

NYR4-05

# Onyxgate

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup>

Nyronde Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

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Dire omens and portents point to a threat gathering in the ancient and fell fortification known as Onyxgate. Rumor speaks of an entire legion lost attempting to clear this den of evil. For the good of the Kingdom, will you risk life and perhaps soul to provide your King with information on this threat? An adventure for resourceful and hardy characters. APL 4-12. It is strongly advised that parties do not "play up".

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

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## Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and record-keeping after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

### Preparation

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First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the judge), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

### Playing the Game

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Instruct the players either to prepare their characters to participate in the adventure before the session begins, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the judge) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the judge can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's*

*Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in bold italics. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

### Tracking

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After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and judge fill out the RPGA Tracking Sheet. The judge should complete the top of the form and list his name and RPGA number. The players should each list their name and RPGA number. After the form is filled out it should be given to the Event Coordinator.

### LIVING GREYHAWK

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This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials discussed in the Preparation section above that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

### LIVING GREYHAWK Levels of Play

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately. Nevertheless, if a character has the Mounted Combat feat, he may bring a single warhorse, light or

heavy, with him in the adventure and it will not count toward the APL calculation.

3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will 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 may gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character will receive only one-half of the experience points for the adventure. Further, if the PC is three character levels or more lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that PC will receive one-half gold for the adventure as well. 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.

Further, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the scenario unless the highest APL supported by the adventure is APL 12.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If a group is APL 1 there are three things that the group can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a move action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If the animal is wounded or has taken

any nonlethal damage or ability score damage, the DC increases to 12.

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

## Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Nyronnd Region. Characters native to the Kingdom of Nyronnd pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy

new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this scenario.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a 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.

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

## Acknowledgements

My thanks to Brandon Gillespie and John Jenks for many fruitful discussions during the development of this scenario. My thanks to Jason Lauman and, again, John Jenks for their editorial comments. My thanks also to the play-testers who were willing to risk their characters through this adventure before it was completely polished. Their comments helped make this a smoother adventure.

## Adventure Background

Onyxgate is an ancient fortification in the Almor region of Nyronnd. It has long been a fell place and, shortly after King Lynwerd came to power in the winter of 587 CY, the Forth Legion was dispatched to cleanse the place of

its inhabitants. In a major blow to the newly installed King, the Fourth Legion disappeared to a man and has not been seen again. Since the Legions were being reorganized at the time, the missing Legionnaires were listed as missing in action, but the scale of the disaster was hidden from the populace by having the lost men appear to be from companies throughout the Legions.

In truth, General Basmajenn, disgruntled at the rearrangement of the Legions and his own demotion from Royal General (in charge of all Nyronese military forces) to mere General (equal with those who were once his inferiors) by King Lynwerd, was wooed by Prince Sewardt. General Basmajenn ultimately joined forces with a fiendish army amassing in support of Prince Sewardt. General Basmajenn brought most of the Fourth Legion with him into this new army, although there were some loyalists who fought to their deaths. As a “reward” and to assure General Basmajenn’s new loyalty, the clerics of Hextor in support of Prince Sewardt performed the rituals turning the general into an Animus.

As things stand in the present day, the corrupted Fourth Legion trains savage humanoids, traitorous humans, and fiends from the pits to work together as a new conquering army, under the direction of Animus General Basmajenn and a Simulacrum of Prince Sewardt.

The Grey Seer has recently been able to uncover some portion of this magically masked buildup of force in the region of Onyxgate, but his scrying abilities are blocked within the keep and its depths. Use of his regular agents was deemed inadvisable, at least according to his divinations on the subject, but those same divining abilities have located qualified candidates within Rel Mord.

Characters are summoned to the Royal Palace for an urgent meeting. The King, having been advised by the Grey Seer, his un-introduced companion at the meeting, will ask for the PCs’ help in gathering more information about the growing threat at Onyxgate. If they are up to the task, they will be asked to prepare themselves and set out for Almor the next morning.

## **Adventure Summary**

### **Introduction: The King and I**

The King asks the PCs to go to Onyxgate

### **Introduction 2: Entering Almor**

The PCs ride through Almor

### **Encounter One: Wanna wrassle?**

The PCs hit the guards at the fissure entrance to the underground fissure system and, probably, take minor damage while killing the guards.

### **Encounter Two: Dead Men Do Tell Tales**

The corpse of a loyalist former Fourth Legion soldier is found along with his journal, giving some information on the happenings of eight years back.

### **Encounter Three: Be My Ghast**

Pazrael’s spy is found along with some notes and a partial map of the fissure system... A vicious fight ensues.

### **Encounter Four: Yikes that’s a lot of troops**

A speech by the would-be King of Nyron is heard and the majority of his personal army is seen. Foolish PCs will attack and die. Smart PCs will sneak away as rapidly as possible, realizing the entire Kingdom is in great danger.

### **Encounter Five: Cry Havoc**

The PCs must fight the Dogs of War as they attempt to reclaim their mounts and rescue a surviving Entrell Militia captain.

### **The Ride Out of Almor**

The PCs ride out of Almor, pursued by a small un-detailed hunting party and creepy flavor text.

### **Conclusion**

The King takes the report of the PCs and thanks them.

## **Preparation for Play**

Before running this scenario, familiarize yourself with the grappling rules, PHB p 155, (for the first combat encounter), the spell Dimensional Anchor, PHB p 221, (for the magic effect of the rock of Onyxgate), and the rules concerning light and vision, PHB p 164, (for the second combat encounter). When a party first sits down to play the scenario, take a note of their Sense Motive bonus (for the first two combat encounters) and note what sort of light sources they require for vision. During the adventure, keep note of which characters have light sources and the marching order of the party within the fissures and tunnels.

There are some extremely long read-aloud sections in this scenario. Read them ahead of time and paraphrase them at will, according to the needs of time, your Judging style and the players’ play style. Since this scenario may run long at the higher APLs, due to the length of combats, Judges may need to consider paraphrasing these sections. The bullet points following each section heading are the most salient impressions that the flavor text is attempting to convey and the most important information within the encounter. Hopefully, the bullet points will make paraphrasing easier while still retaining the flavor intended.

## Introduction: The King and I

*It is a beautiful day in the capitol city of the Kingdom of Nyronnd. With a relatively young, active, and progressive King on the throne, Nyronnd has been able to reform itself with remarkable speed. The devastation of the great wars of CY 583 to 585, the ruined roads, the empty coffers, and the rampant banditry of a mere nine years ago are now firmly in the past. King Lynwerd's reorganization of the military and restructuring of Nyronnd's provinces has paid off. The only cloud on the horizon is the rumors of plague; a misfortune the Kingdom assures its people is well under control, with clerics even now working on a cure.*

As the second bell before noon peals, a small boy approaches the PC as he/she goes about his/her business in Rel Mord.

*Approaching you while glancing repeatedly down at a piece of parchment held in his hands, a young boy dressed in Royal Courier garb stops to say "Pardon me, but I am asked to take you to see His Majesty, the King. It is a matter of great importance."*

The parchment the boy holds, if the PCs wish to see it, contains a rough ink sketch of the PC, the PC's name under the sketch, and the precise location the PC was at, when the second bell rang.

*The boy leads you in the most direct route up to the Palace. Rather than entering the front gates, you are lead around to the side gates near the older section of the Palace. There, the boy salutes and turns the party over to several Guards who come out to greet the party. The PCs are lead by these Guardsmen through a number of less-used hallways to a small antechamber, with broad oak doors.*

Any PCs who were not together before find the rest of the party gathered in the antechamber. This is an opportunity for the PCs who do not yet know each other to make introductions and give character descriptions.

*After only a few moments of waiting, the wax-rubbed oaken doors that dominate this room open, and an elderly Oeridian lady wearing palace livery beckons you into the room.*

*In the center of the room, a cluttered study of some sort, with bookshelves lining the walls, is a desk with a few mismatched chairs in front of it, a high-backed chair behind it, and nowhere else to sit. Four Royal Guardsmen stand unobtrusively at attention in the corners of the room and standing in front of the desk are two men. The tall dark-haired Oeridian man of noble bearing, King Lynwerd, turns from the papers on the desk. His companion, an older, bull-necked man with long gray hair, a long gray beard, and voluminous gray robes glances at you and, with a gesture, closes the drapes on the far*

*side of the room, hiding some sort of crystalline surface that danced with flickering lights.*

This room is used as a private study by the Grey Seer. King Lynwerd and the Grey Seer preferred to have this meeting quietly, without the pomp and ceremony of a formal audience. The draped crystalline surface is a scrying device, currently set on a vertiginous swirl of colors.

*One of the Royal Guard steps forward and announces "His August Supremacy, Altmeister of All the Aerdi, King Lynwerd!". As he steps back to his post by the wall, he makes an abbreviated gesture to the PCs, apparently suggesting now is an appropriate time to bow.*

If the PCs kneel, bow, curtsy or otherwise assume positions of respect, then continue with the flavor text. Otherwise allow an uncomfortable silence to stretch while the Royal Guard signals with more desperation that the PCs ought to bow. In any case, the King is graceful enough to break the silence after a mere moment or two.

*King Lynwerd says "Please rise and approach the table." As the Royal Guard who announced his title steps forward to escort the party, the King waves him back saying, "Thank you, Watchcaptain Renylds. They may enter My presence unescorted; the Seer summoned them, after all."*

As the PCs approach the table, the King and his companion move around to the side with the single chair, without taking seats. Upon the table is a large and detailed map of the Kingdom, seemingly drawn from a position high above the land.

Note that the King's companion is the Grey Seer. However, it is the King himself who is doing the briefing and has made all decisions in the plan of action. Should the PCs wish to question the Grey Seer, they may, but he has exactly the same information as the King. Furthermore, it is impolite to chose to question the advisor when the King is present and so the Grey Seer will direct the PC's attention back to the King rather than make the error of taking over the briefing.

*The King leans forward and says "The divinations of the Grey Seer indicate that this time of relative peace is merely the quiet before a great storm, a storm which may try Our Kingdom greatly. There is a source of evil and threat that his magics can not penetrate from afar. As I plan the future of the Kingdom, I must have more knowledge of the nature of this threat."*

*"When he asked his God, Boccob, for guidance in this matter, the Grey Seer found that greater or lesser disaster attended each proposed use of My own agents or his... However, this was not always true of the times I proposed using outside assistance. Adventurers are often unorthodox in their methods and may be able to penetrate the*

*nature of a threat that our own agents are unsuited to discover. Each of you has proven your capability and resilience many times over."*

*"So it is that I must ask each of you to risk your lives for the good of the Kingdom. I do not ask this lightly. Will you accept this task?"*

If one or more PCs is a member of a Royal MetaOrg, or otherwise considers him or herself to qualify as an agent of the King or the Grey Seer, read the following:

*"We are pleased with you and wish to make use of you in this task... You are not typical of Our servants and the divinations did not indicate any greater threat contingent upon your involvement in this matter."*

If one or more PC is not a citizen of Nyronde:

*"If the threat we face is an enemy of Nyronde, the presence of foreign heroes may not be expected. It is hoped that you may use this to your advantage. I would be most grateful if you would be willing to serve Nyronde in our time of need."*

If the PCs want payment up front or explicit promise of reward, the King looks the PC hard in the eye and says coldly:

*"I see the good of the Kingdom and all your countrymen is not a good enough reason for your mercenary soul. I asked a favor for which I will duly be grateful and you chose to interpret this as a chance to dicker like moneychangers over precise coin weights. If money is what you want, then that shall be your reward. However, I'll not name a price until I know the quality of the information I'm buying."*

The King does not bargain. The only additional allowance the King will advance is a promise to see that, should the PC die in attempting to complete the task, the family of deceased PC will be compensated for their loss.

Should the PCs not get the hint and continue to discuss reward rather than backing off and simply accepting the King's request, they will be permitted to continue with the scenario with full treasure level being rewarded at the end, but ALL item access and ALL favors granted by the scenario are lost; the King makes sure the party gets ONLY the coin for which they were so eager. All Nyronde Royal or Noble favors the PC has on ARs prior to the Onyxgate AR shall also be considered expended.

Should any PC reject the task, the player may leave the table. The scenario is finished for that player. Assuming the PCs accept the task, continue reading the read-aloud text.

*King Lynwerd points to a section of the map. "This is the location of the greatest divined threat to the Kingdom, on a hilltop in old Almor. The primary*

*source of the threat is the ancient and fell fortification known as Onyxgate. This fortress has stood for longer than any current empire and legend tells of it being a home for demons.*

*Shortly after the fall of Chathold, in Patchwall 585, My father stepped down and I prepared for an opportunity to strike the evils occupying Almor. In Readyng 586, Duke Szeffrin left Almor, for unknown reasons, leaving his troops in disarray. Our forces then entered and began reclaiming Almor from the remaining fiendish forces. With the Flight of Fiends in Coldeven of that year, the opportunity for the final purging of evil from Almor seemed to be at hand. A new Legion was formed using hardened veterans from a number of decimated companies. I diverted the entirety of this new Fourth Legion, under the command of General Basmajenn, to enter Onyxgate and reclaim it... The Fourth Legion disappeared to a man.*

*As I arrived on the throne, Our Kingdom was bankrupt, a number of Our provinces were teetering on the edge of open rebellion, and We badly needed for the successes in Almor to be untainted by such a horrific blow. The loss was disguised during the reorganization of the Legions and General Younard listed the lost soldiers as being from battalions operating across the breadth of Almor. I have until now been unable to spare the resources to send more men to investigate what would be capable of swallowing an entire Legion of My men. The Grey Seer has found the stone of Onyxgate to be somehow fortified against both scrying and teleportation, and so we must send people to the area by non-magical means, for a first-hand observation. As Adventurers, you have proven yourselves to be capable and resourceful. I ask that you go to Onyxgate and determine two things: what nature of threat lies still within Onyxgate and what has happened to My men."*

*"Nyronde thanks you for your service and may you return safely to report on the menace we all face. Watchcaptain Renylds will see to any further needs you have. Good day to you and may Heironeous protect you." With that the King turns from the party and enters quiet conversation with his grey-haired companion.*

PCs attempting to say and listen in on the conversation will be ushered out by Watchcaptain Renylds and several of his men.

Watchcaptain Renylds will instruct the party that he has been instructed to provide them with mounts as necessary, a rough map of the area they are to go to, and can see to their needs as to "useful magics". Watchcaptain Renylds can provide access to purchase an Amulet of Proof Against Detection and Location, Goggles of Minute Seeing, a Medallion of Thoughts, a Ring of Invisibility, or a Wand of Silence. The party will have the

rest of the day to purchase general access items and prepare themselves.

Should the PCs wish to investigate further, into the Fourth Legion, Onyxgate, Bloodcrystal, or Duke Szeffrin, they will find that King Lynwerd's short briefing was remarkably thorough. Additional pieces of information should be granted to the PCs with the highest Knowledge: History or Knowledge: Local checks. Since this is all information related to the tales of the Great Wars, Bardic Knowledge may be used in place of Knowledge: History, with the DC being 5 lower for Bardic Knowledge.

- Knowledge: History DC 25 - There is some information indicating that the high priests of Overking Ivid the Undying visited Onyxgate and may have constructed or activated some sort of Planar gate within the depths of the dungeons.
- Knowledge: Planes DC 25 - The Animus Duke Szeffrin may have had an alliance with the Abyssal Lord Pazrael. It is rumored that this Abyssal Lord was the source of fiendish armies supplementing Szeffrin's troops and the source of the power that raised the edifice of Bloodcrystal in a single night.
- Knowledge: History or Knowledge: Local or Profession: Soldier DC 10 - Before being reduced to commanding a single Legion, General Basmajenn had been Royal General Basmajenn, commander of all the forces of Nyronnd during the Great War, with three Field Generals beneath him; Generals Myariken, Hanshal and Younard.
- Knowledge: History or Knowledge: Local or Profession: Soldier DC 15 - Basmajenn was reputed to be an inflexible bully who oversaw the loss of thousands of Nyronnd's troops in the Almorian campaigns of the Great War.
- Knowledge: History or Knowledge: Local or Profession: Soldier DC 20 - Basmajenn was a stern commander who held the loyalty of many of the common soldiers. His major failing, which resulted in his eventual demotion, was that he preferred costly straight-ahead wave assaults to more subtle maneuvering.

The following morning, one bell after dawn, Watchcaptain Renylds will meet them at the east gate with mounts and any special access items they've chosen to purchase. He estimates the distance to the fortress of Onyxgate as being about ten days ride to the southeast.

*As morning dawns cool and clear, the capitol is already bustling with activity. Red and yellow flags fly from the towers of the Rel Mord's tall, strong walls, and Watchcaptain Renylds of the Royal Guard awaits you by the east gate with several scale-mail clad city guardsmen holding a string of chestnut palfreys.*

## Introduction 2: Entering Almor

*Riding southeastward through the rich farmland of Justcrown province for the first three days is peaceful and relaxing, with the clear, cool days being perfect for travel. Passing over the border into the Duchy of Almor, the farms and small villiages seem prosperous for the next two days travel. By the end of the fifth day of travel, which is the second day of travel within the Duchy of Almor, the countryside changes to rolling hills and the land becomes much more sparsely populated. It takes a moment to realize that the sparseness of the settlements are an indication that your group has just passed through what were once known as the Almorian Borderlands and you are now within the borders of Old Almor. Two more days of travel and the depopulated hills of old Almor are all around you, the emptiness of the hills emphasized rather than broken up by the occasional tiny newly built settlements generated by King Lynwerd's resettlement campaign. After eight days of travel, or three days travel within Old Almor, you reach the settlement of Silverwat. This small settlement is the last outpost of civilization for miles around.*

Silverwat was detailed in NYR3-01 Curse of Almor. See that scenario if more information on Silverwat is desired.

This travel section is much more clear to the players if the Judge hands out the Judge Aid #1: The Trail to Onyxgate. The map is all information that may be helpful to both Judge and players.

If the players wish to take the main highways around, rather than following the indicated relatively direct horse trail, then they may, but the trip takes six to eight days longer.

*After staying the night at a farmer's house a day's travel southwest of Silverwat, your group proceeds further into the hills, leaving most evidence of civilization behind. The roads no longer show sign of maintenance or cart-wheel, although the occasional muddy hollow shows evidence of the passage of horses. The soil appears poor and sandy, and only the occasional dilapidated, abandoned peasant's croft give evidence that this land was ever settled.*

*As night falls on the fifth day of travel within Old Almor, you see in the distance the scraggly trees of an old forest. The road has dwindled down to a muddy track that seems to skirt around the distant forest, crossing over the old trail that once connected Onyxgate to Bloodcrystal. Your map indicates that the direction of the fortress of Onyxgate is off the road, through the scraggly forest.*

*Following the rising line of the treetops with your eyes, it is apparent that the forest covers a set of*

*low hills, with some sort of squared-off tower barely visible, just surmounting the tallest of the hills. Oddly enough, as night closes in, evening birdsong seems absent from the woods surrounding Onyxgate, even as it rises from the wooded hills all around.*

The quiet is not a silence spell; the animals simply stay away from the creepy and tainted environs of Onyxgate. Allow the party to rest, but keep the ominous feeling going by suggesting a sense of disquiet if the party camps in the silent wood surrounding Onyxgate, ask for preparations and watch schedule, use hinting questions like “So, are you really going to build a highly visible fire this close to Onyxgate?” and such. Mess with the sensitives in the party a little; tell clerics of the sun (Pelor or Pholtus) that clouds have hidden the sun from them all day and even the moon is hidden in the night. Tell the nature types (Rangers, Barbarians, Druids, Nature Clerics) that the area seems blighted and the creatures unnaturally silent or skittish. Play up the flavor but don’t over-do it and cause the party to not sleep or travel too far away for safety, just keep things a bit creepy and unsettling. Disquiet at this point, before even seeing the tower, should help set the tone so that PCs do not blithely walk up the main (and only) gate of Onyxgate Keep.

If there is a Gnome in the party and he or she wishes to find a burrowing animal with whom to converse, allow a Survival Check DC 15 to find a small misshapen black ground squirrel. The little fellow is misshapen and a bit twitchy and nuts, due to exposure to a rogue patch of badlands warp magic. All he knows is that Onyxgate “feels bad” and he advises the gnome, “no go there”.

Should the party or members of the party chose not to rest, they will be considered Fatigued the next day. See the DMG pg 301 for Fatigue.

## Encounter One: Wanna wrassle?

*As the party travels about 100 yards into the low, sickly wood, which surrounds the hill upon which the tower stands, dappled light can be seen through the oppressive growth, indicating perhaps a clearing or even the far side of the woods. Nearing the edge of the wood, it is clear that what was once a healthy grove covering the top of the hill is now just a thin ring of twisted, dying trees. The land within the circle of trees is broken and heavily fissured, with a fragmentary low-lying layer of brownish-yellow vapor drifting over the land.*

*Dominating the view is a massive black tower of smooth stone at the crest of the hill, about 600 yards from the edge of the wood. The tower itself is some 70 feet wide at the base and easily 200 feet tall, crowned with battlements across the flat top.*

Ask for spot checks. Read the following to whoever has the highest spot check. *You see the briefest flicker of motion among the crenellations at the top of the massive black tower... It appears the tower may have watchers posted.* Then continue with the general surroundings description.

*Some of the fissures in the broken ground surrounding the tower are as deep as five feet, perhaps offering some shelter from the eyes at the top of the tower. The drifting gasses, which pass into the edge of the wood as well, smell sulfurous, but do not appear to be toxic.*

The vapor is smelly but not toxic. It is seeping up from acidic hot springs deep below Onyxgate, but will be having no effect or impact during this scenario.

