

COR4-18



# IT NEVER RAINS IN NYROND

## A One-Round D&D<sup>®</sup> LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>™</sup> Core Scenario

Version 1.0

By Chris Chesher

**Circle Reviewers:** Craig Hier, Creighton Broadhurst and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

**Additional Greyhawk Source Material:** Carl Sargent

With the constant pressure and sorrow that Eastfair extrudes, even the most stout hearted can get the blues from time to time. But missions must be completed and duties upheld with little time left over for lamenting on greener grass. Now an old friend needs you to carry on where others have failed. A package needs to go from point A to point B, and even with a severe storm brewing; this side trip should not take you far out of the way of your own destination. That said destination is that of the instigator of all this. An adventure for APL 2-8. Part four of the *Running with the Baatezu* series.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS<sup>®</sup> rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM license, please visit [www.wizards.com/d20](http://www.wizards.com/d20)

This is an official RPGA<sup>®</sup> play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com).

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, LIVING GREYHAWK, D&D REWARDS, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc, in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2004 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com)

For rules questions specific to this document and the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign email [rpgahq@wizards.com](mailto:rpgahq@wizards.com)

## RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2005.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com).

## PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

## PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in

this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

## LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine this modified Average Party Level (APL) follow the steps below:

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

## SOURCE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the text of this adventure, sentences, paragraphs and ideas have been borrowed (and expanded on) from the sourcebook *'Ivid the Undying'* by Carl Sargent.

### Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Core adventure, set in The Great Kingdom of Northern Aerdy. All characters pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this scenario.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check, the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

### The North Kingdom

The Great Kingdom of Northern Aerdy is ruled by His Righteous and Transcendent Majesty, the Overking of Northern Aerdy, Herzog Grenell the First, Prince of House Naelax (LE male human [flan-oeridian] Clr19 - Hextor).

This is a nation of tyranny and oppression. Outside of the large cities, feudal lords hold god-like power over their small fiefdoms, only paying heed to the more powerful liege above them in the social order.

Inside the city, nobles and the others who are lucky enough to be above the salt practice a lifestyle of hedonistic indulgences and cruelty at the cost of those poor souls who fall below the salt.

The vast majority of the warlike noble families pledge their spiritual faith into the many hands of the Scourge of Battle, Hextor. Cavaliers of the darkest hearts, shiniest armor and most bloodthirsty mounts are a somewhat common sight in these lands— be they the clerics of Hextor or the knightly lord of the local manor and village.

Though there are a number of small and rather ineffectual 'cults' of good (usually in a chaotic form) that preach and practice rebellion against the oppression of the government and society in whole, finding them is rarely easy, but when they are, an iron fist is used to crush them.

That is not to say there are no forces of good left within the North Kingdom. Once, not too long ago, this nation was a part of the truly Great Kingdom and the bastion of Oeridian culture.

Thus as Hextor is a part of that culture, so are gods of good and neutrality. Those who would rebel against the tyranny of the Lawful Evil society (such as Trithereon) have long since been purged to all but the remotest pockets. Followers of gods who would infer its worshippers to a more direct opposition (such as the Arch-Paladin, Heironeous) have been equally purged.

This leaves the followers of good (and neutral) gods who have found a way to work their dogma within the oppressive bounds of the state religion of Hextor. An example of this are followers of the Gentle Hand, Zodal, running orphanages or churches of the Shining One, Pelor, taking care of the poor and sick within the ever-swelling slums of the cities.

The Lawful Evil nature of the society allows these small churches of good who do not practice rebellion as dogma, to operate and take care of those (poor and sick)

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
7	7	9	10	11	

that the government do not want to waste time on. The thinking is, "if they want to waste their resources on those types, and as long as they obey our laws, then let them. Besides, it's fun to bully them too, from time to time."

There are some religions that are accepted because they play an important niche roll. Examples of this are the churches of the Money Counter, Zilchus and the Dweller on the Horizon, Fharlanghn, but the political influence of these sects are kept to a minimum. The only power they can express is that bought by coin and even that is limited.

Amongst the common people (with their heavily mixed Flan heritage) the Oerth Mother, Beory is worshiped for nature related issues and to a lesser extent, so are the Oeridian agricultural gods. Even the different evil gods such as the Reaper, Nerull and the Black Rider, Incabulos are given small prayers and appeasement to ward off their callings and hopefully push them on to the their neighbor, but not them.

### Language

The peasants and serfs of the land all speak the Common tongue, with a heavy Oeridian accent and usually mixing in many words and expressions of Old Oeridian, though this by no means guarantees that the serf speaker can actually communicate fluently in Old Oeridian.

The nobility, clerics, sages, elite servants and anyone with education speak Old Oeridian as their primary language, but the Common tongue is known to all. Religious and legal issues are dealt with in Old Oeridian, as well as anything that is the domain of those above the salt.

### Keeping a Low Profile

When the characters visit Eastfair in this adventure, they should not have too much of a problem with the authorities or the general population (most of which are LE, NE and N) as long as they keep their heads down and don't make a scene.

Those who worship Chaotic (of any morality) or Lawful Good gods and do not pass a DC 12 Disguise check (made once for the whole adventure) or whom reveal themselves, suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all Charisma based skill checks. This is negated if they are dealing with someone of their same ethos (a good worshiper meeting a good worshiper has no problems, etc), but this is left up to the Dungeon Masters to determine.

A special case is in store for worshipers of Heironeous, the archrival of Hextor. Since it is assumed that a proud worshiper of such a god would adorn himself with the marks and symbols of his divine patron, the Disguise check is DC15. This includes not slipping up and using sayings or dogma in speech. The price for being recognized is a -6 circumstance penalty to all Charisma based skill checks. Even if the character fails his skill check, this does not mean that every city guard and cleric of Hextor automatically spot him in the streets. It's only for when he is up close and interacting with

these Heironeous-Haters and those who play along out of fear.

Even then though, he only becomes the target of harsh ridicule. As long as the character keeps his cool and dignity, he can get out safe and alive.

If he ever forces the hand of the Hextorians, however "justice" will be swift.

The Hextorians feel no need to grant a foreigner any sort of honor duel, not in their own capital.

### Pets, Familiars and Animal Companions

Large and/or wild animals are not allowed to be brought into the city unrestrained and without a permit. Wolves, bears, any dire animal and other dangerous creatures must be leashed and muzzled or caged. Dire animals must be caged. A one week permit costs 10 gp per size category of each animal (starting at Small).

Horses, trained dogs, birds and other common domesticated animals cost a copper each to enter the city, but do not require any special restraints, but the master is responsible for any damage the animals cause.

### Crime and Punishment

The laws of the land are typically the same as one would find in another lawful kingdom, only much, much harsher. The people are copper'ed and silvered to death with special taxes and tariffs. Most commoners are considered property, either to their liege or to the government as a whole should they be a Freeman (an ironic term here).

Minor crimes and public disturbances bring about rough treatment from the town guards or from one's social superiors (with little chance for recourse). Thankfully, gold is an accepted solution to get the characters out of all but the most unforgivable crimes (usually those perpetrated against someone with rank and power). The laws have been somewhat softened (or just corrupted) from ten years ago. An influential man about town succeeded in plying the right people to lower the execution range on items from its original 500 gp to the new 1000 gp limit. Rumors have it he is the main backer of a new fledgling Thieves' Guild. Thus these Guilders can pay the bribes required for getting caught for minor theft, instead of executed as in the past.

To give an example: If the characters cause the death of a commoner, they can discreetly pay their way out of punishment (the authorities make this clear with a wink and nudge) for the sum of 1,000 gp per dead commoner (or 100 gp for an orc).

Failure to pay this fee sentences the characters involved to 2d6 TU's worth of imprisonment (the sentence would normally be much longer, life even, but its assumed the crafty adventurers can eventually get themselves out of the situation one way or another, along with all their gear but not gold. All coin is removed from the Adventure Record).

**Killing a tradesmen** or other such 'middle' class member of society is 2,000 gp per offence. It doesn't matter how the death was caused. Accidentally or premeditated, death is death. Failure to pay costs the

characters 2d8 TUs. Otherwise, this is treated the same as the above entry.

**Killing a Noblemen** or other authority figure requires a DC 15+APL Diplomacy check, just to be allowed to make reparations or else be executed permanently. If the characters succeed in the apology, then they at minimum must pay the full cost to bring the person back from the dead (*raise dead* or *resurrection*) and then another 2,000-4,000 gp (DUNGEON MASTERS discretion on severity) on top of that (this secondary amount can be reduced as stated below).

**Theft Over 1000 gp** is a death sentence. Those caught for this crime are almost always publicly executed as an example to the rest of the population. To even attempt to get out of this requires a DC 25+APL Diplomacy check, then confiscation of the item, then a 5,000 gp bribe. Sad to say, few people have those sorts of resources, so permanent death becomes quite the deterrent. Philosophers have pointed out that the crime of theft is more harshly dealt with than the crime of murder and that speaks volumes on the mentality of the government and its people.

For lesser crimes, like;

**Insulting a Noble or a cleric of Hextor** (Diplomacy check DC10+APL to be allowed to pay 200 gp, otherwise 1d6 TUs of imprisonment).

**Interfering with a Guardsmen** (50 gp or 1d4 TUs of imprisonment).

**Public Disorder** (50-200 gp, or 1 TU of imprisonment).

**Theft, Minor** (Half the value of the items and confiscation of the items or 1d3 TUs of imprisonment and confiscation of the items).

**Breaking and Entering** (50-200 gp or 2TU of imprisonment).

**Vagrancy** (a sound beating, then, 50 gp or 1TU of imprisonment and another sound beating).

Dungeon Masters should use these as a guideline should they find their players getting into trouble not listed here. When in doubt though, err on the side of caution and leniency.

These minor crimes can usually be paid on the spot to guards or other authority figures. The more severe charges (like murder) usually take some time to process in the courts. Typically, paying 100 gp can speed it up to 2d6 hours, from 2d8 days (all included in the initial TU's paid for the adventure). This is nothing compared to the poor wretches who spend years in tiny cells awaiting a trial that may never come.

If the characters profess their innocence (whether they are innocent or not, it doesn't matter much) a representative for them all may make a single opposed DC 1d20+3+APL Diplomacy check (per charge). The character may use Knowledge (Core) instead for this check.

If this is successful, then the cost in gold or TUs is reduced by 50% (round down). But if the check fails, the penalties are increased by 50% (round up).

Some exceptions to this are when the authorities hate the victims more than the characters. For example, killing a cleric of Tharizdun or Vecna doesn't bring about much reprisal (unless the characters committed a lot of other crimes in the process).

Also, the adventure text may list specific instructions on how to handle a crime or a trial. Always use the specific instructions in the adventure text over those listed above.

As stated previously, a typical commoner would expect a life sentence for very minor crimes, but the adventurers (with a few exceptions) are only penalized TU's, for it is assumed that they are able to get themselves out of the imprisonment much before the end of the expected sentence. A death sentence is the exception to this. Without specific instructions in the scenario, death becomes difficult to be paroled from but after most petty executions, the body can be recovered by resourceful adventurers.

Guard patrols and even their interest depends on what part of the city or (in the case of in rural area) whose land one is on.

In Eastfair, The New City is closely watched by both mundane and even magical means. Those committing crimes have a much higher chance of getting caught. In the Old City, guard patrols are fewer and petty crime is rampant, but the patrol sizes tend to be much larger with a higher chance of special support units (such as mages or brute squads), ready to tear a neighborhood apart till they get the people their after.

Rural lands are under the jurisdiction of whichever noble owns that patch of land, which can have several layers of authority. These rural nobles have less firepower to back up an arrest then do the city guards against powerful adventurers, so they tend to be more lenient and willing to deal when they feel they lack the upper hand.

### Law Enforcement in Eastfair

The every day city watch duties are held by the Rakers, companies of elite soldiers from the northern border of the North Kingdom. They are much feared and rightly so. Should the need arise; the city has garrisons of church solders, squadrons of calvary, mage detachments, and orc brute squads (though the orcs are generally kept in the Old City).

Ever the inventive and progressive city, Eastfair has established a system where citizens can pay to have a large bell (and additional smaller hand held ones) that can be rung to call forth a city guard patrol. These bells are specially marked by the Rakers and the authorities. Possession of non-sponsored bells without a permit is illegal. Due to the large fee, these signaling bells are mostly found in the hands of the rich.

Normal folk can still summon the guards per the traditional method of yelling or running up and tugging on sleeves, but the bells provides extra convenience when seconds count.

Patrols (both foot and mounted) of Rakers can be found all over the New City, both day and night. There

response time is usually 2+1d4 minutes for a single patrol, with more patrols arriving within another 1+2d4 minutes. For problem cases, magical assistance, both clerical and arcane can be called in, but due to the monetary cost, this is not used for insignificant cases.

#### **Typical patrol in the New City**

Sgt Ftr3; 2d4 Troopers War2

#### **Elite Patrol**

Lt Ftr3/Rog2; Sgt Ftr3; 2d8 Troopers War2; 50% of Evk3; 50% of Clr5 of Hextor

#### **Typical patrol in the Old City**

Orc Squad

Orc Sgt Bar2 or Ftr 2; 4d4 orcs war1; 1d2 ogres

#### **Raker patrol**

Vet Sgt Ftr4; 2d8 Troopers War2

It should be noted that, unlike a typical city in the west, the city guard here are typically evil and uncaring. Good characters trying to turn in bad guys are just as likely to get trouble turned around onto themselves as well with money changing hands being the only way out. The Rakers of Eastfair can't be relied upon to solve all of the character's troubles.

### **Eastfair, The Granite City**

Within the high and heavily fortified outer granite walls of the city, are streets so clean and tidy that they put some high altars of Heironeous to shame.

Heavily worked maintenance crews keep the hard, stark and stern streets sanitary, as much as the elite units of Rakersmen (elite troops of North Province) keep the streets orderly as the town guard.

While it has a reputation for urbanity, ordinary folk in the city work hard and need to in order to compensate for the heavy taxation and cruel red tape. One must pass through the second ring of city walls and into the Old City, in order to get to the interior of the city and to see its true seedy underbelly. Here, the poor and the wretched eek out an existence shut away from the outside, only allowed to exit via special permits or by wearing badges sewn to their vests.

In the last decade or so, this poor interior has turned from poor-man's quarters, though kept almost as orderly as the New City, into a true slum (much to the chagrin of the authorities). This has been caused by the ever-increasing migration of refugees into the city. If you can pay the entrance fee, you can enter Eastfair, but if your not a skilled tradesmen or rich, your shunted to the Old City.

Once there, you can't legally leave without a permit of some sort. This has been causing quite a bit of increased hardship and chaos. The uncaring government's answer is to send in brute squads of orcs and ogres to thin out the population of troublemakers, but never so much that they'll cause a general revolt.

Cycles of famine and diseases keep the population levels of the Old City down as well.

Behind its orderly mask, the population of the city is as prone to hedonistic pleasures. Eastfair has always attracted the most debauched and degenerate nobility and merchants of North Province. If you have the money to pay for it, the Nine Hells itself can be yours to experience.

Eastfair attracts wealth. Those riches are either inherited, or else obtained by the best merchants, that is, the most unscrupulous, swindling, money grabbing ones. Given this, it is not surprising that Eastfair's rich like to spend their money on depraved and immoral activities.

Eastfair has a considerable number of truly exceptional craftsmen and artisans within its city walls. These numbers have swollen by the people seeking refuge in the Granite City from more troubled lands and cities. Now, truly, Eastfair is a city where one can buy almost anything -- if one has almost limitless supplies of gold.

When the sun sets and the streets fill with flickering shadows, it's the poor and common men that pay for the vileness of the riches' entertainment, not to mention all the other hidden evils in the city.

In a nutshell, the common people have very few rights and the government enforces itself on the lower class brutally, but usually overlook the vileness that befalls the common man, as long as its done quietly and doesn't disturb the order of the city.

Something one does not see walking the streets of the city are fiends. Baatezu and especially Tanar'ri are not generally accepted by the church of Hextor. Part of this has to do with their god residing on Archeron, and not the Nine Hells. Though fiends are used for specific purposes (and present within the city), as a policy, the authorities don't want them to wander around within the general populace.

The same goes for undead, for they tend to cause a lot of disorder and public disturbance. Of course, there are always exceptions to those with power and the fact that there are several animus nobles in the city makes it a complicated issue. Having undead wandering the streets is an extravagance reserved for the most powerful and connected. Anyone else will find their minions destroyed and themselves held accountable.

It should be noted that, though mostly just rumors, good outsiders have made temporary homes in this large city. They have been called to do good and help the crusading good minority fight the powers of evil. When these beings are discovered they are routed out with extreme prejudice and any mortals found to be supporting them (and even those not) are punished brutally, usually by having an ogre pay them a social visit to discuss the implications of the transgression.

### **Rise of the Thieves' Guild**

For generations, Eastfair has not had a Thieves' Guild. The authorities of the time would crush without mercy any attempt to organize. Visible crime and disorder to society would not be tolerated.

Around ten years ago, there started a large and steady influx of refugees to the city of Eastfair. Some displaced by the Greyhawk Wars, others by the civil infractions with Ahlissa, and still others driven out by orcs from the Bone March.

Those with talents or money found sustenance within the New City. Those of the poor unwashed and huddling masses that were not so well off, were marched directly into the Old City—a district surrounded by walls and streets that end at them.

As the inhuman conditions worsened within the Old City (and more people arrived), violence and thievery became commonplace. Where in the New City, the city watch could quickly crush such disorder, the slums and crowded streets of the Old City proved difficult to police. Many units of Rakers just gave up even trying, sticking to their barracks rather than bring evil tyrannical order to those who desperately needed it to survive (since freedom and mercy were not on the menu).

Then one day, a rich former adventurer came to Eastfair and he made some deals with those with the power to make small changes to the laws. With bribes in the right place and slight amendments to the laws, organized Guilders started to rise up from the multitude of street gangs.

Those in the government are split on the issue. Some feel it's a good thing to allow the Guilders to operate for it provides bribes and some modicum of control on the population of the Old City. Others see it as an affront to the authority of the Herzog and want every single street criminal wiped out. But as long as the crime stays off the streets of the New City, those factions within the government will continue to debate it. Should the Guild ever become a public embarrassment, then heads will roll. In the meantime, orcs and their kin are used as brute squads to keep the poor in line and the Guild underpowered.

Besides, with the influx of refugees and decrease in the amount of resources of control the government has, the criminal/unruly element of the population is going to increase; its just human nature or at least say the clerics of Hextor.

Now, the government and society hates disorderly crime, but seems to look the other way to stuff that doesn't make it self seen. That is to say, beggars on the streets are a big no-no, but shadows and wraiths haunting a poor neighborhood is not much of a concern. Peasants protesting an injustice are quickly brutalized, but a vampire cultist going out at night and kidnapping a person without money or connections would not interest the authorities much.

It's this apathy that allows the Guild to recruit new members to replace the many it loses to risky ventures. Some street gangs are known to be recruiting fronts for the guild; while some rumors claim that all of the street gangs are controlled pyramid fashion by the Guild, as their own fiefs.

What is known for sure is that the street gangs are often hard hit. They authorities wipe them out as brutally

as they wipe each other out. The gangs of the Old City are as chaotic as they are cruel.

While petty street crime gets handled by junior members, the more senior members seem to easily gain contracts for lucrative jobs within the New City and beyond. It gives the junior members something to aim for.

Others have wilder theories, things like devils control the guilders, or that the city Nobles control the street gangs, or that the Herzog himself is the head Guildmaster.

Whatever the true story, the Thieves' Guild of Eastfair is far more complicated than it lets on.

### Locations in Eastfair

The following is a quick explanation for places within the city that either are discussed with the characters (but not expect to be visited) or are locations that the characters need to visit as listed in the encounters. A more detailed description can be found within the Encounter dealing with that location.

Eastfair is divided into Old City and New City. The Old City was built circa 80 CY, and the city greatly expanded in size during the third century when New City began to grow outside the original walls.

The Old City is now mostly the province of the poorer people, save for the complex of buildings known as "The Cyst," while New City contains the homes and workplaces of the well off.

For characters approaching Eastfair, their first sight of the city should give them an impression of grandeur. Huge granite walls confer an air of invulnerability, and the stone spires and slate roofs of the buildings inside crowd together like a phalanx of powerful defenders. Great Gate, bearing its mighty shields of Hextor and North Province, is a forbidding entrance to this majestic city.

### The Great Gate

This gate is powerfully defended, with ballista platforms flanking the 30 ft. high granite walls and a pair of huge (22 ft. high) stone statues of Aerdi warriors standing one each side of them. These statues can be animated as massive stone golems (271 hp each) by a cleric of Hextor who stands special watch as part of the gate detail, to fight in defense of the city.

➤ **Greater Stone Golem:** 271 hp; see *Monster Manual* page 136.

An entrance toll is charged of 1 sp a person (1 gp a merchant or freesword, with extra charges of 1 sp to 1 gp for each horse, wagon, etc.). The main gates are opened for wagons and horse, with men on foot using smaller side doors at the base of the ballista towers.

Within Great Gate, the broad boulevard known as The Full Path stretches into the heart of the city and on to Newgate and Spider's Gate. Just beyond Great Gate, the extraordinary sight simply named "Waterfall" greets the visitor; 20 ft. high, 10 ft. long standing waves of water lie either side of The Full Path, a permanent magical

reminder that Eastfair lies just north of the headwaters of the Flanmi.

### **The Fisherman's Gate**

The north gate of the city is much smaller than the Great Gate, and receives only visitors on foot or on horse in small numbers.

Originally, this was the gate used by humbler tradesmen, hence its name, but in a reversal of history this gate now opens into the richer areas of the city and merchants are sent to Great Gate if they seek entry.

Though this gate has not the powerful defenses of Great Gate, the gatehouse here contains a minor magical artifact which, if the right command word is activated, can shield the gate in a *wall of stone* which is 90% resistant to any attempts to dispel it, save by use of the same artifact used to create it.

Once the trouble starts in the countryside, this gate is magically sealed (as above) and only opened for use by the most powerful of the city. The characters have no chance in getting it open.

### **The Cyst**

The Cyst comprises three sets of buildings located behind iron railings protected by priests of Hextor and squads of Rakersmen all in the Old City. None can enter without an invitation, granted pass, or the summons of the Herzog himself.

The central building here, the Herzog's Palace, houses Grace Grenell and the hierarchy of the priesthood of Hextor, together with the most senior city officials (Chancellor, city architect, Commander-General of the Watch, etc.). To the right of the Palace are the barracks of the Rakersmen, with some 600 troops and a dozen of their most senior commanding officers.

Unless the characters really act up, they should never need to go here. If the situation warrants them going here and getting inside they are not coming back.

### **The Whirling Dervish**

Nested in the Streets of Delight, the Whirling Dervish is a hostelry offering entertainments marginally less depraved, and more varied, than most establishments around it.

The proprietor, Clinorus Kradner, dresses in Baklunish robes and a turban, even though he's never been west of Edge Field in his life. To someone who is from the Baklunish West or has visited them, it is obvious that Clinorus has dressed to the descriptions of embellished stories, not to mention the man is not Baklunish, more of a dark flan-oeridian mix.

Clinorus is, in fact, a cleric of Olidammara as well (Clr4), with a strong tendency to good alignment. This is a closely kept secret.

This location is visited in the Introduction Encounter.

### **The Merchant Quarter**

The Merchant Quarter contains the better markets of Eastfair and the homes of many ordinary merchants. At

the center of the entire quarter is the main Temple of Zilchus for the city.

This quarter is also home to an enclave (subsection) of merchants who specialize in exotic goods: silks, spices, peppers, rare herbs, alchemical goods, tropical hardwood furnishings, Ketite rugs and carpets, and all manner of unusual items. This square is sometimes referred to as 'Little Bakluni Town'.

Nearby to these shops of Exotic section is the walled compound of the Zilchus Western Company. This is the major supplier to these particular shops of western goods, though they by no means hold any monopolies on Baklunish trade. This just happens to be the sister headquarters of an order of Zilchus clerics that operate this company.

A small part of this quarter is visited in Encounter 1.

### **The Old City**

The houses here are those of laborers, serfs (including church serfs), and unskilled workers. This is the new slum district for Eastfair, though it has only formed in the last ten years.

The houses here are dilapidated, and people live in very overcrowded homes, with a fair amount of violence and drunkenness. However, this is the best place for anyone wishing to lie low in Eastfair.

Racketeer landlords rent a bare room for a copper or two a day per person, and the town guard (Rakersmen) patrol the streets rarely unless there has been a recent bout of worse than usual street fighting.

To keep the newly forming slum-like conditions in check, orc and ogre brute squads smash any shanty towns or tent districts that occasionally form out of desperation. The more vocal troublemakers also get the occasional courtesy call from the brute squads-- Nothing like an ogre to change your opinion in a philosophical debate.

Good churches and clerics tend to the unwashed masses as best as they can with the limited resources they are allowed, though they are often victims of the brute squads themselves. Some of the more charismatic clerics have made contacts within the guardsmen and/or authorities (gold is usually involved) and get some special consideration from that.

### **The Orc Quarter**

Part of the reason for the overcrowding in the rest of Old City is this district, which is walled off from the rest of the Old City (but still inside the Old City). The 3,000 troops of the Euroz Angry Army have settled into barracks here and have made it their own.

At the present, the town guard tries only to patrol the outskirts of this zone, but the orcs have taken to kidnapping ordinary people in Old City (the orcs have secret ways out of the district) and taking them back to their barracks for supper (as it were) or just to torture and kill them out of boredom.

The orcs also act as jailers in the city prison directly opposite Spider's Gate, which allows them some opportunity for indulging their sadism and brutishness.



