

YEO7-07

Dark Gate Stalkers

A Two-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[™] Yeomanry Regional Adventure

Version 0.9.1

by Ron Lundeen

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Brave Heroes: Our town of Dark Gate is being terrorized by forces unknown. Someone or something is kidnapping residents who step outdoors after dark. Some say the ghostly Lerara Suel are to blame, ranging out at night from Slerotin's Passage. The Border Guard here in Dark Gate are brave, but are stymied by these attacks. If you can help us, please hurry to Dark Gate. –Spokesman Olmir. A two-round Yeomanry regional adventure for APLs 2-12.

Resources: *Complete Adventurer* [Jesse Decker], *Complete Arcane* [Richard Baker], *Complete Scoundrel* [Mike McArtor and F. Wesley Schneider], *Player's Handbook II* [David Noonan], *Magic Item Compendium* [Andy Collins et al.], *Monster Manual II* [Ed Bonny et al.], and *Spell Compendium* [Matthew Sernett et al.].

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

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For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at POC@yeomanry.net. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

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Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA event 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.

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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. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the *Appendices*.

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). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

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 calculate the Average Party Level (APL), follow the process below:

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure. Each PC may bring one animal, plus any creatures gained from class abilities to help in combat. (PCs can bring more creatures but they cannot help in combat). If you deem that the animal bestows a significant benefit in combat add the animal's CR to the level of the PC it is accompanying for calculating APL. (Animals gained from class abilities and one standard horse, warhorse, or riding dog for a PC with Mounted Combat do not affect APL).
2. Sum the results of step 1 and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
3. 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. A player character more than three levels higher than the APL at which the adventure is played cannot participate. If a player character is more than two levels away from the APL at which the adventure is played, he suffers a 50% penalty to the amount of gold and XP gained in 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.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-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.

These APL calculation rules reference version 7.0 of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*. If you are playing this adventure in 2008, check the current version of the *LGCS* and follow any updated rules presented within.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard two-round regional adventure, set in the Yeomanry. Characters native to the Yeomanry pay one Time Unit per round, all others 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. 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 adventure.

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 Survival check (DC 20), 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.

Chapters 1 and 5 of the *LGCS* present more information about lifestyle and upkeep.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Is This a Military Adventure?

As Yeoman officials consider the events of this adventure important to the defense of the Yeomanry, members of any branch of the Yeoman military may count the TUs spent on this adventure toward any annual TU commitment required by their enlistment.

Is This a Dustdigger Adventure?

As this adventure does NOT significantly involve archaeological matters, students in the Academy of Lore may NOT count this adventure toward any TUs they must spend per year in study. See individual certificates for more details.

Is this a Promotion Worthy Adventure?

Heroic deeds in the name of the Yeoman military are possible in this adventure, and as such, the possibility for promotion exists. In order for a PC to be considered for promotion at the end of this adventure, the PC must do the following:

1. The DM and all Yeomanry military PCs present at the table must **unanimously** agree that the PC has performed an action and behaved in a manner that would make them a good leader of men in their unit. There must be at least two other military PCs playing the adventure besides the PC up for advancement. Only one PC can be nominated for advancement per adventure.
2. The player so nominated must then gather the names and email addresses of all Yeomanry military players and the DM at the table.
3. The player must then submit a small summary of what happened in the adventure and why he or she should be considered for promotion. Email this information to yeomanry-triad@yahoogroups.com.
4. The Triad will then discuss your promotion and determine whether promotion is granted. You will be notified via email, and a promotion certificate will be sent to you via snail mail.

In order to be considered for promotion, the Yeomanry military character must have spent a minimum of one year of real time at the rank below that being applied for. So in order to be considered for Sergeant, the player must have spent one full year as a Yeoman, and one full year below that as an unranked soldier.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE YEOMANRY

The Yeomanry is situated in a valley between the Jotens and the Tors in the southwest corner of the Sheldomar Valley. The moderately sized realm is nearly surrounded by the Crystalists and its spurs, though its eastern border with Keoland is generally regarded as the eastern bank of the Javan across from the county of Cryllor. Its border continues south to where the great river enters the Hool Marshes and the lands of the Sea Princes. The climate is hot nearly year-round in the central valley, though the temperature moderates as one approaches the foothills, particularly in late fall and winter. The Yeomanry is a land populated primarily by freemen farmers, who are mostly a Suel-Flan mix.

The Yeomanry is one of the few representative democracies in the Flanaess. Any citizen of majority, who has carried the spear for the nation, either now or in the past, is eligible to elect a spokesman on his behalf from his community who serves in the Council of Common Grosspokesmen in Loftwick.

The people of the Yeomanry are rural, cloistered folk with little exposure to either foreigners or magic. They are religious and superstitious, yet reservedly friendly to travelers. Many Yeomen have served in the Militia and are stout defenders of their homes.

You can learn more about the Yeomanry at its official website: <http://www.yeomanry.net>.

DARK GATE BACKGROUND

No town has received as much interest in the Yeomanry over the last decade as Dark Gate. Dark Gate is located in a lightly-wooded area just north of the Hellfurnaces some 12 miles southwest of Westburn. In 579 CY, a tunnel was discovered at the foot of the mountains that reportedly ran for miles to emerge in the Sea of Dust leagues to the west. Furthermore, the tunnel was rumored to link with deep, subterranean caverns that held

indescribable horrors and amazing treasures. In 590 CY, adventurers appeared in town with armor and weapons made of strange black metal that disintegrated within days. With tales of other great riches and wondrous magic laying beyond the entrance to the passage, many have come to test their fortunes. As such, Dark Gate was created, in a short span of only a few years, as a sort of frontier town that catered to the wants and needs of those who wished to explore the tunnel, named the Passage of Slerotin.

Dark Gate has brought increased attention from all around Oerth to the Yeomanry, and much of it is unwanted. Agents from the Scarlet Brotherhood, the Empire of Luz, and elsewhere have been discovered in and near the town. Adventurers from everywhere have turned the town into a wild, almost lawless region where those who have the coin can get almost anything. Treasures, both major and minor, have trickled in from the Passage of Slerotin, and this only enhances the excitement and attention that both the town and the Yeomanry have received over the last decade.

Dark Gate has a permanent population of 550 people, principally humans of mixed Suel-Flan heritage. These permanent residents, like most residents of the Yeomanry, are principally farmers, herdsman, and woodsmen. Dark Gate is often host to transient outsiders, principally treasure-seeking adventurers. Due to the dangerous creatures that occasionally issue forth from the Passage of Slerotin, the Militia keeps a presence of the elite Border Guard headquartered in Dark Gate.

DARK GATE TODAY

In the past few days, Dark Gate has been plagued by mysterious night-time kidnappings and murders. The residents do not know who is behind these killings and the Border Guard has been unable to get to the bottom of it.

In truth, there are two groups stalking the people of Dark Gate for their own ends: one is a group of Lerara Suel scouts bent on reclaiming a sacred heirloom. The other is a group of deranged derro on a slaving mission. Neither the Lerara Suel nor the derro know about the presence of the other group.

Although Dark Gate gets its fair share of unusual visitors, the only outsider in town recently has been the friendly gnome ranger Torkas.

Although he appears harmless, Torkas is an evil mastermind with a dire scheme in motion.

THE LERARA SUEL

Just over a thousand years ago, the Bakluni responded to the Invoked Devastation of the Suel Imperium with the Rain of Colorless Fire, which pounded the Suel Imperium into the wasteland now known as the Sea of Dust. The powerful mage Slerotin escaped the Rain of Colorless Fire, and along with several Suel noble houses, determined to flee through the Hellfurnace Mountains into the lands of the simple Flan tribesmen beyond. Using powerful magic now lost, Slerotin bored a passage over two hundred miles long straight through the Hellfurnaces. Through this passage he swiftly led eighteen Suel noble families. One family, the Lerara Suel, lagged behind the rest of the expedition, delayed by arguments between nobles and moving slower and more cautiously than the rest.

When he reached the other side, Slerotin sealed the passage to prevent pursuit. He magically warded both ends for a thousand years, inadvertently trapping the lagging Lerara Suel in the lightless depths beneath the Hellfurnaces.

Since that time, the Lerara have maintained a fragile existence in the Passage of Slerotin. The family is now frightfully inbred, and albinism is very common among them. Due to their harsh living conditions, most of these Suel are selfish and evil.

The Lerara are strictly patriarchal, and they harvest phosphorescent fungi and use giant millipedes to serve as mounts. The Lerara trade with other underground denizens, such as the drow and the derro, for tools and magic. The Lerara often fall prey to the monsters native to their underground home, such as umber hulks and oozes.

Physically, all pureblooded Suel are pale-skinned and pale-haired, but the Lerara have been bleached almost white. They are lanky, unwashed, and dress in primitive leathers. The nobles among the Lerara wear finer clothes and primitive jewelry. Warriors among them also wear armor fashioned from the carapaces of underground monsters.

Although the eyes of the Lerara Suel have adapted to be very light sensitive, they cannot see in the dark. They cultivate phosphorescent fungi and burn animal fat candles in order to see.

Sometime in their isolation, the Lerara came across the horrid amoeboid behemoth called the

Mother. Although the Mother never communicates with the “priests” who tend her, the Lerara began making dark sacrifices to this oozing horror. When the Lerara could not sacrifice outsiders, they sacrificed their own people to sate the hunger of the Mother. The Mother has never left the cavern in which the Lerara first found it, but the vile worship of the Mother has spread throughout nearly all of the Lerara.

BACKGROUND: THE LERARA AND TORKAS FLESHCARVER

Back in 593 CY, the lives of the Lerara Suel eking out a hard existence in the Passage of Slerotin were shattered by a band of adventurers. Seeking safe passage through the dangerous subterranean passageways, these adventurers ran afoul of Meklot Favored-Son, demagogue and high “priest” of the Mother. The adventurers killed Meklot and, as is their usual custom, stripped him of his gear before leaving the cowed Lerara Suel cringing in their wake. These events were the substance of *COR3-16 Lerara*.

One item taken from Meklot Favored-Son's corpse was his *peript of wisdom*, called *The Mother's Necklace*. No ordinary magic item, this necklace was created by the first of the priests of the Mother and passed down from high priest to high priest for generations. It functions as an ordinary *peript of wisdom* +2, but grows in power along with its wearer.

The adventurers who took *The Mother's Necklace* brought it far from the Passage of Slerotin and, ultimately, sold it. The Lerara desperately desired to recover this holy artifact, but were unable to discover its whereabouts. Recently, *The Mother's Necklace* was acquired by an evil but charismatic gnome named Torkas Fleshcarver.

A skilled ranger and taxidermist, Torkas has hunted, stuffed, and mounted all kinds of animals in his long career. Recently, he's begun practicing his craft on sentient creatures, and a few humans, halflings, and elves now grace his “trophy room” in his isolated manor house.

Torkas has an eye for art, so the “specimens” he prefers to collect are the rarest kind—golden-haired elves, muscular halflings, and humans with rare skin tones. Torkas heard about the Lerara Suel, with their translucent skin, and hoped one day to capture one to add to his gruesome “collection.” He acquired *The Mother's Necklace* and learned of its importance to the Lerara Suel.

Torkas decided that he would use it as bait to lure the Lerara to him.

Torkas paid a hefty sum to have a *dream* sent to the high priest of the Mother. In this dream, Torkas's hired wizard (who is himself Suel) played the role of an ancient prophet, and alerted the high priest that *The Mother's Necklace* could be found in the town of Dark Gate at the head of the Passage of Slerotin. Torkas then traveled to Dark Gate, to see whether the high priest would take the bait. Torkas plans to trap and kill (then, later, to skin and mount) any Lerara Suel that appear. Torkas would prefer, if opportunity arises, to capture more than one Lerara Suel.

Fortunately for Torkas, the Lerara priest took the bait. Anxious to reclaim an artifact that would cement his position atop the ruthless clergy of the Mother, the high priest sent a small band of Lerara Suel scouts to the surface world to find and recover *The Mother's Necklace*. These scouts are unclear as to where in Dark Gate *The Mother's Necklace* may be found. Therefore, they have been kidnapping and interrogating townspeople in the hopes of discovering the necklace's location. Most of their victims have been slain or tortured to near-death and left to die.

BACKGROUND: THE "DROW" DERRO

Several months ago, a small tribe of derro from under the Hellfurnaces was making a usual trading stop at a drow outpost. In a vicious surprise attack, the drow turned on the traders with the intent to steal all of their goods at once. Although the dark elves were able to exterminate most of the derro, the surprised derro were able to drive off their drow attackers. The few surviving derro, never very stable in the first place, have developed a compulsive fascination with the drow.

In the past weeks, the surviving derro traders have become convinced that they *are* drow, and have begun dressing and acting like drow (or, at least, what they think drow dress and act like). For example, they have begun to revere spiders and to seek out riding lizards of their own.

To restore their meager fortunes, the deranged derro have decided to raid for slaves—after all, they know that this is a favorite pastime of the drow. Because the drow hate the surface elves, the derro decided that a raid on a surface village would earn lots of slaves as well as give them a chance to kill their hated elven “brethren.”

These derro now lair in a cave near Dark Gate, and have been stalking and capturing Dark Gate citizens at night, slaying elves, and adding others to the “slave pit” in their cave.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure pits the characters against the forces of the deranged derro and the Lerara Suel. Initially, however, the characters won't know who their adversaries are (or that there is actually more than one group of adversaries). They may be led to believe that the drow are responsible, as well.

It is not intended that a group of characters experience each and every encounter in this adventure. Most parties will only hit nine to twelve of these encounters throughout their investigation.

Introduction: The characters arrive in Dark Gate and get their bearings.

Encounter 1: The characters talk to Spokesman Olmir and learn of the disappearances and other disturbing events in town. Olmir provides several leads.

Encounter 2: The body of the last person to disappear (a halfling tailor named Artemis) is discovered dumped in the town well. His confused, angry spirit rises to attack when his body is disturbed.

Encounter 3: The characters explore the Rooster, the town's inn and tavern. Torkas Fleshcarver (who travels under the name Torkas the Ranger) seems helpful, but sizes up the characters as a potential threat.

Encounter 4: The characters investigate the Border Guard barracks, and learn a little about the missing Errol Cooperson.

Encounter 5: If the characters investigate the Passage of Slerotin, they may find a few clues.

Encounter 6: The characters speak to Solomon, the town drunk, who saw “ghost people” on the night of one of the kidnappings. He directs the characters to the smokehouse in the woods to the west of town.

Encounter 7: If the characters investigate Artemis' home, they find that the tailor was tortured to death in his workshop and his home was thoroughly ransacked.

Encounter 8: If the characters investigate the Whisperbreeze home in the forest, they discover Eliana's body laid out and prepared for burial.

Encounter 9: When the characters investigate the smokehouse, they find Bellia Whisperbreeze barely alive. After fending off some wild animals, the characters can question Bellia and learn that the Lerara Suel were her attackers.

Encounter 10: When the characters investigate the Greer farm, they discover lizard tracks that lead into the hills. If they follow these tracks (either on their own, or with assistance from a townspeople), they lead to the derro cave in the next encounter.

Encounter 11: The characters encounter the derro in their cave and free the Greer family from their imprisonment. Emma Greer indicates that she saw the “ghost people” near the cemetery several days before she was kidnapped.

Encounter 12: Upon investigating the cemetery, the characters learn that the Lerara Suel have been called away by a rude message to a ravine northwest of Dark Gate. The Lerara Suel have left behind a trap in the cemetery for the unwary.

Encounter 13: Once the characters arrive at the ravine, they may investigate the area. If the characters look around the edge of the ravine, they encounter Torkas, who is waiting in ambush for the Lerara Suel. Torkas may enlist the characters’ aid in defeating the Lerara Suel, but he plans to double-cross them instead.

Encounter 14: Inside the ravine, the characters face the Lerara Suel who, believing them to have *The Mother’s Necklace*, offer them no quarter.

Encounter 15: As the characters leave the ravine, they may trigger a trap set by Torkas in his effort to finish off the characters.

Conclusion: The characters are hailed as heroes by the townspeople of Dark Gate for putting a stop to the disappearances.

A NOTE ON TRACKING

In an investigative adventure like this one, there is often a great deal of emphasis on tracking the parties involved. Keep the following points in mind:

- The Lerara Suel leave no tracks in natural surroundings. Even at APL 2, these scouts all have the trackless step class feature. This should emphasize their uncanny nature as “ghost people.” In fact, the only tracks of the Lerara Suel that the characters may find are indoors in the tailor’s house (Encounter 6) or in the mausoleum (Encounter 11).

- Outside of their cave, the derro primarily ride on their lizards, and therefore only leave riding lizard tracks.
- The rainstorm 4 days ago was so severe and so long that it effectively obliterated all tracks from the area prior to that time.
- Many residents of Dark Gate, including several members of the Border Guard, have the Track feat and are glad to help the characters as long as the characters are polite (and particularly after the characters return Bellia Whisperbreeze alive). However, these NPC trackers won’t enter a dangerous situation, and immediately flee to get help instead.

A NOTE REGARDING SENSITIVE PLAYERS

This adventure is designed to have the feel of a horror story. Two villainous groups delight in torturing innocent townspeople to death. The adventure revolves around the characters’ investigations of these despicable depredations.

Although a description of the terrible things the Lerara Suel and the derro have done to the people of Dark Gate is important to both set the tone of this adventure and to paint these foes in an appropriately villainous light, you should be aware of young or sensitive players. Avoid gratuitous descriptions of the torture victims the characters discover when such players are present.

INTRODUCTION

It is a cloudy and dismal afternoon when you arrive in the town of Dark Gate, in the far south of the Yeomanry. The main square of the town seems typical enough, with a large town hall to the north, a small shrine to the east, and a general store to the west. A few people pass by going about their business, giving you wary nods in greeting. A few townspeople congregate around a well in the center of the square, chatting.

To the south of the town square is a busy-sounding blacksmith and a two-story structure with a stuffed rooster mounted above the door. From the smells of bread and stew wafting from it, you’d guess that the Rooster is an inn and tavern. You have responded to a request for aid from Dark Gate’s spokesman, a retired adventurer named Olmir.

If the characters want to know the substance of the summons that brought them here, read them the blurb to this adventure.

You should also give the players Player Handout 1 at this time. This handout is an unlabeled map of the town of Dark Gate.

As the characters have been traveling together for a couple of days, have the players introduce their characters to each other at this time.

Where to Go Next?

If the characters ask about Spokesman Olmir, anyone can direct them to his house (#7 on the DM Map of Dark Gate).

- If the characters approach Spokesman Olmir, go to Encounter 1.
- If the characters enter the Rooster, go to Encounter 3.
- If the characters want to look around town, feel free to let them. Most of the buildings in town are not detailed in this adventure (for example, the general store and the Shrine of the Seven Faiths), because they aren't central to the plot. If the characters want to investigate these locations, make up descriptions and inhabitants as you see fit. Most of the townsfolk have their own theories about the disappearances. If this topic comes up, however, townspeople usually suggest that the characters talk to Spokesman Olmir.
- If the characters specifically investigate the well, they discover the body of Artemis Brookner, the town's halfling tailor. Refer to Encounter 2 if this occurs.

ENCOUNTER 1: SPOKESMAN OLMIR

As the characters approach Spokesman Olmir's house, read or paraphrase the following:

This low rambler faces onto the main street of Dark Gate. A wide, stout porch extends the length of the house. Before you can move toward the house's sturdy door, it opens. A bear of a man hobbles out onto the porch. He leans on a crutch with practiced ease, tamping tobacco into a pipe with his other hand.

"Oy, visitors, and adventurers by the look. If you came about my message, come up on

the porch and sit a spell. If you're the usual treasure-seeking type, the Passage of Slerotin is that-a-way." The man nods, indicating the forested hills west of town. "Be sure to take spare torches and rope. Can't ever have enough."

If the characters indicate that they're here to help, Olmir is visibly pleased and offers to talk with them about Dark Gate's troubles. Olmir is a friendly man and free with information, as he's anxious to have these disappearances stopped. He used to be an adventurer many years ago, but he lost half of his left foot and retired to Dark Gate.

In summary, nine people have gone missing from the Dark Gate area in the past ten days. Only one has been recovered, and she had been tortured to death. Most, but not all, have been taken from the forested hills to the west of town, leading most to assume that a creature from the Passage of Slerotin is responsible.

You should refer to the materials in DM Aid: Timeline and Player Handout 2 to roleplay the conversation with Spokesman Olmir. Once the characters have a sense of the disappearances, give them Player Handout 2 for their reference.

