



THE HAND OF THE HIGHWAYMAN

A Web Enhancement for *Song and Silence*

The judicious use of bardic abilities can help an adventuring group in a variety of ways. Bardic knowledge can provide background information for an area or a situation, offer clues to a mystery, serve as a vehicle for the Dungeon Master (DM) to introduce new concepts, and even help the canny DM determine what areas of the campaign world interest players most.

Bardic music can bolster an adventuring party's combat capabilities, counter spells, and pave the way for gathering information, conducting investigations, and a host of other noncombat situations. In addition, the bard's normally high Charisma helps him make friends and gain new allies almost everywhere he goes.

If your players aren't accustomed to using bardic abilities to their fullest, it may help to send the characters on an adventure that offers several opportunities for using these talents. Here's a short scenario that demonstrates how bardic abilities can enhance a group's success.

This DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® web enhancement showcases bardic abilities (particularly bardic knowledge) and features a spymaster NPC, as well as several of the sample traps listed in *Song and Silence: A Guidebook to Bards and Rogues*. It is designed for four characters of 6th to 7th level. The party should include at least one bard.

Credits

Design: David Noonan, John D. Rateliff, and Penny Williams
Editing: Miranda Horner
Typesetting: Sue Weinlein Cook
Web Production: Julia Martin
Web Development: Mark Jindra
Graphic Design: Sean Glenn, Cynthia Fliege

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PREPARATION

You need the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, the *MONSTER MANUAL*®, and *Song and Silence* to run this mini-adventure.

Text in shaded boxes is player information. Monster statistics noted in each encounter are radically abbreviated, but provide the *MONSTER MANUAL* page number.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The elven overlords of the Lendore Isles want control of the few remaining human-ruled coastal towns of this continent. Their efforts to gain that influence through alliances have thus far been rebuffed. Therefore, they have decided to use more circuitous means to reach their goal.

They have sent two agents, a necromancer and a spymaster, to the coastal city of Restenford to start a mysterious "crime wave." Their hope is that this will panic the citizenry and force Baroness Andrella to waive the town's autonomy and call on the elves for help.

After assessing the situation, the two decided to create a little-known necromantic item called the *glorious*

hand to use in their “crime wave.” The spymaster obtained the necessary raw materials (including the left hand of a recently hanged murderer) and slew the local lighthouse keeper. The two then moved into the lighthouse and set to work.

Once they had completed the *glorious hand*, the spymaster began a series of nightly robberies, some coupled with murder. They stashed the loot in an abandoned thieves’ hideout in the city’s sewers so that no one would find it. However, the necromancer grew greedy and began taking items from the stash. When the spymaster discovered this, he slew his partner and left him for the dire rats in the sewer hideout to devour.

Since then, the spymaster, Sirius, has been continuing the mission alone. The scenario opens with the crime wave in full swing.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure begins with a bandit ambush, which should clue the player characters (PCs) in to the local problems. If the PCs choose to investigate, they can visit Restenford and see the local wizard, the church, the thieves’ guild, and the city guard. They might also have a chance to interact with the Baroness via the bard’s performance. If they go about it correctly, they can find clues with the guards and the sewers that lead to the spymaster, who has taken on the role of the local lighthouse keeper. (He killed the real lighthouse keeper.) Should the PCs discover all of this, they can end the crime wave and foil the underhanded plot of the elven overlords of the Lendore Isles!

CHARACTER HOOKS

There are several ways that you can introduce your PCs to this particular adventure. Pick one of these and adapt it as needed or use them as inspiration for your own introduction to the adventure!

- The characters are on their way to the port city of Restenford for some rest and relaxation between adventures.
- The PCs are carrying a message to the baroness from a leader or local bard who once stayed with the baroness as a guest.
- A local caravan needs some guards, and the PCs suit just fine. Allow the characters to learn that the city of Restenford, the last stop on their trip, is having some crime problems.

THE HANGED HIGHWAYMAN

The whole adventure starts with an ambush. Then the party can investigate the strange crime wave going on in Restenford.

Encounter 1: On the Road (EL 7)

Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The road is well used, and bushes, rocks, and various types of brushy plants make the journey only a little less monotonous. Sometimes larger rock outcroppings provide a bit of distraction for the eye, and you can see copses of trees here and there just off the road.

Let the players roleplay a bit before you get to the ambush. Here are some suggestions for distractions:

- A couple of squirrels chase each other across the road at the PCs’ feet, then head for some nearby trees.
- A cloud of gnats hovers around a specific PC.
- A nearby tree has a fallen bird or bird nest under it, DM’s choice. The PCs should make a Listen check (DC 10) to hear the weak chirping of a bird (or baby birds if the season is right). If they hear it, they can easily find the fallen nest or bird(s).

As the PCs approach a bend in the road, bandits attack.

