

**VERIntro 4-02**

# **Joren's Tomb**

## **A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup> Verbobonc Introductory Regional Adventure**

Version 2

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Special thanks to Terry Doner, Lorcan Murphy, and the citizens of Swan

In years past, a gnomish warmaster rose up to command a force and defend his town, friends, and homeland from an invading army of giants. So complete was the victory that it took over three-hundred years for the giants to regain their former strength. Now, the warmaster's descendant seeks help in locating his final resting place so that the besieged gnomes of today might regain a sense of pride and rally against those who have occupied their homeland. The warmaster's name was Arund Joren. The resting place – Joren's Tomb. A Verbobonc introductory regional scenario for first-level characters only.

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 scoring 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

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.

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

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

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 DM) 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 DM 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 gray boxes. 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.

### Reporting

As an Introductory scenario, this scenario is not reported to the RPGA or to the Verbobonc Triad.

### Living Greyhawk

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 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

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): Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure. Since this

is an Introductory Adventure, all characters must play 1st level characters.

You must have no less than four, nor more than six, players in this adventure. If you have fewer than six players, 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 free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

### **Time Units and Upkeep**

This is a standard one-round Regional introductory adventure, set in Verbobonc. Characters native to Verbobonc 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.

### **Areas of Influence**

This adventure allows the use of the following influence points for purposes of the Verbobonc Influence document.

- Viscount Langard
- House Avgustin
- Church of St Cuthbert
- Church of Rao
- Church of Heironeous
- The Family
- Kron Hills Gnomes/Clan Keeleene

## **Adventure Background**

Far back in the history of the Viscounty, when it was still under direct control of Veluna, the town of Swan went by the name of Guildren. Guildren was a small outpost on the edge of the archclericy's control. Even in those times, giants and other marauders were a threat to the lives of the citizens who chose to make Guildren their home.

A principal figure in the history of the town is Arund Joren, a gnome warmaster who lived in the area and was a pivotal figure during the giant wars

of 262-264, Common Year. During that time, the town and surrounding lands were besieged by a giant army. Joren personally led forces toward the end of siege and engaged the frost giant leader long enough for the more accomplished citizens of the town to formulate a plan for defeating the invaders. Joren fought the giant army on the lands south of Guildren, in the Kron Hills and lower Lortmil Mountains. Such was the totality of their defeat that the giants were not able to muster any organized force until recently.

Twenty years after the defeat of the giants, Joren himself died of old age and was buried somewhere in the south lands that now bore the name of Joren's Field – in tribute to his brave stand.

In recent year, the gnomes has suffered numerous setbacks as the giants—grown strong in the three-hundred-plus years—have renewed their assaults. In late 593, the gnomes were driven from their homes in Tulvar and Sheernobb by a huge giant army, even larger than the force that assaulted Guildren years before. Fleeing before the invaders, the gnomes have taken refuge in the town that once resisted the giant advance – Guildren, or as it is now known, Swan.

Among the gnome refugees is Brimblesock Joren, a descendent of Arund Joren and veteran of the retreat from Sheernobb. Like his ancestor before him, Brimblesock is a warrior and commander in the service of Glenndarc the Headgnome. In the flight from Sheernobb, Brimblesock only had time to secure a few possessions, among them an old map that just might lead to Joren's Tomb. With the talks for re-establishing formal relations going on between the Viscount and the gnome envoys, it might be time to see if the map is real.

## **Adventure Summary**

The adventure begins with the characters arriving in Swan and ending up at the Swan's Rest Inn. The Swan's Rest, known to be a hangout for adventurers and other independent types, lives up to that reputation as the characters are soon approached by Brindlesock Joren, a descendent of Arund Joren

## **Introduction**

In classic adventure fashion, the adventure begins with the characters arriving in town.

Morning in the Kron Hills is a wonderful sight, the rays of the early sun casting long shadows toward the west and illuminating the vibrant and brilliant colors of the land. Nearby, the waters of Gillendyl's Run sparkle in the daylight.

The well worn path you follow shows evidence of frequent and recent use, testifying to the fact that your destination is a place many have traveled to and from. Looking ahead, your journey's end is in sight – the town of Swan. High atop a great bluff, the town seems active even in this early hour. Flags of several different groups fly in the wind – most prominently the symbol of Baron Rollof Avgustin, under whose protection Swan resides. Pennants of the Church of Heironeous, Rao, and St. Cuthbert flap in the light morning breeze as well as that of the 4<sup>th</sup> company of the Mounted Borderers, stationed at Fort Wilfrick.

Characters making a DC 10 Knowledge (Local – Volverdyva Trade Route) check or Bardic Knowledge check can learn one (1) piece of information below. If no one has either of these skills, an Intelligence check will suffice. For every three (3) points above DC 10, an additional piece of information can be learned. There is no particular order to the information below – give it out in whatever order you see fit.

- Baron Avgustin was wounded in battle earlier this year when he was sent to assist Veluna in their war against their infernal invaders.
- The town of Swan was previously named Fort Wilfrick until the death of Lord Willow Swan. Lord Swan died in Highfolk against forces of the Old One and served both Baron Avgustin and Viscount Langard ably. In recognition of his service, Baron Avgustin petitioned the Viscount to have the town renamed in his honor. A portion of the town is still named Fort Wilfrick and houses the local Mounted Borderer garrison.
- Swan has seen an influx of refugees from the gnome lands. The lands were overrun late last year by giants, driving the gnomes out. The Free Assembly of the Kron Hills, the leaders of the gnomes, has taken up residence in Swan.
- During the giant war last year, a huge mountain giant laid siege to the town,

destroying several buildings and walls before being driven off. The giant hasn't been seen since, which has people worried as it's pretty hard to hide a giant the size of a mountain.

- There are talks of reunification between the Gnomes and the Viscount, but there are a lot of differences to be ironed out to make it work.

Starting up the path toward the gates of the town, the wooden palisades serving as the protective walls become more visible – several sections showing signs of distress, evidence of the town's involuntary involvement in the Giant siege late last year. That the sections have been repaired and reinforced shows that the town leaders have not been lax in the peaceful calm following the war.

Approaching the gates, your travel shows as a liveried soldier approaches your group. The symbol on his tabard identifies him as a member of Baron Avgustin's house guard, but with the slight stylistic differences labeling him as one of the White Guard, the warrior's assigned to protect the town of Swan.

The guard simply asks the business of the characters in town. They can provide whatever reason they want for traveling here – as they have not been conscripted into the scenario's plotline ... yet.

The guard welcomes the characters to Swan and, should they ask – tells them about some of the landmarks and shops in town, including the Bejeweled Halls of Heironeous, the Shrine of the Peacemaker, and, of course, the Swan's Rest Inn. The guard particularly directs any new visitors to the Swan's Rest as it has good food at a reasonable price and is known to be a place where adventurers stay and possibly can find work.

Refer to Appendix I: Highlights of Swan if the characters choose to explore any part of the town. Proceed to Encounter One once they reach the Swan's Rest.

## Encounter 1: Joren's Heir

Light pours in the windows as you enter the Swan's Rest Inn, giving you a good view of the environs. Opposite your entrance is a bar, apparently ably manned by the gnome bartender.

