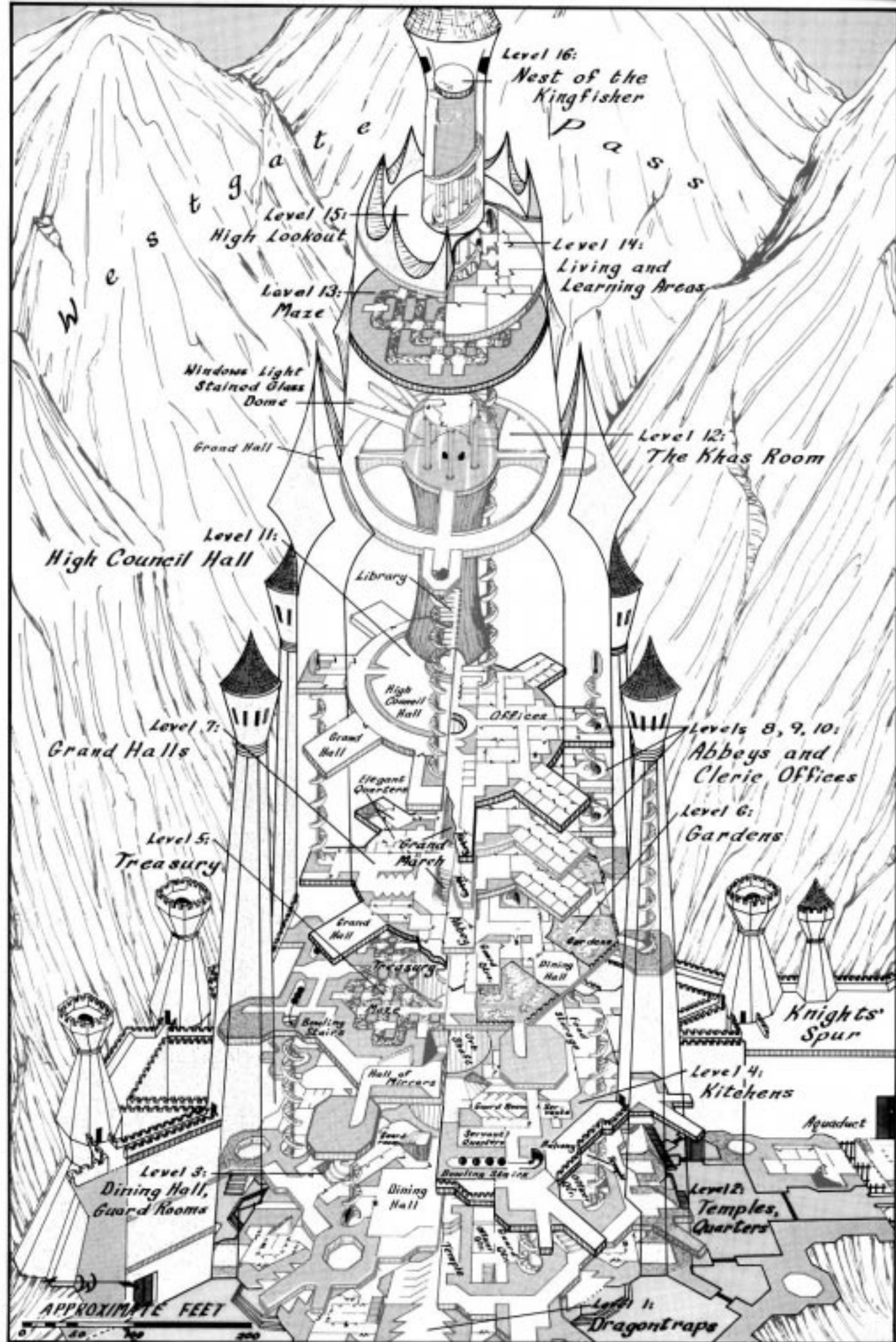
Dragon Lance

Official Game
Adventure

KNIGHT'S SWORD

BY COLIN McCOMB
WITH THOMAS M. REID





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Introduction

Welcome to the world of Krynn. Here, on the continent of Ansalon, the age-old struggle of Good against Evil continues unchecked. Bands of heroes battle forces of darkness, hoping to gain footholds for the side of light. Ansalon is a land of challenge, one in which fortune can make or break any adventurer. Welcome to Ansalon, the land of the Dragonlance.

This module is intended for characters of levels 1 through 3. It can be used as an adventure for introducing players to the world of Krynn. Its primary purpose, however, is to ease a beginning DUNGEON MASTER™ (or DM™) into his or her job. While the adventure is written with these beginners in mind, this does not preclude use by more experienced DMs. **Players should read no further in this book, unless they want to spoil the adventure for themselves. It is intended for the DM's eyes only.**

Most DMs should have already played the game and should be familiar with its terminology and procedures. This time, however, the burden of creating an enjoyable evening rests on the shoulders of aspiring DMs. The following hints will ease the beginner into his or her job.

Tips for The new DM™

Being a DM is a big task. Not only is the DM responsible for populating the campaign, running the NPCs and monsters, creating the maps, remembering vast quantities of rules, and effectively describing each setting, but he or she also must ensure that the players have a good time. This is a tall order, especially for those who have never done it before. Many times it will seem like a thankless job, especially when the players disagree with decisions the DM makes.

Nevertheless, there are good points to being a DM, despite the numerous headaches associated with the job. The satisfaction of providing the players with a memorable experience ranks high on the list. Creating an adventure that engrosses the players' and the DM's imaginations is a vastly satisfying thing. Being a DM is definitely a labor of love, but is well worth the time and effort invested, and soon it will become second nature.

What follows is advice on how to referee effectively, notes on standard refereeing practices, and a few words of caution for the beginning DM.

While wearing the mantle of DM, you must be fair and impartial at all times. No matter how irritating a player becomes, it is imperative that the DM not allow personal preferences to interfere with the smooth flow of the game. Obnoxious players will eventually behave, or else they will quit playing; poor social graces tend to cause inept playing and the death of favored characters.

Likewise, don't let the players get away with too much. Running player characters (or PCs) does not mean they should receive extraordinary treatment from the non-player characters (NPCs). The player characters and the NPCs are citizens in the world and nothing more. They may be heroes, but they must obey the same laws as other citizens.

Since the players do control heroes, they will occasionally try something that is "exceptionally heroic" (nearly impossible). At times like these, the DM's first reaction is just to say "No" and be done with it. However, since these are heroes, they often can accomplish things that ordinary mortals could not. Thus, the wise DM will allow attempts at these actions.

Simply determine how difficult a proposed action might be and have the player roll a d20 against an appropriate ability score for it. For something extremely improbable (jumping across a 30-foot chasm while dressed in full plate armor), the die modifier might be as much as -10, if the DM feels it is warranted. Never deny any action outright; always give the PCs a chance.

Don't try to railroad the players into one course of action, either. If they don't want their PCs to go on an adventure, cajoling them will not help matters. The DM may have to explain what it means to be a hero, but no DM should ever control a player's actions. The DM might want to try offering the same adventure in different packages, through different NPCs, a few separate times. If none of these tempts the players, try to work the adventure in someplace else, in the midst of another. Nothing is more irritating to a player than a DM who constantly tries to dictate the actions of the party.

Remember, the DM is there for both his or her own and the players' pleasure. If one or both of these groups is not enjoying itself, the point of the game is lost. Only if both groups can cooperate to create a shared vision is the game successful. The DM should always strive to make sure that fun is had by all.

One very important thing to remember is that the DM has the final word on **all** rules disputes. The DM shapes the game, and any rules that do not coincide with the DM's style should be ignored. This is not to suggest that all rules simply be discarded, but rather that they be modified as the DM sees necessary. While the players may input their opinions as to the form of the rules (usually in their favor), only the DM decides. They may decide to take on the responsibility of DM themselves.

Also, remember that this is just a game. It is nothing over which to destroy real-world friendships. All disputes should be handled amicably and fairly. If any participants cannot deal with their problems in a more mature fashion, perhaps the game ought to be delayed until the problem can be resolved.

This is only a small list of suggestions for more effective refereeing. For a more comprehensive view of the task, consult DMGR 1, the Campaign

Sourcebook and *Catacomb Guide*. This book provides insight into problems that face every DM, as well as suggested answers to those problems.

Some refereeing conventions include the use of boxed text and abbreviations for monsters and NPCs. Text surrounded by a box means that the DM is to read or paraphrase the enclosed text to the players. Any text not so surrounded is information for the DM only, to be given to the players as he or she sees fit. This information may or may not be discovered by the players' characters as they examine the encounter. Whether they do or not should depend purely on their actions.

When the PCs encounter monsters, the typical format of the presentation is as follows:

Monster Name (Number): Int ; AL ; AC ; MV ; HD; hp; THAC0; #AT; Dmg; SA; SD; MR; SZ; ML; XP each.

Int = Intelligence; AL = alignment; AC = Armor Class; MV = movement; HD = Hit Dice; hp = hit points; THAC0 = roll to hit AC 0; #AT = number of attacks/round; Dmg = damage of each attack; SA and SD = special attacks and defenses; MR = magic resistance; SZ = size; ML = morale; XP = experience points for defeating the creature(s).

Example:

Skeletons (3): Int Non; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 8, 7, 3; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (weapon); SD special; MR special; SZ M; ML special; XP 65.

Non-player characters are presented in much the same way. If they are not major NPCs (who often warrant an entire character sketch), their presentation is as follows:

Tanis Half-Elven: AL NG; AC -3; MV 12; F10; hp 79; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 16, C 12, I 12, W 13, Ch 15; *plate mail* +2, *shield* +2, *long sword* +2

Please note that the class abbreviation follows the movement rating. The abbreviations are:

F = Fighter D = Druid B = Bard
R = Ranger M = Mage KS = Knight of
P = Paladin I = Illusionist Solamnia
C = Cleric T = Thief

A final note: Every DM is advised to carefully read through every adventure he or she runs. Nothing disrupts the flow of an adventure more than a DM who must constantly flip through the text to see what's going on. If a villain has laid plans, it is imperative that the DM know what those plans are. Otherwise, the adventure becomes an exercise in disruption and incoherence. The DM should have an idea about the relative challenge to the players presented by the adventure and be able to adjust the difficulty of the encounters accordingly. If the characters seem too powerful for an adventure,

make the encounters more difficult. If they are too weak, make the encounter simpler. A well-balanced game is essential. **Always read through the adventure at least once!**

A Few Words About DragonLance® Adventures

Armed with all of this information, the beginning DM now prepares to charge into the fray. But wait! The DM must also learn some essentials about the world of Krynn-things that separate it and make it unique from all other known worlds.

A proper DRAGONLANCE® campaign bases itself around the struggle of good versus evil and around the characters' relationships in and with the world. Not every adventure is an earth-shaking event, destined to alter the history of Krynn. However, every one of them should embody the struggle which characterizes the epic quality of the DRAGONLANCE world. While most campaigns are simply a collection of adventurer's stories, the DRAGONLANCE saga draws these stories together into a coherent whole of epic proportions.

DRAGONLANCE adventures promote the power of truth over falsehood, justice over injustice, and Good over Evil. Good actions will generally be rewarded with blessings, while grave consequences arise from evil actions. While evil may temporarily gain a foothold, good should eventually win out.

DRAGONLANCE adventures tend to focus less on the combative aspects of the AD&D® game, and more on thinking and role-playing. Interpersonal relationships are a key facet of DRAGONLANCE play.

The world of Krynn itself is markedly different from others. Any DM who plans adventures within Krynn should be aware of these differences. The features which are most distinct include the new races, the moons and their influences on magic, and the Knights of Solamnia. The races unique to Krynn include the kender, draconians, and minotaurs. Each of these lends a unique flavor to the game. Minotaurs appear outside of Krynn, but they are a lesser race elsewhere.

The effectiveness of magic on Krynn relies on the three moons. When one's "patron moon" wanes, so does the efficacy of one's magic. The DM must pay careful attention to the phases of the moon where magic is involved.

The Knighthood of Solamnia is the enforcing arm of good. Its goals are not so much to win more land and glory for good, but to stem the rising tide of evil on Ansalon. The knights are the main force for chivalry, law, and goodness on this continent, and they constantly seek to keep the people aware of the knightly ideals,





Background

At the height of the War of the Lance, the dragonarmies besieged the High Clerist's Tower near the city of Palanthus, where the knighthood had entrenched itself. After a long wait, a large force of seasoned knights, led by crazed Lord Derek Crownguard, stormed forth from the Tower. However, Dragon Highlord Kitiara had planned for this, and the dragonarmy crushed the battalion.

Convinced that this spelled the end of the knights, Kitiara's army advanced on the High Clerist's Tower. Only Sturm Brightblade and his force of untested knights held Vingaard Pass against the dragonarmies, while an elven princess and her discovery of a dragon orb stood between the dragonarmies and their rape of Palanthas.

Sturm Brightblade sacrificed his life in order to buy time for the remaining knights and Princess Laurana, precious time needed to master the powers of the orb. His death purchased that time, and more importantly, caught the hearts of the people throughout Krynn. It paved the way for a restructuring of the Orders of the Knights of Solamnia. The knights realized that they had been living according to ancient rules that no longer held any meaning, to a Measure that could neither contain nor prescribe the honor of a true knight.

It took Brightblade's death, as well as the inglorious and foolish assault of Derek Crownguard, to make the knighthood realize that its priorities lay scattered. After the War of the Lance, the knighthood honored Sturm Brightblade's bravery and dedication to the orders of the knighthood.

The knights laid his body in state in the Chamber of Paladine, the burial chambers beneath the High Clerist's Tower. Here, with his armor and sword arrayed about him in honor, he lay peacefully and undisturbed by those who came for inspiration. His tale has been told and re-told, his bravery and integrity against the corruption of the old, stagnant knighthood seeming to grow with each re-telling. And with each telling, the reforms sweeping the orders gain even more momentum.

Most support the changes, but there are some who work long and hard to make sure the old ways continue to favor them. It appears that these opponents of change will stop at nothing to make sure that their positions remain unharmed.

This adventure is designed for three to six characters of beginning level. At least one PC **must** be aspiring to the knighthood (although none should have succeeded, as yet). The rest can be a mixture of other races and classes, but each player ought to remember that the knights focus strongly on honor. Dishonorable characters will hurt the knight-to-be's chances of joining the Order. Each player must abide by the restrictions of honor at all times. If existing characters are not available, the DM may assign the pregenerated characters found in the center of this book.

Background for The DM™

Not everyone has felt joy in the exaltation of the famed knight Sturm Brightblade and his heroics during the War of the Lance. Sir Charles Crownguard, in his jealousy over the slighting of his cousin, means to defame the Orders. Unknown to anyone (including himself), Crownguard has been corrupted by a magical item of great evil: the dagger of jealousy. He now plans to desecrate the final resting place of Brightblade and steal his sword (also called *Brightblade*), thus dishonoring the knighthood.

He means to accomplish this by hiring a thief to steal the Brightblade. However, he does not know that the Order plans to spirit the sword away as one of the tests, to see who among the candidates for knighthood has the sharpest mind. The knights, on the other hand, have no idea that the Test will soon turn from a simulation to the real thing.

What follows is the way the adventure is intended to run. If there are minor deviations, don't worry. Make sure that any corrections made to the PCs' path are subtle, and above all, do not force them to follow this path. If they go astray, use imagination to put them back on track.

The Likely flow of The adventure

- I. The player characters arrive at the High Clerist's Tower.
 - A. They proceed to the candidacy ceremony.
 - B. An assassin makes his bid for Lord Gunthar and is stopped.
- II. The Next Day.
 - A. The knight-to-be begins his tests.
 - B. The other PCs amuse themselves.
- III. The Brightblade is "stolen" by Lord Kellin Solanius as part of the tests.
 - A. He leaves an important clue behind.
 - B. He retrieves the blade just before the thief hired by Crownguard arrives.
 - C. Solanius travels to Solanthus.
- IV. The renegade Crownguard decides to kill Solanius for the sword.
 - A. The PCs find the clues left by Solanius.
 - B. The PCs arrive just in time to hear the dying words of Solanius.
- V. The PCs chase Crownguard and his thief to his castle, where they have a final battle. The Brightblade breaks as Crownguard wields it.
- VI. The PCs retrieve the sword and must take it to be reforged.
- VII. The heroes return in victory and their Solamnic companion is knighted.

