

HIGD-03

A New Day Dawns on Weeping Willow

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Highfolk Introductory Adventure

Version 1.0

Round 1

by Joshua B. Grace

A small hamlet, Weeping Willow, has suffered more than its share of tragedy. Now just as it seems that peace and prosperity might return, a small band of heroes stumbles across a fight that threatens to destabilize the region. Will the adventurers discover what secrets lie in Weeping Willow? How will they steer the future of the region? An introductory adventure set in Highfolk for 1st level characters.

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

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

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

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, LIVING GREYHAWK, D&D REWARDS, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc, in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc and the adventure author or authors.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at www.rpga.com

For questions specific to this document and your region, please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at skerrit@wi.rr.com; for LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

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

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----|---|---|----|----|
| CR | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1/4 | and | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1/6 | | | | | |
| 1/3 | and | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1/2 | | | | | |
| 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | | 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 5 | | 5 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 6 | | 6 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 7 | | 7 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. Animals with different CRs are determined separately using the chart; then, take the highest CR animal (or animals), and add 2 (drop fractions). This result is the effective character level for a mixed-CR group of animals. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round regional introductory adventure, set in Highfolk. Characters native to Highfolk 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 that 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*.

Adventure Background

In CY 591, a bitter vampire and priest of Nerull plotted his revenge against his former home, the small village of Weeping Willow, but a small, intrepid band of adventurers managed to foil his plots and remove the taint of Nerull from the hamlet.

Or did they?

For years, a cult of Nerull has worked in the surrounding area, little concerned by the farmers of Weeping Willow. One of their higher-ranked members, a necromantic wizard, found a series of natural caverns near Chirping Creek and built a lair in them. In his lair, he quietly stockpiled dozens of dead orcs from the neighboring lands and began a series of morbid experiments and animations that led to his eventual discovery of a method by which he could breach the barrier between Highfolk and the Plane of Shadow. Much to his chagrin, however, the machine he built to power his portal didn't work as nicely as he liked. He could open a gap, but not one that he could use as he intended (for travel and summoning). Instead, he could only open small rifts that shifted along a mithral ring. Over time, however, the continued generation of these rifts tainted his lair with the shadow energies, and one or two creatures managed to cross into the material plane while the machine was unattended.

These breaches in the fabric of the plane have disturbed many of the more sensitive fey and elementals connected to the region. They have grown irritable and reclusive.

A number of wood elves have noticed the changes in these "nature spirits" and blame it on the sudden influence of dwarves in Weeping Willow who, of course, have begun mining along the Chirping Creek.

Brottor Holderhek, the leader of the dwarven miners, bought land after the deaths of several locals in CY 591, and, after a failed stint as a farmer, found rich veins of ore in the hills along Chirping Creek. He invited his clan mates to help him mine. Neither he nor the residents of Weeping Willow had any trouble regarding the mine until a bunch of wood elves showed up and accused him of disturbing the balance of nature.

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins as the PCs arrive at the hamlet of Weeping Willow on their way back to Highfolk from a failed treasure hunt.

In the town, they may stop a fight between a number of dwarves and wood elves and learn about the source of the tensions from the dwarves, wood elves, and townsfolk alike.

After evening falls, the party helps defend the town from a sudden incursion of orc skeletons.

Taking counsel from the town leaders, dwarves, and wood elves, the party helps the town spokesman decide to ally with the dwarves or the wood elves as each group proposes a separate path for the future of Weeping Willow.

Dwarven Path: The party accompanies the dwarves to their mine, to root out whatever evil lurks within. On their way through the caverns behind the mine tunnels, however, some of the dwarves get scared, requiring the PCs to scout further ahead on their own.

Arriving at a large iron door at the end of a natural cavern, the heroes face a couple of traps before finding their way into a temple of Nerull occupied by a large, loud, odd machine.

The PCs find a secret door and move deeper into a necromancer's complex, only to be attacked by a skeletal ogre amid a mass of orc corpses.

Their foe defeated, the heroes continue through the complex only to find the dwarves badly wounded from their own fight with the necromancer secretly in charge of the entire complex.

The heroes and dwarves return to Weeping Willow to rest and celebrate. As they are about to leave, the party learns the dwarves have discovered adamantine in their mines!