The orc warlord, Snaggrip Grekk, swaggers about Eastfair as if he owned the place, and there are many humans in Eastfair who would like to have the general population rise up and slaughter him and his men -- no matter how many casualties might be suffered.

The situation is very tense, and Grenell knows that while the orc leaders want to be in Eastfair to have a very definite presence in Grenell's capital city, their soldiers often grow rebellious and irritable, needing the fresh stimulus of battle. Brawls and drunken rebellions when out in the countryside are happening with more and more frequency. Usually once the rampaging orcs run out of beer and/or troops are sent out to rein them in, everything settles down again.

A few orc ringleaders (and often their human officers) are severely punished, but the orc regiment is put right back to what ever it was doing before, as if nothing happened.

Though the city has a standard garrison of 3,000 orcs, usually about 1,000 of those orcs are farmed out to nearby garrisons or for special projects (usually as hard laborers).

In this adventure, such a regiment of 600 orcs work and garrison the Holim ruins east of Eastfair.

## THE PREVIOUS PLOT

### *COR3-17 When Orcs Attack*

In the beginning of this series, the characters were recruited by Afronindius the Holy Clerk of the Zilchus Western Company- Eastfair branch. This recruitment was facilitated by Clinorus Kradner proprietor of the Whirling Dervish and friend of the family. The characters were needed to discreetly investigate the ritual-like murder of Afronindius's son, Dantoni. This investigation was quickly interrupted by an incident involving orcs rioting throughout the countryside.

Finding themselves sidetracked with a mission to rescue an endangered orphanage, the characters come to realize that a twist of fate has brought them into contact with the perpetrators of the murder. Information soon comes to light that these two thugs are really just dupes and the real mastermind is still at large and even more of a mystery.

### *COR4-09 A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!*

The characters have returned to Eastfair to continue the investigation into the forces behind the murder of Dantoni, son of the Holy Clerk.

As this adventure reveals, the dreaded Opaquer is actually a Fish Monger named Darrien 'The Knife'. He arrived in the city two years ago and purchased a fishmongery. He then fought quite hard and expensively to gain the contract rights to supply and deliver fish to feed the orc workers at the just started Holim ruins dig site. He then used his access to the site to journey there alone without his usual laborers. There is something there that interests him greatly.

Over the two years, Darrien has been collecting the hearts of various people, many of them minor clerics of different churches, to use in a undisclosed ritual. Dantoni

was his last victim. The victim clerics were of Atroa, Cyndor, Fharlanghn, Lendor, Lirr, Sotillion, Wenta, Zilchus.

Dantoni was working as an Honest Deal Mediator, and Darien, being paranoid about his secrets suspected Dantoni might know too much. So using his two witless thugs, Darien had the young cleric killed and his heart removed, after which Darien skipped town with most of his gear. He left his wererat cohort in charge of his fish mongery and the shrine to Vecna below it. Yes, Vecna. Darrien and his cohort are part of a cult of Vecna up to no good.

It's up to the characters in this adventure to track down the last days of Dantoni's life and find out what prompted someone to murder him and then follow that lead.

To add to the character's troubles, Darrien has hired a southern assassin called the Dawn Tiger to hunt them down. Luckily for the characters, a representative from the local Guild has reasons of her own to tip the characters off to the impending assassination.

### *What's Happening in COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*

Now that the characters have stirred up the nest, the buzzing plot lines are starting to appear like a swarm.

Eastfair is always a complicated web of intrigue and nefarious plots. The air around this scenario series is no different. The characters are starting to understand that what they've gotten themselves involved in goes far beyond the simple murder of a young and inconsequential cleric of Zilchus. In addition to that, they are starting to cross paths with other intrigues that have their own destinations and travelers.

Octreth the young Honest Deal Mediator cleric of Zilchus fell in love with a girl who sells flowers, as is the thing to do in spring. Perhaps that makes all of this Atroa's fault, so blame it on the Atroa.

Octreth needed to change his assigned nightshift for a day shift in order to court his new love before another moved in. His roommate, Dantoni, had such a day shift to trade, but the trade had to be kept secret to avoid the displeasure of their strict superiors.

Thus Dantoni met up with Darien the Knife, a fishmonger by day, but a cleric of Vecna by night. Vecna clerics tend to be paranoid, and so poor Dantoni soon found himself a target for murder. While his roommate was giving his heart away, Dantoni was having his cut from his torso.

Captain Falentia the Rakersmen investigated the murder of Dantoni. This was a half-hearted investigation to begin with, but then those superior to Falentia started to scheme now that an opportunity had fallen into their laps.

Dantoni's father is Holy Clerk Afrondious of the Zilchus Western Company. The Holy Clerk managed to pay for the required *resurrection*, but he feared for his son's continued life. The reason for his murder was still a mystery—so Dantoni was sent to the Baklunish West. Meanwhile, despite direct orders from his superior,

Afrondious started to put out feelers for adventures to do what the city guard seemed to be botching.

Many adventurers started to arrive in the city, all taking up the Holy Clerk's under-the-table charge. While they all did it for different reasons, none of them had any solid clues to start with. That is until, some miles away outside the city, an orc finished downing his twentieth brew and took a sudden disliking to the nose of his human officer.

The resulting wave of orcs rampaging across the countryside brought those adventures into contact with a cleric of Pelor who required their immediate help in saving an orphanage stranded in the midst of the orcs.

At that orphanage was the one witness to the murder of Dantoni, as well as the two culprits trying to silence that witness. But as it turns out, the two thugs with bloody hands were just dupes for a mastermind—one who still needed to be identify and caught.

Word got around that the adventurers were on the trail of mastermind, one Darien the Knife. So he called in some favors and had an allied assassin come into Eastfair from down south to quickly silence the adventurers or at least cover Darien's escape from Eastfair.

The involvement of an assassin foreign to the city brought about the attention of the Eastfair Thieves' Guild, and in particular a faction called the Smiling Ones. But the Smiling Ones are not what they appear to be. Behind their snarling facades are hearts of gold (or silver at least).

The Smiling ones have their own mission within Eastfair, but the plight and quest of the adventurers peeked their interest, so they intervened to test the true intent of the adventurers. They were pleased, but have no intention of revealing their own mission or nature to the adventurers.

The Smiling Ones have their own nemeses within the Eastfair ruling class, one who has his own cravings for dark power and goes about trying to gain it with cloak and dagger operations. This person is Prince Poxquand the Undying of House Naelax. For a price, such an item was obtained by a Zilchan agent from within the Holim ruins. It would have been handed over as agreed, but the Smiling Ones decided to interfere. But in the end, no one came out with the item as it was mysteriously carried away.

The Zilchian agent served the Zilchus Western Company, and thus their order is blamed by the nemesis of the Smiling Ones. In rage, Prince Poxquand swore a blood vendetta, if his desired item was not returned.

As this adventure opens, a certain powerful figure within the Eastfair ruling class is using the below-board actions of Holy Clerk Afrondious to strike a blow against the Zilchus Western Company. Certain members of the ruling class of Eastfair have formed an agreement with Prince Poxquand to crush the Zilchian Order for fun and profit. As long as they have a motivated Prince Poxquand leading them, they cannot fail. If they loose his interest however they will be hard pressed to make a victory profitable and easy.

The front man for this cadre of corruption is Captain Falentia of the Rakermen. He is preparing to arrest the Holy Clerk on the grounds of interference in an official investigation, in order to stir up the Order. But, Falentia has been given strict orders not to harm or hinder the adventurers involved. It seems someone on the evil side has also taken to keeping watch on the advancements of the adventurers and is interested in what they are uncovering. This might have something to do with that the adventurers have revealed a connection between Darien the Knife and the Holim ruins.

At the same time, the Smiling ones are battling in their own secret war with Prince Poxquand and his minions. But they've lost one of their top agents to the ranks of the creatures of the nights. The Smiling ones have urgent business to complete as their grand mission is so near to completion, but they need the help of the adventurers to settle the hash of their turned agent and retrieve a valuable item need for the mission. More will be revealed on this in the next installment.

Thus the adventurers have gotten themselves into more than they realize and the Holim Ruins hold not only the answers to some of those secrets, but it also holds the key to pacifying the rage of Prince Poxquand and saving the Zilchian Order. Once all this easy stuff is completed, the destinies of the adventurers start to get complicated.

### **What's Happening Now in COR4-18 It Never Rains in Nyronnd?**

The characters return to Eastfair to see Clinorus at the Dervish. It's been lightly raining for several days now, as it does every year at this time (rumor has it it's because of supernatural reasons, but that's another story).

Clinorus has been spending his time trying to follow up on clues and leads that the adventurers gave him the last time they were in town. Excitingly he has come up with something that could be a breakthrough.

A cleric of Fharlanghn got drunk and into debt at the gambling tables of the Dervish. After a little plying, this cleric revealed to Clinorus that he knew of a mysterious crossroads where cryptic answers concerning geography and history could be revealed. It just takes a special lantern and some liquor. What could be easier than that?

Meanwhile, the night the adventurers return to Eastfair turns out to be an active one for others in the city. The Smiling Ones have gone out to meet their destiny. They've found that destiny is not all it's cracked up to be.

The Smiling Ones launched a raid to rescue an important child and her attendant hound archons, from the bowels of Prince Poxquand the Undying's dungeon. The operation turned into a trap, as it became clear that someone had betrayed them. Fighting for their lives, and after being hit with a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* and a strange mind-rotting poison, few made it out alive.

The remaining Smiling Ones were in bad shape and their minds were rotting away. They tried to escape back

to their own safe houses, but found the forces of Prince Poxquand waiting for them—more proof to a traitor.

As luck would have it, they ran into Sister Tillie on the streets of the Old City and she helped turn away some vampire minions of Poxquand. Though she didn't know them, she could tell by the hound archons and the child that these people needed help. So she called in a favor, and hid the lot of them at a kennel in the Old City.

The effects of the poison was beyond Tillies' power to help, and the Smiling Ones asked her to go into the New City (and this is in the middle of the night) to find some adventurers that might be able to help. Sister Tillie was happily surprised when recognized some of the names of those she was to seek.

On the streets of the New City, Sister Tillie ran into more of Poxquand's vampires. She had been made in connection with the Smiling Ones, so they gave chase and she was mauled badly by a barghest. The sound of battle attracted a Rakersmen patrol, whose arrival temporarily spooked the barghest long enough for Tillie to get away.

She does eventually get to the Whirling Dervish to meet the adventurers, but the dark naga Slithers, the left hand of darkness to Prince Poxquand, is right on her heels.

Meanwhile, 200 miles to the southeast, Darien the Knife is being thrown into a torture chamber known as the Hall of Whispered Enervation. He has been betrayed by his fellow Footmen of the Spider Throne. These Vecna cultists fear the influence Darien could exert or what secrets he might know, because of his connection with the baatezu of Holim ruins.

Once the adventures travel those 200 miles, they'll find that the base the torture chamber is in is self-destructing, and a badly level drained Darien is emerging with his few remaining followers.

During all that, the rest of the Footmen of the Spider Throne have gone into the magical bad lands of Rauxes to retrieve components to follow through with their dastardly plans.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Once again, the characters arrive at the Whirling Dervish. This time, they're wet and tired. Clinorus has some important information to pass on by the fire, but after that it's right to bed.

### Encounter 1: Snakes and Ladders

At 4 a.m., Sister Tillie comes banging on the characters' door. Seems she has mutual friends that the characters need to help, because she's too wounded to help herself. Oh, and there's a dark naga leading a pack of barghest and vampires only a few minutes behind her. The characters need to hear what she has to say, and then escape out the back door.

### Encounter 2: To the Old City!

It's the middle of the night and there's commotion going on in the streets of the New City. This means it's going to be more difficult than usual to get into the Old City in a timely manner. But there are several methods to do it—the characters just need to choose the one best suited for them. Time is a factor.

### Encounter 3: Dogs of Society

Arriving at the kennel in the Old City, the characters find a combat patrol loyal to Prince Poxquand has beat them there by a minute or so.

As well, the characters find all of the Smiling Ones dead (or insane), and the hound archons explain their problem to the characters. Because they are cursed and magically tracked, the characters must pick one of them to make it out alive with the girl, while the others willingly act as decoy sacrifices.

### Encounter 4: Far and Away

This encounter is more for the Dungeon Master than the players. The characters are being tracked and chased by invisible stalkers. Use this encounter to see if they get away or not.

### Encounter 5: Crossroads

With the help of the *lantern of lament* and some really fine grappa, the characters can summon the spirit of a Walker of Fharlanghn. This ex-cleric fought the Footmen in his own time and can pass on the whereabouts of the meeting place of the cult.

### Encounter 6: Portals of Last Resort

This is where the hound archon and the child must get to be safe. The characters must escort them here in order to gain their prize at the end. Depending on the pursuit results of Encounter 4, the enemy might show up before or after the portal is used.

### Encounter 7: Darien's Back in Town

Some 200 miles from Eastfair and the rain has stopped. Now the only thing left to do is dispense some justice to Darien the Knife.

### Conclusion

In the end, the characters learn that their next stop is somewhere within the magical bad lands of Rauxes. They also have a chance to turn a live Darien over to just about any faction of their choice and get a small reward for it. It seems that no one likes Vecna cultists.

## REMINDER TO THE DM

In this adventure, the box text represents the in-game word usage of the NPCs when referring to the names of gods. Due to the reverence (and sometimes fear) of these most divine and powerful beings in the North Kingdom, the NPCs do not use the true names of the gods in vain during idle conversation. Only when the god's power is truly being invoked (though not necessarily by a spell) is

the true name used. It's a firm belief that to use the gods' true name invokes that being's attention.

For instance, when the NPCs in this scenario wish to refer to Nurell, they say, "The Reaper," in an attempt to avoid his attention. The same is true for all gods, both good and evil.

For reference refer to Zilchus as "The Money Counter"; Hextor as 'The Herald of Hell' or 'The Scourge of Battle'; Fharlanghn as "The Dweller (on the horizon)"; Pelor as 'The Shining One'; Zodal as 'The Gentle Hand'; Vecna as the 'The Whispered One'; Atroa as 'The Sad Maiden'; Delleb as 'The Scholar'; Heironeous as 'The Archpaladin'; Kurell as 'The Bitter Hand'; Lirr as 'The Lore Keeper'; Olidammara as the 'Laughing Rogue'; Pholtus as 'He of the Blinding Light'; Wenta as 'The Alewife'; Kelanen as 'The Lord of Swords'. Though these gods have other names, these are what they are most commonly known as in and around Eastfair.

To give some examples of blessings and curses, to say, "Fharlanghn Rules the Roads" is a blessing, invoking the god's attention. To say "Zilchus be poor" is profanity.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The text of this adventure in many of the encounters lists example questions that trigger certain responses from the NPCs. These are by no means meant to be what the players must ask verbatim. As the Dungeon Master, you will need to judge the intent of the question and decide if it's reasonable to trigger the listed response. The intent of this method is to stop NPCs from blurting out all they know, regardless of the context, in an adventure that is designed to be a mystery investigation (of sorts).

In addition, there is much information that can be passed on to inquisitive characters. Not all of this information is vital to the successful completion of this adventure, but much of it gives insight into the Series as a whole. For players that like to cut to the chase, they can do so, provided they ask the right line of questions. For players that like to absorb the whole experience, that has been provided as well. You should not read all the material if the characters are not asking for it or seem stuck. In addition, different parties getting different topics of non-crucial background information makes for varied adventure play.

## INTRODUCTION

**Note:** For characters (and especially entire parties) that did not participate in the previous adventures in this series (*COR3-17 When Orcs Attack* and/or *COR4-09 A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!* and/or *COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*), there is a small alternative/supplementary introduction after this encounter, but it still loops back to this primary one requiring some adlibbing on the DM's part depending on the situation.

*Welcome back to Eastfair, The Granite City.*

*Clinorus Kradner, the proprietor of the Whirling Dervish has set aside his best suite for you to stay in.*

*Located on the Streets of Delight in the New City, you arrive back once again to the Whirling Dervish and it's exotic western décor.*

*You arrived late into the evening and Clinorus is prepared to sit up and chat and pass on some important information, but suggests you eventually rest for an early start. Mysteries don't solve themselves. Besides, it's raining outside and has been like that all day. Talk is that the weather is only going to get worse.*

Of all the inns to stay at in the city, this one is the most friendly and least evil. Nested in the Streets of Delight, this inn has the least number of evil auras per capita. Characters asking around would eventually be directed here as being 'more suited' to them.

### Location Information: The Whirling Dervish

Nested in the Streets of Delight, the Whirling Dervish is a hostelry offering entertainments marginally less depraved, and more varied, than most establishments around it.

The proprietor, Clinorus Kradner, dresses in Baklunish robes and a turban, even though he's never been west of Edge Field in his life. To someone who is from the Baklunish West or has visited there, it is obvious that Clinorus has dressed to the descriptions of embellished stories, not to mention the man is not Baklunish, more of a dark Flan-Oeridian mix.

But he plays the foolish part well, and has a range of "mystical conjuring tricks of the exotic west" aided by the small time magic his talent as a Brd4 gives him (*animate rope, mage hand, prestidigitation, summon instrument, hypnotism, monster summoning, etc.*).

His dancing girls are the best trained in Eastfair—though most are working their way into much loftier careers such as scribes and sages, and his other attractions include "Kumbli, the strongest man living outside Ekbir" (a shaven headed tanned Pontylver exile with Strength 20). As well, he has boas from Hep.m.onaland trained to curl lazily out of their wicker baskets when Clinorus plays his purposely out of tune conch pipe. To round this all off, vividly colored liqueurs of brain numbing potency, dice game tables, and far more besides are all present to entertain.

Clinorus is, in fact, a cleric of Olidammara, The Laughing Rogue (Clr4), with a strong tendency to good alignment. He is always interested in new visitors among his clientele, and if he spots good aligned people he often goes out of his way to give them some tips on who, what, and where to avoid within Eastfair.

He overhears indiscretions mumbled by drunken nobles and others at his gaming tables, and might pass on something of what he has heard—for the right price—if he trusts the individual he is dealing with.

In this series, Clinorus has dealings with the Zilchus Western Company who supplies him with perishables from the Baklunish West. He is also good friends with Dantoni and would often regale him with wild stories of the west (though these are often rehashed stories Clinorus hears from more senior Zilchus Western

Company members). As a friend of the family, the Holy Clerk has agreed to use Clinorus as a middleman in dealings with the adventurers on the case. Another relevant association that Clinorus has is with a certain element of the troubled thieves' guild. This is a relationship he tends to keep quiet for obvious reasons. To reward the characters' good deeds and friendship, he has made available to them his best suite and a table in the bar just for them.

Other than that, he doesn't reveal his true self or go out of his way to aid the characters (but won't hinder them) besides friendly hints on the city.

✦ **Clinorus Kradner:** Human Male (Flan-Oeridian) Brd4/Clr4 of Olidammara; CG; +11 Will Save; 46 hp; *Undetectable alignment* always cast; speaks Ancient Baklunish (but very poorly).

**Time:** It is approximately 10 p.m. when the characters arrive at the Dervish.

### Entering the Dervish

The Whirling Dervish is known for its friendly manner and exotic entertainment. The host, Clinorus Kradner and all of his staff (and the entire inn) are dressed up like a storybook version of the Baklunish west. The selection of food and entertainment is likewise.

Clinorus is dressed in Baklunish robes and a turban, though his style of wearing them is hardly authentic. He plays the fool to better guile those who would threaten his true nature. He is also willing to use his array of bardic spells to amuse the clients (*animate rope, mage hand, prestidigitation, summon instrument, hypnotism, monster summoning*, and so forth).

The characters are free to enjoy any of the entertainments listed:

1. Baklunish styled dancing girls.
2. Kumbli the strongest man living outside of Ekbir.
3. Trained boas from Hep.m.onaland.
4. Dice games.
5. Food and drink from the far west.

It's been raining all day. Not a heavy rain, but the population of Eastfair expects a storm to follow up this drizzle. Because of this, Clinorus (like most of the Eastfair residents) have been passing the time indoors.

As the characters arrive (or perhaps they are still there from the previous adventure) they are probably wet and the hour is late. Clinorus suggests that they make use of the suite (now renamed The Hero's Suite). He is willing to stay up and chat with them for a bit longer, as he does have an import clue to pass on.

Below is information that can be obtained from Clinorus. Most of it is just a rehash of plot information from the previous adventures (to help Dungeon Masters and characters whom are new to the series). But also present is information on where the characters can go next to pick up a lead on the location of Darien the Knife.

Otherwise, the characters can go straight to bed and unknowingly await a very early wake-up call.

The one important lead that Clinorus has to offer can wait till morning if the PCs insist but it's better that the characters hear it tonight so they can get an early start in the morning.

*Clinorus moves to a private table set near a roaring fire where the damp air looses its grip to the fire's inviting embrace.*

*"Other than this one piece of information, I haven't heard much of anything new, which worries me some. But I'll pass on to you what ever it is that piques your interests" says the turban wearing man.*

**What's this clue?:** "It was either you, or one of the other adventuring parties dealing with the Holy Clerk, I can't recall which—but one of you told me of blue turrets and shifting sands as a cryptic clue to the whereabouts of Darien the Knife"

**What about these turrets and sand?:** "I've been carefully plying those who strike me as being knowledgeable in such areas. I had little luck, until a passing cleric of the Dweller on the Horizon stayed here for a night. He was a horrible drinker, and an even worse gambler. He got deeper into his debts than his cups. Luckily we found a way for him to pay it off..."

**How'd he pay it off?:** "I got him talking, and in his drunken state, he mentioned that while he didn't know as much as he wanted, he once sought out another of his kind who was very knowledgeable on what I seemed to be asking about. He told me of a certain set of very special crossroads, about fifty miles or so east of here. I have rough map of the area for you. He gave me a rune-covered lantern and said it had enough oil for one more short session, but we would need to find our own spirits (liquor)."

**How does this work?:** "He was too drunk to go into details—but what I understand is, this here lantern is magical. He didn't say where he got it, but did seem to have a little bit of internal crisis about handing it over. There's oil inside, but I suspect it's magical oil, and mundane oil would not work. He said there is a hook at the crossroads, and you need to hang the lantern there and then light it. You'll also need a bottle of high quality spirits. Take this bottle of grappa. It means a lot to me, and it is high quality. I don't know what you do with it though, for his speech was too slurred. All of this will supposedly answer questions concerning this area of the Flanaess. He seemed quite certain of it, and also saddened by it, though I don't know why. He said once there, talk to Walker Govanti."

**What about Darien the Knife?:** "I've heard he's left the city a month or two ago (maybe longer) and left a subordinate in charge (who I think was slain by adventurers, perhaps even you?). Seems he's part of a very minor noble family from the northern Ahlissa lands. But his family is so obscure; it's hard to get any details. I think the family branches split their reverences between The Money Counter and The Herald of Hell, but that's a common story for many of those insignificant noble lines in that area."

**What's with the Grappa?:** "This is a 530 CY vintage, pressed at the Malkchin winery on Leastilse in the Sea Baronies. I have a friendship with the Malkchin line, though it has been many years since any of us have met up. So don't go breaking it open, looking for hidden messages. It's symbolic and very hard to come by, especially quality wise. Notice the extra strong bottle?"

**What news of Afronidious?:** "I'm a.m. very sadden to say, there is little news. Last I heard Holy Clerk Afronidious has been moved to a special part of the Eastfair prison. I do not even know if he is alive or dead. It may take me some time, but I vow, should he still live, I shall find the resources to set him free. When I have the means, I may call for you."

**What news of the Zilchus Western Company?:** "The Zilchus Western Company went through some rough times recently. A cadre of powerful nobles within the city tried to manipulate events to provoke another of their ilk into allowing the compound to be besieged and destroyed. It came very near to that. Luckily, some unknown help arrived at the last minute and the Exchequer was able to disarm the situation with words and gifts."

**Do you know what this cookbook is?:** "Sorry, but I do not."

**What news of the street gangs?:** "They've been rather quiet. Perhaps they've finally reached a peaceful equilibrium."

**What news of the Guilders?:** "I have not heard from the Smiling Ones since our last contact with them. I suspect they are getting ready for something, though I a.m. in the dark about what it is."

**So, how about this weather?:** "Rain like this happens this time of year. It usually drizzles for a day or two, and then a thunderstorm moves in. Usually it rains itself out, but sometimes the storm can stick around for a few days. It's nothing to worry about, just keeps most people inside where it's warm and dry. It's also the reason why we have no customers here. No one wants to travel here in the rain."

**What effects will this weather have on our travels?:** "It's been a rather light rain these past few days, a drizzle really. That means the most actual roads should still be well enough for travel. Some smaller bridges and lesser fords may be harder to use, but this kingdom is based on mobility. You will notice that it's safer to travel the roads and trails, for most brigands and even the soldiers of nobles, are more incline to stay inside. Just be careful about trespassing across the lands of nobles. Most are a fiercely protective of their territories."

**Who is Prince Poxquand?:** "Prince Poxquand the Undying. He is one of several animus abominations that inhabit this city as well as the former Great Kingdom as a whole. He keeps to himself mostly, though I have heard of him doing a lot of damage once in the Old City, blew apart almost an entire block. But he pretty much got away with it. His chief henchman is a powerful naga named Slithers."

**Who is Slithers?:** "I don't know how Slithers came into the service of Poxquand, but I can't think of any

reference without Slithers being at his master's side. He is powerful mage and a cruel schemer. Of course, Slithers is not his true name. It's just what he has come to be known as in our human tongues. To say his true name would require the removal of your tongue. But nick name or not, he's dangerous."