Several tables lie situated around the great room and, toward one end, a stage for performing minstrels, members of the Riverwalk Society, and others can be seen. Several patrons appear to have arrived before you, as evidenced by the number of people eating breakfast this morning.

The inn has an inviting appearance and the barkeep, busy with another patrol at the moment, catches your eye and nods toward an empty table near the bar.

The barkeep, Drafner, is a friendly gnome and always eager to keep his patrons happy. His wife is the cook and his daughters are the barmaids.

As the characters sit down, one of the barmaids comes to take their breakfast order. In addition to taking the character's order, she is sizing them up for Drafner. Character's making a DC 18 Sense Motive check will realize that she seems to be paying closer attention than a simple barmaid would need to take an order.

Drafner has been asked by Brindlesock Joren to keep an eye out for anyone who might be able to help him. The barkeep has many contacts throughout town and was informed of the character's arrival moments after they passed the gates of town. Observant characters making a DC 15 Spot notice that after taking the character's orders to the barkeep, the barkeep in turn gestures toward another patron at a table – a hardy looking gnome warrior. The Spot DC is lowered to DC 10 for those who made the Sense Motive check earlier.

As the characters are waiting for breakfast, they are approached by Brindlesock.

As you sit waiting for your order to arrive, your attention is drawn to a gnome warrior rising from a table in the far corner. Though somewhat young-looking in appearance, he carries himself with the air of a seasoned fighter. Several scars line his face and lower arms. A serviceable pickaxe lies sheathed on his belt.

"Excuse me. I hear you're new in town. If you have a moment to listen to a proposal, you could do a great service for the gnomes here and earn yourself some coin as well. Interested?"

If the character's decline his offer, then the adventure ends here and you can hand out the Adventure Records. However, if there's even a

hint of heroic endeavor in the characters, they will probably at least listen to him.

Seating himself at your table, he gestures for the barmaid to bring his breakfast to where you're sitting. A moment passes while the barmaid brings both his breakfast and yours as well. Smiling slightly at the gnome warrior, she turns and leaves you your privacy.

"Drafner and his family are good people. "He says, gesturing toward the barkeep. "They've done a lot for those of us who got out of Sheernobb and Tulvar during the siege." His face darkens slightly as the flicker of a painful memory briefly crosses his brow before passing.

"My name is Brindlesock Joren. I'm one of the commanders for Headgnome Glenndarc of Clan Keeleene. How much do you know about the giant war last year?"

If the players are new to the region or are uninformed about the Gnome/Giant plotline, read the following box-text as Brindlesock gives them a quick overview.

"Things starting going bad several years ago. The old Viscount decided he's rather save his men than keep his promises to the gnomes. You know – the ones about protection and all that. That left us to keep watch over the Greenway Valley, the Kron, and the Lortmil Mountains.

"Now, we've always had problems with giants and orcs and those kinds, but nothing we couldn't handle as long as we had those patrols.

Once they left, we were stretched thin. I don't know if the giants knew what was up, but they started sending in bigger and bigger groups. First it was orcs and orges. Then hill giants and ogres. Then – well, you know how bad it got – they burned our villages and drove us out.

Continue from here.

"Let me tell you a story" Brindlesock says, taking a sip of his ale.

"My family's been fighting giants for hundreds of years. They've always been a problem in the Kron and the Lortmils. Now, this town was the site of a major battle about three hundred years ago. The giants had grown powerful and were laying siege to everything they could get their hands on. Many gnomes and humans fought together against the

giants – but the one who led them was a gnome by the name of Arund Joren, my great-great-great grandfather.

“Joren was a warmaster – a general who knew how to fight the giants on their home ground and win. These giants, however, were pretty tough. Gnomes and humans were getting slaughtered by the giant advance. Joren took a band of his best warriors and played a game of cat-and-mouse, harried them long enough for a plan to be worked out for the defeat of the giants. Joren’s bravery gave them the time they needed. In fact, the lands south of here were named Joren’s Field because of the victory he bought them during that war.”

Characters that make a DC 15 Knowledge (History) check recall that victory was also achieved with the help of a hill giant. This hill giant was different from his kind in that he was not brutish or evil, but introspective and kind-hearted. He helped the defenders work out a plan against his kind because he did not believe in what the giants were doing.

Characters mentioning this to Brindlesock are dismissed, saying he’s found nothing to support that, and his family should know if anyone would.

“Joren died of old age about twenty years after the war and was supposedly buried somewhere out there in the south lands. Because there were still ogres and other creatures out there, even though the giants were defeated, his tomb was hidden to prevent anyone from robbing or desecrating it. Almost no one knew where it was at. Almost.”

Brindlesock reaches into his vest and pulls out an old map, yellowed with age.

“Joren’s lieutenant bore him to his tomb and laid him to rest there. He was the only one who knew where the tomb was located and he left this map for Joren’s descendants in case they ever needed to find it. Before the giant war, there was never a need to find the tomb. Now, with the giants out there – we can’t leave to find it. If the giants follow us and find the tomb, they’ll destroy it. “

Sighing, Brindlesock sits back in his chair – it’s obvious that he’s tired, even in this morning hour. “What I ask you to do is take this map and locate Joren’s Tomb. We believe there are relics of his fight against the giants buried with him, including his armor and weapons. Though they aren’t

expected to have any magical properties, their recovery would help restore the morale of our people. Will you help us?

Questions the characters are likely to ask:

#### **What’s in it for us?/how much do we get paid?**

“All of our gold and resources are tied up in the war effort against the giants. I can’t offer you anything beyond our gratitude and whatever you find on your search for the tomb.”

#### **Can you come with us?/Why can’t you accompany us? / Why are you so tired?**

Swan was besieged last year by a huge mountain giant. Though it was driven off, it hasn’t been seen since the siege. The Council believes the giant is still out there and possibly under the control of the invaders. I’m part of a search team looking for the giant. We’ve been searching for the past several months and not found it, but we’ve seen some signs of its passing. I’m needed to help with the search.

#### **What might we face/fight out there?**

The area of the Kron Hills where you are going is known to be close to areas where the giants and their allies roam. You’ll likely encounter orc patrols and maybe an ogre.

#### **What can you tell us about the tomb?**

Not much is known about Joren’s Tomb. We don’t even know how it got built – Joren didn’t keep any records on its construction. We believe, however, that there are traps designed to incapacitate or kill any non-gnome who tries to enter the tomb – so be careful.

Anything not covered here? Wing it. You’re a judge after all. Be creative!

#### **DM’s Note:**

There are three possible outcomes for this conversation.

#### **1) Sure – let’s go hiking in the Kron!**

Assuming the characters accept, Brindlesock will pay for their meal and accommodations in Swan. Remind the characters that they are only to take the armor and weapons – nothing else. He then departs for his patrol, leaving the characters to prepare for their quest. Again, if the characters

wish to explore the town – let them. Once they're ready, proceed to Encounter Two.

### 2) Nope, sorry – find it yourself.

The adventure ends if the characters decline his offer. Fill out the Adventure Records and go prep for your next mod.

