



Blackwheel Company 10: *Pariah*

A One-Round DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] FACTION
Adventure Packet for 10th to 12th-Level Characters
BLACKWHEEL COMPANY[™] Faction Adventure for the
XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS[™] Campaign

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Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Adventure Title: Pariah
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Adventure Background

In a secret location on Sorrowdusk Isle, the Blackwheel Company gathers to handle some pressing, urgent business. Following up on the events of "A Plague Upon your Houses" General Mach Ogdin has called an Executive Council meeting for a vote of No Confidence in Field Marshal Mackinnon Maceck. Ogdin also plans on using his shares to call for a vote to declare the Blackwheel Company "independent," voiding the exclusive contract with the Dragonmarked Houses.

Mixed Bag

This adventure will allow the PCs to exercise several different skill sets beyond straight combat. For those who crave the more direct approach each of the encounters allows for that possibility.

Wordy Speeches

Unfortunately, the battle of words for the very hearts and minds of the Blackwheel Company cannot be accomplished in two lines. The read-aloud text, particularly for Field Marshal Maceck's part is quite lengthy. Prepare your speeches ahead of time if possible, or paraphrase if necessary, so long as the points and emotion within are conveyed.

Resource Management

The first and last encounters are the most taxing on the PCs resources. Players who are used to a typical set of easy encounters to break-in an adventure may find themselves reeling from the shock of the first encounter; the assassins hit hard and fast. While there are provisions to ensure that doesn't defeat the party right out of the gate the PCs will need to manage their resources to ensure they can handle the other encounters remaining.

Tone

BWC-10 Pariah is a fast-paced module with the future of the company dependent on their individual actions. Stress the gravity and importance of each individual encounter; make sure they realize the fate of the company will be decided ... today.

Adventure Synopsis

The plot of Pariah is linear. There are a few choices, decisions and key points in the adventure, but they do not affect the overall narrative. Encounters flow from one to the next directly. The actions of the players

do have an impact on later encounters and good choices early in the adventure can make the final battle easier.

For reference, the adventure starts early one morning and continues until late at night on the same day.

Part One

The PC's are summoned to an emergency Blackwheel Company meeting. They receive no votes, but are asked to attend as they are perceived as neutral parties. The vote of no-confidence fails and the Field Marshal remains in command.

General Ogdin then gives the PCs a mission – he wants to patch things over with the Field Marshal, and asks that they deliver a message. This is a ruse – the Field Marshal's skiff is untraceable and since the vote has failed, General Ogdin intends to use force. The PCs, however, are simply collateral damage.

Part Two

The PCs and Field Marshal are ambushed as soon as they meet – General Ogdin's plans and betrayal of the platoon is obvious. Afterwards, the PCs will work with the Field Marshal in a last-ditch effort to keep the Company from imploding.

General Ogdin has sent couriers to a number of other Blackwheel company officers. The Field Marshal wants the platoon to intercept one of these and discover the nature of the communication. The PCs track one to a makeshift bar set up on the island where they try to retrieve the letter by stealth, subterfuge or force.

Leaving the area their return to the Field Marshal is blocked by mercenaries employed under General Ogdin's command. Taking a different route they are challenged through difficult terrain, testing their mobility and athleticism prior to rejoining the Field Marshal.

With the letter in hand, the Field Marshal sends the PCs on a diplomatic mission – to speak with and hopefully sway the opinion of General Pilgrim – one of General Ogdin's old adventuring comrades.

Part Three

The Field Marshal intends to confront General Ogdin directly; he returns to the docking tower via the skiff while the PCs proceed on foot. The timing of their mission is off, and the PCs confront General Ogdin directly without the Field Marshal's help.

If they defeat General Ogdin his fate is in their hands ... will they let him escape to the deeps of Xen'drik? Will they turn him over to the Field Marshal? Will they slay him themselves?

Adventure Start

The adventure starts with the platoon being summoned to an assembly of the Blackwheel Company on their airship the *Glory Road*.

Part One - Meeting

Encounter One - The Vote

Read the following to the Players

It isn't often that a summons of this nature arrives. General Officer's meetings are commonplace, but rarely do they call for simple hires like your platoon. In the back of your minds, you wrack your brain wondering what you did that might warrant disciplinary actions before the whole officer corps. Your presence has been requested at an Executive Council meeting. Only the highest-ranking officers receive a vote at council sessions, which makes your presence doubly curious.

You pick your way through the rubble and scree that dots the blasted landscape of Sorrowdusk Isle. This part of the Isle, hidden in a barren valley in between two steep cliffs has been set up as an official Company sanctuary. On account of the historic meeting, a small town of hastily-erected buildings has popped up around the main meeting hall—which is fairly well constructed. In the far distance, at the end of the valley forming a crook between two intersecting mountains sits an airship docking tower. You wind your way towards the docking tower like ants at a morning picnic through the maze of the strange makeshift town ... and as you approach the tower you notice you aren't the only lower-ranked hires present.

Each platoon wears the same slightly-confused expressions on their faces. Seeing others raises the glimmer of hope that you are not in trouble. There's a small amount of idle chit-chat, but as you proceed up the docking tower and across the gangplank onto the airship most of you remain silent.

Filing out onto the deck of the Glory Road, the sergeant separates the hires from the general officers and gathers you on the aft-deck. Once assembled, he breaks addresses the confused mass of hires.

"Ladies and gents ... historic day for the Company. What's going on today ain't never happened before. General Mach Ogdin has called for a vote of no confidence in the Field Marshal and his leadership. They ain't come to blows, but the words have been pretty fierce."

Pausing, he looks around the deck, measuring each of you with a piercing stare.

"You're here because the general officers including General Ogdin and Field Marshal Maceck want some representation by the hires in the company. You're not to be voting, but you're here to watch and listen. History of the Blackwheel Company going to be written today ... and you lot'll be there. You are to provide security and an official escort to the Field Marshal and other generals."

A whistle pierces the air from the fore-deck. Hearing it, the sergeant looks to the front. He signals to your platoon.

"Alright ... that's the signal; they're ready. Your platoon will be escorting the Field Marshal personally, let's head down to the meeting hall."

Confusion? Fear? Worry? With a touch of each you and the other hires move to the fore-deck. The scope of this meeting and full impact of the vote weighs heavily on your mind. Judging from the worried looks of those to your right and left, everyone shares the same sense of trepidation. It's a quick march to the meeting hall, despite the Field Marshal's peculiar handicap. As you enter, the building looks far bigger on the outside than it does on the inside. The sight is momentarily breathtaking as you bear witness to the full assembled leadership of the Company. Every officer ranking above Sergeant is present, and the room buzzes with anticipation.

From a platform set about a story up into the side of the hall, Admiral Findecano Taralom barks commands. With the precision you'd expect from the flagships crew, they relay quickly across the hall. In short order the hires are marshaled into position behind the officers and facing the platform. Then, he addresses the assembled representation of the Company.

“Company ... you know why we are here. We’ll first hear from General Ogdin and then following by Field Marshal Maceck. After that, each officer in the company will cast their vote. Please remain silent ... and direct your attention to General Ogdin.”

Stepping forward from the rear of the platform, the imposing figure of General Ogdin approaches the front. He looks uncomfortable in the full, formal officer’s gear ... clearly he favors the chaos of battle more than the formality of a Blackwheel Company meeting. With a palm resting gently on each of the twin swords at his belt, he waits for a few minutes before beginning ... gathering his thoughts one last time.

“I’m going to make this short; we’ve all got things to do and this is really simple.”

“What are we doing here? We’re a mercenary company. A group of fighting men. It’s stupid to tie ourselves down with this contract any longer. Pointless.”

“It isn’t about the Dragonmarked Houses either. I’ve got no problem with them, hell I’ve even got personal ties to them myself. What I do have a problem with is the amount of control this contract gives them over the company.”

Now most of the time they’re just here to give some feedback and help out ... but they should have no business in the day to day operations. Do the marked people in the Company get better promotions? Are they making decisions for the company or the Dragonmarked Houses?