\ If Clinorus is asked to recount what he imparted to the characters the last time (during *COR4-14 Sympathy of the Baatezu*), he tells them:

The first topic concerns clandestine meetings between the characters and the Smiling Ones faction of the Thieves' Guild.

- ❖ The people Clinorus is referring to are a certain faction of the local Thieves' Guild that he has had friendly dealings with in the past. This faction is lead by Malaya (the same female guildler that the characters may have encountered in their previous outing in Eastfair).
- ❖ Clinorus makes it clear that while he would not trust most members of the guild as far as he can throw them, these particular associates he can vouch for as meaning no harm to the characters.
- ❖ Due to the sensitive nature dealing with the guild and the heavy handedness of the authorities, Clinorus is reluctant to reveal details, such as names, pasts or organizational structure (except where noted).
- ❖ Malaya approached Clinorus and informed him of the need for a confidential meeting with the characters. She was impressed with their handling of themselves and she had need for some help from those outside of the goings on in this city, something that should be right up their ally.
- ❖ The meeting took place at number five Cobblestone Lane in the heart of the Old City. Clinorus can give directions starting at the Spider's Gate. This is a small private residence. When the characters arrived, they were to say they were there to inspect the kittens for sale and are interested in smiling ones in particular.
- ❖ Clinorus recommended that the characters participate in this meeting.

The second topic here is concerning the badges the characters received as gifts.

- ❖ Each bundle (one for each character present) was a collection of outer garments tailored to fit the approximate size and build of the character. This included non-humans. The clothing was designed to make the wearer look like a local to the Old City, yet be functional enough that it can be discarded (as a free action) to avoid hampering physical actions (such as combat). On the vest and sleeves of these garments are the required badges signifying that the wearer is allowed to enter and exit via the Spider's Gate during the day.

- ❖ In addition, the garments held the badge that allowed for the wearer to carry weapons (and armor) for personal protection within the Old City.
- ❖ These badges did not allow the wearer to enter or exit the Old City during the night. Nor does it guarantee them the right to pass. A city guard can still deny them passage if he so wishes (but rarely do they bother to involve themselves unless provoked, seeing the badge is usually enough).

The third topic is concerning the state of Afronidious the Holy Clerk.

- ❖ Afronidious has been reasonably patient with the progress on his son's murder investigation. He has managed to make few waves within the city bureaucracy and feels that the powers of the city may leave him be, as well as the Zilchus Western Company. It wasn't easy working outside the 'law' of the land, but it seems to have been all worth it (you adventurers are proof of that). That is until recently when the heat was suddenly turned up on him. That Rakersmen Falentia is back with a vengeance.
- ❖ Small groups of adventurers still filter in from time to time, all of whom have heard of the Holy Clerk's request for discreet help (mostly from other Holy Clerks, or from fellow adventurers). Some agree to help despite a lack of reward (as it has already been paid out to you), other say they may try to seek out others who are already on the mission, and most others just quietly leave. All those who wish to help my friend Afronidious are welcome at the Whirling Dervish.

If Clinorus is asked to recount what he imparted to the characters the second time they met (During *COR4-09 A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!*), he tells them:

- ❖ The Holy Clerk of the Zilchus Western Company wishes to meet the characters at the Spice of Life tavern at noon. If the characters can't make this meeting, he can also meet at 7p.m. if needed.
- ❖ Due to the sensitive nature of the politics behind the church of Zilchus and the government, and the less than above board nature of this investigation, Afronidious cannot afford to meet or discuss this business within the Zilchus Western Company compound. His lunch and dinner times are far more suited for clandestine meetings.
- ❖ Afronidious had some documents to hand over, but Clinorus does not know the details of their contents, other than that they relate to records of Dantoni's last few days before being murdered.
- ❖ As a small blessing, there does not appear to have been any more ritual killings of this

manner since Dantoni and the character's apprehension of the two thug minions.

If Clinorus is asked to recount what he imparted to the characters the first time they investigated (During *COR3-17 When Orcs Attack*), he tells them:

- ❖ Five days before he first talked to the characters, a young friend Dantoni, a cleric of the Money Counter and acolyte of the Zilchus Western Company, was murdered.
- ❖ The murder happened after Dantoni was on his way back home (the Zilchus Western Company compound) in the streets of the Merchant Quarter. He was somewhat drunk. His heart was cut out in a ritualistic fashion and the heart is still missing.
- ❖ Dantoni visited him often to be regaled of stories of the far west.
- ❖ The Zilchus Western Company is a trading organization run by an order of Zilchus Clerics.
- ❖ Thankfully, Dantoni was resurrected, but it took all the sums of money that his father and his friends (including a gift from Clinorus himself) could put together. It's a misconception that all clerics of the Money Counter are filthy rich, and 5,000 gp is a lot of money on short notice.
- ❖ The authorities and the Church of Zilchus are at a loss to figure out the culprits or even a motive. Dantoni only remembers being hit on the head and being carried into an alleyway by two men before he completely blacked out. The authorities have declared it a random murder and the Church of Zilchus is complaining through formal channels to little results.
- ❖ Dantoni's father, Afronidious the Holy Clerk for the Zilchus Western Company compound here in the city, suspects it maybe more than just a random murder. He suspects cult activity (which there is a fair amount of) and fears that they may strike again.
- ❖ Dantoni has been sent off west to recuperate and to stay protected if whoever killed him wants to take a second shot.

🔦 **Lantern of Lament:** This hooded lantern is of excellent quality, and has runes marked on it. The runes for travel, luck and protection can be found evenly spaced out on its base. On the bottom are the runes for death, rebirth, regret and peace. Despite the lantern's magic nature and high quality, it has been through a lot and is marred and worn. The runes are not in pristine reading condition. Some careful inspection and a DC 15 Decipher Script check is needed to make out each rune. This DC can be lowered to DC 10 if the characters come up with ways to make the runes clearer or easier to read (such as *prestidigitation* to clean, or *mending*, or acid, or *comprehend languages*, or anything else the Dungeon Master feels appropriate. A Knowledge (arcana) DC 10 check can be used instead if the characters have used such a cleaning method. The oil supply is low, and a good

estimate would be 10 minutes or less of burn time. Adding mundane oil does not increase this. This is special oil made for this type of lantern.

A DC 20 bardic knowledge check reveals it to be a *lantern of lament*, but no other information is attached to the name. Nor does it conjure a connection between the need for quality alcohol and the lantern.

What the characters don't know is, once this lantern has used itself up, it disintegrates and splits into the four elements it was made from.

**Treasure:** Items given to the characters by Clinorus. If these items are sold (i.e., money used by the characters before the items are needed), then they do not have the items when it comes time to use them later in this adventure.

APL 2: L: 0; C: 0; M: *Lantern of lament* (100 gp each), High Quality Grappa (3 gp each).

APL 4: L: 0; C: 0; M: *Lantern of lament* (100 gp each), High Quality Grappa (3 gp each).

APL 6: L: 0; C: 0; M: *Lantern of lament* (100 gp each), High Quality Grappa (3 gp each).

APL 8: L: 0; C: 0; M: *Lantern of lament* (100 gp each), High Quality Grappa (3 gp each).

**Development:** After the sit-down with Clinorus, there is not much for the characters to do but go to bed. The suite is the same room on the top floor they've always had (the Hero's Suite). What the characters don't know is that at around 4am, an old friend pays them a visit, followed by some unwelcome visitors down stairs.

Keep track of any characters that decide to stay up past midnight (which is the time that Clinorus begs off to go to sleep) as these characters might be in a different spot then what is assumed for Encounter 1.

Assume dawn comes at 6am. This will be important for clerics that need to pray at that time. As well, resting characters are only going to get between 4-6 hours of sleep before being awoken.

## INTRODUCTION: SUPPLEMENTAL

This small supplemental introduction is for characters that have not been hooked into the story line of the series from the previous adventures. Hopefully, most of the characters in the party have played the previous parts and those new among them can have tagged along and have been filled in on the required questing. But some players may require more motivation and connection for their characters to justify being present and involved.

*Throughout the Flanaess, word has been spreading amongst the faithful of Zilchus. These Holy Clerks, devout defenders of the bottom line, wardens of the coin and keepers of ledgers, have one of their own in distress. Unofficially, they have been giving hints that foreigners, people from the outside, are needed to help right a wrong in a place where wrongs are right. New adventurers are needed where others have stalled. Pull your cloak up tightly and head off to Eastfair, capital of*

*the North Kingdom. All hints suggest seeking out a man by the name of Clinorus Kradner at the Whirling Dervish, though the clerics of Zilchus are unsettlingly quiet on details.*

Thus individual characters or entire adventuring parties can arrive fresh and still succeed in this adventure and be hooked into the series.

The Dungeon Master needs to paraphrase the primary introduction to suit characters arriving by word of mouth and not because of previous involvement. Clinorus is aware that some of the previous adventurers working on the mission either died or became side tracked elsewhere and thus replacements are needed. He goes out of his way to make these new arrivals feel welcome and does his best to merge loners up with any of those who are veterans from the previous parts of the mission.

## ENCOUNTER 1: SNAKES AND LADDERS

### Part A: The cold Ready'reat rain

*The gentle rain kept up its pitter-patter throughout the night. That is, what length of the night you slept, till awoken by a loud knock on the door. A female voice, hushed but urgent, filters through the door, "Friends, It is I, Sister Tillie of the Old City, servant of the Sun Father. You helped out an orphanage at my bequest once, and now others need you as well".*

The woman at the door is indeed Sister Tillie of the Old City, cleric of Pelor. Those characters who played in *COR3-17 When Orcs Attack* should remember her as the strong of spirit cleric who ushered them on to save an orphanage amidst an orc revolt. If none of the characters have played the adventure, then omit the last line, and replace it, *"I've been sent to fetch you, your foreign presence was noted when you entered the city, and that is what is needed now."*

What's different now (other than it being 4am), is that Tillie is badly wounded. The only thing keeping her standing is her Diehard feat. She is currently at -7 hitpoints and has no spells left with which to heal her self. Her most prominent wound is a large gash over the upper left part of her face, which has punctured her eyeball.

She gained these wounds while fighting off a small band of evil minions of Prince Poxquand. She had been spotted earlier helping the Smiling Ones escape pursuit within the Old City. Then she was spotted within the New City and Slithers and his henchmen are pursuing her.

Tillie desires entry (which she waits for the characters to give her) and to explain her plight to the characters. Her main goal is to convince the characters to come to the Old City with her to help out another group (The Smiling Ones) finish a mission, a very important one.



She does not have the details of the mission (escorting the child and the hound archons) but because of the presence of the 'celestial dogs', the death bed request of Malaya, and the fact that Prince Poxquand is tearing the city apart to find her, she believes the mission must be of utmost importance to the cause of good.

Tillie has the following to impart to interested characters. She tries to get as much of this out (or as much as the characters are interested in hearing) before her pursuers catch up to her.

**Wants wrong Tillie?:** "Important mission...Poxquand hunts them... now me for helping... little time, barely got away.. used all my magic...Old City, we must make it to the Old City, Benzeden's Kennel."

**Are you hurt?:** "Yes, but use your magic sparingly on me, others are hurt and you may need all your power to complete this mission".

**How did you get hurt?:** "I was pursued here by minions of Prince Poxquand, several vampires and a barghest. By the blessings of the Sun Father, I was able to turn away the night feeders, but the barghest did this to me (pointing at critical wound to face) before I was able to escape. Luckily a Rakersmen patrol came by and scared off the barghest long enough for me to escape down a back alley and make it here. That was not long ago."

**How'd you get out of the Old City?:** "With Spider's Gate generally closed at night and not easy to get through, I used a smuggler that I'm forced to deal with time to time. I have no idea what method the Smiling Ones used to enter or exit the Old City."

**What is this mission?:** "There is little time to loose. My pursuers may find my trail again. In a nutshell—the Smiling Ones (of the Eastfair thieves' guild) conducted some sort of rescue mission to free a child and a group of celestial beings from the dungeons of Prince Poxquand. The escape went very badly though, and by chance they ran into me and I have hidden them at Benzeden's Kennel. They claim their own hideouts are compromised. They are badly hurt and suspect a traitor in their ranks but have no idea as to his/her identity. Their leader Malaya, asked me to fetch you."

**How do we get there?:** "The kennel is in the Old City. There are several ways back in, all with their own costs and dangers. For example, Spider's Gate, I suspect it has been completely closed due to the commotion in the city. We could still try. Or we could try paying for passage with the Hole in the Wall gang. Or you may know of some other route or method of entry."

At about this time, a loud commotion can be heard from downstairs consisting of furniture being turned over and loud angry shouting. A moment or two after that, a second female form appears at the door (if it was not relocked). This is one of the inn's serving girls.

***Another woman appears at the door, one of the serving girls. She sounds frantic. "You have to leave now! Grab your things. Many monsters are downstairs looking for a woman and yourselves. Clinorus is slowing them down***

***with words, but it won't last. There's a secret ladder-case this way. Hurry!"***

The secret ladder-case is in the hallway and is already open. The ladder-case is narrow and the walls not very thick, but it does come out in the stables of the inn. This gives characters with mounts a chance to collect them up.

There is a dumb-waiter type contraption within the side of the ladder-case that can be used for medium (or smaller) animals, such as dogs and wolves. This works for cargo as well.

### **All APLs**

☛ **Sister Tillie:** Female human (Flan-Oeridian); hp 24; Clr3 - Pelor; see Appendix 1.

**Development:** For those characters that either never went to their rooms, or are curious and wish to investigate the raid instead of fleeing, they can experience it through Encounter 1B.

If the characters need to leave anything behind, the staff of the Whirling Dervish takes care of it on behalf of the characters and takes steps to reunite the items with the character some time after the adventure.

### **Part B: A Criminal Mind**

While the characters are (presumably) up in their rooms, and the main hall of the Whirling Dervish empty, sinister forces lurk just outside the building. They've pursued the wounded Sister Tillie here, and have connected the name of the building with reports that those irritating adventurers frequent a room here.

While Tillie snuck in through an open window, this gang of bad guys merely smashed the front door open. This loud smash and yelling has awoken Clinorus and his staff. He quickly figured out the gist of what was going on and used his bardic magic (*message* spell) to have one of his servants alert the adventurers on the top floor and get them to safety.

The intruding group is made up of lackeys of Prince Poxquand. They have no formal authority within the city, so while brash about kicking in doors and attacking people in the streets, they are careful about whom they mess with.

Other possible foes within the city tend to be minions of more powerful figures, be it openly or concealed. The lawful nature of Prince Poxquand's faction tends to respect that aspect of life within Eastfair; of course, woe unto those who have no political protectors.

This hunting party is being led by a dark naga named Slithers. He is the left-hand being of Prince Poxquand the Undying. He knows he has a lot of influence to throw about in proxy of his master, but also fears pushing events too far in case the backlash ends up inconveniencing his master too much (and thus backlashing Slithers physically).

Slithers and his hunters are not quite sure of the connection between the female cleric of Pelor and the Smiling Ones they are hunting, but for the moment, she

is their best lead. Her scent trails into this building, but it's a complete mystery as to what she is doing here. It is possible this is where she is hiding the Smiling Ones, or coming here to gain something she needs for them. Or, it could be that this is just another attempt to misdirect and escape. Slithers is not yet aware that the characters are involved, nor does he know what they look like besides some general descriptions. He also will not automatically make the connection between the Dervish and the lair of the pesky adventurers right away. Nor does he ask Clinorus about the adventurers, but Clinorus does jump to that conclusion when he warns the party to escape.

Slithers is unsure at the moment just what kind of sway the patron of the Whirling Dervish has. He's certainly heard of Clinorus before, and its known some intermediate powers of the city occasional partake in the delights of the Whirling Dervish, but to the extent of connection and protection needs to be determined before a full-scale scuffle and search can be waged.

To facilitate this, Slithers plans to use his *detect thoughts* ability to spy out the place and then make a decision. This is a typical mode of operation for him, and he's a naga of habit.

It comes as quite some frustration when he is unable to penetrate the mind of Clinorus (and get past the mental protection spells). It leaves him to argue, question, threaten and slap his tail around.

Eventually though, it is just a matter of time before he orders his vampire minions to have a quick look through the public halls of the three floors of the building. The vampires will move about the inn listening at doors until they think they have found the correct room(s).

**Note:** the vampires should not start patrolling until the characters have been given ample opportunity to escape. The characters should only encounter these vampires if they simply refused to abandon their position in the face of superior enemy forces.

The main staircase of the Dervish gives any spying characters coming down from the third floor to observe the interaction between the stalling Clinorus and the frustrated Slithers, a route to do so. As well, if any character for some reason (such as refusing to go sleep in the suite) is still downstairs, the can witness all of this. That is, assuming they did not wake up when Tillie entered, spotted them and asked them to go up to the suite with the others.

Hopefully, the characters know enough to keep a low profile. If they refuse to go with Tillie and stay, and are discovered, they become the target of Slithers *detect thoughts*, and if successfully scanned, may reveal compromising information about recent events (within the adventure series). This may give the characters a penalty when trying to escape with the hounds and toddler overland (*this incurs a -2 hour penalty, see Encounter 4 for details*), as it reveals what they learned from Clinorus and the route. Slithers lets the character slip out as a useless innocent but, when it becomes clear that the adventurers are involved, he can recall the map info and it will penalize the characters.

The point of this encounter is to allow curious characters some knowledge that they are indeed being pursued, and the magnitude of enemy they may have to contend with later. As well, it's meant to scare the characters into escaping. While the powerful enemy is certainly capable of destroying the characters several times over, that's not what they are meant for. Only if the characters push their luck do they meet with opposition.

To further the point, Slithers has strict orders to not interfere or greatly harm the characters (once he figures out who they are). His master has instructed him that these adventurers will lead him to something greater; they just need a chance to blossom. To that effect, they can be threatened, and scared, but they must be allowed to continue on (for now).

### Conversations- Clinorus and Slithers

The exact wording between Clinorus and Slithers is not important. It is merely Clinorus playing the part of the know-nothing buffoon of an innkeeper while he stalls and misleads the inquisitive naga.

Clinorus keeps it civil and friendly, referring to the naga as Lord Slithers, and that as a humble innkeeper, he would be remiss to break the confidentiality of 'certain' guests. He's implying there may be important people (such as nobles) within his rooms doing things they'd prefer not be disturbed doing.

After five or so minutes Slithers becomes frustrated that his *detect thoughts* ability is not working. Even more frustrating is that Clinorus is not giving him a good reason to attack and tear the place apart. If Clinorus provoked him, with insult or threat, then it would be open season on innkeeper and his property.

It does get to the point where Slithers just decides to risk it and bypass Clinorus. At that point they start rummaging around the place and the vampires start to walk all the halls, trying to enter what rooms they can, and listening at the doors of others.

### Warnings from Clinorus

The innkeeper has an active *message* spell between himself and the serving girl who came to warn the characters. He cast it moments after being awoken and popping his head out to see the naga enter.

Whenever he can, he sneaks a message to his serving girl. He's instructing her to hurry and get the adventurers out via the secret ladder-case.

He's not able to carry on a conversation (as replying is too difficult), but when possible he gives suggestions such as, "RUN!!! RUN!!!", and "There is a Naga named Slithers here, with vampires and barghests, RUN! RUN!", or "Take those three extra riding horses so that you can RUN! RUN! Faster".

The serving girl relays these messages to the party, and points out the three light riding horses that Clinorus is loaning to them to make their escape faster.

### All APLs

☞ **Clinorus Kradner:** Human Male (Flan-Oeridian)  
Brd4/Clr4 of Olidammara; CG; +11 Will Save; 46 hp;

*Undetectable alignment* always cast, *Nondetection* cast; Speaks Ancient Baklunish (but very poorly).

➤ **Slithers:** Dark Naga Sor4; LE; 78 hp; see page 191 in the *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Vampires (4):** Vampire Ftr5; LE; 32 hp; see page 250 of the *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Barghests (3):** 32 hp (each); see page 23 of the *Monster Manual*.

**Treasure:** Accept the horse gifts from Clinorus. To aid in their escape, Clinorus relays through the serving girl that the characters should help themselves to his three light riding horses. He'll insist it's just a loan, but he won't bat an eye should the characters never return the horses or reimburse him for them.

APL 2: L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

APL 4: L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

APL 6: L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

APL 8: L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

**Develop.m.ent:** It should be about 4:15am by the time the characters flee the Dervish.

An imp is left to watch over the Dervish should the characters come back at any time. While the imp can't (and won't) stop them, the characters can access the Dervish to get items or what have you. Doing so however incurs a time penalty.

(This penalty ranges from -1 to -3, depending on how severely the characters tipped their hand. Just coming back to the Dervish, even if completely unseen, still incurs a -1 penalty, due to later divinations by the enemy. The Dungeon Master determines the exact penalty from -1 to -3. *See Encounter 4 for details.*)

## ENCOUNTER 2: TO THE OLD CITY!

### Part A: The Streets of the New City

*The streets of the New City are dark, with few revelers still enjoying the Streets of Delights. Main streets and side paths branch out to every part of the New City. Sister Tillie is insistent that you all make haste to the Old City, and that reaching your goal is just a matter of breaching the walls; the method of course is up to you.*

Presented in this encounter are four different ways for the characters to successfully penetrate the walls of the Old City.

Two ways require the use of favors gained in previous adventures, while the other two rely more on different skill sets of the characters. This does not mean these are the only ways to bypass the walls. Resourceful characters (especially at higher levels) will find easy ways to overcome these obstacles with the use of magic and magical items.

Keep track of the time. Each attempt to bypass the walls takes approximately one hour of game time, regardless of success or failure. Thus if the characters fail

at one route and try another, they'll need to use up a second hour.

At 7 a.m., the kennel is raided and the hound archons (still waiting for the promised help to arrive) are recaptured along with the child. This gives the characters only two chances to enter the Old City and make it inside in time to save those who need it. Failure here means they have no need to travel to the portal and the stalkers will not be sent out after the characters. (See Encounter 6 for more details).

Dawn breaks at 6:00 a.m. The daylight hour tends to make things harder for the characters, as well as moves things along for those pursuing the characters. As well, keep in mind those clerics who need to pray for their spell at dawn. Those who choose to forgo their appointed time of prayers must also forgo choosing new spells for the day (though they'll still have those left from the previous day).

Each method of entry has its strengths and weaknesses. Some parties can get across the walls very easily on one method, while another party may have a very hard time at any other given method. Either way, the party is awarded experience points for successfully getting into the Old City.

### Part B: Cost of a Favor

If the characters decide to go to Little Bakluni Town and the Zilchus Western Company, they can wake up Octreth and with either showing him they possess a Money Counter Note, or by using diplomacy, Octreth can be spurred into quick enough action to be useful.

It should be noted that in the last adventure in this series, it was a plot point to decide if the Zilchus Western Company was destroyed or not. By overwhelming majority, it was determined that the actions of the different groups of adventurers had indeed saved the Zilchus Western Company from destruction. For those who played at a table where it was destroyed, the damage must have been greatly exaggerated by rumormongering.

### Location Information: Zilchus Western Company

The **Merchant Quarter** contains the better markets of Eastfair and the homes of many ordinary merchants. This is also home to an enclave (subsection) of merchants who specialize in exotic goods: silks, spices, peppers, yarpick nuts, galda fruit, rare herbs, alchemical goods, tropical hardwood furnishings, Ketite rugs and carpets, and all manner of unusual items.

### Zilchus Western Company

*This small compound sits on the far side of the square in little Bakluni town.*

*The main gates are closed and the walls are heavily patrolled by the feather plumed and richly dressed pikeman common to the orthodox Zilchus customs originating in the old North Province*

*A sign in both old Oeridian and Common proclaims, "The Zilchus Western Company."*

As long as the characters are polite, civil and can come up with any sort of reasonable cause for entering the compound (in this case, because they seek to speak with the Holy Clerk Octreth), then they may do so and though the elite guards do not search the characters, they do eye them very carefully.

It's important that the characters ask for Octreth or the Holy Clerk, otherwise they will be turned away until 7am.

At this point, Holy Clerk Octreth is summoned out to the main gate. Once he sees who the characters are, he lets them in. There is a small gatehouse near the main gate that Octreth ushers the characters into for privacy.

Because the interaction between the characters and the Zilchus Western Company is still being frowned upon by the Exchequer, Octreth wants to keep a low profile to avoid interference. If his superiors suddenly found out about this early morning meeting, internal politics would stop any help he could give to the characters for some time.

Thus, the characters need to spend most of the time within this private gatehouse. They are told not to approach the main temple or any of the other buildings.

The following is what Octreth has to pass along to inquiring characters.

**Can you help us Octreth?** : "I think I might be able to. Its tricky, but I think I can get just the documents and pretense you'll need. But I'll have to come with you to pull it off. All we need now is a Money Counter Note issued by someone other than myself."

**Do you have such note?:** "Alas, I don't. Nor do I think I could get a hold of one for many hours. It would be too risky".

**We have a Money Counter Note:** "You do? That's perfect. If you loan it to me, I'll be sure to get you a new one issued to you within a few days. I'm positive I could manipulate that. I need it to bribe someone here, and unfortunately, my own issuing of Money Counter Notes doesn't have the same impact as yet. Temple politics and all. Don't worry about those details, just let me go handle it and wait here."

**We don't have any Money Counter Notes:** "Oh, that's a shame. I think I could get one, but it would take many hours. I'd have to wake a senior cleric, and convince him it was part of my duties. I just don't know...There are so many intricacies that Holy Clerk Afronidous did not have time to teach me. It can be so complicated."