### 3) You look rich. Give us your money, gnomish scum!

In the extremely unlikely event the characters attack Brindlesock, Drafner quickly summons the Avgustin House Guard. The characters are arrested, convicted of Assault, fined 50 gp each, jailed for two (2) Time Units (not including any TUs for this mod) and locked in pillory from sunrise to sunset. Characters unable to pay the fine are jailed for 1 additional Time Unit. Void any Influence Points the offending characters have with the Kron Hills Gnomes/Clan Keeleene. Fill out the ARs, go prep your next mod, and mourn the state of gaming today.

**Brindlesock:** Male gnome Rgr2/Ftr3.

## Encounter 2: Joren's Field

Once the adventurers are ready to go, they proceed on their journey.

Quicker than you thought possible, adventure has found you and you set off to locate Joren's Tomb.

The Kron Hills south of Swan is a particularly hilly swath of land, with narrow defiles, rocky terrain, and hard scrub ground marking much of the area. The hills, however, provide much in the way of hiding places for a small band determined to harass a much larger group of foes. Thinking back over what Brindlesock told you about Joren's stand against the giant invaders of the past, you can't help but envision how used the land to harry the giant army.

The days pass as you trudge through the hills and enter the lower reaches of the Lortmil Mountains, following the map you have been provided. It's clear that – unless you knew where to look for the tomb, you could spend an eternity out here and never find it.

Characters with the Tracking feat can make a DC 15 Survival check to discover some strange impressions in the ground that could be tracks.

Rangers with favored enemy (giants) or favored enemy (orcs) reduce the DC to 13.

Success in the check reveals that a small body of orcs and giants passed through the area some time ago, apparently in pursuit of something. Making the check by 5 (DC 20, or DC 18 for favored enemy (giant)) further reveals that they were pursuing a very large giant-type creature.

There are not enough tracks for the characters to follow them – but the fact that they are here at all should cause some concern.

### DM's Note:

The mountain giant that participated in the siege of Swan is under the control of the forces that occupy Sheernobb and Tulvar. However this control is not complete – and occasionally it breaks loose to wreak whatever havoc it can. The giants and orcs are pursuing the mountain giant in an attempt to subdue it. See Encounter 7 for more info on this.

## Encounter 3: Joren's Tomb

You have been following the map for three days, turning through the defiles of the Kron Hills and hiking into the lower portions of the Lortmils. As you come out into a small clearing, a sight catches your eye.

Ahead of you, a small flight of stone steps appears carved into the rock; the craftsmanship appearing to be of high quality. Following the steps up the mountain, your eyes rest on a carved entrance into the rock. Two large pillars, carved from the rock, flank the entrance, and a single rune is inscribed above the archway.

This is the entrance to Joren's Tomb – think of the entrance to Mount Doom from the movie **LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING**, but with none of the evil connotations.

Characters who speak Gnome or who make a DC 15 Decipher Script check can identify the rune as a gnomish symbol typically used for tombs of those who were accorded high honor.

Gnomes recognize that the structure, although extremely well done, was not crafted by gnomish hands. A DC 15 Knowledge (Architecture & Engineering) check reveals that it was constructed by a skilled giant craftsman. This DC drops to 10 when the characters actually enter the

structure. Characters with stonemasonry can also learn this information.

### Entering the tomb

The tomb descends some fifty feet into the mountain. There are no light sources, beyond what the characters bring.

## Encounter 4: Joren's Life

Entering the tomb, you are immediately impressed with level of detail from whomever constructed the tomb. Finely etched bas-reliefs are inscribed into the walls on either side.

There are four panels of illustrations.

### Panel 1

This panel shows an obviously young gnome warrior wielding a battleaxe and facing down a much larger ogre opponent. The ogre appears to be raging and frothing at the mouth.

This panel is an illustration of an early event in young Joren's life as he single-handedly defeated a powerful ogre barbarian.

### Panel 2

This panel shows the same gnome, older now, leading a small band of warriors against a group of hill giants.

This panel illustrates Joren's ability to command as he leads a band of gnome warriors against a group of hill giant marauders.

### Panel 3

The same gnome in the first two panels is depicted here, addressing a council of humans, elves, and gnomes. In the background, a hill giant can be seen. Unlike his kin in the second panel, this hill giant appears pensive and thoughtful – almost kind.

This panel illustrates Joren's lesser-known skills at diplomacy and negotiation as he addresses the council in Guildren during the Giant Siege of CY 264. The hill giant, depicted in the background, is Grobindar – the hill giant who helped the defenders.

### Panel 4

This panel shows the same gnome, older and seasoned now, facing down a powerful looking frost giant wielding a massive greatsword. The gnome appears battered and bloody, yet resolute in the face of his opponent. Nearby the gnome, others can be seen engaging ogres and hill giants. In the background, a small town can be seen on top of a great bluff. Three small figures are etched on top of the town, facing a huge giant holding a boulder. The giant is about to throw the boulder.

The panel illustrates the final battle of the Giant Siege as Joren faces down the frost giant leader and the defenders of Guildren work to stop the mountain giant.

## Encounter 5: Joren's Trap

Past the etchings, a small landing interrupts the progress on the steps. Flanking the passage on either side are two statues wielding battleaxes. Ahead, past the statues, is what appears to be an iron door. This door has an image in bas-relief of a gnome in full armor and wielding a battleaxe.

The statues are that of the gnomish god, Garl Glittergold, as a Knowledge (Religion) DC 10 will reveal. They are also trapped.

**Trap:** There is a pressure plate in the middle of the passageway weighted for gnomes. Due to their balance and weight distribution, gnomes will not trigger the trap.

When the trap is triggered, the blades from each battleaxe come cutting down on the poor soul who tripped the trap. Since the trap involves stonework, dwarves can discover the trap as well, even if they are not rogues.

### All APLs (EL 2)

**Two Scything Blade Traps:** CR 1; mechanical trap; location trigger; automatic reset; Melee attack +8 (1d8+2/x3); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20.

**Note:** There are two traps – one from each statue. They may be located by one Search check, but require two separate Disable Device checks to fully disarm the trap. If the trap is discovered, but not disarmed – characters can jump over the area by making a DC 10 Jump check.

The trap continually resets unless disarmed.



The door on the other side depicts Arund Joren in the fullness of life. The iron door is really a double-door even though it is only 5-feet wide. It opens outward from the middle and is not locked.

**Iron Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 28.

## Encounter 6: Joren's Rest

The double-doors open into a large octagonal-shaped chamber. Soft light illuminates the room from the magically-created torches burning on each wall, causing your shadows to flicker and shift. To your right, a finely-crafted weapons rack holds a gleaming battleaxe made of a silvery metal as well as some other preserved equipment. On your left, an armoring stand bears a suit of fine mail and buckler, each made from the same silvery material; and an apron – apparently spun from gold. Next to the armoring stand rests a simple wooden chest.

What commands your attention, however, is a massive stone sarcophagus in front of the wall opposite the door. A pool of soft light from a shaft in the ceiling illuminates it, complementing the torchlight and revealing the bas-relief of a gnome warrior - the same gnome warrior who has been depicted on the walls and the door in this tomb – Arund Joren.

This is it – Joren's Tomb. Remember, the characters are only to take the armor, nothing else.

The chest is locked (DC 20), but not trapped and contains a pile of gold coins.

