

Living Greyhawk™

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JOURNAL

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Editor: Erik Mona • Campaign Director: Stephen Radney-MacFarland
Contributing Reporters: Jason Bulmahn and David Christ
Enlightenment can penetrate even the helm of iron. —Cuthbertine proverb

CAMPAIGN NEWS

GEN CON WRAP-UP

As another summer draws to a close, we put another Gen Con Game Fair into the books. The LIVING GREYHAWK campaign premiered at Gen Con 2000, so this summer's show also marked the two-year anniversary of the campaign. We have gone through a lot of changes in those two years, but the campaign is stronger than ever and is still roaring down the tracks.

This year we premiered three new core modules with great success. *Final Reckoning* wrapped up the long-running *Brendingund* series, *Forbidden Echoes* had players going mad as the voice in their heads returned for another round, and *Escape from Tenh* continued the plot started in *Isles of Woe* and moved it in a new and dangerous direction. A few PCs

missing since July returned to active duty and a few more disappeared in Tenh, never to be seen again. All told, every Gen Con attendee who came to play a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure got their chance, and more than 500 attendees played each event during the show.

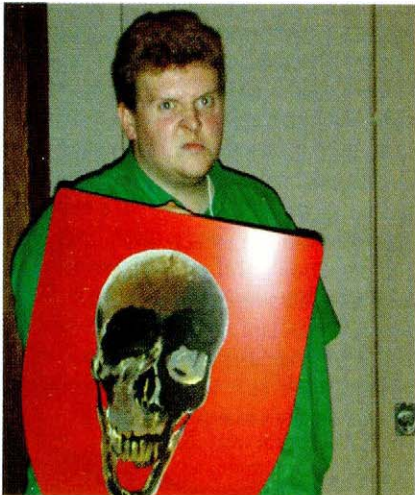
This year's show also featured the debut of brand-new LIVING GREYHAWK prize shields (see picture). We had our master craftsman make up a shield with the heraldry of each GREYHAWK kingdom and faction. We then awarded these shields to the best of the best at the show. William Muench walked away with the best LIVING GREYHAWK Judge award and picked the city of Greyhawk shield for his reward. The top four players also were awarded shields of their choice.

We'll be brining the shields to WINTER FANTASY, so be sure to show up and see if you take your region's shield back home in victory.

BIG BLACK EVIL STONE 1, HEROES 0

This year's Gen Con saw the world premiere of *Forgotten Echoes*, a sequel to last year's *Forbidden Choice*. After each running of the event, the judges carefully tallied the results of a few key plot points. We've tallied up these results and are ready to give them to you. If you have not yet played the event, you may want to skip the next paragraph.

After long-fought battles and a harrowing escape from the clutches of death, most of the heroes managed to recover a large black stone. The voices that echoed from its deep recesses drove many to madness, and in the end the stone was tossed deep into the waters of the Nyr Dyv. As it sank into the black waters of the Lake of Unknown Depths, the madness subsided. The vile voice of the evil stone, however, did not. As a result, the voices will continue to plague some LIVING GREYHAWK characters. Maybe in time a way will be found to rid Oerth of this insidious presence once and for all, but for now the best some heroes can hope for is a strong pint of ale and an unwavering faith to keep the darkness at bay.



The Young Old One: Circle of Six member Jason Bulmahn is luz the Evil.

Eyes on the Prize: David Haga, one of three "Best LG Player" winners, and Bill Meunch "Best LG Judge" show off their newfound defenses at the Gen Con award ceremony.

The curse of the voice will remain in play until further notice. Don't worry; there will be another chance to even the score. Look for another part of this series to debut later next year.

ECHO AND TENH

A problem has arisen concerning *Echo* and *Escape from Tenh*, two scenarios currently available for play. It is highly recommended that the events be played in order—you'll want to play *Echo* before you play *Escape from Tenh*. If played out of order, it is possible that the outcome from playing *Echo* could result in your character being irrevocably lost. If this occurs, and the player has already played *Escape from Tenh*, the following solution remedies the problem. The character in question is not lost, but instead spends four time units wandering aimlessly on the Ethereal Plane before eventually finding a way home. This loss should be recorded on the *Echo* adventure certificate and cancels any contradictory text already contained on that certificate. This solution applies to heroes who have played the events out of order only. Players who have not yet played *Escape from Tenh* proceed according to the original instructions found in *Echo*.