**We do this a lot, it will be alright?!** Octreth is very new at his position as the Holy Clerk for the temple. His confidence is wavering because while his job gives him the authority to do many things, the senior (and older) clerics are not giving him much leeway. In practice, the old Holy Clerk would have used grit and gumption to keep his own superiors in line and not dare interfere with whatever he tells them are his duties. The characters need to inspire Octreth to do something along those lines. Get him to tip his hat over his brow and go into that temple and lay down the law. A successful DC 15

Diplomacy check does this. Only one attempt per party, but all may assist.

**So, you can't help us out?:** "I can, but I need to wait till the right cleric has awoken, then I can approach him during the regular meeting, and try and angle him into issuing me a Money Counter Note, then I can give that note to a certain person I know who is interested in gaining one. And then I can take his assignment and documents and get you into the old city. But by that time, it will be well into morning, and you can probably just walk in through the gates on your own. I'm sorry it can't be faster".

**Any word on Afronidous?:** "Some, but none of it good. It seems that Prince Poxquand did not care enough to include the safe return of Holy Clerk Afronidous as part of his side of the bargain. He did withdraw his support of the assault on our Order, but has left the regaining of Afronidous up to the Exchequer. Some other faction within the city judicial council is using this as a power point. The negotiations could take some time I fear."

If the characters have either given Octreth a Money Counter Note, or used Diplomacy to fluff up his confidence, he puts his plan into immediate action.

If he doesn't have a Money Counter Note, but has the courage to go get one, he tells the characters to stay in the gatehouse, and goes into the temple. Ten minutes later, he has the required Money Counter Note in his hand and is leaving the chambers of a very sheepish-looking superior cleric.

The Octreth takes this Money Counter Note and brings it to the chambers of a fellow cleric. This fellow has asked Octreth to do a favor or two for him on the side and made it clear that he could do a few things for Octreth as well, if he cooperated.

Octreth has gone along with him a few times, as they seemed like nice shortcuts and kept things running smoothly. He never much liked returning the favor, but it was only fair. This cleric has made it clear to Octreth not to reveal who he is to anyone. Doing so would void any future dealings and bring down his ire onto the young cleric.

As it happens, Octreth is aware that this cleric requires a Money Counter Note with a little more leverage than Octreth's signature can provide. Octreth is also aware that this cleric has several early morning meetings scheduled within the Cyst of the Old City.

It is Octreth's plan to take the pass, the wagon, and whatever else is needed, and then brow beat/trick the Spider's Gate guards into allowing him entrance. And it will work.

Assuming the characters go along with it, they are loaded up into a wagon, or used as 'guards' if mounted, and Octreth passes on to the Cyst after informing the guards he's wanted for an early meeting with a certain high-ranking tax agent.

♣ **Octreth:** Male human (Suel-Oeridian) Clr4 of Zilchus; hp 27.

**Development:** Once in the city, Octreth brings the characters near (but not to) the location they need to go, and carries on his way. He says he can't risk too much direct involvement or connection to this kennel if the bad guys come along. But Octreth is willing to meet the characters at this location (about a block away from the kennel) in about thirty minutes. That's about the time it will take him to carry on to the Cyst, then head back to this point. He'll wait another fifteen minutes after that, but he can't risk more.

If the characters come back during that time, he can escort them out, even if its before 8am (when the Spider's Gate and New Gate open up).

### **Part C: The Webs We Weave**

*The old but sturdy stopgap known as The Spider's Gate controls commoner traffic between the outer-ring of the city called the New City, and the interior core called the Old City. Where the New City ranges from rich noble town houses to simple commoner city cottages, the Old City leaves no doubt that slums await. A large number of guards verify that those who use the gate are those with permission.*

Note that for this encounter, day is considered to start at 8am (6am dawn). That is when the gate opens to regular traffic and the guard level is dropped.

The New Gate is at the opposite end of the Old City and is restricted to military, city authorities, nobility and all others with some weight to throw around. All others must use Spider's Gate.

#### **Day**

For those who simply don the disguises provided (In *COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*) and use a little discretion, crossing this gate into the Old City is easy (during the day).

When not on alert, there are no magical protections or detections in use. During an alert, the gates are closed and anyone wishing to pass through faces scrutiny, including the risk of magical scrutiny from three clerics of Hextor and a mid level diviner (but these four do not report in until the alarm is sounded).

Getting in or out (during the day) without the proper badges can still be accomplished, but requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check in order for the opportunity to bribe the guard 10 gp for a one way passage. Failure means the character cannot try again for 24 hours (an exception to this is if he can successfully disguise himself manually or magically and try again as a "new" person).

With the gates open, characters using magic (such as *invisibility*) and some caution can easily bypass any scrutiny from the guards (there's some debate among the city authority about installing a permanent *invisibility* *purge* trap here, but the main issue is who would foot the bill for it).

Unless the characters have done something to change this fact, the gates cease to be on alert by 8am (which also happens to be when the guard is changed and

the gate opens up for the day). Of course, characters waiting that long may find themselves at a loss during later events.

#### **Night**

Without the proper documents (which the characters themselves do not have) getting past the gates at night can be very difficult. The gates are normally closed, and the guard presence is increased from the regular day watch.

In addition, these guards are on alert because of the goings on within the New City. They are concerned with thieves trying to use a distraction in one part of the city to allow something else to pass by in another—such as this gate.

Without the alert, these guards could still be bribed, but because they know their superiors will be checking on them, they are scared of being caught doing so. So they won't.

At the same time, the guards realize that powerful factions within the city fight and struggle against one another. They also know it's counter productive to get on the bad side of one of these secretive factions. So it's a careful game of balance, keeping out the riffraff, but still knowing when to let things slide for the privileged.

Some of the guards will recognize Tillie and tell her they want nothing to do with her while the alert is on. Getting mixed up with her right now would mean nothing but trouble. Nor does Tillie have any passes or favors that can get her (or the adventurers) through this gate at night.

The characters have one option here. They can try to bluff their way through. If they can come up with some angle that uses the guards' fear of retribution from dangerous factions, and succeed in their Bluff check, then they can gain access.

An example scheme would include the characters suggesting that they are on a mission tasked out by some dark master (maybe even Poxquand) from within the city and that they need to enter the Old City right away or else their master will be very unhappy. Disguising themselves as clerics of Hextor or other authority figures helps greatly. The important part is that the gate guards want to believe that powerful forces will involve them in their dark conspiracies. These are fantasy elements that the entire guard shift share on their lonely nights of vigil.

The characters only get one chance at a Bluff check per party, but others may assist the primary roller. This is an opposed Sense Motive check for the guards (one roll for the lot of them). Their skill is as follows: APL2—4; APL 4—6; APL 6—8; APL 8—10. This does not take into account the -5 skill modifier for the guards wanting to believe the characters. As well, the guards only want to believe the characters if the bluff contains some element of dark conspiracy and them being needed to aid in it.

#### **All APLs**

♣ **Sergeant Gronnend:** Male human Ftr4/Rog2; LE.

♣ **Scourge Brother Calathor:** Male human Clr4/Ftr1 of Hextor; LE.

🔪 **Rakersmen Trooper (8):** Male human; LE; War2.

#### Nearby in Guard House

🔪 **Haliand:** Male human Div5; LE.

🔪 **Scourge Chaplin Balleth:** Female human Clr6/Ftr4 of Hextor; LE.

🔪 **Scourge Brother Immons:** Male human Clr4/Ftr1 of Hextor; LE.

**Development:** If the characters are unsuccessful in the attempt, they are rebuffed and ordered to leave. The characters will have to try another route or wait till the guard changes at 8am.

If the characters fail in their attempt but are insistent or act in a hostile manner, the alarm is easily sounded, and the gate goes on alert. Magical back-up arrives within two rounds (from a nearby building) and Rakersmen patrols divert towards the gate from *both* sides (new and old city).

Should the characters vanquish the guards by sword or spell, they still must spend a few rounds either unlocking the small man-sized bolt hole, or many rounds getting a full-sized gate open to all allow mounts to pass through.

#### Part D: The Hole in the Wall Gang

Sister Tillie knows a man who lives on the New City side of the Old City wall. He's in fact a guildler (but not of the same faction as the Smiling Ones) and he and his small gang of smugglers spend their time opening up passages through and under the wall. They are occasionally found out, and have to move setups, but that's their gig.

Tillie can find the right house (a basement actually, accessed from an alley). This is a new set-up and Tillie does not know where the actual tunnel is. In fact, she's certain that it won't be within their hideout. They always set up shop away from the actual tunnel entrance. Tillie came through with a blindfold, and it was not taken off until she was in the hideout. Luckily, in this instance, the blindfold will be skipped for the party.

***Making your way into a housing block adjacent to the north wall of the Old City, Tillie points out an alley and a flight of stairs leading to a subbasement. "In there, that's their latest hangout. Be careful, they're dangerous and I still need to do business with them from time to time."***

Inside is the leader of this small guildler crew, a short and scrawny man by the name of Dalland the Digger. He's bitter and sneaky, but hates confrontation. He would prefer to give in now and get revenge later than risk never getting the chance for revenge. He has a few lads for muscle and cargo transport, but the rest of his crew consists of diggers and other forms of trappers/sappers rogues like him. This gang worships the god Kurelll (the Bitter Hand).

The hideout itself is a 40 ft. by 30 ft. subbasement, with a staircase leading up to the main floor of a private

residence (they rent the basement). The door at the top of the stairs is locked and barred separately from both sides.

Tillie is sure she can get the party the 'preferred customer' (sans blindfolds) rate of 25 gp per person. Normally it could be as much as 50 gp per person for a one-way trip, but alas that is the price of freedom from the slums.

If the characters are not interested in paying the fee, they can have one of their members 'pay with a point of influence with the Thieves' Guild (as gained in *COR4-09 'A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!'*) One point of influence is enough for one-way passage for the entire party.

If the characters are not interested in doing any kind payment, they could try picking up the lead guildler by the jerkin and threatening him. Of course, this is not the best thing for Tillie, for she has to live and do business with these folks, but it could work with a high enough check. A DC 15 Intimidate check can persuade the scrawny guildler into helping, but secretly, he'll plot his revenge. He'll add Tillie and all of the characters to his list (but it's a long list so it may take time to get to them).

As well, threats to report this operation to the authorities or to kill everyone won't go over well. As part of the Eastfair Thieves' Guild, there is a certain amount of protection they receive, regardless of faction politics, from their brother guildlers. Messing with Dalland the Digger in such an extreme way would require the Guild to come down hard on who ever it was that messed with them. Sister Tillie would be guilty by association.

#### Mount Storage

The tunnel (and its exit) can only be accessed by medium (or smaller) sized creatures. Unless the party can magically reduce the size of Large-sized mounts, animal companions etc., they must leave them here (or just not go, or take the time to place the mounts elsewhere).

For a small fee of 10 gp per mount, Dalland the Digger offers to safely store the mount for 24 hours. But he says that if not claimed within that time, he shall keep the animal as collateral against the cost of extra storage. It's an outrageous and risky deal, but then again, so is the adventuring life style. Dalland refuses to allow characters to pay for more than one day at a time.

If taken up on this, Dalland is good enough to his word. The animals are safe and readily accessible for those 24 hours for claiming. Anything past 24 hours and the mounts are long gone.

#### All APLs

🔪 **Dalland the Digger:** Male human (Oeridian) Rog6; NE.

🔪 **Sappers (4):** Male human (Oeridian); N; hp 13; Rog2.

🔪 **Muscles (2):** Male human (Flan-Oeridian); NE; War2/Rog1.

**Develop.m.ent:** Once a form of payment has been worked out, Dalland and some of his lads take the characters to another basement about three houses over. Inside, is a hidden tunnel entrance that opens into a 5-

foot by 5-foot passageway. It's not scenic, but it does go under the walls. It leads to another 'safe' building in the Old City, which a few more Guilders from this outfit guard.

The passage is low at the Old City end, requiring the characters to comfortably crawl the last 10 feet. Upon exiting, they see the following:

***This is another basement, but this one is filled with smoke from a poorly ventilated fireplace. Two men are playing cards at a table, while another sleeps on a cot. On the far side of the room, is a large wooden altar shaped like a hand squeezing something round, but the haze of the smoke makes it impossible to identify what the round object is.***

Present here is Wren, the gang's resident cleric of Kurell, and two more muscle thugs. This basement is doubling as the group's temple. They move their wooden altar around as needed.

Wren automatically assumes anyone coming through the tunnel does so because they have been approved to do so. He does ask them to not loiter and to move on.

The altar is 30 feet away from the tunnel exit. Getting to within 10 ft. of the altar and giving it a good look over identifies the 'round' object, as a broken coin (also made out of wood, as its part of the altar). This is a large sized representation of the holy symbol of Kurell. A DC 12 Knowledge (religion) check identifies it as such.

If any characters start attacking the altar with spells or weapons, Wren demands that they stop desecrating their temporal connection to their god. Ignoring this order will lead to combat.

☛ **Wren:** Male human (Oeridian) Rog1/Clr5 of Kurell; CN.

☛ **Muscles (2):** Male human (Flan-Oeridian); NE; War2/Rog1.

### **Part E: Manual Entrance**

***The inner city walls that separate the New City from the Old City tower some 50 ft. above your heads. While the guard towers and occasional lone foot patrol along the ramparts do not convey much of the cities attitude, the ghastly gargoyle statues with fiendishly large smiles that haphazardly decorate the walls do.***

This is the catchall encounter. If the characters decide they want to climb the 50 feet up and over the wall and ramparts, then this is where they go.

If the characters want to fly or *teleport* or otherwise bypass with walls while breaking the laws of physics, this is where they go.

The inner walls have evenly spaced guard towers with a rampart going all along the wall. This means that there are Rakersmen in those towers and foot patrols along the ramparts. These lone foot patrols are easy enough to bypass with the resources present to most adventurers.

PCs wishing to scale these walls require the requisite number of DC 25 Climb checks.

*Silence* or a simple *sleep* spells will also be useful here. *Invisibility* or any other stealth inducing spells could also render the lone patrolman moot (or at least till another one of his fellow patrollers caught up to him). The guard towers don't see very far in the dark, thus relying on the foot patrols. Come daylight, the inhabitants of the towers can see all along the wall with ease.

What a climber does have to worry about is all those gargoyles. There is a statue roughly every 3 ft. but not in any pattern (so spotting one out of place is not possible) and that's a lot of gargoyles. Luckily, they're almost all just plain statues. I said 'almost all'.

When the characters attempt to scale a section of wall, roll a 1d6. On a 1, 2, 3 or 4 there is nothing more than the normal risk of a patrolman (one comes by every ten minutes or so). On a roll of 5, the characters are below a real gargoyle (see below). On a roll of 6, the characters are below a section of wall with an *alarm* spell tied to it (see below).

### **Gargoyle (roll of 5)**

A clan of ten or so lawful evil gargoyles live on the walls of the city. The authorities know they're there, and in exchange for protecting the walls, the gargoyles are allowed to take a victim or two from the slums when the need comes upon them as long as they keep it discrete.

If a character rolls a 5, then a single Lawful Evil gargoyle awaits the first climber (or flyer) that it can detect passing by. Then it attacks. It has a set territory, and it's not interested at the moment with sharing its prey. It is highly possible however that guards in a watch towers or a foot patrol will see the combat and rush to it within 1d8+1 rounds.

The gargoyle retreats to gather its brethren if it drops below 15 hp. They'll reform to watch the walls, but won't go looking for the characters amongst the Old City (but the characters don't know that).

☛ **Gargoyle:** 37 hp; LE otherwise, see *Monster Manual*.

### **Alarm spell (roll of 6)**

Centered on the wall itself, 20 feet below the actual rampart, is an *alarm* spell (one of many) that were worked into the defenses long ago. The passing patrols are above the range of the spell and thus do not trigger it. As well, those passing the foot of the wall are too far below it to trigger it. Those passing by the middle 20 ft. or so of the wall do risk triggering it however

In the silence of the night, the watchtowers on either side of the wall section being climb can clearly hear it and respond promptly. Once heard, a five-man patrol consisting of Rakersmen will arrive from each of the two nearby watchtowers in 1d6 rounds. Once they arrive, they will stay watchful of the entire section of wall (in fact, the entire wall) for at least a full hour, and possibly longer depending on what kind of contact they made with the characters.

Alert guards on top of the wall have a good vantage point to see down to base of it. The guards won't hesitate to take pot shots with their light crossbows at anyone 'suspicious,' just standing around the wall after the alarm.

🔱 **Rakersmen Troopers (10):** Male human (Oeridian); LE; hp 16; War2.

**Development:** Assuming the characters did not give away their position to the guards on the walls, they should be free to move about throughout the Old City. If the characters did give away their position, they may have to try another approach, for once the troops have been alerted, it's only a matter of time before they get reinforcements. The first to back them up will be the full clan of ten Lawful Evil gargoyles, so it is not in the characters interest to force the issue.

For those characters desiring the quickest route of entry into the Old City, there is an unmanned heavy catapult in a nearby courtyard in the New City. It's even facing the right way. It just needs someone to cock it...

### Encounter 3: The Dogs of Society

The encounter has two parts. The first is the characters arriving at the kennel and encountering a squad of Poxsquand House Troopers. These troopers have just arrived and entered the courtyard when the characters come up to the wide open doors of the kennel compound.

Then second part of the encounter is the finding of the dead Smiling Ones and the interaction with the cursed hound archons.

#### We were too late! (7 a.m.+)

It needs to be noted that if the characters do not arrive here before 7 a.m. (they start at 4 a.m., and each attempt to enter the city takes one hour, plus anything extra they do along the way), then they are too late.

When they finally do arrive, the House Troopers in the first part are not a newly arrived squad, but instead, are a rearguard, waiting for a clean up crew to arrive. In this case, describe the scene as even more bloody.

The second encounter leaves only the bloody note and a lot of bodies to be found. In addition to all the Smiling One bodies, Kilern is now dead, as well as the kennel owner and all five of the cursed hound archons. The little girl is gone (teleported away by a barghest).

This means there is nothing left for the characters to follow up on in this plot thread. They do not receive any XP for delivering the girl safely to the portal, nor do the invisible stalkers chase them. They are free to carry on to the crossroads at their leisure.

#### Part A: First to Respond/Rearguard

*The doors to the kennel compound are wide open and a squad of five troopers [and a/three wolf-like creature(s)] are within the compound's courtyard. They are heavily armored and their tower shields show a noble's*

*household crest. Tillie points at them, "That's them! Those are Poxquand's House Troopers! Get'em!"*

The troopers know a fight when one walks up to them. While they may not know who exactly the characters are, they do know that this compound is theirs to protect and their going to protect it!

The troopers (and barghests if among them) have just arrived and have yet to check the place out. They are not interested in conversation and have been warned about possible resistance from outside forces.

Without any spells, Tillie stays far back, behind cover in the street. If given a wand or scrolls, she'll use them to aid the characters and even make brave dashes to save downed characters. Otherwise, she stays out of both harm's way and the characters' way. Of course, teleporting barghests might find her a tasty treat (though she is not a primary target for them).

#### **Rakersmen and Poxquand Troopers**

These soldiers are *not* Rakersmen (the city guards). These are the personal troops (house guards) of Prince Poxquand the Undying, a member of the House Naelax (as many princes are).

Because these troops are themselves technically breaking the law (though they'd never really be punished for it due to the influence of their master), there is no severe backlash against the characters (no man hunts, etc) as a consequence of any fighting here, though the Rakersmen would still interrupt the combat if they came across it.

As for the Rakersmen patrols—it's raining in the Old City. What was once far and few, are now almost non-existent as the Rakersmen curl up by the barrack's fires. It'll take an awful lot to get a patrol to go investigate something (like a superior threatening them with death). They figure they will clear up problems once the rain lifts. They figure they can't protect the city streets if they're shivering with pneumonia (or so they tell themselves).

**Creatures:** The following creatures are encountered here:

#### **APL2 (EL 3)**

🔱 **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr1; 12 hp; see Appendix 1.

🔱 **Trooper (4):** Male human War1; 9 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

#### **APL4 (EL 5)**

🔱 **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr4; 36 hp; see Appendix 1.

🔱 **Trooper (4):** Male human War1; 9 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

#### **APL6 (EL 7)**

🔱 **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr5; 43 hp; see Appendix 1.



☛ **Trooper (4):** Male human War1; 9 hp each; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Barghest:** 33 hp; see *Monster Manual*.

### APL8 (EL9)

☛ **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr6; 47 hp; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Trooper (6):** Male human War2; 15 hp each; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Barghest (3):** 33 hp (each); see *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** The troopers are wearing half-plate and carrying tower shields but only wield short swords and javelins. These troopers are used to slaughters and driving back light and meager foes; rabble mostly. They keep themselves safe, and poke at the enemy. Unfortunately, what works against rabble rarely works against adventurers.

At APL 2 and 4, the troopers hurl a volley of javelins if the characters have yet to close with them. Otherwise they either fight defensively against lightly armored foes, or use total defense against enemy heavy infantry. They do this keeping a line, zigzag or a burst formation, centered on their sergeant. The sergeant is whom the squad relies on to deal out offensive power. By covering his flanks, this allows him to be the butting head of the turtle. Or at least, that's what they found when fighting off uprising peasants and poorly equipped renegade soldiers.

At APL 6 and 8, barghest(s) join the squad of house troopers acting as skirmishers and trackers. During this combat, given the chance, the barghest(s) hide behind/within the ranks of the troopers and cast their spells such as *blink* and *rage*. The barghests then try to stay close to the shield wall/circle. They'll sally forth from it if the opportunity presents itself, or if the characters are not coming to them.

At APL8, if the characters have rushed forward to engage the shield wall, one or two (or three!) of the barghest can *dimension door* and gang up on any casters or archers that stayed back. Though they can't attack in the same round as the spell, they can set themselves up for a brutal onslaught on their next round, and at the same time, hopefully draw back some of those fighting the shield wall. If it works to their advantage, the barghest and the shield wall can sandwich the attacking characters.

A barghest will attempt to 'feed' on a dead character only if it can do so without drawing an attack of opportunity AND if that barghest is not already in melee with another foe. The barghest make no attempt to feed on the downed troopers because experience has taught them that the soul's of the troopers are weak and give them no nourishment or advancement.

**Treasure:** Loot the troopers and the barghests.

In addition to the arms and armor on the troopers and coins in their pouches, the barghests each have an ornamental collar that has semi-precious gemstones.

Sister Tillie volunteers her experienced services of fencing dubiously obtained goods (such as arms and

armor). This means the characters do not have to carry the gear around. For a small percentage (for the poor), Tillie will get the most she can for the gear and deliver it back to the characters. The gear has the house markings of Prince Poxquand on it, which makes it harder to sell (thus lowers the value), but it's still worth a pretty copper.

If Tillie is killed by this point, then she cannot fence the goods and the characters must handle it themselves (i.e. lug all that armor around).

APL 2: L: 312 gp; C: 10; M: 0 gp.

APL 4: L: 312 gp; C: 10; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 312 gp; C: 20; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 312 gp; C: 40; M: 0 gp.

**Development:** As long as the barghests are alive, the troopers keep on fighting, no matter the odds. Should all the barghest be killed (or if none are presented due to low APL), the house troopers will consider surrender should they start to loose badly or it becomes clear to them that they are out-classed. It's an honest and cooperative surrender (they will disarm and surrender their gear). The troopers do this because they are confident that more squads (and more powerful ones) are rushing to the kennel.

The troopers just beg for their lives, but insist they either don't really know anything or that if they did say anything, Prince Poxquand would do horrible things to them, then kill them and then do even more horrible things to them. If the troopers are charmed or have their minds read (etc), it reveals that the kennel has indeed been identified and that reinforcements are on the way. The characters don't have much time, thirty minutes at the most.

From this point, the characters don't have a lot of time. The troopers think its thirty minutes at the most, but it could be more (or less). The reinforcements arrive at 7am. That's how long the characters have to get out of town.

Being caught here when Slithers and his mortal troops arrive (all undead troops returned to base before dawn) is not a good idea.

Assuming Tillie is still alive, she points to the door that leads to the dog run area and explains that that is where the wounded and dying Smiling Ones have hidden.

### Part B: In the Dog House

*The interior door opens to reveal a scene of blood and carnage. The area outside the dog run is covered in blood and internal organs. Human bodies litter the ground, with their entrails and hearts torn asunder. The bodies of three dead and battle-torn barghests lay amongst the bodies. The dogs in the kennel are remarkably silent, and the only sound is human whimpering coming from behind some straw bundles.*

What the characters are witnessing is the aftermath of a pack of four barghests that successfully tracked the Smiling Ones to the kennel and investigated. They broke open the main doors, then this interior door (which was

later closed again by the hounds) and upon seeing the dead and dying Smiling Ones, they feasted.

The hounds were hidden away within the shack, ready to defend their ward, but upon hearing the slaughter outside; they could not stand by and let it happen. They rushed out and engaged three barghest, but the fourth stayed back, feasting on all it could reach.

The hounds were able to save Kilern (the one whimpering in shock), but because they are not suitable to fighting in their animal form (especially with the curse on them) they were slow in defeating the barghest. Eventually though, they managed to defeat the three aggressive barghest, but the fourth decided to report back instead of risking its luck with the four fighting hounds. Thus, the barghest teleported away and directed more troops toward the kennel to deal with these defenders.

It was during this combat that the owner of the kennel fled in terror. He's probably half way to Kalstrand by now.

### Bodies and the Letter

Characters looking closely at the human bodies (and who have played either *COR4-09 "A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!"* or *COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*) will recognize Malaya, Jirwelt and their half-elf bard companion Ghalarq. About half the bodies (the youngest ones) are wearing shredded red tabards (as denotes a junior Smiling One).

Near the body of Malaya is a spilled bottle of ink, a quill and a blood-covered parchment. This is Player Handout and is the note she was writing to try and help keep her sanity from the effects of the exotic poison she (and the other Smiling Ones) was exposed to within the dungeon of Prince Poxquand.