Naturally, no one can anticipate all of the things a player will do. Know the material, but always be prepared to wing it. Success in this is the measure of a true Dungeon Master.

The Knighthood

You and your friends have ridden long and hard to reach the High Clerist's Tower in time for the Knightly Council. Sir Delson, a good friend of your father, has promised to sponsor you during your petition to become a squire. You are eager to prove yourself, to join the ranks of the gallant knighthood.

The day is bright and clear, the early greenery seeming to burst with life. Birdsong fills the air with sweet notes, and the sky is blue and cloudless. The sun radiates its heat gently on the land. A gentle breeze caresses your faces as you ride for the Tower. Along the road, both ahead of and behind you, other candidates for knighthood also head to the Tower.

The clear, bold notes of trumpets greet you as you ride through the gates. The excitement felt by all is nearly palpable, electrifying the air. Once inside the large courtyard, young grooms rush forward to relieve you of your horses. You notice guards stationed around the walls of the Tower, keeping a vigilant eye on all comings and goings. A harried-looking Knight of the Crown directs you toward the High Council Hall on the 11th floor of the Tower. He introduces himself as Sir Rateliff, orders you to come to him if you have any questions about the Tower or its inhabitants, and then tells you, in tones that brook no disobedience, to proceed there at once.

The knight is a descendant of the general who faced Lord Soth at Dargaard Keep. He has been assigned to see to the care and housing of the candidates, and to make sure that they know the way to the High Council Hall. Due to the comparatively large volume of applicants, he currently has little time to spend answering questions. However, he is thoroughly knowledgeable about the layout of the 16-story Tower. Although he is a soft-spoken individual, with a manner that seems more suited to the Library in Palanthis than the knighthood, his fighting prowess and knowledge of battle tactics make him a fearsome foe in combat.

Sir Rateliff: AL NG; AC 2; MV 9; KC7; hp 53; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 +2 (long sword); S 15, D 14, C 12, I 17, W 16, Ch 13; *long sword* +2

If the characters do not follow Sir Rateliff's directions, they are free to wander around the High Clerist's Tower. However, they will then find themselves late to the Knightly Council. This will present some serious questions about the candidate's dedication and the possibility that he is not responsible enough to enter the knighthood. It also will blemish Sir Delson's honor, since he agreed to sponsor someone unfit for the orders.

Likewise, any of the hopeful knight's companions who wish to explore the tower must restrain any larcenous tendencies. Even kender must hold back, for any misdeeds by the other PCs will reflect on their knightly friend. However, if any do not wish to watch the coming spectacle, they are free to roam around the open parts of the tower. If they so desire, they may even visit the Chamber of Paladine, where the heroes of the knights lie in state. If they do so during the Knightly Council, nothing is amiss. It is only after the first day of the tests that the theft occurs.

At the entrance to the High Council Hall, all of the candidates and their companions are gathered around two Knights of the Rose. The candidates are given white robes to wear over their other clothing. The knights then confiscate everyone's weapons, saying, "You won't need these in there." After the candidates are suitably attired, the knights lead everyone into the hall.

If the PCs resist giving up their weapons, the knights will not allow them into the Hall. Only weapons which are obvious and openly worn will be confiscated; a knight would not insult anyone's honor by accusing him or her of concealing a weapon. The PCs are, however, allowed to wear armor into the hall.

The spectacle in the hall is truly impressive. Rank upon rank of armored men stand before you, gleaming in the sunlight streaming through the western window. The proud symbols of the knighthood decorate their armor, and the profusion of knights is almost overwhelming.

Straight ahead of the candidates, in a cleared space in the center of the room, is a mahogany table with three chairs arrayed behind it. The three chairs are currently empty.

The escorts lead the applicants to the seats arrayed before the mahogany table, while a page shows the candidates' friends to nearby seats. The tension among the applicants is intense, yet unsurprising, considering that the rulings made in this room will change the lives of those gathered today.

The non-candidates among the PCs are seated in an area to the left of the table. There are several seats available in the front row, just enough to seat all the PCs. They are located about 15 feet from the table. Filling most of the rest of the seats are the families of other candidates. Sitting in the back row is a beautiful blonde woman with intense blue eyes. Most of the males in the room are acutely aware of her presence.

After a slight wait (which will seem like an eternity to the candidates), the three High Knights enter. High Justice Gunthar Uth Wistan leads the procession into the room with a minimum of pomp. Even so, their passage seems nearly mystical, like some-





thing out of legend.

They recite the Oath, "Est Sularus oth Mithas," in unison. The three orders repeat it in turn. In unison, everyone in the room echoes it. Then, the knights begin to sing their hymn in celebration of Spring. At last, the three High Knights sit. After they are seated, the rest of the assemblage sits.

The PCs may choose not to participate in the Oath, as they are not knights and probably do not know the words to the Knights' Hymn. No one will think worse of them if they do not.

Immediately, Uth Wistan calls the council to order. He relates to them the knighthood's news, which includes news of the dragonarmies (still secluded in Sanction), the infiltration of the armies by the knights' scouts (it goes well), the disposition of the spoils of war (to go to needy families and the families of the dead knights), and the rumors of a traitor in their midst. He dismisses this last, claiming that no one would be so foolish as to attempt to betray the knighthood.

The hall is bright and warm. Normally, it would be difficult to stay awake, but the excitement flowing through your veins keeps you alert. At long last, Lord Uth Wistan calls upon the supplicants to stand.

The other candidates rise immediately. The PC candidate may or may not, as he so desires, but not rising will be considered very rude and impertinent. This will color the knights' perceptions of the PC for the rest of his existence.

As Uth Wistan calls each candidate's name, he reads the sponsor's name as well. Both come forward to the table and present themselves to the audience. If there is a question of a candidate's honor based on his previous performance, that individual and his sponsor are ushered to a waiting room. Although the candidates do not know it, this action has no bearing on their future in the knighthood. It is simply to let them know that their unacceptable behavior has been noted, and it will not be tolerated. About halfway through the list, the following event occurs. The assassin is sitting next to the knight-to-be PC.

Lord Uth Wistan calls out, "Grall Stone-sword, sponsored by Sir Harald Karanus." A man sitting next to you rises and moves toward the table. A knight in the back rises, looks at the candidate, and with a note of alarm in his voice calls out, "He's not mine!"

The mysterious supplicant explodes into motion, whipping a dagger from beneath his robes and leaping toward the table. All the knights are instantly on their feet with a clash of armor. Some leap toward the table instantly, while others pause to draw their swords. It is obvious that none of them will make it to the table in time. The three High Knights rapidly push backward in their chairs to move away from the man, but

Lord Uth Wistan trips over his. He falls on his back, presenting an easy target for the assassin.

Only the PCs and the other candidates are within reach of the assassin. Give the PCs the first chance to react to the killer. If any of them hesitate, they should be left out of the initial (and crucial) round of action.

Assassin: AL CE; AC 4; MV 9; F2; hp 15; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1; S 16, D 15, C 12, I 12, W 10, Ch 8; SA poison on dagger (roll a successful save vs. poison or death occurs in one day)

The person with the best chance of halting the assassin before he reaches Lord Gunthar is the knightly candidate. If attacked, the man will defend himself with his dagger.

If the PCs do not react immediately, the man will continue his mad dash toward the fallen High Knight. After a moment of stunned disbelief, the other candidates will rush him but will be too late to prevent him from reaching Gunthar Uth Wistan. The man will straddle the knight, and just before he can begin a fatal swing, he will be tackled by a mass of knights. In the confusion, the dagger will scratch some NPC, who will go into immediate convulsions. Clerics rush in to tend to him. Finally, in the confusion, Sir Charles Crownward will run the assassin through with his sword. He will be apologetic, but the assassin will be dead.

If the PCs act quickly, they can drag the assassin down themselves. Even if they are wounded by the poisoned dagger, the clerics of Mishakal can neutralize the poison. Furthermore, if they manage to successfully subdue the murderer, they will have the gratitude of Uth Wistan and the rest of the knighthood. This will make achieving knighthood much easier, and no questions arise about the PC's honor later unless he is guilty of gross misconduct.

If questioned, the assassin reveals that he is a member of the dragonarmies, sent by the Dragon Highlords to assassinate Uth Wistan. During the questioning, the man grovels like a worm, begging for his life. The knights throw him into a cell in the dungeons. If the PCs kill the man, the knights will be rather displeased, but they will not grumble overmuch if the PCs saved the life of Uth Wistan.

After all the confusion, Uth Wistan continues the reading of the candidates. If the PCs saved his life, Uth Wistan adds his name as a sponsor of the knight-to-be PC.

Finally, the candidates and the spectators are ushered from the Council Hall so that the knights may discuss their private business. The candidates are sent to take their belongings to the dormitory. Those who accompanied the candidates on their journeys will be given temporary quarters in the Tower. They can also tour the Tower, with the now-less-harried Sir Rateliff as their guide. The Tower is described in detail beginning on **page 13**.

During this first day, any characters interested in astronomy may observe the constellation Hiddukel menacing Kiri-Jolith, a foreshadowing of the madman (see **pg. 9**). However, do not reveal this information unless someone thinks to ask.

The Tests

After a restful night's sleep, the blare of a trumpet greeting the dawn wakes the heroes. Most of the PCs will have free time on their hands, but their knightly friend will have his hands full with the Tests.

His exertions begin with the dawn, for he and his comrades-in-training have been roused before light struck the eastern sky. If the PC wishes to become friends with any of these comrades, the DM is free to invent them and their statistics. Remember that almost all of these will be fighters no greater in power than 1st or 2nd level.

The calisthenics in full plate mail start at once and last for two hours. On occasion, a candidate falls to the ground, unable to continue. Every hour of the day, the PC must roll a successful Constitution check or fall exhausted to the ground for 15 minutes. A PC with the Endurance proficiency needs to check only once every two hours. If the PC falls, read the following to him:

You lie panting on the ground, unable to muster the necessary strength to climb to your feet. The brutal heat of the sun seems greater than natural for this time of year. Sweat pours from you in rivulets, soaking your underclothes. Your throat is dry, crying out with the need for water. Your aching muscles refuse to support any effort to move, even when the shadow of the brutal drill sergeant Sgt. McKennen falls across you.

He sneers down at you. "Get up, you pathetic little weakling. I've seen newborn colts with more stamina than you! Do you really think you're worthy of the knighthood? Pah! Your puny little body probably couldn't stand the strain of carrying a shield, much less a sword! Come to think of it, I don't know what good a shield would do for the likes of you. We could save them for better specimens-like the draconians. Your only possible value to us would be as a battering ram! Get up, you grovelling worm!"

Sergeant McKennen stands there and continues to harangue you while the other hopefuls stop what they're doing to watch. At last, your muscles on fire, you climb to your quivering legs, leaning on your sword. Pain races its fiery way up and down your body, but you finally achieve your balance. With contempt in his flat, grey eyes, the drill sergeant turns away from you.

The hero might very well wish to plunge his sword into the sergeant's back. However, McKen-

nen is ready for any maneuvers of this sort because he's had it happen more times than he can count. Although he walks away with a swagger, he is listening for anything that may indicate someone rushing his back.

Sir Michael McKennen: AL NG; AC 0; MV 9; KS10; hp 81; THAC0 11; #AT 3/1; Dmg 1d8+6; S 18/53, D 14, C 17, I 12, W 15, Ch 11; *long sword* +1, *shield* +1; SA specialized in long sword, disarms an opponent on an attack roll of 4 greater than needed to hit.

Of course, any knightly hopefuls who do rush his back will be immediately disqualified from training. On the other hand, if the candidate challenges McKennen to a duel (or simply challenges him), the sergeant smiles, agrees, and disarms the character quickly, knocking him off of his feet, without even the knightly salute. He then stands over the fallen PC and offers this advice:

"Sometimes, my lad, you'll face an enemy without honor. Oftentimes, this is true even when your opponent is vastly superior in skill to you. Never let down your guard for an instant in combat. Only in tourneys can you fully expect your foe to follow the same code of honor as you. Your hand, please!" As he pulls you to your feet, you think you might have seen a glimmer of compassion in his eyes.

Other events for the day after the calisthenics include testing with all sorts of swords, to determine aptitude with each variety. After striking at wooden posts for what seems like hours, McKennen has the candidates pair off to whack at each other with wooden blades. This exercise continues until every pair has one partner go down under the bludgeoning of the other. The wooden blades inflict 1d6 points of damage, but only 1/4 of this is actual damage. The rest will fade within an hour. Anyone who drops below 0 hit points is knocked unconscious for an hour.

Typical Candidate: AL LG; AC 2; MV 9; F1; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 14, C 15, I 13, W 12, Ch 14

After the sword test, McKennen will allow a break for lunch. The candidates are not allowed to remove their armor, although they may take off their helms to eat. A cool breeze sighs down from the mountain, and most of the trainees sigh gratefully in response. After two hours of respite have passed (and the unconscious have awakened and eaten), McKennen rouses everyone to their feet. Despite the groans, training begins again.

This time, the test is of horsemanship and skill with the lance. The hopefuls can use only heavy warhorses and heavy lances. Although the lances have been padded, they still look painful. Targets are ranged throughout the field.





For three hours, McKennen has the trainees ride in circles around the courtyard, demonstrating their mastery of a horse from a saddle, as well as showing their skills with a lance. The PC may well begin to feel nauseous from the constant circles.

McKennen warns, "This is a dangerous exercise, and you can expect to get hurt. Anyone who does not want to participate in this event may excuse themselves. Of course, you'll likely not be accepted to the knighthood if you do so. After all, everyone else went through this, and if you can't stand a little pain, you're not fit to join their ranks!" One red-haired fellow, face aflame with embarrassment, flees the field. McKennen gazes after him in smug satisfaction.

In this exercise, the trainees joust with one another. The lances inflict 1d8 +1 points of damage, doubled for the charge (but only 1/4 is real, due to padding). In addition, if the lancer is struck for more than 8 points (after doubling), he must make a Riding check or be unhorsed, suffering an additional 1d2 points of damage.

This continues until the sun sets or all the candidates are unconscious. Then, after allowing unconscious candidates time to awaken, he and the other knights face the students they have trained. They stand in a line, swords drawn and pointing

down, until the students fall to attention. McKennen proceeds to address them:

"For the most part, you have succeeded admirably today. You have demonstrated to me that you are willing to endure almost anything to join our illustrious brotherhood, and I salute you for it." The knights raise their swords in the Solamnic salute. McKennen continues, "I have been honored to teach you today. I hope that those of you who felt my wrath today can forgive me." He grins. "But I'm sure you've had about enough of my prattle. One last word of warning before I go, though. The tests you faced today were the easy ones. Tomorrow, your mind will be tested far more severely. I hope you remember the Measure; otherwise, you'll be serving as squires for a long time."

The knights salute you again, and intone, "Est Sularus oth Mithas." They turn on their heels and walk inside, leaving you to pick up the courtyard. Once you are done with this, some of the young squires come to escort you to a hot bath, dinner, and bed.

The PC is free to do what he wishes with his evening, but unless he can roll a successful Endurance or Constitution check at -4, he will collapse into his bed, already comatose.



Diversions

While their companion occupies himself with affairs of the knighthood, the other characters may wish to do more than sit and watch him perform his tests. Since the knighthood is playing gracious host to the companions of those testing, the characters might as well enjoy the hospitality. Alternatively, they can leave their companion at the High Clerist's Tower and travel to Palanthus. This journey takes about a day. However, things might get complicated when the knight desperately needs his companions to join him.