Creatures: Three bandits hide behind a rocky outcropping at a bend in the road to ambush the party. A successful Spot check (use the rules on pages 59–60 of the *DUNGEON MASTER’S Guide*; terrain is considered light forest at this juncture and the bandits are still) reveals the presence of the group.

➤ **Bandits (3):** Male and female human Rog3/Ftr1; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 1d10+1; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +6 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+2d6); SQ Evasion, traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Diplomacy +1, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Read Lips +2, Ride (horse) +5, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +5; Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, a bandit takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Possessions (each): +1 studded leather armor, +1 buckler, masterwork longsword, masterwork light crossbow, 20 bolts, *potion of hiding* (2 bandits) or *potion of invisibility* (bandit leader), 200 gp.

Tactics: Unless the PCs are attempting to slip into town undetected, the bandits hear the party's approach in time to drink their potions. The two with *potions of hiding* raise their Hide bonuses by +10, and the third (the leader) becomes invisible and circles around to the other side of the road so as to be in a good position for flanking when combat begins.

If the PCs fail to spot the bandits as they hide, the two in hiding attack first with their light crossbows, using the natural formations of the rock as cover (one-half), then draw their longswords when the PCs start to close. The invisible bandit holds his attack until the characters have closed with his fellows, then maneuvers to flank a PC (preferably a spellcaster) for a sneak attack.

Any bandits that the party captures alive and questions reveal that they are all independents who joined forces several weeks ago. At present, they are in search of a magic item called the *glorious hand*, which they believe to be in the keeping of travelers coming into Restenford. While searching the campsite outside of town for valuables after a raid a few days ago, one of them found a scrap of paper in a dead campfire. The paper, currently in the possession of the leader, reads as follows: "eagerly await the arrival of the Glorious Hand—w [illegible] an we not achieve [illegible] in our clutches [illegible]." The bandits do not know what this item does, but they believe it to be of great power and have every confidence in their ability to make use of it once they find it.

A successful bardic knowledge check (DC 20) allows a character to remember a few scattered lines from an old ballad he once heard:

*dum de dum, don't understand
tallow drips on withered hand
'neath shadow of a gallows' pole
I took (something, something),
fingers dance and I stretch and yawn
Hand of Glory.*

The song refers to a magic item called a *hand of glory* (see Chapter 8 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*), but a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15) is required to recall

its specific powers. Failure on this check reveals only one power of the item (see *invisibility*). Such a clue may actually mislead the party into thinking there's some kind of invisible creature on the prowl. A successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 35) reveals that the term *glorious hand* was long ago used to describe a different necromantic magic item manufactured from the left hand of a hanged criminal. It does not, however, reveal that item's powers.


Encounter 2: At Restenford

Upon arriving in Restenford, the characters may settle at the inn of their choice and take care of any town business they may have. Wherever they decide to stay, the innkeeper, a middle-aged man named Grezius, recognizes the bard as an entertainer and asks him or her to put on a show that evening. In exchange for one night's entertainment, he offers free lodging for the bard, plus free dinner for the whole party. (See Encounter 3 when you're ready to have the actual performance.)

From here, the characters may investigate the mystery through any means they desire. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 10) made while a character chats for awhile with Grezius or any ordinary townsfolk reveals that there has recently been a daring series of burglaries in Restenford. The first took place about two weeks ago, and since then one has occurred every night or so. One or two people, apparently unfortunate enough to surprise the burglars in the act, were murdered, seemingly without having put up a struggle. None of the ordinary citizens have ever heard of a *glorious hand* or of any unusual magic item being brought into town recently.

Checking with the following persons and organizations reveals the information listed below (no check required unless noted):

- **The Local Wizard:** The wizard is a recluse who refuses to see anyone. His apprentice, a comely young lady, turns away all callers politely. (Should a character press the issue, go to Encounter 4.)
- **The Church:** There have been no undead sightings here in several years. The church has tried very hard to keep down undead problems, and they are quite happy to report this, even if the PCs ask other questions. This is definitely a dead end, but feel free to allow the party to interact with all manner of church authorities.
- **The Thieves' Guild:** Though it takes several hours and a least one Gather Information check (DC 17) to discover the guild, the PCs can certainly try to



find it. If they succeed, they must deal with the rather paranoid (Unfriendly) thieves. Should the bard deal diplomatically with the bunch (use the rules for dealing with NPC attitudes in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* on page 149), the group can find out more about what is going on in the town. First off, nobody has hocked or fenced the stolen goods locally, and no one knows who's behind the burglaries. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 15) reveals that the guild knows of an abandoned secret hideout of an old thieves' guild somewhere in town, but none of the current guild members know where it is. (The only place this information can be found is the city records, which are kept in the baroness's manor house; see Encounters 5–7.)