Ask for a set of hide checks from the party. Provided at least one member of the party has made a Hide DC 10, indicate that the broken ground sports fissures deep enough to hide in and one branching fissure extends into the twisted, sickly woods in which the PCs are hiding. Indicate that the chances of the party being spotted are “reasonably low” provided they move cautiously and keep down crawling or on hands and knees in the cracks and fissures.

Be sure to note at this point what the party is doing with their horses or other mounts. No fissure is big enough to stash mounts within. However, a sheltered clearing with untainted edible grasses can be found lower on the hill with a successful Survival check DC 10. Location of the mounts is important for Encounter Five: Cry Havoc.

If the party wishes to make a circuit of the tower, to look for windows or entrances, save time by simply providing the following information.

*A quick circuit of the tower by your party, while staying discretely hidden within the wood, reveals that the fortress tower has only one massive entrance and a number of arrow-slits high in the tower walls.*

Ask for another spot check, DC = 10+APL. Assuming at least one member of the party makes the DC, read the following

*Looking out across the shattered landscape, you spot a patrol of three men, wearing cloaks the color of the broken earth they cross. They seem to be keeping low, cutting back and forth through crevasses, in and out of view. They do not appear to see the party and are traveling at an angle away from both the tower and the party, from where you first spot them to about 500 yards out from the base of the tower, perhaps 320 yards from your position, and then they disappear into a relatively large crevasse. After a few moments, the patrol is seen exiting the crevasse and heading back towards the black tower of Onyxgate.*

Should any PC voice the intent to walk openly across the ground towards Onyxgate, rather than attempt to hide in the fissures or at least use the fissures as cover, allow them a DC 10 wisdom check. If successful, tell to PC, that their very flesh seemed to crawl at the idea, cold filled their veins and a feeling of malevolent anticipation seemed to emanate from the black tower. Allow this wisdom check (yes, they can take 10 or even 20, if they'd like) to any PC indicating the intent of heading in the open across the ground before the tower.

The same hints and wisdom checks should be used for any PCs foolishly proposing hailing the patrol. If the patrol is hailed anyway, they will glance over in surprise and then continue on and enter the tower. The tower of Onyxgate is considered alerted at this point and the PCs have very little time to find the safe path. See the Development sections at the end of this section for how to handle the situation.

Any PC planning on depending on Invisibility to allow an approach to the main gate of the fortress tower should be allowed a Knowledge Arcana Check DC 10 to remember that there are a number of spells that can circumvent this (ex. See Invisible and Trueseeing). PCs should also be allowed a Knowledge: Dungeoneering check DC 10 or Knowledge Planes check, DC 10, to remember that a number of creatures can sense without sight (ex. Lifesense, Blindsight, Tremorsense).

Interpret any attempt by the party to hide or conceal themselves as wanting to travel via the fissures. The fissures extend back into the twisted woods as well. Entering the fissures puts the PC or PCs on the path toward the first encounter fight and the "safe" entrance into the underground.

At this point, determine if the PCs will be attempting to Move Silently as well as Hide. Note their Move Silently checks, is they chose to make them, for use at the start of the encounter with the guards.

If these hints are not enough, allow the PC or PCs to approach the Keep without hiding in the fissures. That PC(s) will be able to easily reach the main and only surface entrance to the tower of Onyxgate. Once within 10 feet of the entrance, the massive doors will crack open and reveal a board marked with the Symbol of Death. As readied actions 6 stones each bearing the spells Silence and Deeper Darkness will be pitched out of the opening. Also as readied actions, the 7 Dread Wraiths (see Monster Manual, p258) hiding below the PC(s) underground and 5 more Dread Wraiths, which flow out of the walls of Onyxgate, will attack the hapless PC(s) simultaneously. The final readied actions will be a Destruction spell from a 13<sup>th</sup> level Cleric followed by the closing of the thin crack opened in the doors of Onyxgate. Should any PC(s) still be standing near the tower at the end of the surprise round, the 12 Dread Wraiths will all attack the surviving PC(s). To be clear, this is an untiered optional encounter with the sole purpose of destroying the untrainably stupid. The Judge should feel free to add spell affects or

incorporeal enemies at will to assure the destruction of any foolish enough to approach the front entrance of Onyxgate despite many hints. PCs who stayed in hiding, which means in the fissures, will not be pursued or attacked at this point.

***The fissures, which run back and forth across the broken ground surrounding the black tower of Onyxgate, appear to have been created in some long ago upheaval. Some have been partially filled in by the surrounding dirt and some have been turned into even deeper cracks as water has drained away into the depths.***

***It is a slow process, finding the avenues that continue forward without becoming either too narrow or too shallow to allow the party to proceed while still hidden from the watchers within the tower. Still, a path is eventually found which allows, with the occasional belly crawling, a shielded approach towards your objective.***

This is phrased as "towards your objective" simply because the party may chose to approach the base of the tower or the crevasse into which the three Onyxgate guards had gone. It doesn't matter where the PCs are attempting to go; they will find that the only fissure which stays deep enough and wide enough for the party to sneak along will coincidentally lead the party by a winding route towards where the guard patrol had disappeared. This fissure varies in depth from three to five feet and in width from three to five feet.

Approaching the location where the one patrol entered and the other patrol left, low voices can potentially be heard. Listen check DC 20. If successful, read the following.

***"I don't see the point. There's never anything out here in the Badlands and we don't even know if this leads inside." "Shyaddup Udo. General Bas. sez that it could an' it ain't like 'im ta be leaving anyting ta chance. Orders is orders. We stand an' watch. It's better than bein' downbelow fer yet a'nudder close combat drill."***

Knowledge: Local or Knowledge: History DC 15 "General Bas." may refer to General Basmajenn, the leader of the missing Fourth Legion.

Situation: the party must fight through a minor patrol group guarding a crevasse that leads into the underground maze and eventually under Onyxgate castle. They'll want to keep it fast and not flashy, as they are nearly within view of the tower. Players should be warned before casting flashy magics (fireballs, flame-strikes, ice storms, and such) that this is likely to be seen by the tower.

The leader of the guards, the Adept, and his familiar should each be given a -2 circumstance penalty (due to the Adept chatting with his companions) but still be allowed to make a Listen checks. If the party does not

declare any attempt to sneak, then the DC for the Adept is only a 10, otherwise it is against the Move Silently checks rolled earlier. See the tactics sections for what to do if the Adept has heard the PCs coming.

*The crevasse you have been following has been between three and five feet deep and perhaps three to five feet wide. Ahead of you, around a sharp turn, it simultaneously widens to approximately seven feet wide and deepens to some ten to fifteen feet below the surface. Near the middle of this wider area is a low (four foot) crack near the bottom acting as a cave mouth leading deeper underground. Seated on rubble around this opening are three human men.*

Creatures:

APL 4 (EL 3)

➤ **Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human War2; hp 19, 19; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp2; hp 16; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** hp 8; see *Appendix One*.

APL 6 (EL 5)

➤ **Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human War3; hp 27, 27; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp3; hp 23; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** hp 11; see *Appendix One*.

APL 8 (EL 7)

➤ **Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human Ftr4; hp 44, 44; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp5; hp 37; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** hp 18; see *Appendix One*.

APL 10 (EL 9)

➤ **Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human Ftr6; hp 64, 64; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp7; hp 58; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** hp 29; see *Appendix One*.

APL 12 (EL 11)

➤ **Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human Ftr8; hp 84, 84; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp9; hp 74; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** hp 37; see *Appendix One*.

**Tactics:** If the Adept, Merton, hears the party coming, he continues the patter of conversation while using hand gestures to prepare the warriors for the coming of the party. In this case, the guards will not be surprised and the Adept will use a readied action to buff up one of the warriors before both warriors move to attack the first humanoid to round the turn of the crevasse into their view.

Although the Adept's conversation with the Warriors continues even if they hear the PCs coming, they do not have the Bluff Skill and so their Bluff Check is a straight d20 roll. If the party has heard the guards, then roll a Sense Motive check for the party to see if the party catches on to the fact that they may have been heard.

If the guards hear PC spell-casting happening, then they drop the pretense of being unaware and the adept begins casting spells to enhance the warriors while the warriors drink their potions.

Initial tactics suited to the APL are included in the Appendices along with the stat blocks of the guards. This fight is the easiest fight in the scenario, but in the close quarters of the crevasse this should be a short, bruising battle, dealing a lot of damage to the first PCs attacked. The fight will likely be over fairly quickly, but if enough damage can be concentrated to one or two members of the party, then it is hoped that the PCs will be forewarned that Onyxgate has the potential to be a nasty scenario and the PCs may be appropriately cautious through the rest of the scenario.

All three appear to be between 30-35 years old. Underneath the earth-colored cloaks they wear, the crest of Nyrond (Knowledge: Heraldry/Nobility DC 10 – it's reversed DC 15 – Prince Sewarndt's symbol is the crest of Nyrond, reversed) is displayed on a badge at the breast of their spiked scale mail, along with a black phoenix (Knowledge Heraldry/Nobility DC 20 – the old crest of the missing Fourth Legion). The apparent leader of the group (the Adept), wearing a better helm and with more pips painted on his armor, also wears a wooden symbol of Hextor on a chain about his neck.

**Treasure:** There is no treasure here above and beyond what is found on the guard's bodies. Their lootable possessions are noted below, with total values given rather than the PC's typical 1/6<sup>th</sup> share. The potions have likely been consumed and so are not listed.

Feel free to point out to any PCs gathering up the loot that the equipment is high quality. These guards were clearly part of a well-funded force.

APL 4: Loot – 936 gp value (3 mwk spiked gauntlets, 3 mwk longswords, 3 short swords, 3 daggers, 3 mottled brown cloaks, 3 waterskins, 3 trail rations), Coin – 300 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile, Magic - 3 suits of +1 *scale mail* with armor spikes - (1,875 gp total value).

APL 6: Loot – 936 gp value (3 mwk spiked gauntlets, 3 mwk longswords, 3 short swords, 3 daggers, 3 mottled brown cloaks, 3 waterskins, 3 trail rations), Coin – 300 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile, Magic - 3 suits of +1 *scale mail* with armor spikes – (1,875 gp total value).

APL 8: Loot – 936 gp value (3 pairs of mwk spiked gauntlets, 3 mwk longswords, 3 short swords, 3 daggers, 3 mottled brown cloaks, 3 waterskins, 3 trail rations), Coin – 300 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile, Magic - 3 suits of +1 *scale mail* with +1 *armor spikes* – (5,325 gp total value).

APL 10: Loot – 21 gp value (3 short swords, 3 daggers, 3 mottled brown cloaks, 3 waterskins, 3 trail rations), Coin – 300 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile, Magic - 3 +1 *spiked gauntlets* (3,458 gp total value), 3 +1 *longswords* (3,458 gp total value), 3 suits of +1 *scale mail* with +1 *armor spikes* – (4,875 gp total value), and 3 *Amulets of Natural Armor +1* (3,000 gp total value).

APL 12: Loot – 21 gp value (3 short swords, 3 daggers, 3 mottled brown cloaks, 3 waterskins, 3 trail rations), Coin – 300 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile, Magic - 3 +1 *spiked gauntlets* (3,458 gp total value), 3 +1 *longswords* (3,458 gp total value), 3 suits of +2 *scale mail* with +1 *armor spikes* – (9,375 gp total value) and 3 *Amulets of Natural Armor +1* (3,000 gp total value)

**Development:** What if the tower sees flashy magics or the PCs? There will initially be an ominous silence from the tower. The PCs should be encouraged to head below rapidly as moving quickly is their best safety. If the party chooses to stay above ground despite hints from the Judge, allow about minutes game time to pass and then cut directly to the final encounter (Encounter Five: Cry Havoc), but with no extra horses or Entrell Militia present. It will take about eight minutes game time to bring the initial forces up from the upper dungeons of Onyxgate. An initial wave of the hounds exit Onyxgate's main gate, followed by several more waves.

The final encounter should be fought with the 'bonus' creature added for alerting the tower and the PCs should be strongly encouraged to flee. If they are not fleeing by the end of the exit fight, describe massive waves of demons and incorporeal undead exiting the tower, making it clear that they can be outrun, but not fought. With the forces in Onyxgate alerted, there will be no chance for the PCs to investigate further. Access to most favors and treasure is lost. Cross off of the ARs all

items not recovered and all favors unearned.. If the party heads below ground before the approximately eight minutes game time has expired, then the scenario may continue.

In either case, since the tower has been alerted, add the combatants indicated under the heading "PCs spotted" to the exit fight encounter. Due to errors or poor luck on the part of the PCs, the last fight will now be somewhat more difficult with no extra experience or treasure being awarded.

**Development:** What if one or more of the guards has survived to be captured? They will be as unhelpful as possible; they've spent the better part of a decade being indoctrinated that they are part of the force that is going to purify the "weak and corrupt" Nyrond of "the pathetic" King Lynwerd. At any opportunity, they will attempt to escape or call out to alert other guards.

Recovering any gear bearing the reversed crest of Nyrond surmounted by the black phoenix symbol or even simply being able to describe the combination of symbols is sufficient to qualify for the Favor of the King, I.

## Encounter Two: Dead Men Do Tell Tales

Following low crevasse from the guarded opening into the underground, there are a number of branching minor water-created tunnels and earthquake-caused fissures, but there is only one main branch at any given point that remains large enough for the passage of medium-sized creatures. Numerous false leads continue for a dozen feet or more before shrinking away to nothing.

*Sure enough, the large, low crevasse heads underground roughly in the direction of the black tower. Booted footprints were visible near the entrance, but as the last trace of surface light fades out, you have long since left behind all trace of tracks and the air itself seems musty and dead.*

Should any PC use Detect Magic or Arcane Sight while within the caves and fissures surrounding Onyxgate, they will be able to detect a very faint but pervasive Abjuration aura that seems worked into the stone itself. Spellcraft check DC 20 reveals that extra-dimensional travel magics, such as Teleport and Ethereal Jaunt seem to be blocked by the Abjuration magics. These Abjuration magics function like a Dimensional Anchor Spell (PHB p 221) in all ways, affecting all creatures with in Onyxgate or the surrounding fissure system.

Since a Judge may interpret the Dimensional Anchor Spell (PHB p 221) as preventing access to carried extra-dimensional items (such as Heward's Handy Haversack, a Bag of Holding, or a Belt of Many Pouches), PCs should not have this side effect blind-side them at an inopportune time. If extra-dimensional items are carried

by the party, let some PC within the party notice at the outset that the items within the extra-dimensional spaces are not accessible when the PCs are within the rock of Onyxgate. Allow PCs to notice the effect the moment they enter the fissure system so that they can easily step out of the fissure system and rearrange items if necessary.

Kind Judges may chose to interpret the Dimensional Anchor spell to allow access to items within extra-dimensional spaces, although this is not a standard interpretation. The author's intent with the Abjuration magics is to disallow magical travel into and out of Onyxgate, not to make things other than magical travel difficult for the party.

Now is a good time to ask the party for their marching order, light sources, and default precautions. Once you have this information noted, continue with the following.

*Fissures intersect and disappear in all directions. As you move deeper, insects, vermin, and small, perhaps magically warped, chittering things flee from your presence, deeper into the earth. Your route through the three-dimensional maze of fissures and cracks is both long and arduous, with numerous promising-seeming passageways dwindling down to nothing. Backtracking constantly, you are always able to find a path everyone is able to squeeze through. A path that goes steadily deeper into the earth.*

Survival Check DC 20 - The party is, in fact, moving down and under the main tower of Onyxgate.

Emphasize the oppressive size of the fissure maze by requesting a number of Spot and Listen checks. Inform successful PCs that they hear an insectoid or reptilian skittering noise from the nearby passageways, as though something large were moving close by. The PCs are in no danger at this point, but there is no need for the PCs to know this.

If the party has any Dwarves, have the Dwarf make a Stonecunning (i.e. Search) check. DC 10 – While the fissures are numerous, they are in no danger of collapse. They are through a good strong stone, basalt, and whatever upheaval caused the shattering and fissuring is long in the past. The omnipresent dust hints that the fissures have not shifted in a long time.

If the party has no dwarves, then the information is not to be volunteered; it is only to be offered if the party declares that they are searching and the Search DC is 20.

Before the party has worked their way to the next piece of flavor text and the next encounter, more than four hours of arduous underground travel takes place. If no one in the party has Darkvision, then the trip will have taken more than six hours to reach this point. For those parties using expendable light sources (i.e. torches oil lanterns, light spells, etc.), be sure that the resources are marked off.

For those parties attempting to mark the trail, so that they can follow it back out, take note of this. It will require five pieces of chalk to fully mark the path to this point. Other methods, chipping marks into the stone for example, will take longer and slow the party's travel. If the trail is not marked, then returning by the same path is possible, but will take just as long as it took the party to find this path in the first place. If the trail is marked, then the journey will take one third as long as it did in the first place.

While resting in the fissure system is possible, it is not at all comfortable. Allow spells to be regained if the PCs chose to rest, but the entire party will be fatigued thereafter due to the chill, sharp rock and the numerous small centipede bites and stings they endured during their eight hour rest.

*The current best-bet fissure widens slightly from a claustrophobic three feet wide crack into a near-passage with almost enough headroom for short humans to stand only slightly stooped. A deep chill is present in this area. Where the fissure widens to a full five feet wide, a figure comes into view, seated upright on a large stone block. Apparently unaware of your approach, the figure, human-sized and in full plate and great-helm, sits with a naked bastard sword across his lap. His gauntleted right hand rests upon the sword's pommel and his left arm rests upon the top of a large steel shield bearing the painted image of a snarling lion. The figure is entirely unmoving and silent.*

- Spot DC 5 The armor is dirt-stained and scraped.
- Spot DC 15 Under the dirt, the breast of the plate armor bears the crest of Nyronnd along with a black phoenix.
- Knowledge Heraldry/Nobility DC 10 – The crest of Nyronnd is not reversed.
- Knowledge Heraldry/Nobility DC 20 – The Black Phoenix is the old crest of the missing Fourth Legion.

This is the body of the Fourth Legion Legionnaire and Paladin of Heironeous, Brenton Salaff. He is quite dead and has been so for a long time. Upon escaping from the purge of loyalist soldiers from the Fourth Legion, as General Basmajenn switched allegiance to King Sewardnt, Brenton attempted to escape through the crevasse system to warn King Lynwerd of what had occurred. Lost and without light, food, or water, he weakened and eventually had to face the inevitability of death in the caves. He is found as he composed himself for death. His body is remarkably well preserved since a brown mold has made the crumbly floor of this cavern section it's home.

Should any attempt be made to pass over/through this section of the tunnel that places weight upon the

floor, the floor gives way, likely dumping the PC and definitely dumping the body of the dead Paladin into the rough pit formed, which is also the location of the Brown Mold colony. This is not really a trap, per se; it is simply that the brown mold colony has weakened the rock here over the years.

This section has the potential to bog down if the PCs are searching for traps and find this one. There is the chance that the party could waste a lot of time attempting to disarm or circumvent the pit trap. If the party is spending a lot of time here, feel free to speed things up by having the pit collapse, exposing the brown mold and dropping the Paladin's body into the pit.

Once the Paladin's body is disturbed by the fall, a leather-bound book (the journal is Player's Handout #1, included at the end of this scenario) will be revealed, falling from where it had been tucked beneath the shield.

This encounter is identical for all APLs.

➤ **Camouflaged Pit Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 5 ft. deep drop onto sharp rocks (1d6, total, half falling damage and half piercing); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20, Market value 0 gp.

🦋 **Brown Mold (CR 2):** Brown mold feeds on warmth, drawing heat from anything around it. It normally comes in patches 5 feet in diameter, and the temperature is always cold in a 30-foot radius around it. Living creatures within 5 feet of it take 3d6 points of nonlethal cold damage. Fire brought within 5 feet of brown mold causes it to instantly double in size. Cold damage, such as from a *cone of cold*, instantly destroys it.

Should the PCs wish to examine the body, ask for Heal checks.

Heal check results for the body of Brenton Salaff:

- 1-9 He's a human male and recently dead.
- 10-14 It's hard to tell how long he has been dead as he is well preserved.
- 15-19 He was about 20 years old when he died and has been dead quite a while, but the cold dry air of this section of the corridor has preserved him.
- 20-24 He has been dead for somewhere in the neighborhood of six to ten years.
- 25+ He has been dead for eight years, and probably died in the season of Coldeven, Planting, or Flocktime.

Some players who are very concerned with the history of Greyhawk may disagree with one entry in the Journal of Brenton Salaff, claiming that Onyxgate was the

destination after the taking of Bloodcrystal. Bloodcrystal's defensive forces were defeated and the main fortress was placed under siege, but the main fortress of Bloodcrystal was not initially taken. At the time, it was deemed more important to finish clearing the rest of the countryside of enemy forces, since the remnants of enemy troops at Bloodcrystal were bottled up and could not leave.

#### Treasure:

All APLs: Loot – 778 gp total value (bastard sword, full plate armor, heavy steel shield), Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 0 gp

The journal, Player's Handout #1

**Development:** Should a follower of Heironeous or any Good or Lawful PC state that they intend to see Brenton's body returned to Nyrond/his home/a temple of Heironeous for a proper burial, that PC should be told *"You feel the urge to pick up and use the shield."*

If the PCs wish to take Brenton's body with them, for return to his family, the Army, or the Church of Heironeous, do not make it difficult for them. The body is a desiccated husk and is relatively light and easy to carry. A kind judge may choose to declare the weight of the body and equipment to be lower than the rules list. Do not, however, hint to the PCs that they ought to take the body; this is a role-playing opportunity.