The bodies do have equipment on them, but most of it was recently magical, and designed for stealth and quickness of foot. Unfortunately, during the raid the Smiling Ones had their items neutralized. Now they possess mostly useless trinkets and some masterwork quality arms and armor (as represented in the treasure block).

### The Whimpering One

Behind some bundles of straw is Kilern the newly promoted inner circle Smiling One (he was briefly encountered with his kittens in *COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*). When the characters find him, he's cradling his dead cat familiar in his arms and rocking slowly in an upright fetal position. His mind has snapped.

When he signed up, he did so mostly because he figured these were the right kind of people to help him reach his dream of being an arcane trickster. Now he's lost a level, a soul mate and his sanity. The moral of the story is to just say no to magically induced humor at another's expense.

There have been suggestions made that there is a traitor somewhere within the ranks of the Smiling Ones. Someone tipped off Prince Poxquand regarding their plans and thus doomed the entire operation.

Kilern has little to say (his deranged mumblings are listed below) and anyone using magic or special abilities to read his thoughts only get his shock-induced psychosis. His mind keeps repeating images of desperate fighting within the bowels of a dungeon, frantic running through streets and tunnels, a magical burst going off and everyone within it having their magic items completely fail, brave Fluffy scratching at the face of a black skinned female elf only to be stabbed and thrown back at Kilern.

When asked questions (any kind of questions), he mumbles;

"...she was a good cat, a brave cat. Fluffy saved my life..I killed her."

"I just wanted to be an arcane trickster. But not like this, never like this."

"They were everywhere, waiting for us inside. The poison, the air, why was I so lucky to escape it? What worse fate awaits me because of it?"

"...our game is at an end. Do you not see this? Failure. It would be better if our ward was put in command, for I have failed."

"I keep trying to disbelieve, for these events do not seem like reality."

☛ **Kilern:** Male human (Flan-Oeridian) Wiz); CN; hp 9.

### An Indoctrination in Dogma

Once it comes time for the characters to start looking around for, or discussing amongst themselves the presence of the hound archons, it becomes time for them to introduce themselves.

Hidden amongst the many dogs in the run and cages, are four of the five cursed hound archons (forced into various canine forms, unable to change back or use the majority of their abilities). From the shadowy darkness of the night, they've been observing the adventurers just to make sure they are who the hounds hope they are. The presence of Sister Tillie confirms their hopes.

When it comes time to introduce them, they do so one at a time. They emerge from amongst the dogs and take turns stepping forward and saying a few words. When they do this read or paraphrase their lines and descriptions for the players.

***The lead hound is of Medium size. Strong and muscular, it is a war dog for sure. On his fur is the pattern of a lightning bolt.***

***The next one is Medium-sized too. A female 'great dane', she is skinny and has a runner's build. She has a heart-shaped mark with some blotch in the middle of the heart on her fur.***

***The other two are Small-sized. The first of these is a basset hound, with folds over its eyes, stoic, unmoving, unflinching. A pattern of a white book adorns his fur.***

***The second Small-sized dog is a terrier, watchful and alert with penetrating eyes. This hound has the unmistakable mark of a full moon eclipsing a crescent moon.***

*Something all these canines have in common is that they have horribly stitched wounds and scars where their fur has not re-grown. As well, all have a cruel-looking collar about their necks.*

The characters are free to ask questions, but the hounds have their own agenda and as well, they feel time is against them. When it comes time to move the players along, the hounds can press this issue. Move on now, before the enemy returns in too great of number.

If referred to as “dogs”, the archons quickly correct the characters with ‘hounds’. To them, it’s a very picky subject. They want to be referred to as hounds, never as dogs.

**The Pack:** The Hound of Heironeous tends to speak for the pack, but everything in this section is known by all of the hounds and could be said by anyone of them. Remarks for specific hounds are found in their own sections.

**Who are all of you?:** “We are those hand-picked by our patrons to serve in this special task. We are Chosen Hounds. We are tutors and guardians, those set aside to reemerge when we are called. We guard one of the three. We can say little more.”

**Do you need our help:** “We require your aid. We had relied on these mortals here, but our vile captor has slain them despite our efforts. Now we need you to take their place. We have formulated a plan. It is the only option left that we feel has a worthwhile chance for success, but you must be a part of it. As well, time is quickly running out.”

**What is this plan?:** “These collars have cursed us. They cannot be removed at the moment without causing our destruction. They block almost all of our abilities and keep us in these forms. They also act as a signaling device, giving away our location to an arcane device possessed by Poxquand. There is a secret place we must escape to. It is located in the south east of the realm called Nyronnd. There we can be put back to what should be, and these collars can be removed.”

**Why aren’t you being tracked right now?:** “During our escape, we stole some special salve which when applied to the collars, blocks them from scrying for a short time. We have only one dose of this salve left, and we can tell that our current protection is wearing off.”

**What do you need us for?:** “Our enemies know roughly where we need to go. We plan to use this to our advantage. Four of us plan to run full out to the southwest, towards Nyronnd. When the salve fails (shortly), our enemies will send all they have after us. What they do not know, is that there is a portal some sixty miles to the north east of here, a portal that can transport our ward and one remaining protector to a place near enough in Nyronnd to be safe. The remaining dose of salve is for the one hound to go with you. By the time the salve fails and that hound is noticed, it should be too late for the pursuit forces to catch up.”

**Don’t you fear death?:** “Though it is true that normally our kind is destroyed when we meet death— we few have been offered a special reward. Our patrons have

told us that they will guarantee that for us, all hound archons go to Mount Celestia. There, although we may never leave it again, we shall live on.”

**What does this have to do with The Walker, or the standing stones of Medigia?:** Wardog—“We are aware that some are trying to corrupt these stones. But that is always the case. Unfortunately, it is not our task to defend it. We have our charge and our ward. We are one cell of three. We, and others like us, guard and tutor, till the time comes for the children to be brought forth.” Terrier—“Three children are set aside, babies when they were put in. A fading land for each. The people of their blood have lost their way. They have a chance at redemption. But only when it is time.” Basset—“Time can not be changed. But it can slowed, with relevance to the prime plane. The child stayed a babe, till the time that will grow near. This has been interrupted, and must be set right again.” Grey Dane—“She is our ward, like the other cells have theirs. She is of most royal blood. Others of our kind have been destroyed in this service, but we would be honored and heartfelt to do so ourselves, but one must remain to accompany our ward.” Wardog again— “And now we must complete the patching of this task. We must deliver the child. It must be done.”

**Where is the fifth hound?:** “The runt is back in the shack with our ward. He is back there if you wish to speak with him, if you really desired to do so. (the hounds do not have too much respect for the runt, but tolerate him because he is part of the pack).

**Who is your ward?:** “The identity of our ward is a secret. We may not tell you who she is, nor what her name is. You may address her as Her Royal Highness.”

**What was it we must decide?:** “You mortals must pick which one of us is to stay with our Ward and be escorted to the portal to the north east. While you do that, the rest of us shall run south west towards Nyronnd, drawing away pursuit.”

**How long does this salve last?:** “Not long, we suspect it is measured in hours. Our salves were applied at midnight, and we suspect they will fail some time after dawn.”

**Would normal magic work to stop the scrying?:** “It is a possibility, but we do not know for sure. It is a risk we dare not take. It will not hurt to try it on the lone hound to accompany you, but for us, it is decided that four shall run, and one shall be escorted.”

**What’s in it for us?:** “Once our Ward and one Hound successfully makes it to the place of safety in Nyronnd, I’m sure you shall be smiled upon by our patrons.”

**We have a map, where is the portal?:** “The portal is right ...there... on your map. It’s 60 miles northeast from here. If we hurry, we could make it in a days travel.

**Hound of Heironeous:** This hound is a fighter and a leader, but one who is not afraid to delegate. His magical fangs allowed him to fight off the barghests (with the assistance of the pack).

**Who do you serve?:** “I serve the Archpaladin.”

**Why should we pick you?:** "I a.m. strong and brave. My teeth shall send to Baator those who try to stop us."

**Hound of Atroa:**

**Who do you serve?:** "I serve the Sad Maiden."

**Why should we pick you?:** "I a.m. fast and sleek, a scout with few matches. I offer heart and compassion, as well, companionship for a time."

**Hound of Delleb:** This hound rarely moves, and when he does, it's slow and with purpose. Since his eyes can't be seen, it's hard to tell if he's even living when standing still. But, when he wants to move fast, he certainly can.

**Who do you serve?:** "I serve the Scholar."

**Why should we pick you?:** "I a.m. knowledgeable and patient, and fun to rub the ears of..."

**Hound of Pholtus:** This hound means well, and does respect the existence of the pack, but often finds things being done the wrong way. He'll point these 'wrongs' out to his fellow pack members, but in the end, he'll agree to follow the group, because that is what the covenant requires. Though he still doesn't like that darn Hound of Atroa. Darn wind god servants.

**Who do you serve?:** "I serve He of the Blinding Light"

**Why should we pick you?:** "I a.m. stalwart and vigilant. I shall keep us on the correct path should your spirits falter."

**Runt Hound of Kelanen:** This hound is of Tiny size and looks like a cute puppy with a circle of swords as its mark. This is enhanced by the little girl cradling the runt in her arms, as if holding the puppy meant life itself. But as soon as the runt starts to speak, its cuteness is overshadowed by its abrasiveness.

**Who do you serve?:** "I serve the Lord of Swords...want to fight about it?"

**Why should we pick you?:** "I shall do battle with any foe that threatens Her Highness. I shall never leave her side, thus be her constant guardian... want to make something of it?"

**Why is the girl holding you?:** "I'm her bodyguard, yeah, that's right, little me is her personal defender. Got a problem with that?"

**Why are you so different?:** " While my kind are forged from the elements of Law and Good, I a.m. considered flawed by them. Energy less pure crept into my making. If was not for my patron picking me up with his own hands, I would surely have been reformed by the powers of the plane."

**The Little Girl:** This two-year old human female looks to be of very pure Oeridian decent. She is holding the Runt Hound very tightly. She's dressed in a very simple sleeping gown and is rather dirty and messy (from the poor treatment during captivity and the escape). She is very, very silent. She doesn't say a word, but goes along with what she is told to do. The hounds treat her with

kindness and reverence. Her thoughts only reflect what is going on around her, nothing deeper.

Once it comes time to decide which hound is to go with her, should it not be the runt, the other hounds will act as a team to separate her from the puppy. She's not happy to see him go, but she gets over it. Personal sacrifices need to be made—that's a lesson she'll have to learn.

**All APLs**

➤ **Hound of Heironeous:** male hound archon, (chosen); hp 39; LG; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Hound of Atroa:** female hound archon, (chosen); hp 33; LG; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Hound of Delleb:** male hound archon, (chosen); hp 27; LG; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Hound of Pholtus:** male hound archon, (chosen); hp 27; LG; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Runt Hound of Kelanen:** male hound archon (runt), (chosen); hp 27; N; see Appendix 4.

◆ **Her Royal Highness:** female human (Oeridian); N; hp 2; Com1.

**Treasure:** Loot the dead barghest and the dead guilders.

The three barghests each have jeweled collars, while the Smiling Ones have some masterwork weapons and armor (though even that, they lost most of during there escape).

APL 2: L: 240 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 4: L: 240 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 6: L: 240 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 8: L: 240 gp; C: 30 gp; M: 0 gp

**Development:** During the character's interaction with the hounds, Tillie is busy getting all the treasure ready for storage. If asked to come with them, she tells the characters it is her place to stay in Eastfair.

Tillie also swears she shall take care of the final arrangements for all the Smiling Ones, since she fears they have no more chance of ever coming back.

Once the characters have decided on which hound to take, the other four speed off out of the kennel and make their way into the distance. It's not till later than their fellow archon with the characters feels it in his gut the four runners have been caught and slain.

Spider's Gate opens at 8am for 'regular' traffic so characters wanting to wait that long can escape that way. Those in a hurry can use another means, be it Octreth waiting for them in the wagon, or using the Hole in the Wall gang's services.

## ENCOUNTER 4: FAR AND AWAY

*With the walls of Eastfair disappearing in the distance and the light rain keeping the ground beneath you saturated, it could be an uncomfortable trip across the countryside of the North Kingdom.*

This is a special type of encounter. It is here that the Dungeon Master must keep track of how far the characters have traveled and how much time it has taken them.

This is important because the party is being pursued by invisible stalkers (or imps at APL 2). The stalkers are tracking at a steady but constant rate. A fast party can keep ahead of them, but should they stop to rest, the stalkers gain ground.

**Note:** The imps are done differently, for they are using their *commune* spells and fast flying speeds to try and get ahead of the party to ambush them.

The party starts out with a head start on the stalkers but time penalties listed in previous encounters may close this time gap. As well, the characters have a chance to increase the gap through the use of spells or clever actions.

If the stalkers (or imps) catch up to the characters before the party reaches the portal, then the stalkers attack trying to retrieve the child. If the party outruns the stalkers to the portal, the stalkers attack the party afterwards, but only for four rounds (the stalkers only want the child, thus leave the combat after not finding her).

Below are two charts, one for each day.

The first chart starts at 6 a.m. (dawn) for it's generally considered this is when the party will start its grand adventure with the hounds. This is not an absolute value though. Different parties may leave earlier or later depending on how differently they do things.

The chart is broken down into hours. For each hour of the day, the weather condition is given (rain-light, storm, or clear) as well as the relevant light conditions for that time of day (light or dark). When it is dark, a party may suffer vision penalties for travel and combat. Next is the entry for how far the stalker has traveled at the end of that hour. The stalker flies and needs no rest— its progress is slow and steady. It is also 'taking 10' on its Spot checks to track (see below for changing DCs and when the stalker can keep taking 10s).

The last entry is a blank space for the Dungeon Master to record how far the party has traveled at the end of that hour. The margin can also be used for recording notes such as if the party hustled or forced marched (or both) for that hour.

The following are points of interest the Dungeon Master needs to keep track of for the stalkers.

### Distance

The crossroads are 50 miles east of Eastfair. The portal is 60 miles northeast from Eastfair. The portal is 40 miles north by northwest of the crossroads.

This is assuming the characters travel fairly directly (and there are roads that allow them to do so). Parties that attempt erratic maneuvers or somehow get lost may find themselves going farther than they expected. This is why the two charts list nearly double the needed distance. The stalkers keep following for they don't know where the party is headed.

### Speed

Due to all the rain, the normally excellent road and trail network is very muddy and sloppy. Because of this, land movement is at a  $\frac{3}{4}$  penalty. Both the stalkers and the imps fly, so they have no penalty.

Pages 163-164 in the *Player's Handbook* has the relevant overland and hourly speeds of mounts and characters on foot. It is important that the Dungeon Master find the correct listing (such as choosing the mount with a load, over one without).

Parties wishing to hide their tracks to make it more difficult to be tracked must move at half their rate (page 101 *Player's Handbook*).

Parties traveling at night may be hampered in certain situations as well. The stalker has darkvision and so suffers no difficulties. Plenty of lanterns or magical light sources are needed to negate any hardship darkness brings to distance travel on overcast nights.

### Head Start

The decoy hounds do a good job of luring away the many fast and deadly hunters serving Prince Poxquand. By the time he realizes the ruse, he can only resort to summoning invisible stalkers (a cost he did not care to expend) to pick up where his regular forces had failed.

Under normal circumstances, this means the stalkers start their hunt during the 10am hour and travel 3 miles. This gives the characters four hours of head start (and +4 to the tracking DC due to rain, from the +1 for each hour). But, in some of the encounters, it lists time penalties listed in hours (accumulative). These penalties reduce the head start the characters have. This represents them tipping their hand to Poxquand sooner rather than later.

The use of the *pass without trace* spell can give a bonus to this head start time, or increase the time/mileage gap during the chase. The Dungeon Master will need to make a judgment call case by case, but a rule of thumb would be if all the those leaving tracks (foot or horse) are warded, then for every hour, the gap is increased by that much as the stalker waste time trying to find the trail (and makes no progress). Each hour also increased the DC of the tracking check (see below).

Clever scouting maneuvers by the party can also potentially increase the gap if the party intentionally tries to use tracking tricks and survival skills to do more than just hide their tracks. If such a unique situation comes up, use opposed Survival skill checks between the stalker and the character. Failure means this has backfired by an hour for the party.

### Weather

The rainfall is light but persistent, ranging from a drizzle to a light precipitation. While it is raining, the gap time is hours equals to the penalty to the tracking DC.

When it starts to storm, this is a full-blown thunderstorm (page 94 of the *Dungeon Master's Handbook*). The stalker is reduced to one mile of tracking per hour and smart adventurers will take shelter (and rest) during this time.

Eventually the sky becomes clear as the odd (but reoccurring) weather pattern lifts for yet another year.

### Shelter

All along the route are cottages, shabby inns, wayside shrines of Fharlanghn, remote abandoned mills etc. and many other sorts of roof can be found to get out of the rain.

When the characters decide they want some shelter, there's always something suitable just around the next bend.

### Forced March/Hustle/Fatigue

These mechanics are found on pg 164 of the *Player's Handbook*. It is important for parties wishing to outrun the stalkers to read them. It would also benefit the DM to review these rules before play begins.

Parties tend to do a lot of lethal damage to their mounts, but this can be healed with magic at the end of each hour. It's just a question of keeping their mounts alive and going.

Fatigue and exhaustion can also become factors that need to be kept track of should combat break out.

### Track DC Breakdown

The mileage advancement on the chart for the stalker assumes it is able to Take 10. At APL 4-6, this is DC 23. At APL 8, this is DC 29.

If the DC ever becomes higher than that, the stalkers must stop for an hour (because they failed on the Taking 10, then must have each check rolled manually by the DM for every mile.

Page 101 in the *Player's Handbook*.

Very soft ground +5 DC base

For every three creatures in the group a -1 penalty is added. For this, it is assumed all the characters are on horse back and fit on top of 1 to 5 horses. If more or less, change this value.

Size of largest creature tracked: -1 for large horse

Every hour of rain since: This is equal to the time gap, and this starts at +4

The stalker is traveling at its normal speed: +4

Poor Visibility: precipitation, +3. Since the stalker has darkvision, overcast does not hamper, so it's just the precipitation penalty.

Calculation:  $5 - 1 - 1 + 4 + 4 + 3 = DC 15$

The characters need to change this DC in their favor or increase their speed (and keep pushing on) if they want to avoid the full might of the stalkers and save the child.

Variable: Every 24 hours- unlikely since the stalker is hot on the heels of the party. Tracked party hides track, +5 if the fleeing party decides to move at half speed to increase the DC. Unless this brings the DC up over 23 (29), it won't matter.

### Day One

Hour of the day	Weather conditions	Dark or Light	Stalker distance	Party Miles
6am	Rain	Dark	N/a	

7am	Rain	Light	N/a	
8am	Rain	Light	N/a	
9am	Rain	Light	N/a	
10am	Rain	Light	3 miles	
11am	Rain	Light	6 miles	
12p.m.	Rain	Light	12 miles	
13p.m.	Storm	Light	13 miles	
14p.m.	Storm	Light	14 miles	
15p.m.	Storm	Light	15 miles	
16p.m.	Storm	Light	16 miles	
17p.m.	Rain	Light	19 miles	
18p.m.	Rain	Light	22 miles	
19p.m.	Rain	Dark	25 miles	
20p.m.	Rain	Dark	28 miles	
21p.m.	Rain	Dark	31 miles	
22p.m.	Rain	Dark	34 miles	
23p.m.	Rain	Dark	37 miles	
24am	Rain	Dark	40 miles	

### Day Two

Hour of the day	Weather conditions	Dark or Light	Stalker distance	Party Miles
1am	Rain	Dark	43 miles	
2am	Rain	Dark	46 miles	
3am	Rain	Dark	49 miles	
4am	Rain	Dark	51 miles	
5am	Rain	Dark	54 miles	
6am	Rain	Dark	57 miles	
7am	Clear	Light	60 miles	
8am	Clear	Light	63 miles	
9am	Clear	Light	66 miles	
10am	Clear	Light	69 miles	
11am	Clear	Light	72 miles	
12p.m.	Clear	Light	75 miles	
13p.m.	Clear	Light	78 miles	
14p.m.	Clear	Light	81 miles	
15p.m.	Clear	Light	84 miles	
16p.m.	Clear	Light	87 miles	
17p.m.	Clear	Light	90 miles	
18p.m.	Clear	Light	93 miles	
19p.m.	Clear	Dark	96 miles	
20p.m.	Clear	Dark	99 miles	
21p.m.	Clear	Dark	102 miles	
22p.m.	Clear	Dark	105 miles	
23p.m.	Clear	Dark	108 miles	
24am	Clear	Dark	111 miles	

### The Stalker Combats

If the total miles for the stalkers ever becomes more than those traveled by the party, then the stalker has caught up to them and attacks. If the stalker catches up before the party arrives at the portal, then it attacks trying to steal the child away and then escapes (killing those who get in its way).

If the stalkers do not catch up to the party before it arrives at the portal, then the stalker attacks afterwards, but only for 4 rounds.

See Encounter 6 for details.

### Those Darn Imps

The imps are done differently. They are not tracking the party so much as combining their *commune* spells to guess where the party is headed. Then they try and ambush there.

The imps figure out roughly where the portal area is and fly there. This takes them at least 15 hours of travel/investigation and 4 hours of sitting out the thunderstorm. Their total is 19 +1d4 hours in which they arrive at the portal area and await the arrival of the characters.

A hard and fast moving party can make this trek to the portal from Eastfair in time. It's not easy, but it can be done. Luckily, it's not the lives of the characters the imp's are after, only the child's.

See Encounter 6 for details.

## ENCOUNTER 5: CROSSROADS

*Ahead is a crossroad. It seems rather unremarkable. It has a small wayside shrine to Fharlanghn—a stone shack with bunk beds for six squeezed into it. A small wooden lean-to offers reasonable protection for mounts. A lone hooked pole stands near the junction of the roads.*

The wayside shrine is composed of the stone bunkhouse, a stone altar, a wooden lean-to and a small graveyard that starts about 40 feet from the crossroads.

### The Stone Altar

This stone block is decorated with carvings of Fharlanghn's symbol and other runes and depictions found on similar altars to the Dweller on the Horizon.

What is unique about this altar is that on the side of the altar facing the crossroads are some specific words written in Old Oeridian.

*"Gather faithful. Leave one to escort and one to learn. Within the twilight, the lament shall reveal, but a gift shall make it real."*

### The Bunkhouse

The bunkhouse is remarkably clean. It has bunk beds suitable for Medium-sized or smaller humanoids. It has a hearth for heating and cooking. A single door and two shuttered windows mark the entrances to this 40-foot by 40-foot stone structure.

### Wooden Lean-To

This simple roof/wall structure provide enough cover to stable six Large-sized mounts if put close together. This is not meant for long term housing, merely to keep off the rain and some wind.

### The Graveyard

Those who die on the road and worship Fharlanghn (and some of those who don't) are taken to these roadside graveyards for convenient burial. Many are travelers whose companions had no idea where the deceased family might be.

Many of the graves date back many generations, some even to the birth of the Great Kingdom. None of the graves are fresh; the last noticeable date is from over six months ago.

For those looking around the graveyard, they might notice the name Walker Govanti on a grave marker dated 584CY. Written in Old Oeridian is the epitaph, *"Mentor, explorer, protector, enemy of the eight legged. All roads are now his to travel."*

### The Crossroads

In the bright sunny daylight, this one crossroad is rather unremarkable. It doesn't even have distance or direction markers.

But when the sun sets, or is blocked by overcast skies, a subtle kind of magic fills the air. During these conditions, if the *lantern of lament* is placed upon the hook of the pole, then lit, a happening is revealed. Once the lantern is lit and on the pole, it cannot be put out. It just keeps burning until it's empty.

Unlike a normal hooded lantern, this one only sheds 15 feet of light, but 75 feet of shadowy illumination. When the lantern is lit and on the pole, the following is revealed to the characters.

*After lighting the lantern, the darkness of the night is chased from the center of the crossroads as the special light of the lantern shines. What it reveals are shadows – faint silhouettes of people. Their features are hard to make out, but they all have sticks with bundles on the end, slung over their shoulders and some seem to be waiting around while others walk off along the road, disappearing when they leave the light of the lantern. Others seem to be congregating near your horses in the lean-to, just hanging around them. The rest just pass you by, seeming to paying you no mind.*

These are spirits faithful to Fharlanghn. For now, they are only silhouettes of their former lives, having little connection left with their mortal involvements. Now they gather at these crossroads and exchange stories, breaking their journey before traveling on to their next destination. In death, they have achieved the greatest reward they could have desired in life, the ability to travel freely, constantly and observe all.

The spirits can only be seen while within the shadowy illumination range of the *lantern of lament* and then only when it is night or overcast. The spirits are technically aware of the characters presence, but make no acknowledgement of it, nor do they attempt any interaction with the characters. They are benign. The only interest that the spirits have with these newcomers is that they have mounts.

All during this encounter, spirits will come into the shadowy light and start to congregate around the mounts; a few at first, then more and more as time goes by. By the end, they'll be defying gravity as they attach themselves to all surfaces of the mounts and any angle they can fit. This has no effect on the mortal realm, nor can these spirits be turned or controlled.

### **Summoning Walker Govanti**

Caught between two worlds is Walker Govanti (and his young companion Daris Longfeet, the most recent to be put to rest here, but he shall be moving on soon enough) as he has been selected to escort and prepare the spirits for their renewed travels. This is an equivalent to being a petitioner.

Govanti replaced the fading spirit of the last escort, just as his spirit become like the shadows around him. Eventually, those shadows (not the undead kind) will become one with the roads of Oerth. For now though, Walker Govanti can be summoned forth to this designated crossroads, but not for free.