- **The City Guard:** The local law enforcement (the City Guard) has beefed up patrols in the mercantile sector in response to the burglaries. A successful Gather Information check (DC 15) reveals that the last public execution took place about six weeks ago. The guard hanged the notorious highwayman Reynard and displayed his body for some weeks thereafter as a warning to others. (Characters wishing to pursue this line of inquiry must consult the guards at the north gate, who claim that nothing was unusual about the hanging, the display of the body, or the burial. Ravella, the guard who was actually on duty at the time of the burial, is out of town and won't be back for two more days. If the PCs press the matter, they learn that she is helping her sister while her sister's husband is off on some undisclosed errand that took him away from his family.) Go to Encounter 9 for more information.

Encounter 3: Showtime!

On the evening of the first day, the bard may be performing: If the bard agreed to put on a show for patrons of the inn, Grezius calls upon him or her to fulfill that promise now. At least three dozen patrons—peasants, merchants, farmers, and even a few petty nobles—pack the tavern, for the people of Restenford are eager for anything that might take their minds off the current situation. Their faces are lined with worry and they jump at the smallest sounds.

If the bard makes a successful Perform check (DC 15), one of the petty nobles later describes the performance in glowing terms to Baroness Andrella, ruler of Resten-

ford (see Encounter 5). The bard also may attempt any of the various bardic music effects he can produce to comfort the patrons or gain their cooperation.

Nothing untoward happens during the evening or the night. The villain is biding his time and waiting to see whether the strangers will move on of their own accord.

Encounter 4: The Wizard (EL Variable)

When (or if) any of the characters make a second attempt to visit Barellus, the local wizard, use this encounter.

A successful Diplomacy check (DC 10) made to gain information about the wizard from the townsfolk anytime prior to this encounter reveals that he is old and cantankerous. Success at a higher level (DC 15) reveals that he is impatient with those who waste his time, particularly garrulous townsfolk who can't seem to get to the point. Those who approach him in a businesslike manner have no problems talking with him. Likewise, a Diplomacy check (DC 10) made to discover information about his apprentice reveals that her name is Serena, she is a half-elf, she adores roses, she is afraid of spiders, and she is very interested in antiques.

The wizard's tower stands on the outskirts of town. All along the path leading up to it are signs reading "No Trespassing." The door is secured with both a mechanical lock (Open Lock DC 20) and an *arcane lock* (caster level 10). The only windows are on the top (fourth) floor of the tower.

If the characters knock, Serena greets them. She has orders to turn away all visitors, which she usually does very efficiently. However, a successful opposed check with Bluff, Intimidate, or Diplomacy against her Sense Motive check result convinces her to admit them. Apply a +2 bonus to the check if the PC attempting this brings her roses or an antique as a gift or promises her information about a valuable antique. Apply a –2 penalty should a character try to use a spider (or the threat of one) against her. (She shuts the door against them and runs up to Barellus to warn him of the nasty people who want to see him.)

If they convince her to let them see Barellus, she leads them to his study on the top floor, where he is perusing an ancient tome. She introduces them as strangers who need his advice. In this case, his initial attitude is indifferent. If they enter by any other means, his initial attitude is hostile, and he attacks them as intruders with his wand and spells before asking any questions.

Assuming the characters get to speak with Barellus, he greets them gruffly. Read aloud the following:

“Adventurers, eh?” the old wizard scowls. “Make it fast. You found a magic bauble in some musty old dungeon and you want to know what it does? Your friend got turned into a toad and you want him changed back? You want a new spell for your spellbooks? Well, spit it out! I haven’t got all day!”

If the characters do anything other than state their business without preamble, Barellus orders them from his presence and refuses to talk with them any further. Should the characters be open and forthright with him, however, he invites them to sit and talk. A successful Charisma check (DC 15) at this point converts his attitude to friendly, or to helpful (DC 30).

If the PCs get him to chat, Barellus is happy to tell them what he knows about a *hand of glory* (all its powers as listed in Chapter 8 of the *DUNGEON MASTER’S Guide*). If any character repeats the fragment of the ballad relating to a *hand of glory* (from Encounter 1), the old man’s eyes light up with recognition. “I remember that song . . . it was based on a tale that everyone thought was a legend. But it wasn’t. I once read a dusty old treatise on how to make a necromantic item called a *glorious hand*. It was a five-pointed candle made from the left hand of a hanged murderer, and it could open any lock and hold fast anyone other than the wielder who saw it happen.”

The old wizard knows no more than this, and he has no real concept of what has been happening in town recently.

Should the characters try to fight these two, they have a tough battle on their hands. The treasure within the tower consists primarily of old books relating to magic and legends, for the wizard became a sage after his retirement from adventuring. There are also a few potions, scrolls, and 2,000 gp (secreted inside a fake book).

➤ **Barellus:** Male human Wiz10/Exp6; CR 15; Medium-size humanoid; HD 10d4 plus 6d6; hp 46; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+2, +3 *quarterstaff*) or +8/+3 melee (1d4–1/19–20, dagger); AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +16; Str 8, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +22, Concentration +13, Decipher Script +9, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10, Knowledge

(geography) +10, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Scry +17, Spellcraft +17; Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared: (4/5/5/4/4/2; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare, mage hand, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, magic missile (3), unseen servant*; 2nd—*arcane lock, detect thoughts, levitate, locate object, obscure object*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, fireball, secret page*; 4th—*arcane eye, ice storm, scrying*; 5th—*cloudkill, wall of force*.