A PC who has dedicated him/herself to seeing Brenton's body to a proper funeral outside of Onyxgate will discover that the heavy steel shield has been possessed by the spirit of Brenton Salaff, temporarily granting it all the properties of a *Lion's Shield* (see the DMG, p221). Furthermore, the PC will automatically know the activation word of the *Lion's Shield* ("Invincible", another name for Heironeous) along with what it does. Since this is a powerful item, intended to be a reward for good role-playing, the Judge must not hint at this whatsoever, not even hinting questions as to what the party does with the body. Keep note if anyone announces "We 'Greyhawk' the body" since this will count as disrespectful treatment of the corpse, resulting in the spirit of Brenton Salaff leaving this plane, rather than possessing the shield. It is expected that most parties that pass through this adventure will never gain access to this item during the adventure.

If the party does not have access to the possessed *Lion's Shield* during the adventure, they also do not gain the Favor of the Salaff Blacksmiths at the end since they will not have seen the shield in action and therefore will not be able to describe the shield's miraculous possession to the Salaff family.

Recovering the journal of Brenton Salaff is all that is required to qualify for the Favor of the Church of Heironeous.

## Encounter Three: Be My Ghast

*Once past the body, the path is no easier. Several times the only passable route is a narrow, short drop, which must have been a hellish climb in armor, if the soldier really did come this way from deeper below.*

A Survival (Track) Check DC 20 reveals faint scrapes from metal on stone, indicating that Brenton Salaff really did climb up those drops in his attempted escape.

*As you move deeper, acrid liquid seeps from some of the smaller cracks and the air takes on a bitter, stinging smell. The fissures through which you are passing begin to assume the appearance of water-channels rather than mere earthquake cracks within the earth. The path widens and evens out, becoming a relatively flat winding descent. The slick, moistened black rock distorts, bends and reflects any sounds made, creating the disorienting impression of movement all around you.*

The Judge should, at this point, be aware of the marching order and light sources in play. The Judge should also be aware of what the characters in the party look like; it will be necessary for the next encounter. The tactics of the enemy depend on their being able to discern who amongst the PCs is the Cleric. Until spells are cast, showing the spell-caster to practice either divine or arcane magic, the enemies are going to be forced to assume that any PC in armor, with holy symbols, on the armor, about the neck, or in hand, may be a Cleric. Until they are sure which PC or PCs may be divine spell-casters, they will assume that the armored person with the most displayed holy symbols, from a single god, is the Cleric or divine spell-caster. If a divine spell-caster has attempted to hide his holy symbols and other indications of his class/profession, then allow the enemy Spot checks (DC 10 or the PC's Hide check, if a Hide check was made) to identify the divine spell-caster.

The primary tunnel the party is following winds and bends, splitting and dead-ending as it has throughout. Eventually, a full two to three minutes game time after the above flavor text, the party will come to a bend in the rock tunnel where the Judge must alter the situation based on the party's light sources and marching order: If the party has light sources with the lead party members then they will simply walk out into the cavern with no warning, barring other precautions. If the party has members in the lead who are not using light sources, then, at the bend, they can see the shadows cast by a faint light source ahead. This should warn them that they are about to enter an occupied area and potentially allow them to prepare.

*The acidic sting of the liquid upon the rocks is joined by the sharp odor of decomposing flesh as the fissure takes a final tight bend to open up into a large chamber. Dozens of small candles provide an uncertain light, casting myriad small reflections*

*about the slick black rock chamber and giving a feeling of vertigo and movement.*

*Stepping into the cavern, your eyes take a moment to understand what they are seeing. Your eyes are able to fix on a regular object, some sort dark wooden desk (~60 feet away), and the cavern snaps into focus. Wet rock glistens with the reflected light of candles scattered randomly about. Stalactites, stalagmites, and rubble break up the line of vision, while the many fissures stretching across the floor threaten to swallow leg or body of the unwary.*

*As you enter the cavern, a deep voice purrs out. "Ah, visitors... An unexpected pleasure. What news do you bring me of the surface world?"*

The PCs have stumbled upon the current base of operation of the spy, Grynchlwrđ, and his underlings. Grynchlwrđ is working for the Demon Lord Pazrael, spying on the doings of Pazrael's current ally, Sewardnt. Being a demon, Pazrael is planning on betraying Sewardnt the moment it seems convenient, and therefore has dispatched agents to spy upon Sewardnt's forces and subvert any they can. Pazrael's agent, Grynchlwrđ, a fiendish native of the Prime Material plane (and hence impossible to banish), has recruited the assistance of two amoral thugs, who go by the names Black and Blue, to help him in his endeavors. Black and Blue don't really care what they are doing so long as they are paid well and they get to crack a few heads while doing it. Grynchlwrđ also has the assistance of a few created undead. While the undead may hunger for the living flesh of Black and Blue, they are entirely under Grynchlwrđ's control and will not attack Black or Blue. Grynchlwrđ considers the undead an effective insurance policy to maintain good behavior by the rogues.

The fissures within the cave have the following effect: Any creature moving across the fissured region must make a single Jump or Balance check DC 10+ APL per move action or lose a foot into the cracks. Failing the check, i.e. losing a foot into the cracks results in the creature going prone after only five feet movement and taking 1d6 subdual damage (essentially they are tripped and take minor damage from the rough terrain). Creatures may move at half their movement rate to avoid the need to make a jump check. These conditions are self-evident to the PCs and NPCs from just looking at the terrain. Do not surprise the PCs with this; just explain the ground rules at the start of combat.

For any characters, wishing to fly or otherwise move about the upper reaches of the room, it should be noted that the cavern is a flattened dome-shape, with the highest point in the room being 50' above the floor. However, the ceiling is quite uneven, having fissures within it and stalactites hanging from it. Assume flying in a direct line near the ceiling or moving across the ceiling will be difficult. Those employing Spider Climb or similar effects to cross the ceiling will have their

movement cut in half, effectively reducing their movement to one quarter (1/4) of their normal walking speed. The obstacles also make flying, with average or worse maneuverability, an annoying exercise with a 20% chance of clipping a hanging rock outcropping and dropping the creature to the floor. Because of this, Grynchlwrđ will not be using his wings during this combat.

The candles within the cave are effectively providing sufficient light only for low light vision. Black, Blue, and the undead within the cave all effectively have low light vision for the purposes of this scenario; they have all been in the caves for months and their eyes have adjusted. Those PCs who require better than low light for vision must be within a region lit by the PC's light sources or they have a 20% miss chance due to concealment.

**Creatures:** Please note that the physical description of Grynchlwrđ, the speaker asking the PCs questions, and the members of his little band changes depending on APL. Please refer to the relevant Appendices for the appropriate descriptions. It is critically important to note that both as a half-fiend (at lower APLs) and as a Nabassu (at higher APLs), Grynchlwrđ is a **native** outsider. Attempting any sort of banishment simply results in his staying where he is; the Prime Material is his home plane.

#### APL 4 (EL 7)

➤ **Grynchlwrđ the Half-fiend Rog3:** hp 23; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog3; hp 20, 20; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Human Male Ghouls (2):** hp 15, 15; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 119.

#### APL 6 (EL 9)

➤ **Grynchlwrđ the Half-fiend Rog5:** hp 37; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog5; hp 32, 32; see *Appendix One*.

➤ **Human Male Ghasts (2):** hp 32, 32; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 119.

#### APL 8 (EL 11)

➤ **Grynchlwrđ the Nabassu (lesser):** hp 51; see *Appendix One* and see *Appendix Six*.

➤ **Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog7; hp 44, 44; see *Appendix One*.

#### APL 10 (EL 13)

➤ **Grynchlwrđ the Nabassu (lesser) Rog2:** hp 65; see *Appendix One* and see *Appendix Six*.

➤ **Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog9; hp 56, 56; see *Appendix One*.

#### APL 12 (EL 15)

➤ **Grynchlwrđ the Nabassu (lesser) Rog4:** hp 77; see *Appendix One* and see *Appendix Six*.

➤ **Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog11; hp 79, 79; see *Appendix One*.

**Tactics:** One unifying tactic used at all APLs is that Grynchlwrđ initially tries to delay the PCs' attack and keep their attention focused on him, by talking to them. To keep their attention, he will happily tell them some of what he knows of King Sewarndt's plans. See Player Handout #2: The Demon's Letter for information that Grynchlwrđ will reveal. If the PCs take the bait and are willing to talk to Grynchlwrđ rather than immediately attacking, then attempt to play the conversation out, while keeping a mental estimation of how many rounds of preparation time the rogue underlings, Black and Blue, have gained due to the conversation.

Another unifying tactic used at all APLs is the targeting of divine spellcasters or, if there are no divine spellcasters, the targeting of arcane spellcasters. Handled improperly, this is going to guarantee PC death. This is not the intent of the author; the intent is to use intelligent enemy tactics to deprive the PCs of many of the "power-ups" typically granted by divine spellcasters in the first few rounds of a fight (Bless, Prayer, Bull Strength, etc). By severely hurting the divine spellcaster (or arcane spellcaster), the enemy will hopefully force the spellcaster to retreat and focus instead on healing him/herself and casting protective magics on him/herself. If a targeted spellcaster retreats back up the fissure to heal up or cast protections, do not pursue, but focus on pounding some other PC. If the PCs don't seem to "get it", then kind Judges should blatantly hint to a targeted PC that retreat may be a good idea. Kind Judges may also wish to blatantly hint to the rest of the party that they'd do well to attempt to protect the targeted PC. If a targeted PC behaves intelligently, initiating an outright retreat or even a fighting retreat, keep the pressure on enough to force a continuing retreat, but spread the damage around. However, if a targeted PC chooses to stay in the heat of things, feel free to grant them the glorious death they apparently do not fear.

Detailed tactics for this section are found under the relevant Appendices.

Once the enemy has been eliminated, the party has a chance to look about the room. Feel free to use the bulleted flavor text room descriptions now, if the room has not already been described.

Resting without negative effect is possible here, although the chamber stinks of death, decay, and acid.

Room description pieces to be read as they become relevant, either during the fight or during the looting of the room after the fight:

- ***The heavily fissured half of the cave, by which you entered, seems to be the drain-point for the acrid liquid that coated the rocks for the more recent section of your journey. Past this area, the rest of the cavern is once again dry rock.***
- ***A fine darkwood desk is visible, its construction showing a number of hinges and bracings indicating a folding or portable nature despite its high quality. Next to the desk is a barbed chain hanging from a nearby stalactite, an apparently recently dead human male body supported by the hooks.***
- ***The papers upon the desk are neatly written in a thin spidery script. The language is Abyssal. Upon a Decipher Script Check DC 25, or having a PC able to read Abyssal, provide Player's Handout #2, the Demon's Letter. Allow any PC inspecting Player's Handout #2, the Demon's Letter to notice that the ink on the signature is still damp. Amongst the papers there is also a very crude and incomplete map of the fissure system. Describe it as follows: *There are 'X's through some marked passages, blank spots, and incomprehensible shorthand notes at other points. The most interesting feature of the map is that there are two passages that seem to lead to the surface. One passageway, poorly detailed on the map, is the one through which the party passed. The other passageway seems to be a shorter path, leading off of a branch-point further down in the fissure system. The other path from the branch-point seems to go a short ways before meeting up with regular features, which may be the dungeons proper of Onyxgate. There is something noted at this map feature.**** Decipher Script Check DC 25, or having a PC able to read Abyssal gives the translation "*Useful spy-point*". The other papers on the desk, all also in Abyssal, are not useful to the scenario, being musings entertaining to a demon; an ode to the scent of decaying flesh, a theoretical treatise on how to maximize pain during torture, etc.
- ***There are a number of rotting humanoid bodies in a pile by the left side of the portable desk. Further to the left of the corpse pile is an uneven mound of furs and skins. The creatures from whom the furs and skins came are not immediately identifiable.*** The corpse pile is made up of dead bodies and ghouls or ghouls. When the nabassu uses it's Summon Ghouls ability, the dead bodies

animate and those reborn as ghouls attack. The pile of furs and skins is made up of the skins of both abyssal creatures and natural creatures.

- ***The rough wooden table is unremarkable, unless you find dagger marks and an incomplete set of playing cards remarkable.***
- ***Two folding cots covered in thick woolen blankets of black or dark blue coloring are tucked out of the way in a low alcove. At the end of each cot is an oak chest. The two chests are heavily but crudely carved to show scenes of demonic faces and shadowy human figures. The cavern floor is covered in this section by a large rug depicting obscene scenes involving a wide assortment of creatures.*** Black and Blue, the twin rogues, carved the chests themselves out of boredom. The chests are neither locked nor trapped. Inside the chests are more woolen blankets, iron rations, wine skins, the twin's entire savings, and a scattering of odds and ends they've apparently looted off of their victims.
- ***The western wall is pock-marked with a number of small niches and fissure lines, some of which have been used as storage space by the occupants of the cavern.*** These spaces contain odds and ends; a clay mug, a bit of soap, carved bone dice, a cheap decorative bracelet, a wooden comb, a 'lucky' rabbit's foot, an empty ink bottle, a broken quill, four pieces of parchment, etc.
- ***The steel grate is an open latticework covered in spikes. It appears to be positioned to drop down and slow approach from the corridor over which it is positioned.*** The openings in the grate are 6 inches by 6 inches.

**Treasure:**

ALL APLs – Partial fissure system map (see the read-aloud text above; there is no handout for the map) and Letter.(Player Handout #2: The Demon's Letter)

**Treasure:**

There is little of value here above and beyond what is found on the guard's bodies. Their loot-able possessions are noted below, with total values given rather than the PC's typical 1/6<sup>th</sup> share. The single dose of poison each had upon crossbow bolts has been used and is not listed. The potions have likely been consumed and so are not listed.

APL 4: Loot – 980 gp value (a mwk longsword, 2 mwk bucklers, 2 mwk short swords, 2 mwk daggers, 2 mwk heavy crossbows), Coin – 300 gp in ruby bloodstones and gold coin bearing some sort of barbed skull symbol, Magic – 2,063 gp value (3 suits of +1 studded leather).

APL 6: Loot – 815 gp value (a mwk long spear, 2 mwk short swords, 2 mwk daggers, 2 mwk heavy crossbows), Coin – 200 gp in ruby bloodstones and gold coin bearing some sort of barbed skull symbol, Magic – 1,763 gp value (3 suits of +1 *studded leather*), 1,748 gp value (3 +1 *bucklers*).

APL 8: Loot – 815 gp value (a mwk long spear, 2 mwk short swords, 2 mwk daggers, 2 mwk heavy crossbows), Coin – 200 gp in ruby bloodstones, Magic – 1,175 gp value (2 suits of +1 *studded leather*), 1,165 gp value (2 +1 *bucklers*), and 1,000 gp value (2 *Cloaks of Resistance*, +1).

APL 10: Loot – 505 gp value (a mwk long spear, 2 mwk daggers, 2 mwk heavy crossbows), Coin – 200 gp in ruby bloodstones, Magic – 588 gp value (a suit of +1 *studded leather*), 4,175 gp value (2 suits of +2 *studded leather*), 1,748 gp value (3 +1 *bucklers*), 1,000 gp value (2 *Cloaks of Resistance*, +1), and 2,310 gp value (2 +1 *short swords*).

APL 12: Loot – 505 gp value (a mwk long spear, 2 mwk daggers, 2 mwk heavy crossbows), Coin – 200 gp in ruby bloodstones, Magic – 588 gp value (a suit of +1 *studded leather*), 583 gp value (a +1 *buckler*), 4,165 gp value (2 +2 *bucklers*), 4,000 gp value (2 *Bracers of Armor* +2), 2,000 gp value (2 *Rings of Protection*, +1), 1,000 gp value (2 *Cloaks of Resistance*, +1), 2,310 gp value (2 +1 *short swords*), 4,000 gp value (2 *Amulets of Health* +2), and 18,000 value (2 *Rings of Spell Storing*, Minor).

**Development:** If the party has cast any area-effect magics that encompass the desk and are likely to destroy thin scraps of parchment (ex. *Fireball*, *Flame Strike*, *Blade Barrier*), then the Demon's Letter and the rough fissure map are lost. This is deeply unfortunate for the party as they have destroyed most of the information for which they were looking. The Demon's Letter is required to qualify for the Favor of the King, II.

## Encounter Four: Yikes that's a lot of troops

*Glancing at the map found amongst the possessions of the creature known as "Grychnlwrđ", two things are clear. There is a somewhat shorter and easier route back to the surface. In a slight detour off of that route, is a fissure that winds slightly deeper and intersects with a massive room within the proper dungeons of Onyxgate. The scattered notes upon the makeshift desk seem to indicate that Grychnlwrđ used this side fissure to spy upon the doings within that main chamber.*

Get the party's marching order and light sources again as they set out from this chamber. There is no problem disarming the arrow fusillade trap or in moving the grate to allow a safe exit.

*The oppressive weight of the stone over your heads feels like an almost physical pressure as you enter a maze of natural passageways. They tunnels twist and turn like the architecture of a mad-man's*

*nightmares, unfolding into identical-seeming caverns while joining and rejoining familiar-feeling passageways.*

If the fissure map has not been destroyed, then it takes a mere thirty minutes to reach the next piece of read-aloud text. If the fissure map on Grychnlwrđ's desk was destroyed, then it takes another four hours to reach the next piece of read-aloud text. Carefully marking the passageways will reduce the time from four hours to two hours.

Tracking attempts really do not matter here, since Grychnlwrđ used random paths to get over to the fork between the passage up and out and the passage down to the spy-point. In the following, keep in mind that the exit path is the obscured one while the path leading deeper down is the clear one. The path leading deeper down does not intersect with the dungeons in a nice obvious passageway; it leads to a long thin crack which allows an excellent view down into a massive chamber of the dungeons.

*The thin layer of grit, mold, and lichen, so prevalent in the other dry fissures through which you have traveled is worn away here. It appears that this path has been relatively well traveled in recent times. After proceeding along the fissure for about ten minutes along a downward sloping passage, you come at last to a Y intersection, with a short narrowing passageway continuing to the right and another leading left and deeper. A squiggled claw-mark is cut into the stone, differentiating this particular splitting of the crevasse from the dozens of other branch-points you've passed so far.*

If the party has the map of the fissure system, read the following:

*Finally, this must be the branch-point indicated by Grychnlwrđ's map. The left fork, the one indicated by the map to lead eventually to the regular features which are probably the dungeons of Onyxgate, leads down deeper into the cave system. The right fork, the one indicated by the map as leading to the surface, rounds a bend but then seems to quickly become too narrow to pass through.*

If the party does not have the map of the fissure system, read the following:

*This branch point has a left fork that goes deeper into the cave system and a right fork which rounds a bend but then seems to quickly become too narrow to pass through.*

Quickly scouting either branch reveals that the left fork, which leads to the spy-hole, is a rather long deep path. The spy-hole is about twenty minutes travel away from the branch-point. The right fork only continues for maybe ten or fifteen feet before apparently becoming too narrow to be passable.

At this point, roll Search Checks (DC 10) for any elves in the party. Merely by being near the partially hidden other path, elves have a chance to find it. If there are no elves in the party, at least the PCs should be wondering why the branch point is indicated if it is impossible to continue down the other branch. Hint to them, if they are not thinking of this, and allow them to make a Search Check DC 15 to find the path out.

***Obscured by a boulder wedged in the crevasse before you, is the way to continue along this fissure line; a low hole in the crevasse wall, about 5 ft off of the ground offers a way around the apparently too narrow section.***

So does the party head right and up or left and down? If up, allow them to note that this is a relatively easy path with (Survival Check DC 5) fresh-tasting air. The path takes only 20 minutes to travel to the surface. If the party continues up to the surface, cut to the final exit fight. However, the party does not have sufficient information to qualify for Favor of the King, III. The party that exits at this point will not be aware that Sewardt (or at least his simulacra) is here or that Quaralanth is here. The favors granted will therefore be somewhat limited.

If the party heads down, a choice that will take only about twenty minutes of travel, continue with the following flavor text and information.

***After descending many dozens of feet deeper beneath the earth, the crevasse flattens into a broad undulating crack, a dozen feet wide, but only two feet tall. Crawling perhaps twenty feet further, light is detected ahead.***

The fissure that leads to the spy-hole does not continue on to anywhere else; it simply flattens out into the low crack that intersects with the big cavern. Get party layout, light sources and precautions. This is not really needed information for the Judge, but should increase the party's caution and paranoia.

Allow various Spot and Knowledge checks throughout the following read-aloud text. The Spot and Knowledge checks are detailed in the bullet points following this read-aloud text and are provided simply to allow PCs to better understand what they are seeing, if they are capable.