This exclusive contract is bad for the Company. It’s obvious.

Look at what we’ve done in Xen’drik alone. We’ve constructed the world’s largest airship, we fight and jump from the skies better than the forces of any nation. We’d be elite compared to any military force in Khorviare. And yet we find ourselves tied down, unable to take or bid for any jobs other than the ones we’re given.

This Company is strong enough to stand on its own. I’ve seen too often now the motives of the Houses running right smack across my battle plans. We can’t work for a flighty, shadowy master brothers. We should be working for ourselves.

We’re the finest fighting force this rat’s nest of a continent has ever seen, and we should be calling our own shots.

Despite the admirals request for silence his speech elicits cheers and applause from a number of the officers. You can’t quite gauge whether or not it is half or more ... and there is no time to count. As quickly as it began, it ends; the Field Marshal is ready to have his say. He and his adamantite peg leg stump their way onto the platform, and he begins to address the crowd with passion and resolve:

Esteemed Officers of The Company: I am proud to address you as not just your commanding officer but your colleague and brother in arms. I know that our foray into Xen’drik began disastrously, but of late, our success has not come from an influx of funds or training, but rather from our cohesiveness and belief in each other. Our most recent missions have not only secured the main artery for dragonshard mining and collection in Xen’drik, but have also exerted our military superiority over many of our rivals. The dragonshard operation we now control is the largest and most profitable in the known world.

waits for applause

When the Company first began, we were few: General Pilgrim, General Mach Ogdin, Admiral Findecano Taralom, Hospitaler General Anthor Graves, Lt. General Oath, Captain Scylla, Captain Syra Dusk, and Sgt. Skyne Tragar were the beginnings of this brilliant outfit. After the Last War, I knew there was talent lying fallow, but I resisted the urge to scoop up the masses of listless soldiers. Instead, I hand-picked the best. We became a family, and then a company. From there, we stretched our resources and gathered our strength. We evidenced great potential, but struggled both financially and psychologically, our purposes divided from scattered allegiances and missions. We began by doing wetwork, courier, and caravan duty. It was more than just beneath our talents, it was a waste of our true potential. It wasn't until this incredible potential caught the eye of the Dragonmarked Houses that we became both elite and solvent. They gave us the funding to pursue our own ends, and the unitary allegiance necessary to swell our ranks with the best troops possible.

General Pilgrim always referred to his platoon as 'brothers' and so I will address you now. Brothers, make no mistake: While our contract is to the Dragonmarked Houses, our true allegiance is to each other. Our honor and resolve bid us to honor our contract as we honor our own friendships and loyalty. And while the Houses fund us, supply us, and unify our purpose, our bonds to each other are what make us the most effective fighting force in Eberon. We have pushed the envelope of military technology and where only stagnation and tradition existed, we forced innovation and excellence.

Our alliance with the Houses has been more than profitable, it has allowed us to ignore the legacy of warfare and stagnant policy that preceded us. As a result, we have recruited from every corner of Eberon; in our employ we have warforged, goblins, gnolls, bugbear, lizardfolk and minotaur commanding alongside dragonmarked heirs, sharing equal ranking and an equal take of the profits. Our ranks have swelled with lizardfolk, hobgoblins, ogre, and bugbear, all fighting shield-to-shield with their changeling, dwarven, and elven brethren. Our alliance with the houses has allowed us to select the best troops possible, regardless of race, rather than being relegated to conventional military forces.

Furthermore, our technology is second to none. We control the largest airship known to man. The very decks you tread on our mobile fortress: The Glory Road, are made possible by our skill, combined with the innovation and construction of both of our efforts. We've trained you to leap from thousands of feet in the air to hairpin targets below. We've trained you to fight in the snow, the swamps, the jungles, in the air and under the sea. We've equipped you with the sharpest blades and the finest magic, all because of our cooperation with the Houses.

But brothers, the Houses are not who we are. We are the Blackwheel Company. They give us the means, we choose the expression. They give us a goal, we dictate the execution. They give us funding, we lead the innovation. Make no mistake, your vote tonight is deadly serious. A vote for solvency with the Houses is a vote for each other. It is a vote to preserve our honor and loyalty to each other and to our contract. The Houses give us the opportunities, but your vote to remain with them gives us endless possibilities for glory with each other. My brothers, you have fought and shed blood with me and each other and with those who showed me the strength to lead you. Trust now in your allegiance to each other, and it will lead you to the inevitable conclusion that a vote to remain with the Houses is right for the Company now.

A vote to break with the Houses is tantamount not only to treason to each other, but to an admission of dishonesty. We would not only violate our contract, but everything we have fought so hard for. General Ogdin is a brave warrior and the best swordsman I have ever seen, but he did not found this Company, and does not understand what is at stake. While I believe his loyalty is to you, I also believe that his appetite for immediate glory far outpaces his wisdom and foresight. Tonight, a vote for the Houses is a vote for each other; and a vote for the continued success of The Company."

After a few minutes of sporadic cheering, Admiral Taralom steps forward again and calls out to the gathered mass:

"Fellow officers of the company ... please proceed to the front table and cast your vote."

Nodding to a sergeant, the admiral gives another order which is quickly relayed to you area of the deck. The sergeant who's been directing you nods a confirmation back to the platform on receipt of the order, then turns to you.

"Just a few minutes and the vote'll be done, then we'll get back to your missions or R&R. Sit tight."

So ... you sit, waiting and watching. One by one you watch officers from the highest generals and admirals down to the lower ranks approach the table and cast their votes. Several of the hires are trying to quietly count and predict the outcome, but the bits of hushed conversation that reaches your ears equally predict the vote passing and failing.

You don't have to wait long for the real answer though, as the Blackwheel Company is efficient if anything. Decisions need to be made and Company's leadership strongly believes in action ... so the vote takes mere minutes, though it seems much longer. Stepping forward one last time Admiral Taralom raises his hands for silence.

"Company!" he shouts, "The votes are cast; the motion has failed. We continue as before under Field Marshal Maceck's direction. That is all ... dismissed!"

... and with those simple words another chapter in the history of the Blackwheel Company is written. Efficient, even in the face of complete annihilation. It takes some countries centuries to put the pieces back together after something like this. Yet the Company has peered over the edge of oblivion, and back all in a matter of moments.

At this point, give the players some time to talk and ruminate amongst themselves.

Encounter Two – Secret Mission

Read the following to the Players

As you begin your return to the tower your platoon is pulled aside by a halfling junior officer, his dress-uniform already replaced by the more functional mission uniform. The scaled skins draped on his shoulder like a cloak and series of boomerangs tucked into his belt gives him a feral, animal look.

"This way" he commands, flashing an 8-spoked wheel, and then ushers you into small room. Surprised, you find yourself facing none other than General Ogdin himself. Seeing you enter, he nods to the halfling who shuts the door quickly. Given the short time it took to complete this maneuver it's unlikely anyone noticed you leave.

"Hires," he addresses you, "I need a favor."

Sighing, he pauses momentarily. Clearly something weighs heavily on his mind beyond the earlier vote.

"The Company can't continue like this. Things between me and Mace have to come to an end ... the Field Marshal I mean. The problem is, we can't seem to talk face to face anymore. We get too worked up,

the both of us. We think the Company needs to go in different directions, but the vote ended that. There's one path now, and I want to make sure he and I can understand each other."

"He's taken one of the skiffs ... the Deceiver I think ... anyway, he's heading for the outskirts of the island, near the shore to check on something. I want you to deliver this letter to him. Lutor here," he points to the halfling "will give you directions."

General Ogdin reaches into his vest and pulls out a sealed scroll tube, handing it to one of you, then leaves the room.

Development

The PCs can ask questions of Lutor, but he doesn't have much information beyond where the Field Marshal is located – somewhere North of the encampment, near the shore. He doesn't have much information beyond what is needed for the mission, though the PCs are free to ask.

The Field Marshal's location

"He's off to the north; the main path through the encampment is likely the best route."