Spellbook: 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*alarm, burning hands, charm person, endure elements, feather fall, hold portal, identify, mage armor, magic missile, shocking grasp, sleep, unseen servant*; 2nd—*arcane lock, bull’s strength, cat’s grace, continual flame, darkvision, detect thoughts, knock, levitate, locate object, obscure object, see invisibility, Tasha’s hideous laughter*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, explosive runes, fireball, fly, greater magic weapon, haste, hold person, keen edge, secret page, stinking cloud, tongues*; 4th—*arcane eye, confusion, fear, fire trap, ice storm, polymorph other, remove curse, scrying, wall of fire*; 5th—*cloudkill, cone of cold, major creation, passwall, seeming, telekinesis, teleport, wall of force, wall of iron*.

Possessions: +3 *quarterstaff*, *bracers of armor* +4, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of counterspells*, *wand of fireballs*, *scroll of flesh to stone*, *potion of bull’s strength*.

➤ **Serena:** Female half-elf Wiz4; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d4–4; hp 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 11, flat-footed 11); Atk +4 melee (1d4+2/19–20, +1 *dagger*); SQ Half-elf traits; AL CG; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +10, Concentration +6, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +1, Scry +4, Search +4, Spellcraft +10, Spot +1; Combat Casting, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll.

Half-Elf Traits: Immune to magic sleep spells and effects; +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects; low-light vision (can see twice as far as a human in low-light conditions); +1 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above).

Spells Prepared: (4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*burning hands, charm person, magic missile* (2); 2nd—*bull's strength, detect thoughts, whispering wind*.

Spellbook: 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*burning hands, charm person, erase, hypnotism, magic missile, reduce, sleep, spider climb, unseen servant*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, bull's strength, detect thoughts, ghoul touch, magic mouth, see invisibility, whispering wind*.

Possessions: +1 dagger, bracers of armor +1.

Encounter 5: An Invitation

If the bard impressed the local nobility with the performance the previous night (see Encounter 3), the PCs have a chance to see the baroness. Upon returning to the inn, the bard finds a special invitation awaiting him or her. The local ruler, Baroness Andrella, heard such good reports about his concert that she wants a special performance at the manor tonight—in just a few hours' time, in fact. If the bard accepts, the entire party is welcome at Andrella's manor. Go to Encounter 6 after the PCs have a chance to react and ready themselves.

Encounter 6: The Show of Shows (EL Variable)

If the bard has received and accepted an invitation to perform at the manor house (see Encounter 5), or if the PCs request permission to examine the city records, they can visit the baroness. In the latter case, the baroness requests a performance from the bard in exchange for permission—if she can tell that the group includes an entertainer. If not, the PCs can gain permission if they can convince her with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 20) that such access is vital to solving the recent string of burglaries. (See Encounter 7 if the PCs get permission to research the city records.)

If the bard puts on a show for Andrella, the guard captain warns the PCs upon their arrival that the baroness does not take kindly to attempts to influence her with magic of any sort. If they agree to a magic-free evening, they are ushered into the baroness's presence. At least six minor nobles and the baroness's wizard are also present for the show. A Perform check result of 25 or higher for the bard's performance indicates that the baroness is so pleased that she offers to grant the character a request. If the request is for permission to exam-

ine the city records, she grants it with the caveat that no papers leave the manor house. If it is for a gift (such as a magic item), she freely gives items worth up to 1,000 gp. The DM is free to evaluate any other requests using these guidelines.

The baroness's wizard is watching the characters throughout the show for attempts to use magic. Should the characters attempt spells, bardic music effects, or any other form of magic, the wizard automatically detects the attempt unless the characters attempt to mask it with Disguise Spell and/or *ambient song*. If he detects the attempt, he first tries to cast *hold person*, then informs the baroness of it. She coldly orders the PCs from her presence and refuses all further requests for audience.

If a fight breaks out here, the characters really don't have a chance unless they try to escape. The foes on hand include the court wizard (use the stats for Barelus from Encounter 4), the guard captain (a standard 9th-level NPC human fighter from Chapter 2 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*), two sergeants (standard 7th-level NPC human fighters), two clerics (standard 7th-level NPC human clerics), and three dozen guards on duty (standard 3rd-level NPC human fighters). More guards can come as the alert spreads, up to a total of 50 within the first two minutes of combat. If the battle lasts more than five minutes, the alert can draw in another 50 guards from the outlying areas, and then another 50 after that, plus one sergeant for every 25 guards present. It's really in the best interests of the PCs to try to get out instead of face down a city's worth of guards.