Nonetheless, they may wish to travel to the city to get some things accomplished. For example, while in the city, clerics may need to travel to the Temple of Paladine. Mages might wish to visit the Great Library or (gods forbid) the Tower of High Sorcery in Shoikan Grove. Thieves may want to come here to keep their skills sharp, so to speak.

At any rate, the characters should be able to spend half a day amusing themselves. At that point, they encounter a madman (or maybe something else altogether). Whether they travel separately or together, he will deliver the following message to each of them:

"Oh, great danger now, oh yes, oh yes!" he cackles madly, "When the Trickster crosses the War God, things go awry! Even now, your friends on the pedestal are in need of you, for the Soulstealer threatens. . . ." And the old man falls to the steps in a dead faint.

If the PCs somehow rouse the old man, he looks at them in confusion. He asks, "What am I doing here?" He has no recollection of any of the previous dialogue. However, if the PCs do not roll a successful saving throw vs. spell, they will begin to feel a nameless premonition tugging them toward the High Clerist's Tower. A sense of growing dread accompanies this feeling, increasing until they begin the return trip.

If they remain at the Tower, they have a few other options. Clerics may find it interesting to engage in theological and philosophical discussions with various Knights of the Sword. Mages can retire to the library in the Tower which, while not as well stocked as the Great Library, still has a nice selection. Thieves should do nothing more than inspect the defenses and relax. The knights have no tolerance for burglary, nor for the frivolity of kender.

The Tower is best suited for those interested in the fighting arts. Warriors will find a vast pool of sparring partners, as well as some of the finest instructors available. The knights have a nearly inexhaustible supply of weapons, some of which may be bartered or traded for those of poorer quality and a good sum of money. Of course, if the PCs saved the life of the High Justice, the knights' storemaster will be much more willing to trade the

items of value for a lowered price.

The knights also keep a fine stable, if the adventurers wish to upgrade the quality of their horses. Short of some of the barbarian tribes on Ansalon, few others have such a selection of horses.

The characters may, if they so desire, join a boar-hunting party in the mountains outside of the Tower. If the characters choose to go, there is a 25% chance of a special event. If one is indicated, roll 1d4 and consult the following table:

1. Avalanche
2. Mudslide
3. Lame Horse
4. Dragon flies overhead

Avalanche: Characters (PC or NPC, as determined by the DM) on foot in its path must roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or take 2d10 points of damage. If their saving throw is successful, then they avoid the rocks. Mounted characters must roll a successful Riding proficiency check or be thrown from the horse, suffering falling damage as well as avalanche damage. Horses in the path also suffer damage.

Mudslide: As with the avalanche, the PCs or NPCs must roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or be swept away along with horses in a mudslide. The slide carries creatures 100 yards down the mountain. Unless an individual rolls a successful Strength check to escape the mud, he or she must be rescued. Rescuers trying to cross the mud must roll a successful Dexterity check with a -2 penalty or lose their footing and slide to the bottom. Horses cannot cross the mud; rescuers must traverse it on foot. Trapped characters are submerged and may suffocate, if not rescued quickly enough. (see the Player's Handbook, pg. 122, "holding your breath")

lame Horse: A horse fails to pay attention to its footing, steps on a loose rock, and breaks its leg. Unless one of the PCs knows healing magic, it must be killed to end its suffering.

Dragon Flight: It is only a routine patrol of bronze dragons, but it spooks the horses. They remain skittish throughout the rest of the afternoon, and Riding proficiency checks suffer a -3 modifier for the rest of the day.

Boar-Wild (5): Int Semi-; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 3+3; hp 24, 22, 21, 14, 13; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SZ S; ML 9; XP 175 each.

There are 12 huntsmen, not including the PCs. They are young Knights of the Crown indulging in a bit of sport. Lord Kellin Solanius brings along some of his dogs for tracking, as well.

Hunting Knights (12): AL LG; AC 5; MV 9; KS2; hp 20, 19, 17, 16, 16, 14, 13, 12, 12, 11, 10, 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type





The Theft

While everyone in the Tower slept, Sir Kellin Solanius crept down to the Chamber of Paladine with one of his war dogs. Very intentionally, he walked his dog in the mud of the courtyard first so that it might leave tracks. The Chamber guard, following Uth Wistan's orders, allowed himself to be bound, gagged, and knocked unconscious.

Then, breathing a prayer of forgiveness for the desecration of the tomb, Solanius removed the sword of Sturm Brightblade from the dead man's crypt. Wrapping it in heavy cloth, he stole from the crypt to his room. Taking his luggage and his dogs, he left immediately for Solanthus.

However, as he left the Chamber of Paladine, he failed to observe the figure hiding in the deep shadows in the corner. Corya, the blonde from the initiation ritual, concealed by her black clothing, arrived just a little too late to steal the sword herself. However, she has memorized Solanius' face for future reference so that she and Crownguard might retrieve the sword later.

Begin the second day by reading the following to the PC candidate *only*:

The morning dawns bright and early, a typical beginning to a beautiful day. You and the other knights-to-be have arisen, tended to your morning rituals, and eaten breakfast. Most of your compatriots do not anticipate enjoying the day's tests; if they are anywhere near as difficult as Sir McKennen hinted, many do not predict surviving the day. All of you now sit at the breakfast tables, conversing.

When Lord Aeric Truehilt, today's instructor, arrives, the candidates stand, ready to begin the tests. Thus, it comes as a total surprise when he instead announces, "Everyone to the High Council Hall. Now. No questions. Don't worry about dressing for the occasion. The High Justice must tell you something." His tone brooks no argument, and his thunderous demeanor dares anyone to defy him.

If the PC does try to open his mouth or disobey in any way, Truehilt will turn on him with an unbelievable fury. Until the erring character backs down, Truehilt will rage at him. If this goes on for too long, Truehilt will recommend that he not be allowed to continue the testing process; someone who cannot obey a simple order obviously cannot understand the more complex rules by which a Knight of Solamnia must abide. If no one questions Truehilt, the candidates march upstairs to the hall, casting uneasy glances at one another.

When they arrive, they will find many of the other knights gathered there as well. Many look stern and unforgiving while others are simply outraged. Various knights tug at their mustaches in anxiety or tightly controlled fury. It is easy to see, however,

that many knights have already departed for their homes after the Spring Council, for there are numerous vacancies in the seating.

The candidates are ushered rather firmly into the corner. Uth Wistan and the other High Knights arrive. They seat themselves without ceremony and speak the Oath. The High Justice immediately speaks, wrath evident in his voice.

"Apparently, I was wrong about the supposed traitor in our midst," he says. "Just last evening, someone broke into the sanctified Chamber of Paladine and stole the sword from a dead man's chest! What is worse, this sword served to symbolize all that is good and noble in the knighthood. Because of the misplaced faith in one of our knights, the body of Sturm Brightblade lies violated! If this were for a good cause, the insult to the dead would not be so grievous. As it is, the offense is unparalleled.

"I want the candidates to dress themselves in their armor, gather their weapons, and begin to search for the perpetrator. Bring the culprit back for justice, and restore the honor of the knighthood! Use everything, and I mean everything, you have learned here, heard here, and seen here in this tower to track the guilty party. If you have companions you trust well, you may include them in your quest.

"I hereby open the entirety of the Tower for your perusal. I expect any knights present to give you whatever help they may. I am not certain that the malefactor has left the environs, but we have to assume that it is a distinct possibility. Prepare yourselves for long journeys, but make sure you are thorough in your search.

"The one who finds the missing sword shall be allowed to completely bypass any requirements of becoming a squire, and will be directly knighted. If none of you finds the blade within three months, knights shall ride out to search for it. I bid you all good day, and good luck. May the Three Gods aid you."

Meanwhile, the other characters awaken to the sounds of booted feet and armor clanging down the hallways. A steward comes and knocks at each of their doors, and asks them to accompany him to the High Council Hall. Once they reach the hall, they wait outside for only a few scant minutes before knights come bursting out. Any questions put to the steward before the knights come out are answered with a polite, "I know not, my lords."

If they have chosen to follow the steward, the other characters will be there when their companion emerges from the Council Hall. He can choose to enlighten them or not, as he sees fit. However, the rest of the adventure hinges on their cooperation, as each character should have unique talents to contribute. Once he joins his waiting companions, read the following:

The other candidates and knights are hurrying from the room. Some have taken the time to group together into little clusters, discussing options. All of them seem to be at a loss as to where to start their search for the Brightblade and its thief.

The knights themselves mill about outside the High Council Hall, arguing among themselves. Sir Rateliff stands beside the door to the hall, stroking his long mustache. Over in the corner, Lord Crownguard argues with the beautiful blonde. Their voices do not carry, but their cadences do rise above a whisper occasionally, giving you no doubt that Crownguard is furious about something.

Crownguard and Corya are quarreling about her failure to get the Brightblade before it was stolen by Solanius. Crownguard cannot denounce Solanius without admitting his own guilty intentions. After they lay the blame on one another, Crownguard and Corya begin to plan a way to get the blade for themselves. If anyone draws near to them, they will smoothly change the subject before the person draws within earshot.

Have all of the PCs roll an Intelligence check with a -2 modifier. If any succeed, they remember that Sir Rateliff is the ultimate authority on the layout of the Tower, and might well be able to answer any questions they have. If any adventurer remembers without having to roll the Intelligence check, give the character a 20-xp bonus.

Rateliff will not volunteer information or advice, for Uth Wistan has instructed him not to; the characters must draw it from him. He will only answer questions along the following lines:

1. Layout of the Tower. Refer to **The Investigation** for the information he can provide. Although he does not know the specific contents, Rateliff can give a general description of each floor.
2. Quarters of the various knights, and their eccentricities. More specifically, he can tell the players that it is Lord Kellin Solanius who owns the dogs. If they ask about Gunthar Uth Wistan, he can tell them that Uth Wistan often plays games within games. Any question about McKennen leads to a speech about McKennen's fidelity. Finally, a question about Crownguard draws a puzzled look, as if Rateliff himself weren't certain of the man. He says that Crownguard had been acting strangely even before his cousin's ignominious defeat here at the Tower. The man has become radically different in that short span of time, and no one really knows what he's doing these days.

Rateliff will not wait outside the Council Hall forever. He, too, has a daily routine, and those who want to find him will just have to look for him. He is not here to serve the PCs.

The Investigation

This is the most important phase of the adventure. If the heroes cannot figure out any course of action, they will not be able to advance to the next stage. In this event, the DM must gently nudge them along the right course. Perhaps the characters overhear some of the other candidates saying something about the Chamber of Paladine. Another good ploy to keep them from wasting time is to have knights emerging from the level they propose to search. The knights tell them, "There's nothing here. We searched it thoroughly, and you'll just be wasting your time."

If the PCs ask to join with any of the other candidates, the trainees will reject them. They claim that while teamwork might well prove to be of some use, the PCs are already a large enough group; any more would prove much too unwieldy. No amount of persuasion will get these men to join.

There are only two areas which hold any clues. One is on level 7, where Lord Solanius resided while he was here. The other is in the Chamber of Paladine, as well as on the steps leading to that area. The party will gain any other clues only through questioning the various guards who were on duty last night.

If at any time they go looking for the tomb guard, they will learn that he is currently in the infirmary with a bandaged head. Apparently, he took a nasty blow, and is going to be recovering for some time.

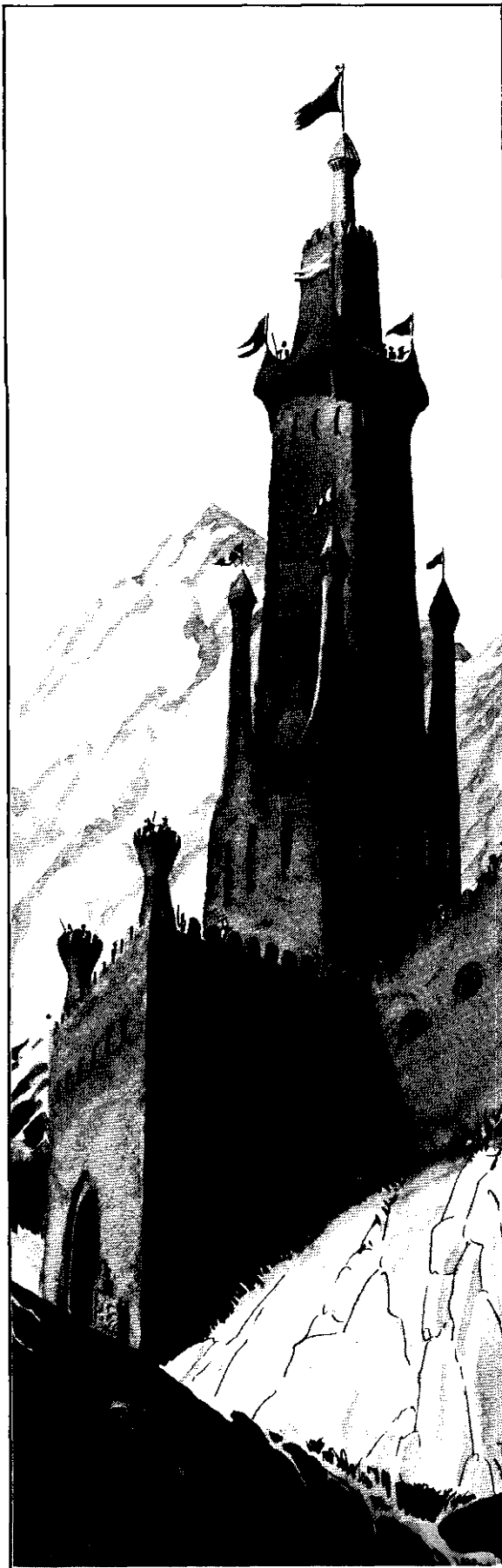
If the PCs have taken their time in getting to him, he will comment on how popular he has become. Otherwise, he will gleam with pleasure at becoming so important to the knighthood. If questioned, he relates the following:

"I had just relieved the previous guard from duty, and was preparing for another long night of boredom! He sneezes, and winces from the pain it causes his head. "Sorry. Where was I? Oh, yes. I was practicing some moves with my sword when I heard someone coming down the stairs. I knew it was a knight, because plate mail does not exactly lend itself to stealth.

"I greeted the knight and, since I recognized him, let him past me into the Chamber of Paladine. He said he had some prayers to attend to. The next thing I knew, I was lying on the cold stone floor outside the Chamber, holding my aching head.

"The worst thing about all of this is that I remember recognizing the knight, but I can't recall his face now! I mean, I know that blows to the head can make you forget things, but I cannot believe that I would forget the most important thing that has ever happened to me!" This obviously frustrates him a great deal, for he knows how important this is to the knighthood as well.





After subsequent questioning, it seems apparent that he cannot tell the heroes much more. As they are on their way from the room, he calls them back to him.

“I just remembered something,” he blurts out, bursting with pride. “The knight had a large mastiff with him, and it was very well trained. Does that help at all?” He then falls back into his pillows, his face pale and drawn. He seems more contented now that he has actually been able to remember something of use.

As much as he would like to, he cannot help the adventurers any further. His amnesia is real, from having been clubbed a little too hard by Solanius, and cannot be cured by spells. He now believes that the theft was real, and genuinely wishes he could remember more.

Tomas, the gate guard who was on duty from midnight to dawn (known as the first watch), is getting ready to go to Palanthas on leave when the characters find him during their search. He is in the barracks packing his belongings. Although he is fiercely devoted to the knighthood, this is his first furlough in over three months, and he is not happy to have it delayed any longer.

When you enter the barracks you see a hard-looking man picking up a large, stuffed bag. He glances up as you make your entrance and appears to curse softly to himself.

“Well,” he says, his rasping voice betraying his disgust, “I guess furlough’s gonna have to wait.” He seats himself on one of the beds and waits for you to do the same.