Elven Path: The party accompanies the wood elves to their encampment where they summon an earth elemental to seal the caverns near the dwarven mine forever. The elemental demands the death of a beast from the shadow plane in return for its services, and the leader of the wood elves, Mythrinnor, asks the PCs to slay the shadow beast.

Their pursuit of the shadow beast leads the PCs to a dryad's grove where the suspicious dryad meets them with bow in hand. In a situation calling for quick thinking, the PCs can escape the dryad's wrath through clear diplomacy or swift combat.

Parties who successfully assure the dryad they mean her no harm learn that she wants the head of an orc to the east of her grove. In return

for his head, she'll offer them a magical item to help them defeat the shadow beast.

The PCs continue through the woods until they come to an incongruous land of rocky hills and dried earth. While they move in search of the shadow beast, it stalks them from the treetops and sets its ambush. Finally, it springs, and the party has to draw upon all its resources to defeat it.

Returning victorious to the elven encampment, the party discovers the elemental already sealed the mine. The wood elves thank the PCs for their efforts, and Weeping Willow and its surrounding lands are neatly restored to a balance with nature.

Preparation for Play

This is introductory module set in the region of Highfolk for first-level characters only. Only first level characters may participate. Magic item creation is not allowed at the end of this module. As this module is an introductory module, it is primarily designed as a role-playing introduction to the region of Highfolk. Much of the outcome of the module is left to the imagination and adjudication of the DM. Reasonable plans should be offered a good chance of success.

Choosing Sides: Please note that the PCs have the very real option of choosing to side with either the dwarves or wood elves they meet in Weeping Willow. After the attack of the orc skeletons, the adventure path splits in half. No table will play both halves. Players will either work with the dwarves or with the wood elves. The story, experience, and treasure have all been created to accommodate the finality of the players' decision in Encounter Three.

Introduction

You are on your way back to Highfolk after a failed treasure hunt in the Sepia Uplands. There is, perhaps, no disappointment so palpable as that which follows a wild goose chase after ancient treasure, and the heat that has dogged your return has only exacerbated the matter. Two days of sunny, uneventful travel along a dry and dusty road have brought you to a series of small, rolling hills, tilled and furrowed in rows of various grains. Now the sun is setting, red on the horizon ahead of you. In the setting sun's molten glow lies the silhouetted hamlet of Weeping Willow. A dozen buildings stand in a cluster amid the fields.

Your new companions march alongside you. Only over the past couple days, have you

begun to get used to some of their quirks and personalities.

DMs should allow the players to introduce their PCs at this time. The party has been together for at least a week. Once their introductions are complete, continue to Encounter 1.

Encounter One: Weeping Willow

Crickets chirp as you continue along the road, but as you get nearer the hamlet, you hear other sounds, voices raised in argument. Shortly, the words become distinct, and you can see a handful of dwarves quarreling with roughly as many wood elves as a number of townsfolk look on, leaning on their hoes, rakes, and pitchforks.

A tall and red-bearded dwarf waggles his finger in the face of one of the wood elves. "The land ain't yours," he snarls. "It ain't your place to tell us what we can or can't do."

One of the wood elves responds, his voice the very embodiment of impersonal disdain, "I do not know how you came to the High Vale, but you must not unbalance the sacred lands at the edge of the forest. How must we convince you? The spirits of these lands are temperamental. Your mining will disrupt their balance. You must cease."

"You can take yer temperamental spirits and shove 'em," says the red-bearded dwarf holding the deed. "We don't need 'em in our mine anyway. And if you're gonna be prissy about your balances, I'm gonna have to ask you to stay off my land." The dwarf emphasizes his words by patting the warhammer hanging from his belt, and a number of wood elves and dwarves respond by moving their hands to the hilts of their weapons.

The two parties lock steely gazes as the villagers back away. A couple of the villagers look to your party, clearly hoping that you might be able to help.

Creatures: The dwarves and elves are so focused upon each other, the PCs can approach unmolested.

Brottor Holderhek: Male dwarf Ftr2/Exp2; hp 36; see *Appendix One*.

Dwarven Miner (4): Male dwarf Exp1; hp 5 each; see *Appendix One*.

Tharivol Galanodel: Male wood elf Rgr2/Exp2; hp 22; see *Appendix One*.

Wood elf Trapper (3): Male wood elf Exp1; hp 3; see *Appendix One*.