Encounter 7: Research

Should the PCs gain permission from the baroness to examine the city records, they can enter the records room of her manor house.

The steward (human Exp4) shows the characters to the records room and stays with them while they peruse the records, but he does not assist them in locating anything. They may take as long as they like in the records room.

The Gather Information skill is no help here, but each successful Search check uncovers some nugget of useful information. The following details are available through records research:

- The first of the strange burglaries occurred only a few weeks after the last public execution—the hanging of a notorious highwayman named Reynard.

- The highwayman was hanged at the gallows on the north side of town, and the City Guard kept his body on display for several weeks thereafter at the north gate as a deterrent to other would-be criminals.
- The abandoned thieves' lair is located in a portion of what is now the city's sewers. The document that reveals this information also recounts a public proclamation that all the passages leading to this section were filled in when Andrella's father broke up the old guild. (A successful Search check [DC 25] at this point reveals that though the former baron announced that he had destroyed the lair, he may not actually have done so. There is a decided lack of passage-filling supplies ordered during that time, and all other expenditures look normal for the period when compared to the months just before and just after the proclamation.)

Encounter 8: The Sewers (EL Variable)

When the characters discover the location of the secret hideout of the former thieves' guild, they can begin exploring in earnest.

To reach the section of sewer where the entrance to the abandoned lair purportedly lies (see Encounter 8A for lair details), the characters must enter the vast network of sewer passages through a street-level access point on the north side of town and traverse at least one mile of dark, crumbling passageways. These passages connect stormwater drains, catacombs, trash pits, and other unsavory areas. A number of equally unsavory creatures call them home.

As with wandering monster rolls in a dungeon, there's a base 10% chance per hour that characters can encounter something in the city sewers. In addition, there's a 10% chance every time they make noise or visit a high-traffic area within the sewer network that they can encounter a monster. The DM may use the table for the desired encounter level from among those presented on the next page. These tables are similar to the Dungeon Encounters tables in the *Adventures* chapter of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, but they feature more creatures that would be at home in a cramped, urban environment. Although even a 3rd-level encounter may be nothing more than a nuisance for characters of this party's level, it is rare to find any creatures more dangerous than these living in a city's sewers.

Encounter 8A: Abandoned Lair Entrance (EL 8)

The PCs eventually reach the abandoned lair during their explorations.

Creatures: Two otyughs (see creature entries in the *MONSTER MANUAL*) have made their lair in a particularly large and disgusting pile of refuse in the section of sewer where the abandoned lair is located. Their eye-stalks protrude just above the refuse; the rest of their bodies are concealed by the muck.

➤ **Otyughs (2):** hp 32, 38, see *MONSTER MANUAL* pages 147–148.

Once the characters have defeated the two otyughs, a successful Search check (DC 15) in the refuse pile reveals their treasure: a bag containing 500 gp, one tourmaline (200 gp), one deep blue spinel (475 gp), one aquamarine (600 gp), a masterwork dagger, and a chain shirt.

Trap: A successful Search check (DC 20) for secret doors reveals one in the opposite wall of this passage. The secret door is trapped with a wide pit in front of it. There is a hidden bypass switch 6 feet to the left of the door.

➤ **Wide-Mouth Pit Trap:** CR 6; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 30); Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft. by 10-ft. area); Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 25). *Market Price:* 30,600 gp.

Encounter 8B: Abandoned Lair (EL 4)

Beyond the door, a passage leads into the darkness. It splits into two passageways about 100 feet from the door, and on either side, three empty chambers open from its twisting length. The corridors in the section beyond this door have not been filled in—in fact, they are in remarkably good condition for an abandoned lair. Though the passages are dark and dank, the walls and floors seem clean. Both passages eventually converge at a single chamber.

Creatures: Several dire rats (pets of the spymaster) call this chamber home and attack any intruders.

➤ **Dire Rats (12):** hp 5 each, see *MONSTER MANUAL* pages 56–58.

It's clear that someone has been using this place lately. All the stolen loot is here, though oddly enough, it's scattered about carelessly, and some of it has spoiled through neglect or been chewed by the dire rats. In one corner lies a skeleton dressed in a few remnants of dark cloth. (This is the body of the necromancer, which the

TABLE 1: 1ST-LEVEL SEWER ENCOUNTERS

<i>d%</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Number of Creatures and Kind</i>	<i>Treasure</i>
1–10	Critter	2d10 bats (animal)	—
11–20	Critter	2d8 rats (animal)	—
21–25	Critter	1d3 centipedes, Medium-size monstrous (vermin)	20%
26–35	Critter	1d3+1 dire rats	20%
36–40	Critter	1d3 snakes, Small viper (animal)	20%
41–45	Critter	1d3 spiders, Small monstrous (vermin)	20%
46–55	Friend	1d3 beggars (1st-level commoners)	5%
56–60	Friend	2d4 city guards (1st-level warriors)	80% +1
61–65	NPC	1 1st-level NPC	Gear
66–70	Terror	1 darkmantle	50% +1
71–80	Terror	1 shrieker	20%
81–90	Tough	1d3 thugs (1st-level warriors)	80%
91–94	Undead	1d3+1 skeletons, Medium-size	50%
95–98	Undead	1d3 zombies, Medium-size	50%
99–100	Undead	1 ghoul	50%