SPREADING THREAT

Bards across Greyhawk City speak in broken voices when spinning tales concerning the belabored Duchy of Tenh. Some stories tell of survivors seen stumbling out of the region with entire parts of their bodies missing or bearing other ghastly wounds. Perhaps more shocking, they also speak of the complete withdrawal of the Old One's forces from the region. Opinions vary greatly as to what could force luz to surrender such a large parcel of his domain so quickly and completely. Rumor has it that some of the more powerful forces in and around the city of Greyhawk are becoming very concerned over this growing dilemma. Fears speak of a new enemy worse than luz.

To see what the bards are buzzing about, check out the new *Ether Threat* core storyline, which begins in *Escape from Tenh* (now available) and continues in *Into the Dying Lands*, set to premier in November.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ?

In our efforts to bring you the best campaign possible, we have created a new tool for you, the player, to use. Head over to www.living-greghawk.com and click "Features." There you will find a survey about the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign. The survey contains some specific questions as well as a general "sound off" section for you to get what you like and dislike about the campaign off your chest. We will be using this information to help steer the campaign as it enters year three, so do not hold back. If you dislike something, say so, but please be polite in doing so. We are looking for constructive criticism and feedback, here. Pointing out what you see as a problem is good, but saying what you think needs to be done to correct it is even better. Also, please be as complete as possible when you take the survey. We will randomly select one respondent to win a prize. While we are not sure what that prize will be, we promise it will be something cool.

WHAT'S OFFICIAL?

Over the past few months there has been some confusion as to what is and is not official for the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign. We have devoted this little corner of the *Journal* to clearing that up for you.

The following are official resources for the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign:

- LIVING GREYHAWK Character Creation Rules
- Rules Updates 1, 2, & 3 (commonly referred to as the RUP's)
- Players Handbook* (current printing)
- Dungeon Master Guide* (with errata from website)

- Monster Manual* (with errata from website)
- LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer* (current printing)
- Builder Books (Per rules contained in RUP-1. This includes *Sword & Fist*, *Defenders of the Faith*, *Tome & Blood*, *Song & Silence*, and *Master of the Wild*, with errata from website if available.)
- LIVING GREYHAWK *Journal* (Issues 0-5 separate magazines, Issues 6 + contained in *DRAGON Magazine*)
- D&D FAQ (available on the wizards.com website)

Updates to these documents happen often, so check www.living-greghawk.com regularly to make sure you have the most up-to-date information.

NEW APL ROUNDING RULE

In November of 2001, the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign initiated a new system to determine the correct scenario "challenge level" based upon the relative experience of the characters embarking on the adventure. This Average Party Level (APL) system calculated the average level of the party, along with any animals and companions that might be tagging along. The original APL rule stipulated that when determining the party's average level, the judge was to round up fractional levels. This has led to some characters accidentally "bumping" themselves into more difficult APLs and finding themselves facing dangers too powerful for them.

Starting November 1st, 2002, judges must use standard rounding procedures to determine APL. If the fractional level is .5 or higher, the judge should round up. If it's less than .5, the fraction should be rounded down. This will eliminate the problem of lower-level parties being just on the borderline and finding themselves outclassed, while allowing parties legitimately on the cusp of the next highest APL to take a slightly risky plunge. ✨

What is LIVING GREYHAWK?

LIVING GREYHAWK is the largest, most popular shared-world DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign in the history of gaming. Run under the auspices of the RPGA Network (RPGA), the campaign offers gamers around the world the chance to contribute to the developing history of Oerth by playing specially constructed adventures at conventions, game days, or in the comfort of home. For more information on how you can get involved in the campaign, visit www.livinggreghawk.com

To the Losers Go the Spoils

GREYHAWK'S BEGGAR'S UNION

By Erik Mona · illustrations by Karl Kersch



As even the most naive caravan boy can tell you, Greyhawk is a city of thieves. From the crumbling tenements of the Slum Quarter to the highest courts of New City, the influence of Greyhawk's Guild of Thieves worms its way throughout the metropolis, secretly pulling along the city's businesses while at the same time imagining and implementing new means by which to divorce those agencies from their lawfully gained coin. The guild's control of illegal activities in a city made famous by its illegal activities approaches absolute. But even Greyhawk's illustrious Guild of Thieves has its competitors.