Essentially two things can happen here: The PCs can either use Diplomacy or Intimidate to break up the fight (and DMs are encouraged to give circumstance bonuses or penalties to their checks based on role-playing), talking them down from hostile to indifferent, or they can fail to break up the fight, in which case the town speaker (effectively the mayor) and his back-up will arrive shortly to break it up and take the dwarf and elf leaders into custody for questioning.

Diplomacy

Treat the wood elves and dwarves as hostile to each other and indifferent to the PCs. At 1st level, it is unlikely (though possible) the PCs will be able to talk the two parties down from hostile to indifferent (DC 25 Diplomacy check); instead, if the PCs succeed at a Diplomacy check (DC 15) with either of the leaders, Brottor Holderhek or Tharivol Galanodel, the leader will become friendly toward the PCs, attempting to recruit them to his side of the argument by explaining, as rationally as possible, his people's concerns.

Brottor Holderhek: Brottor's primary contention is that he has a legal right to mine the land. He bought it with money he earned from adventuring back in the day, and he suspects the wood elves are simply jealous that they didn't find the vein of ore before he did. He doesn't care about nature spirits. He points out every dwarven city that's ever existed as examples of how little nature spirits care about dwarven mining.

Some players may wish to roleplay a short question and answer session with Brottor, and several of the likely questions and answers are listed below.

- **What's going on here?** *"Can't ye see for yerself? Soon as a dwarf starts minin' near the woods, they make up stories of nature spirits to stop us from diggin'?"*
- **Who are you?** *"Name's Brottor. Brottor Holderhek. I see yer all adventurers. Well, I used ta be an adventurer, too, 'til I got tired of it. Bought me some land and settled down here in Weeping Willow. Turned out farmin' was no life for me, but lucky me, I found a good vein of ore just up the ol' Chirping Creek."*
- **Are you worried the mining might upset nature?** *"Bah! The mine's a mine, and the trees is trees. I'm just cutting some rock out o'*

some more rock. Besides, unlike those buttinsky elves, I'm actually a resident of this town."

- **Who are the other dwarves?** "They're me mates. Come to help me mine."
- **What do you want us to do?** "Get those elves off our backs, if you can. They got no right to tell us what we can and can't do."

Tharivol Galanodel: Tharivol's primary contention is that, regardless of the dwarves' legal right to the land, the mining operation threatens Weeping Willow and the surrounding area. The wood elves' priest has had numerous dark visions of something stalking the woods, and since the dwarves started mining, his visions have turned darker and repeated more frequently. The wood elves define "nature spirits" not only as elementals, but fey, plants, and even some undead tied to the land. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check confirms that some undead, such as ghosts, form ties to areas and incomplete tasks that bind them to the land even beyond death. Tharivol expresses sympathy for the dwarves and their mining (though a DC 5 Sense Motive check suggests Tharivol's sympathy is formal rather than heartfelt), but his first concern is for the land and its inhabitants, not for ore.

Some players may wish to role-play a short question and answer session with Tharivol, and several of the likely questions and answers are listed below.

- **What are you doing here?** "We're here to prevent those dwarves from angering all the spirits of the land. The nature spirits have been angry of late, and we see that the source of their anger is the dwarven mine. It must be closed."
- **What are "nature spirits"?** "Many spirits have close ties to the land that can be damaged by mercenary mining. Animals, plants, fey, and even elementals are angered by the disruption to the land."
- **Who are you?** "I am Tharivol Galanodel, the lead hunter of our small tribe. We have traveled from the outskirts of the region, guided by our priest, Mythrinnor, to find the cause of the recent disturbances, and now we have."
- **Who are the other elves?** "They are my companions, other trappers of our tribe. Each of them can attest to the distortion of the balance of the region. The animals are angry. The plants are angry. The fey play angry music."

- **What do you want us to do?** "Dwarves are a stubborn lot and do not listen to us. Speak sense to them. No small amount of ore, no matter how precious, is worth the destruction of the balance of nature in the whole region."

In turn, if the PCs speak with one or both of the leaders and assume responsibility for helping arbitrate the matter, they will need only a DC 15 Diplomacy check with the other leader to convince his side to settle this matter without violence. Additionally, if the PCs stall until the town speaker arrives with his back-up (after 3 minutes), they will receive a +2 circumstance bonus to their Diplomacy check as neither the dwarves nor wood elves wish to agitate relations with the local authorities.