The contents of the letter

"Not my business, yours neither."

Relationship to General Ogdin

"He's my commanding officer; I do what he says."

Once the PCs are done with questions, proceed with Part Two / Encounter Three below.

Part Two - Conflict

Encounter Three – When Words Fail

Read the following to the players

The journey out of the encampment is uneventful. You pass through the throngs of gathered hires and officers, all buzzing excitedly. On your way, you pass several hastily-erected drinking establishments that are packed to the gills. Many of the hires seem happy, or at least relieved, and there doesn't seem to be a major contingent of sulkers.

Soon the encampment fades from view as the road takes you more and more into the outlying lands. Thanks to the presence of so many troops, what may have once been nothing more than a goat trail is now smoothly beaten dirt road and where you pass rock outcroppings and thickets of grey, dismal bramble.

Once the encampment is fully behind you and only the top of the docking tower remains in view above the ridgeline, you round a bend in the road and see the Field Marshal's airskiff ahead. Before you get much closer a shout rings out from behind some rocks ahead.

"Ho there ... halt!"

A sentry garbed in the Blackwheel Company uniform steps from behind the rocks, holding his hand raised, then approaches you.

"Alright then hires... what can I help you with?"

Setup

The suggested map for this encounter is the King's Road.

At this point, have the players assemble their miniatures on the game board, somewhere on the road. The skiff is not represented on the map; the PCs are stopped well before they reach it.

The skiff is still very far ahead, perhaps 600 feet or more.

Skill Checks

The PCs may want to run a number of skill checks to understand the situation; these could be prior to interacting with the sentry or during the interaction itself.

Spot (the airskiff)

- DC 20 The Field Marshal and his crew
- DC 22 You can make out the name of the skiff – the Gay Deceiver.
- DC 25 The bound elemental seems to be suppressed on the skiff
- DC 30 You notice even the eternal lanterns are not activated

Spellcraft (after someone notices the skiff has some magic items suppressed)

- DC 20 Likely some sort of anti-magic field

Sense Motive (on the sentry)

- DC 20 He's clearly jumpy and on edge, like they expect some trouble.
- DC 25 The sentry is sensing motive on you guys

Time of Day

Curious players will ask the time of day; it is currently late morning when you arrive.

Interaction

Allow the PCs to interact with the sentry.

Who are you?

"Corporal Yar. I'm a sentry."

What are you doing

"I'm a sentry. I'm watching the road making sure no one sneaks by. Dangerous times still."

We have a message for the Field Marshal ...

"Who from?"

... from General Ogdin

"I'll deliver it."

We have to deliver it ourselves

"Alright ... whatever ... let me get the Field Marshal over here"

The sentry then waves a complex signal over to the skiff.

Eventually the sentry will signal and the Field Marshal will come over to the PCs, sending the sentry back to the airskiff. There will be a few minutes of dialog, and then they will be attacked.

Read the following to the players

Corporal Yar signals back to the skiff with a complex set of hand signals. There's obviously more conveyed in the message than you'd normally expect; the Field Marshal's staff must have developed a complex short hand allowing for such unspoken communication. Watching intently, the sentry sees a reply message, which he acknowledges with a nod.

"He's on his way. Just a few."

Looking back towards the skiff you see Field Marshal Maceck making his way down the road. In a few short minutes his awkward, limping strides bring him in front of you. Taking the measure of each of you, he dismisses the sentry with a jerk of his head back towards the skiff, then reaches out his open hand to you.

"Alright lads, let's see this message. From General Ogdin you say?"

Pause here for the PCs to hand over the message, then continue

The Field Marshal takes the message from you and cracks open the seal on the top of the tube, pulling out the scroll within. He reads it with a frown. Scowling, he looks up at you.

"This makes no sense ... what did ..."

Unfortunately, his question is cut short as a blast of arcane energy explodes around you. The acrid smell of burnt flesh fills the area. The Field Marshal recovers quickly; pointing to the sky, he yells.

"AMBUSH!"

Tactical Details

Leave the PCs set up exactly as they are on the map. The Gnoll Strikers come from each of the long-sides of the map. Position Phranklyn flying 20 feet from the ground approximately 60 feet from the PCs anywhere you like. Move Horgretor from the road entrance you've nominated as being farthest from the skiff up to 12 squares onto the map to represent his running to join the fray, unless the PCs are close enough to charge from the map border.

They have orders to take out the Field Marshal using whatever means required; the PCs are deemed collateral damage and likely colluders.

The Ambush

During this surprise round the PCs and Field Marshal Maceck are targeted with an area of effect spell (*fireball*). Mace has left the anti-magic field and is now susceptible to a magical attack.

First Round

Mace goes first in initiative order and activates an item of *mislead*. His double will remain with the party and will fight with either a longbow or warhammer for four rounds. Mace will then action surge, take another standard action and use a second item, sending him back towards the skiff (on the opposite side) and out of sight.

To the party and the attackers, Mace is still there fighting – but ineffective. Roll his to-hits, have him move and shoot or move and swing (so he only gets one attack each round). Declare he is fighting defensively, thus when he misses with his attacks no one is surprised.

The Attackers

Phranklyn starts the encounter having used potions of *fly* and *displacement*. He stays in the air, raining down damage on the party. The Gnoll Strikers will engage at 30 feet and use their distracting attack class feature (PH2); this allows their allies to treat the target as flanked and enable their additional sneak attack damage. If engaged in melee, they will move to flank or otherwise assist with distracting attacks in melee.

Gnoll Strikers (3): hp 51, 49, 48; Combat Statistic

Horgretor: hp 84; Combat Statistic

Phranklyn: hp 58; Combat Statistic

Gnoll Striker: Male Gnoll Rgr4/Rog2 (CR 7)

Medium Humanoid (Gnoll)

HD 2d6+4d8+18; hp 49

Init +2

Spd 30 ft/x4

AC 19 (+7 armor, +2 dex), touch 12, flat-footed 17

AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +4

Base Atk/Grapple

+5/+10

Full Atk

+1 *Greataxe of deadly precision*: +11 (1d12+8;20/x3)

+1 *Composite Longbow [mighty +5] of deadly precision*: +6/+6
(1d8+7;20/x3) [rapid shot]

+1 *Composite Longbow [mighty +5] of deadly precision*: +8
(1d8+6;20/x3)

Combat Gear

+2 *mithral breastplate*, +1 *greataxe of deadly precision*, +1 *mighty (5) composite longbow of deadly precision*

SA&SQ *Distracting Attack*(Ex), *Wild Empathy*(Ex), *Evasion*(Ex), *Favored Enemy* (Humanoid [human] +2 bonus), *Sneak Attack* 1d6, *Trapfinding*(Ex)

Str 20(+5), Dex 15(+2), Con 16(+3), Int 7(-2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 6(-2)

Skills: *Balance*¹ +8, *Jump*¹ +13, *Listen*¹ +7, *Spot*¹ +9, *Survival*¹ +7, *Tumble* +8

Feats: *Endurance* (PH 93), *Point Blank Shot* (PH 98), *Precise Shot* (PH 98), *Rapid Shot* (PH 99), *Track* (PH 101), *Steadfast Determination* (PH2 83)

Distracting Attack (Ex): Whenever you hit an enemy with a weapon attack (melee or ranged), that enemy is considered flanked by you for the

purpose of adjudicating your allies attacks. This flanked condition lasts until either the enemy is attacked by one of your allies or until the start of your next turn, whichever comes first. This ability only works on creatures subject to flanking.