The city's Beggar's Union, a collection of con artists, panhandlers, and low-grade criminals, has big plans for the future—plans that might cross the path of your LIVING GREYHAWK character.

HISTORY OF THE UNION

Shortly after Lord Mayor Paerinn declared Greyhawk a free city in 498 CY, several thieves and shady merchants banded together to opportunistically corner the city's burgeoning crime market. As a parody of the various business guilds that had sprung up over the last century, the villains called themselves the Guild of Thieves. Not all of Greyhawk's crooks were willing to join the guild, however, and many aligned themselves with rival gangs or operations. These secondary organizations lacked the high-powered corrupt businessmen and politicians so crucial to the success of the Guild of Thieves, however, and this lack proved their collective downfall.

In 510 CY, the Directing Oligarchy issued a secret decree that stipulated the powers of the guild, granting that body dominion over nearly all aspects of criminal activity in the city. Word soon passed through the Greyhawk underworld that members of the guild would receive lighter sentences when captured, and that non-affiliated thieves would be prosecuted with vigor. Understanding that they must allow some means by which non-affiliated dregs might make a dishonest living, the Oligarchy (at this point virtually controlled by the Guild of Thieves) "insured" that begging (a low-profit enterprise unattractive to the guild for several pragmatic reasons) fell outside the guild's charter,

effectively allowing anyone to become a panhandler or street con artist without needing the approval of the Guild of Thieves.

By 533 CY, the guild's hold over Greyhawk's commerce became so pervasive that it threatened to drive all legitimate business from the city. A political struggle between those who wished to keep the status quo and those who wished to work hand-in-hand with the city's merchants soon erupted, throwing the guild into an internal war that lasted nearly two years. By the time the bloody conflict came to an end, the reformers stood victorious, but at great cost. Wounded and unable to enforce their dominance, the thieves watched impotently as several of the city's criminal outcasts banded together in a rival organization jokingly called the Beggars' Union, a mocking play on the Guild of Thieves' ostentatious title. The unionists knew that the guild would regain its strength in time, and rather than attempting to snuff out the weakened organization, the beggars instead chose to standardize and dominate those areas of crime that had been left to them in 510 CY. By the time the Guild of Thieves had regained its footing, the beggars were entrenched.

WAR IN THE STREETS

The two guilds existed in a state of grudging tolerance for years, the thieves generally viewing the beggars as low-class bottom feeders and the beggars always trying to gain grudging acceptance from their underworld competitors by pulling off more and more daring gambits. In 571 CY, Theobald, the union's preening, corpulent Beggarmaster, initiated the most daring gambit of all.

Long tired of his organization's inferior status, Theobald secretly hired a number of independent rogues to train his apprentices in the arts of thievery. He then had the renegade thieves murdered to cover his subterfuge, hoping one day to control a secret elite cadre of beggar-thieves who swore allegiance only to him. He squirreled away the proceeds from his illicit thieving operations in order to pay for mercenaries and sellswords, who he hoped would protect him from the inevitable backlash from the Thieves' Guild. If he could pull it off, Theobald hoped he might leverage his private army against his enemies in the

city government. In his most grandiose, narcotic-smoke-addled moments, he even fancied himself in the Lord Mayor's chair.

It was not to be. When an unsanctioned thievery operation resulted in the murder of a guild thief, Theobald's enemies had the ammunition they needed to wipe the smug, slovenly smear from the face of the Slum Quarter. The Beggarmaster's enemies in the city government, including a furious Lord Mayor Nerof Gasgal, turned a blind eye to the guild's harsh retribution. In the month of Harvester, Greyhawk's thieves made war on the beggars, slaying dozens of them in a raid on the Beggarmaster's own Palace of Trash. Theobald vanished in the conflict, and most expected the union itself to disappear shortly thereafter.