The characters likely have several other questions that aren't answered by Players Handout 2. Here are some anticipated questions and Olmir's answers:

- **Who/what do you think is responsible?**
I'd be a fool for ignorin' the elephant in the corner, so to speak. We're situated right next to the Passage of Slerotin, a tunnel straight to the lightless realms below the Hellfurnaces. I think something from the darkness walked—or crawled, or slithered—out of the tunnel and is kidnapping my townspeople. It explains why all the attacks happened at night. There's supposed to be a race of albino, evil humans that live deep in the tunnels, called the Lerara Suel, and I suspect that some of them have, for some reason, come to the surface to kill.
- **Haven't the Militia helped/Isn't this the Militia's job?** The Border Guard are a talented bunch, but they don't usually watch over the Passage of Slerotin day and night. Plus, they're a little shaken to realize that one of their own number was taken. They were some of the first ones out looking, and they were the ones that found Eliana's body. However, I wouldn't

have sent for help without their approval. They agree that outside specialists, like you, might be needed. You might want to talk to them. Their barracks is over that-a-way (points to the southwest).

- **Do the people that disappeared have anything in common?** Other than being residents of Dark Gate and the immediate area, I can't think of any connection.
- **Have you looked for tracks/clues?** We've got some skilled woodsmen in the area, but they haven't been very lucky at finding any tracks. Plus, we had a terrible storm blow through here four days ago, turning everything to mud and washing away any tracks that may have been left before then. Since then, though, we've had six more people go missing, so there's bound to be clues or tracks where they were taken.
- **What does this job pay?** Ah, I could've seen this one coming. I was an adventurer myself once. We've only got a bit of coin to offer, but you know as well as I that adventurers really make their way by stripping their foes of valuables, raiding their lairs, and so on. The best I can offer you myself is the thanks of a town that's scared and needs help.
- **Tell us about Ernol Cooperson.** Ernol Cooperson was a member of the Border Guard stationed here in town. A thick, blond fellow. None too bright. We thought he'd run off with a trader's daughter about a week back, but it's more likely he was the first to go missing. They could tell you more at the Border Guard barracks just over yonder.
- **Tell us about Eliana and Bellia Whisperbreeze.** Now there's a sad, sad story. The Whisperbreezes are sisters, a pair of half-elves that tend to a grove of the wildest plants you ever saw just to the west of here. Eliana went missing almost a week ago, and her sister was frantic with worry. Some of the townsfolk and me looked as well we could, but didn't turn anything up, not even any tracks. Two days ago, a border guard patrol found her body. She'd been cut up something terrible and stashed behind some shrubs in a small cave in the hills. Bellia took her body back to their cottage to prepare it for

burial, but Bellia herself was taken the night before last. Bellia hasn't been found, but I'm not hopeful that we'll find her in any better shape than her sister.

- **How/where was Eliana's body found?** One of the Border Guard patrols found it. You'd be better getting the details from them rather than getting them roundabout through me.
- **Tell us about Frenel the Tall.** He's a lanky farmer and trapper, as the name might tell. Spent a fair amount of time at the Rooster. To be honest, I didn't know him all that well myself. He was a private fellow.
- **Tell us about Solomon.** I guess every town is plagued with a layabout, and our plague is Solomon. He's not a bad fellow, but he's regularly drunk and constantly begging. Older man, about yay tall, doesn't smell too good. A decent laborer on the rare occasions he decides to work an honest day. Solomon came to me three days ago sayin' that he'd seen Frenel getting attacked by ghosts on the night Frenel went missing. Initially, I didn't believe him, but I'm starting to wonder if there isn't a core of truth in his ramblings. I don't know where you'd find Solomon, but he's usually around town somewhere.
- **Tell us about the Greer family.** Good folk that run one of the last farms out of town to the east, toward the mountains. There's four of them now. Emma's husband died a while back. Emma runs the farm with her mother, her son, and her daughter-in-law. They're good, simple folk and well liked around here.
- **Tell us about Artemis Brookner.** Artemis was the halfling tailor here in town. Always a stylish dresser, brown hair, bushy sideburns. It looks like he was kidnapped from his shop just down the road last night. The place was tossed pretty good, as well. You're welcome to go down and take a look (points to the south). Nobody's there—Artemis was a bachelor and lived alone.

Where to Go Next?

Once the conversation with Spokesman Olmir is starting to wind down, move immediately to Encounter 2.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE BODY IN THE WELL

Begin this encounter once the conversation with Spokesman Olmir in Encounter 1 is wrapping up. A farm boy runs up to Olmir with some startling news. Read or paraphrase.

A young boy, kicking up clumps of dirt as he sprints down the street, runs up to Spokesman Olmir's porch. "Spokesman, we done found the tailor's body. Someone dumped it inna the well, and it looks awful."

Spokesman Olmir hobbles up the road to the well in the town's square. He assumes that the characters accompany him, but they don't have to. When the characters reach the well, read:

A cluster of townsfolk muttering darkly to each other stands around the crumpled corpse of a middle-aged halfling. The body has been pulled up from the well recently, as it is sopping wet. Spokesman Olmir crouches down around his crutch for a closer look, and gestures you forward as well.

To characters that examine the body closer, read:

This halfling clearly died by violence. His arms and legs have been broken and his face is a swollen mass of cuts and bruises. His clothes are very stylish and quite fine, despite being waterlogged.

Spokesman Olmir sighs. "Well, another body found, and treated as badly as Eliana's by the look. That's certainly Artemis, by the cut of those clothes and the sideburns he was so proud of. Whatever's behind this has come right into our town. We need it found and stopped."

Characters that make a Heal check against the following DCs can learn more information:

- **DC 10:** The halfling was tortured badly before being dumped in the water.
- **DC 12:** The halfling has been in the water for less than a day.
- **DC 15:** The halfling was tortured to death sometime last night. He was tortured with a small piercing item. His body was dumped into the well within ten or fifteen minutes after he died.

- **DC 20:** The wounds on the halfling's face are like those made by a spiked gauntlet. Although the halfling's face is seriously marred, his mouth and tongue are intact. Whoever was torturing him may have wanted information.

Anyone examining Artemis' body can tell that the halfling wasn't robbed. He is still wearing a particularly valuable-looking amulet and very nice clothes. Olmir can confirm that Artemis always dressed stylishly and was never without his magic amulet. However, neither Olmir nor any of the other townspeople have any clue as to what the magic amulet does.

A *detect magic* spell confirms that the amulet is magical (Spellcraft DC 19, moderate abjuration). At APL 8 and above, the spell also identifies Artemis' fine shirt as magical (Spellcraft DC 18, moderate transmutation). The amulet is an *amulet of fortune prevailing*, and the shirt is a *shirt of the fey*.

At a dramatically appropriate time while the characters are investigating Artemis' body, the halfling's frightened and unquiet spirit rises up from his corpse. This shade thirsts for vengeance and, unable to tell living creatures apart, simply attacks whoever is nearest.

Note that the thick cloud cover above means the spirit's daylight powerlessness drawback is not triggered.

APL 2 (EL 1)

Shadow: hp 19; see *Monster Manual*, page 221. As a Small creature, this shadow has a +1 bonus to its AC and +1 to hit, due to size, but only inflicts 1d4 points of Strength damage with each hit. This shadow has only a tenuous hold on this world, and it automatically takes 8 points of damage at the end of each round (eventually it dissipates on its own, which is the reason for the lower EL for this combat).

APL 4 (EL 3)

Shadow: hp 19; see *Monster Manual*, page 221. As a Small creature, this shadow has a +1 bonus to its AC and +1 to hit, due to size, but only inflicts 1d4 points of Strength damage with each hit.

APL 6 (EL 5)

Wraith: hp 32; see *Monster Manual*, page 258. As a Small creature, this wraith has a +1 bonus to its AC and +1 to hit, due to size, but

only inflicts 1d3 points of damage (plus 1d6 Constitution drain) with each hit.

APL 8 (EL 7)

Spectre: hp 45; see *Monster Manual*, page 232. As a Small creature, this spectre has a +1 bonus to its AC and +1 to hit, due to size, but only inflicts 1d6 points of damage (plus energy drain) with each hit.

APL 10 (EL 8)

Greater Shadow: hp 58; see *Monster Manual*, page 221. As a Small creature, this shadow has a +1 bonus to its AC and +1 to hit, due to size, but only inflicts 1d6 points of Strength damage with each hit.

APL 12 (EL 11)

Dread Wraith: hp 104; see *Monster Manual*, page 258. As a Small creature, this wraith has a +2 bonus to its AC and +2 to hit, due to size. It has 5 ft. space and reach and only inflicts 1d6 points of damage (plus 1d8 Constitution drain) with each hit.

Tactics: The undead simply attacks whoever is nearest to the best of its ability. The townspeople flee from the creature as soon as possible. Spokesman Olmir also retreats, but out of wisdom, not cowardice. As a retired adventurer, Olmir knows about fighting incorporeal undead (and he knows that, without an enchanted weapon, he won't be able to hurt it). Once he has retreated to a short distance away, Olmir shouts words of advice and encouragement to the characters, such as "get around behind it! Undead don't have vital spots, but they can still be flanked!" and "force effects always hit ghostly spirits!"

After Artemis' spirit is defeated, Spokesman Olmir arranges for his burial. Spokesman Olmir encourages the characters to take the magic items in thanks for defeating the shade. Olmir asks some of the townsfolk to take the halfling's body to the Shrine of the Seven Faiths. There, it will be wrapped for burial and buried in a couple of days' time. If the characters want to view the body further, it can be found at the shrine. If the characters have some other plan for the body, the townspeople agree to it on a DC 20 Diplomacy or Bluff check, as long as the plans aren't unreasonable or suspicious.

If the characters cast *Speak with Dead*, Artemis is Neutral Good and has a +4 Will save to resist the spell. He can describe the sudden, brutal

attack in his home. Two "ghost men" (Artemis doesn't know anything about the Lerara Suel and assumes that the pale figures were undead of some sort) tortured him and demanded to know where he had hidden "the holy artifact." Of course, Artemis had no idea what the "ghost men" were talking about. He insisted that he didn't know anything about any holy artifact and that he was just a tailor. The "ghost men" seemed to believe he knew nothing, so then they just killed him.

If the characters have the means to bring Artemis back from the dead, even after being transformed into an undead creature, his soul does not return, fearing future torment by the "ghost men."

For more information on Artemis Brookner and his final night, refer to Encounter 6.

Treasure: Obtain Artemis' valuables.

APL 2 to 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *amulet of fortune prevailing* (416 gp).

APL 8 to 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *amulet of fortune prevailing* (416 gp); *shirt of the fey* (1250 gp).

Where to Go Next?

Spokesman Olmir encourages the characters to uncover the tailor's murderer in whatever way the characters deem best. Go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation.

If the characters elect to search the well, Olmir praises them for their ingenuity. Unfortunately, the characters do not find anything of interest.

The characters might chase off on a number of dead ends right away (such as searching Frendel's house or investigating the cave where Eliana Whisperbreeze's body was found). In the interest of time, just let the characters know how long that avenue of investigation takes, but assure them that they don't find anything of interest. Then you can move on.

ENCOUNTER 3: AT THE ROOSTER

Use this Encounter if the characters investigate the Rooster (Location 5 on DM Aid: Map #1). The Rooster is operated by a man named Wenden and his two teenaged sons. The Rooster is a popular watering hole for the town, and two to twelve townspeople can generally be found here. The

Rooster was damaged in a fire several years back in an undead attack on the town. Like the other buildings that had been damaged, the Rooster has by now been completely restored.

The regulars at the Rooster are happy to gossip about the missing townspeople. The person most missed in the Rooster is Frendel the Tall, as he had been a regular here for many years.

For the past week and a half, the Rooster has been the gnome Torkas Fleshcarver's home (although around here, he goes by the equally accurate "Torkas the Ranger" and does not wear his grisly human trophies). Torkas has gone out of his way to present a pleasant exterior to the locals here. Torkas even prepared a masterfully stuffed rooster to mount above the inn's door. Torkas' animal companion, a badger named Bristle, is well-behaved and welcome in the Rooster. Wenden, in particular, thinks very highly of Torkas, which is just as Torkas likes it.

When the characters first enter the Rooster, read:

Underneath the colorful stuffed rooster, the doors to the inn and tavern are propped open. Stepping inside, you see a few patrons sharing gossip about recent events over bread and stew. Lounging on a small corner stage is a big badger. A large balding man and a teenaged boy chat with a gnome standing atop a stool at the bar. The gnome sips from an oversized stein of beer as he looks your way, raising an eyebrow enquiringly.

Whether the characters intend to talk to him or not, Torkas approaches the characters to make their acquaintance soon after they enter the Rooster. Bristle the badger also raises her head to eye the characters. Torkas isn't immediately sure what to make of the characters, and their first impression is key to his response to them in Encounter 13. When the characters meet Torkas, read:

This man is lean and wiry for a gnome, dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered. He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly necklace made of bone and shell. The gnome introduces himself as Torkas the Ranger and holds out a hand in greeting.

Torkas engages in small talk in order to feel out the characters. He asks their purpose in town,

their professions, and so on. During this conversation, a few things might raise the characters' suspicions.

- Torkas is evil. *Detect evil* or similar spells reveal that Torkas has a faint evil aura. Torkas neither denies nor explains his aura.
- Torkas is evasive. Although friendly enough at first (he even introduces Bristle), Torkas won't say anything about why he's in town other than that he's "just out to see the Yeomanry." He deflects any conversations about his background, other than to admit that he is merely a ranger and hunter by trade. If the characters mention the recent attacks, Torkas insists that he doesn't know who is responsible. If the characters specifically ask whether Torkas thinks the Lerara Suel might be responsible, he dodges with a comment like "Don't they live deep underground, a thousand miles away? Just as likely to be an aboleth or a band of drow. Which is to say, not likely at all." Any of Torkas' evasions can be detected with a DC 20 Sense Motive check. A success means that the character has a hunch that Torkas knows more than he's letting on, but Torkas refuses to elaborate.
- Torkas doesn't talk about the necklace he wears, other than to say it's a *peripat of wisdom* that he purchased some time ago. He lets the characters take a closer look if they like, but he does not take it off. He certainly won't mention its connection to the Lerara Suel.
- Torkas lets slip his "hobby." If the characters compliment the rooster, Torkas lets his pride get the better of him with a suspicious, but not necessarily incriminating, comment like "Well, I hunt a lot of things, and I like to take the occasional trophy. What good is killing an unusual beast if you aren't going to eat it or stuff it?"
- Torkas is not sympathetic to the town's problem. Although Torkas is clearly liked by the inhabitants of the Rooster, Torkas isn't willing to get involved in Dark Gate's problems. If the characters press for his help, he replies, "That Olmir fellow hinted that I should look into this, too. But I can't

see that there's a whole lot in it for me, so, no, thank you for asking."

After talking to the characters for a few minutes, evaluate Torkas' attitude. If the characters have been polite, he is indifferent. If the characters have been confrontational (challenging him about his alignment or his evasions, or demanding he help Dark Gate), he is unfriendly. If the characters have been downright rude, cast spells to target Torkas (such as *detect thoughts*) or hinted that they think Torkas is behind the recent attacks, he is hostile.

Allow the characters to make a Diplomacy check, if they wish, to influence Torkas' attitude. Torkas' attitude cannot be increased above friendly. Torkas knows that his plan may bring him into conflict with the characters at a later time, so he does not get too close to them. Note Torkas' attitude for use in Encounter 13.

The characters might also question Wenden, Wenden's sons, or the other patrons about Torkas. They all gladly impart the following:

- Torkas has been here almost two weeks. He's a good guy.
- Torkas is almost always here at the Rooster. Some days he'll go out and walk around a bit, but he's rarely gone more than an hour or two. He usually takes his bow with him when he goes.
- Bristle is very well-behaved, and she loves cheese.
- Torkas' necklace is pretty horrid-looking, but he wears it like it was a medal. He says it's made of bones and bug shells.
- Torkas is an excellent taxidermist. Look at the stuffed rooster—he did that. I guess there's more to being a good ranger than killing things—like killing things and stuffing them!
- If the characters ask whether Torkas could be behind the disappearances or Artemis' death, the Rooster's inhabitants insist that it couldn't be so. Torkas is nearly always here at the Rooster. Besides, he's hardly big enough to cause that kind of mischief.

The characters might return to the Rooster several times to ask Torkas or the patrons follow-up questions as their investigations continue. Alternatively, the characters might come back to the Rooster for the simple reason that they have rooms there. When the characters make return

visits, Torkas is usually here (except after Encounter 12), but he remains evasive and unhelpful.

Where to Go Next?

Go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation. If the characters ask Spokesman Olmir what he thinks of Torkas, Olmir admits that he doesn't like the gnome, but that he is no worse than many visitors that Dark Gate sees.

ENCOUNTER 4: BORDER GUARD BARRACKS

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the Border Guard Barracks (Number 12 on DM AID: Map #1).

The Border Guard is an elite branch of the Yeomanry Militia. The Border Guard stationed in Dark Gate are particularly brave, hardy soldiers. Not only must they protect the Yeomanry from threats descending from the Hellfurnaces, but from the occasional monster surfacing from the Passage of Slerotin.

As the characters approach this building, read or paraphrase:

This squat building has only a few small windows. Two horses graze in a small paddock just to the west of this defensible-looking structure. The front door is wide open, and just inside you can see three or four people dressed in the uniform of the Yeomanry Border Guard.

If the characters approach, the Border Guard soldiers are friendly but wary. They know adventurers sometimes bring trouble, and Dark Gate has its share of trouble already. The commander is a wiry, well-muscled woman named Merra Farwalker. It is clear that the other Border Guard like and respect Merra.

Merra has nine men under her command. Merra used to send four-man groups on days-long patrols into the Hellfurnaces, but she doesn't have the manpower to do that any more. During the day, four men are at the Passage of Slerotin, four are sleeping or relaxing here, and one is out patrolling the area around the town. At night, five guards are sleeping here and four patrol the town in pairs. Merra stays here at the barracks most of the time.

The characters are likely to have a few questions for Merra, who speaks on behalf of the Border Guard stationed here. If the characters have already recovered Bellia Whisperbreeze, Merra and the Border Guard are more respectful. If the characters have run into trouble in town, the Border Guard are more reserved.

Typical Dark Gate Border Guard: LG male human Fighter2/Ranger2 (Listen +8, Spot +8, Survival +7).

Merra Farwalker, Dark Gate Border Guard Commander: LG female human Fighter4/Ranger4 (Listen +12, Spot +12, Survival +10).

Merra has all of the information on Players Handout 2, which she shares with the characters during their conversation, to the extent they haven't already learned it. The characters likely have several other questions. Here are some anticipated questions and Merra's answers:

- **What do you do here?** We're members of the Border Guard. We watch over the borders and dangerous places of the Yeomanry. Here in Dark Gate, we keep an eye out for dangers from the Hellfurnaces or from the Passage of Slerotin. I'm Merra, and I'm in charge here.
- **How long have you been here?** The members of the Border Guard rotate, but not often. Each of us has been stationed here at least a year or two. Long enough to know Dark Gate pretty well.
- **Who/what do you think is responsible for the disappearances?** Spokesman Olmir seems to think it's the Lerara Suel, but you don't have to look into that gaping pit to find trouble. The Lerara Suel haven't yet come anywhere even close to the surface world, so I don't think they're responsible. Plenty of dangerous predators live in the Hellfurnaces and come down from time to time to feed on the unwary. I suspect a creature from high up in the mountains. As we haven't been able to find any tracks, I suspect it's probably a creature that flies and carries off its kills, like a dragon or a mantichore. But we can't be too careful, so I've doubled the watch on the Passage.
- **Have you looked for tracks/clues?** We've investigated some of the disappearances directly, but we haven't

found any tracks or anything else you might call a clue. We've been scouting around the area during the day. My men found the body of Eliana Whisperbreeze two days ago, wedged in a cave. She'd been pretty badly tortured, and her body was stashed as though to hide it. As for the rest of the disappearances, we've had our hands full watching the Passage of Slerotin and keeping an eye on the town. I haven't had the men available to send out to the Greer farmstead yet. *(As long as Artemis Brookner's body has been found, add:)* And what with the tailor turning up dead right here in town, it's likely I won't have the men to spare to investigate the Greer farm for at least a day or two.

Note: The characters might want directions to the cave where Eliana's body was found. If so, Merra has Crebb (a guardsman stationed here) give them directions. However, there are no clues to find there, as Eliana's body isn't there and the derro tracks were washed away by the rain four days ago.

- **Where is Eliana's body now?** We turned it over to her sister Bellia. Bellia was going to prepare it for burial, or whatever else sort of custom they have, but then Bellia went missing, too. I imagine it's still at their cottage, but likely in a pretty bad state now. She's been dead for days, after all.
- **Do you watch over the Passage of Slerotin?** We watch over the passage in shifts during the day. We generally don't watch it at night, as it'd be pretty hard to see anything in the area without a lot of torches or lanterns, and carrying torches or lanterns that far from town can invite trouble. The first thing I did when the disappearances started was to double up the guard out there. However, nothing's come of it. My men did notice some strange lizard-like tracks a week or so back, but didn't follow up on them at the time. With the recent rain, I'm sure they've been washed away.