If the PCs convince the two parties to stand down, when Myrindil Riverstone (a member of the high elven Clan Krysalyn), the town speaker, arrives, he will congratulate them for their cool-headedness, thank them for their efforts, and ask them to make themselves at home in Weeping Willow and enjoy themselves while he discusses a resolution to the matter with the factions' leaders, Brottor and Tharivol. He then speaks to each of the leaders in turn in order to make sense of the argument.

Intimidate

PCs may choose to Intimidate either side's leader. If the PCs succeed, they may treat the leader as friendly (as above), gaining the opportunity to hear that leader's rational, though one-sided, explanation of the situation. If the PCs attempt to Intimidate one of the leaders and fail, that leader becomes hostile toward the PCs as he assumes they have taken allegiance with the other group.

Failure to resolve conflict

If the PCs fail to talk the dwarves and wood elves down from hostile to indifferent after 2 minutes, one of the dwarves at the edge of the crowd will think he sees bared metal glinting off a wood elf's longsword (as though he was drawing it), and he'll rush at the wood elf with a punch, starting a larger brawl. The brawl turns into a sprawling fistfight, with some members wielding weapons, but no one strikes for lethal damage unless first attacked for lethal damage.

Any remaining villagers quickly move away from the combat, watching from a distance.

The combat lasts 10 rounds as some members from each side knock each other out, and the two leaders circle about like boxers, looking to land blows roughly every other round,

when they think they spot a weakness in the other's defense.

Some PCs may join in the combat. So long as they use only non-lethal damage, they'll only get a stern reprimand from the town speaker when he arrives. If any of the PCs draws a weapon to attack for lethal damage, one of the hamlet's old, gap-toothed farmers will call out to him or her, *"There ain't no call for that weapon, son/girly."* If the PC continues to press a lethal attack, he or she will be "mysteriously" disarmed as someone bumps into him/her (Reflex DC 20 negates, if the player complains). If the PC still fails to get the hint, allow the attack. This will effectively end the brawl between the dwarves and elves as they turn on that PC (not the entire party) in order to beat him/her into submission. However the combat resolves, that PC's adventure is over. No one will be willing to work with someone who attacks with lethal force in a fistfight.

The town's speaker, Myrindil Riverstone (Male high-elf Rgr2), will arrive 3 minutes after the PCs initially engaged with the dwarves and wood elves (or 10 rounds after combat breaks out) to see what the commotion is all about. He arrives flanked by two of the town's sturdier farmers (Male Com2), and, if the negotiations have devolved into combat, they will quickly disentangle the brawling parties, taking each of the leaders aside for discussion. Myrindil will speak with each leader in turn in order to make sense of the matter.

Furthermore, if the PCs engaged in the combat, they will be thoroughly scolded, and just as Myrindil is about to tell them to *"get gone and stay gone,"* one of the younger villagers will state that his family heirloom, a masterwork silver holy symbol of Phyton, went missing during the skirmish (this is actually true, but he just dropped it and hasn't yet found it). In this case, Myrindil will pause, scratch his head, and shrug, saying, *"Well, then I guess maybe you better stick around until I get to the bottom of all this. But if any of you starts causing trouble, I may have to knock your heads and send you limping away."*

Encounter Two: Late Evening of the Walking Dead

After Myrindil asks the leaders to accompany him to speak with the priest, Derith, a pair of dwarves rushes down the street, chased by a dozen orc skeletons. Their mining has opened an old network of caves. They promote some excitement that continues until a number of zombies attack. The PCs have to help defend the townsfolk

alongside the dwarven miners and elven woodsmen.

As the twilight sky darkens, Weeping Willow's town speaker, Myrindil Riverstone, nods and mutters something in a quiet voice to the dwarven leader, Brottor Holderhek. Then Myrindil walks to the middle of the street and scratches his head. "Well," he says, addressing both the dwarves and wood elves, "this one's beyond me. Why don't you, Brottor, and you, Tharivol, come with me, and we'll seek out our priest's advice. Every once in a while, Derith offers good counsel." A slow murmur sounds; then Brottor and Tharivol step forward, eying each other warily.

The remaining dwarves and elves move apart to opposite sides of the street, and the on looking villagers depart for their homes. All is calm for a moment, and then the sounds of rapid footfalls carry loudly from just down the road. Then as an eerie clatter sounds behind the footfalls, and a low-pitched huffing, and a dwarf emerges from the edge of the darkness. "Skuh-skeletons!" he wheezes.