If asked about his exasperation, he explains that this is his first holiday in some time, and he’s probably going to be stuck here answering questions for at least a day. When the real questions begin he says:

“Yeah, I was on duty last night for the first watch. Really cold and, more to the point, really boring. After all, who’s gonna attack the Tower? After we took on an entire dragonarmy, I think we’ve got a pretty ferocious reputation.

“Anyway, three or four knights left during my watch. You’d think that these guys, being experienced warriors and travelers, would want to wait until they could at least see the light in the east before they set out.

“There was young Warin Strongbow, headed to Palanthus. He said something about finding some excitement. Arius Steelhelm took off for Tarsis. Said he had urgent business. The arrogant knave said he had no time for talking to the likes of me. Reminds me of the old knighthood during Crownguard’s time.

“Only one of them had any real light (and probably any real brains, too); he was carrying

one o' them light-gems from Solanthus. That was . . . let's see . . . yeah, that was Kellin Solanius. He had his dogs with him, as always. I don't think he goes anywhere without 'em. Said he was goin' back to the old family homestead there.

"Finally, there was Keris Virtainus. He told me he was going east on a "mission of importance" for the knighthood. Something about a whole bunch of new minotaurs showing up on Mithas. He said these guys supposedly came from even further east than that. Just between you n' me, I didn't think there was any land east o' Mithas. An' who cares about thirty more minotaurs? It's not like they mean the destruction of the knighthood or anything.

"An' that was it. Hope I've been some help. If you'll excuse me, I've gotta pack some more stuff." He turns his back on you, and resumes his preparations for his journey.

Tomas does not know any more than that. If questioned further, he'll shrug and say, "I don't know," or words to that effect. He has already offered the only information he knows that might be useful.

Layout of the Tower

Level 16: Nest of the Kingfisher. This is one of two areas that the candidates are not free to enter. It is the sacred home of the knighthood's token, and the knights will not allow it to be disturbed.

Level 15: High Lookout. The only thing up here, aside from the knight on patrol, is the whistling wind.

Level 14: Living and Learning Areas. Searching this area takes about two hours.

Level 13: Maze. This place is simply a test of the wits and directional ability of those who come here. If the characters wish to search this place, it will take them over four hours.

Level 12: The Khas Room. Meditation and quiet reflection are the dominant features of this room. Level 12 also houses a Grand Hall, but it is completely empty. It takes two and a half hours to search this level.

Level 11: High Council Hall and Library. This level is growing very familiar to the PCs. They may conclude that there is nothing here after only forty-five minutes of searching.

Level 10: Abbeys and Clerical Offices. This is where the various clerics of the Gods of Good are quartered when they are here. The chaplain will claim that nobody came by last night, and the doors were securely locked when he awoke this morning. It takes two hours to search this level.

Level 9: Abbeys and Clerical Offices. This level is nearly identical to level 10.

Level 8: Abbeys and Clerical Offices. As with level 9, the cleric here asserts that no one stopped by while he was awake. Since the knights usually wake him when they need to do some praying or confessions, he assumes that none visited at all last night. Although he does not lock the abbey, he is fairly certain that there were no nocturnal visitors. A search of the level will take only one and a half hours, because the cleric will join in the search.

Level 7: Grand Halls and Elegant Quarters. The Grand Halls are situated conveniently for any visiting dignitaries, who are quartered in the finest accommodations the High Clerist's Tower has to offer when they visit. When there are no important outsiders to entertain, prominent knights often take these rooms for their own.

One interesting thing the characters can find in one of these rooms is an overwhelming amount of evidence suggesting many dogs. There are dog tracks littering the floor, closely resembling the muddy dog prints on the steps leading to the Chamber of Paladine. If the party has been there and noticed the tracks, they will easily recognize these.

There is dog hair all over everything. The man staying in this might have been a nobleman, but he certainly did not keep his dogs from dirtying things. If the characters ask around, they will eventually find out (probably from Sir Rateliff) that Lord Kellin Solanius occupied these chambers during his stay.

Level 6: Gardens. Because of the nearly constant activity in this area, with a staff of full-time gardeners keeping the area free from weeds, any clues that might have once been here are totally obliterated. There is evidence of fresh digging everywhere, so any complete search of this area would take over seven hours.

Level 5: Treasury and Maze. The maze hides the entrance to the Great Treasury of the High Clerist's Tower. Since only the three ranking knights may enter the maze freely, and the guards outside remained conscious all evening, they are sure that the sword is not hidden within. Therefore, this area is totally off-limits.

Level 4: Kitchens. Servants bustle here and there, carrying racks of beef, huge tubs of steaming water, and other food-related goods. If any are stopped and questioned, they will say that there are always at least 10 people in the kitchen at any given time. Thus an outsider, especially at midnight, would be easily noticed. There is no need to search this level, but if the characters do so it will take them one hour.





Level 3: Dining Hall and Guard Rooms. While the dining room is well-appointed, there is nothing even closely resembling Sturm's sword in the area. Likewise, the guards in the efficiently-kept barracks would have immediately noticed if any intruders had entered their area. They will be deeply insulted if the heroes insist on searching here anyway, and will offer no aid in the search. Thus, the search here takes two hours.

Level 2: Temples and Quarters. The quarters are where the lesser knights and the candidates stay while at the Tower. Only the most fastidious and stubborn PCs will search these areas, for they certainly heard nothing last night. A search of the quarters takes two hours.

The Temples are where the grand ceremonies of the knighthood take place. The burnished wooden pews gleam softly in the refracted light from the stained glass. Its beauty is totally unmarred by any clues for the characters.

Level 1 (Ground Level): Dragontraps, Courtyard, Stables, and Dungeons. These areas are just as their names describe. The dragontraps have been cleared of the dead blue dragons and eagerly await their next victims. The courtyard is still churned and muddy from yesterday's practice sessions, awaiting a good rain shower to smooth it out again.

The stables hold a sizable number of excellent horses, although this number is smaller now that so many knights have left the Tower. The dungeons currently hold no prisoners, for which the jailer is profoundly happy. The dungeons also hold no clues, nor do the rest of the areas. This will take about six hours to ascertain.

Cellar: Chamber of Paladine. Go to the next section for a full description.

Knights' Spur: This is a hollowed wall that is roughly square in shape, about 200 feet on a side. It has three levels which house a chapel, map rooms, meeting rooms, and several sleeping rooms. This is the only part of the Tower that was used during the siege of the War of the Lance, except the dragontraps. There is a stream which runs through an aqueduct underneath the castle.

Though the PCs might search here (for what better place to hide a stolen object than under the victim's nose?), they will find nothing pertaining to their quest. It will take about three hours to thoroughly search the Spur.

The Chamber of Paladine

Immediately upon entering, have the characters roll a Wisdom check with a +2 modifier. If any succeed, they will notice two sets of muddy footprints on the staircase leading downward; a large

dog's and a human's. Both lead directly to the door of the Chamber of Paladine and through the door into the tomb.

Even if none of the PCs notice the tracks immediately, allow them to re-roll the modified Wisdom check after each turn they spend searching. When a success is finally rolled, the tracks are noticed.

If they enter the crypt itself, they will see that the sarcophagus labeled "Sturm Brightblade" has had its cover pushed away to reveal its contents. If they enter the room to investigate, the door swings shut behind them, drawing a thunderous echo in the crypt. At that precise instant, the torches flare out.

In all the excitement, it appears as if someone has forgotten to change the torches. At least, this is what you assume when they gutter madly for an instant and then extinguish themselves. You scramble for a moment to establish a new light source, then realize that you can still see. The mysterious light source is an amber gem with a mellow gleam. It glows serenely for a few moments longer and begins to flicker. Before anyone can do anything, the sunny light emanating from it fades entirely.

The characters may now take whatever action they wish. Of first priority, of course, is getting a light. Once they have achieved this, they may examine the gem. It lies just to the left of Brightblade's tomb, an interesting little jewel that has somehow been carved into the shape of an eagle in flight.

Any character who rolls an Intelligence check with a -3 modifier or any character who hails from Solanthus will recognize the gem as one of the Solanthian light-gems. It can hold sunlight for up to 30 hours after having been exposed to it for one turn.

Additionally, anyone who rolls another successful (unmodified) Intelligence check will remember certain other important facts about these light-gems. The most relevant is that, due to the mineral's rarity, each stone is personally crafted for one individual. Thus the craftsmen of Solanthus, who are the only ones skilled enough to work the light-gems, would probably recognize this one and be able to identify its owner.

If none of them make the check, almost anyone else in the Tower can give them this information. The clues by now should tell the players that Solanthus should be their next destination. At this point, the characters may choose to investigate further or to ride for Solanthus at once.

The players may wish to show the light-gem to other candidates in hopes of gaining more members to their party. If they try this, they will find that most of the others have left the Tower for various points, following their own lines of investigation.

Erastin Rivenguard

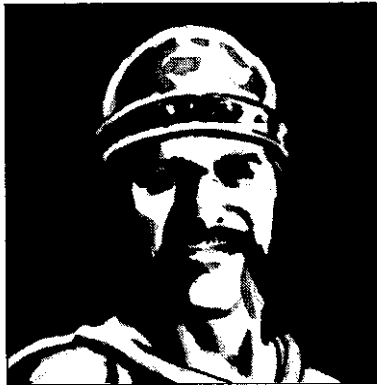
Male Human Fighter, Level 1
Lawful Good

AC: 1 THAC0: 20
MV: 9 #AT: 1
hp: 11 Dmg: 1d8+1
Str: 17 Int: 14
Dex: 16 Wis: 15
Con: 15 Cha: 12

Weapon Proficiencies: heavy lance, long sword, two-handed sword, dagger

Non-weapon Proficiencies: horse riding, heraldry, animal handling, reading/writing, endurance

Equipment: plate mail, family's long sword, heavy war horse



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Targin Steelaxe

Male Dwarven Fighter, Level 3
Chaotic Good

AC 3 THAC0: 18
MV: 6 #AT: 3/2 or 1/1
hp: 29 Dmg: 1d8+3
Str: 17 Int: 10
Dex: 17 Wis: 9
Con: 16 Cha: 15

Weapon Proficiencies: battle axe (specialized), short bow, dagger

Non-weapon Proficiencies: endurance, mountaineering, stonemasonry, blacksmithing

Equipment: chain mail, pony

Magical Items: *chain mail +1, 20 arrows +1*



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Galenye Faelern

Female Human Thief, Level 2
Neutral Good

AC 4 THAC0: 20
MV: 12 #AT: 1
hp: 10 Dmg: 1d6+1
Str: 13 Int: 15
Dex: 17 Wis: 12
Con: 12 Cha: 16

Weapon Proficiencies: wrestling, short sword

Non-weapon Proficiencies: juggling, tumbling, disguise, reading lips

Equipment: thieves' picks, numerous hidden pouches, three doses of contact sleep poison (successful save vs. poison or fall asleep for 1 turn)


Magical Items: *leather armor +2, short sword +1, rope of climbing*



Thieving Abilities:

PP: 30% OL: 40% F/RT: 35% MS: 35%
HS: 20% DN: 15% CW: 60% RL: 0% I.b.
Backstab x2

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Erastin Rivenguard grew up in a family with a long tradition of providing soldiers to the Knights of Solamnia. At last, the knighthood agreed to honor this contribution by allowing one of the family's children to seek entrance into the Order. Thus, from the moment Erastin could speak, he was groomed for the knighthood. Ever since he could read, he has studied the Measure and was made to recite the Oath every night before he slept. His knowledge of the Measure is greater than most full knights'.

To ensure that he was fit in more than just mind, the Rivenguards hired the dwarf Targin Steelaxe to see to the boy's training. Targin made sure that Erastin learned both the chivalric forms of combat and the more common dirty fighting.

To prove his worth before seeking entrance into the knighthood, Erastin began his adventuring. He, Targin, and Galenye took up arms. In time, he gathered more companions, each whom he values dearly. He would sacrifice his life and his chance at the knighthood for his friends.

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Targin Steelaxe has always been somewhat of a loner. His childhood in Thorbardin affected him strangely, somehow driving him to the open air which frightens so many dwarves. Indeed, he becomes claustrophobic underground. In all other ways, however, he seems the typical dwarf. He is grumpy, dour, and stern. Underneath, he holds a deep love for all that is good and will attempt to destroy anything that perverts it. He hates draconians nearly more than anything.

He is a young dwarf, about 75 years old. In this time, he has learned a decent measure of fighting

skill. Targin was, for a time, the companion of a knight, and he learned the ways of true honor from him. Thus, he seemed a natural choice to tutor Erastin in knightly combat. Targin now travels with Erastin to the High Clerist's Tower to see how well his teaching took hold.

Targin has been a long-time friend to Jilani, although he distrusts the magic she wields. He was happy to have her join the expedition to the Tower, and he took an instant liking to Karathos the Minotaur. However, he hides this with a typical dwarven gruff exterior.

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Having grown up in the same Solamnic village as Erastin Rivenguard, Galenye knows him well. As children they were sweethearts, and she has not forgotten the childish love she felt for him then.


For a few years, she traveled away to Gwynnedd in Ergoth. There she learned the skills that enabled her to survive in the city, as well as the illegal trade by which she survived for a time. It was also there that she was captured and thrown in jail. The Ergothians planned to execute her, but she man-

aged to escape from the jail before they did so.

After having re-encountered Erastin, she realized the fundamental selfishness of her previous life. She now uses her thief's skills to combat crime, rather than commit it.

More often than not, she uses her good looks and charming manner instead of hard work to get by. Although she is somewhat lazy, she is beginning to develop a strong sense of honor through her friendship with Erastin.

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Jilani

Female Half-Elf Mage, Level 1
Chaotic Good

AC: 7 THAC0: 20
MV: 12 #AT: 1
hp: 4 Dmg: 1d6
S: 10 I: 18
D: 11 W: 12
C: 9 Ch: 13

Weapon Proficiencies: quarterstaff
Non-weapon Proficiencies: astrology, reading/
writing, dancing, spellcraft, disguise
Equipment: spellbook, robes, staff
Magical Items: *ring of protection +3*
Spells in spellbook: *detect magic, magic missile,*
read magic, shield, wall of fog



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Karathos

Male Minotaur Fighter, Level 2
Lawful Good

AC: 4 THAC0: 19
MV: 12 #AT: 3/2 and 1
hp: 24 Dmg: 1d8+9
Str: 19 Int: 10
Dex: 15 Wis: 8
Con: 17 Cha: 9

Weapon Proficiencies: battle axe (specialized),
two-weapon style, wrestling
Non-weapon Proficiencies: tracking, seamanship,
rope use, blind fighting, ambidexterity
Equipment: 50' silk rope, grappling hook
Magical Items: *chain mail +1, battle axe +2*



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Siriath Leafwine

Male Elven Cleric, Level 2
Lawful Good


AC: 2 THAC0: 19
MV: 12 #AT: 1
hp: 14 Dmg: 2d4
S: 14 I: 13
D: 16 W: 17
C: 15 Ch: 12

Weapon Proficiencies: morning star, sling
Non-weapon Proficiencies: healing, herbalism, re-
ligion, reading/writing, ancient history
Equipment: chain mail, shield
Magical Items: *medallion of faith*



Spells: 1st level: 4
Favored spells: *command, cure light wounds,*
entangle, light

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For as long as she can remember, Jilani has been fascinated with magic. Although she has not been at it too long, she has found that she has a natural aptitude for the work. Her lifelong friend Targin Steelaxe distrusts her sorcery, yet he seems to accept it as a necessary evil.

For a time, she and Targin went their separate ways, choosing to gain more experience in their chosen fields. A few years passed. On her way back to their designated meeting place, she stopped in a tiny hamlet for the night. Little did she know that the natives were incredibly superstitious, regarding her as a witch to be destroyed. As she slept that night, the natives crept into her room and bound and gagged her. They prepared a great pyre in the center of town and tied her to a stake in the center of it. They were preparing to torch the

whole pile when a horned figure burst roaring from the forest at the edge of the tiny village.