Instead, the canny Arentol, then Guildmaster of Thieves, bargained with the few remaining master beggars and established a new relationship between guild and union. Henceforth, the Beggars' Union would serve as scouts and information brokers for the Guild of Thieves, donating a substantial portion of their earnings to their superiors in the guild. In return, the beggars received de facto control of the Slum Quarter and were held to an even more restricted list of "acceptable" crimes. The living master beggars elected a treacherous former plaything of Theobald named Gaspar to serve as the new Beggarmaster, fully expecting him to be assassinated within the year.

Gaspar filled his inner circle with the best surviving union members and wasn't shy about recruiting rogues from other parts of the Flanaess to help him lead the organization. His first recruit was a former lover from Zeif whom he had met during his early adventuring days, a bold burglar named Haarkon Diadra who had been exiled from his position as a master in the Ceshra Thieves' Guild after the disappearance of the sultanate's crown jewels (which remain unrecovered). Fleeing Zeifan assassins, Diadra sought succor in Greyhawk, where he soon joined Gaspar. As taskmaster for the union, Diadra taught new beggars, paying particular attention to Gaspar's elite private order of indentured children.

A more important addition came in the form of the frugal Simeon Hellwater, a long-time unionist who became the organization's chief treasurer following the troubles of 571. Hellwater's diligent bookkeeping and conservative point of view encouraged Gaspar to focus on improving the margins of those activities ceded to the union by the Thieves' Guild, hence increasing the profit of begging operations without risking the ire of the union's most powerful enemies. Under Gaspar and Hellwater, the union became more successful than ever before, and relations with the Guild of Thieves brightened considerably.

RECENT HAPPENINGS

But Gaspar could sense that something was wrong. Old Arentol, Guildmaster of Thieves, died shortly after the 571 war and was replaced by his second in command, the wily Org Nenshen. The change in leadership brought a change in style for the thieves, and Gaspar soon discovered that his

organization had sprung a leak, since the thieves often anticipated his moves before he had even committed to them. To test the union, the Beggarmaster faked rumors of a cult of Kurell that sought to encroach on the union's activities. Gaspar vanished during a personal investigation of that cult shortly after the Greyhawk Wars, leaving many to think that he'd finally taken one risk too many.

Gaspar had planned to leave the city, anyway. During the hiatus he ventured to distant Zeif, paying off the sultan's assassins with coins skimmed from Beggars' Union profits. It took him more than a year to trek to the Baklunish lands and back, and in that time, his traitor didn't fail to disappoint.

Long in the employ of the Thieves' Guild as a mole within the union, Simeon Hellwater took Gaspar's absence as an opportunity to set himself up as Beggarmaster. He framed the union's loyal spymaster as an agent of the Scarlet Brotherhood and paid the Assassins' Guild to deal with Haarkon Diadra, whose body was never recovered. He named himself King of Beggars and filled the union's inner circle with rogues hand-picked for their loyalty to the Thieves' Guild.

Gaspar returned to Greyhawk in 592 CY, pardon in hand, to find "his" union in shambles, a puppet of the Thieves' Guild lorded over by the maddeningly efficient, humorless Hellwater.



News of his lover's fate sent him into a rage, but rather than strike out blindly, Gaspar kept to the shadows and plotted his return to power. He and a few beggars who remained loyal to him burglarized Hellwater's stately home in the Artisans' Quarter, carting off his valuable art and wealth to Dyvers, where it was fenced to provide the funds for Diadra's *true resurrection*. Gaspar and his associates regained the guild simply by walking in the front door and cutting the treacherous Simeon Hellwater to pieces.

Despite the troubles of the last year, Hellwater's coup may turn out to be one of the best things to have ever happened to Gaspar. His ostentatious return to the union boosted his credibility with many members, and the revelation of Hellwater's ties to the Thieves' Guild has bolstered union members' support of their "independent" leader.