If the characters press for more information, Merra dismissively tells the characters to go ask the guardsmen that are out at the Passage of Slerotin now, as they were the ones that found the tracks. Merra dismisses this clue, as no other

lizard tracks have been seen in the area since.

- **Tell us about Ernol Cooperson.** Cooperson was a good man, but not an incredibly disciplined soldier. He took up with a girl that was part of a group of traders that travel around the Sheldomar Valley. We see them every few months. They camp on the outskirts of town for a week or two, and then they're gone again. Whenever his girl was in town, Cooperson would sneak away every other night or so to be with her. It was on his way back from seeing her the last night they were here that Cooperson disappeared. When he didn't come back by morning, we assumed he'd finally run off with his girl and joined the traders. I was mad, and I went riding out to drag Cooperson back. The traders said they hadn't seen Cooperson since the previous night, and his girl said he'd left to go back to town about midnight. I assumed that they were lying, and that Cooperson was hiding, but there wasn't a whole lot I could do. So I came back, and reported Cooperson as abandoning his post.
- **Do you still think he abandoned his post?** No. With the later disappearances, I think that Cooperson was probably victim to whatever's stalking this town. We didn't put it together for several days, though. He would have come back toward town from the west, and that's where the disappearances have all happened, except for Artemis. Plus, Crebb here says that he owed Cooperson quite a lot of gold, and Cooperson wasn't likely to run off to start a new life with his gal before trying to collect on that.
- **Where can we find these traders?** I don't know; they'll be back in a few months. *DM Note:* the traders have nothing to do with this adventure. Try to deter the characters from chasing off after this red herring.
- **What did Ernol look like?** He was a stout, blond-haired fellow, a little taller than me, with big eyes. Rather handsome, in his way, but he leaned toward dense.
- **Tell us about someone else.** Merra has much of the same information as Olmir

regarding other people in town, or other people that have disappeared.

- **You aren't doing your job.** If the characters imply that the Border Guard is not doing their job in Dark Gate, or if the characters insinuate that they're doing the Border Guard's work here, Merra turns cold. She points out that the Border Guard have investigated the site of almost every disappearance so far, and that they are likely to find out who's responsible with or without the characters' help (which is not likely true). Merra believes that everyone working together in the face of adversity is what has made the Yeomanry strong, and if the characters want to insult the Border Guard, then they're welcome to leave Dark Gate. Merra won't go so far as to arrest the characters—after all, they are helping the town—but she won't provide them with any aid, either.

Where to Go Next?

Go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE PASSAGE OF SLEROTIN

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the Passage of Slerotin (See location 9 on DM Aid: Map #1).

The entrance to the Passage of Slerotin is about five miles due west of Dark Gate. The terrain is forested hills, and the ground becomes rougher as the characters travel west. A sparse trail marks the path directly to the Passage of Slerotin, worn by the Border Guard coming and going to keep watch over the entrance to the passage every day for many years and the few adventuring groups that brave the dangerous location. Any townspeople can direct the characters to the entrance to the Passage, and they do so with the practiced ease of someone that's given directions there many times.

The travel to the Passage of Slerotin is uneventful. When the characters arrive, read:

The terrain has become noticeably steeper as you hike along the trail leading due west from Dark Gate. The forested foothills begin to give way to the jagged mountains. The trail opens up into a wide area where it seems two hills have crashed together. Between them is a

circular opening many dozens of yards across. Although the edges have worn down over centuries, it is clear that this passage is far too even to be natural. It thrusts directly back into the Hellfurnaces, a night-black passage into a dangerous realm.

Fifty feet from the gaping entrance is a large, gnarled tree. A sturdy platform has been built high up in the tree, providing a good view of the surrounding area. Two men dressed in the tabards of the Yeomanry Border Guard scan the hills for trouble. Two other Border Guard stand at the base of the ladder leading up to the watchpost, talking to each other.

Although there are usually only two Border Guard on watch here at a time, Merra Farwalker recently doubled the guard. The four guardsmen take turns up in the watchpost, which is only barely large enough for two people. None of the Border Guard have ventured more than a hundred feet or so into the Passage of Slerotin. It's their job to turn back (or report on) anything dangerous that comes out, not investigate the passage itself.

The guardsmen very likely see the characters approach. Unless the characters look dangerous, the guardsmen greet them with a hand raised in greeting. They are glad for the company to break the monotony of their watch. The guards have a starting attitude of indifferent, and talk to the characters if their attitude is increased to friendly. Otherwise, they warn the characters away from the area.

Typical Dark Gate Border Guard (4): LG male human Fighter2/Ranger2 (Listen +8, Spot +8, Survival +7).

The four guardsmen here are Beckler, Brewster, Eggrin, and Riley. Generally, they know much of the same information that Merra Farwalker does (see Encounter 4) and they share her opinion that a flying creature from higher in the Hellfurnaces is behind the disappearances. However, they do know more about the tracks found within the Passage of Slerotin. In fact, the Border Guard can show the characters the tracks, many yards inside the Passage of Slerotin, where the recent rainstorm has not been able to wash them away. Characters can make Search or Survival checks to determine the level of information they can learn about these tracks:

- **DC 5:** The tracks are large and splayed, like a gecko, but each track is several feet long. The creature was probably as big as

a horse. The creature also has thick claws.

- **DC 10:** There are at least two but as many as ten of these creatures. They walked single file so it's hard to tell how many there were.
- **DC 12:** The tracks lead out of the Passage of Slerotin, and are about seven days old. No similar tracks lead back into the Passage of Slerotin. *DM note:* this level is as much as the Border Guards have discovered about the tracks.
- **DC 15:** The way the pads on these footprints are laid indicates that the creature can probably climb as easy as it walks. The claws look sturdy, to help the creature climb, but are probably not used in combat to great effect.
- **DC 20:** Refer to Encounter 11 to see how many riding lizards are present. The character identifies that precise number of creatures. The character is also able to determine that the creatures are not particularly heavy, and weren't carrying a particularly heavy load. The character can also identify other tracks in the Passage of Slerotin (such as from past adventurers), but those tracks are very old and not relevant to this adventure.
- Note that the Lerara Suel scouts have left no tracks here.

Characters can also make a Knowledge (nature) roll to determine how much they know about the creatures that made these tracks.

- **DC 10:** These aren't dragon tracks, but tracks of some sort of big lizard-like animal.
- **DC 16:** These are tracks of riding lizards, large subterranean lizards that are used as mounts and beasts of burden by some races of the Underdark, notably the drow. Riding lizards are generally foul-tempered creatures with a vicious bite.
- **DC 20:** These tracks are particularly large even for riding lizards, indicating that these creatures are stronger and more powerful than usual specimens.

Where to Go Next?

The characters probably return to Dark Gate to continue their investigations. Deter the characters

from traveling deeper into the Passage of Slerotin, as the Passage isn't relevant to this adventure. If the characters are determined to venture into the passage (such as to confront the Lerara Suel about the disappearances) arrange an encounter with an overwhelming force to block the characters' path and threaten them (one or two purple worms should serve nicely for this). These creatures do not follow the characters if they flee, as this sort of encounter should be used to encourage the characters to cease investigations in the Passage of Slerotin.

ENCOUNTER 6: TALKING TO SOLOMON

Use this Encounter when the characters decide to look for Solomon, the town drunk, to find out what he knows. Unfortunately, Solomon has several regular boltholes around town and it's hard to know where to find him at any given time.

Finding Solomon requires the characters to make a DC 20 Gather Information check around town. This isn't because it's hard to get the townspeople to direct the characters to Solomon. Instead, it reflects the fact that few people know where to find him with any accuracy. Finding Solomon is all about finding whoever saw him last. As is typical with the Gather Information skill, each check takes 1d4+1 hours.

If the characters find Solomon (he is in town, but it is not particularly important which alley or woodpile he is hanging around in), describe him as follows:

This older human has a loose, stoop-shouldered look and the smell of the unwashed about him. He gives you a gap-toothed grin as you approach.

Solomon lives in a near-permanent state of mild to severe intoxication. Several years ago, Solomon discovered an abandoned still in the hills to the southeast, and keeping it running is Solomon's only really useful skill. He generally makes his living by begging, with the occasional bit of hiring himself out as a laborer.

Solomon: N male human Commoner2 (Diplomacy +3, Sense Motive +4)

When the characters ask about the disappearances or what Solomon may have seen in the woods, Solomon eagerly tells his tale. However, if the characters look like they will pay for his tale (or, better yet, if they offer to pay him

for his tale), Solomon holds out for as much as he can get.

“So I got this comfy place in the woods to the west, by the smokehouse. It's 'tween these two trees growin' right close together, and plenty o' shrubs to keep off the rain. Lets me have a good view of the smokehouse, too, so I kin see whether anyone's comin' to filch a piece of dried venison or suchlike. 'Course, I wouldn't dream of filchin' any meself.”

“So, 'twas the middle of the night a few nights ago, I was in the comfy spot, and I wake up to hear this gurgling scream. I peeked out, and there was Frendel. He'd got a spear poked right through his shin and into the ground. Round him were two—or mayhaps it was three—ghost people. They was tall an' thin, an' their hair and skin glowed all white in the moonlight. Oh, the looks on their faces was enough to scare the smoked venison right outta ya!”

“One of 'em twisted the spear, and Frendel gave out another cry and raised his hand to try to push 'em away. Them ghosts'd done sommin to his hand, too, but I couldn't see what, 'cause it was all bloody.”

“Then one of the ghosts says, and I heard this right clear, 'No more lies. Tell us where it is.' And Frendel fainted right away. Felt like I would, too. Then one of 'em says something like 'Some brood will it.' Then they picked him up and walked off. And I dint come outta my comfy place 'til the sun was high in the sky the next morning.”

Characters that speak Ancient Suloise can make a DC 12 Intelligence check to realize that “Some brood will it” sounds like the Ancient Suloise words that mean “Bring him back with us.”

If the characters ask for more specifics, Solomon can provide a bit more information.

- **The Time:** Solomon's encounter happened 5 nights ago (see DM Aid: Timeline). Solomon remembers it as “the night before it rained really hard.”
- **Who's Frendel?** Solomon explains that Frendel is a farmer and trapper from the area. He is a lanky fellow, so people have called him Frendel the Tall ever since he was a teenager. Frendel shared Solomon's passion for drink and the two men knew each other reasonably well, but they weren't close friends.

- **The “Ghosts”:** The figures were wearing light metal armor, leather coverings, and carried longspears. At APL 2, there were only two figures. At all other APLs, there were three figures (the fourth Lerara Suel was elsewhere).
- **Lerara Suel:** If the characters ask Solomon about the Lerara Suel, he doesn’t know anything about them and doesn’t remember hearing the name before.
- **Which Way Did They Go?:** When the figures left, they left toward the north (in order to circle back to the cemetery, but Solomon doesn’t know this).
- **The Location:** Solomon can give good directions to the smokehouse and his comfy hiding hole.
- **What Happened Next?:** Solomon spent the next day trying to drink away the sight of Frendel’s torture. The morning after the rains, Solomon was still so upset by what he had seen that he told Spokesman Olmir what he’d witnessed two nights previously. Olmir and a few Border Guards accompanied Solomon back to the smokehouse. They didn’t find any tracks, blood, or other indication. They did find Solomon’s hidey-hole, along with a mostly empty waterskin containing dregs of crude liquor, and they dismissed Solomon’s “ghost story” as fantasy. They were rather mean to Solomon about it, as well. (Spokesman Olmir and any of the Border Guard can confirm these events, but they deny being *too* mean to Solomon.)

What Solomon doesn’t know is that Spokesman Olmir later realized that Solomon’s story may have been true. This is one of the reasons Olmir now suspects that the Lerara Suel have come to Dark Gate.

Solomon also doesn’t know that the Lerara Suel were torturing Frendel to learn the location of *The Mother’s Necklace* (Frendel didn’t know). The Lerara Suel took him back to the mausoleum and, ultimately, they killed him.

Where to Go Next?

The characters probably head out to the smokehouse. If so, go to Encounter 9. If they continue their investigation by going elsewhere, refer to the appropriate Encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE TAILOR’S HOUSE

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the home of the halfling tailor, Artemis Brookner (location 13 on DM Aid: Map #1).

A skilled tailor with a small fortune from his younger days in Loftwick, Artemis came to Dark Gate six years ago. He was well-known and well-liked by the community and often the butt of good-natured jokes due to his small stature (as the only halfling resident of Dark Gate) and his penchant for dressing in fine clothes. Artemis never spoke of his days in Loftwick, how he made his fortune, or why he chose to move to Dark Gate. Nevertheless, the people of Dark Gate were grateful to have a skilled tailor and leatherworker in town.

Artemis was a victim of his size. The Lerara Suel, by now, have learned that a small man has been wearing *The Mother’s Necklace*. They saw Artemis going about the town, noticed from afar that Artemis wore a necklace, and assumed that the tailor had the necklace they were seeking. That is, the Lerara Suel confused Artemis for Torkas. Last night, two Lerara Suel snuck into Artemis’ home, searched his house, and tortured the unfortunate tailor. When they realized that Artemis wasn’t the small man they were looking for, they killed him. The Lerara Suel noticed Artemis’ amulet but, as it clearly isn’t *The Mother’s Necklace*, they had no interest in it. After killing Artemis, the Lerara Suel dumped his body in the town well rather than take it back to the mausoleum. They hoped that this gruesome act might terrorize the town further.

Anyone in the town can direct the characters to the home of Artemis Brookner, the halfling tailor. Artemis lived alone. His home and shop are in the same building (the shop and workroom is in the front, and living quarters are in the back).

When the characters arrive at this building, read:

This building looks carefully tended and recently painted. A tasteful plaque on the door, approximately at waist level, reads “Artemis Brookner, Tailor.” The door’s handle has been smashed, preventing the door from closing all the way.

No one is around to object if the characters take a look inside. When they do, read:

The front room of this house has been converted into a display area where a few suits of sturdy but stylish clothes are on display. An open doorway leads to a workroom and a once-curtained archway opens to living quarters in the back. Although the building itself and all of the clothes are sized for a human, the furnishings and tools are halfling-sized.

It is clear that this building has been thoroughly ransacked. Baskets are upended, bolts of cloth torn, and tools scattered throughout the room. More ominously, blood is spattered over much of the workroom.

There are only a few clues here, available with a successful Search check:

- **DC 5:** Someone was attacked, and probably killed, in the workroom.
- **DC 10:** More specifically, a Small-sized creature was grabbed from his bed, tied up, and then taken to the workroom to be assaulted.
- **DC 12:** There are bolts of valuable cloth and tools here. Even a small cash box (containing 12 gp and 7 sp) has been left. Clearly, this was no burglary. *DM Note:* The valuable items remaining here, should the characters decide to loot the dead tailor's residence, are detailed in the Treasure section below.
- **DC 20** (the Survival skill may also be used for this piece of information): Clearly a halfling lived in this shop and spent much time here. A few booted Medium-sized creatures came in and took a quick look around very recently. There is no indication of any tracks from the creature that performed the assault. *DM Note:* these easier-to-find bootprints are the townspeople who came in and took a look around after Artemis was found dead. If the characters acted quickly to cordon off the tailor's house after his body was found, then these prints are absent.
- **DC 26** (the Survival skill may also be used for this piece of information): The assailants did leave a few partial footprints. There are bootprints of two Medium-sized creatures here, and they were involved in assaulting the halfling.

Treasure: If the characters loot the tailor's house of the remaining valuables, they gain the following treasure.

All APLs: L: 14 gp, C: 2 gp, M: 0 gp.

Where to Go Next?

Go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation. If they return to Spokesman Olmir's house with information, he is grateful for whatever information the characters provide. He encourages them to continue their investigations.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE WHISPERBREEZE GROVE

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the home of Bellia and Eliana Whisperbreeze.

The Whisperbreeze sisters are both half-elven druids who tend a grove about three miles west of town. They live together in a simple cottage at the edge of this grove. The Whisperbreeze sisters grow herbs, flowers, and unusual fruits and vegetables for the townspeople. They also provide occasional veterinary services. Anyone in town can provide directions to the Whisperbreeze cottage and grove.

The derro kidnapped Eliana six days ago and killed her. Bellia was consumed with worry but could not find her missing sister. Eliana's body was discovered by the Border Guard two days ago. Bellia, grief-stricken, spent the day preparing her sister's body for burial. That night, Bellia was herself kidnapped by the Lerara Suel. The grove and the Whisperbreeze cottage have been untended since.

When the characters arrive here, read:

Before you lies a vast thicket of plants, riotous with color. Trees, flowers, vines and herbs grow in abundance here. Although there is no fence to mark where the forest ends and the cultivated grove begins, the border of the grove is plain.

At the edge of the grove are a small cottage and a few sheds. They seem deserted.

The grove is very well-cared for and contains several exotic herbs and plants such as saffron, crocuses, peppercorns, and cinnamon. The cottage is small but well-tended with two rooms (a main room and a bedroom). There are few

valuables here, other than the produce of the grove.

Behind the cottage is a covered porch. On the porch is a low table and a few gardening tools. Resting on the table, wrapped tightly in strips of cloth, is the corpse of a half-elven woman. This is the body of Eliana Whisperbreeze. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that wrapping a body like this prior to burial is a common ritual.

Development: Examining the Body. If the characters unwrap the body, they find that Eliana was badly beaten, her tongue was removed, and her ears have been cut off. Eliana's wounds have been carefully cleaned and sewn up before she was wrapped in bandages. There are only two clues to be found here.

On a DC 27 Search check, the characters discover a long strand of white hair under one of Eliana's remaining fingernails.

If the characters have examined anyone killed by the Lerara Suel, such as Artemis the tailor, ask the characters to make a DC 25 Heal check. On a success, the character can distinguish that different weapons were used on Eliana than those used on victims of the Lerara Suel, although the wounds appear very similar (Medium-sized spiked gauntlets, as opposed to Small-sized short swords).

Development: Examining the Hair. Characters examining the hair should make a Knowledge (local) check and, if they have ranks, a Knowledge (nature) check. If any character succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check (remember, a Knowledge check with a DC of 10 or less can be used untrained), remind the players that drow elves have long white hair. However, this assumption is incorrect. If a character succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) check, add that this hair is too coarse to be drow hair; it looks more like hair from a derro.

Where to Go Next?

This Encounter is a dead end. Go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE SMOKEHOUSE

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the old smokehouse. The characters

likely arrive here after talking to Solomon the drunk in Encounter 6.

This area serves as a common location to cure and smoke meat for many hunters and trappers in Dark Gate. The smokehouse is a sturdy shed with several simple latches to keep animals away from the meat being preserved here. Inside, the smokehouse has a slow-burning fire pit and a small grate-covered vent in the ceiling. Several rafters contain hanging slabs of meat. As several families share this smokehouse, the meat is grouped together and labeled.

The smokehouse is only a mile or so to the northwest of town and most residents of Dark Gate can provide directions there.

When the characters arrive at the smokehouse, read or paraphrase:

Your directions lead you to a clearing in the forest surrounding a small valley. To one side, up on a rise, is a large, sturdy shed. There is a crisp, smoky smell of meat coming from the shed.

Near the center of the clearing, lying in a pool of blood, is a half-elven woman. She breathes shallowly, and then gives a rattling, sudden gasp.

Bellia was questioned, tortured, and left for dead by the Lerara Suel the night before last. However, Bellia did not die. Once she regained consciousness, she managed to drag herself to the nearest place that she knew someone might come: the smokehouse clearing. Having arrived only a short time ago, Bellia has again succumbed to her wounds and is bleeding to death. Bellia is currently at -6 hit points. If the characters do not staunch Bellia's wounds in the next four rounds, she dies.

Before the characters can act to try to save Bellia, one or more wild animals enter the clearing from the other side. These animals have been drawn to this area by the smells from the smokehouse and Bellia's bloody trail. Use DM Aid: Map #2 for this encounter.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Wolves (3): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 283.

APL 4 (EL 4)

Wolves (4): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 283.

APL 6 (EL 6)

Dire Boars (2): hp 52 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 63.

APL 8 (EL 8)

Dire Boars (4): hp 52 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 63.

APL 10 (EL 10)

Razor Boar: hp 127; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 12)

Razor Boars (2): hp 127 each; see *Appendix 1*.

Tactics: These animals are hungry, but not suicidal. If any animal is reduced to 20% of its starting hit points, it flees. These animals only attack downed opponents (including Bellia) when there are no other visible threats to attack. They carry no treasure.

Development: Examining Bellia. Bellia's body shows sign of obvious torture. Characters that make a Heal check against the following DCs can learn a bit more information:

- **DC 13:** This half-elf woman was badly tortured two nights ago. It is a miracle she survived, much less dragged herself here. She was tortured with a small piercing item. If the characters examined the halfling's body in Encounter 2, the wounds are very similar.
- **DC 20:** The wounds on the half-elf's face are like those made by a spiked gauntlet. Although her face is seriously marred, her mouth and tongue are intact. Whoever was torturing her may have wanted information.