The grappa (or an equivalent high quality alcohol) is needed to draw him forth. It must be offered in some way. Be it pouring a measure onto the ground, or holding it forth and calling out their intent, or some other semantic of offering, it needs to be done. This brings forth the spirit of Walker Govanti (and his current pupil Daris).

Once that is done, read the following:

*From the far edge of the lantern light comes a pair of spirits walking along the road towards you. These two seem much more distinct than the other shadowy ones. One is of an older man with a wise look to his face, and the other is a young man, with a fresh and bewildered look. The young man stops half way to you but the older man comes right up to you. "Ah, grappa. It's been a while," says the older spirit. You notice that he bears a holy symbol of Fharlanghn.*

Due to the rules of the Crossroads and the power of the *lantern of lament*, only Govanti speaks with the characters. His companion Daris stays well back. Even if the characters try to interact with him, he ignores them.

Govanti is also limited in what he can talk about and what he actually remembers. The longer he remains a slow crossing spirit, the more of his mortal life he begins to lose hold of. Only some of his strongest and recent (before death) memories remain intact.

He'll keep talking as long as the lantern oil lasts. It only has ten minutes of fuel. Once that is gone, the *lantern of lament* disintegrates and returns back to the four elements it was forged from.

During that time, each character may only ask one question of Walker Govanti in regards to their mission. Questions marked with an asterisk are freebies. If the question proposed reasonably covers more than one of the below responses, then give the applicable answers. But if the question is too broad (such as, 'Tell me all you

know) then the characters may receive an equally broad answer (and unhelpful).

**Who are you?:** "I was Walker Govanti. I am the escort of faithful souls who pass through these crossroads on towards the horizon."

**What can you tell us?:** "The rules of the Crossroads prevent me from sharing too much with those still traveling on their mortal coils. As well, my own mortal memories are fading as I prepare for my own long journey into eternity. One question on the topic you seek per person. That is all."

**What do you know of the Footmen of the Spider Throne?:** "I knew them. I battled them. While I still lived, I slew many as they sought to steal the very secrets of the roads, and I foiled their plans. Into forced obscurity others and I sent them into. I often wondered if they had been broken for good, or if a new scheme with some different secret was being hatched. Then a minion of them came for me during my dawn prayers. A kukri into my back was all it took. The footmen wait long for their vengeance."

**Where is Darien the Knife?:** "I do not know who that is. Perhaps too much time as passed by in the mortal world."

**Where are the Footmen of the Spider Throne?:** "While I can not tell you their current location, for it would mean violating the rules of the Crossroads, I can tell you where I last knew them to be. During my lifetime, I crossed paths with the Footmen as I helped in foiling a scheme of theirs to manipulate the roads. The footmen all have their own secret lairs hidden amongst the environs of Rauxes, but they have a shared meeting place. Blue turrets among shifting sands."

**Uhm, OK, and where are these turrets and sands?:** "The blue turrets and shifting sands. There is only one such place that I know of. The lair and meeting hall of the Footmen of the Spider Throne. Go south. On the northern side of the old Rauxes city-state border, you will find a small barony. Within the Barony of Stel, there is a run-down estate. It is crafted of sandstone, some with a blue hue and sits upon land that is foul with sand. That is what you seek. The entrance is within the courtyard."

**How can we stop the current plot of the Footmen of the Spider Throne?:** "I'm afraid I do not know. I do not know of their current plot, it is not within my realm. I do know that before, we of the Fharlanghi infiltrated the lairs of the leaders and that caused much chaos within their ranks. Take away their secrets, and you take away their confidence and their power."

**What can you tell me of the Fharlanghi?** "Not as much as I would like. I was a Fharlanghi and several of these passing spirits were Fharlanghni—a sect within a sect. While most hold the roads sacred to travel on, a few go farther to make sure the roads remain safe from threats. Of those, most foil the mundane threats, but a still smaller few, they protect against far grander machinations. That is who the Fharlanghi are. Or were. There were few left when I died. Not enough worthy



candidates to take up the reigns. But it's not my concern anymore, though I wish them the Dweller's passing."

**What of the Walker or the Stones of Medegia?:** "That is something I may not speak of. I will not speak of The Walker, may his journey eventually end."

**What's with these hounds and this little girl?:** "I do not know. It is not within my realm."

**What's the backstory behind the Footmen?:** "The cultists that make up the Footmen of the Spider Throne all come from families from the area that is now the wasteland of Rauxes. While their families venerated the Scourge of Battle, or the Money Counter, these few paid only lip service. They crept into their private sanctuaries and paid heed to the Master of the Spider Throne. Many such personal lairs exist, but all the cultists gathered below the blue turrets. Further more, they have hidden treasures within the walls of Rauxes. Their true numbers are limited, seek them out, and cut them down. They cannot regroup. Just beware the lands of Rauxes."

**What's up with the lands around Rauxes?:** "It is a wasteland, a crossing of the planes. Men scream as they are cut down, only to scream again. Do not tread there lightly. You might never escape."

**Development:** Once the lantern oil runs out (ten minutes) the view changes back to that of a normal crossroads. At that point the questioning must stop (because the characters are alone) and they are free to either move on, or spend some time resting. Of course, if the stalker is still after them and they sleep here, it might catch them here.

## ENCOUNTER 6: PORTALS OF LAST RESORT

This encounter contains the entering of the portal, as well as the combat with the stalkers/imps.

Go to the listed section as needed. Of course, you will only need to deal with one stalker combat or the other, not both. The rewards for winning the combat are the same either way.

The imps are a similar matter. Either the imps beat the party to the portal ruins, or they did not. The difference here is that if the party does manage to beat the imps, then the imps do not attack. They scout and watch from a distance and confirm that they are too late, and then flee. But the experience is award for getting the child safely to the portal, not for defeating the imps. Like the stalkers and the weather, that was the risk and challenge.

### First Arriving

*Up ahead is a small scattering of trees and undergrowth. Keeping the trees spread out are crumbling ruins, covered in moss and partial stolen for materials over time.*

The ruins offer no threat of their own. They are very old, dating back to before the birth of the Great Kingdom. It's

obvious that over the generations, the stone of the ruins has been chipped and carted away.

All of the Hounds know where to go within the ruins, and characters spending time searching will also eventually find the secret door that leads to the portal chamber.

### The Stalkers

**Ambush:** If the invisible stalkers have managed to overtake the party, then they attack wherever that is. They keep attacking till they have the child and have killed anyone who gets in their way. They do not harm the child though.

If the invisible stalkers catch up to the party after the child has been delivered to the portal, then the stalkers attack the party as normal, but only for four rounds. After those four rounds, the stalkers convince themselves that the child is no longer present and simply flee.

**Creatures:** The following creatures will be encountered here:

#### APL4 (EL7)

➤ **Invisible Stalker:** 52 hp; see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL6 (EL9)

➤ **Invisible Stalker (2):** 52 hp (each); see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL8 (EL11)

➤ **Advanced Invisible Stalker Ranger (2):** 52 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

**Tactics:** The stalker(s) attempt to use their Move Silently skills to sneak up (from 10 ft. off the ground if the terrain permits) on the party. They are looking for the girl.

If the girl is being 'carried' (therefore consider her grappled or held by the carrier), then the stalker must either wrestle the girl from them, or beat the holder senseless and then take the girl.

If attacking someone within the same square as the girl, the stalker will use non-lethal damage in order not to harm the girl.

If someone holds the girl up trying to avoid blows on himself, then that character receives an additional +4 dodge bonus to AC as the stalker tries his best not to hit the girl.

Once they have the girl in their possession, they attempt to flee with her. They will first double move up into the air (to about 60 ft.), then they use their run speed (120 ft.) to head directly for Eastfair. Since the stalkers travel as the crow flies, and ground based pursuit must weave in and out of terrain, the stalker has the advantage after 5 rounds of pursuit (and thus can be considered escaped). This is not the case for air pursuit. As long as a flying character(s) can keep up, then they can keep attacking.

No matter what, the hound archon does not give up pursuit. But once the girl is back over the walls of

Eastfair, she is considered lost and the hound archon (if still alive) disbands from the characters to go it alone. It would be suicide for the characters to attempt a rescue like the Smiling Ones did. Make this clear to them.

**Failed Pursuit:** If the stalkers are too late and the girl is gone, they stalkers still attack the party as above, but they only do so for four rounds. During these deadly rounds, the stalkers are looking for any signs of the girl or the hound. They do so by ripping the party apart.

After four rounds, the Stalkers are convinced enough that the girl has escaped and go off elsewhere to search for her.

### Imps

This combat encounter only takes place if the Imps arrive at the portal before the characters do.

**Creatures:** The following creatures will be encountered here:

#### **APL2 (EL5)**

➤ **Imps (3):** 13 hp (each); see *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** The imps wait in ambush for the party to arrive at the ruins. They sit *invisible* up in the trees. Their tactic is to have two imps fly invisibly to the holder of the child. Then the third imp makes itself known on the opposite side, but in the form of a boar. This is an attempt to draw fighters away from the main party to fight the boar some 40 ft. away.

Once the party is split (or if it looks like it won't happen), the two imps try to use their poison to put the one holding the child asleep. The child herself is their next victim. They will try to put her to sleep too.

The Imps then systematically use their invisibility to skirmish with the party until they are all either dead or asleep. At that point, they will all transform into boar shape (or use the existing one) to carry her back to Eastfair. The imps are worried about pursuit so they won't try to take the girl until they have incapacitated everyone (including the hound archon).

### The Portal

Within this underground chamber, is a 4-foot high miniature standing stone. It has only one marking on each of its four sides. Each side shows the same word, but each in a different language. The word is 'birthright', and the four languages are Old Oeridian, Celestial, Draconic and Sylvan.

The hound will simply thank the characters for the escort and assure them that the gods will look kindly on them. The hound also says that only someone of this girl's bloodline can activate the portal. She need only prick her finger on one of the sharp nubs of the standing stone.

It is going to be a one-way trip; the portal will not be opened up again from the other side. It will be destroyed to prevent any kind of tampering. The characters are asked not to go through, for it would mean risking the secret location. Any character that somehow sneaks or forces their way through the portal would be

apprehended on the other side and held for 2d6 TU's while he was debriefed. Painfully.

So without much adieu, the hound instructs the girl to prick her finger to activate the portal.

*As the little girl pricks her finger on a nub of stone, an emerald green portal 6 ft. in diameter appears a few feet away from the girl. The hound instructs the girl to enter the portal and she does.*

*Before entering itself, the hound turns to you, "The patrons shall smile upon you in your journeys. You mortals may not live to see the results that you've started, but your children and their children shall feel the blessings of it." With that, the hound steps through the portal and is gone. The portal closes quickly behind them.*

**Development:** Once the characters are done with the portal, they can either move on to the crossroads (if they haven't been there already) or go several days south towards the border of the Rauxes badlands and the blue turreted estate.

## Encounter 7: Darien's Back in Town

It is several days' travel (200 miles from Eastfair to northern Rauxes environ border) to the region of Rauxes. But by now, the rain has stopped and all pursuit has given up. This means the characters can use the dirawein (magical highways) to make a safe trip south.

### Barony of Stel in Brief

The old Great Kingdom was made up of princedoms. Within those princedoms, tracks of land were divided up to numerous petty Barons, Counts and Dukes. Those nobles in turn divided out their even smaller parcels of land, estates, to minor nobles. Each paid the price of loyalty to his liege above him.

The Barony of Stel is one such petty collection of estates. At one time it was somewhat prosperous with trade, strategic locale and rare resources. After the collapse of Rauxes and the Great Kingdom, the barony (like so many others) fell into a state of apathy.

Noble bloodlines were thinned and estates and holdings reduced to ruin. Bandits, orcs from the north and fiends from the Rauxes badlands to the south stalked the lands. These curse-like events and more have reduced the few villages and thorps into mud-hobbled decay.

The characters find little organized resistance traveling through this barony. For a few gold pieces, they can find all the local information and directions they need to track down the blue sandstone estate. The local inn is happy to have the patrons.

### Arriving at the Estate

Once the characters arrive, it's easy to find the barony and the run-down estate that has been mentioned to them.

*Asking around within the run-down and neglected barony, directions to the old estate with blue sandstone walls are easy to come by.*

*The ground is covered in very odd sandy patches. Not everywhere, just spread out.*

*Then you feel a rumbling of the ground, and you are nearly knocked off your feet.*

*You can see smoke start to rise from within the courtyard of the run down/ruined estate with the blue turrets.*

The above happens when the characters are still 200 ft. away from the estate.

Once the characters get closer, they can see that the gates (or what's left of them) are wide open. Within the empty courtyard, smoke is rising up from ground in several places. In some spots, the ground looks caved in by a 2 to 3 feet.

Some of the stonework has fallen into the edges of the courtyard. As the characters look about the courtyard, read the following:

*On the far side of the courtyard a large section of wall falls and crumbles. It looks like it was a secret door that could no longer take the strain of the wall above. Behind this opening is a 15-foot by 15-foot (10-foot. high) chamber with stairs leading down from it. Smoke and fumes drift out into the air from the stairs. The room is occupied by a human and [insert APL specific minions]. They just stare at you for a second before reaching for their weapons.*

This is Darien the Knife and his loyal minions. He's been through a lot the last few days and he really needs to vent his frustrations and anger.

### The Backstory

Darien the Knife has been here at the Footman meeting hall/temple for a while now. He and his fellow cultists have been making plans to further their scheme to defraud the Standing Stones of Medegia of magical energy. To do this, they need to go back into Rauxes and retrieve vital components and supplies stored there. But there is still the little matter of *what* is going to be done with the magical energy once it is stolen. There are several different opinions and desires within the ranks of the Footmen. This comes more to the fact that different Footmen want to be the one in charge of the project.

This has led to infighting and political backstabbing. But this is nothing new. So far, the leader of the Footmen fear's Darien's connection to the baatezu of Holim Ruins and so Darien had to be dealt with. And he was.

A few days ago, the leader of the cult put the Rauxes recovery operation into full swing. The meeting hall/temple was packed up and sent off to the base camp near to the Rauxes. But a special fate awaited Darien.

He was taken by surprise and thrown into a special torture chamber called the Hall of Whispered Enervation, filled with wraiths. It's actually several chambers linked up with tunnels. The walls are warded

so that wraiths may not leave the chambers. A long story short—the victims run around the chambers, trying to avoid the wraiths. Few last long. All the while, the cultists can view the progress and even stop it if they wish (should the victim finally crack and give up what is wanted).

But for poor Darien, there was no reprieve planned. When he was thrown in, he was left for dead and the acidic pools and explosive gasses that the lair was built around, were set to self-destruct the base. There is an important reason why the Footmen did not just kill Darien. Though his being in the Hall of Whispered Enervation is entertaining, there is a practical reason. When Darien signed on with Grynanquil (of the Holim ruins), he signed away his soul to the service within Grynanquil's extra-planar keep.

Thus if Darien dies, his spirits goes to the parlor where the characters encountered Grynanquil in *COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*. The baatezu would then have all the secrets of the Footmen and have an edge at thwarting them (for the purposes of revenge).

Luckily Darien still had a few loyal servants left. Just in the nick of time, they broke him out of the Hall of Whispered Enervation and out of the lair before it fully collapsed. They brought him a small selection of items that he had stored away for emergencies. Unfortunately, the wraiths hit Darien pretty badly and as the night past, he lost some levels (how many levels depends on what APL the characters are playing at).

The lair is completely collapsed; even the stairs Darien just came up, now only go down about 30 ft. before ending in a cave-in.

It's a fight now, but if the characters capture Darien (or if he surrenders after a hard fight) he'll have some talking to do with them.

### Map Key

1. Fallen rubble acting as a 4 ft. high wall
2. Sunken ground, act as trenches
3. 6 ft. high bundles of hay. Flammable.
4. Ruined entrance (and player starting point)
5. Revealed chamber (and NPC starting point)
6. 15 ft. high stone towers with stairs and wall access. Windows face in and out of courtyard.
7. Close portcullis. Not locked

**Creatures:** The following creature are encountered here:

### APL2 (EL 4)

☞ **Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz3; 13 hp; see Appendix 1.

☞ **Orcs (2):** 5 hp (each); see page 203 of the *Monster Manual*.

### APL4 (EL 6)

☞ **Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz5; 21 hp; see Appendix 1.

☞ **Orcs (6):** 5 hp (each); see page 203 of the *Monster Manual*.

## APL6 (EL 8)

☞ **Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz7; 29 hp; see Appendix 1.

☞ **Orc Shock Troopers (6):** Male orc Bar1; 14 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

## APL8 (EL 10)

☞ **Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz7; 29 hp; see Appendix 1.

☞ **Hill Giants (2):** 102 hp (each); see page 123 of the *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** A lot depends on initiative. Darien and his minions start off in a partially enclosed 15 ft. by 15 ft. space (NPC's that don't fit, start just coming up the stairs). Darien wants to get out of there and get behind the cover of the rubble of the fallen wall. His minions try to both screen their mage master and attack the characters. Depending on APL, the orcs/giants wait for their buffs.

**APL 2:** The cover of the rubble is Darien's best friend. His *sleep* spell is his main offensive spell, with which he will try to target fighter-types, so that his orcs can get some easy shots in. After trying that he will cast *flaming sphere* on enemy mages and clerics.

**APL 4:** While it might be tempting to open up with a *fireball*, in the long run it would be better to get up *invisibility*, and make for the cover of the rubble. From there, allies (and himself) can be buffed up with *haste* and *shield*. After that, let loose with the offensive spells as in the APL 2 tactics.

**APL 6:** As with the APL 4 tactics, he uses *invisibility* to get to the cover of the rubble, then buffs up allies and himself; *lesser globe of invulnerability* is a must. But since it doesn't move, this needs to be the last stand position. Once Darien becomes visible again, he should have his *shield*, *displacement* and *haste* active. Hasting the troops is a priority.

**APL 8:** Just like the APL 6 tactics, but this time, Darien has a *wand of magic missile* at CL 9<sup>th</sup>. Once in position and the bigger spells are gone, he starts sniping with it.

**Treasure:** Loot the minions and Darien (dead or alive).

**APL 2:** L: 63; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp each).

**APL 4:** L: 63; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp each).

**APL 6:** L: 63; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +3* (750 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp each), *dagger of venom* (691 gp each).

**APL 8:** L: 40; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each),

*potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +3* (750 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp each), *dagger of venom* (691 gp each), *wand of magic missiles* (CL 9<sup>th</sup>, 50 charges) (562 each).

**Development:** If Darien is killed, he still has some rough notes on him that can be looted to give a few clues as to where the Footmen are hiding out within the Rauxes area. (See AR).

If Darien is killed, see the Conclusion for a special reward from the friendly neighborhood baatezu.

If Darien escapes, then the characters gain the 'What was I thinking!?' entry on their AR.

If Darien is taken alive, he'll tell the characters everything they want to know (within the limits of the knowledge of this encounter). He'll tell them why he was betrayed, why he was put in the Hall of Whispered Enervation instead of being killed out right.

Darien also goes into detail about Grynanquil being very dangerous. He explains that the characters only saw a parlor, a small section of his realm. It's all illusion. Within the rest of his manor, he has a horde of devils, and many petitioners he is developing. Worse still, those who have made deals with him, their spirits go to serve in his manor when they die; thus he has all of their knowledge and secrets.

Darien will beg for mercy if he has to. The ending of his life means eternity in servitude to Grynanquil. The baatezu is up to something; something about collect more souls, more powerful souls. Darien suspects it's another route to freedom for the trapped baatezu.

If he is allowed to go free, Darien vows to make it his life work to defeating Grynanquil (and getting his soul contract nullified). Thus the characters gain the 'What was I Thinking!?' entry on the AR.

Darien gives directions to the location of the Footman base he knows about in the Rauxes area.

## CONCLUSION

What a ride.

From when the characters were first asked to investigate the murder of an insignificant cleric of Zilchus, right up to the final capture/death of the mastermind behind that murder they have endured much.

While this leg of the journey is over, the characters still have the Footmen of the Spider Throne to deal with and the magical badlands of Rauxes to brave.

For some, they may wish to quit now, for they were only in it to find the murderer of Dantoni. Others however will stick with it to destroy whatever evil plot these cultists of Vecna are concocting.

*"You have come far and faced many dangers from the seemingly coincidental intrigue around the murder of Dantoni, to the discovery of a far deeper machination. Perhaps fate has picked you out of a crowd to face this life encounters. Perhaps you'll choose for your journey*

*to end here. But for those who prefer to press on, the badlands of Rauxes await."*

## Collecting Rewards

● **Darien's Bounty:** Alive, Darien is worth a reward from a lot of people. Many want vengeance on him. Others want to harm him because of what he is.

All the characters have to do is turn him over to any one of these groups. It doesn't matter which one. It could be Clinorus, or Octreth, or Poxquand, or the Rakersmen. It could be some group of good/lawful types back in their home region. It really doesn't matter. They all give a reward, as long as he is returned alive.

The reward is access to the following;

*Amulet of health +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)  
*Belt of giant strength +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)  
*Cloak of Charisma +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)  
*Gloves of Dexterity +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)  
*Headband of intellect +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)  
*Periapt of Wisdom +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

● **The Baatezu that you Know:** If Darien is killed at the hands of the characters; they have started the first part of a bargain with Gryinanquil. The characters have resorted to the method they are most familiar with in defeating a cultist of Vecna. Regardless of their motives, their acts have consequences.

The characters gain the following AR entry: "For killing Darien, your soul has taken a first step towards a deal with the baatezu. Completion is up to you. Once per adventure, this character may cast *spell resistance* (CL 11) on themselves as a spell-like ability. But in doing so, the character is unaffected by *raise dead*, *reincarnation* or *resurrection* for the rest of the adventure."

● **Secret Location and Documents:** This character has been told the secret location of a Footmen base within the Rauxes area and has a small amount of written information to examine in context to the Footmen and the Rauxes area.

● **Divine Rewards:** The following reward is ONLY for those parties that successfully escort the little girl into the portal safely. The hound does not have to have survived.

The reward is based on which hound was chosen. Only one hound can be chosen, and thus only one reward can be given from the list. All others are crossed out. All characters get the same reward.

This character has made peaceful contact with an agent of [Heironeous] [Atroa] [Delleb] [Pholtus] [Kelanen] (only one can be selected)

In addition, this character has been granted a divine gift based on the god circled above. Cross off the non-relevant entries. Caster level equals character level.

**Heironeous:** Once ever, this character may use a spell-like ability to summon (as per the *summon monster V* spell) a hound archon. □

**Atroa:** Three times ever, this character may use *good hope* as a spell-like ability. □ □ □

**Delleb:** Three times ever, as a free action, this character may add a +20 insight bonus to any Intelligence-based skill or ability check. This bonus must be applied before the check is made. □ □ □

**Pholtus:** Once ever, this character may use *mind fog* as a spell-like ability. □

**Kelanen:** This character may use the following spells as spell-like abilities: *shield*, *mage armor*, *magic weapon* and *divine favor* a total of five times. □ □ □ □ □

**The End**

## EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

### Encounter 3: Dogs of society

Defeat the troopers/barghests

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	290 XP

### Encounter 6: Portals of Last Resort

Get the girl safely through the portal **or** kill the stalkers for ½ xp.

APL 2	150 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	350 XP

### Encounter 7: Darien's Back in Town

Defeat Darien and his minions

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	320 XP

### Story Award

Getting into the Old City in time

APL 2	20 XP
APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	45 XP
APL 8	60 XP

Good roleplaying:

APL 2	70 XP
APL 4	100 XP
APL 6	135 XP
APL 8	165 XP

### Total Possible Experience

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1250 XP

## TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their

earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spells to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

L = Looted gear from enemy

C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M = Magic Items (sell value)

### Encounter 1: Snakes and ladders

**Treasure:** Loot the poor innocent light riding horses from the nice warm stables.

**APL 2:** L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

**APL 4:** L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

**APL 6:** L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

**APL 8:** L: 19; C: 0; M: 0

### Encounter 3: Dogs of Society part A

**Treasure:** Loot the troopers

**APL 2:** L: 312; C: 10; M: 0

**APL 4:** L: 312; C: 10; M: 0

**APL 6:** L: 312; C: 30; M: 0

**APL 8:** L: 312; C: 40; M: 0

### Encounter 3: Dogs of Society part B

**Treasure:** Loot the Smiling Ones and barghests

**APL 2:** L: 240; C: 30; M: 0

**APL 4:** L: 240; C: 30; M: 0

**APL 6:** L: 240; C: 30; M: 0

**APL 8:** L: 240; C: 30; M: 0

### Encounter 7: Darien's back in town

**Treasure:** Loot the minions and Darien (dead or alive).

**APL 2:** L: 63; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp each).

**APL 4:** L: 63; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp each).

**APL 6:** L: 63; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +3* (750 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp each), *dagger of venom* (691 gp each).

**APL 8:** L: 40; C: 0; M: *arcane scroll of disguise self* (2 gp each), *arcane scroll of charm person* (2 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *bracers of armor +3* (750 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp each), *dagger of venom* (691 gp each), *wand of magic missiles* (CL 9<sup>th</sup>, 50 charges) (562 each).

### Conclusion:

#### Treasure:

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *potion of heroism* (no loot)

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *potion of heroism* (no loot)

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *potion of heroism* (no loot)

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *potion of heroism* (no loot)

### Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 2: 400 gp

APL 4: 600 gp

APL 6: 800 gp

APL8: 1250 gp

### Adventure Record Text

*Cross out the following if it does not apply:*

### ALL APLs (if awarded)

☛ **Map to Secret Base:** This character has been told the secret location of a Footmen base within the Rauxes area. As well, this character has some scraps of documents to sort out pertaining to the Rauxes area and the Vecna cultists.