Even as the dwarves and wood elves stand to ready themselves for combat, a dozen skeletons run out of the darkness. Six of them are headed right for you!

APL 2 (EL 3)

Orc Warrior Skeletons (6): hp 7 each; see *Appendix One*.

Tactics: The skeletons are mindless warriors and rush forward to join the nearest living creature in combat. The dwarves mount a defense on the left side of the road while the wood elves hold fast on the right. Both groups manage to hold off their undead foes while the remaining villagers flee to safety. All of this leaves the PCs to contend with only the 6 skeletons nearest them.

Treasure: The PCs may claim the rusty armor and weapons that still cling to the skeletons rotting corpses.

APL 2: Loot – 22 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 0 gp.

Development: After the battle, Keldon, the dwarf who ran into town reveals that the skeletons came out of the new dwarven mine. Their mining bore into a series of natural caves, and shortly after they began to explore them, a horde of skeletons emerged. Four dwarves were slain in the immediate combat, and Keldon ran to town for help. He thought he might have given the skeletons the slip, but it seems they spotted him.

Encounter Three: Taking Sides

If the PCs successfully talked the dwarves and wood elves down from the earlier combat, read or paraphrase the following text:

As the last of the skeletons are destroyed, Myrindil rushes to the site, wielding a longsword. Brottor and Tharivol follow shortly behind him, also armed. As a small boy, in priest's robes jogs forward, huffing and puffing, Myrindil takes a moment to survey the destruction, then looks over the dwarves, the wood elves, and your party. He grins, then addresses you. "It seems Weeping Willow is doubly fortunate to have you here this evening."

If the PCs failed to talk the dwarves and wood elves out of their earlier skirmish, read or paraphrase the following text:

As the last of the skeletons are destroyed, Myrindil rushes to the site, wielding a longsword. Brottor and Tharivol follow shortly behind him, also armed. As a small boy, in priest's robes jogs forward, huffing and puffing, Myrindil takes a moment to survey the destruction, then looks over the dwarves, the wood elves, and your party. He grins, then addresses you. "It seems Weeping Willow is fortunate to have you here this evening after all."

If the PCs have not spoken to Brottor and/or Tharivol about the dwarven mine at the root of the tensions between the dwarves and wood elves, Myrindil explains:

"Brottor and Tharivol have been expressing to me their concerns about this region. It seems that after Brottor moved here, he discovered a vein of ore north of town and shortly upstream along Chirping Creek. Like any good dwarf, he summoned his clan mates to come and help him mine. They say the vein is rich, and the ore is of a high quality. However, as Tharivol has explained to me, the woods beginning along the Chirping Creek are delicately balanced. His people claim the nature spirits in these parts are temperamental. They say there are dark forces at work, and the dwarves' mining will only lead to a disruption of the region's

precarious balance. For my part, I have been unable to get either side to make concessions. Brottor is a citizen of Weeping Willow. He bought several farms after the previous residents, bless their souls, were slain in the misfortunes of CY 591. I'm at a loss what to do, my friends. Derith, too, was unable to bring our dwarven and elven friends to see eye to eye."

In any case, after the PCs have a chance to respond to Myrindil's comments, read or paraphrase the following text:

"Now could someone explain to me what these skeletons are doing here?" Myrindil steps forward and reaches for one of the skulls. "Orcs! Curse their dead bones."

Allow the PCs a chance to respond and explain what happened.

A moment passes quietly as Myrindil examines the scattered bones. "They came from the mine?" says Myrindil. "Then we must do something. Immediately."

"Cleanse it!" calls Brottor. "Root it out. There's good ore in them caves!"

"Cleanse it?" scoffs Tharivol. "It is clear that these mines are wholly disrupting the balance. They must be sealed forever. Our priest can close them with a ritual."

"But..." calls Brottor, nearly moaning, "but did you not hear me, elf? There's good ore in there!"

"It matters not."

Again, both the dwarves and wood elves stand from their positions at the opposite edges of the street and eye each other over. Myrindil holds up his hands and calls, "Enough! I've heard enough from both of you. I will make this decision. I will take short counsel from you, Brottor. Then from you, Tharivol. Then from Derith and our friends, here," he says, pointing at your party.