***Finally, inching forward, the source of the light is apparent. The low wide crack intersects a truly massive cavern in the cavern wall high above it's floor. The cavern must be eighty feet tall, ten times as wide and twenty times as long. The crack you are in is sixty feet above the ground and only fifty feet back from the head of the massive cavern... It seems to be the head of the cavern as that is where the stage is set up and where all of the assembled creatures are facing. The fifty-foot by seventy foot, fifteen foot tall wooden stage has a smaller dais upon it rising an additional ten feet.***

***Dozens of glowing balls of light slowly bob and wander about the vast cavern space, illuminating the assembled troops. Rank upon rank of humanoids in spiked armor stand at parade rest. Diverse weapons are sheathed by their sides, and almost all bear a bow. In smaller units amongst the warriors are robed human men and women, often accompanied by small animals and metal giants. On the far side of the cavern, are a long row of human men and women in metal breastplates and bearing flails. They seem to serve as a buffer between the main army and a number of things difficult to count; insubstantial things bob in the uncertain light amongst a scattered rank of gaunt, feral looking men. Towards the back of the cavern are a number of half-built multistory buildings bearing the mark of frequent damage.***

***Creeping to the edge of the crack and glancing down, the feeling of palpable evil is quite strong. Directly beneath the crack, are some troops apparently summoned from the Infinite Layers of the Abyss. These are separated from the main ranks of warriors by a long line of robed men and women each bearing some mark of fiendish taint.***

***As you finish your quick glance about the cavern, the slight murmuring and shifting about comes to a silent standstill at the sound of a single sustained note from a war horn. Behind the 15 ft. tall stage a single figure bearing a crown upon his head separates from a discussion with two other crowned figures and a robed man in a breastplate and mounts the stairs. As he reaches the top of the stage and walks forward, the two other crowned figures separate and join a short line of six robed men, who begin a series of arcane gestures. The robed man in a breastplate joins several other armored and robed men behind the line of mages and they also begin gesturing. Meanwhile, the crowned figure on the stage reaches the pinnacle of the smaller dais as a trumpet fanfare sounds and vast banners appear in the air behind him. Leaning forward, he begins speaking in a confident and familiar tone that carries easily through the entire vast chamber.***

Hand out Player Handout #3: King Sewardt's Speech. If there is a player at the table whom you think may be a good choice to momentarily ham it up as Sewardt, ask that player to read the speech aloud to the rest of the table. If nothing else, it will give the Judge a break from a whole lot of reading.

- The metal giants are Iron Golems, the insubstantial things are incorporeal undead, gaunt feral looking men are vampires and vampire spawn.
- Knowledge Local DC 15 - The damaged half-built buildings in the back are urban warfare training area modeled on the King's walk in Rel Mord.

- For the troops from the Infinite Layers of the Abyss, feel free to make up numbers and demon types. This is not meant to be a combat encounter and the demon numbers and types should be described as whatever is sufficient to convince the party that picking a fight here will be a spectacularly bad idea.
- Spot DC 15 – the crowned men were all identical
- Spot DC 20 – the crowned men were all Sewardnt
- Knowledge: Arcana DC 15 – these are most likely several simulacra
- Spot DC 20 – the robed man with the Sewardnts is Quaralanth
- Spellcraft DC 11 – The glowing balls of light are Dancing Lights from dozens of casters.
- Spot DC 15 then Spellcraft DC 11 – the spell cast simultaneously by a number of arcane casters behind the stage was Ghost Sound one or two silent images thrown in.
- Spot DC 15 then Spellcraft DC 11 – the spell cast by several of the divine casters behind the stage was an unfamiliar one, but it had the marks of enchantment magics.
- Amongst the banners is the Shield of Nyrond, (Knowledge: Heraldry/Nobility DC 10 – it's reversed, DC 15 – Prince Sewardnt's symbol is the crest of Nyrond, reversed), a black phoenix (Knowledge Heraldry/Nobility DC 20 – the old crest of the missing Fourth Legion), a number of other shields, (Knowledge: Heraldry/Nobility DC 10 - the Shields of the provinces of Nyrond), a swirling symbol (Knowledge: Religion DC 20 – Thirazdun), and a red symbol (Knowledge: Heraldry or history DC 10 – The Scarlet Sign)

*As the last resounding cry of 'No mercy!' still echoes throughout the cavern, a guard in spiked armor pelts from a low cavern exit near the stage and charges up upon the stage. Regally silencing the gathered forces with a one-handed gesture, the crowned man upon the stage listens momentarily to the messenger before again addressing the assembled troops.*

*"Men. Royal General Basmajenn reports the loss of a posting within the surface fissures. Our sacrifices in secrecy must not be exposed just yet. This meeting is over. Report to your posts. Diviners, begin your probes within the caverns and work outwards. Summoners, bring forth the Hunters of the Depths. Beastmasters, unleash your charges upon the surface. If there are still spies within the depths or the nearby surface, they must be destroyed. Now go!"*

Upon succeeding in a Listen check DC 10, read the following.

*It is not clear just what the "Hunters of the Depths" are, but from the chorus of pleased hissing and malevolent laughter coming from below the crack in which you are hiding, it just cannot be good.*

The laughing creatures are a bunch of demons a mere sixty feet below the crack.

Upon succeeding in a Wisdom check DC 10, read the following.

*If you cannot get back to your mounts before those Beastmasters are organized and unleash their creatures upon the surface, then you will be on foot as the forces of Onyxgate seek you out. It may be wise to get out fast.*

Keep in mind that the Abjuration magic infused into the stone surrounding Onyxgate acts as a Dimensional Anchor spell on all within Onyxgate or it's fissure system. Should any PC use Detect Magic or Arcane Sight while within the caves and fissures, they will be able to detect the faint but pervasive Abjuration magic and a Spellcraft check DC 20 reveals this fact. Hopefully, the PCs will have noted this already and will not be discovering this effect just now.

**Development:** What to do if the PCs choose to attack the assembled forces of Onyxgate. Pause and offer to let the PC(s) rethink that idea with the following points in mind – 1) "Sewardnt" may be a simulacrum, not the original, 2) the vampires, incorporeal undead and some of the demons could definitely reach the PCs' location rapidly, and 3) the area may be shielded in a way which prevents teleportation for escape. If the PC(s) still choose to attack, simply collect the character sheets. Everyone is dead and attempting to play it out is pointless.

Some PCs may wish to sacrifice themselves by dropping powerful area-effect magics in an attempt to harm the army for the sake of Nyrond. Unfortunately, even the apparently 'perfect' spell Earthquake will not significantly harm the army since the magic-infused rock of Onyxgate resists further collapse or fissuring. This is why the fissure system through which the PCs have passed still remains intact many years after it's formation. The PCs were sent to get information. The best thing they can do is get away quickly so that their information can be delivered.

**Creatures:** Too many to count and way too many to list. Attacking them is simply suicide.

**Treasure:** Information only. However, this information on the make-up of the forces gathered in Onyxgate is what is required to qualify for the Favor of the King, III.

## Encounter Five: Cry Havoc

Ask the party which way they are choosing to exit the crevasse system. They can either take the longer route back up to where they eliminated the three guards at the entrance, within sight of the tower, or they can follow the shorter route that seems to exit lower on the hillside, according to Grynchlwr'd's map.

If the PCs attempt to exit the same way they came in, add a guard post appropriate to one APL higher than the party experienced first encounter, plus the hounds of the final fight, plus the 'bonus' hound normally added due to being spotted by the tower. As this is a highly unlikely choice by the PCs, there is no flavor text provided for the encounter. Feel free to improvise.

Assuming the PCs exit by the shorter route, heading out the hidden exit, out of view of the tower:

*The rush out of the depths is a blur. The fissures seem to go on forever and be over in an eye-blink. The exit of this route is a low crawl beneath an old, dead oak and climbing out of it's hollow broken trunk. Even the weak dappled sunlight amidst the trees is sharp and over-bright as it replaces the absolute dark you have left.*

*The hazy warmth of the day and the buzzing of bees would be an image of peace, were it not for the approaching unearthly howls. The sounds of horrible howling are loudest behind you, a rising chorus from up the hill. There are sounds of combat, screams and neighing, off to your left, a few hundred feet.*

Situation: Ten riders from the Entrell Militia have passed by on their way back to the Entrell Estates from patrols along the eastern Almorian border. They had noticed and followed the trail of horses to where the PCs had left their mounts. This is where they had the misfortune to meet the first wave of hounds unleashed by the beastmasters of Onyxgate. They have fought a valiant but losing battle against the hounds. As the PCs arrive, the last of the elves is about to be killed. If the PCs aid him immediately, he will survive and be able to ride out with the party.

Any PC who has brought his or her own mount shall find that mount to be still alive but at 50% hit points. As for the mounts provided by the royal stables, beautiful chestnut palfreys, a number of them are dead along with a number of the dappled palominos ridden by the Entrell Militia elves. At the end of the fight, unless the PCs are responsible for killing a horse or two, there will be sufficient mounts for the entire party, plus one.

*Entering the familiar section of woods where you had left your mounts, a scene of carnage is before you. Armored elves lie broken and bleeding about the glade, most surrounded by the corpses of one or more massive wolves. Dead or dying horses form*

*low, bloody lumps in the churned terrain. Several wounded horses are being herded back into the killing circle by great growling beasts as two of the animals assault an armored elf still astride his mount.*

*With a sudden leap, the elf is ripped from his mount by one of the wolves and they begin to close in.*

Roll for initiative.

Situation, Captain Vel'morel is the last remaining elf from a troop of ten and has only 25% of his original hit points remaining. The other nine elves are all dead at this point and they have accounted for fifteen wolves/hounds during the fighting. The estimate of '25% of his original hit points remaining' is provided only as a measure indicating that he is pretty badly wounded. If offered healing, he will advise the party to "Heal your own and prepare to ride!" If precise hit points become important for reason, then assume Captain Vel'morel's maximum number of hit points is the same as the average maximum number of hit points for the party.

When the PCs show up, Captain Vel'morel is unhorsed and loses his sword. During the ensuing battle, he will not be useful in the fight as he is busy with the critical task of preventing the wounded and panicked horses from running away. The number of horses he is able to keep together is initially one for every PC as well as one for himself. As the combat progresses, this number may drop. See the tactics sections of the Appendices for why. Captain Laucian Vel'morel has not been provided a stat block as he will not be fighting.

### Creatures:

#### APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Worgs (3):** hp 35, 35, 35; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 256.

➤ **Bonus "We were spotted in Encounter one" creature:** add one Worg, hp 35, and see *Appendix One* for bonus creature separate tactics.

#### APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Hell Hounds (5):** hp 26, 26, 26, 26, 26; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 152.

➤ **Bonus "We were spotted in Encounter one" creature:** add one Hell Hound, hp 26, and see *Appendix One* for bonus creature separate tactics.

#### APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Winter Wolves (4):** hp 57, 57, 57, 57; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 256.

➤ **Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one Winter Wolf, hp 57, and see *Appendix One* for bonus creature separate tactics.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Hell Hound (Nessian Warhound):** hp 116; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 152.

➤ **Winter Wolves (4):** hp 57, 57, 57, 57; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 256.

➤ **Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one Winter Wolf, hp 57, and see *Appendix One* for bonus creature separate tactics..

APL 12 (EL 13)

➤ **Hell Hounds (Nessian Warhounds) (4):** hp 116, 116, 116, 116; see *Appendix One* and see *Monster Manual* page 152.

➤ **Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one Nessian Warhound, hp 116, and see *Appendix One* for bonus creature separate tactics.

**Treasure:**

Since the PCs will not reasonably have time to loot the bodies of the fallen, there is no treasure to be gained other than the Favor of the Entrell Militia

## The Ride Out of Almor

Note that the following read-aloud text assumes that Captain Vel'morel has survived the fight. It will need to be skipped if he was killed.

*As the last of the beasts drops, the panic of the surviving horses subsides and the elven fighter is able to bring the horses over to the center of the battlefield. Retrieving his sword, he says “I am Captain Laucian Vel'morel of the Entrell Militia, and I thank you. We must flee, but I ask your indulgence for a moment. Please tend the horses and mount so we may flee the more quickly” He then moves rapidly amongst the carnage, his dagger darting down as he kneels by each fallen elf.*

Captain Vel'morel will quickly step up to the corpse of each of his dead comrades, say something quietly in elven, cut a lock of hair and move to the next. As he moves, the howling in the distance seems to come closer.

Listen check DC 15 to hear his words (in rapid, but forceful, elven)

**“Dear friend, I pray your spirit travel with this lock of hair as I bring it with me to our home. You have died a hero and must accompany me on this last ride. Do not linger in this foul place. Come.”**

There are nine bodies, but Captain Vel'morel, is fast and efficient, taking only 4 rounds to complete his circuit. He considers this his duty to his men and will not leave until it is complete. As the fourth round starts, distant war-horns join the now much closer howling of a great horde of beasts. If there is still a horse to spare or one which may be ridden double Captain Vel'morel will quickmount and thank any PCs who have been willing to stay with him through this task before riding like the wind to stay ahead of the pursuing assault.

If the PCs attempt to leave before Vel'morel has finished his task, he will ask that they leave him a horse. If a horse is left for him, Vel'morel survives and will catch up with the PCs on the ride out. If no horse is left for Vel'morel and he is left to fend for himself, he dies and the Favor of the Entrell Militia is lost.

If any PCs should wish to stay and make a stand after having killed the first set of hounds, have them make a listen check DC 10. Let them know that the sounds of many dozen great wolves have been joined by the pounding of war drums and clarion of war-horns. The only hope of survival lies in fleeing as fast as mounts may carry them. If Vel'morel still lives, he will advise the PCs to flee, once he has completed his task, and he will set an example.

Sadistic judges may choose to request ride checks and upon failure describe the sounds of howling getting closer.

If there are too few horses to provide mounts for the entire party, the PCs may ride double. Any PCs with a high movement rate (ex. Monks or Barbarians) choosing to run rather than ride may do so as well.

The PCs will not have a chance to rest during the first part of their trip back to Justcrown Province. Wolves and worse creatures chase the party for the first fifteen hours of the pursuit, forcing the PCs to right flat-out even at night, with the result that the PCs reach Silverwat in fifteen hours rather than two days. As they pass rises and glance back, they will be able to spot motion on the ground and black shapes flitting about the treetops. In Silverwat, they will be able to get new horses for free, but a ominous feeling of pursuit and encirclement force the PCs to leave as quickly as they may. Even after the sounds of howling have faded (going silent shortly before Silverwat was reached), the feeling of malign pursuit remains for many days. In truth, there are no more encounters in the scenario, but (as a flavor issue) don't let the PCs rest or relax until they enter Justcrown.

**Development:** The effects the rest-free run out of the environs of Onyxgate are as follows: horses ridden double will be ridden to death by the time Silverwat is reached. The horse will stagger into town and then collapse, dead. The PCs who choose to run will have begun taking subdual damage during the fifteen-hour pursuit; unlike horses, the PCs have not been bred to run long distances for hours at a time. The subdual damage will be two fortitude checks, DC 15 for half damage, with the each check being to save against (APL/2)\*d6 worth of subdual damage. Skip or reduce the rolled subdual damage at will, if it will knock a PC unconscious; this is intended as flavor rather than a chance to kill PCs with an unlisted encounter. Although the scenario is essentially over at this point, and so no permanent harm is to be done, it is important to maintain the feeling of threat and pursuit. It is not that the PCs have escaped from danger, but more that they have barely survived to carry word of the massive danger that will fall upon the PCs, and all of Nyrond, later.

## Conclusion

*As you ride out of Old Almor, passing the tiny thorps of the resettlements, it is clear how undefended and indefensible these tiny villiages are. Once passing through the Old Almorian Borderlands into the more populated farmlands in the northwestern section of the Duchy of Almor, the friendly waves from the farmhands seem to be a salute of recognition that they are unaware of the threat hidden within the heart of the hills of Old Almor.*

PCs may wish to attempt rescuing or defending minor settlements from the force pursuing them. Point out that the settlements have been thus far unmolested and, furthermore, it seems that the pursuit has gone covert, apparently intent on eliminating the PCs without giving themselves away to the locals.

*Even entering Justcrown province, with its well-patrolled roads, does not shake the vague feeling of threat and pursuit, lingering like the scent of the fissures under Onyxgate.*

In reality, the pursuit fades away entirely once the PCs have left the Almorian Borderlands. The rolling fields offer little by way of cover or camouflage. The remaining feeling of pursuit is purely psychological.

*As the days of wearying travel affect your eyes, you pull up in shock just after cresting the last rise before Rel Mord comes into view. The setting sun's crimson light conspired with the red and yellow tower pennants to make it seem that the great walls of the capitol were aflame, a hallucination rapidly blinked away. The massive losses during the Greyhawk wars of a decade ago have been made up by many patriotic youth wishing to serve in the Legions of the Reformer King, but the sights*

*beneath Onyxgate have cast into sharp relief the relative youth and inexperience of the Legions now protecting Nyrond.*

*As you reach the gates of Rel Mord, your descriptions have apparently been passed to the guards, since you are whisked through all normal barriers into an immediate audience with the King. King Lynwerd accepts your report, appearing to pale and age as he understands the import of your discoveries. Nodding his thanks, he wastes no time and immediately calls for his council of advisors to be summoned, along with a steward to see to your needs.*

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 One: Wanna Wrassle?

APL4 90 xp

APL6 150 xp

APL8 210 xp

APL10 270 xp

APL12 330 xp

### Encounter Two: Dead Men Do Tell Tales

APL4 90 xp

APL6 90 xp

APL8 90 xp

APL10 90 xp

APL12 90 xp

### Encounter Three: Be My Ghast

APL4 210 xp

APL6 270 xp

APL8 330 xp

APL10 390 xp

APL12 450 xp

### Witnessing Encounter Four Story Award

APL4 35 xp

APL6 50 xp

APL8 65 xp

APL10 80 xp

APL12 95 xp

### Encounter Five: Cry Havoc

APL4 180 xp

APL6 240 xp

APL8 300 xp

APL10 360 xp

APL12 420 xp

### Discretionary role-playing award

APL4 70 xp

APL6 100 xp

APL8 130 xp

APL10 160 xp

APL12 190 xp

### Total possible experience:

APL4 675 xp

APL6 900 xp

APL8 1125 xp

APL10 1350 xp

APL12 1575 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 scenario, 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.

The below values are the typical PC's 1/6<sup>th</sup> share of the total loot.

### Encounter One: Wanna Wrassle?

APL 4: L: 156 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 313 gp

APL 6: L: 156 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 313 gp

APL 8: L: 156 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 888 gp

APL 10: L: 4 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 2,540 gp

APL 12: L: 4 gp; C: 500 gp; M: 3,290 gp

### Encounter Two: Dead Men Do Tell Tales

All APLs: L: 130 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

### Encounter Three: Be My Ghast

APL 4: L: 163 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 249 gp

APL 6: L: 136 gp; C: 33 gp; M: 585 gp

APL 8: L: 136 gp; C: 33 gp; M: 557 gp

APL 10: L: 84 gp; C: 33 gp; M: 1,470 gp

APL 12: L: 84 gp; C: 33 gp; M: 5,941 gp

### Encounter Five: Cry Havoc

All APLs: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

### Total Possible Treasure

APL 4: L: 449 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 606 gp - Total: 1,155 gp (but max gp cap is 600 gp)

APL 6: L: 421 gp; C: 83 gp; M: 898 gp - Total: 1,402 gp (but max gp cap is 800 gp)

APL 8: L: 421 gp; C: 83 gp; M: 1,444 gp - Total: 1,949 gp (but max gp cap is 1,250 gp)

APL 10: L: 217 gp; C: 83 gp; M: 4,010 gp - Total: 4,311 gp (but max gp cap is 2,100 gp)

APL 12: L: 217 gp; C: 83 gp; M: 9,231 gp - Total: 9,531 gp (but max gp cap is 3,000 gp)

### Special

Until a favor is expended, the character is deemed to have an Influence Point with the associated power group.

**Disfavor of the King:** All item access and favors listed on this AR are removed, although the character does receive maximum gold for the appropriate APL. Similarly, all Royal or Noble favors from the Kingdom of Nyronnd issued or received prior to the date listed on this AR are similarly cancelled.

**Favor of the King, I:** King Lynwerd has arranged to allow one suit of armor to be enchanted with the Light Fortification special ability. This favor may also be used to upgrade an already Fortified suit of armor from either Light to Moderate or Moderate to Heavy. This favor counts only as access and the PC must pay the difference in market value for the upgrade.

**Favor of the Church of Heironeous:** The Church of Heironeous will upgrade any one magical weapon that the PC owns to add the Holy special ability. This favor counts only as access and the PC must pay the difference in market value for the upgrade.

**Favor of the Salaff Blacksmiths:** The PC has access to purchase the Lion Shield (DMG p 221).

**Favor of the King, II:** King Lynwerd has arranged to cover half the expenses of one Raise Dead spell, should your body be brought to any Temple in the Kingdom of Nyronnd. If a PC has died during the course of the scenario, this favor may be expended immediately.

**Favor of the King, III:** The King has granted the PC access to purchase either, a Ring of Spell Storing, Minor, a Ring of Spell Storing, or a Ring of Spell Storing, Major. Until this favor is expended, the character is deemed to have an Influence Point with the King or any Royal organizations.

**Favor of the Entrell Militia:** The Entrell Estates will provide access to purchase either Horseshoes of Speed or Horseshoes of the Zephyr.

- Medallion of Thoughts (Adventure; DMG; 12,000 gp))
- Ring of Invisibility (Adventure; DMG; 20,000 gp)
- Amulet of Proof Against Detection and Location (Adventure; DMG; 35,000 gp)

APL 12 (all of APLs 4-10 plus the following):

- Ring of Spell Storing, Minor (Adventure; DMG; 18,000 gp)

## Items for the Adventure Record

### Item Access

APLs 4-10:

- Goggles of Minute Seeing (Adventure; DMG; 1,250 gp)
- Wand of Silence (Adventure; DMG; 4,500 gp)

## Appendix One – Combat Encounters

### Encounter One: Wanna wrassle?

#### APL 4

**Tactics:** If Merton's Listen check has exceeded the PC's Move Silently check by a fairly large margin, it will be fair to consider the guards to have readied actions for the appearance of the PCs.