Since they had never seen a minotaur before, the villagers fled from the creature they assumed was a fiend from the Abyss. Soon, the whole village was deserted. Jilani, having prepared herself for the searing heat, was amazed instead to find gentle hands untying her.

She and the minotaur Karathos became fast friends. When they reached the Solamnic village after several interesting exploits, she found that Targin had found himself a whole new group of friends, and that they were heading to the High Clerist's Tower. She and Karathos agreed to come along. She does not quite trust the thief Galenye, nor does she fancy the elven cleric. However, since Targin allows them to come, she accepts it.

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Karathos' origins are something of a mystery. He will not speak of his past willingly. He says only that he came from the lands to the northeast of Ansalon. This would lead one to believe that he is from the brutal continent of Taladas, leading to even more speculations.

Only Karathos knows the true story: He left the League of Minotaurs to escape the constant brutality inherent in life there. He took a small ship with two companions who found life on Taladas equally unattractive. However, storms and continual ill-luck ruined their expedition on the shores of Ansalon, and he found himself washed up alone on the shores of Mithas.

He set out to find his comrades, but was not sure where to begin looking. One thing is certain: he is not welcome on Mithas any longer, for he slew the minotaurs who, suspicious of his foreign

appearance, attempted to take him hostage.

Karathos has a unique fighting style. He fights with a battle axe in each hand, and has named his two axes Bonebiter (magical) and Heartcleaver. His expertise is such that he gets three attacks every two rounds with Bonebiter. He is a savage fighter when enraged, yet he retains his code of honor at all times.

He has a bet with Erastin that Erastin won't make it to the knighthood. His honor prevents him from fouling Erastin's chances, and besides, he wants to see Erastin succeed, for the two honor-bound individuals have become good friends. He is simply trying to offer a little more impetus.

He trusts Jilani implicitly, for they have experienced many things together. He is still wary of all the others in Erastin's band.

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Siriath Leafwine is a distant descendant of Silvanos, the founder of Silvanesti. In the War of the Lance, Siriath commanded a troop of elven warriors in raids along the dragonarmies' flanks. He saw that the "cursed humans" were bringing the Queen of Darkness back to Krynn, and he longed for a way to combat this.

Soon, he encountered a true cleric of Paladine and was converted. However, he did not lose his racial intolerance. His stiff-necked pride alienated many of the clerics of other races whom he encountered.

He began having dreams of a huge golden dragon. It turned its head sorrowfully toward him and gazed at him with reproach in its eyes.

The dream became ever more realistic, until one

night when the dragon spoke. "Go. Leave this land and journey with those you would brand impure. Do not return until you have learned the true value of humanity." When Siriath awoke, he found himself in a strange place and heard a group of beings approaching him. This is how he came to meet Erastin and his comrades.

Although he remains haughty, he is becoming more and more impressed with these others. Their short lives are incredibly rich and full, and they have developed an appreciation for beauty rivaling that of the elves. Even the "savage" minotaur has a true zest for life.

While Siriath still lapses into his arrogance, this happens less as time progresses. He is even becoming a pleasant individual with whom to travel.

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The Road To Solanthus

The road to Solanthus is fraught with peril. In the wake of the War of the Lance, many less savory individuals found that the way of the sword suited them. Others had no homes to which to return, for the War had devastated the land. The War awakened many voracious monsters, too. Many claim that it is not safe to travel anywhere without a heavily-armed escort.

There is no paved road between the High Clerist's Tower and Solanthus, although there is an admirable dirt trail from so many years of travel between the two areas. The distance between the two is about 120 miles, requiring three days of mounted travel. Although the road sees frequent use (or perhaps because of this fact), bandits and various other creatures often use this area as a focal point for their depredations.

Roll 1d10 twice a day to determine if the party encounters some of these creatures. On a roll of 1 or 2, they have encountered one of the following creatures. Roll 1d8 to determine which:

Wandering Monsters

1. Stag (1): Int Animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3 (hooves) or 2d4 (antlers); SZ M; ML 7; XP 65.

2. Draconians, Baaz (4): Int Average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 6, Glide 18; HD 2; hp 15, 13, 8, 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axes); SZ M; ML 13; XP 175 each.

3. Goblins (8): Int Low; AL LE; AC 6 (10); MV 6; HD 1-1; hp 6, 5, 5, 4, 3, 3, 3, 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short swords); SZ S; ML 10; XP Varies each.

4. Bandits (5): Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 1 +1; hp 8, 7, 5, 5, 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long swords); SZ M; ML 10; XP Varies each.

5. Ogres (2): Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 31, 28; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (or by weapon); SA +2 to damage; SZ L; ML 11; XP 175 each.

6. Tinker Gnomes (8): Int Highly; AL NE; AC 5; MV 6; HD 1; hp 8, 7, 7, 6, 3, 3, 1, 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SZ S; ML 8; XP 65 each.

7. Wolves (3): Int Semi-; AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 9, 8, 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1; SZ S; ML 10; XP 65 each.

8. Kender (4): Int Average; AL CN; AC 8; MV 6; HD 1; hp 6, 6, 3, 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SZ S; ML 20; XP 65 each.

The stag silently appears from behind a stand of trees, gazing impassively at the party. Although the stag obviously is not the fabled White Stag of legend, an inhuman intelligence seems to lurk behind its eyes. If any in the party approach it, it gazes at them a while longer and then, with an impertinent flick of its white tail, vanishes into the woods.

The draconians pose as traveling mendicants who appear as no threat. They are dressed in long brown robes with hoods covering their features. Filthy bandages swath their hands, obscuring their reptilian heritage. Since they are currently in a leadership crisis, they have no formal plans for attack. They rely on their time-worn method, that of using their disguises to draw close to their victims and then attacking.

It is very possible (75% chance) that the sight of a knightly person will cause them to ignore their plan and simply rush forth screeching. They have not forgotten that the knighthood played a crucial role in the downfall of the dragonarmies, and they long for revenge.

The goblins are beginning to get some organization after the War and are trying to amass some notoriety so that they may attract more followers. Obviously, they won't last long by attacking traveling knights and their companions. This particular company has no sense of tactics and will break cover screaming. They have over 40 yards to traverse before they can reach their prey, allowing the victims plenty of time to ready a defense. No one ever said goblins were smart.

The bandits are under the command of one Erek Malham, a crafty old warrior from before the War. He wisely took no sides, preying on both for his living. His opponents call him "The Solanthian Scourge" for his irritating habit of intercepting goods going both to and from the city. The merchants of Solanthus have set a 1,000 stl reward on his head.

Erek Malham: AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; F2; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1; S 16, D 14, C 10, I 14, W 13, Ch 16; *broad sword +2, leather +2*

When the characters come upon the bandits, they are encamped in a small depression. The bandits are totally surprised, allowing the characters a free first attack. This will completely negate Malham's tactical ability, allowing for a fairer fight between the two parties. If the heroes kill Malham, they may claim the reward in Solanthus.

The ogres are a mated pair on a simple bashing spree. They will not surrender, but if one should fall, the other will go into a berserk rage, gaining a +2 modifier on initiative and attack rolls until it dies. They will not flee from battle and have no strategy. Crushing things is all they want to do.

The gnomes are would-be raiders. They have discovered the theory that it is easier to feed on others' work rather than doing one's own. Unfor-





tunately for them, their method of going about it does not produce the best results. Of course, they rely on their technology and their wits (in that order) to overcome any obstacles in their path. For this reason, they are currently starving.

When the party encounters them, they are standing around a strange contraption, having just given it the final touches. The thing looks like nothing more than a steam-blowing scrapheap with a huge and terrifying metallic face mounted on the front. It apparently acts as a ram as well as an awe-inspiring piece. It chuffs scalding steam from its mouth and nose, making the face resemble a fire-breathing gnome. Its spiked wheels find easy purchase in the ground, the fifth wheel mounted in the rear providing the steering. The overall effect, however, is not one that induces overwhelming fear; rather, the contraption is ludicrously humorous.

When the gnomes first spy the characters, they leap into the "death machine" and stoke its fires to greater heat. The machine rumbles ominously and rolls slowly forward, gathering speed as it approaches the characters. Suddenly, it emits a huge steamy belch and trundles from the road. Moments later, the gnomes abandon ship, leaping from it in great haste. As they race away, the boiler on the machine explodes with a loud bang, leaving a dented and ripped hull on the machine.

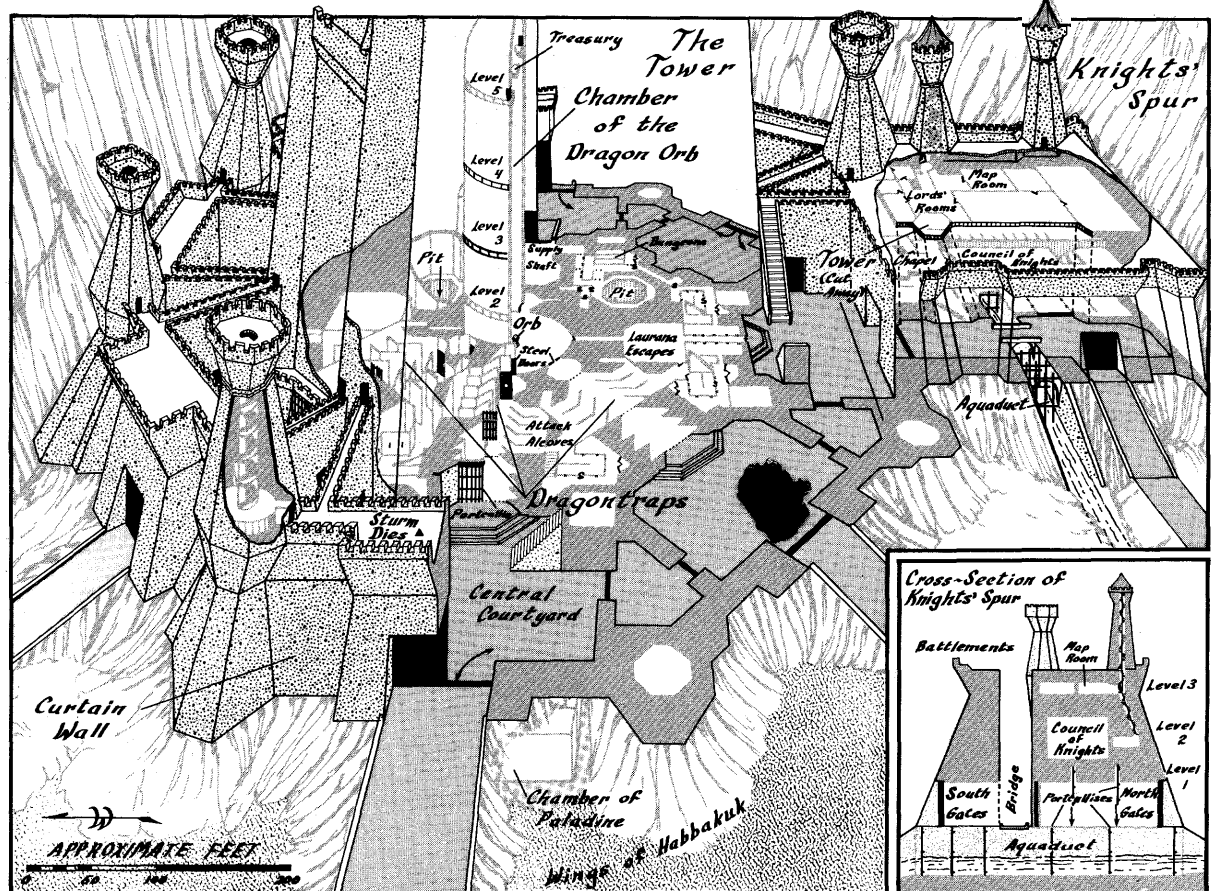
In the event the characters wish to search the machine, they will find that the interior of the de-

vice is totally unrecognizable. Any sense they might have made from it has been obliterated by the explosion. The machine is completely useless except for any other gnomes.

The wolves are three young males whose pack was slaughtered by fur trappers and fearful townsfolk. They are hardly more than cubs and have little idea of how to survive. They appear at night around the characters' camp, their eyes gleaming redly in the firelight. They will not enter the camp and will flee from combat. They howl mournfully if driven away from the camp, getting just far enough from the campsite that it would be a bother to the characters to chase them.

If the PCs leave scraps of food for the young wolves, the wolves will follow the characters. They become bolder as time progresses, and if they are well-treated, they may even come to join the party's "pack." They will serve as faithful companions once their trust is won. If the PCs keep them, they will grow to full size and gain hit points.

The kender are just wandering. They flock around the PCs with great interest, filching small items from them and replacing them with other things. They will take nothing of real value but may leave one or two gems worth 250 stl in exchange for some shiny object. This encounter should be played for amusement value and to see how the characters deal with a swarm of kender surrounding them. Good role-playing should be rewarded with a 75-xp bonus.



The Traitor?

At last, the characters reach Solanthus. The fortified city presents a forbidding exterior to those who approach it. In addition to its newer and stronger walls, the city is surrounded by a shallow moat (about 10 feet deep). The moat is well-maintained and free from algae and dangerous creatures. Ringing the moat is a decrepit old wall, half-crumbled and weakened, a remnant of earlier ages.

There are only three entrances to the town, each of them well-guarded by sentries loyal to the Lord Mayor. They inspect each wagon coming into and leaving the city, ensuring that no one is engaging in activities detrimental to the well-being of the town.

The city is only just regaining its former status as a trade center, for it suffered mightily during the War of the Lance. The dragonarmies and various raiders destroyed the surrounding area, depriving the honest farmers of their livelihood. The raiders slaughtered the cattle and burned the fields that provided sustenance for the city dwellers. The fear that this might happen again has prompted their suspicion of strangers.

Granted to the Solamnics for their aid to the dwarves in a time of need, Solanthus is situated on an old dwarven mine site. The tunnels carved by the dwarves provide an ideal method for smugglers and thieves to transport their goods to and from the city. The guards and the Lord Mayor are aware of most of the shafts, but there are a few in the twisted maze of which they remain oblivious.

The most obvious gift the dwarves left for the humans was the cleft spire, a shimmering tower of rock which graces the night sky in the center of the town. With a pure spring bubbling at its base, the spire is the only known source of the Solanthian light-gems. Within the town, a soft glow constantly keeps the streets lit and fairly free from crime. Light-gems mounted atop tall poles and protected with powerful magic shed their stored brilliance during the night, keeping even the darker streets aglow with a lesser imitation of the sun's light.

The spires themselves are well guarded all the time. It is forbidden for anyone but those approved by the Lord Mayor to mine from the spires, for the mineral is very rare. Only those who have provided a great service for the city may possess any pieces of the light-gems. Each piece is carved into a distinctive shape, so that if it is lost, each gem may be returned to its rightful owner. At night the glow from the spires may be seen at a distance of over one mile.

Two castles flank Solanthus on either side, resembling grim sentinels against the backdrop of the Garnet Mountains. One is the ancestral home of the Crownguard family, of which Charles is the last surviving scion. The other, looming ominously over the town, is the refuge of Lord Kellin Sola-

nius, the nephew of the Lord Mayor of Solanthus.

When they arrive in Solanthus, the characters must take rooms in town if they wish to stay. Although they could claim rooms in either Crownguard's or Solanius' strongholds if they were full knights, neither of these two will recognize them as worthy of this claim. There are two decent inns in town, the Gleaming Gem and the Boisterous Bull, from which the characters can base their operations.

The characters might wish to ride to Solanius' castle immediately. If so, proceed to **Visiting Solanius**.

In town, the characters can do just about anything they please. Although the city is still trying to rebuild from the disastrous attacks of the War of the Lance, its merchants and residents present a united front to visitors. They try to provide as many amenities as would be available in an undamaged city. Almost every service the characters might need is procurable.

Thus while the characters may pass through sections of the town that are charred and ruined, the commercial life exhibits no such ruin. If they wish to search through the rubble, remind them that this is tantamount to looting, and no honorable person would allow the theft of another's property.