The sarcophagus is sealed, but may be opened by a DC 30 Strength check. Success reveals the remains of a gnome wrapped in white cloth. Near the skull is a holy symbol of Garl Glittergold (Joren was very devout for a non-cleric) and a diary. This diary recounts the events of the Giant Siege and specifically mentions the involvement of Grobindar Give the players Appendix II-History of the Shrine of the Peacemaker (excerpt). Nothing else of value is in the tomb.

### Development:

Once the characters have gotten what they came for, read the following.

As you prepare to leave, you feel some pebbles and dust fall on your head from the ceiling. The ground suddenly starts to buckle and shake. You hear a rumbling sound as crashing boulders and rocks fall into the passageway, blocking the exit from the tomb. The avalanche lasts for several moments before subsiding, though you can still feel rumbling and shockwaves through the ground. Something massive is nearby!

If any characters did not enter the tomb (perhaps staying outside to keep watch), then they too feel the shockwaves and see a massive landslide cover the entrance to the tomb.

The quake is the result of the mountain giant breaking free from its captors and hurling boulders and other implements of destruction in an effort to smite them.

Miraculously, the shaft above the tomb is still open and leads one-hundred (100) feet to the outside. Due to the quake, there are rough protrusions in the shaft, providing characters with hand-holds and places to get leverage.

Climbing up to the shaft from the floor requires a DC 20 Climb check. Characters with rope and grappling hook can make a DC 10 Use Rope check to hook onto one of the protrusions with the grapple. Once the characters get into the shaft, it's only a DC 5 Climb check to make it out. Be sure to apply weight and armor check penalties.

## Encounter 7: Joren's Foes

As the last character climbs out of the shaft, read the following.

The rumbling sounds continued to get louder and louder as you climb through the shaft. As the last of your group clears the shaft opening, you finally get a clear view of the area.

The rocky outcropping on which you stand overlooks a large canyon below. Steep cliffs lies on either side to the north and south, but what arrests your attention is what's taking place in the valley.

A giant, massive and huge like a lumbering mountain, stands in the middle of the canyon, opposite where you are at. As you watch, the giant grabs a chunk of the rock wall and hurls it at group of ogres and orcs below, scattering body parts everywhere. Beyond the orcs and ogres, a

group of warriors can be seen, though their race cannot be determined. Flying about them, a figure wrapped in robes and a cowled hood, directs the forces.

As you watch, the cowled figure's hands begin moving in an arcane gesture and a volley of fiery stones fly out from the outstretched hand, streaking toward the giant and exploding in a massive star-shaped pattern. The impact rocks the valley. The giant staggers backwards, colliding with the canyon walls, and sending another shockwave through the rock.

The sound of footsteps behind you draws your attention from the conflict. Turning, you catch the eyes of four orc warriors running up the side of the canyon you are on. They appear just as surprised to see you.

#### Notes:

The mountain giant is under the control of the forces that occupy Tulvar and Sheernobb. Those forces are commanded by the cowled figure directing the battle. More is revealed about this individual in VER4-07: Reunification and VER4-08: Wicked Three, but what is important at the moment is that the cowled figure is trying to recapture the giant, which has shaken off the influences of the domination spells used to control it.

It is extremely important that the character feel they are grossly overmatched by these forces and not attempt to engage them. Their priority should be to escape. The orc warriors are merely a well-equipped scouting party, sent to observe from the top of the battle. They did not expect anyone to be here.

#### All APLs (EL 2)

**Orcs (4):** hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 203. These orcs are much better equipped than ordinary orcs. They wear masterwork chain shirts (improving their AC to 14). Their wicked falchions are also masterwork (+5 to hit, 2d4+4/18-20 damage), and they carry masterwork mighty composite (Str +3) longbows rather than javelins (+2 to hit, 1d8+2/x3 damage). They each carry a handful of coins, as well.

**Treasure:** from looting the orcs.

All APLs: L: 442 gp; C: 8 gp; M: 0 gp.

## Conclusion

By the time the characters defeat the orcs, the mountain giant has been subdued and magically transported back from whence it came. There is no sign of any of the combatants beyond the two orcs that the characters fought.

#### Possible Outcomes:

There two basic outcomes.

#### 1) The characters try to keep the armor or sell it off for cash.

If the characters attempt to sell off the armor or keep it for themselves, they are arrested by Avgustin House Guard, who have been told by Brindlesock about the characters' mission. The characters are convicted of Theft, fined 200 gp each and sent to the salt mines for five (5) Time Units (not including any TUs for this mod). Characters unable to pay the fine are jailed for 1 additional Time Unit.

#### 2) The characters return the armor to Brindlesock.

They are greeted by Brindlesock Joren at the Swan's Rest.

Brindlesock's eyes widen at the sight of the recovered armor and you can see the gleam of a tear beginning to form. When he speaks to you, it is with the hushed reverence one holding a religious artifact.

"Thank you for what you have done. The sight of this armor in battle again will rally our warriors in the fight to reclaim our home. The gnomes will always speak highly of you."

If character's mention seeing the mountain giant and the forces arrayed against it, he is immediately interested.

"This is incredible. Not only do you give the gnomes renewed hope, you return with information we have been trying for months to locate."

And the adventure concludes.

Brindlesock rises and gestures to two gnomes waiting nearby. They gently take the armor and move to leave. Brindlesock turns back to you and says, "You have done the gnomes a great service this day. I hope that we meet again soon." So saying, he departs the Swan's Rest Inn. Looking

at each other, you can't help but feel like you've accomplished something of note – perhaps the beginning of a great adventuring career. Time will tell, but in the meantime, its time to enjoy the fruits of your efforts. As Brindlesock departs, one of the gnome barmaids approaches your table, bearing a platter of drinks. Handing one to each of you, she simply says “On the house.”

## 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 5: Joren's Trap

Disable, bypass, or survive the traps:

All APLs 100 XP

#### Encounter 7: Joren's Foes

Defeat the orcs:

All APLs 100 XP

#### Story Awards

Characters didn't take anything but the armor:

All APLs 100 XP

Good roleplaying:

All APLs 150 XP

**Total Possible Experience 450 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

#### Encounter 7: Joren's Foes

From looting the orcs:

All APLs: L: 442 gp; C: 8 gp; M: 0 gp.

**Maximum Possible Treasure: 450 gp**

# Appendix I: Highlights of Swan

*(special thanks to Terry Doner, Lorcan Murphy, Joshua O'Connor-Rose, and the citizens of Swan)*

## **Willow Swan's Mansion and the Avgustin House Guard Barracks**

One of the largest structures in all of Swan was the home to one of Verbobonc's most well known adventurers. Calling upon the favors of merchants and professionals that he had met during his travels across the Flanaess, Willow Swan had built his home, barracks for the Avgustin House Guard, and the stables for his business, WS Equines, into one structure. The entire complex is in a 'U' shape, the center building being two stories tall. It is longer than it is wide and the first floor contains the offices and barracks of the Avgustin House Guard. The second floor is exactly the same size as the first floor by contains Sir Willow Swan's personal residence. Sir Swan's floor is divided into two parts. The first contains his bedroom, two guest rooms, a small armory, and a rather lavish library. The library contains many books on military history and tactics. The second part is for Sir Swan's personal followers. There are three small yet private bedrooms for the commanders, a large barrack style room for the ordinary soldiers, and another small armory.