Development: Questioning Bellia. Assuming they are able to return her to consciousness, Bellia is grateful for being found and begs to be taken to the Temple of the Seven Faiths. If the characters try to question her, however, Bellia helps as much as she can.

Bellia reveals that her attackers interrogated her about a lot of different people in town. Bellia's will was not strong, and she admits that she told as much as she knew about everyone in town to her tormentors. Bellia told the Lerara Suel everything they asked about. Among the information Bellia told them was that she had seen Torkas wearing a bone-and-shell necklace, but she does not realize that this was the key piece of

information that the Lerara Suel were looking for (as they continued to torture her, just for their own twisted amusement).

Bellia can describe her attackers as two tall, thin men with skin so pale their veins showed through it. They had leather clothes, light armor, and wide hats shielding their faces. They were completely merciless. Although they interrogated her in strangely-accented Common, the pale men laughed and joked with each other as they tortured her in a language she did not understand. If the characters speak Ancient Suloise to Bellia, she identifies it as the language of her assailants.

Although Bellia's bloody trail leads a few hundred yards into the woods, there are no tracks of her attackers at the site she was tortured. Ultimately, Bellia's tracks lead all the way back to her cottage (see Encounter 8), as this is where the Lerara Suel kidnapped her.

Where to Go Next?

Bellia is in serious need of assistance, and taking her back to the Shrine of the Seven Faiths is a good idea. If the characters return to Dark Gate with Bellia Whisperbreeze, the townspeople hear about it and several people come running to care for Bellia and thank the characters. The characters should feel that they have done a good deed by saving Bellia, but this Encounter is ultimately a dead end.

Go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation.

ENCOUNTER 10: THE GREER FARMSTEAD

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the Greer farmstead. Any resident of Dark Gate can direct the characters to this farm, two miles out of town to the southwest. The derro kidnapped everyone on this farm three nights ago (a total of four people: the widow Emma Greer, Emma's mother, Emma's grown son, and Emma's daughter-in-law).

As the characters approach this farmstead, read:

The past mile or two has consisted primarily of well-tended fields separated by rows of tall trees or simple log fences. The Greer farmstead is easy to find, as it is the last of these farms, bordered on its western edge by untamed forest. At first glance, the Greer

farm appears no different than the others you passed on your way here.

Have the characters make a DC 10 Spot check. To those that succeed, add:

Between the farmhouse and a small barn beyond it, a large animal has been messily slaughtered and is surrounded by a cloud of flies. With a sudden “clack” the screened door on the front porch blows open and then slams closed again.

There is no danger here, but this shouldn't be immediately obvious to the characters. Play up the creepy atmosphere of an abandoned farmhouse.

The derro came from the woods to the west while the Greer family was asleep. They dismounted from their riding lizards, burst into the house, and beat all of the Greers unconscious. They also made a quick search of the farm and the barn. When the derro discovered the Greers' only horse, they killed it, dragged it into the yard, and carved off several chunks of meat to take back with them and eat later.

If the characters take a look around, ask them for Search or Survival totals. The characters may take a few hours to “take 20” on the entire house and barn area. There are a few clues here available with a successful Search or Survival check:

- **DC 5:** Four people lived here, two in one room and two in another. The barn was used to store farm tools and as a stable for a single horse, which is now lying outside of the barn, hacked apart.
- **DC 10:** The horse was quickly and sloppily butchered. There are tracks all over the area of some large dragon-like creatures. Refer to the Search/Survival table in Encounter 5 for more information, but do not apply the DC 12 result there (as it is inapplicable here). You can also let the characters roll on the Knowledge (nature) table in Encounter 5 as well.
- **DC 13:** Two women lived in one of the rooms and a married couple lived in the other room.
- **DC 15:** The horse was hacked apart with a bladed weapon like a short sword. Much of the meat is gone. Smaller wild animals have gnawed on the carcass after the horse was killed, which was about three days ago.

- **DC 18:** There was a struggle in one of the bedrooms of the house. The characters discover a clump of long white hair in one of the bedrooms. Refer to the “Examining the Hair” Development in Encounter 8 if the characters take a closer look at the white hairs.
- **DC 22:** The family consisted of a very old woman and her daughter (who shared one room) and a grandson and his wife (who shared the other room). They have all been living here for many years.
- **DC 26:** The creatures that kidnapped the people did not leave much evidence of their presence (except for the clump of hair). They were not heavy and fairly small, about the size of large gnomes.

Development: The Coster Family in Need.

The occupants of the nearest farmhouse, the Coster family, were too far away to hear the attack. The Costers volunteer this information if the characters think to go ask them. The Costers are terrified that they might be the next victims of the unknown stalkers. They offer to pay the characters their entire savings—30 gold coins and two heavy horses—if the characters agree to remain on the Coster farm and protect them. Of course, the characters' time is probably better spent solving the mystery of the disappearances, but you can use this opportunity to show some conflict between what the characters can do in the short term and what they should do in the long term.

Where to Go Next?

The riding lizard tracks clearly come in from the hilly forest to the west and just as clearly leave the same way. The Survival check to follow the tracks is only DC 10, and therefore may be attempted even without the Track feat. When the characters follow the tracks, go to Encounter 11.

If the characters leave the farm for any other reason, go to the Encounter applicable to the characters' next avenue of investigation. If the characters return to mention the tracks to the Border Guard or to Spokesman Olmir, they encourage the characters to follow the tracks warily.

ENCOUNTER 11: THE DERANGED DERRO

Use this Encounter when the characters approach the derro cave by following the tracks from the Greer farmstead. The trail leads several miles into the foothills of the Hellfurnaces. If the characters approach with any reasonable attempt at stealth, they can get up to the cave unnoticed, as the derro don't post guards (their riding lizards smell characters entering the cave itself; see below). The derro doze lightly in shifts throughout the day but are immediately alert if notified by their lizards. As described in the Adventure Background, these derro all believe themselves to be drow elves (in spirit, if not in form).

When the characters approach, read or paraphrase:

Large boulders and sheer rock faces predominate as you follow the trail higher into the Hellfurnaces. There are trees here, too, but they are twisted specimens gripping tenaciously to patches of soil. The tracks lead around a large boulder and into a wide cave. The cave is no more than eight feet high but at least 15 feet wide, capped with a huge flat rock like a natural lintel. The area outside the cave is shrouded in shadow and the cave itself is dark.

Refer to DM Aid: Map #3 for the cave layout. At the entrance to the cave is a dart trap. As soon as a character steps on the indicated square, a fusillade of darts fills the four squares marked on DM Aid: Map #3. These darts are designed to whistle when fired, alerting the derro to intruders.

APL 2 (EL 4)

Poisoned Dart Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, dart); multiple targets (1 dart per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); poison (Small monstrous centipede poison, DC 10 Fortitude save resists, 1d2 Dex/1d2 Dex); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 22.

APL 4 and 6 (EL 6)

Poisoned Dart Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, dart); multiple targets (1 dart per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); poison (malys root paste, DC 16 Fortitude save resists, 1 Dex/2d4 Dex); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 22.

APL 8 (EL 7)

Poisoned Dart Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, dart); multiple targets (1 dart per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); poison (purple worm poison, DC 24 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Str/2d6 Str); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 22.

APL 10 and 12 (EL 9)

Poisoned Dart Trap: CR 9; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +20 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, dart); multiple targets (1 dart per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); poison (purple worm poison, DC 24 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Str/2d6 Str); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 22.

Once a character crosses the dashed line, the riding lizards automatically pick up the foreign scent and alert the derro. Roll for initiative immediately.

Depending upon the APL, there are between one and six derro here, with an equal number of riding lizards. At APL 2, there is bedding for two derro, but one of the derro recently killed the other in a quarrel.

When the characters enter this cave, read the following text, modified as appropriate for the characters' light sources.

This large, low cave slopes down to a natural sinkhole at the back of the cave. Nest-like bedding for several creatures of various sizes is strewn throughout the chamber, contributing to a pungent reek. The walls of the cave are daubed with crude designs representing spiders and webs.

Standing in the center of the room is a comical sight. A miniature dwarf with long white hair and a long, drooping mustache is clad in a revealing silk gown with elaborate spider designs draped over the top of some light armor. The skimpy gown is much too long for its wearer which is, in any case, definitely a male. It gibbers something in a sibilant language and draws a short sword.

Characters that speak Undercommon understand, "In Lolth's name we will bleed you, then add you to our slave pit!"

Add the following, based on the APL:

APL 2: *Another one of the mustachioed dwarves lies immobile in one corner of the*

room. Two lizards the size of cows stare placidly at you from the back of the room.

APL 4: Another one of the mustachioed dwarves lurks near a wall of the cave with a sword drawn. Two lizards the size of cows stare placidly at you from the back of the room.

APL 6 and up: Several other mustachioed dwarves lurk near the walls of the cave with swords drawn. Several lizards the size of cows squat between you and the strange creatures, clearly poised to attack.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Derro: hp 16; see *Monster Manual*, page 49. The derro's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

APL 4 (EL 5)

Derro (2): hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 49. The derro's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

APL 6 (EL 8)

Derro (3): hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 49. The derro's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

Advanced Riding Lizard (3): hp 52 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Derro (3): hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 49. The derro's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

Derro Warlock, male derro warlock6: hp 69; see *Appendix 1*.

Advanced Riding Lizard (4): hp 52 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Derro (3): hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 49. The derro's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

Derro Warlock, male derro warlock6 (3): hp 69 each; see *Appendix 1*.

Advanced Riding Lizard (6): hp 52 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Derro Warlock, male derro warlock6 (6): hp 69 each; see *Appendix 1*.

Advanced Riding Lizard (6): hp 52 each; see *Appendix 1*.

Tactics: These crazed derro fight until killed or subdued, confident that drow are too powerful to face defeat. Riding lizards attempt to flee if reduced to less than 15 hit points. At APL 2 and 4, the riding lizards are at the back of the room and do not engage in combat unless directly attacked. At APL 6 and above, the lizards are near the center of the cave and used as cover by the derro. Ordinary derro use ranged attacks and *sound burst* first, and only enter melee if necessary or if they can flank a weak-looking opponent. Derro warlocks blast away with *beshadowed blasts*, providing their companions with sneak attack against blinded opponents. Derro warlocks avoid melee as much as possible.

Treasure: Loot the derro.

APL 2: L: 37 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 4: L: 74 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 111 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 145 gp, C: 7 gp, M: *cloak of elemental protection* (83 gp); *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp).

APL 10: L: 213 gp, C: 22 gp, M: 3 *cloaks of elemental protection* (83 gp each); 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

APL 12: L: 204 gp, C: 45 gp, M: 6 *cloaks of elemental protection* (83 gp each); 6 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

Development: The Pit: At the bottom of the natural sinkhole in the back of the room, 30 feet down, are the four members of the Greer family. They have been prisoners for three days. The derro have given them food and water, but they are anxious to be rescued and shout for help as soon as combat breaks out.

The slanted edge of the pit is very slick. Any creature entering a square adjacent to the pit (as marked on DM Aid: Map #3) must make a DC 15

Balance check or fall into the pit. Climbing out requires a DC 20 Climb check. The riding lizards don't have to make this check, but the derro do.

If rescued, the Greer family is very grateful. They answer any questions the characters have. If the characters speak of "ghost people" or Lerara Suel, Emma Greer provides the following:

"A couple of nights before we were taken, I seen...something. I don't know that I believed what I seen, and I didn't tell anyone about it, but I seen a couple of strange, pale people after visiting Carble—that is, my late husband. He's buried in the town cemetery, and I visit him one or two evenings a week."

"I seen two of these pale men in wide hats just as I was leaving the cemetery. I don't think they seen me. At the time, I thought they walked behind the biggest building—mezzoleum or what have you—in the cemetery. Now that I think about it, I bet they went inside it. Which is strange, since nobody ever goes in there."

Emma can confirm that the two men were wearing light metal armor, leather coverings, and carried longspears.

Where to Go Next?

The characters may want to escort the Greers safely back to their farm (although they insist that they don't need the help) or alert Spokesman Olmir about the rescue.

Eventually, Emma Greer's story should convince the characters to examine the large mausoleum in the town cemetery. Emma, or any of the townspeople, can tell the characters where to find the cemetery. It is only a short distance outside of town. When the characters go there to investigate, go to Encounter 12.

ENCOUNTER 12: THE HAUNTED MAUSOLEUM

Use this Encounter when the characters investigate the large mausoleum in the Dark Gate cemetery looking for the Lerara Suel. The characters learn about this location from Emma Greer when they rescue her from the derro slave pit.

It is likely to be after dark by the time the characters arrive here. Alter the text below as appropriate.

The cemetery of Dark Gate is a dismal place, choked with weeds and hung with a low mist in the humid night. As you approach, soft spatters of rain begin to fall. Rising above the headstones that peek out of the low mist are several large stone cubes, each a mausoleum to house a departed soul.

You should play up the atmosphere in this forlorn graveyard. As long as the characters spoke to Emma Greer, they know the largest mausoleum is inhabited by the Lerara Suel. The Lerara Suel have been very careful to keep their presence here quiet, so there is no indication that the graveyard has seen any visitors in many days.

The only tracks are Emma's, as she visits her husband's grave every week or so. A DC 19 Survival check reveals her footprints (this DC drops to 13 during the day), but there are no other tracks to find in this eerie place.

When the characters approach the largest mausoleum, it is shut tight and appears abandoned. Engraved over the entrance is a mostly-obscured coat of arms and an illegible name. The door opens with a solid tug. Inside is a crude camp for four individuals (or, at APL 2, only two individuals). There are bedrolls, canteens of water, a few remnants of previous cold meals, and miscellaneous traveling supplies. There are a few boot prints in the dust here as well.

The interior of the mausoleum is approximately 15 feet square. The mausoleum has been trapped by the Lerara Suel scouts in case any intruders managed to find their lair. Once at least three characters have moved into the mausoleum the heavy stone door slams shut and locks. The interior of the mausoleum fills with a poison gas.

Stone Door: 3 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 45; Break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25.

The trap can be detected from outside or inside the mausoleum. The door locks once it closes, and it can be unlocked (or battered open) from either side. Once the door is closed, however, the trap can only be disarmed from the inside and the characters have only a few rounds to do so before the trap is triggered.

APL 2 (EL 4)

Ungol Dust Vapor Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 15 ft. by 15 ft. room); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1

Cha/1d6 Cha plus 1 Cha drain); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 16.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Ungol Dust Vapor Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 15 ft. by 15 ft. room); never miss; onset delay (2 rounds); poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1 Cha/1d6 Cha plus 1 Cha drain); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 16.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Burnt Othur Vapor Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 10 ft. by 10 ft. room); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison (burnt othur fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con drain/3d6 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 21.

APL 8 (EL 8)

Burnt Othur Vapor Trap: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 10 ft. by 10 ft. room); never miss; onset delay (2 rounds); poison (burnt othur fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con drain/3d6 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 23.

APL 10 (EL 9)

Burnt Othur Vapor Trap: CR 9; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 15 ft. by 15 ft. room); never miss; onset delay (1 round); poison (burnt othur fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con drain/3d6 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 24.

APL 12 (EL 10)

Burnt Othur Vapor Trap: CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 15 ft. by 15 ft. room); never miss; onset delay (1 round); poison (burnt othur fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con drain/3d6 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 29.

The mausoleum also contains a solid stone sarcophagus that has been pushed to one side. Opening the sarcophagus reveals a ghastly stench and the gruesome remains of two men. These men (Ernol Cooperson and Frendel the Tall) are jammed into the sarcophagus atop the tomb's original occupant (now just dry flesh and bones). The men have been cruelly tortured to death. A

DC 15 Heal check reveals that the men were tortured to death with a small, piercing object, but were killed several days apart (Ernol is eight days dead; Frendel is five days dead). A DC 20 Heal check reveals that the wounds were made by a spiked dagger in the same manner as Artemis Brookner's wounds (assuming the characters examined the halfling tailor's body in Encounter 2) and Bellia Whisperbreeze's wounds (assuming the characters examined Bellia in Encounter 9).

On a DC 15 Search check the characters find a map hidden among the miscellaneous items of the Lerara Suel. Give the characters Player Handout #3. This map was drawn by Torkas for the Lerara Suel to find. Torkas is baiting the Lerara Suel into a nearby ravine, where he plans to kill them.

Development: Reading the Map: Torkas is no artist; the map is crude and may be difficult to figure out. Torkas is not certain that the Lerara Suel speak Common (he doesn't think that they do), and he couldn't resist scrawling an insult on the map.

Here are what the different symbols on the map mean. You might allow the characters to make DC 10 Knowledge (geography) checks to figure out the various clues.

- **The Sun.** The scribble in the upper right corner is supposed to be the sun, with the arrow marking its path across the sky. This is supposed to show the passage of east to west, in order to provide that the top of the map is north.
- **The Hellfurnaces.** The upside-down Vs on the left side of the map represent the Hellfurnaces. They are to the west of Dark Gate (and to the south as well, but those are not represented on this map).
- **Dark Gate.** The collection of buildings drawn down in the lower right hand corner of the map is supposed to represent Dark Gate. The small circle is the town well.
- **The Cemetery.** The walled-in collection of buildings is supposed to represent the cemetery, where the Lerara Suel are lairing. Torkas not only deduced that the Lerara Suel were staying in the cemetery, and he couldn't resist marking the mausoleum in which the Lerara Suel were camped.
- **The arrows.** The arrows represent the distance from the town to the cemetery

(which is about two miles to the northwest of the town). The arrows away from the cemetery provide directions to the ravine: go north about two miles (until you reach a sharp bend in a stream flanked by two tall trees), and then go due west for six miles. There, the ground is rent by a large ravine.

- **The ravine.** It is not immediately clear from the map that a ravine is represented here. The characters may think the swirls represent water or a waterfall, but they represent the vegetation that grows over the top of the deepest part of the ravine.
- **The necklace.** The circle with several items hanging off of it is a sketch of *The Mother's Necklace*. The characters recognize it as a fair representation of the ugly necklace worn by Torkas the Ranger, if they ever met him.

Where to Go Next?

The map is easy to follow, and leads the characters to the ravine in Encounter 13. If the characters do not find the map, you may have to use creative means to get the characters back on track (for example, one of Wenden's sons may have heard that Torkas was heading out to the ravine, and he took several gruesome pieces of clothing with him).

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

Use this Encounter when the characters arrive at the ravine on the crude map. You should draw out this area on the battlemat, using DM Aid: Map #4.

The rain continues as you forge your way through the hilly woods to the ravine marked on the map. The ravine slopes down from a wide valley, like a scar in the earth. Large, overhanging trees and dense brush choke much of the valley, but the path into the ravine is plain.

Torkas Fleshcarver is hiding in the brush with his animal companion. He also has a cart hidden nearby. Torkas planned to ambush the Lerara Suel in the gorge, but the arrival of the characters causes him to change his plans. Identify how Torkas feels about the characters, based on their interactions with him in Encounter 3 (if any).

If, for some reason, the characters are not seen at all by Torkas (if they are invisible, for example), and if they do not spot him hiding in the brush, proceed right to Encounters 14 and 15.

If Torkas is Friendly

Torkas stands up and waves to the characters as soon as they arrive. Read:

The gnome trapper lodging at the Rooster suddenly stands up from some of the nearby brush, waving to catch your attention. He is soaked from the rain, and wears several flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you realize that these items are made from teeth and scalps of some kind of humanoid. The gnome hisses at you in a low voice.

"Hey, you're just in time. I don't have a lot of time to explain, but I'm here hunting these same underground bastards that you are. You want them dead for what they've done, and I want to take a couple of bodies for, well, my own style of artistic preservation. Tell you what: if you'll go down there and flush them out, I'll snipe at them from up here. But no slashing weapons or fire spells if you can avoid it. I need their bodies as intact as you can manage. In exchange, I'll give you this hideous old necklace. This necklace, by the way, is what they've been looking for around here. Problem solved, everyone happy. Sound like a deal?"

Torkas knows that there is not a lot of time to discuss, because eventually the Lerara Suel will realize they've been trapped and leave the ravine. He answers only a few questions, and answers them fairly honestly, so long as he thinks it will get the characters down into the ravine faster. Note that Torkas takes a -16 to any Diplomacy checks with humans, due to his trophies.

Torkas intends to give the characters *The Mother's Necklace* after they have returned from the ravine, not before they go into it. If they demand the necklace up front instead, Torkas lets them have it on a DC 25 Diplomacy check.

Once the characters are in the ravine, Torkas has a change of heart. He instead sets up a trap for the characters (see Encounter 15), hoping to kill them once they've dispatched the Lerara Suel. Torkas flees the area, covering his tracks. He intends to come back later to take all of their gear as well as the Lerara Suel corpses. He plans to come back in a few hours, which should give the party plenty of time to leave if they survive.

If the characters are hostile to Torkas or reluctant to go along with his plan, Torkas loses patience. He looks anxiously toward the ravine, mutters, "I don't have time for this nonsense" in Gnome, and attacks. Proceed to initiative.