Horgretor - human male fighter 8 (CR8)

HD:8 HP:84

Chaotic Neutral humanoid (human)
Init:+2 Senses: Listen +0 Spot +0
Languages: Common

AC:20 Touch:11 Flat Foot:19
Fort:+9 Ref:+4 Will:+2

Speed 20 ft
Melee +2 Greatsword of deadly precision +16/+11 (2d6+10) or
Melee masterwork Dagger +13/+8 (1d4+4)
Ranged masterwork Composite Long Bow +11/+6 (1d8+4)
Base Atk +8/+3 ; Grp +12
Attack Options Power Attack. Dodge, Lunge Strike, Intimidating Strike,
Improved Critical (Greatsword)
Combat Gear +2 Greatsword of deadly precision, masterwork dagger,
masterwork Composite Longbow (mighty [+4])

Abilities Str:18 Dex:14 Con:16 Int:10 Wis:10 Cha:08
Feats: Improved Toughness, Power Attack, Dodge, Weapon Focus
(Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword), Greater Weapon
Focus (Greatsword), Lunge Strike, Intimidating Strike, Improved
Critical (Greatsword)
Skills: Climb +6, Intimidate +10, Ride +10, Handle Animal +4
Possessions: combat gear plus +1 full plate mail

Phranklyn : Male Halfling(Lightfoot) Wmg8 (CR 8)

Small Humanoid (Halfling)
HD 8d6+24; hp 58

Init +4; Spd 20 ft/x4
AC 24 (+7 armor, +4 dex, +1 size, +2 deflection), touch 17, flat-footed
20
Str 6(-2), Dex 18(+4), Con 16(+3), Int 14(+2), Wis 12(+1), Cha 16(+3)
AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +8

Base Atk/Grapple
+4/-2
Full Atk
+4 Masterwork spiked gauntlet (1d3-2;20/x2)
+10 Masterwork light crossbow (1d6;19-20/x2)
+10 Ray / ranged touch (varies,20/x2)

SA&SQ Armored Mage(Ex), Warmage Edge(Ex), Advanced Learning(Ex)
Skills: Concentration¹ +14, Intimidate¹ +14, Knowledge (arcana) +13,
Spellcraft +15
Feats: Extra Edge (CAr 79, total warmage edge bonus = +5 damage),
Sudden Empower (CAr 83)², Sudden Enlarge (MH 28), Sudden Maximize
(CAr 83)

Warmage Spell Remaining (4/3/3/2/1 CL 8th)

4th (1 remaining)–blast of flame (60' cone, 8d6+5 fire damage, DC 17)
3rd (2 remaining)–fireball, lightning bolt
2nd (3 remaining)–Melf's acid arrow, scorching ray, shatter
1st (3 remaining)–magic missile, true strike, burning hands
0 (4 remaining)–acid splash, disrupt undead, ray of frost, light

Scaling the Encounter

11th level characters

Increase the Gnoll Strikers in the encounter to five (5)

12th level characters

Increase the Gnoll Strikers in the encounter to six (6)

The encounter is meant to be difficult, but not deadly. Some parties may not be as effective at dealing with the threats; if so, feel free to drop the attackers early.

One of Field Marshal Maceck's staff is hidden near-by and can use up to five *enlarged close wounds* (SPC 48) when necessary to prevent PC death during the encounter. The PC is left with -1 hit point and stable.

Development

After combat ends (either all PCs or attackers are killed) proceed to Encounter Four – New Orders.

Encounter Four – New Orders

Read the following to the players once combat has ended

With military precision you're surrounded by a detachment of Blackwheel Company veterans. The score of volunteers move your platoon to a staging area set up behind the skiff. Those of you who were neutralized during the encounter find yourselves rousing. Injured ... yes ... but not dead.

By your count there are at least three dozen regulars attending to you; more milling about the command tent and skiff.

Seeing the confused look on your faces, a hard-faced woman officer (Consul by the insignia) catches your attention and speaks.

"We'll get you fixed up shortly. We're low on resources, but will do what we can. Now why don't you tell me what your mission was. I must warn you, we've got a zone of truth active."

At this point, the PCs can respond and interact with Consul Dorovich and ask questions. Once the PCs explain their mission Consul Dorovich will know they had nothing to do with the attack itself and the conversation can proceed.

Who are you?

Consul Ilva Dorovich, the intelligence officer for this battalion

What happened?

Apparently General Ogdin is unhappy with the results of the vote. He sent your platoon as dupes and expendables to bait the Field Marshal for an ambush. We're interrogating the traitors now.

Even the dead ones?

Especially the dead ones.

What happens next?

As you're clearly not with the traitorous General Ogdin and are solid Blackwheel Company vets, we could use your help.

Can we help?

When the PCs ask this, proceed to Encounter Five – Follow the Trail.

Sense Motive – What's she doing?

DC 15 She's trying to figure out if you're on General Ogdin's side or not.

Troubleshooting

Any PCs that do not want to help Field Marshal Maceck and instead want to side with General Ogdin are removed from the adventure and retired. There is no place for traitors in the Blackwheel Company.

Development

Once the PCs agree to help, proceed to Encounter Five – Follow the Trail.

Encounter Five – Follow the Trail

Read the following to the players

"Good." Dorovich says plainly, appearing pleased.

"It has come to our attention that General Ogdin has sent couriers to a number of other senior officers in the company ... we think to try and secure their help for a coup. With some hasty magic, we were able to pinpoint the location of one of his couriers on the island. His name is Melbane Oxphax, one of General Ogdin's most experienced and trusted. We need you to go and intercept whatever it is that he is transporting."

At this point the players can interact with Dorovich and ask questions.

Interaction

What can you tell us about Melbane?

"Melbane has a taste for the finer things in life. He loves fine clothes, food, drink and women. He's a bit too self-confident though, and whenever he has a free moment he usually stops off to slake his thirst."

Where can we find Melbane?

"He's been known to frequent a small place called the #2. It was the second makeshift tavern setup in the encampment. We think the chance is high you can intercept him here before he leaves the encampment or the island completely." (She gives directions to the #2)

What is Melbane carrying?

"More than likely something small like a note, letter or scroll. We are not sure what it details. It may be simply a request for assistance ... or it could tell us the specifics of his plans. Hopefully it's not an incendiary device. But I wouldn't put it past Ogdin at this point, even to sacrifice one of his own."

What does Melbane look like?

(Dorovich gives you a description of Melbane)

Setup

The suggested map for this encounter is the Spawnscale Nursery.

The pillars are not there it is just debris filled road.

At this point, have the players assemble their miniatures on the Spawnscale map on the left hand side in the 20' x 15' block between the ruins. Melbane and his bodyguards are 60' from the closest PC as they just left the #2. The Bugbears are hiding 20' behind Melbane in the rubble of the street.

Read the following to the players as they are approaching the tavern.

When you travel to the tavern you notice the neat and rather orderly manner in which this building has been erected. The stone-work is fairly decent, and there must have been magic at work to get it accomplished so quickly. Unfortunately, whatever magic was at work, along with the hasty construction left the street choked with rubble.

As you approach the #2 you notice 3 men leaving the bar. One is dressed like a nobleman and the other two are wearing plate mail armor.

Skill Checks

The PCs at this time should make a Spot check:

Spot

DC 15 This looks like Melbane

DC 20 This IS Melbane

DC 25 You think you see something beyond Melbane

DC 30 You see the Bugbears hiding just past Melbane

When in combat with Melbane the in an adjacent square you can make a Sleight of Hand check to steal the Letter from Melbane.

Sleight of Hand

DC 30 You take the Letter from Melbane

Tactical Details

The road is covered with so much rubble that player wanting to move quicker than normal move will have to make a DC 15 Balance check or loose their Dexterity for that round.

Melbane's bodyguards will block the players from him.

Melbane will use spring attack trying to either always moving at least 10' to get his Skirmish damage bonus. If Melbane's will try and flee under the following conditions:

- Both of his body guards are taken out of the fight and Melbane has less than 50% Hit Points
- If Melbane is knocked down to 25% or lower Hit Points

The Bugbear's will wait until the players are within 30' or less of Melbane and then they will hurl javelins at them trying to do sneak damage. The Bugbear's are not stupid and will look for those players that seem to be stumbling while trying to move quickly as potential targets. If they can not get good shots at the players they will move up and help out Melbane's body guards.