The other two parts of the 'U' shaped structure contain the Avgustin House Guard armory/training rooms and the WS Equines stables and offices, respectively. WS Equines, while a new business, is vigorously searching for horses of fine quality. It was the hopes of Sir Willow that he may have been able to eventually breed the finest war horses in all of Verbobonc. If the stable master, Bilo Longshank, was any indication, he would have achieved his aims. Bilo is originally from Keoland. He has trained and bred horses his whole life. His maternal grandfather was the master of horses to the King of Furyondy. He is a short, squat man who walks with a decided limp. When Bilo sits on a horse though, even elves would be amazed at his grace. He is soft spoken and was well liked by Sir Willow, as well as the House Guardsmen. Currently he is unsure of his status as no one has stepped forth to claim Sir Swan's inheritance.

## **The Family in Swan**

A small home near one of the streams that is around Swan is the home of Drebor. He came to town a few months ago and got a job at the salt mine. He seems to be nothing more than a common worker with a below average intelligence. The truth is something altogether different. Drebor is the Battirovka Family's contact in Swan. His home houses dozens of secret rooms and compartments. These are used for housing the Family's goods or for hiding the occasional person. Drebor's job for the family is to keep them posted on what the caravans that are coming to and from the Kron hills are carrying.

A month ago, another member of the Family has moved to Swan. Kuman the baker and his daughter Alix have set up shop in town. Drebor has contacted them and they are working together for the goals of the Family. Whatever those may be.

## **The Swan's Rest**

The Swan's Rest tavern is a long structure, the main door being in the center of one wall. Upon entering you will see the bar on the opposite wall from you. To both your left and right are tables and chairs of varying sized (to accommodate all the races that may stop in). It is well lit and clean. Along one of the short walls is a stage, where on many nights can be found Bell of the Silver Voice, singing and dancing. The barkeep is Drafner, a gnome of easy disposition. He readily greets one and all as they enter.

His wife, Drusilla, is the cook. Her meals are plain but good affairs. She has been known to come out and berate a customer who does not finish their plate. The Swan's Rest is known for its friendly atmosphere. There has never been a night when some members of both the Avgustin House Guard and the Mounted Borderers were not present.

## **The Two Foot Traveler**

The Two Foot Traveler is an eclectic collection of converted older buildings and new construction to join them. The results are hallways that bend at unusual angles, and the occasional hallways that the Halfling proprietor neglected to make easily navigable to larger races. All of this makes a trip

past the entry-ways of the various structures quite the adventure, which is more than fitting to the intent of the structure, which can be divided into three major purposes: The Two Foot Traveler tavern, Treats of the Two Foot Traveler, and the Shrine to the owner's deity: Brandobaris, the irrepressible halfling god of adventure. The tavern's main room was formerly the town hall of a previous incarnation of the community, and the large open spaces of this structure have made for an oversized common room with more than ample room for travelers and townsfolk to socialize and refresh themselves. There is an unusual amount of seating available for smaller races, and in spite of the Swan's Rest's accommodations to those races, the great majority of the town's halfling population is generally found at the 'Traveler, whose bar is ably staffed by a pair of quick halflings by the names of Fielo and Curtis. Off of the common room are numerous hallways of varying sizes, the smallest of which requires a crouch by human sized patrons and leads throughout the collection of buildings to various halfling sized rooms, the Shrine of Brandobaris, and to Treats'. Some conference rooms from the old city-hall have been converted into storerooms, rooms for rent to bigs', but mostly into a truly massive kitchen that overflows out of the original structure and across the intervening space into the next building.

The next building over is the shop Treats of the Two Foot Traveler, and is a much smaller affair, aside from the massive kitchen shared with the tavern. A young halfling girl by the name of Mindy usually maintains the storefront. She is quite popular with the younger halfling men around town and quite unashamed to have them purchase the stores wares for her so that she can more guiltlessly indulge in her love of sampling the pastries, candies, and baked goods sold therein.

Somewhere within the entire convoluted structure, the halflings swear, is a Shrine to Brandobaris. They steadfastly refuse to lead newcomers to the shrine, insisting that finding the shrine is the best form of offering to their recklessly traveling deity.

### **The Bejeweled Halls of Heironeous**

This building is dedicated to the worship of Heironeous the Invincible. This large chapel features a polished stone altar, handsomely finished pews and stained glass in the windows. Fine candelabras rest in separate prayer alcoves,

and an elegant room with a wardrobe and large desk allows the presiding cleric to prepare for services in comfort. A supply closet holds extra prayer texts, altar cloths, candles, and other religious paraphernalia. There's also a small dressing room for the cleric to prepare for services in, and in here there's a wardrobe for keeping religious garb and supplies. Up to 240 people can fit in here for service. Most distinctive about the halls is that unlike the many austere shrines and chapels to Heironeous in the Viscounty, the Bejeweled Halls have been decorated extensively using stained glass and the precious stones that are Swan's primary export. From any angle, the Halls catch the sunlight and reflect it back in a brilliant blaze, especially the Mailed Fist and Thunderbolts of Heironeous above the main doubledoors, tiled in brilliant yellow and gleaming white stones.

Inside the Minster is stored the Thunder Stone, the first stone removed from the precious stone mine in the town, which was itself discovered the same day that the original Halls of Heironeous were consecrated in the town. The Thunder Stone is a local treasure, and reputed to be a gleaming white stone the size of a man's head, shot through with a streak of yellow with an unmistakable resemblance to a thunderbolt. Father Joram, one of the original inhabitants of the thorp of Swan and member of a family residing in the area for untold generations, tends to the stone and says regular masses here, though he leaves the training of warriors to other able defenders of the town. Adjacent to the Minster is the reason that those who mistake the beauty of the minster for weakness have been disappointed. Would-be warriors of the Heironean faith from the surrounding countryside often train in a nearby yard under the tutelage of the numerous Paladins and other warriors of the Invincible native to the town.

### **The Oaken Shrine**

Constructed, no doubt, as a Cuthbertine answer to the Shrine of the Peacemaker, the Oaken Shrine is in some sense a more lavish structure, if only to the extent that the two faiths can compete in lavish austerity. The shrine itself is housed within a tall single story structure constructed entirely of oak, and polished to a high loss regularly by the faithful. The building is almost entirely without windows near the ground level, but being taller than an ordinary single-story building, much of the

upper parts of the walls are given over to stained glass windows depicting battles with the Hordes of Elemental Evil and the Cuthbertine warriors and priests present at the battle. Inside, the building is a deliberate chamber of echoes for the praise of Saint Cuthbert, protector of the people of Verbobonc, although it is reputed that should someone dare to speak against the Saint within the structure, the walls will silently consume their words and offer no amplification to them. Within the Sanctuary of the structure is the Chalice of Harim of the Ironwood, a minor relic of the Verbobonc Cuthbertine faith. Harim of the Ironwood was a martyr of the Cuthbertine faith who fell in battle against the Hordes of Elemental Evil and whose body was never recovered. The chalice is reputed to be the cup from which he drank before going forth into the battle where he fell.