Udo rushes the first PC he sees in an effort to block up the fissure and prevent the other PCs from being able to get past him or spread out. Garrod uses the long spear to keep other PCs off of Udo while Udo grapples and uses his spiked armor on the grappled PC. Merton casts Bless and moves up with the long spear to aid by stabbing the grappled PC repeatedly.

Play the guards smart. Ex. if Udo is more badly hurt than Garrod, they will trade places so that Merton can heal Udo. If the guards start losing the battle, Merton will attempt to signal the Tower. In this effort, he will send his bat familiar (Knowledge Arcana DC 15: kill the spell caster and the familiar is just an animal, incapable of communicating anything) and will use Ghost Sound to create the sound of a single incredibly loud alarm horn. Should the party have cast silence or otherwise negated the Adept's ability to signal the Tower, he will simply continue in the fighting, doing as much damage as he can before going down. All three will fight to the death as they have been trained to do.

**Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human War2, CR 1 (each); Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d8+6; hp 19 (each); Init +2; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 17; touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +2/+9; Atk: +6 melee (1d4+3/20/x2, mwk spiked gauntlet) or +6 melee (1d8+3/20/x3, mwk long spear) or +5 melee (1d6+3,20/x2, spiked armor) or +5 melee (1d6+3/19-20/x2, short sword) or +5 melee (1d4+3/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16(+3), Dex 14(+2), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0).

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +3, Intimidate +4, Jump -2, Listen +1; Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike

**Possessions (each):** +1 scale mail with armor spikes, mwk spiked gauntlets, mwk long spear, short sword, dagger, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile.

**Physical Description:** a scarred and weathered 30-35 yr old human male, of Oeridian descent.

**Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp2, CR 1; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d6+6; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 15; touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +1/+3; Atk: +4 melee (1d4+2/20/x2, mwk spiked gauntlet) or +4 melee (1d8+2/20/x3, mwk long spear) or -1 melee (1d6+2,20/x2, spiked armor) or +4 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, short sword) or +4 melee (1d4+2/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +6; Str 14(+2), Dex 10(+0), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 16(+3), Cha 10(+0).

**Skills and Feats:** Climb -1, Concentration +11, Jump -7, Listen +10, Spot +6; Combat Casting, Skill Focus(Concentration)

**Possessions:** +1 scale mail with armor spikes, mwk spiked gauntlets, mwk long spear, short sword, dagger, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile.

**Spells Prepared (3/2 base DC = 13 + spell level):** 0—*Cure Minor Wounds, Ghost Sound, Light*; 1st—*Bless, Cure Light Wounds*

**Physical Description (for all three humans):** a scarred and weathered 30-35 yr old human male, of Oeridian descent.

**Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** Diminutive magical beast; HD (2d6+6)/2; hp 8; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 17; touch 16, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +1/-16; Atk: None; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 1(-5), Dex 15(+2), Con 10(+0), Int 6(-2), Wis 14(+2), Cha 4(-3).

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +14, Listen +10, Move Silently +6, Spot +9, Improved Evasion, Share Spells, Empathic Link, Alertness, Blindsight 20 ft., Low-light vision.

**Physical Description:** a tiny black bat

## APL 6

**Tactics:** If Merton has heard the PCs coming, then all three will have quaffed their potions of Bull's Strength. This has not been factored into their stats yet, so the Judge must increase the listed Strength, Attack, Grapple, and Damage bonuses by +2. If Merton's Listen check has exceeded the PC's Move Silently check by a fairly large margin, it will be fair to consider the guards to have readied actions for the appearance of the PCs.

Initially, Udo rushes the first PC he sees in an effort to block up the fissure and prevent the other PCs from being able to get past him or spread out. Garrod uses the long spear to keep other PCs off of Udo while Udo grapples and uses his spiked armor on the grappled PC. Merton casts Bless and moves up with the long spear to aid by stabbing the grappled PC repeatedly.

Play the guards smart. Ex. if Udo is more badly hurt than Garrod, they will trade places so that Merton can heal Udo. If one or the other of them did not get the chance to drink a potion of Bull's Strength, they trade places to allow that. Obscuring Mist will be used if the party manages to bring ranged weapons to bear. If the guards start losing the battle, Merton will attempt to signal the Tower. In this effort, he will send his bat familiar (Knowledge Arcana DC 15: kill the spell caster and the familiar is just an animal, incapable of communicating anything) and will use Ghost Sound to create the sound of a single incredibly loud alarm horn. Should the party have cast silence or otherwise negated the Adept's ability to signal the Tower, he will simply continue in the fighting, doing as much damage as he can before going down. All three will fight to the death as they have been trained to do.

**Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human War3, CR 2 (each); Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d8+9; hp 27 (each); Init +2; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 17; touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +3/+10; Atk: +7 melee (1d4+3/20/x2, mwk spiked gauntlet) or +7 melee (1d8+3/20/x3, mwk long spear) or +6 melee (1d6+3,20/x2, spiked armor) or +6 melee (1d6+3/19-20/x2, short sword) or +6 melee (1d4+3/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16(+3), Dex 14(+2), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0).

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +4, Intimidate +4, Jump +0, Listen +2; Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack

**Possessions (each):** +1 scale mail with armor spikes, mwk spiked gauntlet, mwk long spear, short sword, dagger, potion of Bull's Strength, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile.

**Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp3, CR 2; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d6+9; hp 23; Init +0; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 15; touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +1/+3; Atk: +4 melee (1d4+2/20/x2, mwk spiked gauntlet) or +4 melee (1d8+2/20/x3, mwk long spear) or -1 melee (1d6+2,20/x2, spiked armor) or +3 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, short sword) or +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 14(+2), Dex 10(+0), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 16(+3), Cha 10(+0).

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +0, Concentration +12, Jump -6, Listen +14, Spot +6; Combat Casting, Skill Focus (Concentration), Skill Focus (Listen)

**Possessions:** +1 scale mail with armor spikes, mwk spiked gauntlet, mwk long spear, short sword, dagger, potion of Bull's Strength, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile.

**Spells Prepared** (3/3 base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*Cure Minor Wounds, Ghost Sound, Light*; 1st—*Bless, Cure Light Wounds, Obscuring Mist*

**Physical Description** (for all three humans): a scarred and weathered 30-35 yr old human male, of Oeridian descent.

**Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** Diminutive magical beast; HD (3d6+9)/2; hp 11; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 18; touch 16, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +1/-16; Atk: None; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 1(-5), Dex 15(+2), Con 10(+0), Int 7(-2), Wis 14(+2), Cha 4(-3).

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +14, Listen +11, Move Silently +6, Spot +9, Improved Evasion, Share Spells, Empathic Link, Deliver Touch Spells, Alertness, Blindsight 20 ft., Low-light vision.

**Physical Description:** a tiny black bat

## APL 8

**Tactics** If Merton has heard the PCs coming, then all three will have quaffed their potions of Bull's Strength. This has not been factored into their stats yet, so the Judge must increase the listed Strength, Attack, Grapple, and Damage bonuses by +2. If Merton's Listen check has exceeded the PC's Move Silently check by a fairly large margin, it will be fair to consider the guards to have readied actions for the appearance of the PCs.

Initially, Udo rushes the first PC he sees in an effort to block up the fissure and prevent the other PCs from being able to get past him or spread out. Garrod uses the longspear to keep other PCs off of Udo while Udo grapples and uses his spiked armor on the grappled PC. Merton casts Bless, then he will also make sure that both Udo and Garrod have Bear's Endurance cast on them. Once the basic "buff" spells have been cast, Merton moves up with the longspear to aid by stabbing the grappled PC repeatedly.

Play the guards smart. Ex. if Udo is more badly hurt than Garrod, they will trade places so that Merton can heal Udo. If one or the other of them did not get the chance to drink a potion of Bull's Strength, they trade places to allow that. Obscuring Mist will be used if the party manages to bring ranged weapons to bear. If the guards start losing the battle, Merton will attempt to signal the Tower. In this effort, he will send his bat familiar (Knowledge Arcana DC 15: kill the spell caster and the familiar is just an animal, incapable of communicating anything) and will use Ghost Sound to create the sound of a single incredibly loud alarm horn. Should the party have cast silence or otherwise negated the Adept's ability to signal the Tower, he will simply continue in the fighting, doing as much damage as he can before going down. All three will fight to the death as they have been trained to do.

**Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human Ftr4, CR 4 (each); Medium Humanoid (human); HD 4d10+12; hp 44 (each); Init +2; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 17; touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +4/+11; Atk: +8 melee (1d4+3/20/x2, mwk spiked gauntlet) or +8 melee (1d8+3/20/x3, mwk longspear) or +9 melee (1d6+6,20/x2, +1 armor spikes) or +7 melee (1d6+3/19-20/x2, short sword) or +7 melee (1d4+3/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 17(+3), Dex 14(+2), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0).

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +4, Intimidate +5, Jump +1, Listen +4; Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Spiked Armor), Weapon Specialization (Spiked Armor)

*Possessions (each):* +1 scale mail with +1 armor spikes, mwk spiked gauntlet, mwk longspear, short sword, dagger, potion of Bull's Strength, mottled

brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardndt's profile.

**Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp5, CR 4; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 5d6+15; hp 37; Init +0; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 15; touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +2/+4; Atk: +5 melee (1d4+2/20/x2, mwk spiked gauntlet) or +5 melee (1d8+2/20/x3, mwk longspear) or +1 melee (1d6+3,20/x2, +1 armor spikes) +4 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, short sword) or +4 melee (1d4+2/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 14(+2), Dex 10(+0), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 17(+3), Cha 10(+0).

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +0, Concentration +14, Jump -6, Listen +15, Spot +6; Combat Casting, Skill Focus(Concentration), Skill Focus(Listen)

*Possessions:* +1 scale mail with +1 armor spikes, mwk spiked gauntlet, mwk longspear, short sword, dagger, potion of Bull's Strength, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardndt's profile.

*Spells Prepared (3/3/2 base DC = 13 + spell level):* 0—Cure Minor Wounds, Ghost Sound, Light; 1st—Bless, Cure Light Wounds, Obscuring Mist; 2nd—Bear's Endurance (2)

*Physical Description (for all three humans):* a scarred and weathered 30-35 yr old human male, of Oeridian descent.

**Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** Diminutive magical beast; HD (5d6+15)/2; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 19; touch 16, flat-footed 17; BAB/Grp: +2/-15; Atk: None; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 1(-5), Dex 15(+2), Con 10(+0), Int 8(-1), Wis 14(+2), Cha 4(-3).

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +14, Listen +12, Move Silently +6, Spot +9, Improved Evasion, Share Spells, Empathic Link, Deliver Touch Spells, Speak With Master, Alertness, Blindsight 20 ft., Low-light vision.

*Physical Description:* a tiny black bat

## APL 10

**Tactics** If Merton has heard the PCs coming, then all three will have quaffed their potions of Bull's Strength.

This has not been factored into their stats yet, so the Judge must increase the listed Strength, Attack, Grapple, and Damage bonuses by +2. If Merton's Listen check has exceeded the PC's Move Silently check by a fairly large margin, it will be fair to consider the guards to have readied actions for the appearance of the PCs.

Initially, Udo rushes the first PC he sees in an effort to block up the fissure and prevent the other PCs from being able to get past him or spread out. Garrod uses the long spear to keep other PCs off of Udo while Udo grapples and uses his spiked armor on the grappled PC. Merton casts Bless, then he will also make sure that both Udo and Garrod have Bear's Endurance cast on them. If Merton is being targeted by the PCs, he will cast Mirror Image fairly early on. Once the basic "buff" spells have been cast, Merton moves up with the long spear to aid by stabbing the grappled PC repeatedly.

Play the guards smart. Ex. if Udo is more badly hurt than Garrod, they will trade places so that Merton can heal Udo. If one or the other of them did not get the chance to drink a potion of Bull's Strength, they trade places to allow that. Obscuring Mist will be used if the party manages to bring ranged weapons to bear. If the guards start losing the battle, Merton will attempt to signal the Tower. In this effort, he will send his bat familiar (Knowledge Arcana DC 15: kill the spell caster and the familiar is just an animal, incapable of communicating anything) and will use Ghost Sound to create the sound of a single incredibly loud alarm horn. Should the party have cast silence or otherwise negated the Adept's ability to signal the Tower, he will simply continue in the fighting, doing as much damage as he can before going down. All three will fight to the death as they have been trained to do.

**Wrassling Guards, 2; Garrod and Udo:** Male human Ftr6, CR 6 (each); Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d10+18; hp 64 (each); Init +2; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 18; touch 12, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +6/+13; Full Atk: +10/+5 one-handed melee (1d4+4/20/x2, +1 spiked gauntlet) or +11/+6 one-handed melee (1d6+6, 20/x2, spiked armor) or +11/+6 Two-handed (1d8+7/20/x3, +1 long spear) +9/+4 melee (1d6+3/19-20/x2, short sword) or +9/+4 melee (1d4+3/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 17(+3), Dex 14(+2), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0).

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +6, Intimidate +5, Jump +1, Listen +6; Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Weapon Focus(Spiked Armor)

*Possessions (each):* +1 scale mail with +1 armor spikes, +1 spiked gauntlets, +1 long spear, short sword,

dagger, Amulet of Natural Armor +1, potion of Bull's Strength, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 200 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile

**Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp7, CR 6; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 7d6+21; hp 58; Init +0; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 16; touch 10, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp: +3/+5; Full Atk +6 One-handed (1d4+3;20/x2, +1 Spiked Gauntlet) or +2 One-handed (1d6+3;20/x2, +1 Spiked Armor) or +6 Two-handed (1d8+4;20/x3, +1 Longspear) +5 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, short sword) or +5 melee (1d4+2/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 14(+2), Dex 10(+0), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 17(+3), Cha 10(+0).

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +0, Concentration +17, Jump -7, Listen +18, Spot +6; Combat Casting, Skill Focus(Concentration), Skill Focus(Listen), Improved Toughness

*Possessions:* +1 scale mail with +1 armor spikes, +1 spiked gauntlets, +1 long spear, short sword, dagger, Amulet of Natural Armor +1, potion of Bull's Strength, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 200 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile

*Spells Prepared* (3/4/3 base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—Cure Minor Wounds, Ghost Sound, Light; 1st—Bless, Cure Light Wounds (2), Obscuring Mist; 2nd—Bear's Endurance (2), Mirror Image

*Physical Description* (for all three humans): a scarred and weathered 30-35 yr old human male, of Oeridian descent.

**Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** Diminutive magical beast; HD (7d6+21)/2; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 20; touch 16, flat-footed 18; BAB/Grp: +3/-14; Atk: None; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 1(-5), Dex 15(+2), Con 10(+0), Int 9(-1), Wis 14(+2), Cha 4(-3).

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +14, Listen +15, Move Silently +6, Spot +9, Improved Evasion, Share Spells, Empathic Link, Deliver Touch Spells, Speak With Master, Speak with animals of its kind, Alertness, Blindsight 20 ft., Low-light vision.

*Physical Description:* a tiny black bat

## APL 12

**Tactics** If Merton has heard the PCs coming, then all three will have quaffed their potions of Bull's Strength. This has not been factored into their stats yet, so the Judge must increase the listed Strength, Attack, Grapple, and Damage bonuses by +2. If they had the time, all three will have also quaffed their potions of Shield of Faith +3. This has also not been factored into their stats yet, so the Judge must increase the listed Armor Class bonuses by +3. If Merton's Listen check has exceeded the PC's Move Silently check by a fairly large margin, it will be fair to consider the guards to have readied actions for the appearance of the PCs.

Initially, Udo rushes the first PC he sees in an effort to block up the fissure and prevent the other PCs from being able to get past him or spread out. Garrod uses the long spear to keep other PCs off of Udo while Udo grapples and uses his spiked armor on the grappled PC. Merton casts Bless, then he will also make sure that both Udo and Garrod have Bear's Endurance cast on them. If Merton is being targeted by the PCs, he will cast Mirror Image fairly early on. Once the basic "buff" spells have been cast, Merton moves up with the long spear to aid by stabbing the grappled PC repeatedly.

Play the guards smart. Ex. if Udo is more badly hurt than Garrod, they will trade places so that Merton can heal Udo. If one or the other of them did not get the chance to drink a potion of Shield of Faith +3, they trade places to allow that. Obscuring Mist and/or Deeper Darkness will be used if the party manages to bring ranged weapons to bear. If any PC gets within 10 feet of Merton, he will activate his *Quaal's Feather Token - Whip*. If the guards start losing the battle, Merton will attempt to signal the Tower. In this effort, he will send his bat familiar (Knowledge Arcana DC 15; kill the spell caster and the familiar is just an animal, incapable of communicating anything) and will use Ghost Sound to create the sound of a single incredibly loud alarm horn. If a situation occurs where Merton has a chance to hit a bunch of PCs with Lightning Bolt, he will use it even if it means hitting one of his fellow guards. Otherwise, Lightning bolt may be fired directly into the air to help signal the tower. Should the party have cast silence or otherwise negated the Adept's ability to signal the Tower, he will simply continue in the fighting, doing as much damage as he can before going down. All three will fight to the death as they have been trained to do.

**Wrassling Guards; Garrod and Udo:** Male human Ftr8, CR 8 (each); Medium Humanoid (human); HD 8d10+24; hp 84; Init +2; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 19; touch 12, flat-footed 17; BAB/Grp: +8/+16; Atk: +13/+8 one-handed (1d4+5/20/x2, +1 spiked gauntlet) or +14/+9 one-handed (1d6+7/20/x2, +1 spiked armor) or +14/+9 two-handed (1d8+9/20/x3, +1 long spear) +12/+7 melee (1d6+4/19-20/x2, short sword) or +12/+7 melee

(1d4+4/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 18(+4), Dex 14(+2), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0).

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +9, Intimidate +3, Jump +6, Listen +6, Spot +1; Combat Reflexes, Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Spiked Armor, Longspear), Weapon Specialization (Spiked Armor, Longspear)

**Possessions:** +2 scale mail with +1 armor spikes, +1 spiked gauntlets, +1 long spear, short sword, dagger, Amulet of Natural Armor +1, potion of Bull's Strength, potion of Shield of Faith +3, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 100 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile.

**Wrassling Coach; Merton:** Male human Adp9, CR 8; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 9d6+27; hp 74; Init +0; Spd 20 ft/x4; AC 18; touch 10, flat-footed 18; BAB/Grp: +4/+6; Atk: +7 one-handed (1d4+3/20/x2, +1 spiked gauntlet) or +3 one-handed (1d6+3/20/x2, spiked armor) or +8 two-handed (1d8+4/20/x3, +1 Longspear) +6 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, short sword) or +6 melee (1d4+2/19-20/x2, dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +10; Str 14(+2), Dex 10(+0), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 18(+4), Cha 10(+0).

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +18, Jump -4, Listen +20, Spot +7; Combat Casting, Skill Focus(Concentration), Skill Focus(Listen), Weapon Focus(Longspear), Improved Toughness

**Possessions:** +2 scale mail with +1 armor spikes, +1 spiked gauntlets, +1 long spear, short sword, dagger, Amulet of Natural Armor +1, potion of Bull's Strength, potion of Shield of Faith +3, mottled brown cloak, waterskin, 1 trail ration, 200 gp in gold nobles bearing King Sewardt's profile.

**Spells Prepared** (3/4/3/2 base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—Cure Minor Wounds, Ghost Sound, Light; 1st—Bless, Cure Light Wounds (2), Obscuring Mist; 2nd—Bear's Endurance (2), Mirror Image; 3<sup>rd</sup>—Deeper Darkness, Lightning Bolt

**Physical Description** (for all three humans): a scarred and weathered 30-35 yr old human male, of Oeridian descent.

**Bat Familiar; Squeaky:** Diminutive magical beast; HD (9d6+27)/2; hp 37; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 21; touch 16, flat-footed 19; BAB/Grp: +4/-13; Atk: None; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 1(-5), Dex 15(+2), Con 10(+0), Int 10(+0), Wis 14(+0), Cha 4(-3).

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +14, Listen +16, Move Silently +6, Spot +9, Improved Evasion, Share Spells, Empathic Link, Deliver Touch Spells, Speak With Master, Speak With Animals of Its Kind, Alertness, Blindsight 20 ft., Low-light vision.

**Physical Description:** a tiny black bat

## Encounter Three: Be My Ghast

### APL 4

**Tactics:** Grynchlwrđ will initially attempt to distract the PCs (Bluff Check vs. the PC's Sense Motive Check) by chatting with them. If PCs do not initially attack, then Grynchlwrđ will 'bargain' with the PCs, offering an exchange of information. Even if the PCs do not offer information in return, Grynchlwrđ will attempt to hold their attention by revealing pieces of information that he knows to be of value to them. See Player Handout #2 for the information he is willing to reveal. This conversation is simply to buy time for his underlings drink their potions of invisibility and to get into position. For each piece of information Grynchlwrđ reveals, consider one round to have passed, during which the Rogues will be preparing. Conversation stops when the Rogues indicate their readiness for combat by attacking. Grynchlwrđ will have been waiting for this moment and will be able to act immediately after the Rogues.