Best of all, Gaspar recently discovered that Hellwater had been using the union's impressive information network to gather embarrassing facts about several city officials, including members of the Directing Oligarchy. Gaspar jovially threatened Guildmaster Org Nenshen about revealing the files to the directors as evidence of the thieves' treachery (which was illegal even by the city's exceptionally lax standards). He privately pushes to have himself added to the Directing Oligarchy in exchange for dropping the whole affair. Like Theobald before him, Beggarmaster Gaspar has big plans in politics, and hopes one day to become Lord Mayor of the City of Greyhawk.

A BEGGAR'S LIFE

Union members break down into two types. Common beggars—legitimately poverty-stricken, diseased, or handicapped panhandlers—pay the union a small fee in exchange for the right to beg legally, a limited license to beg in a certain part of the city, and the promise of union help if they should get themselves into trouble. It's impossible to say how many such beggars exist, but their numbers easily top 500.

These common beggars always bear the sign of the open palm, a wooden medallion worn around the neck. Begging without such a symbol is a crime punishable by a sentence to the city workhouse, but the greater danger comes from affiliated thieves or beggars, who have no appreciation for independent agents. Common beggars generally get along well with the city's thieves, as the relationship between guild and union mandates that beggars must always pass along information regarding potential marks to members of the guild, who in turn give generously to beggars whenever they are encountered. A successful job that capitalized on beggar-provided information sees a 10% tithe paid directly to the Beggar's Union. If lucky, the beggar scout receives 1% of the total take.

Despite the excessive 50% tax on earnings due to the union, a great number of common beggars make a healthy living off Greyhawk's credulous populace.

The heart of the union comes not from these rank-and-file panhandlers, but from the Beggarmaster's own private association of highly trained charlatans, con artists, and contortionists who live at the Palace of Trash, the union's gaudy headquarters in the Slum Quarter. These beggars undertake and oversee most of the guild's scam and outright theft operations.

THE INNER CIRCLE

In addition to at least a half-dozen full masters, the Beggars' Union supports a small "inner circle" of leaders. Gaspar has not yet filled the positions of treasurer or spymaster, and he is considering selecting replacements from outside the union, seeing the "inside" recruitment pool as hopelessly compromised by the Thieves' Guild.

Beggarmaster Gaspar, Male Human Rog3/Ftr8: CR 11; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d6+6 plus 8d10+16; hp 90; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Atk +16/11 (1d6+7/crit 12-20, +2 *keen scimitar*), or +13/8 (1d6+3/crit x3, masterwork mighty composite shortbow [+3]); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +10, Hide +9, Innuendo +5, Intimidate +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +5, Pick Pocket +6, Read Lips +8, Search +7, Spot +13*; Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Critical (scimitar), Iron Will, Leadership, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

*Includes +5 circumstance bonus from *eyes of the eagle*.
Possessions: +1 *glamered studded leather*, +2 *keen scimitar*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *eyes of the eagle*, *potion of invisibility*, *potion of expeditious retreat*, *potion of cure moderate wounds* x2, masterwork buckler, masterwork mighty composite shortbow [+3] with 20 arrows, shoddy noble clothes, costume jewelry.

Armed with Simeon Hellwater's files, Gaspar has high hopes for the future but remains worried about the affairs of the present. A driven man with a playful, somewhat effeminate demeanor, the Beggarmaster seldom allows others to see his worry, masking his calculation and pragmatism behind a mask of joviality.

The self-proclaimed King of Beggars quite literally clothes himself in the finery of a noble, having fished most of his wardrobe from the garbage of New City's most prestigious clotheshounds. He fancies costume jewelry, especially gold and silver necklaces and nonmagical rings.

Gaspar's recent betrayal hardened him to the point that he now shows affection only for his deceased paramour, the taskmaster Haarkon Diadra (CG male human Rog12), and while he is proud of his beggars and respects more than a few of them, every single one is expendable in the pursuit of his goal to join the Directing Oligarchy and finally get some respect.

UNION SERVICES

Although the Beggar's Union exists primarily to enrich its leadership and members, the organization offers a number of services that might be useful to adventurers visiting or inhabiting the free city.

Location: Few have as many contacts or know the city streets as well as members of the Beggars' Union. For a fee of 5 gp, the union will locate anyone within the city of Greyhawk. Searches last from a matter of hours to several days, and no refund is paid if the quarry cannot be located.