Solanthus holds three major temples, those of Shinare, Paladine, and Mishakal. Each temple has a full staff waiting to help the needy. Although none of the temples is as large as the one in Palanthas, they each have a respectable following.

The Lord Mayor maintains a townhouse near the spires and the central market. Not only is this a residential home, but it also functions as the town hall. The Lord Mayor can be reached here at almost any time of the day. His last name is also Solanius. He is Kellin's uncle, and he will speak glowing words of praise in the knight's defense. Despite the fact that he is family, he is not trying to protect Kellin; these words are sincere.

The Lord Mayor does not altogether trust Crownguard. To be entirely frank, he does not trust him at all. The two have been rivals on the City Council often enough that neither likes the other; the Lord Mayor is honest enough to admit that he has let his personal feelings bias his actions against Crownguard.

However, he claims that there is reason for his dislike, for he sees Crownguard as greedy, vainglorious, and grasping, a man concerned only with his own ambition. He is certain that Crownguard would sacrifice everything to restore his family's name, and to further enhance it, he would betray his knightly vows. The Lord Mayor is not certain that Crownguard took his vows seriously, anyway.

The lifesblood of the city is the grain and cattle that are sold at the weekly auctions in the marketplace. In pre-war days, farmers came from all over Ansalon to sell their livestock and their produce in the Solanthian marketplace. Since the War, farmers are starting to filter back into the market.





However, they must first look to their own survival, and they therefore do not bring the huge amounts of harvest they did in the past.

The people in town, if asked, will all support Kellin Solanius. Although they regard him as a bit of a fop, they claim that he is one of the most noble people they have ever met. "A true Knight of Solamnia," they will say, "one of the good ones." They will refuse to hear ill spoken of him, for he dedicated himself to improving the lot of everyone in Solanthus, not just his cronies.

They are dissatisfied with Crownguard, for he seems interested only in improving his own lot and those of his rich friends. The citizens seem to feel that Kellin and Charles are opposite numbers, at least as far as personalities go. Where Kellin is giving, kind, and generous, Crownguard is selfish and greedy. However, since the rich people control the elections, Crownguard is a perennial winner.

If the PCs take the eagle-carved light-gem to any jeweler in Solanthus, these experts will recommend that they visit Myrtha Stoneshaper. They say she is the best jeweler this side of the Gate of Souls, and that she has been blessed by Reorx the Shaper, himself, with her ability.

When they enter her shop, located conveniently near the spires, read the following:

As you enter the small, dingy shop, a small silver bell above the door tinkles sweetly. The store seems strangely devoid of any sort of product. The display cases are all empty. From the back room, you hear a crabby old voice call out, "Bide yer time! And don't touch anything!" In a moment, a small dwarvish woman strides forth from her workshop. In there you can spy the jewels and gems that should be on display out front. It looks almost as if a weird fire had sprung up in the back room, so intense are the blazes from the stones in back.

The little woman looks up at you and snaps, "What!"

After the PCs explain their mission, or produce the light-gem (depending on whether they left it as a clue to other searchers), she pauses thoughtfully.

"Wait here," she mutters and shuffles into the back room. She comes out moments later holding a heavy leather book. After blowing dust from its cover, she opens it carefully and begins thumbing through the brittle pages.

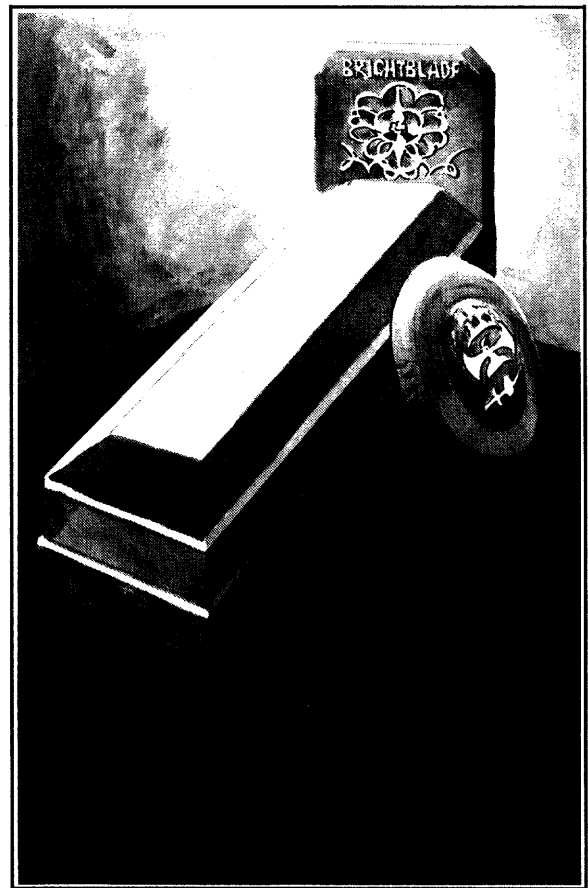
"Let's see . . . eagle . . . hmm. Ah, yes, here we go. I thought I 'membered carving that one. Let's see, it musta been coupla years back. Did it fer that young Kellin Solanius. Fine fella, him. That what you wanted ta know?" She stares at you with bright eyes, daring you to keep her from her work for much longer.

She will answer their questions for about five more minutes, growing ever more impatient with

each passing moment. At last, she grows disgusted enough to walk into the back room during the middle of one of their questions. She will lock the workshop door and yell, "Go away! I'm busy!"

No matter what the characters do, short of burning the shop, she will remain in the back. The flimsy-looking doors turn out to be securely locked by magical means, and if the party harasses Myrtha for too long, the city guard will show to escort them from the town. Those who resist will be dealt with harshly, for the guard has no time for foolishness or the fools.

Although they may not know it, the PCs now have enough evidence to confront Solanius. The clues all certainly seem to point in his direction. The only problem is the townsfolk will not believe that he is guilty, and his behavior seems to indicate someone concerned with the well-being of others. The party will have to determine how they want to unravel this mystery.



Visiting Solanius

If the players are intent on riding off to confront Solanius immediately, remind them that their characters need hard evidence before they can bring him to justice. Unless they can somehow positively identify him as the culprit, they must continue to conduct their investigation in Solanthus. They may wish to spy on him in order to ascertain whether he is the culprit. Allow this to happen, but they should not be able to discover the evidence for which they search. However, the numerous dogs that Kellin keeps will bark frantically the whole time unless the characters take precautions against detection.

Once the characters head for Solanius' castle, ask them what proof they have that he is the thief. If they offer an inadequate explanation (a hunch, the simple fact that a dog was at the tomb, or anything of the sort), continue with Solanius still alive. When they confront him, he fairly bristles with anger. He will first demand, in righteous tones, the evidence they hold against him. When they are unable to produce it, he will threaten to discredit them before the Knightly Council for attempting to sully his good reputation.

If, however, the PCs have adequate evidence, then their arrival at Solanius' keep is just after Crownguard's move for the sword. Once they enter the grounds, read the following to the players:

As you approach Solanius' keep, something odd keeps nagging at you. You finally realize that his dogs, which you would expect to be barking, are silent. In fact, you cannot hear the slightest whimper from their kennels.

Another minor detail draws your attention. The beautifully-carved oak front doors of Lord Kellin's stronghold stand slightly ajar, spilling forth the light from inside. You see a form sprawled on the floor just beyond the doors. A weak moan issues from the figure.

If the characters draw closer to investigate, they find that the form is that of Lord Kellin Solanius. He lies in a pool of his own blood. He has crawled some distance after being wounded, as there is a trail of bright crimson stretching behind him. When he sees the heroes, he gestures them closer to bestow upon them his dying words. If they do approach, read the following:

Solanius smiles a wistful smile, and chuckles weakly, blood trickling from his mouth. His humor quickly turns to a gasp of pain when the movement tears at his insides. He is obviously beyond any but the most advanced healing magic. Only force of will keeps him alive now.

He begins to whisper to you. You have to bend close to hear his words. When he speaks, flecks of bloody spittle fly from his mouth.

"You certainly did your investigating well," he murmurs. "You fingered the correct culprit. I was the one who stole the sword. However, I am also innocent. Read this parchment in my belt. It will explain everything. It was all part of the Test, and you've passed admirably. I hope my clues weren't too obvious." He coughs painfully, and a clot of gore spatters the floor.

"Ouch," he continues mildly. You can't help but admire how little he complains and whimpers. "Read the parchment. The Brightblade has been stolen from me, the keeper. It was that traitor Crownguard and his thieving wench Corya. He distracted me, she stabbed me in the back, and I whirled. Then Crownguard stabbed me. Watch out for him. I think he has a poison-coated dagger. Please. Avenge me, and reclaim the honor of the knighthood from Crownguard. Nobody in his family has ever been worthy of it. And hurry, before he goes anywhere.

"One last request," he asks, his breath growing short. "Take me to my dogs. I know that ruthless pig Charles slaughtered them, but I want to lie with them in death." He closes his eyes and does not open them again.

The parchment (found in the back of this book) is a signed and sealed letter from Lord Uth Wistan, explaining that the theft was an integral part of this year's Test. He asks those who apprehend Solanius to treat him with courtesy until they can return to the Tower so that the story may be verified. In a post-script, he asks that Solanius' detainers return the sword without using it.

Assuming that the characters take Solanius to his beloved dogs, they will find the kennel in complete disarray. Every dog is either dead or dying, some by gaping sword wounds, while others lie panting their last, their muzzles covered with foam that indicate poisoning. The dogs that still live crawl over to their dead master and lie beside him, waiting to die.

If the characters spent too long investigating (that is, spent more than a day looking around in the High Clerist's Tower or more than two days in Solanthus), they will arrive to find two other candidates rushing forth from the keep. These two leap to their horses and begin to gallop off in the direction of Crownguard's keep. If hailed, they call back that they are headed to the real traitor's keep. They have Uth Wistan's letter with them.

In the time it takes for the characters to react to this, the two candidates will have gained a substantial lead. Unless the party has some method of stopping these two, they will reach Crownguard's fortress well ahead of the PCs. If the PCs follow, they will find the bodies of the two hopefuls and the letter when they reach Crownguard's keep. They appear to have been slain from behind. This should prepare the party for the assault they will face when (or if) they enter the keep.





The True Traitor

Like the portals at Lord Kellin's keep, the doors to Crownguard's castle also stand wide open. However, there is a welcoming party at these gates, one much more malicious than a huddled body. Crownguard stands there, cradling the Brightblade as if he owned it. He waves you inside as you enter the courtyard then vanishes into the darkened interior with an evil-sounding giggle before anyone can react.

If the party follows him inside, they immediately enter the Great Hall of Castle Crownguard. While it is not nearly as impressive as some of the Great Halls on Anasalon, neither is it tiny. Once the PCs enter, the massive doors swing shut behind them, keeping them trapped inside the shadowy confines.

Toward the back of the hall, Crownguard stands clutching the Brightblade possessively. Even from the characters' vantage point, it is obvious that the man has at last gone totally insane. At his side is Corya, who sneers maliciously at the party as she reaches for Crownguard's arm.

The thing that really draws the PCs' attention, however, is the new and improved Gnomish Death Machine. If the characters encountered the gnomes on the road to Solanthus, they will recognize the general machine type. Painted across the

cheeks of this one are the words, "Knight Squisher." A band of eight gnomes hangs from Knight Squisher, shouting derisively at the characters. At Crownguard's signal, Knight Squisher begins to trundle forward, blowing steam.

The gnomes have the same statistics as the ones in the **Wandering Monster** section, **pg. 19**. In fact, if the characters did not kill them, these are the same gnomes. They cackle menacingly as Knight Squisher approaches the characters and ready themselves for the inevitable and unpleasant thumps when the characters are overrun.

This fails to happen. The machine seems not to have been properly repaired, for it veers from its set course again and crashes into a nearby wall. The force of the impact flings the gnomes from the hull of Knight Squisher, and they are dazed for a full round. The characters may attack them freely.

In the back of the Hall, Crownguard has just looked up and noticed that the machine has weakened the supports in the walls of the Hall, and taken a large chunk of his financing with it. He hurls a gauntlet to the floor in a fit of rage. He picks up Sturm's sword, and calls a challenge to the Solamnic character.

If the candidate takes the challenge, the gnomes (assuming they are still alive to do so) part for him, and immediately resume fighting. They will try to occupy the candidate's friends for as long as it takes for Crownguard to slaughter the would-be hero. They will give no quarter, although they may



grovel if it seems they might be killed.

In the meantime, Corya has melted into the shadows and is trying to maneuver behind the characters to attempt a backstabbing attack. If one of the players has stated that he or she is looking for Corya, check to see if she successfully hides in the shadows. If not, she is spotted. However, if no one mentions looking for her, she successfully sneaks up behind the party.

Since Crownguard is not worthy to wield the *Brightblade*, he does not gain any of its bonuses. Indeed, the blade actually hampers his fighting ability, giving him a penalty of -2 to initiative, -1 to hit, and -2 to damage rolls. After four rounds, if he is still standing, Crownguard will realize how much the sword resists his touch. With a howled curse, he will throw the blade at his opponent, using the time this provides to draw his *long sword +2* and the *dagger of jealousy* from behind a pillar. He will use both to try and kill his foe, forgoing the chivalric rules of combat.

However, if he rolls a natural attack roll of 16 or better while using the *Brightblade*, the sword shatters in his hands. It inflicts 1d10 points of damage to him, and will blind him with pain for 1d4 rounds.

Even as Crownguard strikes a mighty blow, the sword of the Brightblades shivers in his hands. He gapes at it stupidly for a moment, not understanding what has transpired. While he stands, mouth ajar and eyes agape, the sword explodes in his hands, sending spinning shards of metal into his body. Oddly, the shrapnel propels itself only in his direction, leaving bloody rents.

This is the ideal opportunity to subdue the traitor so that he might be brought to justice before the tribunal at the High Clerist's Tower. The PCs should remember that their quest is not to kill the thief but to retrieve him and the Brightblade in order to take them back to the Tower. Of course, if the PC wishes to strike down a defenseless man ignobly, that's his choice. . . .

In any case, once Crownguard and Corya are defeated, the PCs will notice that the castle seems to be swaying somewhat, and that tremors are rippling through the keep. There is just enough time to gather the Brightblade and the prisoners and make an escape. Even if the Brightblade has shattered, the pieces are ridiculously easy to gather, almost as if they wished to be reunited.

If anyone tries to take the *dagger of jealousy*, it will slip from their hands. Unless they harbor a strong evil in their hearts, it will be impossible for them to pick up the cursed item.

There is, unfortunately, no time to go further into the keep to collect all of Crownguard's treasure. Any who try suffer 1d10 points of damage each round from falling masonry until they head for the exit. There is nothing of value this close to the entrance except for Crownguard's *long sword +2*.

The Return

After defeating Crownguard (assuming they do so), the characters must journey back to the High Clerist's Tower with the *Brightblade*. If the sword shattered during Crownguard's battle, the characters might wish to take it to be reforged. The candidate can easily remember legends that state that it can only be fixed by the best living smith. This description could only fit Theros Ironfeld, the smith with the silver arm.

Last reports placed Theros on the isle of Ergoth, where he has continued to produce dragonlances. However, he has not been heard from in some time, and there are those who think he must have died. Other rumors place him in the vicinity of Vingaard Keep, where he ran into some unknown difficulties. The PCs must determine the truth of these rumors themselves, for they might not wish to return to the Tower with the sword shattered.

If they do seek Theros Ironfeld, they will eventually find him in a location of the DM's choosing. He will understand the importance of reforging the sword promptly and will set aside his current work to restore it. However, he will forbid the PCs to look at it, saying his work must have time to settle. The price for his work is that they present the package containing the Brightblade to Gunthar Uth Wistan without having opened it.

Whether or not they have the sword reforged, their journey back is uneventful. The monsters and bandits have moved to greener pastures or have been slain. Peace has descended on the area.