If Torkas is Indifferent

Note: You should also use this result if the characters never met Torkas, but they do not look like an obviously "good" party (that is, so long as they do not display holy symbols of commonly-known good deities).

In this event, Torkas does his best to stay hidden, along with Bristle. Make Hide checks for the two of them. The characters' Spot checks are penalized with -4 due to the rain and -1 for every 10 feet of distance.

If Torkas remains hidden, the characters likely walk right down into the ravine and don't notice him. Go right to Encounter 14. Once the characters are past, Torkas sets the trap described in Encounter 15 and flees the area, intending to come back in a few hours. He carefully covers his tracks as he does.

If Torkas is spotted, then he decides that he might be able to enlist the party's aid. Read the text from "If Torkas is Friendly," above, and proceed as described there.

If Torkas is Unfriendly

Note: You should also use this result if the characters never met Torkas and if they look like an obviously "good" party (for example, if they display holy symbols of commonly-known good deities).

In this event, Torkas does his best to stay hidden, along with Bristle. Make Hide checks for the two of them. The characters' Spot checks are penalized with -4 due to the rain and -1 for every 10 feet of distance.

If Torkas remains hidden, the characters likely walk right down into the ravine and don't notice him. Go right to Encounter 14. Once the characters are past, Torkas sets the trap described in Encounter 15. Torkas then flees the area, covering his tracks as he does so. He intends to circle back in a few hours to loot whatever bodies remain.

If Torkas is spotted, then he decides that he should silence the party quickly. He immediately sends Bristle into melee and attacks.

If Torkas is Hostile

In this event, Torkas does his best to stay hidden, along with Bristle. Make Hide checks for the two of them. The characters' Spot checks are penalized with -4 due to the rain and -1 for every 10 feet of distance.

If Torkas remains hidden, the characters likely walk right down into the ravine and don't notice him. As soon as all but one of the characters have entered the difficult terrain of the ravine slope, he attacks the last party member. Torkas is counting on the fact that the difficult slope of the ravine will slow the party down enough that he can pick them off one by one.

If Torkas is spotted, then he decides that he should silence the party quickly. He immediately sends Bristle into melee and attacks.

APL 2 (EL 4)

Torkas Fleshcarver, male gnome Ranger4: hp 35; see *Appendix 1*.

Bristle, Badger (animal companion): hp 6; see *Monster Manual*, page 268.

APL 4 (EL 6)

Torkas Fleshcarver, male gnome Ranger6: hp 51; see *Appendix 1*.

Bristle, Advanced Badger (animal companion): hp 24; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Torkas Fleshcarver, male gnome Ranger7: hp 59; see *Appendix 1*.

Bristle, Advanced Badger (animal companion): hp 24; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Torkas Fleshcarver, male gnome Ranger9: hp 75 each; see *Appendix 1*.

Bristle, Dire Badger (animal companion): hp 28; see *Monster Manual*, page 62.

Note: At APL 10 and APL 12, Torkas is being watched by two demons. These two demons owe him a favor. The demons are lurking quite some distance away, watching Torkas for a predetermined signal through a spyglass that Torkas lent to them. Torkas makes this signal as part of his first action in combat (a free action), and the demons immediately *greater teleport* into combat to aid him.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Torkas Fleshcarver, male gnome Ranger¹⁰: hp 83; see *Appendix 1*.

Bristle, Dire Badger (animal companion): hp 28; see *Monster Manual*, page 62.

Babau (2): hp 66 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 40. One of the babau carries a spyglass to watch Torkas for his signal.

APL 12 (EL 13)

Torkas Fleshcarver, male gnome Ranger¹⁰: hp 83; see *Appendix 1*.

Bristle, Dire Badger (animal companion): hp 28; see *Monster Manual*, page 62.

Babau Rogue^{4 (2)}: hp 137 each; see *Appendix 1*. One of the babau carries a spyglass to watch Torkas for his signal.

Tactics: Torkas is a skilled archer. If threatened in melee, he generally casts *arrow mind* and stands his ground. At higher APLs, Torkas casts *spike growth* to cover as large an area as possible between himself and his attackers. At APL 10 and 12, Torkas uses his *boots of swift passage* to escape grapples, entanglement, and other hindering situations. At APL 6 and above, Torkas has already cast *resist energy* (of a type he knows the characters use, or fire as a default).

Bristle and the babau are melee combatants. Bristle just charges the nearest character. The babau *teleport* into flanking and maintain flanking as long as possible to maximize their sneak attack ability.

Torkas surrenders when reduced to 15 hit points or less, unless his victory seems imminent. The babau and Bristle do not surrender.

Treasure: Loot Torkas Fleshcarver and his minions.

APL 2: L: 21 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 4: L: 46 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 6: 46 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 8: 56 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 10: L: 139 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *boots of swift passage* (416 gp), *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 12: L: 181 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *boots of swift passage* (416 gp), *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

Development: Following Torkas. If Torkas has slipped away and the party elects to follow him, they can swiftly catch up to him by following his tracks (Torkas is moving at half speed, or a speed of 10 feet, while covering his tracks). However, following Torkas requires a DC 16 Survival check and the Track feat (this increases to DC 22 at night).

Development: Questioning Torkas. If the characters beat Torkas in combat and question him, he admits his entire plan (see the Adventure Background). If the characters seem likely to execute him on the spot, Torkas demands to be taken to the local guard (who will execute him anyway once his many past crimes are revealed, but to Torkas' thinking, this buys him a little time to come up with an escape plan).

Where to Go Next?

Whether or not they faced Torkas, the characters probably descend into the ravine in order to face the Lerara Suel. If the characters just wait around, however, the Lerara Suel eventually climb out of the ravine at the back end and try to sneak up on the characters. In either case, this leads to the confrontation with the Lerara Suel in Encounter 14.

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

When the characters descend into the ravine, read the following:

The rain continues to tumble down, making the slope down into the ravine somewhat treacherous. The ravine curves down and to the left, out of sight behind massive walls of rain-streaked rock and piles of fallen scree. Near the base of the slope, overhanging branches blot out the little light that remains. The area in the back of the ravine is dark.

The slope counts as difficult terrain because it is so slick. When the characters have reached the bottom of the slope and can see a bit more around the curve of the ravine, have them make Spot checks against the Hide totals of the Lerara Suel scouts. The characters' Spot checks are penalized with -4 due to the rain and -1 for every 10 feet of distance. Even if the characters succeed, they can only see one or two of the Lerara Suel scouts—the others are hidden by the curve in the ravine and the rock piles until the characters get closer.

The Lerara Suel scouts are not interested in discussion or negotiation. They attack anyone in the ravine immediately, starting with any character that obviously displays *The Mother's Necklace*. These fanatics plan to kill the party and take *The Mother's Necklace* from their corpses once they are dead. They do not believe any claims that the party doesn't have *The Mother's Necklace*. The Lerara Suel scouts intend to attack first and interrogate prisoners later to find out the necklace's location if, in fact, the party doesn't have it.

The Lerara Suel scouts hold special hatred for humans of Suloise decent, as they see these humans as blood traitors whose ancestors abandoned them to the lightless depths (which is, historically speaking, probably true).

If the party did not detect the hiding Lerara Suel scouts, then the scouts get a surprise round of combat. Otherwise, proceed to initiative normally.

APL 2 (EL 5)

Lerara Suel Scout, male human Scout3 (2): hp 21 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 4 (EL 7)

Lerara Suel Scout, male human Scout3 (4): hp 21 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 9)

Lerara Suel Scout, male human Scout5 (4): hp 33 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Lerara Suel Scout, male human Scout7 (4): hp 46 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Lerara Suel Scout, male human Scout9 (4): hp 66 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Lerara Suel Scout, male human Scout11 (4): hp 80 each; see *Appendix 1*.

Tactics: Review the skirmish ability of the scouts. Whenever possible, the Lerara Suel scouts use the skirmish ability in preference to full attacks (at APLs 10 and 12, the scouts make use of their *skirmisher boots* to get multiple skirmish attacks). They also provide each other flanking when possible, concentrate their attacks on the easiest foes to hit (or the bearer of *The Mother's Necklace*, if they know who that is), and generally display very good teamwork. The Lerara Suel scouts use their potions as needed.

If the Lerara Suel scouts have the opportunity to take *The Mother's Necklace* and flee, they do so. Otherwise, these men fight until killed or subdued.

Treasure: Loot the Lerara Suel scouts.

APL 2: L: 90 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 2 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 2 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 4: L: 180 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 6: L: 180 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 8: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 10: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 12: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each), 4 *skirmisher boots* (275 gp each).

Development: Interacting with the Lerara Suel: The Lerara Suel scouts speak Common with a very strange accent and prefer to speak in Ancient Suloise (although they do not prefer to speak to humans of Suloise ancestry at all). If interrogated, they reveal the reason for their quest

to the surface (refer to the Adventure Background) and the actions they have committed since they arrived. They are haughty, remorseless, and evil. They would rather die than return home without *The Mother's Necklace* and vow to reclaim it.

Some parties may elect to give *The Mother's Necklace* to the Lerara Suel scouts. Hardly daring to believe their good fortune, the Lerara Suel leave the surface world without so much as a word of thanks.

A few rare parties that did not obtain *The Mother's Necklace* from Torkas and subdued (but did not kill) the Lerara Suel scouts may enlist the aid of the Lerara Suel scouts to hunt Torkas down. The Lerara Suel scouts agree to do so, but plan to betray or flee the party once they have *The Mother's Necklace* in their possession. As the gnome does not move quickly, the characters (with or without the Lerara Suel scouts) will be able to overtake Torkas before too long. You will have to improvise the terrain for this confrontation. Afterwards, the Lerara Suel scouts claim *The Mother's Necklace* and flee with it if possible.

Where to Go Next?

When the characters decide to leave the ravine, note whether they have already dealt with Torkas Fleshcarver. If they have, proceed to the Conclusion. If they have not, Torkas has set a trap for them: proceed to Encounter 15 instead.

ENCOUNTER 15: A PARTING GIFT

Use this Encounter only if the characters did not face Torkas Fleshcarver at all, or if they left him alive after negotiating with him in Encounter 13.

Torkas was able to take a few moments to enact a contingency plan—he set a trap designed to kill anyone walking up out of the ravine. If the party never encountered Torkas in Encounter 13, then he set this trap before he fled the area. If the characters struck up a deal with Torkas and survived the Lerara Suel, Torkas set the trap in order to double-cross them and try to finish them off.

This encounter provides a final challenge to the party only in the event that they were not challenged (either by combat or diplomacy) by Torkas. A party should face either Torkas or this trap, but not both.

The location of the trap is as indicated on DM Aid: Map #4. When it activates, read:

With a sudden rumble, the wall of the ravine crashes down upon you.

At APL 12, add: ***Behind the collapsed wall is a writhing mass of segmented purple flesh. Clearly irate, the creature slithers into your midst.***

APL 2 (EL 4)

Falling Wall Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 melee (4d6); multiple targets (can strike all characters in six adjacent specified squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 4 (EL 6)

Falling Wall Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (can strike all characters in six adjacent specified squares); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Falling Wall Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 melee (8d6); multiple targets (can strike all characters in six adjacent specified squares); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Falling Wall Trap: CR 9; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +20 melee (10d6); multiple targets (can strike all characters in six adjacent specified squares); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Falling Wall Trap: CR 11; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +20 melee (12d6); multiple targets (can strike all characters in six adjacent specified squares); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25.

APL 12 (EL 13)

Falling Wall Trap: CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +20 melee (12d6); multiple targets (can strike all characters in six adjacent specified squares); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20. At this APL, the falling wall reveals a very irate purple worm that immediately attacks the party.

Purple Worm: hp 200; see *Monster Manual*, page 211.

Where to Go Next?

Once the characters have left the ravine, they can return to Dark Gate as heroes. Proceed to the Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

When the characters return to Dark Gate, they are greeted by Spokesman Olmir. Olmir asks the characters about what happened. Once the characters explain that there were two groups of forces preying on the town, and they have been dealt with, Olmir is very pleased. Read or paraphrase:

A smile crosses Spokesman Olmir's weathered face, "A-yea, it's good to know there are heroes about right when folks need 'em. Friends, you'll always have a place here in Dark Gate, any time you return."

If the characters have *The Mother's Necklace*, add:

You aren't certain what would bring the Lerara Suel from their deep, dark homes into the sunlit world for this hideous-looking necklace of bone and carapace. The peculiar item thrums momentarily, like a tuning fork. You get the brief sensation that the item is uneasy, and perhaps displeased with your actions today. But this can't possibly be the case; after all, isn't it only an ugly necklace?

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 2: The Body in the Well

Defeat Artemis Brookner's angry spirit.

APL 2: 30 xp.

APL 4: 90 xp.

APL 6: 150 xp.

APL 8: 210 xp.

APL 10: 240 xp.

APL 12: 330 xp.

Encounter 9: The Smokehouse

Defeat or drive off the wild animals.

APL 2: 90 xp.

APL 4: 120 xp.

APL 6: 180 xp.

APL 8: 240 xp.

APL 10: 300 xp.

APL 12: 360 xp.

Encounter 11: The Deranged Derro

Disable or survive the dart trap.

APL 2: 120 xp.

APL 4: 180 xp.

APL 6: 180 xp.

APL 8: 210 xp.

APL 10: 270 xp.

APL 12: 270 xp.

Defeat the deranged derro.

APL 2: 90 xp.

APL 4: 150 xp.

APL 6: 240 xp.

APL 8: 300 xp.

APL 10: 360 xp.

APL 12: 420 xp.

Encounter 12: The Haunted Mausoleum

Disable or survive the gas trap.

APL 2: 120 xp.

APL 4: 150 xp.

APL 6: 210 xp.

APL 8: 240 xp.

APL 10: 270 xp.

APL 12: 300 xp.

Encounter 13: To Trap the Lerara Suel -or- Encounter 15: A Parting Gift

Defeat or negotiate with Torkas Fleshcarver **or**
Disable or survive the collapsing wall trap.

APL 2: 120 xp.

APL 4: 180 xp.

APL 6: 210 xp.

APL 8: 270 xp.

APL 10: 330 xp.

APL 12: 390 xp.

Encounter 14: In the Ravine

Defeat the Lerara Suel scouts.

APL 2: 150 xp.

APL 4: 210 xp.

APL 6: 270 xp.

APL 8: 330 xp.

APL 10: 390 xp.

APL 12: 450 xp.

Story Awards

Save Bellia Whisperbreeze.

APL 2: 60 xp.

APL 4: 90 xp.

APL 6: 120 xp.

APL 8: 150 xp.

APL 10: 180 xp.

APL 12: 210 xp.

Obtain *The Mother's Necklace*.

APL 2: 60 xp.

- APL 4: 90 xp.
- APL 6: 120 xp.
- APL 8: 150 xp.
- APL 10: 180 xp.
- APL 12: 210 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

- APL 2: 60 xp.
- APL 4: 90 xp.
- APL 6: 120 xp.
- APL 8: 150 xp.
- APL 10: 180 xp.
- APL 12: 210 xp.

Total possible experience

- APL 2: 900 xp.
- APL 4: 1,350 xp.
- APL 6: 1,800 xp.
- APL 8: 2,250 xp.
- APL 10: 2,700 xp.
- APL 12: 3,150 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 spell 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. Because this is a Regional adventure, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 2: The Body in the Well

APL 2 to 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *amulet of fortune prevailing* (416 gp).

APL 8 to 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *amulet of fortune prevailing* (416 gp); *shirt of the fey* (1,250 gp).

Encounter 7: The Tailor's House

All APLs: L: 14 gp, C: 2 gp, M: 0 gp.

Encounter 11: The Deranged Derro

APL 2: L: 37 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 4: L: 74 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 111 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 145 gp, C: 7 gp, M: *cloak of elemental protection* (83 gp); *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp).

APL 10: L: 213 gp, C: 22 gp, M: 3 *cloaks of elemental protection* (83 gp each); 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

APL 12: L: 204 gp, C: 45 gp, M: 6 *cloaks of elemental protection* (83 gp each); 6 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

Encounter 13: To Trap the Lerara Suel

APL 2: L: 22 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 4: L: 60 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 6: 60 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 8: 70 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 10: L: 153 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *boots of swift passage* (416 gp), *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

APL 12: L: 195 gp, C: 75 gp, M: *boots of swift passage* (416 gp), *potion of bear's endurance* (25 gp), *The Mother's Necklace* (333 gp).

Encounter 14: In the Ravine

APL 2: L: 90 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 2 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 2 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 4: L: 180 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 6: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 8: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each).

APL 10: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each), 4 *skirmisher boots* (275 gp each).

APL 12: L: 380 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 *armbands of elusive action* (66 gp each), 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 4 *potions of invisibility* (25 gp each), 4 *skirmisher boots* (275 gp each), 4 *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp each).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 163 gp, C: 77 gp, M: 1,006 gp – Total: 1,246 gp (900 gp).

APL 4: L: 328 gp, C: 77 gp, M: 1,238 gp – Total: 1,643 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 6: L: 565 gp, C: 77 gp, M: 1,238 gp – Total: 1,880 gp (1,800 gp).

APL 8: L: 609 gp, C: 84 gp, M: 2,586 gp – Total: 3,279 gp (2,600 gp).

APL 10: L: 760 gp, C: 99 gp, M: 4,328 gp – Total: 5,187 gp (4,600 gp).

APL 12: L: 793 gp, C: 122 gp, M: 5,986 gp – Total: 6,901 gp (6,600 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Hero of Dark Gate: Due to your successful resolution of troubles in Dark Gate, you are always welcome there. You receive free Adventurer's Standard upkeep during any adventure set in or around the town of Dark Gate. Furthermore, the townspeople agree to keep items you may need in the future. You may circle any two items to which you have access below and add Frequency: Regional access to those two items.

The Mother's Necklace: This ornate necklace is made of painted millipede carapace, bone, and some sort of ceraceous secretion. It was once passed down through generations of worshippers of the Mother, the horrid amoeboid quasi-deity worshipped by the savage and depraved Lerara Suel in the Passage of Slerotin.

The Mother's Necklace functions as a *peript of wisdom +2*. However, characters with a powerful divine connection have the ability to increase the power of *The Mother's Necklace*. If you are able to cast 3rd level divine spells, you may spend 6,000 gp and 2 additional TUs to upgrade *The Mother's Necklace* to a *peript of wisdom +4*. At any time after making this upgrade, if you are able to cast 6th level divine spells, you may spend an additional 10,000 gp and 4 TUs to upgrade *The Mother's Necklace* to a *peript of wisdom +6*.

Once it is upgraded beyond a *peript of wisdom +2*, *The Mother's Necklace* carries a dire curse. Anyone wearing the upgraded *The Mother's Necklace* automatically fails any saving throw from

a spell or effect generated by an ooze for as long as the upgraded necklace is worn and for 24 hours after it is removed. This includes any saving throw required by the character's attended equipment (such as the Reflex save to avoid having a weapon destroyed by the acid of a black pudding). This effect can only be removed with a *wish* or *miracle*.

Moderate transmutation; CL: 15th;
Prerequisites: cannot be crafted; *Price*: 4,000 gp.

Item Access

APLs 2, 4, 6 (all of the following):

- *Amulet of fortune prevailing* (Adventure; MIC; Limit 1)
- *Armband of elusive action* (Adventure; MIC; Limit 1)
- *The Mother's Necklace* (Adventure; see above; Limit 1)

APLs 8, 10 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6 plus the following):

- *Cloak of elemental protection* (Adventure; MIC; Limit 1)
- *Shirt of the fey* (Adventure; MIC; Limit 1)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 plus the following):

- *Boots of swift passage* (Adventure; MIC; Limit 1)
- *Skirmisher boots* (Adventure; MIC; Limit 1)

APPENDIX 1:

APL 2

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

TORKAS FLESHCARVER CR 4

Male gnome Ranger4

NE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Common, Gnome

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield)

hp 35 (4 HD)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4 (+6 vs. illusions, +8 vs. fear);
1/day +4 to a Will save

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Ranged longbow +8 (1d6/x3) or longbow +6/+6 (1d6/x3,
Rapid Shot)

Melee club +5 (1d4)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +0

Atk Options favored enemy (humans +2), Rapid Shot

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
SQ animal companion (Bristle the badger), favored
enemy (humans +2), gnome traits, wild empathy +4

Feats Endurance, Iron Will, Rapid Shot, Track, Trophy
Collector

Skills Craft (alchemy) +2, Craft (taxidermy) +7, Handle
Animal +1, Hide +13, Intimidate +3 (+11 vs. humans),
Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +8, Spot +8, Survival
+8

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded
leather, buckler, longbow with 40 arrows, club, *The
Mother's Necklace*, four human trophies (gloves
studded with teeth, bracers made of skin, scalps
hanging from a belt, and fingers woven into a cloak),
explorer's outfit, 75 gp.