TABLE 2: 2ND-LEVEL SEWER ENCOUNTERS

<i>d%</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Number of Creatures and Kind</i>	<i>Treasure</i>
1–5	Critter	1d4+1 centipedes, Medium-size monstrous (vermin)	20%
6–16	Critter	2d6 dire rats	20%
17–21	Critter	1 dire weasel	20%
22–27	Critter	1d3 giant ants, worker (vermin)	20%
28–32	Critter	1 snake, Medium-size constrictor (animal)	20%
33–39	Critter	1d3 snakes, Medium-size viper (animal)	20%
40–45	Critter	1d3 spiders, Medium-size monstrous (vermin)	20%
46–50	Critter	1d4+1 stirges	20%
51–55	Friend	1d3 beggars (1st-level commoners)	5%
56–60	Friend	2d4 city guards (1st-level warriors)	80% +1
61–65	NPC	1d3 1st-level NPCs	Gear
66–70	Terror	1 choker	20%
71–75	Terror	1 ethereal marauder	20%
76–85	Terror	1d3 shriekers	20%
86–90	Tough	1d4+1 thugs (1st-level warriors)	80%
91–95	Tough	1d3 thieves (1st-level rogues)	80% +1
96–97	Undead	1d3 ghouls	50%
98–100	Undead	1d4+2 zombies, Medium-size	50%

TABLE 3: 3RD-LEVEL SEWER ENCOUNTERS

<i>d%</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Number of Creatures and Kind</i>	<i>Treasure</i>
1–10	Critter	2d4 centipedes, Medium-size monstrous (vermin)	20%
11–15	Critter	2 dire weasels	20%
16–20	Critter	1 gelatinous cube (ooze)	20%
21–25	Critter	1d2 giant ants, warrior (vermin)	20%
26–35	Critter	1d4+1 snakes, Medium-size viper (animal)	20%
36–45	Critter	1d4+1 spiders, Medium-size monstrous (vermin)	20%
46	Fiend	1 doppelganger	80% +2
47–48	Fiend	1 ooze mephit	80% +2
49–50	Fiend	1 wererat (lycanthrope) and 1d3+1 dire rats	80% +3
51–55	Friend	1d3 beggars (1st-level commoners)	5%
56–60	Friend	2d4 city guards (1st-level warriors)	80% +1
61–65	NPC	1d3+1 1st-level NPCs	Gear
66–69	Terror	1 carrion crawler	20%
70–71	Terror	1 ethereal filcher	50%
72	Terror	1 otyugh	20%
73–76	Terror	1 phantom fungus	20%
77–80	Terror	1 violet fungi	20%
81–83	Terror	1 grick	20%
84–89	Tough	1d4+1 thugs (1st-level fighters)	80% +1
90–95	Tough	1d4+1 thieves (1st-level rogues)	80% +2
96–98	Undead	1 ghast	50%
99–100	Undead	1 shadow	50%

dire rats have devoured. Sirius has taken his *bracers of armor +2* and his *wand of inflict serious wounds*.)

A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals some elven clothing, a scrap of paper, and a disguise kit. Examination of the latter and a successful Disguise check (DC 15) reveals that someone, probably a male elf, has been using this kit to disguise himself as a human.

The scrap of paper has a couple of symbols placed at various places, though it's torn. A successful Decipher Script check (DC 20) allows the reader to figure out that the symbols stand for several locations: a mill, a smithy, a stable, an inn, a tavern, five residences (residence is the general notation—no proper names are mentioned), six warehouses, and a lighthouse. Marks are made next to the inn, the tavern, the lighthouse, two of the residences, and two warehouses. If the PCs check into these marks by talking to people at each location, they can discover that these places had an incidence of theft within the last two weeks—with the exception of the lighthouse. (See “The Culprit” for the encounter at the lighthouse.) Here's a quick list of NPCs at each location and the main things they say:

Inn (Sea Maiden's Dream): Innkeeper Surave (NG male human War7/Exp7) says he lost his weekly stash. It amounted to about 100 gp in assorted coinage.

Tavern (The Wallowing Sow): Tavernkeeper Yolana (N female human War4/Exp7) tells the PCs she lost her evening's take, which amounted to about 10 gp in assorted coinage.

Lambent Residence: Alean Lambent (LG male human Exp4) lets the PCs know that he and his wife lost a family gemstone—a red spinel. He also lost about 25 gp. Alean had hoped to have the gemstone set into a piece of jewelry or something for his wife, who is currently away from home.