The DM should role-play the remainder of this encounter as Myrindil quickly consults with Brottor, Tharivol and Derith, in turn, becoming only more frustrated as the pre-existing difficulties continue ad-nauseum. Then he consults with the PCs, hoping to gain their insight.

Essentially, if the PCs, as a group, agree to side with the dwarves or with the wood elves, Myrindil listens for a while and then agrees, glad to be done with the matter. If the PCs consult

Myrindil for his opinion, he clearly expresses that his first concern is for the good of Weeping Willow. He acknowledges Brottor's right to live in the hamlet and states that he doesn't know of any legal reason why Brottor wouldn't have the right to mine along the creek. He believes that Brottor has been a good citizen, and though his clan mates have sometimes been noisy since they arrived three weeks ago, they have made fast friends with the innkeep and several of the villagers. In fact, they've performed some excellent blacksmith work for the local farmers. If the PCs were to cleanse the mines, it would likely be a dangerous task. Myrindil has little taste for such skulking about the bowels of the earth, but he would be comforted to know that whatever forces lurked beneath the mines had been rooted out and destroyed.

However, as an elf, Myrindil is loath to tempt the spirits of the woods. Fey, animals, magical beasts, and elemental spirits all live in the neighboring woods, and if the wood elves are right, the dwarves' continued mining could lead to the eventual downfall of Weeping Willow. But it's hard to say whether or not the wood elves are right. He believes they think they're telling the truth, and they've always been allies of the village. In his travels, Myrindil has often wandered across the bodies of dead orcs and goblinoids, their backs pierced by arrows. If the wood elves were to seal the caverns for good, Myrindil would be relieved to have the crisis averted while maintaining the natural balance of the region. He is uncertain what such a ritual requires, but he expects the PCs could make themselves helpful.

Once the PCs persuade Myrindil to ally Weeping Willow with either the dwarves or the wood elves, Myrindil announces the decision to all those involved.

If the PCs choose to ally with the dwarves, follow the Dwarven Path, Encounters Four D through Conclusion D.

If the PCs choose to ally with the wood elves, follow the Elven Path, Encounters Four E through Conclusion E.

Encounter Four D: The Dwarven Path

When Myrindil announces your decision to clear out the mine and caverns, the dwarves clap their hands, tug their beards, and cheer. "Yer alright. That's fer sure," says Brottor, the red-headed leader of his clan.

Tharivol, the wood elf leader, walks quietly to Myrindil and speaks in tones so hushed,

you can barely hear them, but even so, the edge in his voice is unmistakable. "You have made your choice, Myrindil. And the fate of Weeping Willow and this region is on your head. My people will not stay to struggle against the spirits of the woods."

Myrindil says nothing, but nods farewell.

Then the dwarves introduce themselves to you and lead you to the mine entrance. Nothing in your short career as an adventurer could have prepared you for what you see. Across the creek, below a rocky hillside dotted with towering trees, a clearing lies before the mouth of a giant hole in the mud and rock. A tent houses mining equipment. Outside the tent and all across the clearing lie scattered bones and the tattered, bloodied remains of four dwarves. The stink is overpowering.

Brottor directs two of the dwarves to start digging graves and tells the other three to start donning their armor. He lifts his warhammer and swings it twice through the air. Turning to your party, he says, "We're coming with you."

The DM should take a moment to have Brottor regard the PCs. He's looking them over for standard caving gear: light sources, ropes, climbing harnesses, pitons, water skins, 10-foot poles, tools, and the like. Ask the players what gear their characters own. If they are well prepared for underground adventuring, Brottor will make a congratulatory remark and ask them what their plan might be. If the PCs seem to lack some of the requisite tunnel-crawling materials, Brottor will pause and ask the PCs, "Ye have been in tunnels before, haven't ye?" However the PCs respond, have Brottor react with some suspicion and slowly relax and continue to regard the PCs warmly. He is appreciative of their aid even if they aren't particularly well prepared for adventuring in tunnels. Fortunately for the PCs, Brottor's clan have some supplies in their tent which they can loan the PCs for this adventure only: 5 sunrods, 50 feet of knotted silk rope, 3 climbing harnesses, 1 crowbar, 1 toolset (thieves' tools), 3 shovels, 1 ten-foot pole, and 6 pick axes.