The Rogues will drink their potions of invisibility and move to within 30 feet of the most obvious cleric/divine caster. They will reveal themselves with simultaneous heavy crossbow sneak attacks upon the target cleric/divine caster. Once the Rogues have attacked, the Ghouls will stand up from within the pile of bodies between the desk and Grynchlwrđ's bed, and join the attack, along with Grynchlwrđ himself. Grynchlwrđ will make his initial attack against any divine spellcaster.

All attackers, except the Ghouls, will have as their highest priority the elimination of divine spellcasters from combat. Unconscious, dead, or simply fleeing all count as 'eliminated from combat' as their goal is to remove from the fight whoever can power up the whole party (bless, prayer, etc.) or heal the party or turn their undead allies. If no divine caster is available as a target, then they will primarily target any other spellcasters.

The Ghouls simply attempt to attack and occupy the PC fighter-types, to allow the rogues freedom in their attacks.

Play the combatants intelligently; whenever they can, they will flank opponents. When they cannot flank, they will use Improved Feint. Grynchlwrđ will use the reach of the longsword for opportunity attacks upon people who attempt to close with him, but will switch to claw attacks if he is prevented from withdrawing to the distance required for the longsword.

**Grynchlwrđ the Half-fiend:** Male Human Rog3, CR 4; Medium Outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 3d6+9; hp 23; Init +4; Spd 30 ft/x4; Fly 30 ft.(avg); AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp +2/+6; Atk +6/+6 primary natural (1d4+2;20/x2, 2 Claws), +1

secondary natural (1d6+4;20/x2, Bite), +7 two-handed (1d8+6;20/x3, mwk longsword); AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 18(+4), Dex 18(+4), Con 16(+3), Int 16(+3), Wis 10(+0), Cha 14(+2);

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +8, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +10, Hide +10, Jump +14, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Search +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Tumble +14, Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint.

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 feet; Damage reduction: 5/magic; Immunity to poison; Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10; Spell Resistance 13; Your natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Smite Good (Su):** Once per day you can make a normal melee attack to deal +3 against a good foe.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day- Darkness, 1/day - Desecrate

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 2d6 damage

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather, mwk longsword, and 100 gp in ruby bloodstones.

*Physical Description:* A black-skinned and red-eyed humanoid neatly dressed in black studded leather, with silver trim. A pair of bat wings is folded against the creature's back.

**Rogue Twins, 2; Black and Blue:** Male human Rog3, CR 3 (each); Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d6+6; hp 20 (each); Init +2; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 17; touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp: +2/+4; Atk: +5 melee (1d6+2, 19-20/x2, mwk short sword) or +5 melee (1d4+2, 19-20/x2, mwk dagger) or +5 melee (1d10/19-20/x2, mwk heavy crossbow); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 14(+2), Dex 14(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0).

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +9, Bluff +7, Climb +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +10, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Tumble +10, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 2d6 damage. Ranged attacks must be within 30 feet to gain this.

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather, mwk buckler, mwk short sword, mwk dagger, mwk heavy crossbow,

Potion of Invisibility, and 100 gp in gold coin bearing some sort of barbed skull symbol.

*Physical Description:* Twin young Oeridian men, 17-20 yrs old, with black hair and very pale skin. One wears mottled brown studded leather with black trim and the other mottled brown studded leather with dark blue trim.

**Human Male Ghouls (2):** hp 15, 15; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

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## APL 6

**Tactics:** Grynchlwrđ will initially attempt to distract the PCs (Bluff Check vs. the PC's Sense Motive Check) by chatting with them. If PCs do not initially attack, then Grynchlwrđ will 'bargain' with the PCs, offering an exchange of information. Even if the PCs do not offer information in return, Grynchlwrđ will attempt to hold their attention by revealing pieces of information that he knows to be of value to them. See Player Handout #2 for the information he is willing to reveal. This conversation is simply to buy time for his underlings drink their potions and to get into position. For each piece of information Grynchlwrđ reveals, consider one round to have passed, during which the Rogues will be preparing. Conversation stops when the Rogues indicate their readiness for combat by attacking. Grynchlwrđ will have been waiting for this moment and will be able to act immediately after the Rogues.

The Rogues will drink their potions of invisibility and move to within 30 feet of the most obvious cleric/divine caster. If they have the time before combat starts, they will also drink their potions of Cat's Grace and Blur. They will then reveal themselves with simultaneous heavy crossbow sneak attacks upon the target cleric/divine caster. These crossbow attacks are the only attacks in which poison is used. One bolt is coated with Medium Spider Venom and the other bolt is coated with Black Adder Venom. See DMG p 297 for the effects and save DCs of the poisons. Once the Rogues have attacked, the Ghosts will stand up from within the pile of bodies between the desk and Grynchlwrđ's bed, and join the attack, along with Grynchlwrđ himself. Grynchlwrđ will make his initial attack against any divine spellcaster.

All attackers, except the Ghosts, will have as their highest priority the elimination of divine spellcasters from combat. Unconscious, dead, or simply fleeing all count as 'eliminated from combat' as their goal is to remove from the fight whoever can power up the whole party (bless, prayer, etc.) or heal the party or turn their undead allies. If no divine caster is available as a target, then they will primarily target any other spellcasters.

The Ghosts simply attempt to attack and occupy the PC fighter-types, to allow the rogues freedom in their attacks.

Play the combatants intelligently; whenever they can, they will flank opponents. When they cannot flank, they will use Improved Feint. Grynchlwrđ will use the reach of the long spear for opportunity attacks upon people who attempt to close with him, but will switch to claw attacks if he is prevented from withdrawing to the distance required for the long spear.

**Grychnlwrđ the Half-fiend:** Male Human Rog5, CR 6; Medium Outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 5d6+15; hp 37; Init +4; Spd 30 ft/x4; Fly 30 ft.(avg); AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 21; BAB/Grp +3/+7; Atk +7/+7 primary natural (1d4+2;20/x2, 2 Claws), +2 secondary natural (1d6+4;20/x2, Bite), +8 two-handed (1d8+6;20/x3, mwk longspear); AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +1; Str 19(+4), Dex 18(+4), Con 16(+3), Int 16(+3), Wis 10(+0), Cha 14(+2);

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +10, Escape Artist +12, Gather Information +12, Hide +12, Jump +16, Knowledge (local) +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Search +11, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Tumble +16, Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint.

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 feet; Damage reduction: 5/magic; Immunity to poison; Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10; Spell Resistance 15; Your natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Smite Good (Su):** Once per day you can make a normal melee attack to deal +5 against a good foe.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day- Darkness, 1/day – Desecrate, 1/day – Unholy blight

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 3d6 damage.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** You retain you Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, mwk longspear, and 100 gp in ruby bloodstones.

*Physical Description:* A black-skinned and red-eyed humanoid neatly dressed in black studded leather, with silver trim. A pair of bat wings is folded against the creature's back.

**Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog5; CR 5; Medium Humanoid; HD 5d6+10; hp 32; hp 32; Init +2; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 18; BAB/Grp +3/+5; Full Atk +6 One-handed (1d6+2;19-20/x2, mwk short sword), +6 Two-handed (1d10;19-20/x2, mwk heavy crossbow), +6 One-handed (1d4+2;19-20/x2, mwk dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 14(+2), Dex 15(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0);

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +12, Bluff +8, Climb +10, Escape Artist +10, Hide +10, Jump +12, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Tumble +12, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Dodge

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 3d6 damage.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** You retain you Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.

*Possessions (each):* +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, mwk short sword, mwk dagger, mwk heavy crossbow, Potion Of Invisibility, Potion Of Cat's Grace, Potion Of Blur, 50 gp in gold coin bearing some sort of barbed skull symbol.

*Physical Description:* Twin young Oeridian men, 17-20 yrs old, with black hair and very pale skin. One wears mottled brown studded leather with black trim and the other mottled brown studded leather with dark blue trim.

**Human Male Ghosts (2):** hp 32, 32; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

## APL 8

**Tactics:** Grynchlwrđ will initially attempt to distract the PCs (Bluff Check vs. the PC's Sense Motive Check) by chatting with them. If PCs do not initially attack, then Grynchlwrđ will 'bargain' with the PCs, offering an exchange of information. Even if the PCs do not offer information in return, Grynchlwrđ will attempt to hold their attention by revealing pieces of information that he knows to be of value to them. See Player Handout #2 for the information he is willing to reveal. This conversation is simply to buy time for his underlings drink their potions and to get into position. For each piece of information Grynchlwrđ reveals, consider one round to have passed, during which the Rogues will be preparing. Conversation stops when the Rogues indicate their readiness for combat by attacking. Grynchlwrđ will have been waiting for this moment and will be able to act immediately after the Rogues.

The Rogues will drink their potions of invisibility and move to within 30 feet of the most obvious cleric/divine caster. If they have the time before combat starts, they will also drink their potions of Cat's Grace and Displacement. They will then reveal themselves with simultaneous heavy crossbow sneak attacks upon the target cleric/divine caster. These crossbow attacks are the only attacks in which poison is used. One bolt is coated with Shadow Essence and the other bolt is coated with Black Adder Venom. See DMG p 297 for the effects and save DCs of the poisons. Once the Rogues have attacked, Grynchlwrđ will use his Summon Ghosts ability, causing some of the bodies in the pile of corpses between the desk and Grynchlwrđ's bed to be reborn as Ghosts. The Ghosts will stand up from the pile of bodies, and join the attack. Grynchlwrđ next uses his spell like ability Death Gaze against any divine spellcaster.

All attackers, except the Ghosts, will have as their highest priority the elimination of divine spellcasters from combat. Unconscious, dead, or simply fleeing all count as 'eliminated from combat' as their goal is to remove from the fight whoever can power up the whole party (bless, prayer, etc.) or heal the party or turn their undead allies. If no divine caster is available as a target, then they will primarily target any other spellcasters.

The Ghosts simply attempt to attack and occupy the PC fighter-types, to allow the rogues freedom in their attacks.

Play the combatants intelligently; whenever they can, they will flank opponents. When they cannot flank, they will use Improved Feint. Grynchlwrđ will initially use the reach of the long spear for opportunity attacks upon people who attempt to close with him, but will quickly switch to claw and bite attacks.

**Grynchlwrđ the Nabassu (lesser):** Male Tanar'ri, CR 9; Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Native); HD 7d8+14; hp 51; Init +5; Spd 30 ft/x4; Fly 40 ft.(avg); AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21; BAB/Grp +8/+12; Atk +12/+12 primary natural (1d4+4;20/x2, 2 Claws), +10 secondary natural (1d6+2;20/x2, Bite), +13 two-handed (1d8+6;20/x3, mwk long spear); AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +13; Str 19(+4), Dex 14(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 14(+2), Cha 13(+1);

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +16, Escape Artist +13, Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Jump +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +13, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Search +13, Spellcraft +13, Spot +15, Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 feet; Damage reduction: 10/magic; Ethereal jaunt; Immunity to death effect magics; Immunity to electricity and poison; Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10; Spell Resistance 21; telepathy 100 ft. Your natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—deeper darkness (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric); 1/day—death gaze (functions as Finger of Death cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 18).

A Nabassu that reaches 10+ HD by Feeding can also use the following: 1/day—energy drain (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 20), silence (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric, DC 14), and vampiric touch (cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer).

**Feed (Su):** When a Nabassu slays a humanoid opponent, it can feed on the corpse, devouring both flesh and life force, as an action requiring a full round. For every 8 HD or levels a Nabassu consumes, it gains 1 Hit Die. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of resurrection that requires part of the corpse. A wish, miracle, or true resurrection spell can restore a devoured victim to life.

**Paralysis Aura (Su):** As a free action, a Nabassu can create an aura of paralysis in a 10-foot radius. It is otherwise identical with ghoul touch cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer (save DC 13). If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that Nabassu's paralysis aura for one day. Other demons are immune to the aura.

**Ethereal Jaunt (Su):** Twice per day a Nabassu can shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal as part of any move action, and shift back again as a free action. It can remain on the Ethereal Plane for 1 round before returning to the Material. The ability is otherwise identical with ethereal jaunt cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer.

**Summon Ghosts (Sp):** Once per day a Nabassu can automatically summon 1d6 Ghosts (see **Monster Manual page 119.**) as a standard action.

**Telepathy (Su):** Nabassu can communicate with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

*Possessions:* Mwk longspear and 200 gp in ruby bloodstones.

*Physical Description:* The creature stands about 7 feet tall and resembles a gargoyle at first glance, but one with tough, leathery, black skin rather than a hide of stone. It is gaunt, with tightly corded muscles, and great claws on its hands and feet. Its eyes gleam steel-gray and flicker with malice while its mouth is stretched in a feral grin, displaying sharp fangs.

**Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog7; CR 7; Medium Humanoid; HD 7d6+14; hp 44; hp 44; Init +2; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 18; BAB/Grp +5/+7; Full Atk +8 One-handed (1d6+2;19-20/x2, mwk short sword), +8 Two-handed (1d10;19-20/x2, mwk heavy crossbow), +8 One-handed (1d4+2;19-20/x2, mwk dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 14(+2), Dex 15(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0);

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +14, Bluff +10, Climb +12, Escape Artist +12, Hide +12, Jump +14, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Tumble +14, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Dodge, Mobility

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 4d6 damage.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** You retain you Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, mwk short sword, mwk dagger, mwk heavy crossbow, Cloak of Resistance, Potion Of Invisibility, Potion Of Cat's Grace, Potion Of Displacement, and no coin (lost it gambling with Grynchlwrđ).

*Physical Description:* Twin young Oeridian men, 17-20 yrs old, with black hair and very pale skin. One wears mottled brown studded leather with black trim and the other mottled brown studded leather with dark blue trim.

## APL 10

**Tactics:** Grynchlwrđ will initially attempt to distract the PCs (Bluff Check vs. the PC's Sense Motive Check) by chatting with them. If PCs do not initially attack, then Grynchlwrđ will 'bargain' with the PCs, offering an exchange of information. Even if the PCs do not offer information in return, Grynchlwrđ will attempt to hold their attention by revealing pieces of information that he knows to be of value to them. See Player Handout #2 for the information he is willing to reveal. This conversation is simply to buy time for his underlings drink their potions and to get into position. For each piece of information Grynchlwrđ reveals, consider one round to have passed, during which the Rogues will be preparing. Conversation stops when the Rogues indicate their readiness for combat by attacking. Grynchlwrđ will have been waiting for this moment and will be able to act immediately after the Rogues.

The Rogues will drink their potions of invisibility and move to within 30 feet of the most obvious cleric/divine caster. If they have the time before combat starts, they will also drink their potions of Displacement. They will then reveal themselves with simultaneous heavy crossbow sneak attacks upon the target cleric/divine caster. These crossbow attacks are the only attacks in which poison is used. One bolt is coated with Large Scorpion Venom and the other bolt is coated with Wyvern Poison. See DMG p 297 for the effects and save DCs of the poisons. Once the Rogues have attacked, Grynchlwrđ will use his Summon Ghosts ability, causing some of the bodies in the pile of corpses between the desk and Grynchlwrđ's bed to be reborn as Ghosts. The Ghosts will stand up from the pile of bodies, and join the attack. Grynchlwrđ next uses his spell like ability Death Gaze against any divine spellcaster.

All attackers, except the Ghosts, will have as their highest priority the elimination of divine spellcasters from combat. Unconscious, dead, or simply fleeing all count as 'eliminated from combat' as their goal is to remove from the fight whoever can power up the whole party (bless, prayer, etc.) or heal the party or turn their undead allies. If no divine caster is available as a target, then they will primarily target any other spellcasters.

The Ghosts simply attempt to attack and occupy the PC fighter-types, to allow the rogues freedom in their attacks.

Play the combatants intelligently; whenever they can, they will flank opponents. Black and Blue will delay to move on the same initiative, attempting, whenever possible to do simultaneous flanking spring attacks on targets. When they cannot flank, they will use Improved Feint. Grynchlwrđ will initially use the reach of the longspear for opportunity attacks upon

people who attempt to close with him, but will quickly switch to claw and bite attacks.

**Grychnlwrđ the Nabassu (lesser) Rog2:** Male Tanar'ri, CR 11; Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Native); HD 7d8+2d6+18; hp 65; Init +5; Spd 30 ft/x4; Fly 40 ft.(avg); AC 29, touch 12, flat-footed 27; BAB/Grp +9/+13; Atk +13/+13 primary natural (1d4+4;20/x2, 2 Claws), +11 secondary natural (1d6+2;20/x2, Bite), +14 two-handed (1d8+6;20/x3, mwk longspear); AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 19(+4), Dex 14(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 14(+2), Cha 13(+1);

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +6, Concentration +16, Escape Artist +17, Gather Information +8, Hide +18, Intimidate +12, Jump +20, Knowledge (Arcana) +13, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +19, Move Silently +17, Search +16, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +13, Spot +20, Tumble +9, Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 feet; Damage reduction: 10/magic; Ethereal jaunt; Immunity to death effect magics; Immunity to electricity and poison; Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10; Spell Resistance 21; telepathy 100 ft. Your natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—deeper darkness (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric); 1/day—death gaze (functions as Finger of Death cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 18).

A Nabassu that reaches 10+ HD by Feeding can also use the following: 1/day—energy drain (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 20), silence (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric, DC 14), and vampiric touch (cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer).

**Feed (Su):** When a Nabassu slays a humanoid opponent, it can feed on the corpse, devouring both flesh and life force, as an action requiring a full round. For every 8 HD or levels a Nabassu consumes, it gains 1 Hit Die. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of resurrection that requires part of the corpse. A wish, miracle, or true resurrection spell can restore a devoured victim to life.

**Paralysis Aura (Su):** As a free action, a Nabassu can create an aura of paralysis in a 10-foot radius. It is otherwise identical with ghoul touch cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer (save DC 13). If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that Nabassu's paralysis aura for one day. Other demons are immune to the aura.

**Ethereal Jaunt (Su):** Twice per day a Nabassu can shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal as part of any move action, and shift back again as a free action. It can remain on the Ethereal Plane for 1 round before returning to the Material. The ability is otherwise

identical with ethereal jaunt cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer.

**Summon Ghasts (Sp):** Once per day a Nabassu can automatically summon 1d6 Ghasts (see *Monster Manual* page 119.) as a standard action.

**Telepathy (Su):** Nabassu can communicate with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage.

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 1d6 damage. Ranged attacks must be within 30 feet to gain this, and this extra damage is not increased on a critical hit. Creatures that are immune to critical hits ignore this damage, as do creatures with concealment

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, mwk longspear, and 200 gp in ruby bloodstones.

*Physical Description:* The creature stands about 7 feet tall and resembles a gargoyle at first glance, but one with tough, leathery, black skin rather than a hide of stone. It is neatly dressed in silver-trimmed black studded leather, and has great claws on its hands and feet. Its eyes gleam steel-gray and flicker with malice while its mouth is stretched in a feral grin, displaying sharp fangs.

**Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog9; CR 9; Medium Humanoid; HD 9d6+18; hp 56; hp 56; Init +3; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 20; BAB/Grp +6/+8; Full Atk +9/+4 One-handed (1d6+3;19-20/x2, +1 short sword), +10/+5 Two-handed (1d10;19-20/x2, mwk heavy crossbow), +9/+4 One-handed (1d4+2;19-20/x2, mwk dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 14(+2), Dex 16(+3), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0);

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +17, Bluff +12, Climb +14, Escape Artist +15, Hide +15, Jump +16, Listen +12, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12, Tumble +17, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 5d6 damage.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** You retain you Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.

*Possessions:* +2 studded leather, +1 buckler, +1 short sword, mwk dagger, mwk heavy crossbow, Cloak of Resistance, Potion Of Invisibility, Potion Of Cat's Grace, Potion Of Displacement, and no coin (lost it gambling with Grynchlwrđ).

*Physical Description:* Twin young Oeridian men, 17-20 yrs old, with black hair and very pale skin. One wears mottled brown studded leather with black trim and the other mottled brown studded leather with dark blue trim.

## **APL 12**

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**Tactics:** Grynchlwrđ will initially attempt to distract the PCs (Bluff Check vs. the PC's Sense Motive Check) by chatting with them. If PCs do not initially attack, then Grynchlwrđ will 'bargain' with the PCs, offering an exchange of information. Even if the PCs do not offer information in return, Grynchlwrđ will attempt to hold their attention by revealing pieces of information that he knows to be of value to them. See Player Handout #2 for the information he is willing to reveal. This conversation is simply to buy time for his underlings drink their potions and to get into position. For each piece of information Grynchlwrđ reveals, consider one round to have passed, during which the Rogues will be preparing. Conversation stops when the Rogues indicate their readiness for combat by attacking. Grynchlwrđ will have been waiting for this moment and will be able to act immediately after the Rogues.

The Rogues will drink their potions of invisibility and move to within 30 feet of the most obvious cleric/divine caster. If they have the time before combat starts, they will also drink their potions of Cat's Grace and Displacement. They will then reveal themselves with simultaneous heavy crossbow sneak attacks upon the target cleric/divine caster. These crossbow attacks are the only attacks in which poison is used. One bolt is coated with Purple Worm Poison and the other bolt is coated with Deathblade. See DMG p 297 for the effects and save DCs of the poisons. Once the Rogues have attacked, Grynchlwrđ will use his Summon Ghosts ability, causing some of the bodies in the pile of corpses between the desk and Grynchlwrđ's bed to be reborn as Ghosts. The Ghosts will stand up from the pile of bodies, and join the attack.