Guides: Young urchins in the employ of the union flock to the city gates, offering to act as guides to travelers and merchants for just 1 gp. For a larger, secret fee, the guides

will point out secret passages, false walls, and sewer shortcuts. Only occasionally do the children lead their charges to a dangerous Slum Quarter neighborhood, promising that they could remember the way to safety for "only a few coppers more."

Misinformation: Many beggars delight in using their extensive network of snitches and spies to spread false or damaging information about a person, with fees ranging wildly depending upon the smeared individual's social status. Beggars often dress in finery, feigning a certain amount of class to lend veracity to their slanderous gossip. Of course, the union is not above selling out its own clients to former victims, essentially playing one side against the other in a war of hearsay.

Scouting: Anyone curious about the movements of a certain ship, cart, or person would be well-served to hire a beggar, as the eyes of the Union are everywhere. Compared to the often-inaccurate logs of comings and goings kept at the city gates, a beggar's memory often can be the best source of information available. For a retainer of 2 gp per day, a beggar will remain at a single location, keeping close watch for their employer.

Information Brokering: It took Simeon Hellwater to suggest that what the beggars in the field saw and heard might very likely be worth more to the union than the money they could convince others to give them out of pity. People say the dumbest, most private things in front of a "harmless" cripple or "drunken" homeless wretch. The Beggars' Union, of course, is more than happy to sell that information to the highest bidder.

COMMON CONS

Greyhawk beggars employ countless tricks and stratagems to convince marks to hand over their cash. Here are a few of their more popular street cons:

Hot Coins: By "chance," a beggar dressed in ordinary street clothes comes across a planted purse filled with gold and platinum coins just as a mark happens to walk by. The beggar points out his find, revealing the purse's contents in a hushed but obviously excited voice. "This must be worth at least 100 gold!" the beggar exclaims, opening the purse to reveal the valuable coins within. The beggar "discovers" the monogram of a well-known, benevolent noble on the purse and mentions that the kindly old man likely will offer a handsome reward for the prompt return of the coins.

The beggar confides that he would return the pouch personally if not for the fact that his ship sets sail for Nyronnd in the next hour. In return for a good-faith payment of 30 gp, the beggar will allow the mark to return the purse and collect the reward. Once the exchange has been made, the beggar hands over the monogrammed purse and beats a hasty retreat back to his ship, having surreptitiously switched the purse with one filled with worthless iron and brass coins only moments before, right under the mark's nose.

The con works best in seedier neighborhoods like the River Quarter, where the mark is more likely to consider simply keeping the purse rather than settling on some fractional reward. A mark's greed, says the beggars' credo, is the best weapon to use against him.

Guilty Conscience: Popular among Greyhawk's youngest beggars, this con requires a small, expensive-looking trinket, often a broken sculpture or plate fished out of a High or Garden Quarter trashbin. In a busy part of town, the beggar

collides with her mark, dropping the now-broken trinket to the ground. Struggling with tears, the beggar explains that the item belongs to a harsh master or parent, and that she is sure to be beaten for breaking the object. Most marks immediately offer to compensate the youngster for the broken trinket, paying a beggar-provided estimate of the item's value often several times its actual worth. Best of all, once the mark has left, the "useless" trinket can be scooped up and used again.

The Fake Fight: This con requires at least three beggars, one of whom must be a child or someone capable of appearing old and feeble. The three set up in an alleyway or courtyard just off a major thoroughfare. When a group of marks (preferably a party of inexperienced, foreign adventurers) approaches, the two "able-bodied" beggars attempt to hassle and sometimes even beat the weaker beggar, who cries for help. When the rescue-minded adventurers shuck their backpacks in an attempt to fight the bullies, the child or "old" beggar sprints for their set-aside items, quickly scrambling through a tight building abutment, sewer grating, or small hole in the wall, packs in hand. The other two beggars immediately flee in two different directions, attempting to use their strong command of the city's winding streets against their pursuers. Due to the dangers involved in attempting to con powerful adventurers, the union attempts this scam only on those it has previously seen in action (perhaps in response to another con attempt). If a group has access to *lightning bolt* or *fireball*, they're likely safe from facing such a risky gambit. ✨