### **Moschatel's Library**

The local library is exactly the sort of proper and serious structure that one would expect of a major library, looking precisely like a mansion, only filled with books. This appearance is largely due to the fact that the structure was originally a family mansion, belonging to one of the original families of the area, whose sole living descendant is Moschatel the Sage. A voracious reader and something of a kleptomaniac, the old sage has hidden away an alarming number of books throughout the numerous drawing rooms, dining halls, guest bedrooms, and even the very hallways of the structure, mostly in an organizational pattern that is entirely arcane to those who are not Moschatel himself.

He has let out one of his larger rooms that were not yet filled with books to resident members of the Wrinkle Academy, wherein is housed a Research Laboratory for all manner of arcane inquiry. Though he has never visited this part of the house in any other person's presence, and never been seen to cast a spell, the old academician has, through massive accumulation of tomes and the presence of such a laboratory within his home, earned something of a reputation as a wizard, which he steadfastly disavows, claiming that his only divinations chart the course of the stars in the heavens.

Somewhere within the large structure must be the personal quarters of the old man, but none in town who admit to it have been to such a place. Largely

owing to the enormous number of old and obscure reading to be had within the structure, the Wrinkle Academy has begun preliminary talks with the sage for him to organize his libraries in a fashion more typical of a professional library, and open his doors further to wizards and the like. Due to the results thus far of consulting with wizards, as well as a stubborn resistance to the task of organizing his books, these talks have yet to bear fruit. Nonetheless, for a minor fee and a pastry from 'Treats', Moschatel will occasionally locate some obscure piece of lore for a traveler or Academician, and often receives visitors for this purpose. Moschatel is the most promising resource in town for any person wishing to explore the history of the area, as this is a special area of research for him, and he has sent numerous reports and letters on the subject to the Baron Avgustin.

### **The Salt Mines**

The salt mines were the primary reason for the lingering population of the area prior to the recent population explosion, and most of the locals are miners by trade. Work in the salt mines is hard and exhausting, but the hardy folk of the region largely still ply their historical trades, and resist moving to the silver mines and particularly the motions of a certain local constable to make forced labor in the Salt Mines a punishment for criminals in the area.

### **The Joram Silver Mines**

Established by Rolan Joram in 592, the Joram Mines were opened by an earthquake in the spring of that year. Much of the Joram family in the area and Viscounty at large pooled their wealth and leveraged their assets in order to hire outside labor and bring the mines into production.

To this day, the mines are largely worked by newcomers to the town, with locals either preferring to stick with their experience in salt mining, or somehow being discouraged from taking work in the silver mine. Owing to his disproportionate wealth as a result of profits extracted from the mines, Rolan Joram declared himself acting mayor of the thorp in late 592 CY. As a result of the town's explosive population growth, Baron Avgustin and representatives of the Viscount challenged this claim, and elections were held, resulting in the appointment of Sir Willow Swan as mayor of the town.

## **The Jewel Mines**

At the beginning of the year (593CY) as the Hall of the Holy Knight was being consecrated, a miner opened a passage out of the Joram Mines into a new set of water caverns, within which were a variety of veins of precious stones. The worker, a Heironean, ran immediately to inform the congregation, and the Jewel Mines have been viewed as a sign of Heironeous' providence to the present. Not yet fully explored, a tunnel and shaft from the existing caverns has been run out into a separate entrance into the mines, and work continues apace. The mines are presently held in public trust, leading to some bad blood with Rolan Joram.

## **The Shrine of the Peacemaker**

The History of the Shrine of the Peacemaker is really a history of the town of Guildren and, later, Swan.

Build in CY 146, the Shrine of the Peacemaker was part of the outpost then known as Guildren. A way station and meeting place for the elves, gnomes, and men of the land, the priests of the Shrine were often called upon to mediate and settle the inevitable disputes that arose from the different personalities that conducted commerce in the area. During this time, Guildren prospered with the guidance and wisdom of the Raoan priests.

The defensible location of Guildren almost guaranteed that a military outpost would be constructed. In CY261, the gnome leader Arund Joren successfully convinced the human and elven settlers to build a military fortification on top of the great bluff overlooking Gillendyl's Run. Joren, a veteran of many skirmishes in battles against the native ogres and hill giants of the Kron Hills, had received reports of increasingly larger warbands coming further and further north and west out of the Hills. Fearing what it portended, he hastily assembled a council of prominent local citizens of Guildren, including the resident priest of the Stone Shrine, Father Mindael. Seeing the wisdom of the gnome's persuasive argument, Father Mindael supported the action and a wooden palisade was constructed through the winter. It proved to be a fortuitous move, for in the spring of CY262, an assault party of giants made their way north out of the Kron Hills and began harassing and killing the gnome and elven travelers journeying to and from Guildren. Though the palisade served to protect the town, it did

nothing for those out in the open. Bloody skirmishes persisted over the next three years, as human, elf, and gnome resisted the slow but relentless advance of the giants. The mortality count began to climb steadily higher for the defender and might have resulted in the loss of the town had help not come from an unexpected source.

During the summer of CY264, Father Mindael received a vision from Rao. In this vision he saw three images – the face of a serene old, a bolt of lightning, and a billet. These images constantly shifted and wavered, blending into and out of each other as they raced over the landscape of the southern hills, heading toward a heretofore unknown cave. When he awoke, the priest quickly jotted down the details of the vision and set about to decipher its meaning. He was not long in his search. The beginning of the week saw additional adventures pour into the fort, anxious to make a name for themselves against the giants. Two in particular caught Mindael's attention – Quintin MacHaarl, a Cuthbertine priest, and Corminder Schwan, a priest in the service of the archpaladin, Heironeous. Drawn together by the strands of fate, the three priests conferred and quickly discovered that each had had the same vision. Quickly provisioning themselves, the three set out under cover of darkness to find this mysterious cave they had seen in their vision. Traveling for two weeks – through the plains immediately south of Guildren and across the rugged terrain of the Kron Hills. Discovering the trail of a giant warband, the three followed it to a cave where they discovered the warband, a group of four hill giants, taunting and jeering a fifth giant – this one looking weaker and less healthy than the others. Bleeding gashes lined his body and one of his eyes was blackened and swollen shut. Feeling a surprising sense of pity for the wounded giant, the three priests attacked the warband. Though they were overmatched, a divine grace lent strength and guidance to their strikes and they managed to slay the warband. In speaking with the wounded giant, they made a startling discovery. Unlike his kin, the giant, called Grobindar, did not agree with the war against the humans and gnomes. Weaker than others of his tribe, he had been constantly tormented and ridiculed. Turning away from his warlike nature, Grobindar had thought to flee and make a life for himself away from the others. But he also took plans and information on a siege the giants were planning. The hill giants had recruited

assistance from deep in the Lortmils – a giant as tall and strong as a mountain and could easily breach the defenses of Guildren.