The rogues next use Improved Feint to attempt to gain sneak attack damage on the Extended Melf's Acid Arrows (total duration of ten rounds) that they trigger from their Rings of Spell Storing, Minor. If this will result in a guaranteed kill of the divine spell-caster, target any spell-casters with these Acid Arrows since the continuing damage should force concentration checks. Grynchlwrđ next uses his spell like ability Death Gaze against any divine spellcaster.

All attackers, except the Ghosts, will have as their highest priority the elimination of divine spellcasters from combat. Unconscious, dead, or simply fleeing all count as 'eliminated from combat' as their goal is to remove from the fight whoever can power up the whole party (bless, prayer, etc.) or heal the party or turn their undead allies. If no divine caster is available as a target, then they will primarily target any other spellcasters.

The Ghosts simply attempt to attack and occupy the PC fighter-types, to allow the rogues freedom in their attacks.

Play the combatants intelligently; whenever they can, they will flank opponents. Black and Blue will delay to move on the same initiative, attempting, whenever possible to do simultaneous flanking spring attacks on targets. When they cannot flank, they will use Improved Feint. Grynchlwrđ will initially use the reach of the long spear for opportunity attacks upon people who attempt to close with him, but will quickly switch to claw and bite attacks.

**Grynchlwrđ the Nabassu (lesser) Rog4:** Male Tanar'ri, CR 13; Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Native); HD 7d8+4d6+22; hp 77; Init +5; Spd 30 ft/x4; Fly 40 ft.(avg); AC 29, touch 12, flat-footed 29; BAB/Grp +11/+15; Atk +16/+16 primary natural (1d4+5;20/x2, 2 Claws), +14 secondary natural (1d6+2;20/x2, Bite), +17 two-handed (1d8+7;20/x3, mwk long spear); AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +12; Str 20(+5), Dex 14(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 14(+2), Cha 13(+1);

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +8, Concentration +16, Escape Artist +19, Gather Information +10, Hide +20, Intimidate +12, Jump +23, Knowledge (Arcana) +13, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +21, Move Silently +19, Search +16, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +13, Spot +22, Tumble +11, Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 feet; Damage reduction: 10/magic; Ethereal jaunt; Immunity to death effect magics; Immunity to electricity and poison; Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10; Spell Resistance 21; telepathy 100 ft. Your natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—deeper darkness (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric); 1/day—death gaze (functions as Finger of Death cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 18).

A Nabassu that reaches 10+ HD by Feeding can also use the following: 1/day—energy drain (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 20), silence (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric, DC 14), and vampiric touch (cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer).

**Feed (Su):** When a Nabassu slays a humanoid opponent, it can feed on the corpse, devouring both flesh and life force, as an action requiring a full round. For every 8 HD or levels a Nabassu consumes, it gains 1 Hit Die. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of resurrection that requires part of the corpse. A wish, miracle, or true resurrection spell can restore a devoured victim to life.

**Paralysis Aura (Su):** As a free action, a Nabassu can create an aura of paralysis in a 10-foot radius. It is

otherwise identical with ghoul touch cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer (save DC 13). If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that Nabassu's paralysis aura for one day. Other demons are immune to the aura.

**Ethereal Jaunt (Su):** Twice per day a Nabassu can shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal as part of any move action, and shift back again as a free action. It can remain on the Ethereal Plane for 1 round before returning to the Material. The ability is otherwise identical with ethereal jaunt cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer.

**Summon Ghosts (Sp):** Once per day a Nabassu can automatically summon 1d6 Ghosts (see Monster Manual page 119.) as a standard action.

**Telepathy (Su):** Nabassu can communicate with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

**Evasion(Ex):** On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage.

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 2d6 damage. Ranged attacks must be within 30 feet to gain this, and this extra damage is not increased on a critical hit. Creatures that are immune to critical hits ignore this damage, as do creatures with concealment

**Uncanny Dodge(Ex):** You retain your Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, mwk long spear, and 200 gp in ruby bloodstones.

*Physical Description:* The creature stands about 7 feet tall and resembles a gargoyle at first glance, but one with tough, leathery, black skin rather than a hide of stone. It is neatly dressed in silver-trimmed black studded leather, and has great claws on its hands and feet. Its eyes gleam steel-gray and flicker with malice while its mouth is stretched in a feral grin, displaying sharp fangs.

**Black and Blue the Rogue Twins:** Male human Rog11; CR 11; Medium Humanoid; HD 11d6+33; hp 79; hp 79; Init +3; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 19; BAB/Grp +8/+10; Full Atk +11/+6 One-handed (1d6+3;19-20/x2, +1 short sword), +12/+7 Two-handed (1d10;19-20/x2, mwk heavy crossbow), +11/+6 One-handed (1d4+2;19-20/x2, mwk dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +4; Str 14(+2), Dex 16(+3), Con 16(+3), Int 14(+2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0);

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +19, Bluff +14, Climb +16, Escape Artist +17, Hide +17, Jump +18, Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Sense Motive +14, Spot +14, Tumble +19, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack

**Improved Evasion(Ex):** On a failed Reflex save against a magical attack, you take half damage. On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, you take no damage.

**Sneak Attack:** Any time someone you attack is denied his or her Dexterity bonus to AC, or you are flanking him or her, you inflict an extra 6d6 damage.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** You retain your Dexterity bonus to AC even if flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker.

**Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** You can no longer be flanked, except by a level 15+ rogue.

*Possessions (each):* Bracers of Armor +2, +2 buckler, Ring of Protection +1, +1 short sword, mwk dagger, mwk heavy crossbow, Amulet of Health +2, Cloak of Resistance, Potion Of Invisibility, Potion of Cat's Grace, Potion Of Displacement, Ring of Spell Storing, Minor, and no coin (lost it gambling with Grynchlwrđ).

*Physical Description:* Twin young Oeridian men, 17-20 yrs old, with black hair and very pale skin. Apparently unarmored, one wears a mottled brown jerkin with black trim and the other a mottled brown jerkin with dark blue trim.

## Encounter Five: Cry Havoc

### APL 4

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**Tactics:** The worgs will attack the smallest or most wounded-appearing PCs, circling and working together to wound one PC until that PC retreats. If a PC retreats, they will switch targets, to whomever is the next smallest or most wounded, until the original target returns to battle. The worgs were trained to harass and wound opponents, softening them up and making them bleed so that running would be less of an option for the victims once the main pack arrives.

**Worgs (3):** hp 35, 35, 35; see *Monster Manual* page 256.

**Bonus "We were spotted in Encounter one" creature:** add one Worg, hp 35. This worg does not initially engage the PCs. Instead, it heads for Captain Vel'morel and the horses. It will kill one wounded horse on round one and engage Captain Vel'morel on round two. Unless the PCs save him by attacking the beast and causing it to join the assault on the PCs, Captain Vel'morel will be killed in round three. Thereafter the bonus worg will join the assault on the PCs and, unless one PC spends their actions attempting to gather the horses, one riding horse will flee irretrievably every other round. War-trained horses will not flee.

## APL 6

**Tactics:** When the party arrives, it has been a few rounds since the hell hounds have used their breath weapons and so they are ready to be used again. The hell hounds will charge the party and use their breath weapons at point blank range, if they can catch more than one PC in a single blast. When biting, they will attack the smallest or most wounded-appearing PCs, circling and working together to wound one PC until that PC retreats. If a PC retreats, they will switch targets, to whomever is the next smallest or most wounded, until the original target returns to battle. The hell hounds were trained to harass and wound opponents, softening them up and making them bleed so that running would be less of an option for the victims once the main pack arrives.

**Hell Hounds (5):** hp 26, 26, 26, 26, 26; see *Monster Manual* page 152.

**Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one Hell Hound, hp 26. This hell hound does not initially engage the PCs. Instead, it heads for Captain Vel’morel and the horses. It will kill one wounded horse on round one and engage Captain Vel’morel on round two. Unless the PCs save him by attacking the beast and causing it to join the assault on the PCs, Captain Vel’morel will be killed in round three. Thereafter the bonus hell hound will join the assault on the PCs and, unless one PC spends their actions attempting to gather the horses, one riding horse will flee irretrievably every other round. War-trained horses will not flee.

## APL 8

**Tactics:** When the party arrives, it has been a few rounds since the winter wolves have used their breath weapons and so they are ready to be used again. The winter wolves will charge the party and use their breath weapons at point blank range, if they can catch more than one PC in a single blast. When biting, they will attack the smallest or most wounded-appearing PCs, circling and working together to wound one PC until that PC retreats. If a PC retreats, they will switch targets, to whomever is the next smallest or most wounded, until the original target returns to battle. The winter wolves were trained to harass and wound opponents, softening them up and making them bleed so that running would be less of an option for the victims once the main pack arrives.

**Winter Wolves (4):** hp 57, 57, 57, 57; see *Monster Manual* page 256.

**Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one Winter Wolf, hp 57 This winter wolf does not initially engage the PCs. Instead, it heads for Captain Vel’morel and the horses. It will kill one wounded horse on round one and engage Captain Vel’morel on round two. Unless the PCs save him by attacking the beast and causing it to join the assault on the PCs, Captain Vel’morel will be killed in round three. Thereafter the bonus winter wolf will join the assault on the PCs and, unless one PC spends their actions attempting to gather the horses, one riding horse will flee irretrievably every other round. War-trained horses will not flee.

## APL 10

**Tactics:** When the party arrives, it has been a few rounds since the winter wolves or the hell hound have used their breath weapons and so they are ready to be used again. The winter wolves and the hell hound will charge the party and use their breath weapons at point blank range, if they can catch more than one PC in a single blast. When biting, the winter wolves will attack the smallest or most wounded-appearing PCs, circling and working together to wound one PC until that PC retreats. If a PC retreats, they will switch targets, to whomever is the next smallest or most wounded, until the original target returns to battle. The winter wolves were trained to harass and wound opponents, softening them up and making them bleed so that running would be less of an option for the victims once the main pack arrives. The hell hound will attack and harass whichever PC is doing the most damage to the winter wolves, in an attempt to protect them and allow them to focus on a single target.

**Hell Hound (Nessian Warhound):** hp 116; see *Appendix Four* and see *Monster Manual* page 152.

**Winter Wolves (4):** hp 57, 57, 57, 57; see *Monster Manual* page 256.

**Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one extra tough and healthy Winter Wolf, hp 78, +1 to Fort, Ref, and Will saves. This winter wolf does not initially engage the PCs. Instead, it heads for Captain Vel’morel and the horses. It will kill one wounded horse on round one and engage Captain Vel’morel on round two. Unless the PCs save him by attacking the beast and causing it to join the assault on the PCs, Captain Vel’morel will be killed in round three. Thereafter the bonus winter wolf will join the assault on the PCs and, unless one PC spends their actions attempting to gather the horses, one riding horse will flee irretrievably every other round. War-trained horses will not flee.

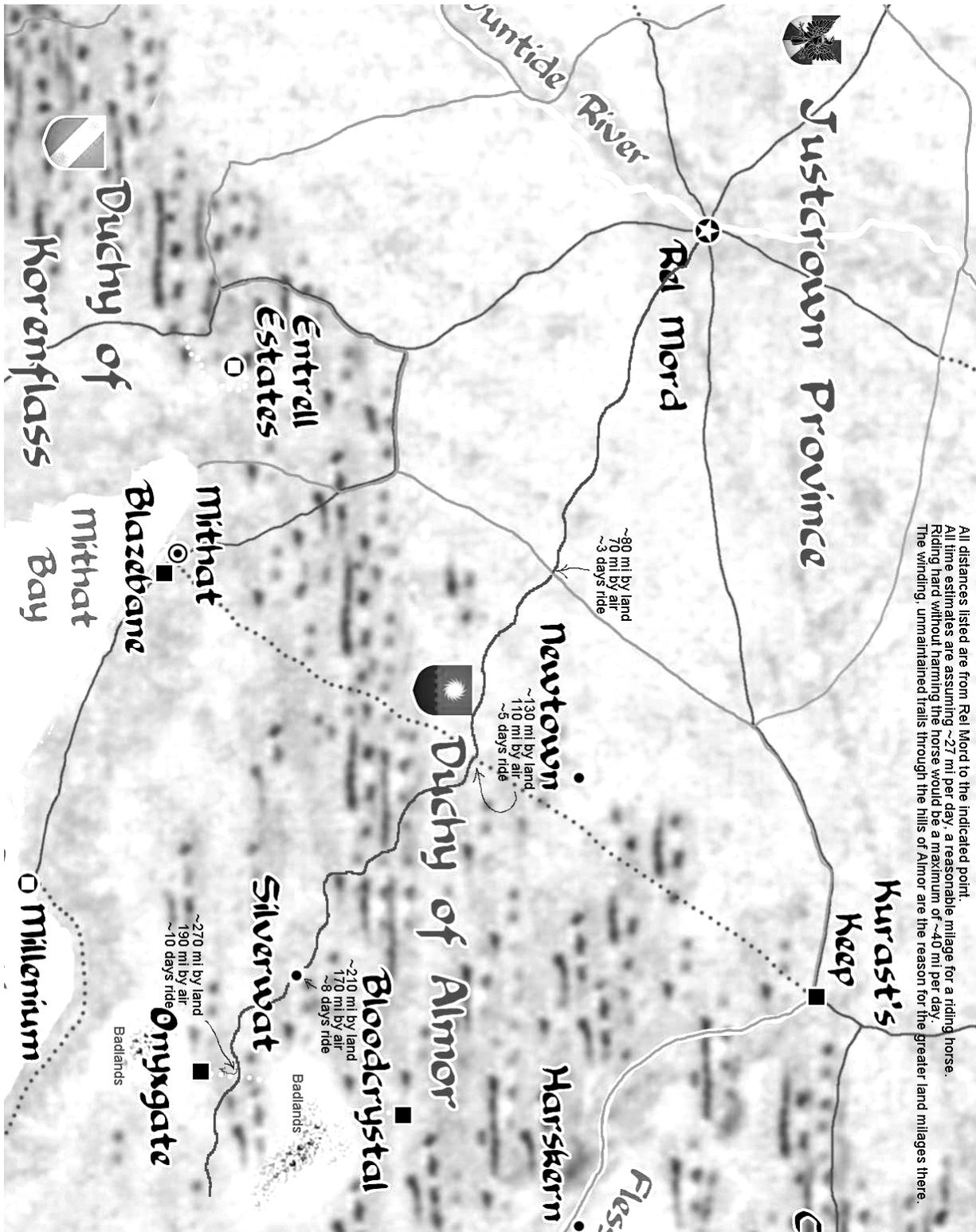
## APL 12

**Tactics:** When the party arrives, it has been a few rounds since the hell hounds have used their breath weapons and so they are ready to be used again. The hell hounds will charge the party and use their breath weapons at point blank range, if they can catch more than one PC in a single blast. When biting, they will attack the smallest or most wounded-appearing PCs, circling and working together to wound one PC until that PC retreats. If a PC retreats, they will switch targets, to whomever is the next smallest or most wounded, until the original target returns to battle. The hell hounds were trained to harass and wound opponents, softening them up and making them bleed so that running would be less of an option for the victims once the main pack arrives

**Hell Hounds (Nessian Warhounds) (4):** hp 116, 116, 116, 116; see *Monster Manual* page 152.

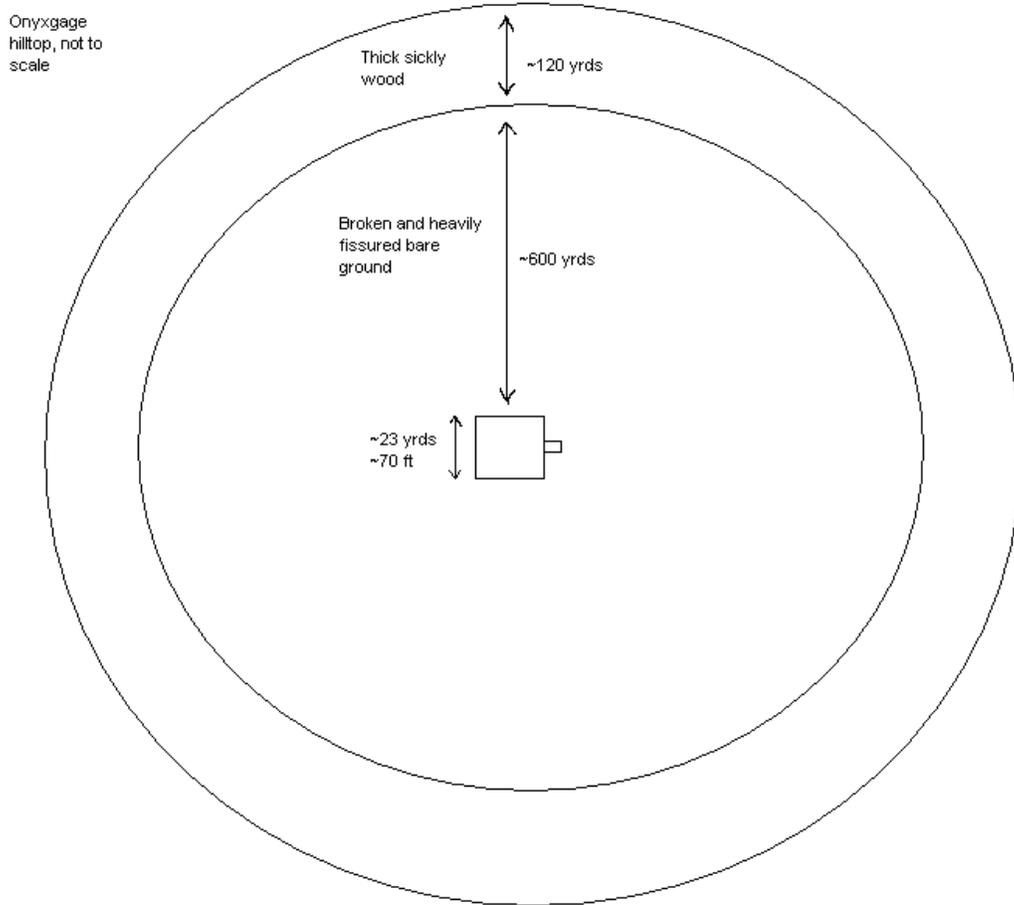
**Bonus “We were spotted in Encounter one” creature:** add one Hell Hound (Nessian Warhound), hp 116. This hell hound does not initially engage the PCs. Instead, it heads for Captain Vel’morel and the horses. It will kill one wounded horse on round one and engage Captain Vel’morel on round two. Unless the PCs save him by attacking the beast and causing it to join the assault on the PCs, Captain Vel’morel will be killed in round three. Thereafter the bonus hell hound will join the assault on the PCs and, unless one PC spends their actions attempting to gather the horses, one riding horse will flee irretrievably every other round. War-trained horses will not flee.

# Judge Aid #1 (or Player Handout #0): The Trail to Onyxgate



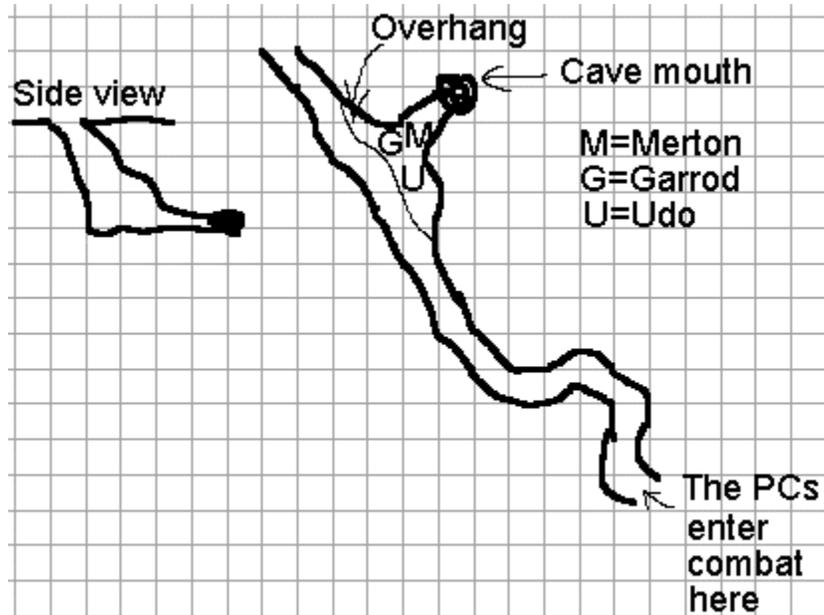
## Judge Aid #2: Top-down view of Onyxgate

This is intended to be a top down look at the above ground area of Onyxgate. The tower is on top of a very large hill. The tower is surrounded by an area of blasted and warped earth, with deep fissures all through it. This is then edged by low sickly wood and healthy wood further out.