☛ **Darien's Bounty:** For turning Darien over alive to interested parties, this character gains access to the various magical adornments listed under APL 2 in the Item's Found During the Adventure section.

☛ **What was I thinking?:** This character agreed to let a known cultist of Vecna go free. This *will* have repercussions.

☛ **The Baatezu that you know:** For killing Darien, your soul has taken a first step towards a deal with the baatezu. Completion is up to you. Once per adventure, this character may cast *spell resistance* (CL 11) on themselves as a spell-like ability. But in doing so, the character is

unaffected by *raise dead*, *reincarnation* or *resurrection* for the rest of the adventure.

☛ **All Hound Archons go to Mount Celestia:** This character has made peaceful contact with an agent of [Heironeous] [Atroa] [Delleb] [Pholtus] [Kelanen] (only one can be selected based on play)

In addition, this character has been granted a divine gift based on the god circled above. Cross off the non-relevant entries. Caster level equals character level.

**Heironeous:** Once ever, this character may use a spell-like ability to summon (as per the *summon monster Vspell*) a hound archon. ☐

**Atroa:** Three times ever, this character may use *good hope* as a spell-like ability. ☐ ☐ ☐

**Delleb:** Three times ever, as a free action, this character may add a +20 insight bonus to any Intelligence-based skill or ability check. ☐ ☐ ☐

**Pholtus:** Once ever, this character may use *mind fog* as a spell-like ability. ☐

**Kelanen:** This character may use the following spells as spell-like abilities: *shield*, *mage armor*, *magic weapon* and *divine favor* a total of five times. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

### Items Found During the Adventure

*Cross off all items not found*

### APL 2

*Amulet of Health +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

*Belt of Giant Strength +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

*Cloak of Charisma +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

*Gloves of Dexterity +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

*Headband of Intellect +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

*Periapt of Wisdom +4* (Any, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

### APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following)

*Cloak of resistance +2* (Adventure, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

### APL 6 (all of APL 2-4 plus the following)

*Bracers of armor +3* (Adventure, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

*Dagger of venom* (Adventure, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

### APL 8 (all of APL 2-6 plus the following)

*Wand of magic missiles (CL 9<sup>th</sup>)* (Adventure, *Dungeon Master's Guide*)

## APPENDIX I: NPCS AND MONSTERS

☞ **Sister Tillie:** Female Human Clr3 – Pelor: CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6; hp 24; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, light mace); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, light mace); SA Turn undead 4/day; AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Diplomacy +5, Healing +7 Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (arcana) +1, Spellcraft +1; Diehard, Endurance, Negotiator.

*Cleric Spells Prepared* (4/ 3+1/ 2+1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0- ~~detect poison, mending (2), purify food and drink~~, 1st- ~~protection from evil\*~~, bless, ~~command, remove fear~~, 2nd- ~~cure moderate wound\*~~, ~~restoration lesser, hold person~~.

\*Domain Spell. *Domains:* Healing and Good.

Domain Powers: Good (+1 CL for spells with the good descriptor); Healing (+1 CL for spells with the healing descriptor).

*Possessions:* Layers of clothing and cloaks, light mace, wooden holy symbol of the Pelor, 50 gp.

### Encounter 3: Dogs of society

#### APL2

☞ **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr1; CR 1; medium humanoid (human); HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +0 ranged (1d6+2 x2, javelin) or +2 melee (1d6+2 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+2 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); SA –; SQ –; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -11, Intimidate +5, Ride +5; Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), masterwork short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

☞ **Trooper (4):** Male human War1; CR 1/2; medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk -1 ranged (1d6+1 x2, javelin) or +0 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); Full Atk +0 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); SA –; SQ –; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -12, Intimidate +4, Ride +4; Combat reflexes, Weapon Focus (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), short sword, half-plate, tower shield

#### APL4

☞ **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr4; CR 4; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d10+4; hp 36; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +3 ranged (1d6+3 x2, javelin) or

+6 melee (1d6+5 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+5 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); SA –; SQ –; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -8, Intimidate +8, Ride +8; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon specialization (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), masterwork short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

☞ **Trooper (4):** Male human War1; CR 1/2; medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk -1 ranged (1d6+1 x2, javelin) or +0 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); Full Atk +0 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); SA –; SQ –; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -12, Intimidate +4, Ride +4; Combat reflexes, Weapon Focus (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

#### APL6

☞ **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr5; CR 5; medium humanoid (human); HD 5d10+10; hp 43; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +4 ranged (1d6+3 x2, javelin) or +7 melee (1d6+5 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+5 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); SA –; SQ –; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -7, Intimidate +9, Ride +9; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), masterwork short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

☞ **Trooper (4):** Male human War1; CR 1/2; medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk -1 ranged (1d6+1 x2, javelin) or +0 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); Full Atk +0 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); SA –; SQ –; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -12, Intimidate +4, Ride +4; Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

#### APL8

☞ **Sergeant:** Male human Ftr6; CR 6; medium humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 47; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21,



touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield, tower +4]; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +5 ranged (1d6+3 x2, javelin) or +8 melee (1d6+5 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+5 19-20x2, masterwork short sword); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -6, Intimidate +10, Ride +10; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), masterwork short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

☠**Trooper (6):** Male human War2; CR 1; medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+2; hp 15; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; [half-plate +7, shield-tower +4]; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +0 ranged (1d6+1 x2, javelin) or +1 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1 19-20x2, short sword); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb -11, Intimidate +5, Ride +5; Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (short sword).

*Possessions:* dagger (x3) javelin (x2), short sword, half-plate, tower shield.

## Encounter 6: Portals of Last Resort

### **APL8**

☠**Ranger Invisible Stalker, advanced (13HD) (x2):** CR 9; large elemental (air, extraplanar); HD 13d8+39; hp 98; Init +11; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft.(perfect); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 13; [-1 size, +7 dex, +4 natural]; Base Atk +10; Grp +20; Atk +16 melee (2d6+6, slam); Full Atk 2 slams +16 melee (2d6+6); SA Favored Enemy (dwarves) +2; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, natural invisibility, improved tracking; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +17, Will +9; Str 22, Dex 24, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 9.

*Skills and Feats:* Knowledge: Nature +2, Listen +19, Move Silently +21, Search +18, Spot +19, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks); Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (slam).

**Natural Invisibility (Su):** This ability is constant, allowing a stalker to remain invisible even when attacking. This ability is inherent and not subject to the invisibility purge spell.

**Improved Tracking (Ex):** An invisible stalker is a consummate tracker and makes spot checks instead of the usual Survival checks to trace a creature's passage.

## Encounter 7: Darien's Back in Town

### **APL2**

☠**Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz3; CR 3; medium humanoid (human); HD 3d4+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; touch 11; flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 dagger); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA n/a; SQ spells, summon familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +7, Craft butcher +7, Decipher script +9, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (arcane) +9, Knowledge (planes) +7, Spellcraft +9; Blind-fight, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (dagger).

*Wizard Spells Prepared (4/ 3/ 2; save DC 13 + spell level):* 0- *ray of frost, touch of fatigue, daze*, 1st- *magic missile, reduce person, sleep* 2nd- *glitterdust, flaming sphere*.

*Possessions:* masterwork dagger, darts (x3), *arcane scroll of disguise self, arcane scroll of charm person, potion of cure light wounds, bracers of armor +1*.

### **APL4**

☠**Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz5; CR 5; medium humanoid (human); HD 5d4+5; hp 21; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; touch 11; flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4 dagger); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA n/a; SQ spells, summon familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +9, Craft butcher +9, Decipher script +11, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (arcane) +11, Knowledge (planes) +9, Spellcraft +11; Blind-fight, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Weapon Focus (dagger).

*Wizard Spells Prepared (4/ 4/ 3/ 2; save DC 13 + spell level):* 0- *ray of frost, touch of fatigue, daze*, 1st- *magic missile (2), reduce person, shield* 2nd- *glitterdust, flaming sphere, invisibility*; 3<sup>rd</sup>- *fireball, haste*.

*Possessions:* masterwork dagger, darts (x3), *arcane scroll of disguise self, arcane scroll of charm person, potion of cure light wounds, bracers of armor +, cloak of resistance +2*.

### **APL6**

☠**Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz7; CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d4+7; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14; touch 11; flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+1 + poison, *dagger of venom*); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA n/a; SQ spells, summon familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +11; ABL Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +11, Craft butcher +11, Decipher script +13, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (arcane) +13, Knowledge (planes) +11, Spellcraft +13; Blind-fight, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Weapon Focus (dagger).

*Wizard Spells Prepared (4/ 5/ 4/ 3/ 1; save DC 13 + spell level):* 0- *ray of frost, touch of fatigue, daze*, 1st- *magic missile(2), reduce person, shield, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd- *glitterdust, flaming sphere, summon monster II, invisibility*; 3<sup>rd</sup>- *fireball, haste, displacement*; 4<sup>th</sup>- *globe of invulnerability-lesser*.

*Possessions:* darts (x3), *arcane scroll of disguise self, arcane scroll of charm person, potion of cure light wounds, bracers of armor +3, cloak of resistance +2, dagger of venom*.

☠**Orc Shock Trooper (6):** Male Orc Bar1; CR 1; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 1d12+2; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC

15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; +3 studded leather, +2 Dex] Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +5 melee (1d12+6 greataxe); Full Atk +5 melee (1d12+6 greataxe); SA Rage x1; SQ Fast movement, uncanny dodge, darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +7, Jump +7, Intimidate +1, Listen +4, Survival +3; Power Attack.

*Possessions:* Leather armor, greataxe, javelin(x6).

## APL8

☞ **Darien the Knife:** Male human Wiz7; CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d4+7; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14; touch 11; flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+1 + poison, *dagger of venom*); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA n/a; SQ spells, summon familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +11; ABL Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 10.

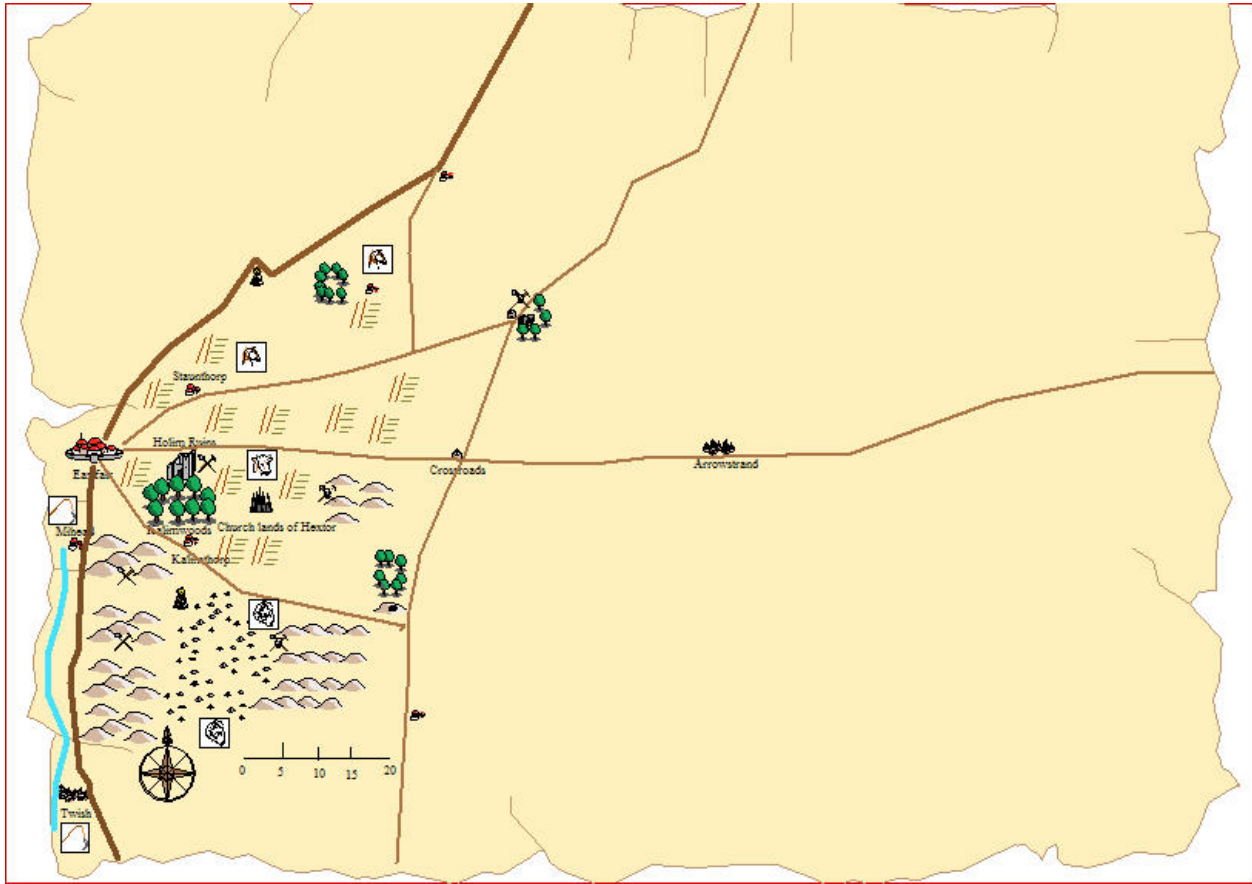
*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +11, Craft butcher +11, Decipher script +13, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (arcane) +13, Knowledge (planes) +11, Spellcraft +13; Blind-fight, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Weapon Focus(dagger).

*Wizard Spells Prepared* (4/ 5/ 4/ 3/ 1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0- *ray of frost, touch of fatigue, daze*, 1st- *magic missile(2), reduce person, shield, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd- *glitterdust, flaming sphere, summon monster II, invisibility*; 3<sup>d</sup>- *fireball, haste, displacement*; 4<sup>th</sup>- *globe of invulnerability-lesser*.

*Possessions:* darts (x3), *arcane scroll of disguise self, arcane scroll of charm person, potion of cure light wounds, bracers of armor +3, cloak of resistance +2, dagger of venom, wand of magic missiles (CL 9<sup>th</sup>)(50 charges)*.

# APPENDIX 2: PLAYER HANDOUTS

## Player Handout 1 The Map from Clinorus



## PLAYER HANDOUT 2: A BLOOD COVERED PARCHMENT

Adventurers;

My wounds are great, and I a.m. still unsure of the nature of this poison that courses through my veins. It is like an acid, eating away at my insides. The others, those of us who survived, are in as rough shape or worse. All except Kilern that is, but I fear it may be some time before his mind heals.

I have so much to tell you here, incase I can not do so in person. The pain is so intense, that I can not think straight. I try to focus on what I need to tell you, but find my mind wandering off to fantastical landscape or childhood memories. I can't even tell what images or thoughts are real. I see them, and believe them, then moments later shake my head and realize them all to be false. It's confusing.

I thank you for Jirwelt...that was you who saved him, right? I'm not confusing you with all the other adventurers that have traipsed through the city, a.m. I? I was so sure it was you, I see the memory so clearly that it must be true. You saved Jirwelt from his undeath and you brought us back the prison key. Once we brought Jirwelt back to life, he told us that there is a traitor somewhere within our ranks, someone who knows of our plans and is feeding it to Prince Poxquand and others. After hearing that, we changed our plans again, and even moved up the operation date. Take them by surprise. It seems the gamble didn't pay off this time. Now Jirwelt shares my fate.

Can't concentrate. Must tell you... must think clearly, calmly. Unless I write the words down, each word, I can't tell if it even happened. Each sentence I reread is like a history book on my life, but a lifetime stretched over mere moments.

Lirr, goddess of thought, of knowledge, of lore. Hear my chant, read my verse. Let this final epilogue leave my words unearthed.

We used the golden half circle, a dungeon key, to free them. We went in, all twelve of us. Silent, skilled and prepared. We thought we had them, and for a while, I think we did. Then they became aware of us. We had the child and all hounds that were left in one piece. The horror of it, the torture chamber, the tables for vivisections, the pure evil and methodical cruelty. What could this monster hope to learn? We expect to find so many, but there were only six left, and the child. Then the enemy starting coming for us. We planned for the hounds to simply teleport away when we had freed them, but those damn collars, and we couldn't get them off without killing the hound. We all had to fight our way out, but it was too much. Too many ambushes and traps. The magic, the magic, Poxquand came personally. He had that damn object, the disjunction, it doomed us all. The hound of the Money Counter was caught within the blast. His collar dissolved, but within seconds, the hound dissolved into a puddle of goo, screaming all throughout. That left five, if you count the runt.

Thank you for saving Jirwelt,,,, no, I told you that already. Why we did this. Orders, a mission, a quest, a holy quest to liberate she who was not meant to be among us yet. Came here ten years ago to do good, to bring the system down from the inside, he recruited us to help him, our guildmaster. The years went by, now new mission came down the line two years back. Save the girl and her protectors. She can restore things.

So much more I need to say... If you get here in time or if you have a cure, I can tell you it all myself, without these images overpowering my mind, my sight.

I loved the rain as a child, it felt so free, so all encompassing. All the drops were different, yet still part of a whole when they wanted to be. Individual drops that came together to wash away the grime and go on to form a clear puddle. Yet, even if you couldn't see it, each raindrop kept its individual form, waiting to be scooped out and dripped down my hands. Each drop, its own tiny puddle, with a shape of its own. Is it really raining now? Or is it all in my head?

I sent Sister Tillie for you. I thought she might know who you were. The Lore Keeper smiled upon us today, our one stroke of divine grace. We had to abandon are planned safe house and escape routes, even our back-up ones. Poxquand's minions were hot on our heels. If not for our chance meeting with Tillie, we would all be dead. She helped us carry the wounded, and brought us here. She has done so much for people she knows not. I fear I my recklessness may have finally caught up with me.

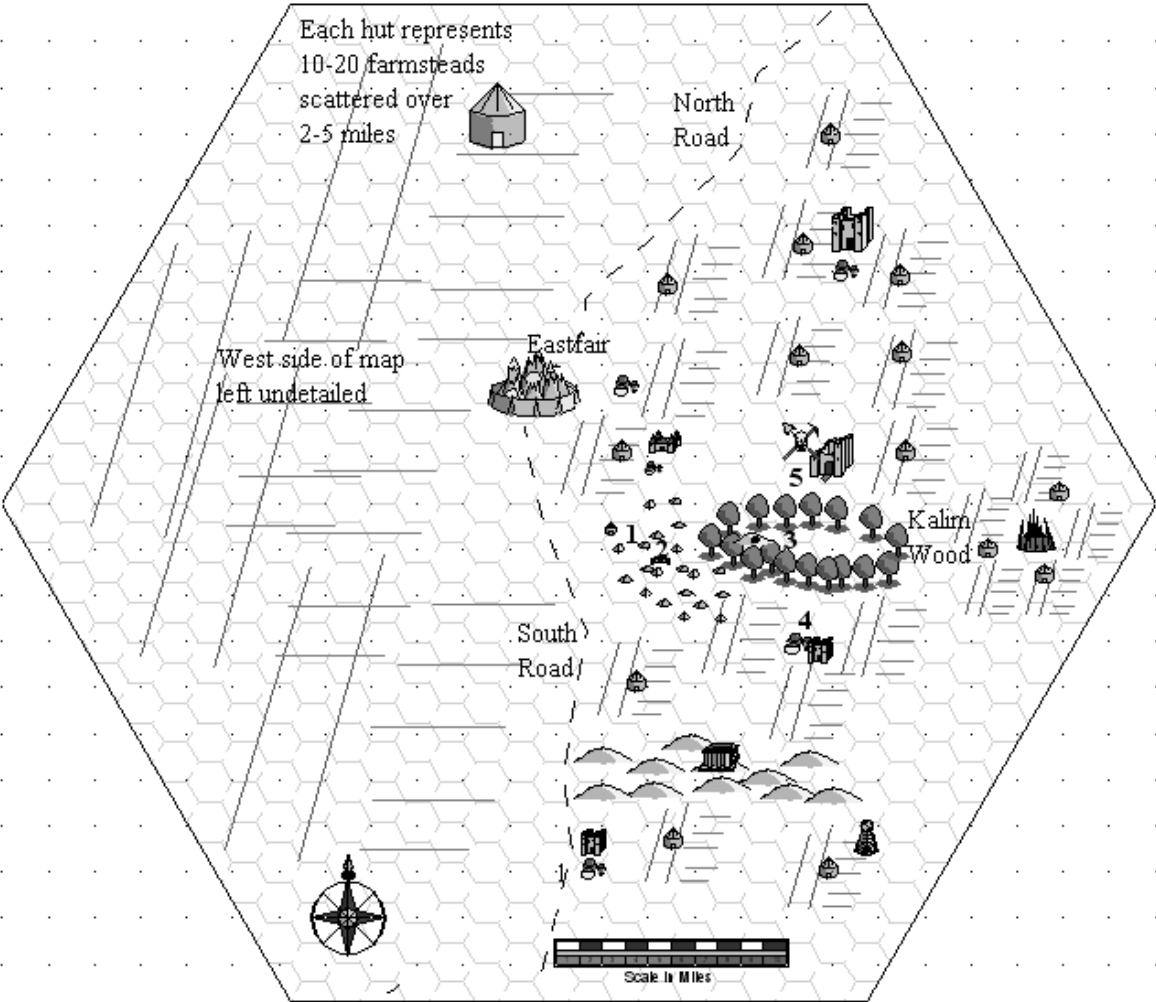
I know if I stop writing I will loose all that is left of me. Each word is a lifeline, each sentence a glimpse of the nearing shore. I can't allow my mind to be swept out to into a stormy sea to drown.

We were supposed to take her to Nyronnd. Somewhere near the old Almor border. Our back-up plan was, that if the hounds could not teleport, we would make a mad dash south west, skirt the forest, and on into Almor then Nyronnd. But the hounds say they are tagged. They say it's only a matter of time before Poxquand can sense them again. They destroyed his device, damaged it at least. The hounds carried out something with them, some salve, but most of it got destroyed with the hound of the Money Keeper. They only have one use left, and I can hear them discussing it. They think we are goners. They feel for us, I know they do, but they are resigned to what needs to be done. One usage left. I heard their decision, and I understand why they need a mortal to make it final for them. I never had a dog before, never had time for one. But I think I would have enjoyed one as a child. Maybe made me a little softer and not hard like a gemstone. And now I'm dying with mutts all around me, but not one within my reach to pet.