The three quickly came to the decision that Grobindar should be taken back to Guildren – both for his protection and questioning. Hurrying back to the town, they quickly discovered that the giant army was moving north out of the Kron Hills toward Guildren. Calling Joren's war council together, Father Mindael informed them what they had discovered. Dismayed at this news, some called for abandoning the town to its fate and leaving the area. Joren himself said nothing, but privately later told his lieutenant's that he saw further defense as futile. The plans gave the town a chance to leave, but otherwise they could not stand against the invader. It was Father Mindael and Quintin MacHaarl who came up with the plan that gave the town a chance. They had rescued Grobindar from his tribe, so there was a sense of gratitude and a debt to be repaid that the outcast giant felt toward the priests. If they could not defeat the giants by force of arms, what about some other means? Grobindar could provide insight into how the giants thought and acted – could not a means to influence their actions be discovered? A long shot at best, but such a long shot sat better with Joren, who though resigned to defeat – still preferred to fight rather than flee.

A hastily assembled group of wizards – human, elven, and gnome began working with Grobindar to learn about giant behavior and thoughts, in the hopes of discovering a spell or something that could deter the invaders. As the days wore on and the giants got closer, Joren came up with the strategy to gain some time. He would take his band of gnome fighters – seasoned giant slayers – and harry them on their approach toward the town. Though few in number, the gnomes could hopefully buy the time needed for the wizards to make their breakthrough.

The fight between the gnomes and the giants was bloody. Though the giants incurred heavy losses, still they came forward, bolstered by the mountain giant who assisted them. Finally, the giants were at the doorstep of Guildren. Joren and his group, forced out into the open by the immediate threat of the giants laying siege to the town, were being decimated by the ogres who accompanied the army. Joren himself faced off against the leader – a huge frost giant who wielded a wicked looking greatsword in his massive hands. The mountain

giant, dwarfing everything in sight, loomed over the town like a massive statue and began hurling trees and boulders at the palisade walls and smashing them to flinders. As Joren was about to fall to the frost giant, the mountain giant suddenly stopped and stood still. His torn face looking up, Joren saw three figures standing on the ramparts of Guildren – wizards. Two wizards - a human and an elf - flanked a third wizard, a gnome, who held a book in his hand. Directing his hands in a strange fashion toward the giant, the mountain giant suddenly pivoted and hurled a great boulder at the frost giant leader, struck him in the head, and felled him instantly. The battle became a rout of the giants, who broke ranks and fled back south as soon as they saw their slain leader.

Returning to Guildren, Joren went directly to the Stone Shrine of Rao. Grobindar, who had been holed up there during the fight, looked apprehensive as the bloody gnome general walked up to him. Silent for a moment, Joren did something he never thought he would ever do – he extended his hand in friendship toward the hill giant who had risked his life so that peace might return to the town. From that day forward, the Stone Shrine was known as the Shrine of the Peacemaker, in honor of the peace won that day.

The next seventy years saw relative peace in the region as the giants, broken by their defeat on Joren's Field, as the south plains became known, returned to minor skirmishes in the lower Kron Hills and the Lortmils. Joren himself died some twenty years after the siege and was buried along with those of his kinsmen somewhere in the plains that now bore his name. Of Grobindar, no mention of his fate was recorded.

War again returned to the land in 349 with rumors of conflict from relatively distant Kingdom of Keoland. The rumors proved true with the invasion of 350 of Keoish forces into the land. Relations between the gnomes and humans had grown distant with the deaths of Father Mindael and Araun Joren. Retreating to their homes on the edge of the Gnarley Forest, the gnomes left the war to the humans and, in CY355, Guildren became occupied by Keoish forces and continued to be for eighty-three years. During this time, the Shrine of the Peacemaker was blocked shut, but surprisingly left otherwise unmolested. This state of affairs continued until the climax of the Short War in 438 when Canon Turgen V of Veluna sent priests back to the town.



Conversations with the delegate sent by the Viscount of Verbobonc had left the Canon with the distinct impression that the tenor of the land had changed considerably during the occupation. The folk of the land held more reverence for the faith of St. Cuthbert than that of Rao. The chief priest of the group, Father Entharian, quickly assessed the situation and discerned the spiritual direction of the land. Corresponding directly with Canon Turgen, Father Entharian proposed a bold solution – concede spiritual authority for the whole region to the priests of St. Cuthbert, an acknowledgement in practice of what existed in fact.

The recommendation brought a swift recall of Entharian back to Veluna City as the College of Bishops sought to have the recommendation dismissed. Veluna herself was in the midst of planning secession from Furyondy and it was believed the concession would be seen as an act of weakness. The Canon, however, was a student of history and a shrewd judge of events. He was aware of the events of CY264 – Father Mindael had kept meticulous records – and quickly saw that such a concession would do much to improve the image of the Church in the region. Furthermore, both the Canon and Father Entharian knew that a break with Furyondy would require the support of the sizeable contingent of Cuthbertine priests. That support could be wooed and garnered with the promise of a greater land to oversee. Returning Father Entharian back to Guildren, he directed that the shrine be restored to a semblance of her former service and that preparations be made for the purposes that Entharian described. Following the Concordat of Eademer in 446 and the formal establishment of the Archclericy of Veluna,

Entharian's preparations moved to the forefront and, in the spring of 448, a delegation of Cuthbertine priests traveled to Guildren. Providing a sense of historical symmetry, Entharian had contact the local priest of Heironeous, Pacinder Swan – a descendant of the priest who had traveled to the town during the giant war of 180 years past – to oversee the proceedings.

Though unaccustomed to negotiation and diplomacy, Pacinder acquitted himself surprisingly well during the talks. The talks, later known as the Guildren Accord, were historic for the growing Viscounty of Verbobonc, for they acknowledged the tenor of the land and helped preserve a sense

of connection with Veluna. They lasted for several months, until Patchwall of that year – when the Canon himself came to the town to meet with the Cuthbertine delegation for the ceremony of transference. Even the gruff Cuthbert priest, Magnus Strom, found himself unexpectedly moved by the Canon's words during the ceremony. In the end, though the spiritual authority rested with the priests of St. Cuthbert – the daring idea proposed by Father Entharian resonated through the years as a supreme gesture of wisdom and grace and cemented relations between the priesthoods.

Over the next hundred years, Guildren lost its prominence as a historical site as the eye of the

Viscounty turned south – where the Hateful Wars caused a great toll on humanoid and demihuman lives; and later north and east – when orc and bandit incursions forced the eyes of the Viscounty toward the Gnarley Forest and the towns of Hommlet and Nulb, where a temple of evil was constructed in the shadow of those two towns. By the time of the Battle of Emridy Meadows, Guildren's name had been all but forgotten as the town population dwindled down to about fifty to eighty people, mostly miners who worked in the salt mines discovered during the Keoish occupation. This continued until CY585 when representatives of Viscount Wilfrick traveled to the area, looking for locations to construct outposts for the Viscount's Mounted Borderers. Finding the town sparsely populated, they began putting money into the area. About this time, the Church of Rao assigned a new priest to the shrine, Father Cadifel.

Between 585 and 593, the town saw an increase in activity and, slowly but surely, Father Cadifel began to restore the shrine, which had fallen again into disrepair. The election of Father Owain Aneirin Llewelyn, a paladin of Rao, after the death of Lord Willow Swan, signaled a new focus for the shrine as the new mayor began to put personal resources into the refurbishment of the shrine. As a sign of personal favor and respect, the Bishop of Whitehale sent Father Owain a personal assistant to help with day to day affairs and, ostensibly, provide information on the restoration of the shrine.