Fenard Residence: Nellie Fenard (LG female human Ftr10), a widow, tells the PCs that she lost her savings, which amounted to about 250 gp. Thankfully, she scared away the rogue before he could get to her weapon and armor stash. (She might be willing to show the PCs her nice weapons and armor or even sell them if the DM wishes to introduce a few magic items into the game to rid the PCs of some money. A successful Diplomacy check [DC 20] can persuade the former fighter to dig out her items. She doesn't let the PCs know where she hides them, though.)

Selan Warehouses: The supervisor on duty, Magnus Firehand (CG male human War7), tells the PCs that he lost a black pearl and 200 gp one night, as well as some

supplies like flour, sugar, and a length of mauve silk fabric worth 100 gp. The supplies were in a different warehouse than the black pearl. He'll give the PCs the fabric if they can come up with the black pearl; it belongs to a customer of his boss, as does the silk, but the silk is already reported as lost to that particular customer. The pearl isn't. If asked, Magnus thinks only one person is responsible for these thefts, due to the relatively small loss he sustained that evening. He is rather astonished that he didn't lose more, but he thinks the supplies loaded down the thief to the point where he had to leave or get caught.

Encounter 9: The Hanged Man

Should the PCs follow up on the clue about the hanged highwayman, they can discover some more information, but only if they have their wits about them.

The hanged highwayman's remains were displayed for several weeks near the town's north gate, which overlooks the graveyard. Ravella, the guard assigned to that post at the time of the hanging, is out of town when the PCs arrive in Restenford, but is available two days thereafter. She is willing to talk with the party, but a successful Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals a wariness about her, as if there were something about the situation she wishes to hide.

Ravella answers the PCs' questions truthfully, explaining that the corpse was cut from the gallows and hung on the outside of the city wall above the north gate for display. Her tower post allowed her full view of it at night, when she was on duty. If the PCs ask whether anyone could have approached the corpse while it was displayed, she insists that no one came near it the whole time it was hanging there, though her manner becomes somewhat less relaxed than it was before. A successful Intimidate check (DC 15) or *suggestion* to tell the truth at this point causes her to confess that she thought she saw someone “messing around” with the body one night. She was sure that she'd chased the miscreant off before any damage was done, but in the morning she discovered to her horror that the corpse's left hand had been neatly severed at the wrist. Afraid of getting in trouble for dereliction of duty, she buried the body the next day, claiming that it was beginning to fall apart. If further pressed, she shows the PCs the site of the highwayman's unmarked grave in the graveyard. (See Encounter 10.) She buried the body about two weeks ago.

Encounter 10: A Double Grave

If the PCs wish to examine the highwayman's body, they can find a further clue that could lead them to the spymaster behind the plot.

Attempts to exhume the highwayman's body without permission from the baroness or the guard captain result in arrest if the PCs are caught. Since the graveyard is within sight of both guard towers, which are manned day and night, digging up a body by stealth is nearly impossible. If the PCs approach the baroness with the guard and her story, however, Andrella readily grants them permission to exhume the highwayman's corpse.

Exhuming the corpse not only confirms Ravella's story but also reveals that the grave has two occupants rather than one! The other body is that of the local lighthouse keeper, who has obviously been dead for weeks. Ravella truthfully claims ignorance of how the extra body came to be in the crude coffin, though she does recall that the coffin seemed unusually heavy when she and the guard assisting her with the burial lowered it into the grave. A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals that the coffin lid was pried up with a metal instrument after being sealed, then subsequently refastened.

Should the PCs inquire about the lighthouse keeper in town, the locals claim to have seen him purchasing supplies at Malka's competitor only the other day. They mention that the lighthouse keeper usually heads over to Malka's store for his supplies. If asked, Malka mentions that he thinks it odd that the lighthouse keeper Bomarc hasn't stopped by to pick up his flour and other longer-term supplies. Bomarc was due in last week, and he picks up his order every 45 days.

THE CULPRIT

This section contains the climax of the adventure. It occurs whenever the characters decide to visit the lighthouse and confront the fake keeper, an elf spymaster named Sirius.

The lighthouse is located on the edge of town, on a rugged, rocky outcropping overlooking the coast. It is four stories tall, with the upper story consisting of the light apparatus. Each of the lower three stories consists of a single, round room with a stairway leading up through the center.

Sirius does not respond to knocks or calls, since he knows full well that the lighthouse keeper never had visitors. If alerted to the presence of strangers by any

noise, he hides behind the floor-length curtains covering the windows in the third-floor bedroom, drinking his potions when intruders seem to be near.

Sirius and his partner made a number of modifications to the lighthouse. They installed traps with bypass elements that only Sirius now knows about on each floor and at the entrance. The money for these "improvements" came from their employers.

1. Entrance (EL 7)

The door of the lighthouse is trapped with a dart trap.