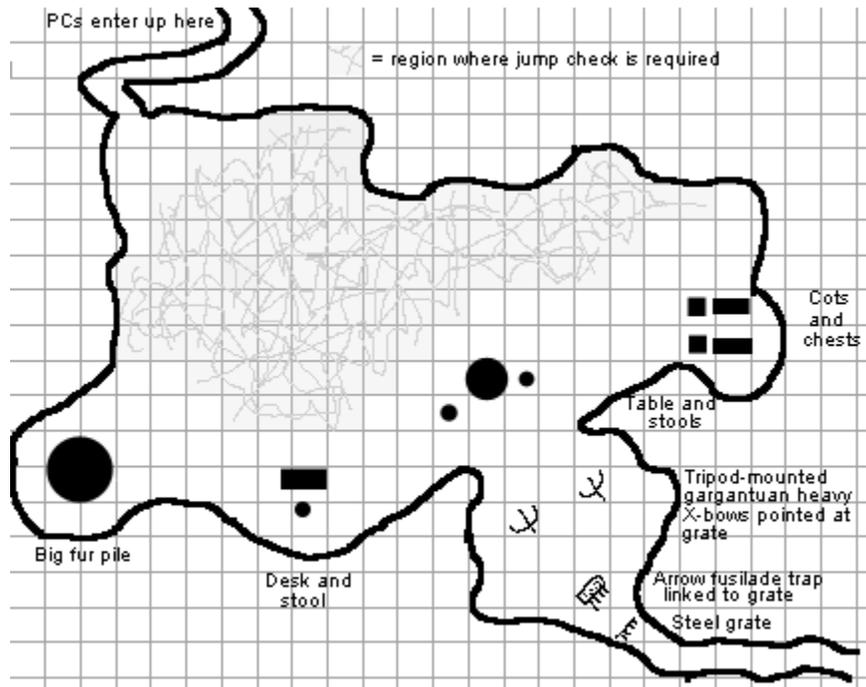
### Judge Aid #3: Side and top views of entrance crevasse

The PCs will be belly-crawling or crouching along and then be able to make their way over to where the fissure widens and deepens. The surface level crack, only opens to about 5 feet wide, but as it deepens to 10-15 feet deep, it also opens up somewhat to 10 feet wide or so. Down there, right by the entrance is a set of guards. The party is going to have to take down the guards without letting any of them signal the tower. The passageway is tight and so the party will have difficulty bringing everyone to bear or maneuvering.



## Judge Aid #4 Nabassu's temporary home

This is the rough sketch of where the scenario's biggest fight takes place. After a tight turn in the tunnel, the PCs enter a largish natural cave. Stalactites and stalagmites are not in the sketch but can be added at random when the Judge sketches this on the battle-mat. The important features are the heavy fissures in the region where the PCs enter (to make the fight more interesting) and the uneven walls with hiding space so the PCs may not know if they've seen all the baddies. The distance from the PC's entrance fissure to the desk is about 60 ft. The cave is about 110 ft. wide, from the big fur pile to the two cots. The defenses of the occupants of the cave are all mounted pointing at the opposite entrance, since the spies were most concerned about discovery by the inhabitants of Onyxgate, not by people from the surface.



## Judge Aid #5 (Player Handout #5) The Favors Explained

### **Disfavor of the King:** (From Introduction: The King and I)

Qualification – Continuing to attempt to bargain with King Lynwerd over pay, after he has become annoyed and called the PC a “mercenary soul”.

Result – King Lynwerd makes sure the PC receives only the gold they craved. He has let it be known, furthermore, that the PC in question is a mercenary, and not the sort which He considers a true friend of Nyronnd.

Mechanic - All item access and favors listed on this AR are removed, although the character does receive maximum gold for the appropriate APL. Similarly, all Royal or Noble favors from the Kingdom of Nyronnd issued or received prior to the date listed on this AR are similarly cancelled.

### **Favor of the King, I:** (From Encounter One: Wanna wrastle?)

Qualification – Noticing and understanding the meaning of the symbols on the guard’s armor; the inverted shield of Nyronnd and the black phoenix. Not knowing the meaning, but simply returning some of the armor bearing those symbols to Rel Mord also qualifies.

Result - You have performed a valuable service for the King in being able to warn Him that the lost legion has apparently survived, and is in allegiance to Prince Sewardnt. King Lynwerd is grateful.

Mechanic - In return for this information, King Lynwerd has arranged to have one suit of armor enchanted with the Light Fortification special ability. This favor may also be used to upgrade an already Fortified suit of armor from either Light to Moderate or Moderate to Heavy. This favor counts only as access and the PC must pay the difference in market value for the upgrade.

### **Favor of the Church of Heironeous:** (From Encounter Two: Dead Men Do Tell Tales)

Qualification – Bringing the journal of Brenton Salaff back to Rel Mord.

Result - In recovering the diary of Brenton Salaff, you have recovered a very minor relic of the Church. For the past several years, there has been the occasional report of a soldier in full plate appearing in the dreams of the faithful of Heironeous. The figure, seated upon a stone in a dark cave, simply intones “Prepare” and then fades.

Mechanic - When the PC exercises this favor, the Church of Heironeous will upgrade any one magical weapon that the PC owns to add the Holy special ability. This favor counts only as access and the PC must pay the difference in market value for the upgrade.

### **Favor of the Salaff Blacksmiths:** (From Encounter Two: Dead Men Do Tell Tales)

Qualification – Recovering the body of Brenton Salaff from Onyxgate.

Result - Touched by your treatment of their long-lost son’s body and effects, the Salaff family has recreated the Lion Shield of Brenton Salaff. Their gratitude knows no bounds; only the expense of the enchantment prevents them from granting the Lion Shield as a gift.

Mechanic - The PC has access to purchase the Lion Shield (DMG p 221).

### **Favor of the King, II:** (From Encounter Three: Be My Ghost)

Qualification – Recovering Player Handout #2: The Demon’s Letter.

Result - You have performed a valuable service for the King in being able to provide Him with a list of those with whom the Traitor Prince may be dealing. This shall allow King Lynwerd to plan strategy to inconvenience those allies. He has let it be known, furthermore, that the PC in question is a true friend of Nyronnd. The King has informed the Temples that he will pay well to not lose such valued friends.

Mechanic - King Lynwerd has arranged to cover the expenses of one Raise Dead spell, should your body be brought to any Temple in the Kingdom of Nyronnd. If a PC has died during the course of the scenario, this favor may be expended immediately.

### **Favor of the King, III:** (From Encounter Four: Yikes that’s a lot of troops)

Qualification – Witnessing Sewardnt’s speech to his assembled troops.

Result - You have performed a critically valuable service for the King in being able to warn Him of the presence of Prince Sewardnt, Quarelant, and an impressive fighting force in the heart of Onyxgate. Your report mentioning the

make-up of his main forces has allowed the King and his advisors to begin intelligently planning tactics with those opponents in mind. His reward to you is an opportunity to have a ring enchanted which may let you prepare for your opponents.

Mechanic - The King has granted the PC access to purchase either, a Ring of Spell Storing, Minor, a Ring of Spell Storing, or a Ring of Spell Storing, Major. Until this favor is expended, the character is deemed to have an Influence Point with the King or any Royal organizations.

**Favor of the Entrell Militia:** (From Encounter Five: Cry Havoc)

Qualification - Saving the life of Captain Laucian Vel'Morel and waiting to allow him to carry out locks of his comrade's hair for burial in consecrated ground.

Result - The PC has earned the favor of the Entrell Militia.

Mechanic – The Entrell Estates will provide access to purchase either Horseshoes of Speed or Horseshoes of the Zephyr.

## Appendix Six: New Monster – The Nabassu (lesser)

NABASSU (lesser)

**Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Native, Tanar'ri)**

**Hit Dice:** 7d8+14 (45 hp)

**Initiative:** +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 40 ft. (average)

**Armor Class:** 23 (+2 Dex, +11 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 21

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +8/+12

**Attack:** Claw +12 melee (1d4+4)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +12 melee (1d4+4) and bite +10 melee (1d6+2)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Spell-like abilities, feed, paralysis aura, *summon ghosts*

**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., ethereal jaunt, immunity to death effect magics, immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 21, telepathy 100 ft.

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +13

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 13

**Skills:** Concentration +16, Escape Artist +13, Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Jump +15, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Search +13, Spellcraft +13, Spot +15

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

**Environment:** Any and Infinite Layers of the Abyss

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 9

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 8-9 HD (CR = HD+2), 10-14 HD (CR = HD+3); 15-21 HD (CR = HD+4 and Size changes to Large)

*The creature stands about 7 feet tall and resembles a gargoyle at first glance, but one with tough, leathery, black skin rather than a hide of stone. It is gaunt, with tightly corded muscles, and great claws on its hands and feet. Its eyes gleam steel-gray and flicker with malice while its mouth is stretched in a feral grin, displaying sharp fangs.*

The Nabassu, also known as “death stealers”, are demons, which inhabit the prime material plane as part of their life cycle. Once spawned in the Abyss, young Nabassu must survive as best they can in the Abyss. Those that live long enough to reach young adulthood attempt to find a secure location to form a cocoon. The process by which the young Nabassu undergoes within its cocoon not only transforms it into the adult form of the Nabassu, but also gates the Nabassu to the prime material plane, leaving the empty cocoon on the Abyss. Many are slain in the process of moving from the Abyss to the prime material plane, but those that survive begin their true growth. In order to grow and mature, each Nabassu must Feed on many humans, create evil undead, and wreak wickedness. Dwelling in places of desolation, these dreadful monsters trouble mankind continually by raiding in order to work their evil, thus satisfying their lust for cruelty and their desire to regain their place in the Abyss. Since spending time on the Material Plane is part of their unnatural life cycle, they cannot be banished to the Abyss when on the Material Plane; unlike most other Outsiders, Nabassu are considered to have the Material Plane as one of their two home planes and so banishment will not work.

### COMBAT

Nabassu are sadistic, preferring to paralyze opponents if possible, before attacking using claw and bite. This is their preferred method as they enjoy watching their foes die a slow and very painful death. Should their prey be dangerous opponents who are not easily paralyzed, they will Death Gaze the biggest perceived threat, use the summon ghosts

ability, then close to attack with claw and bite. If a fight goes against the Nabassu, it will use the deeper darkness ability and ethereal jaunt abilities to pick at it's opponents until it can Feed on a fallen foe.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will—deeper darkness (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric); 1/day—death gaze (functions as Finger of Death cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 18).

A Nabassu that reaches 10+ HD can also use the following: 1/day—energy drain (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, DC 20), silence (cast as a 12<sup>th</sup>-level cleric, DC 14), and vampiric touch (cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer).

**Feed (Su):** When a Nabassu slays a humanoid opponent, it can feed on the corpse, devouring both flesh and life force, as an action requiring a full round. For every 8 HD or levels a Nabassu consumes, it gains 1 Hit Die. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of resurrection that requires part of the corpse. A wish, miracle, or true resurrection spell can restore a devoured victim to life.

**Paralysis Aura (Su):** As a free action, a Nabassu can create an aura of paralysis in a 10-foot radius. It is otherwise identical with ghoul touch cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer (save DC 13). If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that Nabassu's paralysis aura for one day. Other demons are immune to the aura.

**Ethereal Jaunt (Su):** Twice per day a Nabassu can shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal as part of any move action, and shift back again as a free action. It can remain on the Ethereal Plane for 1 round before returning to the Material. The ability is otherwise identical with ethereal jaunt cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer.

**Summon Ghosts (Sp):** Once per day a Nabassu can automatically summon 1d6 Ghosts (see *Monster Manual* page 119.) as a standard action.

**Telepathy (Su):** Nabassu can communicate with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

#### **Knowledge: Planes Check Results**

DC 10 - Identify it as a demon,

DC 15 - Learn that it is immune to poison and electricity and resistant to cold, fire and acid. Additionally, learn it has telepathy,

DC 20 - Identify it as a Nabassu,

DC 25 - Learn that it comes to the prime through its own powers to feed on humanity once in its lifetime. Additionally, learn that it devours its victims after killing them and destroys their soul, preventing almost all hope of resurrection,

DC 30 - Learn of its paralysis, darkness, and vampiric touch abilities.,

DC 35 - Learn that it can summon ghosts, and it can shift to the Ethereal. Additionally, learn of its death gaze ability and immunity to death effect magics

The Nabassu first appeared in the First Edition *Monster Manual II* (Gary Gygax, 1983).

Nabassu were specifically mentioned in the Marklands as inhabiting Bloodcrystal and mentioned in Ivid the Undying as inhabiting Onyxgate, Bloodcrystal, and the lands between them, frequently attacking and feeding in Narsel Mendred.

Nabassu, DnD 3.5 Conversion by Keith A. McCall. This version is termed "Nabassu (lesser)" to differentiate it from the much higher CR version published in *Dragon* after this version had been used in the scenario.

## Player Handout #1: The journal of Brenton Salaff

The book appears to be the journal or diary of a soldier in Nyronnd's Fourth Legion, one Brenton Salaff. Mildew and a long past drenching have destroyed much of the text. From the few readable pages remaining, it is apparent that Brenton joined the Army young and against the will of his blacksmith family. Many early passages seem to be attempts to come to terms with the Great War, in the florid prose of a young teen. Mercifully, few of these pages have survived the ravages of time, but those that have survived seem to dwell on the rampant tactical mismanagement of the Armies by King Archbold and his cronies. Towards the end of the text, the early florid prose is slowly replaced by a terse and factual style. Fragmentary evidence shows young Brenton was part of the great push into Phostwood during the campaigns. Later pages indicate he was one of the few survivors of the devastatingly costly victory at Karndred's Meadows near the end of the Great War. The actual pages are missing but later pages refer to the fact that Brenton dedicated himself to Heironeous at Karndred's Meadow and attributes his survival to the influence of Heironeous. Of the surviving text, several sections seem to suggest an explanation for the loss of the missing legion:

Field promotion to Captain ignored. No surviving commanders to able to attest to the promotion. Does Heironeous wish to teach me humility? Prayers unanswered. Will bear my newly lowered rank and reassignment to new legion with honor. May He find me worthy.

Assigned to legion under former Royal General Bagmajenn. Many veterans from different legions formed into special task force, new Fourth Legion. Hitting Almor. Flight of fiends did not destroy all their monsters, allies or works. Every man here a blooded veteran. Many sick-of-mind from too much war. Great war over. Still we have neither pay nor rest.

General Bagmajenn addressed troops. Angry. Been assigned to clear Onyxgate. Warned us, expects command to be suicide for him and us. Fiends gone but fiends' allies still remain, fiends' magics remain. Expects next mission to be taking Bloodcrystal fortress and, if any survive Onyxgate and Bloodcrystal, next mission to be Chathold and further east.

Onyxgate sighted. Strange messengers came riding from Nyronnd. No heraldry. We encamp. Hooded magikers met General Bagmajenn. Command staff, one company, and magikers approaching Onyxgate. Most of legion remains encamped.

Whole legion entering Onyxgate. General excited, pleased. Says Onyxgate empty in upper reaches. Lord Heironeous filled dreams with blessings and protections in night past. Is warning I will need them? Dark tower gives me shivers and cold sweat despite heat. Others do not want to hear warnings. Tired and want to hear good news only. If Onyxgate empty, why does Lord Heironeous grant me such magics?

Upper tower vacant. Legion now encamped within Onyxgate. Command staff, magikers, elite company, others, encamp in depths. Elite company with new faces placed in charge of gates. Where new ones come from? Unable to sleep this night. Something pulling me to seek the lower regions, though skin crawls.

Planting of 586. Last entry. Light failing. Deep in caverns. Last night was purge. Fled into dungeon depths and into cave system. Trying to find path back to surface. Must escape to warn rest of army. Traitor Prince here. Bagmajenn joined him. Magikers bent minds. Resisting few slaughtered. Last torch going and still in tunnels, I fear I may not escape. Heironeous grant me freedom or guide others to take word. Prepare. Fourth Legion turned. Dark things move here. Nyronnd not safe. King must be told. Seal Onyxgate. Pray for the Last.

## Player Handout #2: The Demon's Letter

*My Dear Lord Pazrael,*

*It has been long since my last communication, but our plans proceed apace. It is fortunate that the main caverns and dungeons intersect with a maze of smaller passageways in several places. Although the Animus, Basmajenn, employs regular sweeps of the caverns, I have so far been able to avoid detection. While I've been forced to move regularly, this has afforded me the opportunity to learn safe routes through these backways and I have used them to catch the occasional individual unaware. One particularly good catch was a half-fiend mage called Neskartu... He was, and still is, high within the ranks of King Sewarndt's forces. I have turned him to your allegiance and he has proven quite useful. He has managed to make the necessary changes to the rituals for the reopening of the Gate. When it opens, it shall connect to the domain of our forces and, should our alterations remain unnoticed, King Sewarndt shall be unable to close it from this side. Furthermore, Neskartu has been teaching those under his tutelage the means of summoning fiendish flesh to taint themselves, as a means to power. I provided Neskartu with the true names of minor fiends within our forces and these are the fiends who are being bound to these mages. If all works as expected, for the price of a few minor fiends, you shall be gaining a number of mages deeply tainted and predisposed to be loyal to our cause.*

*The forces King Sewarndt has managed to array in his bid for power are finally almost ready and the final rituals to open the gate are due to start in two weeks' time. I have not yet been privy to how long the rituals shall take to complete. Speaking of those forces, I have done my best to learn of their goals, but most remain unknown to me. It is best to assume that they are planning the same sort of betrayals we are and I hope to be able to tell you more of their capabilities and weaknesses in a future letter.*

*One group is, of course, the Hextorite clergy. They seek the annihilation of their Heironean brethren and claim that they have taken steps already to assure that the Heironean clergy shall be a minimal factor in the upcoming battle.*

*Another group is the old human nobility. The Almorian nobles want their kingdom returned and the Nyrondeese nobles displaced by Lynwerd's policies want their old powers and prestige returned. Both sets will support any side that promises to return their lands to them.*

*Then there is a set of Suel humans with a predilection for the color of blood. They seem to have offered themselves in a Naval capacity and request dominion of the southern islands off the coast of Nyronde in exchange for their aid. I do not understand this, but they have requested no compensation for "cleansing the northern hills of non-human filth", so they may be involved in the army as well as in taking the coastal cities. There have been tantalizing hints that they consider Oldred to be in their hands already.*

*Additionally, there are a number of Flan human women, wearing the mark of Tharizdun, who have offered magical support, provided certain royal personages are exterminated in a particular order. I must look into this further.*

*There are rumors that King Sewarndt has offered to recognize the town of Midmeadow as belonging to the Pale in perpetuity in return for aid from that side as well, although I've uncovered no information to support this rumor, nor does it seem likely. King Sewarndt has little love for the Northern Pholtan zealots.*

*In addition to these, there are a dozen minor power groups willing to support Sewarndt's return to power if they believe it to be to their advantage. King Sewarndt has been skillful at convincing each group of his ability to deliver to each the many things he has no intention of delivering.*

*Honestly, King Sewarndt has promised so many different forces so many different things that it shall be impossible to fulfill all his agreements in the event of victory. I am impressed. At this rate, even were our forces to do nothing to aid in the coming cataclysm it should still be a delightful dance of betrayal, death, and destruction. However, since the Gate shall be opened and our forces available to add to this effort, it should take little additional effort to make this land positively homey. Before the season is out, I hope to greet you here in person.*

*Yours in eternal fealty,*

*Grynychlwrđ*

## Player Handout #3

King Sewarndt's Speech. This is not a document found by the PCs, but rather a speech witnessed by the PCs. It is delivered with such power and conviction (reinforced with mild and subtle magics) that it is easy for any PC to remember for later transcription, and so it is reproduced here.

"My friends. Nyrond lies in the grip of weakness! My scheming older brother sits upon the throne while my noble father yet lives. Our noble King, our King Archbold, his mind destroyed by Lynwerd's betrayal, is forced to be a living ghost, powerlessly haunting the very halls his own son usurped! Where once nobility and experience were respected, we now see the proper order of things overturned by blatant cronyism. Those same young nobles who played games with the lives of the Legions, interfering in the plans of loyal generals, those same insolent rabble have been placed in positions of power."

"Royal General Basmajenn was usurped by young Myariken. In mimicry of my honored father's position, good Count Blackmar has been usurped by his own son and was stripped of titles and honors. But that did not satisfy the Usurper. Lynwerd feared that others may rally behind Count Blackmar and so Count Blackmar was executed on trumped up charges. I weep to think that even now good Count Blackmar's head is displayed for the mockery of the peasants, upon the gates of Rel Mord. Everywhere across our great land, power and position have been granted to the cronies of Lynwerd, while the families who have served My family for generations have been stripped of power and turned out of their homes..."

"Is this just?!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No!**"

"Is this honorable?!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No!**"

"Will this be allowed to stand?!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No!**"

"How, how does the Usurper justify this betrayal of our nation? He claims to make our nation stronger by these petty political games. He makes this claim even while pursuing the goal of Lesser Nyrond. Even now, the Usurper has allowed the zealots of the Theocracy to take control of Midmeadow and her environs. Even now that weakling asks for aid from allies who should rightly be vassal states!"

"The Usurper has placed Nyrond on it's knees, cravenly taking a defensive stance and making concessions in hopes that Nyrond's enemies will show pity! Weakness is death! I have seen the forces that are arrayed against us - the demigod and his undead forces to our northwest, the fanatical zealots to our north, and the corrupt horrors of the mad Aerdi Overking to our east..."

"Will they have pity on us?!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No!**"

"Do we dare be weak before them?!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No!**"

"Dare we let mercy weaken our resolve when the fate of our nation depends on us?!" "**No!**"

"Fear not. Soon is the time we shall retake Nyrond from weakness and betrayal. We have reached beyond our traditional alliances and our cause is supported by the followers of the Scarlet Sign. The Gods themselves smile on our efforts... They have sent a green dragon to plague that friend of the Usurper, the Gnome King Ap'Hiller. They have sent a plague upon the lands that has sickened many in the Usurper's armies. The Gods smile on us and prepare the field. Soon we shall finally leave this stronghold to re-forged Nyrond in our image."

"No mercy for the Usurper!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No mercy!**"

"No mercy for the enemies of Nyrond!" <The arrayed troops cry back in massed unison> "**No mercy!**"

"No mercy for those who would leave Nyrond on her knees!" "**No mercy!**"