The giant uprising of 593 Ready'reat has seen an influx of citizens into the town, and a corresponding increase in status for the Shrine of the Peacemaker, as penitent worshipers are

attracted to the principles of peace and reason.  
For the first time since 448, the shrine is almost at  
its state of former glory.

## Appendix II: The Shrine of the Peacemaker (excerpt)

The History of the Shrine of the Peacemaker is really a history of the town of Guildren and, later, Swan.

Built in CY 146, the Shrine of the Peacemaker was part of the outpost then known as Guildren. A way station and meeting place for the elves, gnomes, and men of the land, the priests of the Shrine were often called upon to mediate and settle the inevitable disputes that arose from the different personalities that conducted commerce in the area. During this time, Guildren prospered with the guidance and wisdom of the Raoan priests.

The defensible location of Guildren almost guaranteed that a military outpost would be constructed. In CY261, the gnome leader Arund Joren successfully convinced the human and elven settlers to build a military fortification on top of the great bluff overlooking Gillendyl's Run. Joren, a veteran of many skirmishes in battles against the native ogres and hill giants of the Kron Hills, had received reports of increasingly larger warbands coming further and further north and west out of the Hills. Fearing what it portended, he hastily assembled a council of prominent local citizens of Guildren, including the resident priest of the Stone Shrine, Father Mindael. Seeing the wisdom of the gnome's persuasive argument, Father Mindael supported the action and a wooden palisade was constructed through the winter. It proved to be a fortuitous move, for in the spring of CY262, an assault party of giants made their way north out of the Kron Hills and began harassing and killing the gnome and elven travelers journeying to and from Guildren. Though the palisade served to protect the town, it did nothing for those out in the open. Bloody skirmishes persisted over the next three years, as human, elf, and gnome resisted the slow but relentless advance of the giants. The mortality count began to climb steadily higher for the defender and might have resulted in the loss of the town had help not come from an unexpected source.

During the summer of CY264, Father Mindael received a vision from Rao. In this vision he saw three images – the face of a serene old, a bolt of lightning, and a billet. These images constantly shifted and wavered, blending into and out of each other as they raced over the landscape of the

southern hills, heading toward a heretofore unknown cave. When he awoke, the priest quickly jotted down the details of the vision and set about to decipher its meaning. He was not long in his search. The beginning of the week saw additional adventurers pour into the fort, anxious to make a name for themselves against the giants. Two in particular caught Mindael's attention – Quintin MacHaarl, a Cuthbertine priest, and Corminder Schwan, a priest in the service of the archpaladin, Heironeous. Drawn together by the strands of fate, the three priests conferred and quickly discovered that each had had the same vision.

Quickly provisioning themselves, the three set out under cover of darkness to find this mysterious cave they had seen in their vision. They traveled for two weeks – through the plains immediately south of Guildren and across the rugged terrain of the Kron Hills. Discovering the trail of a giant warband, the three followed it to a cave where they discovered the warband, a group of four hill giants, taunting and jeering a fifth giant – this one looking weaker and less healthy than the others. Bleeding gashes lined his body and one of his eyes was blackened and swollen shut. Feeling a surprising sense of pity for the wounded giant, the three priests attacked the warband. Though they were overmatched, a divine grace lent strength and guidance to their strikes and they managed to slay the warband. In speaking with the wounded giant, they made a startling discovery. Unlike his kin, the giant, called Grobindar, did not agree with the war against the humans and gnomes. Weaker than others of his tribe, he had been constantly tormented and ridiculed. Turning away from his warlike nature, Grobindar had thought to flee and make a life for himself away from the others. But he also took plans and information on a siege the giants were planning. The hill giants had recruited assistance from deep in the Lortmils – a giant as tall and strong as a mountain and could easily breach the defenses of Guildren.

The three quickly came to the decision that Grobindar should be taken back to Guildren – both for his protection and questioning. Hurrying back to the town, they quickly discovered that the giant army was moving north out of the Kron Hills toward Guildren. Calling Joren's war council together, Father Mindael informed them what they had discovered. Dismayed at this news, some

called for abandoning the town to its fate and leaving the area. Joren himself said nothing, but privately later told his lieutenant's that he saw further defense as futile. The plans gave the town a chance to leave, but otherwise they could not stand against the invader. It was Father Mindael and Quintin MacHaarl who came up with the plan that gave the town a chance. They had rescued Grobindar from his tribe, so there was a sense of gratitude and a debt to be repaid that the outcast giant felt toward the priests. If they could not defeat the giants by force of arms, what about some other means? Grobindar could provide insight into how the giants thought and acted – could not a means to influence their actions be discovered? A long shot at best, but such a long shot sat better with Joren, who though resigned to defeat – still preferred to fight rather than flee.

A hastily assembled group of wizards – human, elven, and gnome – began working with Grobindar to learn about giant behavior and thoughts, in the hopes of discovering a spell or something that could deter the invaders. As the days wore on and the giants got closer, Joren came up with the strategy to gain some time. He would take his band of gnome fighters – seasoned giant slayers – and harry them on their approach toward the town. Though few in number, the gnomes could hopefully buy the time needed for the wizards to make their breakthrough.

The fight between the gnomes and the giants was bloody. Though the giants incurred heavy losses, still they came forward, bolstered by the mountain giant who assisted them. Finally, the giants were at the doorstep of Guildren. Joren and his group, forced out into the open by the immediate threat of the giants laying siege to the town, were being decimated by the ogres who accompanied the army. Joren himself faced off against the leader – a huge frost giant who wielded a wicked looking greatsword in his massive hands. The mountain giant, dwarfing everything in sight, loomed over the town like a massive statue and began hurling trees and boulders at the palisade walls and smashing them to flinders. As Joren was about to fall to the frost giant, the mountain giant suddenly stopped and stood still. His torn face looking up, Joren saw three figures standing on the ramparts of Guildren – wizards. Two wizards - a human and an elf - flanked a third wizard, a gnome, who held a book in his hand. Directing his hands in a strange fashion toward the giant, the mountain giant

suddenly pivoted and hurled a great boulder at the frost giant leader, struck him in the head, and felled him instantly. The battle became a rout of the giants, who broke ranks and fled back south as soon as they saw their slain leader.

Returning to Guildren, Joren went directly to the Stone Shrine of Rao. Grobindar, who had been holed up there during the fight, looked apprehensive as the bloody gnome general walked up to him. Silent for a moment, Joren did something he never thought he would ever do – he extended his hand in friendship toward the hill giant who had risked his life so that peace might return to the town. From that day forward, the Stone Shrine was known as the Shrine of the Peacemaker, in honor of the peace won that day.

The next seventy years saw relative peace in the region as the giants, broken by their defeat on Joren's Field, as the south plains became known, returned to minor skirmishes in the lower Kron Hills and the Lortmils. Joren himself died some twenty years after the siege and was buried along with those of his kinsmen somewhere in the plains that now bore his name. Of Grobindar, no mention of his fate was recorded.

# DM Aid

## DM's Map of Joren's Tomb