➤ **Fusillade of Greenblood Darts:** CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (greenblood oil, Fortitude save [DC 13] resists, 1 Con/1d2 Con); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-ft. by 10-ft. area); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25). *Market Price:* 34,400 gp.

2. First Floor (EL 7)

The first floor room is a living room furnished with an overstuffed couch and chairs, bookcases, and two small tables. Stepping on the bottom step of the spiral staircase without flicking the hidden bypass switch on the railing causes the door to close (if it is not closed already), the stairway to collapse, and a trapdoor to seal the ceiling hole where the stairway accessed the second floor. It also triggers a gas trap.

➤ **Burnt Othur Vapor Trap:** CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 35); gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. by 10-ft. room); never-miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison (burnt other fumes, Fortitude save [DC 18] resists, 1 Con [permanent drain]/3d6 Con); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 21). *Market Price:* 21,700 gp.

The collapsed stairway requires time and materials to repair. The ceiling is 10 feet high, and the wooden trapdoor to the second floor is locked (Open Lock DC 25). If the characters get it open, they can grab onto the end of the stairway above and climb up to the second floor.

3. Second Floor (EL 6)

This floor is the kitchen and dining area. A wood stove vents to the outside, and a small counter and cupboards hold pots, pans, and nonperishable foods. A large table with one chair serves as the dining area. At present, the kitchen is littered with pans and jars holding various

foul-smelling preparations. These are the poisons that Sirius has been brewing (DM's choice as to types).

The trap on this floor is whirling poisoned blades. They attack anyone who comes into the room unless the hidden lock bypass near the stove is activated.

↗ **Whirling Poisoned Blades:** CR 6; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; hidden lock bypass (Search [DC 25], Open Lock [DC 30]); Atk +10 melee (1d4+4/19–20 plus poison, dagger); poison (purple worm poison, Fortitude save [DC 24] resists, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str); multiple targets (one target in each of three preselected 5-ft. squares); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). *Market Price:* 30,200 gp.

4. Third Floor (EL 8)

This floor serves as the bedroom. On one side is the bed; on the other side is a large window covered with drapes behind which an invisible Sirius hides. This room is trapped with a set of poisoned spikes that fire at anyone stepping on the floor if the hidden bypass switch on the staircase is not flipped.

↗ **Poisoned Wall Spikes:** CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +16 melee (1d8+4 plus poison, spike); multiple targets (closest target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); poison (Medium-size spider venom, Fortitude save [DC 14] resists, 1d4 Str/1d6 Str); Search (DC 17); Disable Device (DC 21). *Market Price:* 13,150 gp.

When the PCs enter, Sirius first uses the *glorious hand* to hold as many of them as possible. Then, if the characters begin searching the room, he attacks with his wand, then finally his short sword. If they begin climbing to the top of the tower, he waits until the last mobile PC is left in the room before attacking that one.

➤ **Sirius:** Male elf Rog7/Spymaster1; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; HD 7d6 plus 1d8; hp 46; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 16); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+3/19–20, +2 *short sword*); or +6 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack (+4d6); SQ cover identity, elf traits, evasion, traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +10, Craft (poison-making) +7, Craft (trapmaking) +12, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +8, Gather Information +8, Hide +12, Innuendo +8, Intimidate +5, Jump +3, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Open Lock +14, Profession (lighthouse keeper) +3, Search +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +13,

Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +8; Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse (short sword).

Elf Traits: Immune to magic sleep spells and effects; +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells and effects; low-light vision (can see twice as far as a human in low-light conditions); entitled to a Search check when within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door as though actively looking for it; Martial Weapon Proficiency (composite longbow, composite shortbow, longbow, longsword, and rapier) as bonus feats; +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above).

Possessions: +2 *short sword*, light crossbow, 20 bolts, *bracers of armor* +2, *glorious hand*, *wand of inflict serious wounds* (25 charges), *potion of invisibility*, *potion of cat's grace*.

Glorious Hand: This grisly item is the severed left hand of a human male, with a candle affixed to each of the fingers and the thumb. Upon command, the candles light, providing illumination as per a *light* spell. If rapped on a locked door or other locked item, it produces a *knock* effect. Finally, upon command, it produces a *hold person* effect (Will save DC 17) against any designated target. *Caster Level:* 8th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *hold person*, *knock*, *light*; *Market Price:* 39,900 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

CONCLUSION

If Sirius is losing the battle, he surrenders. Should the PCs defeat Sirius without killing him, he admits that the elven overlords of the Lendore Isles sent him here to destabilize Restenford (one of the few remaining human-ruled towns in the area), hoping the baroness would waive the town's autonomy and call on the elves for help. Naturally, he claims diplomatic immunity after confessing his crimes. If the PCs kill him, there is enough evidence in his belongings to reveal the source of his funding. Hidden in the bedroom of the lighthouse is an additional 800 gp, one red spinel (300 gp), and one black pearl (850 gp). The PCs can also find the supplies stolen from the warehouses, though the food supplies were obviously used.