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—*arrow mind*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11),
prestidigitation, *speak with animals* (burrowing
mammals only)

Description This man is lean and wiry for a gnome,
dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black
hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered.
He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly
necklace made of bone and shell. He wears several
flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you
realize that these items are made from teeth and
scalps of some kind of humanoid.

Sources *arrow mind* (*Spell Compendium*), Trophy
Hunter (*Players Handbook II*)

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

LERARA SUEL SCOUT

CR 3

Male Lerara Suel Scout3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** exceptional low-light vision; Listen +8,
Spot +8

Languages Common, Ancient Suloise

AC 16 (17), touch 12 (13), flat-footed 16 (17)

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +1 skirmish); Dodge; ignore attack
of opportunity 1/day; uncanny dodge

hp 21 (3 HD)

Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee longspear +4 (1d8+3/x3 plus poison) or spiked
gauntlets +4 (1d4+2)

Ranged mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow +4
(1d6+2/x3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4

Atk Options skirmish (+1d6/+1 AC)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion
of invisibility*, *armband of elusive action*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ battle fortitude +1, fast movement +10 ft., skirmish
(+1d6/+1 AC), trackless step, trapfinding, uncanny
dodge

Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Track

Skills Balance +3, Climb +8, Hide +8, Jump +14,
Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (nature)
+3, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +8
(+10 underground), Tumble +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt,
longspear, mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow with
20 arrows and 20 silver arrows, spiked gauntlet,
rough leather clothes, various trinkets of bone

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex) A Lerara Suel
scout can see five times as far as a human in
starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions
of poor illumination. He retains the ability to
distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Poison (Ex) The Lerara Suel scout's longspear is
coated with small centipede poison (Fort DC 11;
damage 1d2 Dex/1d2 Dex).

Skirmish (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout gains a +1
competence bonus to AC and deals an extra 1d6
damage on all attacks during any round in which he
moves at least 10 feet. The extra damage applies
only to attacks taken during his turn. This damage
also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to
30 feet away. Creatures without discernable
anatomies and creatures immune to extra damage
from critical hits are immune to this additional
damage. A Lerara Suel scout loses this ability when
wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a
medium or heavy load.

Trapfinding (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can find, disarm,
or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Trackless Step (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This gaunt figure looks like the ghost of a human, with skin so pale you can see blue veins beneath it. He is dressed in dark, crude leathers and light metal armor. His fair hair is pulled back under a wide-brimmed leather hat. He carries a massive wooden spear in both hands, held suspiciously at the ready.

Sources Scout (*Complete Adventurer*), *armband of elusive action* (*Magic Item Compendium*).

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

TORKAS FLESHCARVER CR 6

Male gnome Ranger6
NE Small humanoid (gnome)
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages Common, Gnome

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15
(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield)
hp 51 (6 HD)
Resist fire (or other) 10
Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5 (+7 vs. illusions, +9 vs. fear);
1/day +4 to a Will save

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Ranged masterwork longbow +12/+7 (1d6/x3) or
masterwork longbow +10/+10/+5 (1d6/x3, Rapid
Shot) or masterwork longbow +8 (2d6/x3, Manyshot)
Melee club +7 (1d4)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +2
Atk Options favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2),
Manyshot, Rapid Shot
Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
SQ animal companion (Bristle the badger), favored
enemy (humans +4, animals +2), gnome traits, wild
empathy +6

Feats Endurance, Iron Will, Manyshot, Rapid Shot,
Track, Trophy Collector, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +2, Craft (taxidermy) +9, Handle
Animal +1, Hide +16, Intimidate +4 (+12 vs. humans),
Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +10, Spot +10,
Survival +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded
leather, masterwork buckler, masterwork longbow
with 40 arrows, club, *The Mother's Necklace*, four
human trophies (gloves studded with teeth, bracers
made of skin, scalps hanging from a belt, and fingers
woven into a cloak), explorer's outfit, 75 gp.

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):
1st—*arrow mind*, *resist energy*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):
1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11),
prestidigitation, *speak with animals* (burrowing
mammals only)

Description This man is lean and wiry for a gnome,
dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black
hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered.
He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly
necklace made of bone and shell. He wears several
flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you
realize that these items are made from teeth and
scalps of some kind of humanoid.

Sources *arrow mind* (*Spell Compendium*), Trophy
Hunter (*Players Handbook II*)

BRISTLE, ADVANCED BADGER CR —
N Small animal

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +4, Spot
+4

Languages —

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14
(+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 24 (3 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2; evasion

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft.
Melee 2 claws +7 each (1d2-1) and bite +2 (1d3-1)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** -3
Atk Options rage

Abilities Str 9, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Track^B, Weapon Finesse
Skills Escape Artist +8, Listen +4, Spot +4

Rage (Ex) If Bristle takes damage in combat, it flies into
a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting
madly until it or its opponent is dead. Bristle cannot
end this rage voluntarily. Bristle's statistics change as
follows:

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12
hp 30
Fort +7
Melee 2 claws +9 each (1d2+1) and bite +4
(1d3+1)
Grp -1
Abilities Str 13, Con 19

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

LERARA SUEL SCOUT CR 3

Male Lerara Suel Scout3
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +3; **Senses** exceptional low-light vision; Listen +8,
Spot +8
Languages Common, Ancient Suloise

AC 16 (17), touch 12 (13), flat-footed 16 (17)
(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +1 skirmish); Dodge; ignore attack
of opportunity 1/day; uncanny dodge
hp 21 (3 HD)
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4
Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee longspear +4 (1d8+3/x3 plus poison) or spiked
gauntlets +4 (1d4+2)
Ranged mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow +4
(1d6+2/x3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4
Atk Options skirmish (+1d6/+1 AC)
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion
of invisibility*, *armband of elusive action*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
SQ battle fortitude +1, fast movement +10 ft., skirmish
(+1d6/+1 AC), trackless step, trapfinding, uncanny
dodge

Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Track
Skills Balance +3, Climb +8, Hide +8, Jump +14,
Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (nature)

+3, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +8 (+10 underground), Tumble +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, longspear, mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow with 20 arrows and 20 silver arrows, spiked gauntlet, rough leather clothes, various trinkets of bone

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can see five times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Poison (Ex) The Lerara Suel scout's longspear is coated with small centipede poison (Fort DC 11; damage 1d2 Dex/1d2 Dex).

Skirmish (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout gains a +1 competence bonus to AC and deals an extra 1d6 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 10 feet. The extra damage applies only to attacks taken during his turn. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures without discernable anatomies and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are immune to this additional damage. A Lerara Suel scout loses this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Trapfinding (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Trackless Step (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This gaunt figure looks like the ghost of a human, with skin so pale you can see blue veins beneath it. He is dressed in dark, crude leathers and light metal armor. His fair hair is pulled back under a wide-brimmed leather hat. He carries a massive wooden spear in both hands, held suspiciously at the ready.

Sources Scout (*Complete Adventurer*), *armband of elusive action* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 11: DERANGED DERRO

ADVANCED RIDING LIZARD CR 3
 N Large animal
Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +3
Languages —
AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 52 (7 HD)
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3
Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.
Melee bite +8 (2d4+4) and 2 claws +3 each (1d3+2)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13
Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Feats Alertness, Diehard, Endurance
Skills Climb +14, Hide +0, Jump +11, Listen +6, Spot +3

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

TORKAS FLESHCARVER CR 7
 Male gnome Ranger7
 NE Small humanoid (gnome)
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +11, Spot +11
Languages Common, Gnome
AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield, +2 natural)
hp 58 (7 HD)
Resist fire (or other) 10
Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5 (+7 vs. illusions, +9 vs. fear); 1/day +4 to a Will save
Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Ranged masterwork longbow +13/+8 (1d6/x3) or masterwork longbow +11/+11/+6 (1d6/x3, Rapid Shot) or masterwork longbow +9 (2d6/x3, Manyshot)
Melee club +8 (1d4)
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +3
Atk Options favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2), Manyshot, Rapid Shot
Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, ~~*potion of barkskin*~~
Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
SQ animal companion (Bristle the badger), favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2), gnome traits, wild empathy +7, woodland stride
Feats Endurance, Iron Will, Manyshot, Rapid Shot, Track, Trophy Collector, Weapon Focus (longbow)
Skills Craft (alchemy) +2, Craft (taxidermy) +10, Handle Animal +1, Hide +17, Intimidate +5 (+13 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +11, Spot +11, Survival +11
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather, masterwork buckler, masterwork longbow with 40 arrows, club, *The Mother's Necklace*, four human trophies (gloves studded with teeth, bracers

made of skin, scalps hanging from a belt, and fingers woven into a cloak), explorer's outfit, 75 gp.

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):
 1st—~~*arrow mind*~~, ~~*resist energy*~~
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):
 1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammals only)

Description This man is lean and wiry for a gnome, dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered. He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly necklace made of bone and shell. He wears several flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you realize that these items are made from teeth and scalps of some kind of humanoid.
Sources *arrow mind* (*Spell Compendium*), Trophy Hunter (*Players Handbook II*)

BRISTLE, ADVANCED BADGER CR —
 N Small animal
Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages —
AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 24 (3 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2; evasion
Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft.
Melee 2 claws +7 each (1d2-1) and bite +2 (1d3-1)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** -3
Atk Options rage
Abilities Str 9, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Track^B, Weapon Finesse
Skills Escape Artist +8, Listen +4, Spot +4

Age (Ex) If Bristle takes damage in combat, it flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until it or its opponent is dead. Bristle cannot end this rage voluntarily. Bristle's statistics change as follows:
AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12
hp 30
Fort +7
Melee 2 claws +9 each (1d2+1) and bite +4 (1d3+1)
Grp -1
Abilities Str 13, Con 19

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

LERARA SUEL SCOUT CR 5
 Male Lerara Suel Scout5
 NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +4; **Senses** exceptional low-light vision; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages Common, Ancient Suloise
AC 17 (18), touch 13 (14), flat-footed 17 (18) (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +1 skirmish); Dodge, Mobility; ignore attack of opportunity 1/day; uncanny dodge

hp 33 (5 HD)

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4; evasion

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee masterwork longspear +6 (1d8+3/x3 plus poison) or spiked gauntlets +5 (1d4+2)

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow +7 (1d6+2/x3)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options skirmish (+2d6/+1 AC)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of invisibility, armband of elusive action*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ battle fortitude +1, evasion, fast movement +10 ft., skirmish (+2d6/+1 AC), trackless step, trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Track

Skills Balance +4, Climb +10, Hide +11, Jump +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Spot +10, Survival +10 (+12 underground), Tumble +13

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, masterwork longspear, masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow with 20 arrows and 20 silver arrows, spiked gauntlet, rough leather clothes, various trinkets of bone

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can see five times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Poison (Ex) The Lerara Suel scout's longspear is coated with medium centipede poison (Fort DC 13; damage 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

Skirmish (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout gains a +1 competence bonus to AC and deals an extra 2d6 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 10 feet. The extra damage applies only to attacks taken during his turn. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures without discernable anatomies and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are immune to this additional damage. A Lerara Suel scout loses this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Trapfinding (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Trackless Step (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This gaunt figure looks like the ghost of a human, with skin so pale you can see blue veins beneath it. He is dressed in dark, crude leathers and light metal armor. His fair hair is pulled back under a wide-brimmed leather hat. He carries a massive wooden spear in both hands, held suspiciously at the ready.

Sources Scout (*Complete Adventurer*), *armband of elusive action* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 11: DERANGED DERRO

ADVANCED RIDING LIZARD CR 3

N Large animal
Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +3

Languages —

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12
 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 52 (7 HD); Diehard
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.
Melee bite +8 (2d4+4) and 2 claws +3 each (1d3+2)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Feats Alertness, Diehard, Endurance
Skills Climb +14, Hide +0, Jump +11, Listen +6, Spot +3

DERRO WARLOCK CR 8

Male derro warlock6
 CE Small monstrous humanoid
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*, Listen -3, Spot -3

Languages Undercommon, Elven

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 17
 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor, +2 natural); *entropic warding*

hp 69 (9 HD); **DR** 1/cold iron
Immune *confusion* and insanity
SR 15

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Ranged *beshadowed blast* +12 touch (3d6 plus blindness for 1 round, Fort DC 20 negates)
Melee short sword +9 (1d4+1/19-20 plus poison)
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +4

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6
Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection, potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 4, Cha 22
SQ damage reduction 1/cold iron, deceive item, *detect magic*, madness, poison use

Feats Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills Bluff +10, Concentration +5, Hide +11, Move Silently +11, Use Magic Device +7

Possessions combat gear plus short sword, 2 doses of drow sleep poison, masterwork chain shirt, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Invocations Known (CL 6th):
 Lesser—*beshadowed blast*
 Least—*dark one's own luck, entropic warding, see the unseen*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):
 At will—*detect magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

At will—*darkness, ghost sound* (DC 16)
 1/day—*daze* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 18)

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a derro warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks and gains damage reduction 1/cold iron.

Deceive Item (Ex): A derro warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other characters. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

Detect magic (Sp): A derro warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Invocations (Sp): A derro warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beshadowed Blast (Sp): This invocation allows you to change your *eldritch blast* (see below) into a *beshadowed blast*. Any living creature struck by a *beshadowed blast* must succeed on a Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 round. *Beshadowed blast* is the equivalent of a 4th level spell.

Dark One's Own Luck (Sp): You are favored by the dark powers. You gain a luck bonus equal to your Charisma bonus (if any) on Fortitude saves, Reflex saves, or Will saves (each time you use this ability) for 24 hours. You can't apply this ability to two different save types at the same time. This bonus can never exceed your class level. These derro warlocks

have applied this bonus to their Fortitude saves, and its effect is included in the statistics above.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects. An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 3d6 points of damage. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell. The derro warlocks almost always enhance their *eldritch blast* to be a *beshadowed blast* essence, as described above.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays, and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.) *Entropic warding* is the equivalent of a 2nd level spell.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as *see invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60 feet for a period of 24 hours. *See the unseen* is the equivalent of a 2nd level spell.

Madness (Ex) Derro warlocks use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom modifier, and have immunity to *confusion* and insanity effects. A derro warlock cannot be restored to sanity by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

Poison (Ex) The derro warlock's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

Poison Use (Ex) A derro warlock is not at risk of poisoning himself when handling poison.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A derro warlock takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This small, stocky humanoid has bluish-white skin, white eyes with no irises, and pale hair. A long white mustache droops below the creature's chin. Despite the fact that this creature is clearly a male, it dresses in a very revealing silk gown cut all the way down to the navel over a suit of metal armor. Crude spider patterns have been daubed onto the silk gown. The pale creature pets at these spider patterns absentmindedly and coos to himself.

Sources Warlock (*Complete Arcane*), *cloak of elemental protection* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

TORKAS FLESHCARVER

CR 9

Male gnome Ranger9

NE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Gnome

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield, +2 natural)

hp 75 (9 HD)

Resist fire (or other) 10

Fort +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6 (+8 vs. illusions, +10 vs. fear);
1/day +4 to a Will save; evasion

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), *teleport* 20 ft. as a move action 5/day.

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +15/+10 (1d6+1/19-20/x3) or masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +13/+13/+8 (1d6+1/19-20/x3, Rapid Shot) or masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +11 (2d6+2/19-20/x3, Manyshot)

Melee club +11 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +6

Atk Options favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2), Manyshot, Rapid Shot

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ animal companion (Bristle the dire badger), evasion, favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2), gnome traits, swift tracker, wild empathy +9, woodland stride

Feats Endurance, Improved Critical (longbow), Iron Will, Manyshot, Rapid Shot, Track, Trophy Collector, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +2, Craft (taxidermy) +12, Handle Animal +1, Hide +19, Intimidate +6 (+14 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +13, Spot +13, Survival +13

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather, masterwork buckler, masterwork longbow with 40 arrows, club, *The Mother's Necklace*, *boots of swift passage*, four human trophies (gloves studded with teeth, bracers made of skin, scalps hanging from a belt, and fingers woven into a cloak), explorer's outfit, 75 gp.

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 4th):

1st—*arrow mind*, ~~*resist energy*~~

2nd—*spike growth*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammals only)

Description This man is lean and wiry for a gnome, dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered. He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly necklace made of bone and shell. He wears several flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you realize that these items are made from teeth and scalps of some kind of humanoid.

Sources *boots of swift passage* (*Magic Item Compendium*), *arrow mind* (*Spell Compendium*), Trophy Hunter (*Players Handbook II*)

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

LERARA SUEL SCOUT CR 7

Male Lerara Suel Scout7

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** exceptional low-light vision; Listen +12, Spot +12

Languages Common, Ancient Suloise

AC 17 (19), touch 13 (15), flat-footed 17 (19) (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +2 skirmish); Dodge, Mobility; ignore attack of opportunity 1/day; uncanny dodge

hp 46 (7 HD)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5; evasion

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); flawless stride

Melee masterwork longspear +8 (1d8+3/x3 plus poison) or spiked gauntlets +7 (1d4+2)

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow +9 (1d6+2/x3)

Base Atk +5; **Gp** +7

Atk Options skirmish (+2d6/+2 AC)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of invisibility, armband of elusive action*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ battle fortitude +1, evasion, fast movement +10 ft., flawless stride, skirmish (+2d6/+2 AC), trackless step, trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track

Skills Balance +4, Climb +12, Hide +13, Jump +18, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +12, Move Silently +13, Spot +12, Survival +12 (+14 underground), Tumble +15

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, masterwork longspear, masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow with 20 arrows and 20 silver arrows, spiked gauntlet, rough leather clothes, various trinkets of bone

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can see five times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Flawless Stride (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can move through any sort of terrain that slows movement (such as undergrowth, rubble, and similar terrain) at her normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. This ability does not let him move more quickly through terrain that requires a Climb check or a Swim check to navigate, nor can he move more quickly through terrain or undergrowth that has been magically manipulated to impede motion. A Lerara Suel scout loses this benefit when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Poison (Ex) The Lerara Suel scout's longspear is coated with large centipede poison (Fort DC 16; damage 1d4 Dex/1d4 Dex).

Skirmish (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout gains a +2 competence bonus to AC and deals an extra 2d6 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 10 feet. The extra damage applies

only to attacks taken during his turn. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures without discernable anatomies and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are immune to this additional damage. A Lerara Suel scout loses this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Trapfinding (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Trackless Step (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This gaunt figure looks like the ghost of a human, with skin so pale you can see blue veins beneath it. He is dressed in dark, crude leathers and light metal armor. His fair hair is pulled back under a wide-brimmed leather hat. He carries a massive wooden spear in both hands, held suspiciously at the ready.

Sources Scout (*Complete Adventurer*), *armband of elusive action* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 9: THE SMOKEHOUSE

RAZOR BOAR CR 10

N Large magical beast

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages —

AC 27, touch 10, flat-footed 26 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +17 natural)

hp 127 (15 HD); fast healing 10 **DR** 5/-

SR 21

Fort +12, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee tusk slash +22 (1d8+8) and 2 hooves +17 each (1d4+4) or bite +22 (1d8+8)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +27

Atk Options trample 2d6+12 (Reflex DC 25 half), vortal tusks

Abilities Str 27, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 9

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Listen +8, Spot +8, Survival +8

Vortal Tusks (Ex): On a successful critical hit against a creature of up to one size category larger than itself, the razor boar's tusk slash attack severs the opponent's head (if it has one) from its body. Though some creatures, such as golems and undead other than vampires, are not affected by the loss of their heads, most creatures die when their heads are cut off.

ENCOUNTER 11: DERANGED DERRO

ADVANCED RIDING LIZARD CR 3

N Large animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +3

Languages —

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 52 (7 HD)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +8 (2d4+4) and 2 claws +3 each (1d3+2)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Diehard, Endurance

Skills Climb +14, Hide +0, Jump +11, Listen +6, Spot +3

DERRO WARLOCK CR 8

Male derro warlock6

CE Small monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*, Listen -3, Spot -3

Languages Undercommon, Elven

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 17

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor, +2 natural); *entropic warding*

hp 69 (9 HD); **DR** 1/cold iron

Immune *confusion* and insanity

SR 15

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Ranged *beshadowed blast* +12 touch (3d6 plus blindness for 1 round, Fort DC 20 negates)

Melee short sword +9 (1d4+1/19-20 plus poison)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +4

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 4, Cha 22

SQ damage reduction 1/cold iron, deceive item, *detect magic*, madness, poison use

Feats Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills Bluff +10, Concentration +5, Hide +11, Move Silently +11, Use Magic Device +7

Possessions combat gear plus short sword, 2 doses of drow sleep poison, masterwork chain shirt, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Invocations Known (CL 6th):

Lesser—*beshadowed blast*

Least—*dark one's own luck*, *entropic warding*, see *the unseen*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 16)

1/day—*daze* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 18)

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a derro warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks and gains damage reduction 1/cold iron.