Melbane: hp 59; Combat Statistic

Body Guards (2): hp 58, 54; Combat Statistic

Bugbear Rogues (2): hp 60, 58; Combat Statistic

The Attackers

Melbane Oxphax - HP:59 HD:8 CR:8

8th level human male scout
Chaotic Neutral humanoid (human)
Init:+6 Senses: Listen +12, Spot +12
Languages: Common, Orc

AC:21 Touch:15 Flat Foot:21
Fort:+4 Ref:+11 Will:+3

Speed 40 ft
Melee +1 Short sword +12/+7 (1d6+2) or
Melee +1 Dagger +12/+7 (1d4+2)
Ranged Masterwork Short Composite Bow +12/+7 (1d6+1)
Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +7
Attack Options Weapon Finesse, Skirmish +2d6, Flawless Stride, Dodge,
Mobility, Spring Attack
Combat Gear +1 Short Sword, +1 dagger

Abilities Str:12 Dex:20 Con:12 Int:12 Wis:12 Cha:14
Feats Weapon Finesse, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Improved
Toughness, Track
Skills Balance +16, Climb +10, Hide +16, Jump +15, Listen +12, Move
Silently +16, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12, Survival +12,
Tumble +15
Possessions combat gear plus +2 Gloves of Dexterity. +2 Mithral Chain
Shirt, Masterwork Short Composite Mighty Bow +1, 20 arrows

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): retains his Dexterity bonus to AC even if
flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.
Evasion (Ex): On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack,
takes no damage.
Trackless Step (Ex): You leave no trail in natural surroundings, and
can not be tracked unless you choose to.
Fast Movement (Ex): Your movement is increased by 10' while in light
armor.
Camouflage (Ex): You can use the HIDE skill in any sort of natural
terrain, even if the terrain does not grant cover or concealment
Flawless Stride (Ex): You can move through any terrain that slows you
at full speed movement with out suffering any damage or impairment.
Magically manipulated areas still hamper you.
Skirmish (Ex): On any round that you move 10' or more you gain +2d6
damage plus a +2 circumstance bonus to your AC.

(2) Body Guards - HP:54 HD:5 CR:5

5th level human male fighters
Chaotic Neutral humanoid (human)
Init:+1 Senses: Listen +0 Spot +0
Languages: Common,

AC:22 Touch:11 Flat Foot:21
Fort:+7 Ref:+2 Will:+1

Speed 20 ft
Melee masterwork Long sword +11 (1d8+6) or
Melee masterwork Dagger +10 (1d4+4)
Ranged Masterwork Composite Long Bow +7 (1d8+4)
Base Atk +5 ; Grp +9
Attack Options Power Attack. Cleave
Combat Gear masterwork long sword, masterwork dagger, Masterwork
Composite Long Mighty Bow +4, 20 arrows

Abilities Str:18 Dex:13 Con:16 Int:10 Wis:10 Cha:08

Feats Improved Toughness, Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Long sword), Weapon Specialization (Long sword), Shield Specialization (Heavy)
Skills Climb +6, Intimidate +7, Ride +6, Handle Animal +4
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork full plate mail, masterwork shield

(2) Bugbear Rogues - HP:60 HD:8 CR:8

7th level male Bugbear Rogue/1st level Humanoid (Bugbear)
Chaotic Evil humanoid (goblinoid)
Init:+5 Senses: Listen +14, Spot +14
Languages: Common, Goblin

AC:27 Touch:16 Flat Foot:27
Fort:+5 Ref:+12 Will:+3

Speed 30 ft
Melee +1 Short sword (1d6+5)
Ranged *Masterwork Javelins* (1d6+4)
Base Atk +5; Grp +9
Attack Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Sneak Attack +5d6, Weapon Focus Javelin
Combat Gear +1 *Short Sword, Masterwork Javelins (20)*

Abilities Str:18 Dex:20 Con:16 Int:12 Wis:12 Cha:08
Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus Javelin
Skills Balance +7, Climb +15, Hide +16, Jump +5, Listen +14, Move Silently +19, Spot +14, Tumble +17
Possessions combat gear plus +2 *Chain Shirt, +2 Amulet of Natural Armor, +2 Ring of Protection*

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): retains his Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.
Evasion (Ex): On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, takes no damage.
Sneak Damage (Ex): The Rogue's attack deals extra damage (5d6) any time an target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC.

Scaling the Encounter

11th level characters

Increase the Bugbear Rogues in the encounter to three (3)

12th level characters

Increase the Bugbear Rogues in the encounter to four (4)

Encounter Six - Who's Side Are You On?

Debriefing

Read the following to the players

Returning to the Field Marshal's command center the sentries immediately shuffle you in to see Consul Dorovich. With a wave of her hand, she motions you into the large black tent.

"Well ... report!"

Allow the PCs the opportunity to report status of the mission.

Read the following to the players if they retrieved the message

"Good ... anything we can do limit the spread of dissent is a positive step. I'm afraid this will still lead to direct confrontation, but perhaps when he realizes the company truly isn't on his side he'll stop the sedition."

Consul Dorovich pauses, considering each of you.

"Are you ready for the next task?"

Read the following to the players if they did not retrieve the message

That is unfortunate. We're doing what we can on other fronts to stop the sedition, but that would have helped greatly. I'm sure you did your best though.

Consul Dorovich pauses, considering each of you.

"Are you ready for the next task?"

Once the players agree, continue reading.

"Good," Dorovich nods, pleased with your choice, "... good. There's one more piece to the puzzle. The Field Marshal needs to know where the loyalties of the other core officers lie. We've dispatched emissaries to most of the general staff ... but there's one in particular that needs extra attention. Your record with the Company and your performance today show you to be the best platoon for the job."

She pauses, a stern look overtaking her face. Clearly this situation is grave.

"General Ogdin wasn't always in the Company – none of us were. Like many, he had a rough and tumble past as an adventurer and mercenary. Some of his closest friends are in the Company now ... four in particular with which he has strong ties. Admiral Taralom is one, but he's loyal to his house and the Blackwheel Company. Tubal d'Cannith is another... and he as well is loyal. Lt. General Oath is the third ... he was the recipient of the courier Orpac's message earlier today."

Again, she pauses.

"The fourth ... General Pilgrim. This is the quandary... Above all, he is known as being fanatically loyal to those in whom he has placed his trust. The reason he refers to people as his brothers and sisters is because he views them as such ... equal to a blood relative to you or I. What we don't know is whether his loyalty lies more strongly with the Company or with his old friend. We need someone to talk to him and ascertain his position."

"I won't lie to you; he can be imposing. He won't harm you either; he'd never do that unless provoked ... I guess at the least that makes him different than General Ogdin."

One last pause before she finishes; "I can't state how important this mission is. We must ensure General Pilgrim remains loyal to the company. My aide has directions. Any questions?"

At this point, the PCs can ask questions or run attempt skill checks to gain more information. The information in here isn't directly applicable to the upcoming negotiations but is presented as colorful fodder for the background. To really role-play diplomacy, bluff, sense motive, intimidate and other parts of the social encounter, this kind of information is helpful. Grant the PC's a bonus to the following checks equal to the number of spokes on their rank insignia.

Knowledge (Local / Blackwheel Company / History/Nobility or Profession: Soldier) – Pilgrim and Mach Ogdin's relationship

DC 15 They used to adventure together; their adventuring group was known as the Six Paths

DC 18 General Pilgrim was the leader of their adventuring group

DC 22 Not all of the original members remain; the other officers mentioned before were in the group however

DC 25 At times their relationship has been stressed; Pilgrim always turned leadership of the adventuring group over to Admiral Taralon or Lt. General Oath in his absence – never Mach Ogdin

DC 30 Pilgrim has long considered General Ogdin's mind as too open to control by outside sources

Knowledge (Local / Blackwheel Company / History/Nobility or Profession: Soldier) – General Pilgrim

DC 15 He's warforged & leader of the Six Paths Battalion

DC 20 His skills and abilities indicate juggernaut & marshal classes

DC 25 He values loyalty greatly and he focuses on the best in people

DC 30 Intimidating him can be very difficult

Knowledge (Local / Blackwheel Company / History/Nobility or Profession: Soldier) – General Mach Ogdin

DC 15 General Ogdin is known for his direct attitude and skills in battle

DC 20 He has an on-again / off-again relationship with House Deneith; his brother has ties to the house

DC 25 General Ogdin wields a concerningly intelligent sword

DC 30 He isn't afraid to confront authority if he thinks the leadership is wrong

How long have they known each other?