The dogs are uneasy, barking, growling from within their kennels. The hounds sense it too, and despite their ghastly condition, they're readying to fight, my swo... [the ink trails off sharply]

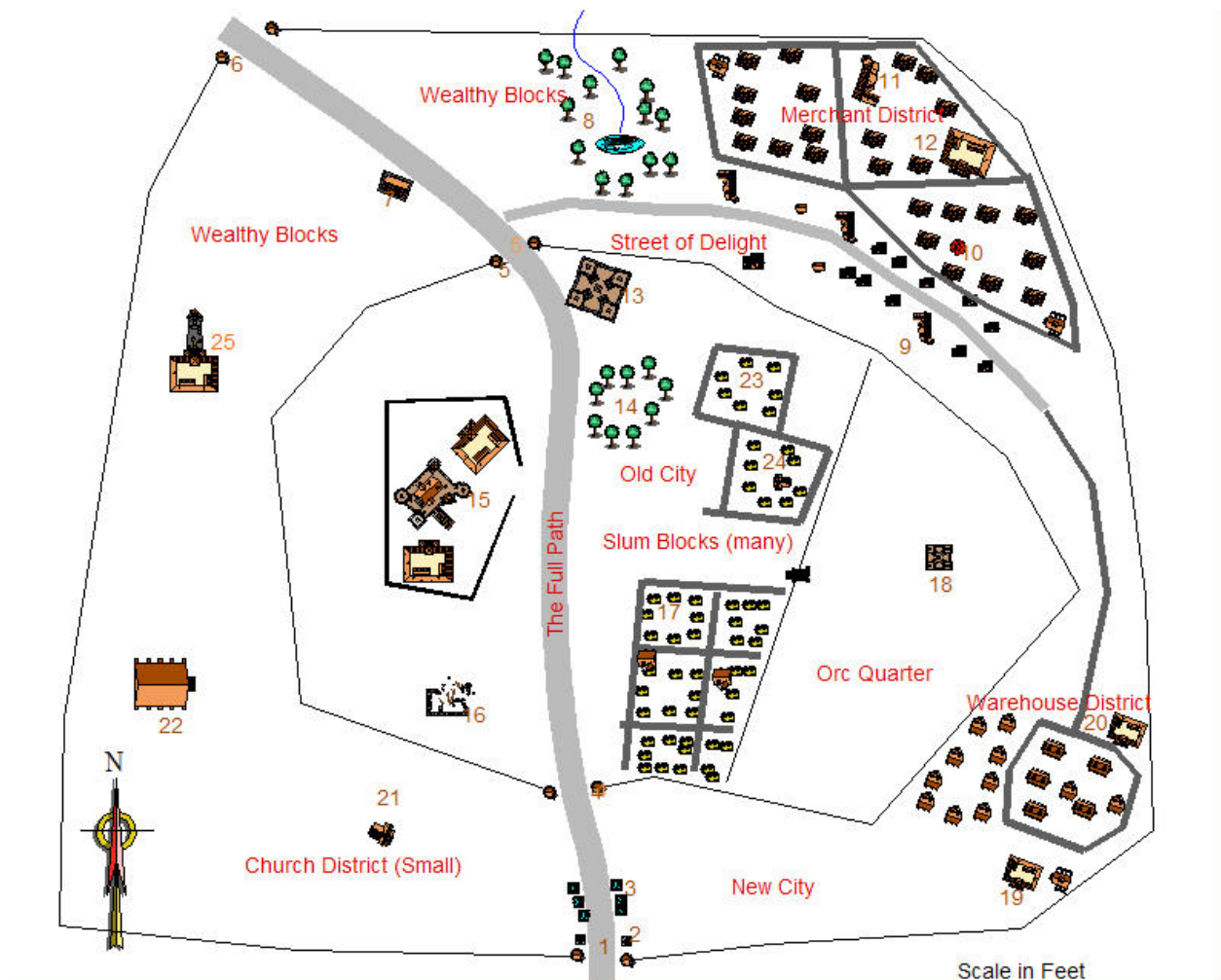
# APPENDIX 3: DM'S MAPS

The immediate countryside of Eastfair (DM Map 1)

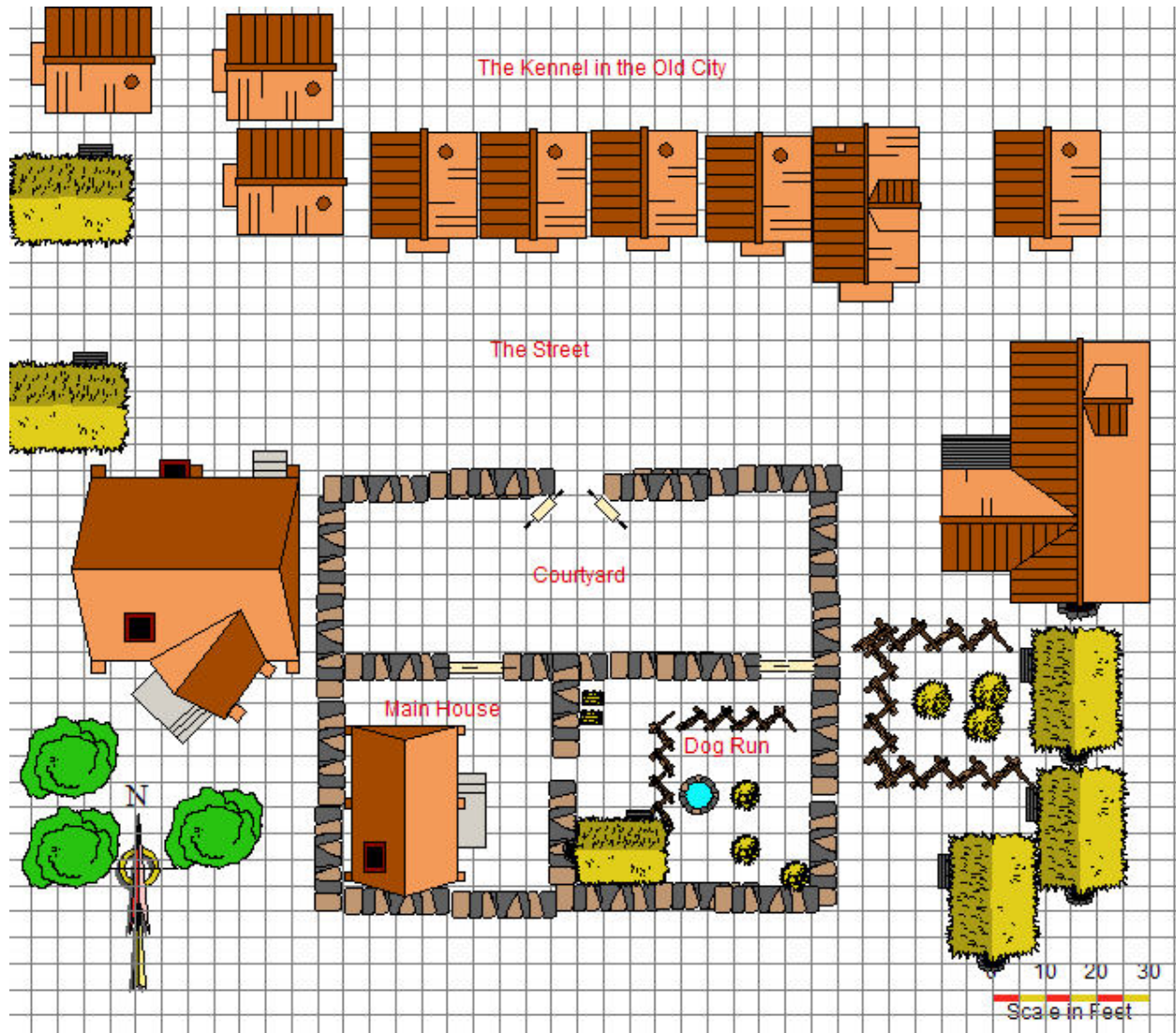


## ROUGH MAP OF EASTFAIR (DM'S MAP 2)

1 Great Gate; 2 Greater Stone Golems; 3 'Waterfall' magical water display; 4 Newgate; 5 Spider's Gate; 6 Fishermen's Gate; 7 Eastfair Courts (walled compound); 8 Blue Lake and wealthy city-estates; 9 The Whirling Dervish ;10 Side street location of Dantoni's murder and vivisection; 11 The Spice of Life tavern (Little Bakluni Town); 12 The ZWC compound (Little Bakluni Town); 13 Eastfair Prison; 14 The Park; 15 The Cyst; 16 Old City Arena (nearly ruins, Multi faith, Kelanen occupied); 17 Smiling Ones Safehouse (Kitten Ranch); 18 Orc Warlord HQ (Orc District really only half the size shown); 19 Hughnard's Fishmongery Compound (one of many, small); 20 Darin The Knife (and Cohorts) Fish Mongery Compound (one of many, small); 21 Temple of Zilchus (primary) (Church of Zilchus); 22 New City Arena (nearing completion, Hextor dedicated); 23 The Kennel; 24 Tillies small temple of Pelor; 25 Prince Poxquand the Undying's Tower and compound.

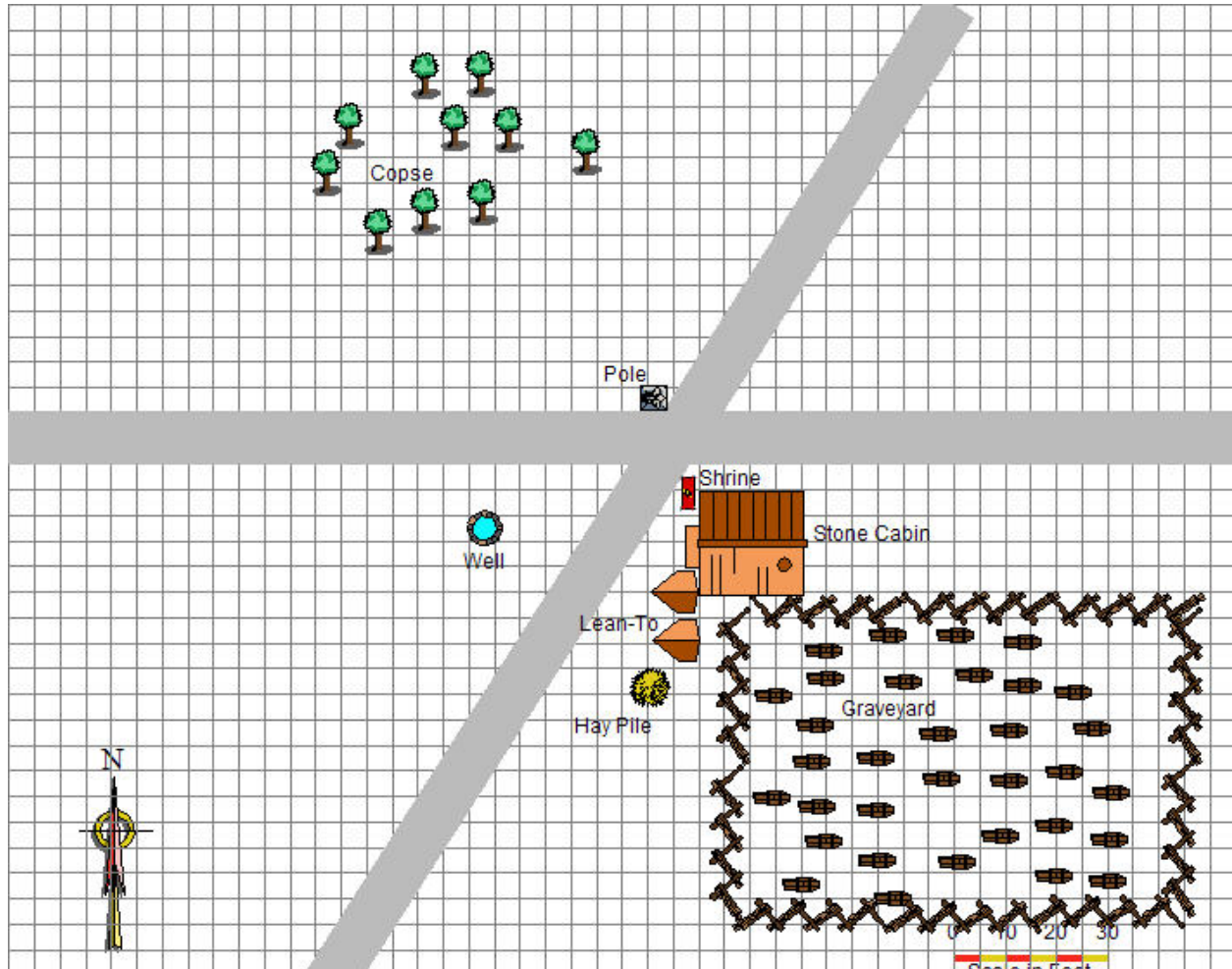


# THE KENNEL

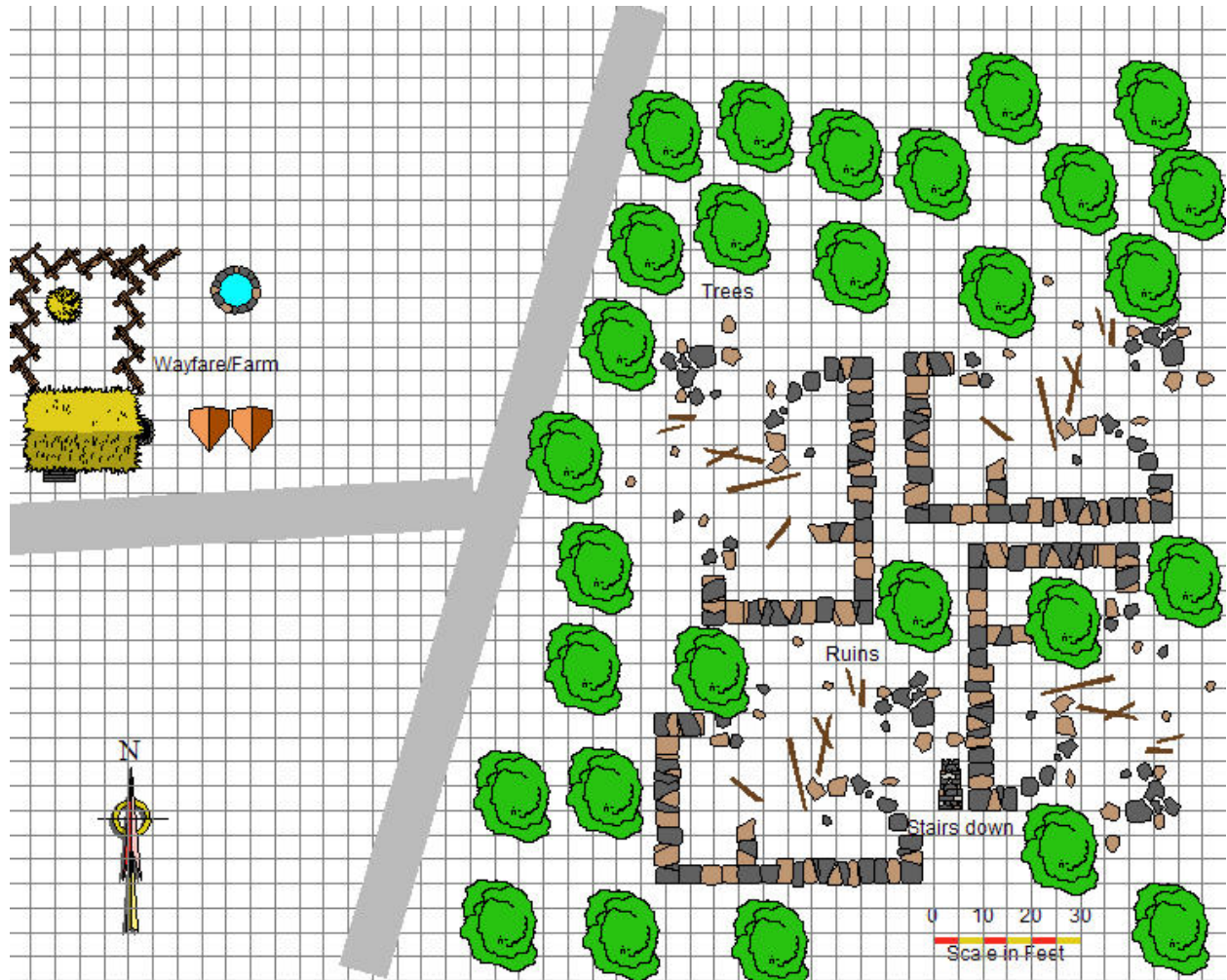




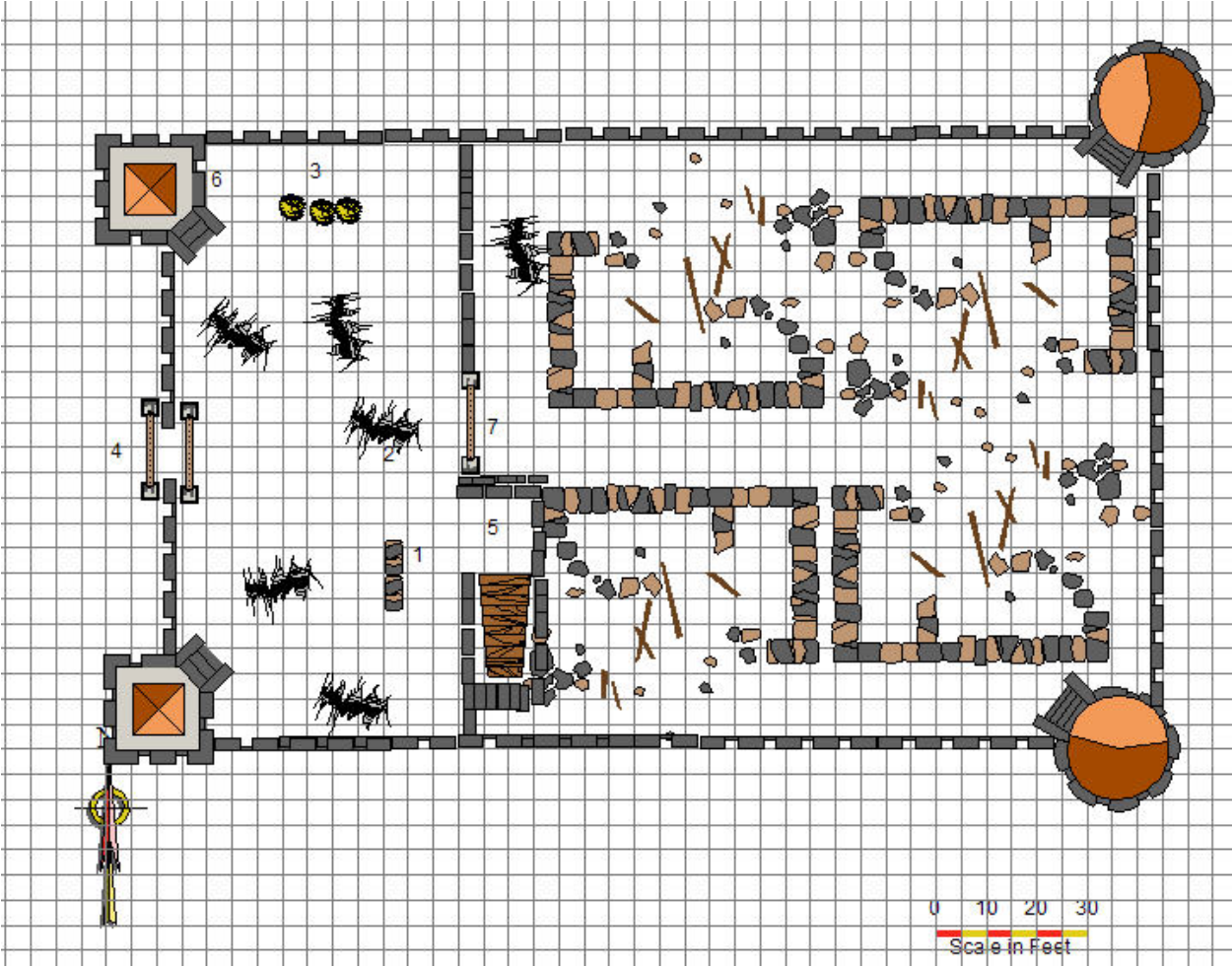
# ENCOUNTER 5: THE CROSSROADS



# ENCOUNTER 6: PORTALS OF LAST RESORT



# ENCOUNTER 7: DARIEN'S BACK IN TOWN



## APPENDIX 4: NEW RULES ITEMS

### Chosen Hound Archon of Heironeous (cursed)

#### Medium Outsider

**Hit Dice:** 6d8+12 (39 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**AC:** 19 (+9 natural), touch 10 flat-footed 19

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+8

**Attack:** Bite +9 melee (1d6+4 magic) + Trip

**Full Attack:** Bite +9 melee (1d6+4 magic) + Trip

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Trip

**Special Qualities:** Archon Traits (cursed), Chosen Traits, Scent

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12

**Skills:** Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Hide +9, Jump +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +10

**Feats:** Improved Initiative Power Attack, True Believer

**Climate/Terrain:** Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia

**Organization:** Solitary, Pair or Pack (3-6)

**Challenge Rating:** 6

**Treasure:** None while cursed

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Advancement:** By character class

**Archon Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

-Darkvision 60 ft.

- Immunity to electricity and petrification

+4 saves vs poison

Attacks considered Good and Lawful

**Chosen Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

Magic Maw, the teeth are considered a +1 magic weapon.

**Change Shape-Cursed (Su):** This hound archon is trapped in a specific canine form. The stats given reflect the archon in this form.

**Trip (Ex):** A hound that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the hound.

**Temperament:** This hound protects the party as a whole. Unless there is immediate danger to his ward, he charges towards the enemy and meets it head on, only breaking off to defend his ward from direct attack.

**Scenario Specific Ability:** This hound offers the party muscles.

### Chosen Hound Archon of Atroa (cursed)

#### Medium Outsider

**Hit Dice:** 6d8+6 (33 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 45 ft. (9 squares)

**AC:** 19 (+9 natural), touch 10 flat-footed 19

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+8

**Attack:** Bite +8 melee (1d6+3) + Trip

**Full Attack:** Bite +8 melee (1d6+3) + Trip

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Trip

**Special Qualities:** Archon Traits (cursed), Chosen Traits, Scent

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12

**Skills:** Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Hide +9, Jump +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +10

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, True Believer, Track

**Climate/Terrain:** Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia

**Organization:** Solitary, Pair or Pack (3-6)

**Challenge Rating:** 6

**Treasure:** None while cursed

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Advancement:** By character class

**Archon Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

-Darkvision 60 ft.

- Immunity to electricity and petrification

+4 saves vs poison

Attacks considered Good and Lawful

**Chosen Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

Improved Tracking

**Change Shape-Cursed (Su):** This hound archon is trapped in a specific canine form. The stats given reflect the archon in this form.

**Trip (Ex):** A hound that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the hound.

**Temperament:** This hound seeks to nurture and take care of the emotional needs of the party and her ward. She's a scout and spends time at a distance ahead or behind the party. In combat, she can will either defend or attack based on what is being asked of her by others.

**Scenario Specific Ability:** This hound allows the party to move at full speed and still receive the benefit of covering their tracks (+4 to tracking DC for Stalkers).

### Chosen Hound Archon of Delleb (cursed)

### Small Outsider

**Hit Dice:** 6d8+6 (33 hp)

**Initiative:** +5

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**AC:** 21 (+9 natural, +1 size, +1 dex), touch 12 flat-footed 20

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+5

**Attack:** Bite +7 melee (1d4+1)

**Full Attack:** Bite +7 melee (1d4+1)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:**

**Special Qualities:** Archon Traits (cursed), Chosen Traits, Scent

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 12

**Skills:** Concentration +13, Diplomacy +3, Hide +3, Jump +3, Listen +10, Knowledge (All) +10, Move Silently +3, Sense Motive +3, Spot +10, Survival +5

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, True Believer, Skill Focus Concentration

**Climate/Terrain:** Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia

**Organization:** Solitary, Pair or Pack (3-6)

**Challenge Rating:** 6

**Treasure:** None while cursed

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Advancement:** By character class

**Archon Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

-Darkvision 60 ft.

- Immunity to electricity and petrification

+4 saves vs poison

Attacks considered Good and Lawful

**Chosen Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

Knowledge (all)

**Change Shape-Cursed (Su):** This hound archon is trapped in a specific canine form. The stats given reflect the archon in this form.

**Temperament:** This hound sticks to the party and tutors his ward (and the rest of the adventurers) on points of fact (mostly trivial to the context of the adventure). In combat, he sticks by his ward and attacks those that threaten her.

**Scenario Specific Ability:** With this hound in the party, the characters are allowed to ask two question each from the spirit in Encounter 5: Crossroads. This is represented by the hound filling in the answers himself as he pieces together the clues and scraps of knowledge.

In addition, any character within 50 ft. and able to hear the Hound, gain a +3 Sacred bonus to all Intelligence based skills and ability checks. This is represented by the Hound constantly giving out 'helpful' factoids.

### Chosen Hound Archon of Pholtus (cursed)

### Small Outsider

**Hit Dice:** 6d8 (27 hp)

**Initiative:** +5

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**AC:** 21 (+9 natural, +1 size, +1 dex), touch 12 flat-footed 20

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+5

**Attack:** Bite +7 melee (1d4+1)

**Full Attack:** Bite +7 melee (1d4+1)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:**

**Special Qualities:** Archon Traits (cursed), Chosen Traits, Scent

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +7

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12

**Skills:** Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Hide +9, Jump +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +11

**Feats:** Power Attack, True Believer, Track

**Climate/Terrain:** Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia

**Organization:** Solitary, Pair or Pack (3-6)

**Challenge Rating:** 6

**Treasure:** None while cursed

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Advancement:** By character class

**Archon Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

-Darkvision 60 ft.

- Immunity to electricity and petrification

+4 saves vs poison

Attacks considered Good and Lawful

**Chosen Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

Immune to Blindness spells

**Change Shape-Cursed (Su):** This hound archon is trapped in a specific canine form. The stats given reflect the archon in this form.

**Temperament:** This hound stays close to his ward. He attacks all those that threaten her and tries to position himself between her and that threat.

When not in combat, he lectures and lectures. The party can do nothing right, and all their flaws are pointed out, but only because he feels they can improve. There's the wrong way to do things, the Pholtan way to do things.

**Scenario Specific Ability:** With this hound in the party, the characters are informed of all the possible questions (but not the answers) that can be asked during the interaction with the spirit in Encounter 5: Crossroads. This is represented by the hound explaining to the characters what they could/should ask if it was up to him. He doesn't know the answers though.

### Chosen Hound Archon of Kelanen (cursed)

**Tiny Outsider**

**Hit Dice:** 6d8 (27 hp)

**Initiative:** +5  
**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)  
**AC:** 23 (+9 natural, +2 size, +2 dex), touch 12 flat-footed 20  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+5  
**Attack:** Bite +8 melee (1d3-1 19/20 x3)  
**Full Attack:** Bite +8 melee (1d3-1 19/20 x3)  
**Space/Reach:** 2.5 ft./0 ft.  
**Special Attacks:**  
**Special Qualities:** Archon Traits (cursed), Chosen Traits, Scent, Runt  
**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6  
**Abilities:** Str 7, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12  
**Skills:** Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Hide +9, Jump +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +10  
**Feats:** Improved Initiative, True Believer, Combat Expertise  
**Climate/Terrain:** Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia  
**Organization:** Solitary, Pair or Pack (3-6)  
**Challenge Rating:** 6  
**Treasure:** None while cursed  
**Alignment:** Lawful Good  
**Advancement:** By character class

this, hit the hound instead, but automatically becomes a critical hit.

**Archon Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

-Darkvision 60 ft.

- Immunity to electricity and petrification

+4 saves vs poison

Attacks considered Good and Lawful

**Chosen Traits-Cursed (Su):** This archon has been cursed and has limited access to its normal abilities. Unless it is listed here, the archon does not have its normally granted abilities.

Improved Critical

Improved Multiplier

**Change Shape-Cursed (Su):** This hound archon is trapped in a specific canine form. The stats given reflect the archon in this form.

**Runt (Ex):** This hound archon is a pariah of his society. For what ever cosmic reason, he was born into the universe not only smaller and weaker, but lacking the inborn Lawful Good alignment. Though as an archon he is considered a Lawful Good creature, his actual alignment is Neutral. Only because of his patronage by Kelanen has this runt not been thrown back into the cosmic forge.

**Temperament:** This hound stays as close to his ward as possible. Usually this means being carried around by her. He means well, but he has some issues about his size and his ability to prove himself.

**Scenario Specific Ability:** When ever this hound is in the same square as his ward (even if being carried), instead of attacking an opponent, the hound can use his current AC as that of his wards. This includes combining full defense and/or Combat Expertise into his AC (as the situation permits). Any blows that hit the ward during