Deceive Item (Ex): A derro warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other characters. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

Detect magic (Sp): A derro warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Invocations (Sp): A derro warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beshadowed Blast (Sp): This invocation allows you to change your *eldritch blast* (see below) into a *beshadowed blast*. Any living creature struck by a *beshadowed blast* must succeed on a Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 round. *Beshadowed blast* is the equivalent of a 4th level spell.

Dark One's Own Luck (Sp): You are favored by the dark powers. You gain a luck bonus equal to your Charisma bonus (if any) on Fortitude saves, Reflex saves, or Will saves (each time you use this ability) for 24 hours. You can't apply this ability to two different save types at the same time. This bonus can never exceed your class level. These derro warlocks have applied this bonus to their Fortitude saves, and its effect is included in the statistics above.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects. An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 3d6 points of damage. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell. The derro warlocks almost always enhance their *eldritch blast* to be a *beshadowed blast* essence, as described above.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.) *Entropic warding* is the equivalent of a 2nd level spell.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as see *invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60

feet for a period of 24 hours. See *the unseen* is the equivalent of a 2nd level spell.

Madness (Ex) Derro warlocks use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom modifier, and have immunity to *confusion* and insanity effects. A derro warlock cannot be restored to sanity by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

Poison (Ex) The derro warlock's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

Poison Use (Ex) A derro warlock is not at risk of poisoning himself when handling poison.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A derro warlock takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This small, stocky humanoid has bluish-white skin, white eyes with no irises, and pale hair. A long white mustache droops below the creature's chin. Despite the fact that this creature is clearly a male, it dresses in a very revealing silk gown cut all the way down to the navel over a suit of metal armor. Crude spider patterns have been daubed onto the silk gown. The pale creature pets at these spider patterns absentmindedly and coos to himself.

Sources Warlock (*Complete Arcane*), *cloak of elemental protection* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

TORKAS FLESHCARVER **CR 10**

Male gnome Ranger10

NE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +14, Spot +14

Languages Common, Gnome

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield, +2 natural)

hp 83 (10 HD)

Resist fire (or other) 10

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6 (+8 vs. illusions, +10 vs. fear); 1/day +4 to a Will save; evasion

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), *teleport* 20 ft. as a move action 5/day.

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +16/+11 (1d6+1/19-20/x3) or masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +14/+14/+9 (1d6+1/19-20/x3, Rapid Shot) or masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +12 (2d6+2/19-20/x3, Manyshot)

Melee club +12 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +7

Atk Options favored enemy (humans +6, animals +2, halflings +2), Manyshot, Rapid Shot

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ animal companion (Bristle the dire badger), evasion, favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2, halflings

+2), gnome traits, swift tracker, wild empathy +9, woodland stride

Feats Endurance, Improved Critical (longbow), Iron Will, Manyshot, Rapid Shot, Track, Trophy Collector, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +2, Craft (taxidermy) +13, Handle Animal +1, Hide +20, Intimidate +6 (+14 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +14, Spot +14, Survival +14

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather, masterwork buckler, masterwork longbow with 40 arrows, club, *The Mother's Necklace*, boots of *swift passage*, four human trophies (gloves studded with teeth, bracers made of skin, scalps hanging from a belt, and fingers woven into a cloak), explorer's outfit, 75 gp.

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th):

1st—*arrow mind*, ~~*resist energy*~~

2nd—*spike growth*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammals only)

Description This man is lean and wiry for a gnome, dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered. He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly necklace made of bone and shell. He wears several flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you realize that these items are made from teeth and scalps of some kind of humanoid.

Sources *boots of swift passage* (*Magic Item Compendium*), *arrow mind* (*Spell Compendium*), *Trophy Hunter* (*Players Handbook II*)

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

LERARA SUEL SCOUT

CR 9

Male Lerara Suel Scout9

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** exceptional low-light vision; Listen +14, Spot +14

Languages Common, Ancient Suloise

AC 17 (21), touch 13 (17), flat-footed 17 (21) (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +2 skirmish, +2 improved skirmish); Dodge, Mobility; ignore attack of opportunity 1/day; uncanny dodge

hp 66 (9 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; evasion

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); flawless stride

Melee masterwork longspear +9/+4 (1d8+3/x3 plus poison) or spiked gauntlets +8/+3 (1d4+2)

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow +10 (1d6+2/x3)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +8

Atk Options skirmish (+3d6+2/+2 AC), improved skirmish (+5d6+2, +4 AC), *skirmisher boots*

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, *armband of elusive action*, *skirmisher boots*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ battle fortitude +1, camouflage, evasion, fast movement +10 ft., flawless stride, skirmish (+3d6+2/+2 AC), trackless step, trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Skirmish, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track

Skills Balance +4, Climb +14, Hide +15, Jump +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Spot +14, Survival +14 (+16 underground), Tumble +17

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, masterwork longspear, masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow with 20 arrows and 20 silver arrows, spiked gauntlet, rough leather clothes, various trinkets of bone

Camouflage (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can use the Hide skill in any sort of natural terrain, even if the terrain doesn't grant cover or concealment. A Lerara Suel scout loses this benefit when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can see five times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Flawless Stride (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can move through any sort of terrain that slows movement (such as undergrowth, rubble, and similar terrain) at her normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. This ability does not let him move more quickly through terrain that requires a Climb check or a Swim check to navigate, nor can he move more quickly through terrain or undergrowth that has been magically manipulated to impede motion. A Lerara Suel scout loses this benefit when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Poison (Ex) The Lerara Suel scout's longspear is coated with huge centipede poison (Fort DC 18; damage 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex).

Skirmish (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout gains a +2 competence bonus to AC and deals an extra 3d6+2 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 10 feet. This increases to a +4 competence bonus to AC and an extra 5d6+2 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 20 feet. The extra damage applies only to attacks taken during his turn. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures without discernable anatomies and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are immune to this additional damage. A Lerara Suel scout loses this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Trapfinding (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Trackless Step (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by

an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This gaunt figure looks like the ghost of a human, with skin so pale you can see blue veins beneath it. He is dressed in dark, crude leathers and light metal armor. His fair hair is pulled back under a wide-brimmed leather hat. He carries a massive wooden spear in both hands, held suspiciously at the ready.

Sources Scout (*Complete Adventurer*), Improved Skirmish (*Complete Scoundrel*), *armband of elusive action* (*Magic Item Compendium*), *skirmisher boots* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 9: THE SMOKEHOUSE

RAZOR BOAR **CR 10**

N Large magical beast
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages —

AC 27, touch 10, flat-footed 26 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +17 natural)
hp 127 (15 HD); fast healing 10 **DR** 5/
SR 21

Fort +12, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)
Melee tusk slash +22 (1d8+8) and 2 hooves +17 each (1d4+4) or bite +22 (1d8+8)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +27

Atk Options trample 2d6+12 (Reflex DC 25 half), vorpal tusks

Abilities Str 27, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 9
Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack
Skills Listen +8, Spot +8, Survival +8

Vorpal Tusks (Ex): On a successful critical hit against a creature of up to one size category larger than itself, the razor boar's tusk slash attack severs the opponent's head (if it has one) from its body. Though some creatures, such as golems and undead other than vampires, are not affected by the loss of their heads, most creatures die when their heads are cut off.

ENCOUNTER 11: DERANGED DERRO

ADVANCED RIDING LIZARD **CR 3**

N Large animal
Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +3

Languages —

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 52 (7 HD)
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.
Melee bite +8 (2d4+4) and 2 claws +3 each (1d3+2)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +13

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Feats Alertness, Diehard, Endurance
Skills Climb +14, Hide +0, Jump +11, Listen +6, Spot +3

DERRO WARLOCK **CR 8**

Male derro warlock
 CE Small monstrous humanoid
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*, Listen -3, Spot -3
Languages Undercommon, Elven

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor, +2 natural); *entropic warding*

hp 69 (9 HD); **DR** 1/cold iron
Immune *confusion* and insanity
SR 15

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14
Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Ranged *beshadowed blast* +12 touch (3d6 plus blindness for 1 round, Fort DC 20 negates)

Melee short sword +9 (1d4+1/19-20 plus poison)
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +4

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection, potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 4, Cha 22
SQ damage reduction 1/cold iron, deceive item, *detect magic*, madness, poison use

Feats Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills Bluff +10, Concentration +5, Hide +11, Move Silently +11, Use Magic Device +7

Possessions combat gear plus short sword, 2 doses of drow sleep poison, masterwork chain shirt, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Invocations Known (CL 6th):
 Lesser—*beshadowed blast*
 Least—*dark one's own luck, entropic warding, see the unseen*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):
 At will—*detect magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):
 At will—*darkness, ghost sound* (DC 16)
 1/day—*daze* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 18)

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a derro warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks and gains damage reduction 1/cold iron.

Deceive Item (Ex): A derro warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other characters. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

Detect magic (Sp): A derro warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Invocations (Sp): A derro warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses, and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during

casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beshadowed Blast (Sp): This invocation allows you to change your *eldritch blast* (see below) into a *beshadowed blast*. Any living creature struck by a *beshadowed blast* must succeed on a Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 round. *Beshadowed blast* is the equivalent of a 4th level spell.

Dark One's Own Luck (Sp): You are favored by the dark powers. You gain a luck bonus equal to your Charisma bonus (if any) on Fortitude saves, Reflex saves, or Will saves (each time you use this ability) for 24 hours. You can't apply this ability to two different save types at the same time. This bonus can never exceed your class level. These derro warlocks have applied this bonus to their Fortitude saves, and its effect is included in the statistics above.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects. An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 3d6 points of damage. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell. The derro warlocks almost always enhance their *eldritch blast* to be a *beshadowed blast* essence, as described above.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.) *Entropic warding* is the equivalent of a 2nd level spell.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as *see invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60 feet for a period of 24 hours. *See the unseen* is the equivalent of a 2nd level spell.

Madness (Ex) Derro warlocks use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom

modifier, and have immunity to *confusion* and insanity effects. A derro warlock cannot be restored to sanity by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

Poison (Ex) The derro warlock's short sword is coated with drow sleep poison (Fort DC 13; damage unconsciousness for 1 minute/unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

Poison Use (Ex) A derro warlock is not at risk of poisoning himself when handling poison.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A derro warlock takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This small, stocky humanoid has bluish-white skin, white eyes with no irises, and pale hair. A long white mustache droops below the creature's chin. Despite the fact that this creature is clearly a male, it dresses in a very revealing silk gown cut all the way down to the navel over a suit of metal armor. Crude spider patterns have been daubed onto the silk gown. The pale creature pets at these spider patterns absentmindedly and coos to himself.

Sources Warlock (*Complete Arcane*), *cloak of elemental protection* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

ENCOUNTER 13: TO TRAP THE LERARA SUEL

TORKAS FLESHCARVER **CR 10**

Male gnome Ranger10

NE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +14, Spot +14

Languages Common, Gnome

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield, +2 natural)

hp 83 (10 HD)

Resist fire (or other) 10

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6 (+8 vs. illusions, +10 vs. fear); 1/day +4 to a Will save; evasion

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), *teleport* 20 ft. as a move action 5/day.

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +16/+11 (1d6+1/19-20/x3) or masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +14/+14/+9 (1d6+1/19-20/x3, Rapid Shot) or masterwork mighty composite (Str +1) longbow +12 (2d6+2/19-20/x3, Manyshot)

Melee club +12 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +7

Atk Options favored enemy (humans +6, animals +2, halflings +2), Manyshot, Rapid Shot

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ animal companion (Bristle the dire badger), evasion, favored enemy (humans +4, animals +2, halflings +2), gnome traits, swift tracker, wild empathy +9, woodland stride

Feats Endurance, Improved Critical (longbow), Iron Will, Manyshot, Rapid Shot, Track, Trophy Collector, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +2, Craft (taxidermy) +13, Handle Animal +1, Hide +20, Intimidate +6 (+14 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +14, Spot +14, Survival +14

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather, masterwork buckler, masterwork longbow with 40 arrows, club, *The Mother's Necklace*, boots of *swift passage*, four human trophies (gloves studded with teeth, bracers made of skin, scalps hanging from a belt, and fingers woven into a cloak), explorer's outfit, 75 gp.

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th):

1st—*arrow mind*, ~~*resist energy*~~

2nd—*spike growth*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammals only)

Description This man is lean and wiry for a gnome, dressed in comfortable-looking leathers. His black hair is close-cropped and his face is well-weathered. He wears a bit of jewelry, including a particularly ugly necklace made of bone and shell. He wears several flesh-colored articles of clothing. With a shudder, you realize that these items are made from teeth and scalps of some kind of humanoid.

Sources *boots of swift passage* (*Magic Item Compendium*), *arrow mind* (*Spell Compendium*), Trophy Hunter (*Players Handbook II*)

BABAU ROGUE4

CR 10

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, tanar'ri)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +20, Spot +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 26, touch 14, flat-footed 26

(+4 Dex, +8 natural, +4 armor) uncanny dodge

hp 137 (11 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron or good

Immune electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 14

Fort +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8; evasion

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee* 2 claws +13 each (1d6+10) and bite +10 (1d6+7)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +16

Atk Options aligned strike (chaotic and evil), Cleave, Power Attack, sneak attack +4d6

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)

At will—*darkness*, *dispel magic*, *see invisibility*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only)

*4-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 22, Dex 18, Con 24, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

SQ protective slime (DC 20), trapfinding, trap sense +1

Feats Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Climb +16, Disable Device +12, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +14, Hide +25, Jump +13, Listen +20, Move Silently +23, Open Lock +14, Search +20, Sleight of Hand +15, Spot +16, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks), Tumble +20, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings)

Possessions masterwork chain shirt, gnawed dwarf fingers. One babau rogue has a spyglass to watch Torkas for his signal.

Protective Slime (Su) A slimy red jelly coats a babau rogue's skin. Any weapon that touches it takes 1d8 points of acid damage from the corrosive goo, and the weapon's hardness does not reduce this damage. A magic weapon may attempt a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid taking this damage. A creature who strikes the babau rogue with an unarmed attack, unarmed strike, touch spell or natural weapon takes this damage as well but can negate the damage with a DC 20 Reflex save. The DCs are Constitution-based.

Summon Demon (Sp) Once per day, a babau rogue can attempt to summon one normal babau with a 40% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Trapfinding (Ex) A babau rogue can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A babau rogue retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Description This gaunt figure looks like a humanoid that has been flayed alive and dressed in light armor. The monster sports a single large horn, a mouthful of teeth, and a disgusting odor. It cackles and gives a knowing grin to its companion.

ENCOUNTER 14: IN THE RAVINE

LERARA SUEL SCOUT

CR 11

Male Lerara Suel Scout11

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +10; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., exceptional low-light vision; Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Common, Ancient Suloise

AC 18 (23), touch 14 (19), flat-footed 18 (23)

(+4 Dex, +4 armor, +3 skirmish, +2 improved skirmish); Dodge, Mobility; ignore attack of opportunity 1/day; uncanny dodge

hp 80 (11 HD)

Fort +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6; evasion

Weakness Vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares); flawless stride

Melee masterwork longspear +11/+6 (1d8+3/x3 plus poison) or spiked gauntlets +10/+5 (1d4+2)

Ranged masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow +13 (1d6+2/x3)

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +10

Atk Options skirmish (+3d6+2/+3 AC), improved skirmish (+5d6+2/+5 AC), *skirmisher boots*

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, *armband of elusive action*, *skirmisher boots*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
SQ battle fortitude +2, blindsense 30 feet, camouflage, evasion, fast movement +20 ft., flawless stride, skirmish (+3d6+2/+3 AC), trackless step, trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Skirmish, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track

Skills Balance +4, Climb +16, Hide +18, Jump +22, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +16, Move Silently +18, Spot +16, Survival +16 (+18 underground), Tumble +20

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, masterwork longspear, masterwork mighty composite (Str +2) shortbow with 20 arrows and 20 silver arrows, spiked gauntlet, *gloves of dexterity* +2, rough leather clothes, various trinkets of bone

Camouflage (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can use the Hide skill in any sort of natural terrain, even if the terrain doesn't grant cover or concealment. A Lerara Suel scout loses this benefit when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can see five times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Flawless Stride (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can move through any sort of terrain that slows movement (such as undergrowth, rubble, and similar terrain) at her normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. This ability does not let him move more quickly through terrain that requires a Climb check or a Swim check to navigate, nor can he move more quickly through terrain or undergrowth that has been magically manipulated to impede motion. A Lerara Suel scout loses this benefit when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Poison (Ex) The Lerara Suel scout's longspear is coated with gargantuan centipede poison (Fort DC 26; damage 1d8 Dex/1d8 Dex).

Skirmish (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout gains a +3 competence bonus to AC and deals an extra 3d6+2 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 10 feet. This increases to a +5 competence bonus to AC and an extra 5d6+2 damage on all attacks during any round in which he moves at least 20 feet. The extra damage applies only to attacks taken during his turn. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures without discernable anatomies and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are immune to this additional damage. A Lerara Suel scout loses this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Trapfinding (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC higher than 20.

Trackless Step (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A Lerara Suel scout takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun.

Description This gaunt figure looks like the ghost of a human, with skin so pale you can see blue veins beneath it. He is dressed in dark, crude leathers and light metal armor. His fair hair is pulled back under a wide-brimmed leather hat. He carries a massive wooden spear in both hands, held suspiciously at the ready.

Sources Scout (*Complete Adventurer*), Improved Skirmish (*Complete Scoundrel*), *armband of elusive action* (*Magic Item Compendium*), *skirmisher boots* (*Magic Item Compendium*)

DM AID: MAP #1 – DARK GATE

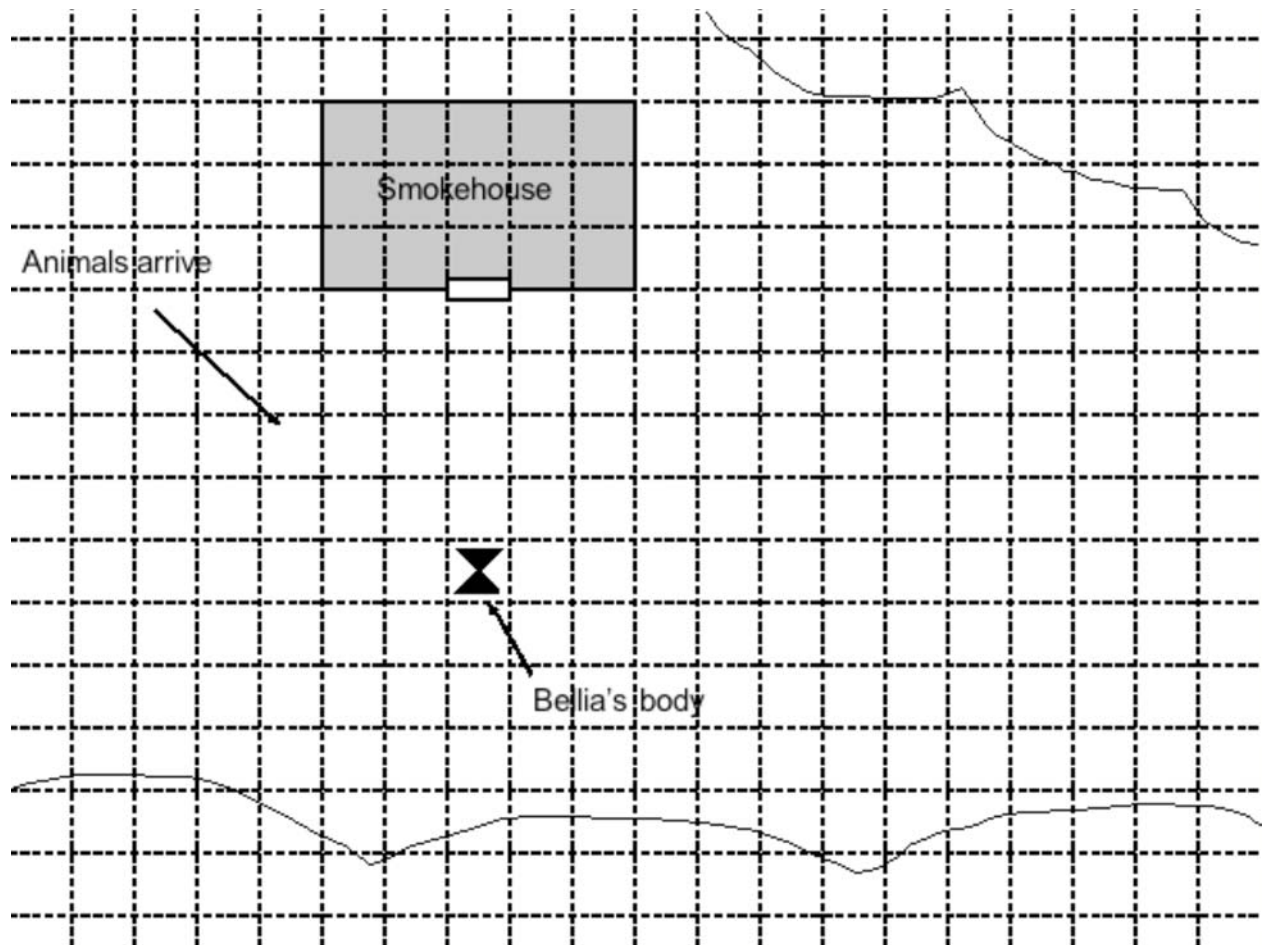
Map modified from http://www.wizards.com/dnd/images/hoh_maps/HoH_map2.jpg



- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Town Meeting Hall | 8. to the Greer Farm and derro caves |
| 2. General Store | 9. to the Passage of Slerotin |
| 3. Town Square | 10. to the Whisperbreeze Grove and the Smokehouse |
| 4. Shrine of the Seven Faiths | 11. to the Cemetery and Lerara Suel outpost |
| 5. The Rooster (inn and tavern) | 12. Border Guard Barracks |
| 6. Blacksmith | 13. Tailor's Shop and Residence |
| 7. Spokesman Olmir's Residence | |

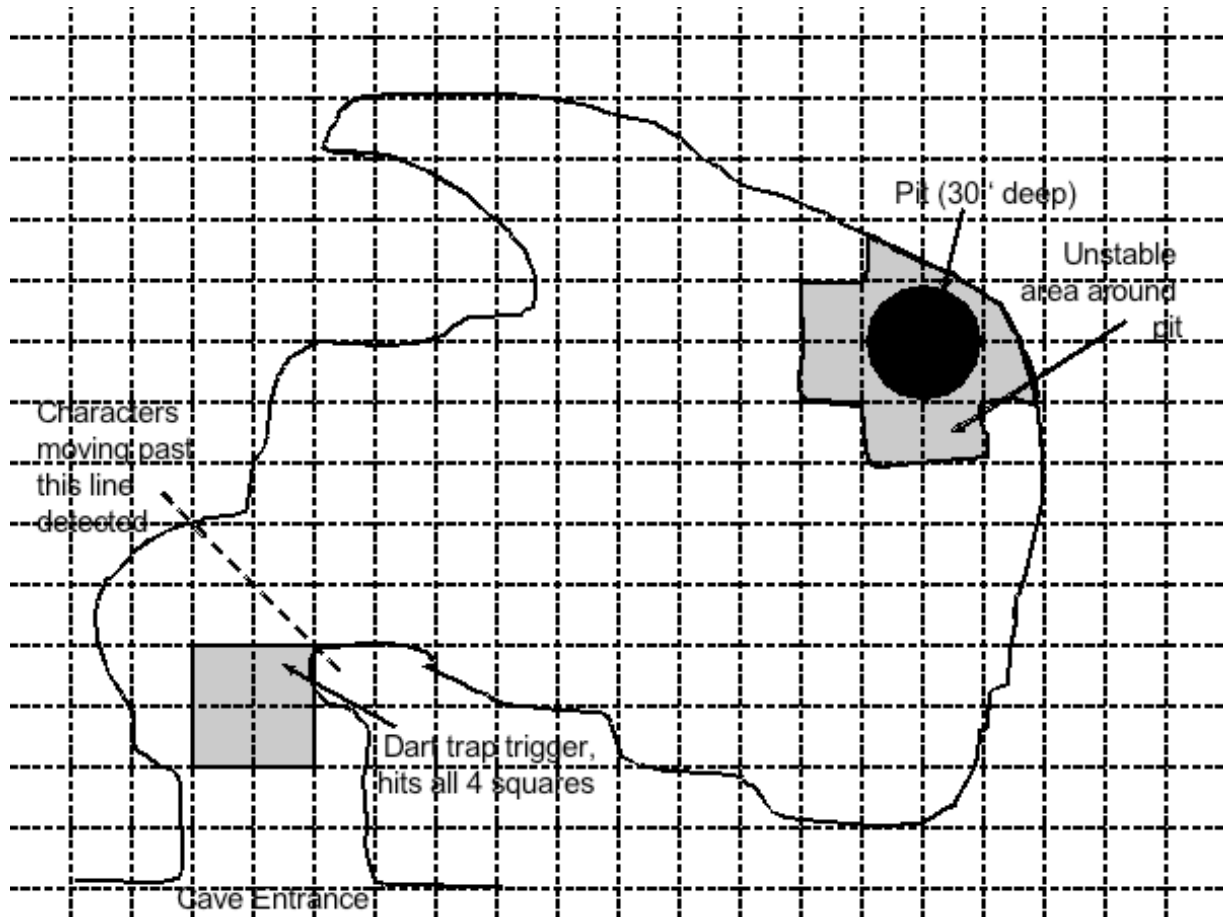
DM AID: MAP #2 – THE SMOKEHOUSE

Use this map for Encounter 9: The Smokehouse.



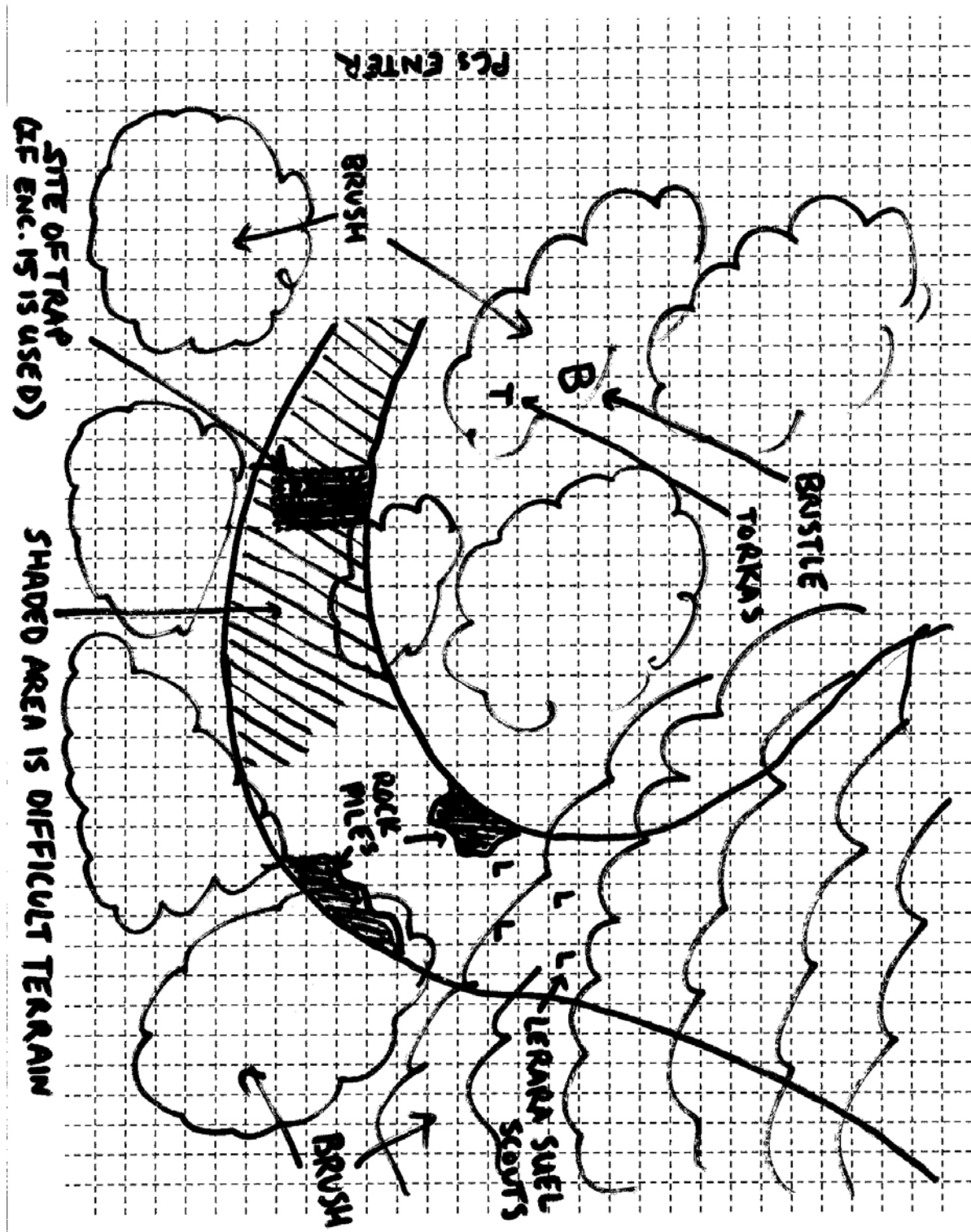
DM AID: MAP #3 – DERRO CAVE

Use this map for Encounter 11: The Deranged Derro.



DM AID: MAP #4 – RAVINE AND ENVIRONS

Use this map for Encounter 13: To Trap the Lerara Suel, Encounter 14: In the Ravine and, if necessary, Encounter 15: A Parting Gift.



DM AID: TIMELINE

This is a timeline of key events, including the disappearances. You should refer to this list to aid NPC conversations with the characters, but you should NOT give this list to the players. All these kidnappings have happened at night, and count back from the afternoon that the characters arrive in Dark Gate.

11 nights ago: Torkas the Ranger arrives in town. He is useful, easygoing and well-liked. Torkas has been at the Rooster ever since, except for long walks in the woods and hills around Dark Gate every couple of days.

8 nights ago: The Lerara Suel scouts skulk out of the Passage of Slerotin and take up residence in the mausoleum in the town cemetery. They are seen by Emma Greer, but the Lerara do not notice her. Emma tells no one of what she saw. This night, the Lerara waylay a Border Guard named Ernol Cooperson, torture him, and kill him. Ernol was on his way back from trysting with a local itinerant trader. The Border Guard assumed at the time that Ernol had deserted, but only recently realize that he was the first of the disappearances. Ernol's remains are in the mausoleum.

7 nights ago: The derro arrive, and set up their camp in a cave in the mountains west of Dark Gate. This cave has a deep natural sinkhole in the back, which they determine will be useful for slaves. The derro spend the night making their cave more "homey" by painting crude spider pictures over all of the walls.

6 nights ago: The derro catch Eliana Whisperbreeze out after dark. Due to her elven nature, they kill her and deface her body. She is not found for several days.

5 nights ago: The Lerara Suel kidnap Frendel the Tall, torture him, and kill him. The Lerara are seen by Solomon, the town drunk out by a smokehouse in the woods. Frendel's body is stashed in the mausoleum.

4 nights ago: Heavy rains wash through the area, which destroy many tracks and keep the Lerara and the derro under cover for this night.

3 nights ago: The derro kidnap the entire Greer family from their farm southwest of town (the widow Emma Greer and Emma's mother, son and daughter-in-law). Eliana Whisperbreeze's mutilated body is found stashed in a cave in the hills. At these events, Spokesman Olmir sends out his call for help to other towns in the Yeomanry. Currently, the Greers are all alive in the sinkhole in the derro's cave.

2 nights ago: The Lerara kidnap Bellia Whisperbreeze from her home as she is preparing her sister's body for burial. They take her to the smokehouse, torture her, and leave her for dead. However, Bellia does not die, and may be found by the characters.

Last night: The Lerara capture the halfling tailor Artemis Brookner in his house, because they mistake him for Torkas (halflings and gnomes look alike to the Lerara Suel). They ransack Artemis' house looking for *The Mother's Necklace*. When they don't find it, they torture Artemis and discover that he's not the person they're looking for. They Lerara Suel then kill Artemis and dump him into the town well while avoiding the Border Guard night patrols. Artemis' corpse is discovered in the well shortly after the characters arrive in Dark Gate.

DM AID: NEW RULES

NEW FEATS

Improved Skirmish (*Complete Scoundrel*)

With a few extra steps, you gain even greater benefits from your skirmishing combat style.

Prerequisite: Skirmish +2d6/+1 AC.

Benefit: If you move at least 20 feet away from where you were at the start of your turn, your skirmish damage increases by 2d6 and your competence bonus to AC from skirmish improves by 2.

Normal: A scout's bonus damage and AC bonus apply if she moves at least 10 feet away from where she was at the start of her turn.

Special: A scout can select Improved Skirmish as one of her scout bonus feats (*Complete Adventurer* 13).

Trophy Collector (*Players Handbook II*)

A belt of minotaur fur, a hood of cloaker wing-skin, and an amulet fashioned from a petrified dragon's eye—these are the intimidating symbols of your trade. You are skilled in preserving portions of defeated enemies and turning them into trophies. The memory of your past accomplishments drives you onward, instilling in you the confidence needed to face still greater foes.

Prerequisite: Craft (taxidermy) 6 ranks.

Benefit: When you defeat a foe in combat, you can preserve a part of its body and create a trophy that you can wear or brandish. In order to be worthy of your efforts, the opponent must have a CR greater than your current level.

A trophy has a value equal to the defeated creature's CR x 100 gp. You must spend time using the Craft (taxidermy) skill to create the trophy as normal. Once you create a trophy, you can sell it for its market price or wear it. When you create a trophy, you must design it to occupy space on your body as one of these kinds of magic items: amulet, belt, boots, or cloak. You cannot gain the benefit of both a magic item and a trophy if both occupy the same space on your body; in such a case, the object you donned last becomes functional and the other object does not work.

While wearing a trophy, you gain a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks per trophy against creatures of same type as the trophy, except for outsiders and humanoids. In those two cases, the target must share the same subtype as the creature from which you crafted the trophy. You take a -4 penalty on Diplomacy checks against creatures of the same type or subtype as one or more of your worn trophies.

For each trophy you wear, you gain a +1 bonus on saves against fear effects. Once per day, you gain a morale bonus on a single Will save equal to the number of trophies you wear. In this case, you draw upon the memories of past victories to strengthen your resolve. If you choose to take this morale bonus on a save against a fear effect, it stacks with the usual +1 bonus on saves per trophy worn.

Special: You can only craft trophies from corporeal creatures that you actively helped defeat. You cannot craft trophies from oozes.

NEW ITEMS

Amulet of Fortune Prevailing (Magic Item Compendium)

You can activate an *amulet of fortune prevailing* (as an immediate action) to reroll a saving throw. You must activate this ability before the success or failure of the saving throw has been determined, and you must use the second result, even if it's lower. You can't use this ability if you have already rerolled the save for any reason.

An *amulet of fortune prevailing* functions once per day.

Moderate (DC 19) abjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *break enchantment*; Price 5,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Armband of Elusive Action (Magic Item Compendium)

An *armband of elusive action* allows you to protect yourself from the hazards of battlefield chaos. When it is activated (mentally, as an immediate action), the band allows you to avoid provoking a single attack of opportunity that your actions would otherwise incur.

Faint (DC 16) transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *cat's grace* or *evade attack*; Price 800 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Boots of Swift Passage (Magic Item Compendium)

When activated (as a move action), *boots of swift passage* teleport you up to 20 feet in any direction (with no chance of error).

You must have line of sight and line of effect to your destination to use the boots. You can't use the boots to move into a space occupied by another creature, nor can you teleport into a solid object; if you attempt to do so, the boots' activation is wasted. You can bring along objects weighing up to your maximum load, but you can't bring another creature with you.

Boots of swift passage function five times per day.

Moderate (DC 18) conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *dimension door*; Price 5,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Cloak of Elemental Protection (Magic Item Compendium)

When you activate a *cloak of elemental protection* (as an immediate action), you gain resistance 10 against a single energy type of your choice (acid, cold, electricity, fire or sonic). This protection lasts until the start of your next turn.

A *cloak of elemental protection* functions once per day. You must wear a *cloak of elemental protection* for 24 hours before you can access its abilities. If it is taken off, it becomes inactive until worn for an additional 24 hours.

Faint (DC 16) abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *resist energy*; Price 1,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Shirt of the Fey (Magic Item Compendium)

When donned, a *shirt of the fey* fades away, becoming almost impossible to see. This shirt grants you damage reduction 3/cold iron.

Moderate (DC 18) transmutation; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *stoneskin*; Price 15,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Skirmisher Boots (Magic Item Compendium)

Scouts prize *skirmisher boots*, but any character can use them to increase combat prowess in a mobile battle. You gain a +2 bonus on damage rolls when you make a skirmish attack. This is a continuous effect and requires no activation. A character without the skirmish class feature does not gain this benefit.

In addition, you can activate *skirmisher boots* (as a swift action) to make a single extra melee or ranged attack using your full base attack bonus. You can only activate this ability if you have already moved at least 10 feet from the space where you started your turn. Movement while mounted does not allow you to activate the boots. This benefit does not require the skirmish class feature and can be activated two times per day.

Faint (DC 17) transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *haste*; Price 3,200 gp; Weight 1 lb.

NEW RACE

Lerara Suel Human

The Lerara Suel are a family of Suel stranded underground after the Rain of Colorless Fire, over a thousand years ago. Abandoned and forced to survive in the inhospitable tunnels under the Hellfurnace Mountains, this once-proud family has degenerated into fierce, pale-skinned savages.

Like most Suel, the Lerara Suel are lean, with pale skin and fair hair. However, centuries spent underground have taken their toll on the Lerara physique. The Lerara have skin so pale that bluish veins can be seen through the skin, and many of them are true albinos. All Lerara have eye color ranging from a light blue to pink.

Most Lerara Suel bathe rarely and wear poorly-tanned animal skins, adding to their pathetic and degenerate appearance. Nobles among the Lerara wear finer leathers, and prefer jewelry. Warriors wear armor constructed from various fearsome creatures native to their underground realm. These creatures are most often bested by luck rather than skill, and rampaging monsters regularly take a heavy toll on the Lerara population.

The Lerara are naturally predisposed to no alignment in particular, but their harsh living conditions and veneration of a horrid entity known as the Mother turn many of the Lerara to evil. No matter their alignment, Lerara Suel are selfish and bossy. Good-aligned Lerara Suel exist, but are rare.

The Lerara Suel have all the traits of humans found in the *Player's Handbook*, with the following additions:

Languages: All Lerara Suel speak Ancient Suloise and Common.

Exceptional Low-Light Vision (Ex): A Lerara Suel can see five times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): A Lerara Suel takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour it is exposed to sunlight, and it dies if its Constitution score reaches 0. Lost Constitution points are recovered at the rate of 1 per 24-hour period spent underground or otherwise sheltered from the sun. This weakness is eliminated if the Lerara Suel takes the Daylight Adaptation feat (below).

NEW SPELLS

Arrow Mind (Spell Compendium)

Divination

Level: Ranger 1, Sorcerer/Wizard 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 immediate action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

The bow in your hand feels more like an extension of your body as you complete the spell—as if its' become a part of your arm. Creatures nearby seem sharper to your eyes, more in focus.

While this spell is in effect and you are wielding a projectile weapon that fires arrows, such as a longbow or shortbow, you threaten all squares within your normal melee reach (5 feet if Small or Medium, 10 feet if Large) with your bow, allowing you to make attacks of opportunity with arrows show from the bow. In addition, you do not provoke attacks of opportunity when you shoot a bow while you are in another creature's threatened square.

Material component: A flint arrowhead.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1 – THE TOWN OF DARK GATE



PLAYER HANDOUT #2 – MISSING TOWNSPEOPLE

This is a list of the townspeople that have gone missing, when they disappeared, and other notes.

- 8 nights ago: Errol Cooperson, a Border Guard, disappears while returning to the Border Guard barracks. It is assumed at the time that he has deserted, and he is not seen again.
- 6 nights ago: Eliana Whisperbreeze disappears from her home west of town. Her twin sister, Bellia, worries but cannot find her.
- 5 nights ago: Frenel the Tall disappears while returning home from a night at the Rooster. Only Solomon claims to have seen him, but investigations don't yield any clues.
- 4 nights ago: A fierce rainstorm pummels the town and the surrounding area throughout the night and the following day. No one disappears this night.
- 3 nights ago: The entire Greer family is kidnapped (four people in total) from their farm west of town. Eliana's body is discovered the next morning, hidden in a small cave west of town. Spokesman Olmir sends word that his town needs help.
- 2 nights ago: Bellia Whisperbreeze disappeared from her home west of town, where she was preparing her sister's body for burial.
- Last night: Artemis Brookner, the town's tailor and leatherworker, disappears from his home. His house was vandalized as well.

PLAYER HANDOUT #3 – HIDDEN MAP

This is the strange map you found hidden in the mausoleum. It looks recently drawn.



CRITICAL EVENT SUMMARY: YEO7-07 DARK GATE STALKERS

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Did Torkas Fleshcarver survive this adventure? | Yes | No |
| 2. Did any of the Lerara Suel survive to flee back to their subterranean home? | Yes | No |
| 3. Did the characters recover <i>The Mother's Necklace</i> ? | Yes | No |

Notes: (Add anything that happened that might be considered out of the ordinary – strange occurrences, results that may not fit the above, etc):