"A very long time ... years before the company."

Any advice? Pilgrim's interests?

"As odd as it may be, he is a being of faith. He also prizes honesty and loyalty ... an odd trait for someone so seemingly reserved."

Describe Pilgrim

"Warforged of the juggernaut bent, but different ... charismatic and spiritual streak."

Don't you have files on each of these guys?

"We don't have all our normal resources at our disposal today."

Once the questioning and knowledge checks are done, the PCs proceed out to the aide and receive directions to where Pilgrim and the Six Path's Battalion is mustered. The location is a loading tower not far from here to the east on the shore. Give them time to make preparations, then continue below.

Face to Face

Read the following to the players when they are ready to proceed to the next phase.

It has been a long day already ... marching in and around the encampment. Still, desperate times call for desperate measures and the events of the day qualify. Nothing short of the future of the Blackwheel Company is at stake and your platoon plays a key role.

The trip to the Six Paths Battalion takes less time than you'd expected. Mustered only a handful of miles away, the mounts provided by the Field Marshal carry you into their camp as the sun is nearly set. The camp is a field of tents laid out in a matrixed grid with a set of six larger tents arrayed in the center.

You have no difficulties with the sentries; they clearly have been expecting riders from the Field Marshal. After assuring you they'll handle your mounts, they escort you to the central courtyard and into one of the tents.

General Pilgrim stands out ... an imposing figure, even for a warforged, but strangely not as tall as you'd expected. Broad-shouldered and sturdy, he may not even top six feet in height. He leans casually on a desk, obviously of sturdier construction than it seems as it bears his weight without breaking. A white cloak trimmed in blue rests on his shoulders.

"So, Mace has sent you? I expected as much ... but sooner. The coin is in the air and he wants to make sure he knows on which side it will fall ... he or Mach ... correct?"

Social Mechanics

At this point the PCs should initiate dialog with General Pilgrim. The structure of this encounter is to amass successes and failures using social skills during the encounter. The players are allowed to make diplomacy, sense motive, bluff or intimidate checks as often as they wish, but they must do so by providing some basic premise for the check. If they achieve more successes than failures, General Pilgrim will not provide aid to his old friend General Ogdin.

Until the process is completed, General Pilgrim won't commit to one side of the other.

Skill Checks

- Bluff checks are opposed by Pilgrim's Sense Motive skill (+6)
- Diplomacy checks are opposed to Pilgrim's Diplomacy skill (+19); Pilgrim will play the devil's advocate.
- Intimidate checks against Pilgrim automatically fail; he can't be intimidated.
- Specific triggers provide bonuses or penalties

Conversation Triggers

In order to make a check of some kind, the PCs need to mention a specific fact or fabricate a fact. Once they do, allow them to make a check and then secretly record the result. Each trigger can only be used once. Not every trigger needs to be used ... give the PCs time to talk, make some rolls and give reasons to General Pilgrim ... then tally the results and proceed as detailed below.

When you are roleplaying General Pilgrim, reply to each of their arguments simply and succinctly. If PCs ask, allow the PCs to make Sense Motive checks opposed against his Bluff check (+8) to determine their success or failure.

If an item appears under multiple categories, ask the players if they are trying to bluff, use diplomacy or intimidate. Diplomacy is by far the best option, with intimidate being almost useless.

Bluff triggers (Opposed by Pilgrim's +6 Sense Motive)

- General Ogdin uses an intelligent weapon, I hear it IS controlling him ...
- General Ogdin is ... (make up a threat ... lie) ... Pilgrim receives a +10 bonus to his Sense Motive – he knows General Ogdin well; if the lie is truly outrageous, increase his bonus to +20
- Field Marshal Maceck will do (something made up) if you don't back him (lie) ... Pilgrim receives a +10 bonus to his Sense Motive – he knows Field Marshal Mace well; if the lie is truly outrageous, increase his bonus to +20
- Lt. General Oath has sided with the Field Marshal; you want to go where he goes don't you (lie)?
- Lt. General Oath has sided with General Ogdin; you don't want to be with him do you? (Automatic Failure – General Pilgrim values Lt. General Oath greatly)

Diplomacy triggers (Opposed by Pilgrim's +19 Diplomacy)

- Field Marshal Maceck is the rightful leader of the Blackwheel Company and General Ogdin is being mutinous (PCs receive a +5 bonus to this check)
- Field Marshal Maceck is your commanding officer; if you don't side with him aren't you being mutinous? (Automatic Success – Pilgrim values loyalty)
- General Ogdin uses an intelligent weapon – do you worry that it might be controlling him? (PCs receive a +10 bonus to this check)
- Admiral Taralom has sided with the Field Marshal (Automatic Success and you receive a +2 circumstance bonus to all future checks)
- Tubal d'Cannith has sided with the Field Marshal (Automatic Success)
- You were the leader of your adventuring group, do you thing General Ogdin would be a good leader that you'd follow? (Automatic Success)

Intimidate triggers (intimidate checks against General Pilgrim automatically fail)

- Field Marshal Maceck is your commanding officer; if you don't side with him YOU are being mutinous (Automatic Failure)
- General Ogdin uses an intelligent weapon – do you worry that it might be controlling him? (Automatic Failure)
- General Ogdin is ... (make up a threat ... lie) (Automatic Failure)

- Field Marshal Maceck will do (something made up) if you don't back him (lie) (Automatic Failure)
- You were the leader of your adventuring group, do you think General Ogdin would be a good leader that you'd follow? (PC's receive a -5 penalty on this check)

Other information

- Lt. General Oath is undecided (General Pilgrim will note this, but this doesn't provoke a skill check)

If the players come up with other plausible discussion items, decide their chance of success or failure using the items above as a guide.

Resolution

Once the PCs have amassed either five successes or five failures, the encounter is over.

Read the following to the players if they had five successes

"Enough ... this is mere formality. The Field Marshal should know I am true to my word, and my commission is here with the Blackwheel Company. Wherever that path takes me, I will go. May the Traveler guide us all through these troubling days."

With a wave of his hand, he dismisses you. "Return, and assure Mace that I view Mach's actions as seditious."

You find your mounts well cared-for, and the journey back to the Gay Deceiver goes quickly through the evening twilight.

Read the following to the players if they had five failures

"Enough!. The Field Marshal should know I am loyal and true – and not one to be intimidated. Wherever that path takes me, I will go. May the Traveler guide us all through these troubling days."

With a wave of his hand, he dismisses you. "Return to your master and tell the Field Marshal that on this day I will make no commitments to him."

You find your mounts well cared-for, and the journey back to the Gay Deceiver goes quickly through the evening twilight.

They can attempt one more Sense Motive check (opposed by Pilgrim's +13 Bluff) to gauge overall success or failure.

Scaling the Encounter

11th level characters

Provide a +1 bonus for General Pilgrim on all opposed checks

12th level characters

Provide a +3 bonus for General Pilgrim on all opposed checks

Development

Proceed from here to Part Three – End Game.

Part Three – End Game

Encounter Seven – The Sword is Mightier than the Vote

Read the following to the players

Returning to the site of Field Marshal Maceck's improvised camp, you find a bustle of activity. The airskiff, the Gay Deceiver, slowly rises to the sky departing towards the mainland in the general direction of Stormreach. The remainder of the detachment work to get packed and moving quickly. Some urgent task is clearly underway.

Luckily, Consul Dorovich stands out from the crowd. Standing on a stack of crates, she scans the horizon. Seeing you arrive, a look of relief crosses her face. Quickly she jumps from the crates and rushes to you and

"We do not have much time ... tell me, is General Pilgrim loyal to the Company or the traitor?"