If Crownguard has been taken alive, he will prove to be a difficult prisoner. Although the Solamnic Code demands that a captive be treated well, Crownguard seems intent on earning the wrath of everyone. He will abuse his captors verbally and will take every opportunity to escape the justice he knows awaits him at the High Clerist's Tower. Although he has no choice but to go, he will not go gracefully.

If Corya has also been taken prisoner, she will remain silent throughout the journey. If a chance presents itself, she will attempt to escape and will free Crownguard if at all possible.

Whether or not the characters stop to have the Brightblade reforged, word of their success has somehow reached the High Clerist's Tower.

As your destination comes into sight, you can vaguely see that the place is festooned with brightly colored banners. You cannot remember what the holiday might be and continue to trudge forward, anticipating a real bed.

As you draw closer to the Tower, a great cheer rises from the knights assembled on the walls and parapets. Somewhat belatedly, you realize that the cheers are meant for you, and you can feel your skin grow red with pleas-





ure and embarrassment.

Knights come galloping forth from the opened gates to greet you. They throng around you and raise their lances in a salute to your bravery, courage, and intelligence. Once inside, you are led to hot baths and deep, feathered beds. You fall almost immediately into a coma-like slumber.

Gunthar Uth Wistan wishes to see the heroes immediately after they awaken. Squires stand faithfully at the champions' doors until they arise, ready to pass along this message. They will be escorted to the High Justice's chambers, where an elegant breakfast is laid before them. Also present are the High Warrior and the High Clerist.

Gunthar greets the heroes warmly, inviting them to share his breakfast with him. He has a magnificent view from the upper floors of the Tower. After servants clear away the dishes, Gunthar begins to question the adventurers on the details of their quest while the other two listen attentively. Hopefully, the PCs have behaved in a manner befitting heroes, for the High Knights are listening carefully to determine if the Solamnic PC is worthy of the honor of knighthood. After the PCs have finished relating their tale, the High Knights thank them.

If the adventurers brought Crownguard back alive, they may attend his trial. Nearly all the other knights in the Tower do, except those on guard duty. The hearing is held in the High Council Hall:

The hall is packed with knights for the second time in your memory. This time, it is not a joyous occasion for which the Knightly Council has convened, and the grim mood in the room echoes this fact. After a repetition of the Oath, the prisoner Crownguard is led into the room.

His eyes spit venom where he casts his glances, but it lingers longest on you. When it passes on, you have to restrain an urge to rub yourself down. His gaze reminds you of a bathtub full of spiders. When his escort leads him to the clear space in the center of the hall, he spits on the floor. The knights mutter in disapproval.

The trial goes downhill from there. Crownguard curses the knighthood throughout the trial, making no effort to defend himself. Your testimony against him is not even needed. Almost as soon as the High Knights clear the hall to deliberate on his sentence, they recall the knights. Sitting on their table in plain view are several black roses, a symbol of guilt. Lord Uth Wistan stands to pronounce sentence on the traitor. He appears as if he wishes to make a speech, but thinks better of it. "Death by beheading," he says, and walks from the room, followed by the other two knights.

Once outside in the courtyard, Crownguard appears to recover his senses. He grovels before the executioner, begging for his life. De-

spite his impassioned cries and his cringing, the executioner delivers the death blow. The gathered knights file somberly and silently away.

If Corya was brought back alive, the knighthood turns her over to the authorities in Palanthus. They have no hard and fast evidence against her, and she does not fall under their jurisdiction anyway.

While awaiting trial in Palanthus, she escapes from the jail, and vows revenge on the PCs. They have made a resourceful enemy who can be used again in later adventures, if the DM desires.

Epilogue

Several days after the execution, the knights hold funeral ceremonies for their departed friend Kellin Solanius. They lay him to rest in the Chamber of Paladine, near the body of Sturm Brightblade. If any of the companions perished during this adventure, they too are honored with a place in the Chamber. Since they perished in the service of the knighthood, this is not at all a breach of protocol. If the candidate died fighting Charles Crownguard, his body will be knighted before he is received to Huma's breast.

Otherwise, if he survived, he must sit through his vigil in the chapel in Knight's Spur. The Measure dictates that he sit through the night alone (or in the presence of other knights-to-be) in silent prayer and meditation, guarding his arms and armor.

When morning arrives, so does your Guard of Honor. They dress you in long white robes and escort you to the courtyard. Each member of the guard carries a separate piece of your new plate mail uniform. One carries your shield (for which you have chosen a personal device), another carries your spurs, while another carries your sword and a freshly tooled scabbard, decorated with the symbols of the knighthood. The final guard carries your helm.

In the center of the courtyard waits Lord Uth Wistan and Sir Delson, your two sponsors. When you reach Uth Wistan, you kneel. For what seems an eternity, he recites your accomplishments. At last, he begins the ritual.

"I hereby declare you a Knight of Solamnia. You have spent the night in prayer. Do you consider yourself worthy of this great honor?"

"No, my lord," you answer, "but I most humbly accept it and vow that I shall devote my life to making myself worthy."

Uth Wistan lifts you to your feet and embraces you fiercely, while the knights gathered around cheer wildly. At long last, you have realized your ambition. You know that you will prove yourself worthy of your knighthood, and you are eager to prove yourself to the evil in the world. Your time has come.



Major NPCs

Sir Charles Crownguard

Male Human Knight of the Crown, Level 3

Chaotic Evil

AC: 2

MV: 9

hp: 25

THACO: 18

#AT: 2

Dmg: by weapon type (+1 due to Str)

S: 17

D: 14

C: 16

I: 16

W: 10

Ch: 17

Weapon Proficiencies: two-handed sword, heavy lance, long sword, dagger, spear

Non-weapon Proficiencies: land-based riding,

heraldry, etiquette, endurance, reading/writing

Magical Items: *plate mail* +1, *long sword* +2, *Dagger of Jealousy* (q.v.)

Sir Charles Crownguard has always been a pampered person. When he was a child, he had no wants that were unfulfilled. While peasants around him starved, he feasted. He had never truly faced hardship in his life until he joined the knighthood.

There, he and his cousin Derek learned of loyalty and of the Oath and the Measure. These two secretly swore their loyalty to one another, vowing vengeance on all who crossed them. Although the knighthood would always be important to the two of them, they saw it mainly as a tool to further their ambitions. Their loyalty was to each other first.

After their knightly initiations, the two of them went their separate ways. Derek, using his connections (and, it must be admitted, his excellent battle prowess and nobility) quickly advanced





through the ranks. Charles, on the other hand, focused more on political matters, using his knightly status as a bargaining tool. Both quickly gained a fine reputation in their fields of expertise. Both were also secretly vainglorious and power-hungry.

Then came the War of the Lance, and the pressures began to build. Although both Charles and Derek welcomed the opportunity to test themselves, the tension and stress began to take their tolls, and both began to go slowly mad. In Derek, this led to the final, fateful charge that eliminated the flower of the knighthood.

Charles' change was much more subtle. At the beginning of the War, an ancient dagger came into his possession. Although he was not normally a weapons collector, he had to have this one. Called the Dagger of Righteous Vengeance by the peddler, it seemed to beckon to the dark chasm waiting in Charles' heart. Even had he known that the blade was more rightfully known as the *Dagger of Jealousy*, he would not have been able to resist its allure.

With this dagger in his possession, he changed slowly from the weak-willed, foppish nobleman he had been to a strong-minded pillar of the nobility. Privately, his paranoia increased. He began to jump at every sound that was out of place. He fired his servants and replaced them with new ones, only to find that he had trusted the old ones more. Worst of all, he found himself becoming jealous of Derek's success in the knighthood.

The gods only know what might have happened if things had continued this way. However, even as Charles plotted to have his "righteous revenge" on Derek, his cousin perished in the ill-fated assault from the High Clerist's Tower. Robbed of a target for his suspicions, he was at a loss for some time.

Meanwhile, in his private life, he grew increasingly more distrustful. Publicly, he became ever more friendly and forthright. His foppishness decreased, his clothing and his manner becoming less effected and seemingly more genuine.

His political opponents and his friends, who had been growing more distant, noticed his marked change with some amazement. For some reason, they began to fear his newfound power and self-assurance. He destroyed many of them politically without a second thought.

Then he discovered that the knighthood was venerating that coward and Measure-breaker Sturm Brightblade while his beloved cousin Derek lay in dishonor! Forgetting his previous wrath against his cousin, Charles set out to discredit Sturm. He spent some years cautiously examining Sturm's past, and he created some lies to spread. After a time, he found that his innuendoes and his carefully placed rumors availed nothing.

In the meantime, despite these stories, the Orders began to rank Sturm among the knights of legend. He, not Derek, was regarded as the true hero of the High Clerist's Tower, as the embodiment of

the spirit of the Oath and the Measure. From his home near Thelgaard Keep, Sir Charles Crown-guard laid his plans to permanently divide the Order that had shunned his cousin's sacrifice and dishonored his family's name.

He began to frequent the lower taverns of Solanthis in disguise, associating with the scum normally found there. It was here that he first encountered the thief Corya, who agreed to help him perform the deed. Eventually, through their plotting and close association, the two became lovers.

However, Charles' jealousy and madness continued to drive him, and he soon overcame his infatuation with Corya. His paranoia forced her from him, and he threatened her life more than once. Since she knows his secrets, he is planning on having her killed once she retrieves the Brightblade from the High Clerist's Tower.

Corya

Female Half-Elven Thief, Level 4

Neutral Evil

AC: 2

MV: 12

hp: 18

THACO: 19

#AT: 1

Dmg: 1d8/1d12

S: 13

D: 17 (18)

C: 14

I: 14

W: 10

Ch: 14

Thieving Abilities: PP: 45% OL: 55% F/RT: 50%

MS: 40% HS: 45% DN: 25%

CW: 75% RL: 0% Backstab x2

Weapon Proficiencies: long sword, dagger, sling

Non-weapon Proficiencies: disguise, appraising, gaming, forgery, dancing

Magical Items: *long sword +2*, *gauntlets of dexterity*, *leather armor +2*

Corya has never been a child of privilege. Everything she has ever wanted, she has had to work hard for. For a brief time, she came into a small sum of money, which she hoarded away. Not comfortable with her monetary standing, she began stockpiling every copper piece. Still not satisfied that she had enough to begin spending any money, she started stealing small amounts from the marketplace.

Soon, she found that she had a flair for thievery, and she entered into that business full-time. She now spends the money of other people, although she saves most of it for herself. When she makes a big theft, she tends to spend about 25% of it on a single drunken night on the town. She spends the rest only on necessities. She has over 5,000 stl secreted away in her quarters.

She generally tends to frequent the lower-class bars of Solanthus, which is where she met Sir Charles Crownguard. Although he was disguised, she recognized that he was high-born and immediately recognized her chance to become wealthy beyond her wildest dreams. He had heard of her reputation and enlisted her skills in his bid to discredit Sturm Brightblade. The two soon became lovers. She did not know that he counted the silver every time she left.

Charles became extremely jealous and untrusting (with good reason), and the two fell out. However, Corya had accepted the payment for the theft and so was obligated to follow through with it. If she had attempted to renege on her deal, she knew that Charles could track her down and execute her. However, she believes that he will allow her to survive once she performs the burglary. She has no idea of the extent to which he does not trust her.

Corya is a very attractive woman, with cornsilk blonde hair and deep blue eyes. Her slim body bristles with hidden daggers, and she knows how to use them quite well. She generally favors darker leathers for her working clothing, although she will occasionally dress up to have fun when she relaxes.

She has absolutely no honor, and will betray someone at the drop of a hat if it profits her. Otherwise, she will toy with her acquaintances, waiting until they can be of use to her. The only way she will ever honor an obligation is if she is faced with serious retribution. Charles, the only man with whom she has ever acted honorably, does not trust her farther than he has to . . . which is to say, not at all.

Although she has developed a reputation within the seamier side of Solanthus, the law knows almost nothing of her. She is well known for revenge among the other thieves, and they know that she will hunt them down if they ever betray her. More than one of her companions has been found dead after threatening to expose her name. For some reason, she frightens them more than any of their fellows. Of course, they would be willing to expose her to save their lives, but under few other circumstances will they cross her.

Magical Items

The Brightblades' Sword

. . .he caressed the hilt of his sword lovingly. "According to the legend, this sword will only break if I do," Sturm said.

—*Dragons of Autumn Twilight*

The sword of the Brightblades has endured as long as the Brightblade family itself. Indeed, some speculate that it is from the sword that the family is named, rather than the other way around. Whatever the truth is, the family and the sword have had a long history together.

Appropriately enough, the sword is called the *Brightblade*. The sword is a rather splendid two-handed sword, one of the finer swords dwarves have ever produced for humans. Its workmanship is old-fashioned, the only evidence of its antiquity to those examining it. The Brightblade is approximately 2,900 years old, but its metal is as unmarred as it was on the day it was forged. Its entire length is unblemished.

Oddly, although the owners and the history of the Brightblade have been illustrious, the blade is not commonly considered one of the important artifacts of Krynn. Its powers have not been widely touted, as have the powers of many other blades, nor has its distinguished list of ownership made the rounds among the weapons collectors and adventurers.

This obscurity is largely due to the fact that the Brightblade family is traditionally close-mouthed regarding its own prowess and history. They seem to have preferred to let their deeds speak for them, rather than their history. Thus, few people seek it for its magical and historical value, as they do many other famous weapons. Its main value is as the sword of Sturm Brightblade, and the rest of its history is largely disregarded.

However, its history extends to the time of Vinas Solamnus, when one of Sturm's ancestors, Berthel by name, defended a lone dwarven traveler from a tribe of bloodthirsty hobgoblins. After the two of them deflected this attack, the dwarf revealed his identity as a noble. He promised a reward to Berthel, and one year later a delegation of dwarves arrived at Berthel's stronghold. They brought with them a beautifully shining two-handed sword, engraved and enchanted with the dwarven runes of friendship and peace. It bore the name *Brightblade*.

Berthel accepted the blade and took its name as his own. With it strapped across his back, he traveled to serve under the command of Vinas Solamnus against the Ergothians. Solamnus recognized Brightblade's prowess and service, and rewarded both by granting Brightblade a place as a trusted lieutenant.

Eventually, despite his valor and skill, Berthel





succumbed to old age. He passed his sword to Bedal, his only child. Bedal proved himself another heroic Brightblade by holding a strategic pass against fierce desert nomads until reinforcements arrived-by himself. Yet few bards sang of his prowess, for there were other knights performing deeds nearly as heroic. This was the time of the knighthood's bloom, and its members were intent on proving themselves and the Oath and Measure. The fortunes of the Brightblade family blossomed with the Orders of the Solamnic Knights.

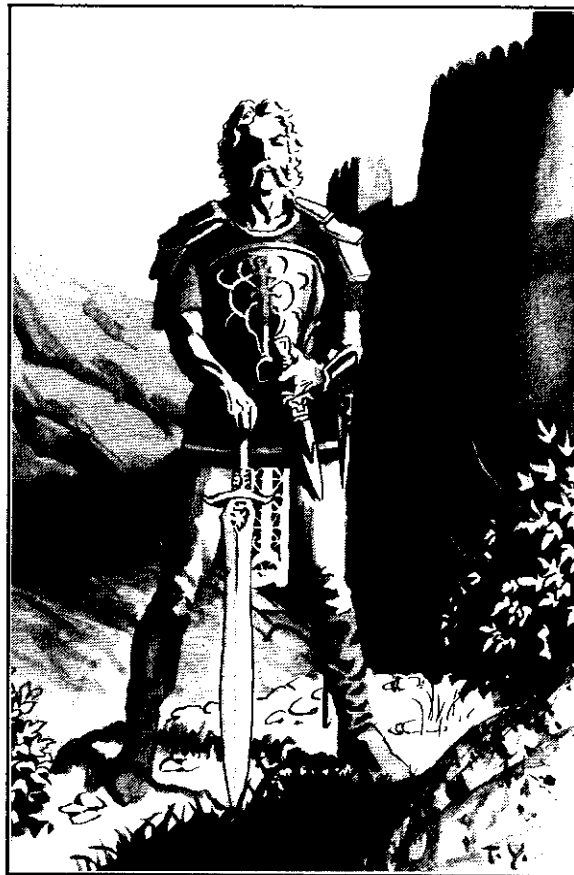
The sword continued its history with the family for the next three millenia, with a few minor diversions. After the Cataclysm, when the sword was to go to Bayard Brightblade, it was either mislaid or stolen. The legends are unclear on this point, but the Knight's Quest of Bayard was to retrieve the *Brightblade*. He returned with it in less than a week and would not speak of his trials except to the Knightly Council. They awarded him his knighthood immediately. After Bayard, the sword passed to Galen Pathwarden di Caela Brightblade, Bayard's adopted son. Although his childhood reputation was a poor one, he became an up-standing knight, a paragon of the virtues espoused by the knighthood. When Bayard's true son came of age, Galen passed the sword to him.