Pause here and allow the PCs time to respond, then continue.

"Good. Knowing which way he falls is probably more important than his actual position. Knowing allows us to plan, one way or the other ... and we have no time for guesswork."

She gestures to the throng of Blackwheel Company hires busy breaking camp.

"No time ...", Dorovich repeats. "We've gotten word of trouble back on the Glory Road; General Ogdin may be trying to take the flagship. The Field Marshal and many of our number here have already left in the skiff. I need you to get to the docking tower as quickly as you can to assist. You've proven your loyalty today, and you have more experience among the handful of you than the rest of these combined. They are strong, sturdy soldiers ... but I think we need more savvy, more experience and more creativity at the docking tower as soon as possible."

She points off to the left. "Fresh mounts. Get to the docking tower as soon as possible and help out however you can."

And with that, she turns back to the preparations, disappearing into the crowd. A fresh hire guides your platoon to the mounts and in the space of five minutes you find yourself heading back down the path into the encampment. How many times did you pass that same rock formation?

The mounts can't manage an all-out run the entire distance to the docking tower, so you alternate between a slow gallop and a fast trot. Soon you find yourself back in the encampment. Night has come at last to this long day and you can make out the glow of fires dotting the mountainside ... parts of smaller camps for various platoons, no doubt.

With the orange glow reflecting off low clouds in the sky, the docking tower forms a black shadow piercing the sky. A number of airships are tethered there, judging from the twinkling deck lights. As you approach nearer a flash of flame illuminates the tower and the tethered airships and lighting the city like a flare. One of the smaller airships has burst into flames and as you watch, horrified, it loses its buoyancy and plummets to the ground. Flashes of brilliant energy signal the familiar combination of magic and combat.

Set-Up

Field of Ruin is the suggested map for this encounter. Have the players place themselves on one edge of the map moving towards the wrecked airship. If some of them want to make preparations, allow them to do so until one of them is within 8 squares of the airship.

Once they are that close, read the following to the players.

You find the docking grounds to be littered with wreckage ... some from the siege and some much newer. The ship that crashed earlier lies ahead, smoking. Coming closer, you recognize it as the Harsh Mistress, and not the Gay Deceiver. Bodies clad in Blackwheel Company uniforms punctuate the landscape. As you work your way towards the tower, you ready yourself.

Spot Checks

Allow each player to make a spot check (DC 20) to avoid surprise with a +5 circumstance bonus if they specifically state they are wary or otherwise taking measures to not be surprised. Place the attackers on the map either within the wreckage of the airship, behind it or behind nearby rubble. General Ogdin was not on the airship, he and his group are using it for concealment.

Surprise Round

None of the attackers are surprised; they all act during the surprise round. During the surprise round, General Ogdin will remain invisible and yell a challenge to the party. He acts first in initiative order (he's readied this action).

Read the following to the players.

A voice rings out from near the wreckage – one you recognize from this morning as being General Ogdin himself.. "If you're not with me, you're against me! The vote was rigged, and now we'll see if the sword is mightier than the pen!"

Proceed with combat from here.

General Mach Ogdin: hp 99; Combat Statistic

Timblar: hp 73; Combat Statistic

Combat

Composition

The attackers consist of General Mach Ogdin (a human warrior who dual-wields short swords), Timblar (dwarven cleric) and possibly others. If the party was unable to stop the courier from delivering his message, General Ogdin is also assisted by Vash the Lesser (a goblin warlock). If the party was unable to convince General Pilgrim to side with the Field Marshal, General Ogdin is also assisted by Vaarak (a warforged dragonfire adept).

Tactics

General Ogdin will engage opponents in melee. He will single out a target and concentrate on it until it drops, maximizing his full-attack and dual-strike potential. Don't forget to employ his Hard to Kill ability when the PC's are about to drop him.

Timblar remains invisible, having cast *shield other* on General Ogdin and *invisibility* and *sanctuary* on himself. He functions as additional hit points for the general and also provides healing and protection magic. His spell list has been diminished through other activities of the day, but *bless* and *prayer* may be among his first choices. PCs will have to make a listen check to attempt to discern his location if they do not detect him otherwise. He may cast *bear's endurance* on himself if *shield other* becomes too damaging.

If present, Vash the Lesser moves and shoots each round with his *eldritch blast*, triggering his skirmish damage. He has *entropic warding* and *see the unseen* active at the start of combat. He will skirt the edge of the map and avoid getting too close (he has a range of 250 ft. with his *eldritch spear*)

If present, Vaarak will breathe alternating his cold breath and slow breath. Assume he has already cast *endure exposure* on his allies to protect him from his breath effects as well as *draconic flight* and *see the unseen*.

General Mach Ogdin

Male Human Bbn1/Ftr8/Rgr3; CR 12

Medium Humanoid (Human)

HD 3d8+8d10+1d12+24; hp 99

Init +5; Spd 40 ft/x4

AC 22 (+7 armor, +5 dex), touch 15, flat-footed 17

Base Atk/Grapple

+12/+14

Single Atk

+22 (1d6+7+1d6 electricity; 19-20/x2, +1 *Shocking Short Sword*)

Full Atk

+20/+15/+10 (1d6+7+1d6 electricity; 19-20/x2, +1 *Shocking Short Sword*)and;

+20/+15/+10 (1d6+6+1d6 cold; 19-20/x2, +1 *Frost Short Sword*)

SA&SQ Fast Movement(Ex), Rage, Wild Empathy(Ex), Favored Enemy(Undead), Hard to Kill

Combat Gear: *mithral breastplate +2, +1 shocking short sword, +1 frost short sword*

AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +12, Will +7

Str 14(+2), Dex 20(+5), Con 14(+2), Int 12(+1), Wis 11(+0), Cha 8(-1);

Skills: Climb¹ +6, Handle Animal +5, Jump¹ +20, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen¹ +15, Ride¹ +15, Spot¹ +14, Survival¹ +7, Swim¹ +5.

Feats: Combat Reflexes (PH 92), Endurance (PH 93)², Track (PH 101)², Two-Weapon Fighting (PH 102)², Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (PH 96), Greater Two-Weapon Fighting (PH 95), Weapon Finesse (PH 102), Weapon Focus (PH 102) (Sword, Short), Weapon Specialization (PH 102) (Sword, Short), Greater Weapon Focus (PH 95) (Sword, Short), Melee Weapon Mastery (PH2 81) (Slashing), Steadfast Determination (PH2 83), Two-Weapon Rend (PH2 84), Dual Strike (CAD 108)

Possessions: Combat gear plus *boots of speed* (seven rounds remaining), *cloak of resistance +2, gloves of dexterity +2*

- **Hard to Kill(Su):** Once per round, if General Ogdin would be dropped to 0hp or below, roll a d20. On a roll of 11 or higher, General Ogdin lives and is returned to 10hp, regardless of what caused the damage or how much was dealt. On a roll of 10 or less, he takes the damage and result as normal.
- **Two Weapon Rend (Ex):** If Mach successfully strikes an opponent with both of the weapons he wields, he deals an additional 1d6+1 damage to that opponent. This damage can be dealt only once to any given target in a single round.

Timblar: Male Dwarf(Hill) Clr7; CR 7

Medium Humanoid (Dwarf);

HD 7d8+28; hp 73

Init -1; Spd 20 ft/x3

AC 23 (+10 armor, +4 shield, -1 dex), touch 9, flat-footed 23

Base Atk/Grapple

+5/+5

Full Atk

+6 One-handed (1d8;19-20/x2, Masterwork morningstar)

+5 Touch (*;20/x2, Touch)

SA&SQ: Spontaneous Casting, Turn Undead(Su)

Combat Gear: *full plate +2, large steel shield +2, masterwork morningstar*

AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +10

Str 10(+0), Dex 8(-1), Con 18(+4), Int 12(+1), Wis 20(+5), Cha 6(-2)

Skills: Concentration¹ +14, Hide¹ +3, Knowledge (religion) +11,
Survival¹ +15.

Feats: Enlarge Spell (PH 94), Divine Vigor (CW 108), Improved Toughness (LM 27)

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- Spontaneous Casting: Can spontaneously cast cure spells, by sacrificing a pre-prepared spell of equal or higher level.
 - Turn Undead(Su): Can turn undead 1 times per day. A turning check is made on 1d20; turning damage is equal to 2d6+5 on a successful check.
 - Domains: Travel (free action 7 rounds), Trickery
 - Spells Remaining (CL 7):
 - 1st -bless, shield of faith, remove fear, longstrider
 - 2nd -bear's endurance, resist energy x2
 - 3rd -magic vestment, fly, prayer
 - 4th -spell immunity, dimension door

Possessions: *Combat gear and amulet of health +2, periapt of wisdom +2*

Vash the Lesser : Male Goblin Wlk5/Sct1; CR 6

Small Humanoid (Goblinoid)

HD 5d6+1d8+18; hp 45

Init +6; Spd 30 ft/x4

AC 20 (+1 armor, +1 shield, +5 dex, +1 size, +2 deflection), touch 18,
flat-footed 15

Base Atk/Grapple

+3/-3

Full Atk

+3 One-handed (1d3-2;20/x2, Masterwork spiked gauntlet)

+10 touch (*;20/x2, Eldritch Blast);

SA&SQ:

Trapfinding(Ex), Eldritch Blast(Sp), Detect Magic(Sp), Damage Reduction(Su), Deceive Item, Skirmish(Ex)

Combat Gear: *Leafweave Padded Armor, Mithral Light Steel Shield, Masterwork Spiked Gauntlet*

AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +5

Str 6(-2), Dex 20(+5), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 12(+1), Cha 6(-2)

Skills: Balance¹ +11, Concentration¹ +12 (16), Knowledge (arcana) +2,
Spot¹ +9

Feats: Point Blank Shot (PH 98), Precise Shot (PH 98), Combat Casting (PH 96)

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- Eldritch Blast(Sp): Ray deals 3d6 damage.
 - Detect Magic(Sp): At will, as the spell.
 - Damage Reduction(Su): You gain damage reduction 1/cold iron.
 - Deceive Item: You can always take 10 on Use Magic Device checks.
 - Skirmish(Ex): For any round in which you move at least 10', you gain 1d6 damage.

Invocations:

- Eldritch Spear (blast shape): increases range to 250 ft.
- Entropic Warding: as *pass without trace* and *entropic shield*
- See the Unseen: see *invisible*, as the spell

Possessions: Combat gear and *ring of protection +2*, *amulet of health +2*

Vaarak: Male Warforged Dragonfire Adept 6; CR 6

Medium Construct (Living Construct, Dragonblood)

HD 6d8+36; hp 75

Init +3; Spd 30 ft/x4

AC 22 (+4 armor, +3 shield, +3 dex, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 19

Base Atk/Grapple

+4/+3

Full Atk

+4 Primary Natural (1d4-1;20/x2, slam)

SA&SQ: Draconic breath, DR 2/magic, invocations

Combat Gear: *Mithral light steel shield +2*, *composite plating +2*

AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +11

Str 8(-1), Dex 16(+3), Con 22(+6), Int 12(+1), Wis 8(-1), Cha 6(-2)

Skills: Concentration¹ +15, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +5

Feats: Endurance (PH 93), Steadfast Determination (PH2 83), Ability Focus - Breath Weapon (MM 303)

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- Breath Weapon (Su): 3d6 DC 21 Reflex. 15 ft. cone or 30 ft. line of fire, 15 ft. cone of cold, slow breath
 - See the Unseen (Sp): see *invisible*, as the spell
 - Endure Exposure (Sp): target is immune to all effects of your breath weapon for 24 hours
 - Draconic Flight (Sp): fly 30 ft w/ good maneuverability
 - Slow Breath: Can be applied only to cone of fire; breath does half damage and target is *slowed* for two rounds; additional Fort save (DC 21) reduces this to one round.

Possessions: Combat gear plus *amulet of health +2*

Ending the Adventure

The adventure ends when the PCs have defeated or are defeated by General Ogdin's forces.

Read the following if the PCs were vanquished by General Ogdin's forces.

As the last of you slip into darkness you see the shadow of a small airship in the sky illuminated by the glowing light of the bound elemental. The Field Marshal has arrived ... is he too late?

Sadly, you may never know ...

Read the following if the PCs defeated General Ogdin.

A final vestige of magic flickers around the General, rousing him to consciousness. Recognizing his defeat and his weakened position, a look of grim resolution sets in jaw. Exhausted and breathing in great, gasping heaves he manages to speak.

"I'm done with this Company anyway. Too stupid to save itself and fighting like Dol Dorn and the Devourer to make sure no one else can either. So ... what is it? Kill me? Throw me in the brig? I've got an idea ... why don't you just let me wander into the night ... you've my word I'll disappear."

He twists his head to the sky, nodding towards an approaching shadow.

"Your master is coming ... not much time for a decision. What'll it be?"

Allow the PCs to decide General Ogdin's fate.

Event Treasure

If you are running *BWC-10 Pariah* as part of another event, please have each PC record the following event treasure upon their adventure journals in addition to any story objects. Each PC receives a *potion of haste* and two potions of *repair critical damage* or *cure critical wounds* to be carried on their adventure journal until the results of this event are reported and their EV is updated. If the PC's sided with the Field Marshal and survived the adventure, award them the One Aim, United story object. If they chose to let General Ogdin live, award them the Merciful story object.

Adventure Questions

1. How did PCs fare in the initial ambush?

- a. Poorly. The ambushes obliterated the party or completely tapped their resources.
- b. Well enough; the PCs held their own.
- c. Cake walk, the PCs didn't break a sweat.

2. How did the PCs fare with the courier?

- a. They intercepted the message skillfully and kept combat to a minimum.
- b. There was a fight, and the PCs lost.
- c. It was a fair fight.
- d. The courier and his guards didn't stand a chance.

3. Did the courier deliver the message?

- a. Melbane is an awesome courier with mad skills and the PCs could do nothing to stop him – he delivered the message.
- b. They prevented him from delivering the message.

4. How did the PCs fare with General Pilgrim?

- a. Well-prepared, they dominated the social challenges and secured his position with the Field Marshal.
- b. The PCs were no match for General Pilgrim's smooth talking – he sided with General Ogdin

5. How did the PCs fare in the final battle?

- a. The PCs bought a one-way ticket to Dolurrth, courtesy of General Ogdin.
- b. It was a tough fight, but they stuck with it and pulled out the win.
- c. General Ogdin was a pushover.

5. What was the resolution to the final confrontation?

- a. The PCs died horribly.
- b. The PCs prevailed and General Ogdin was slain.
- c. The PCs prevailed and General Ogdin is now in the Field Marshal's custody.
- d. The PCs prevailed and showed mercy, allowing General Ogdin to disappear into the night.

7. Rate the players' role-playing:

- a. Fantastic; everyone was clearly a member of Blackwheel Company. United aim!
- b. Good; the players made an effort to role-play where appropriate.
- c. Poor; the characters were just numbers on a sheet of paper.

Story Objects

EXBC31

One Aim, United

Your loyalty to the Blackwheel Company is beyond question. When you use the aid another action to assist another Blackwheel Company member you can spend an action point and provide an addition +3 morale bonus to the check. This award grants a bonus of +500 gp to your EV.

EXBC32

Merciful

You have been marked by some as weak and by others as showing great mercy and compassion. No one really believes that General Ogdin somehow "just got away" – they suspect you had a hand in his escape. This may not make you many friends in the Blackwheel Company, but gives you a +2 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy, Bluff, and Intimidate checks with the Cabal of Shadows, Crimson Codex and Covenant of Light.

Map 1: King's Road



Map 2: Spawnscale Nursery