Finally, the sword passed to Sturm Brightblade. When he came from Solace to seek his father and claim his inheritance, he was given the *Brightblade*. He carried it with him to his gallant death. Through Sturm's bravery, the Brightblade has come to represent the ideals of the knighthood.

The Brightblade is a *two-handed sword* +3 of dwarvish make. Mined from the purest ore in Thorbardin, it is remarkably resistant to rust and wear. Additional dwarven enchantments increased this resistance, making it well nigh invulnerable to the banes of the common blade. Thus, the edge never loses its razor sharpness, despite heavy use. In addition, the sword's runes grant the wielder a +2 modifier to all reaction checks and the blade has the speed factor of a long sword. Finally, the Brightblade has the power to emulate a *light* spell and a *protection from evil* spell once per day each.

However, the near perfection of the blade has a price. The dwarves had made a blade to commemorate the nobility of a man and wanted to ensure that the blade would only be used by worthy humans. To make sure that this would be the case, they wrapped powerful enchantments about the blade, making them essential to the sword's composition. If any of these enchantments were disrupted, the sword would lose the beneficial qualities it possessed.

The spells the dwarves laid upon the blade protect it from misuse by those who would pervert its purpose. Only those of good heart, noble virtue, and courage can wield the Brightblade without bringing about its destruction. Legend holds that the sword is only as strong as the heart of its user. If



it is used by one of dark purpose, weak beliefs, or in the service of Evil, it will shatter itself.

Once this is accomplished, it may be restored only through the grace of the Gods of Good and the best weaponsmith alive. If it is ever shattered, so too will be the knighthood's honor until the blade is repaired.

The Dagger of Jealousy

This cursed weapon comes from the depths of the past. Only the gods know its full history, for it is almost unknown to the vast masses of people. It is one of the few effective weapons against the armband called *Trueheart's Warding*.

It makes its way around the world, known to many as the Dagger of Righteous Vengeance. Once a new owner possesses it, it begins to work its magic on that individual. Only a remove curse, limited wish, or wish spell can dislodge the dagger once it has attached itself to a person. Only if the dagger is stolen can it disappear from its owner's life otherwise, and more than likely, the dagger will bond itself to its new owner.

At first glance, the dagger may seem to be a beneficial item, for its powers are strong. It acts as a self-recharging *dagger of venom* +2 of extra potency (saving throw penalty of -1), and it can be used in the wielder's off hand with no penalty. Furthermore, if employed in an act its user perceives as vengeance, that individual gains an additional +4 in any attempt to backstab an "enemy."

If the backstab attempt is successful, the dagger twists in the wound for another round, inflicting 1d4 +2 additional points of damage. The DM must then roll 1d20 again. If 18 or higher is rolled, the dagger injects its venom into the victim.

Of course, with strong magic comes strong obligations. The dagger is no exception. If the owner has any jealousy in his or her heart at all, the dagger can gain a foothold. It will gradually shift the owner's alignment to chaotic evil, shaping him or her into a more perfect tool of revenge.

Additionally, it implants suggestions into its owner's mind, making him or her suspicious of the successes of others. It causes the wielder to consider these successes as detracting from his own. The owner begins to think, "Vengeance will be mine."

Finally, even if the dagger is stolen, it continues to call out to its former owners from across the miles. If a previous master's combined Intelligence and Wisdom is less than 27, he will drop what he is doing to track down the lost item. The dagger does not call owners directly, but rather leaves a trail for them to follow. Thus, it may take months for a past holder to find it, but find it he will. Any possessors are likely to find the dagger's past owners hunting him or her, and there is no reasoning with a previous owner once the dagger is in sight.

The dagger's powers are readily apparent to any who come into possession of it as soon as they en-

ertain thoughts of vengeance. Of course, its malefic side effects will always remain hidden from the user. He or she will resist all attempts by others to separate the dagger from his or her possession, seeing those who would do so as enemies to be destroyed.

Pregenerated Characters

In the middle of this book (pp. 15-18), the DM will find a set of pregenerated characters. These have been set up so that the DM can remove the pages on which they appear, cut them apart, and distribute them to the players. Alternately, the pages may be photocopied and the book left intact to be used again in the future.

It is not necessary to use any of these characters in the adventure. They are here for the convenience of the players and the DM so that the adventure may be played more easily if any players do not have characters available.

Note about Equipment: The DM should assume that the players have the essential equipment, such as flint and steel, bedrolls, food and drink, and so forth. Only the more esoteric equipment, weapons, and armor are listed.



To the prospective candidate:

Greetings and salutations! If you have received this letter, you have solved the mystery of the theft of Sturm's sword. This means that you are eligible to become a knight immediately upon your return to the High Clerist's Tower. This is, as you are no doubt aware, a great honor. Only one candidate each year is eligible to forego training as a squire, and you have earned that honor this year by virtue of your hard work, your reason, and your honor.

As per the instructions given to you to bring the perpetrator to justice: Lord Kellin Solanius acted under my orders, with the approval of the other High Knights, in removing the Brightblade from the Chamber of Paladine. Thus, although I do not expect you to believe this letter without a personal approval from me, I ask that every possible courtesy be extended Lord Solanius during the journey from Solanthus to the Tower.

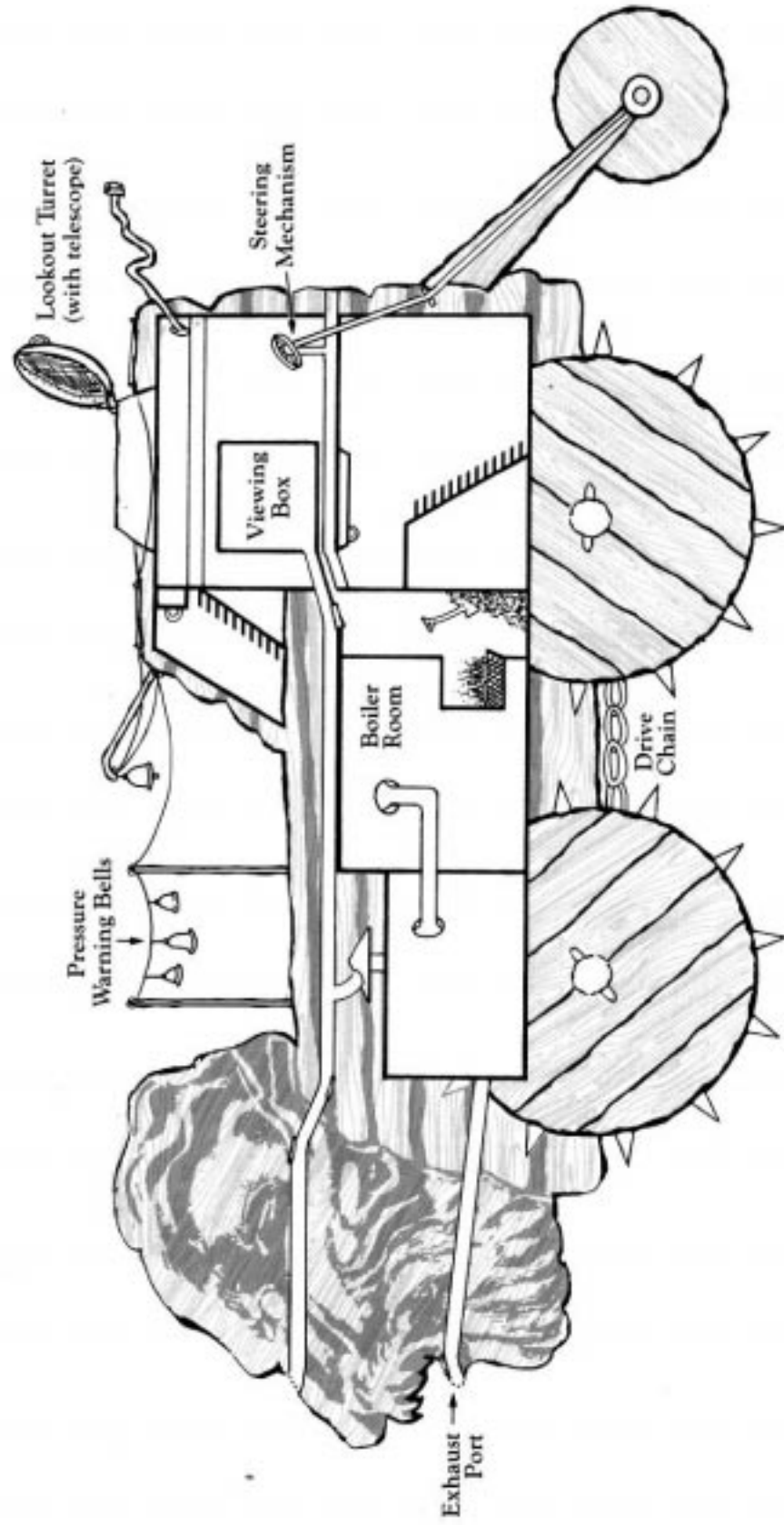
Once again, I congratulate you on your fine work. I look forward to speaking with you when you return to the High Clerist's Tower.

Yours truly,



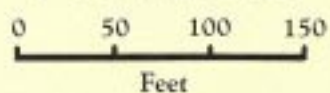
*Lord Gunthar Uth Wistan
High Justice of the Knights of Solamnia*

Gnomish Death Machine

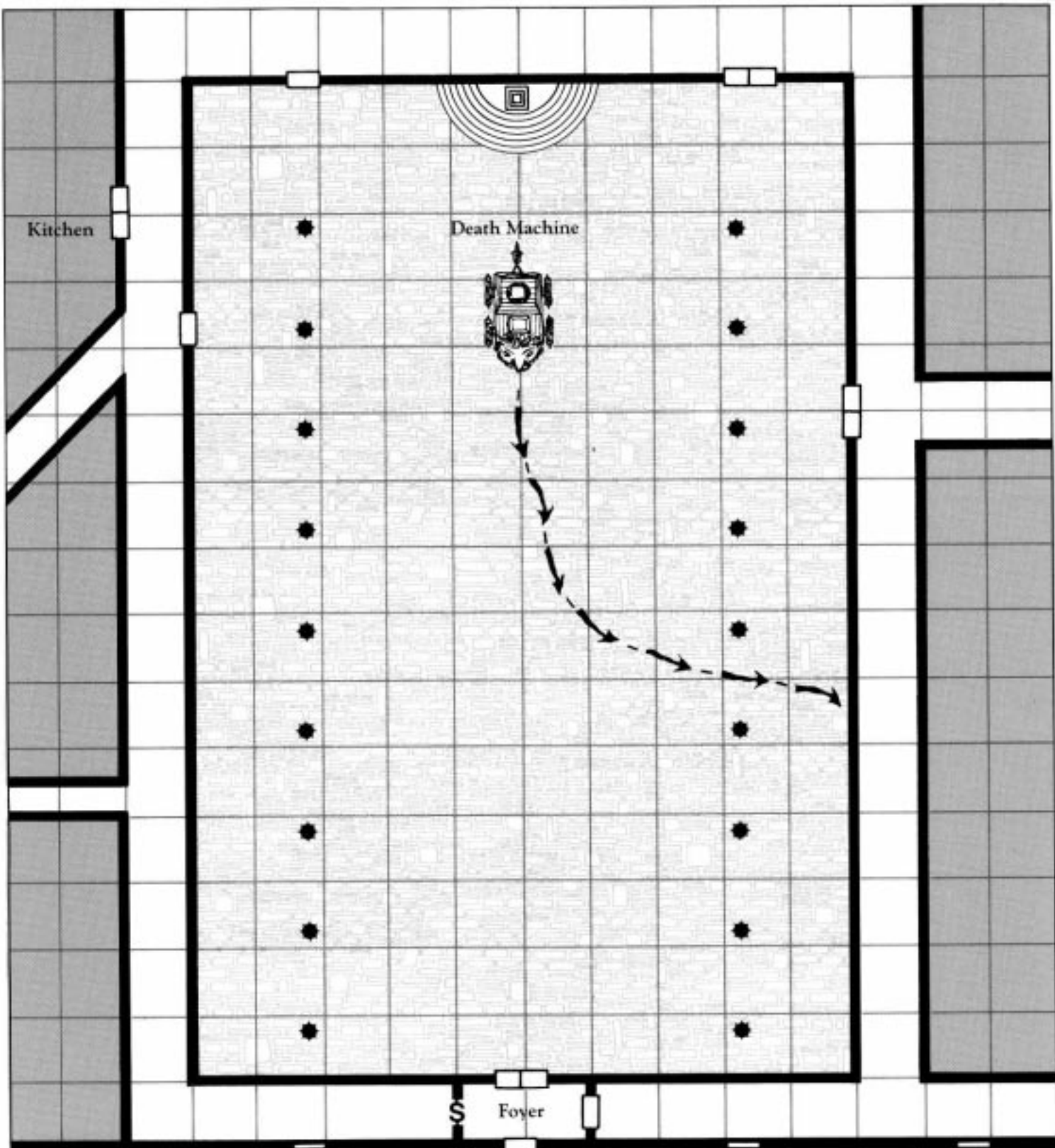










Solanthus



- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Residential Area | 6. Temple of Mishakal |
| 2. City Hall/Lord Mayor's Home | 7. Warehouses |
| 3. Marketplace | 8. Jeweler |
| 4. Temple of Shinare | 9. Cleft spires |
| 5. Temple of Paladine | 10. Barracks/ Guard Post |



Crownguard's Grand Hall
 One Square = 10'

	Dais		Death Machine's Course
	Door		Double Door
	Pillar		Secret Door

Courtyard

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition

DRAGONLANCE

Official Game
Adventure

KNIGHT'S SWORD

BY COLIN McCOMB
WITH THOMAS M. REID

*E*st Sularus oth Mithas: My Honor is My Life. For the young men who have gathered at the High Clerist's Tower, those words mean one thing: Knight of Solamnia. For some, knighthood is just around the corner. For others, there will be only failure and the shameful return home. Whatever the eventual outcome, all of the candidates bear those words in their hearts. Eagerness and anticipation fill the sun-filled morning air, as the candidates jockey for position, ready to show their prowess before the Knights of the Orders. *My Honor is My Life*. One Knight, however, does not live by the Oath.



The sword of Sturm Brightblade is gone, stolen from his dead body. The dishonorable one must be brought to justice, before he flees forever and the blade lost. The trail leads through webs of intrigue to traitors and thieves most foul. This is a task suitable only for those of keen mind and stout heart, for danger will confront them at every turn.

This is the first adventure module written for the TALES OF THE LANCE Boxed Set, and is especially designed for beginning players and the DUNGEON MASTER™. It reveals for the first time the powers of the Brightblade, the hereditary sword of Sturm Brightblade, a Hero of the War of the Lance. Additional background information is included, along with new magical items and some pregenerated characters to help get the adventure running quickly and easily.

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