Allow the PCs a chance to introduce themselves to the dwarves and make preparations if they choose. The dwarven miners know very little about the caverns, but they're willing to share all the information they have. The dwarves names and some pertinent details are listed below:

Keldon: A pot-bellied dwarf with a thick, gnarled brown beard, Keldon is the dwarf who fled the mines earlier when the skeletons attacked. He

saw them as they first exited the caverns into the mine. They didn't seem to know what they were doing at first, but their general malice soon provoked them to attack the nearest dwarves. Despite his potbelly, Keldon was the fleetest of the dwarves at the mine, so the others sent him to get help. The memory of his companions' cries haunts him as though he hears it in the air. He has an ashen, wild look to his face. Diplomacy might prompt him to act bravely, but nothing short of a *heal* spell will relieve him of the evening's trauma. Keldon stays behind to dig graves for his fallen companions.

Torbin: Torbin is Keldon's younger brother and stays behind to dig graves with him as the party enters the caverns. The dwarves' handyman, he spends time during the party's preparations helping the other dwarves put on their armor, test their weapons and instruments. He knots ropes and sorts out all the dwarves' inventory into neat, orderly piles in their tent. While he works, he casts occasional glances at his brother, to remain aware of his state. A quiet, young dwarf, Torbin has deep, purple shadows under his eyes and a large, hooked nose.

Dungar: A grey-bearded, old dwarf with arms nearly thick as tree trunks, Dungar is the senior miner among the dwarves. He knows rock. During the party's preparations to enter the caves, Dungar keeps looking thoughtfully and wistfully at the mine, sometimes muttering that he knows there's something rich in there. "*There's good rock.*" Every once in a while he might use a pick to remove a piece of stone, taste it, and stare meaningfully into the dark of the caverns.

Wort: The youngest of the dwarves, is Dungar's apprentice. As such, he tends to follow Dungar around and stare where Dungar stares, but a DC 15 Sense Motive check recognizes that he's just mimicking the old dwarf's actions, not fully aware of what he's doing. Wort is the only dwarf who is openly afraid to enter the caverns, yet he is brave enough to face his fears.

Taklinn: The tallest of the dwarves with a fine, golden beard, neatly trimmed and braided, Taklinn has come to the mine hoping to get rich quickly. He's bold and brash and eager to get into the caverns and clear them out. A strong, stocky dwarf, Taklinn spends some of the party's preparation time practicing his swing with a heavy mace.

Eventually, PCs who choose to work with the dwarves head into the caverns, accompanied by Brottor, Dungar, Wort, and Taklinn.

Encounter Five D: A Dwarf's Gotta Do What a Dwarf's Gotta Do

The caverns wind through tunnels 10 feet wide. Two natural offshoots proved to lead to dead ends. Cobwebs hang from the walls and ceiling. As you walk forward, the dwarves, other than Brottor, appear to tremble and peer cautiously into the dark. They start at the sound of something scuttling away into the dark. Brottor turns to them and laughs, "Ye've been living on me farm too long, boyos. What happened to yer dwarven spines?" But none of the dwarves answer him. They just lower their heads and plod through the caves.

Your path takes you deeper into the tunnels until they fork. One passage continues straight ahead. The other curves left.

As the PCs head deeper into the caverns, the walls slowly, and subtly change from natural caverns to rough-hewn (apparently just enough stonework to modify the tunnels for passage). PCs with stonemasonry, Profession (miner), or Knowledge (dungeoneering) might notice this change with a successful DC 15 check.

On a successful DC 10 Listen check, the PCs hear a faint moaning further down the tunnel straight ahead.

If at least one of the PCs makes the listen check, read or paraphrase the following text:

As you stand at the fork in the tunnels, trying to decide which way to go, you hear a faint clanking and groaning further down the tunnel straight ahead. Apparently, a couple of the dwarves hear it, too, because they take a few steps backward, holding up their shields.

Brottor looks at them and frowns. "What's the matter now, milk for courage?"

"No offense, Brottor, but these caverns is unnatural, sir," says Dungar, the grey-bearded dwarf. "And if I had any fighting days in me when I was a whelp, Brottor, well, those days is long past."

Wort, the youngest of the dwarves, points to your group and tells Brottor, "Maybe we should just stay here and cover their backs." The other dwarves nod and express their consent, much to Brottor's discontent.

"Well, heroes, it looks like ye've got a rearguard worth a pile of spit to protect you. I'd get me boyos to follow you down the tunnel, but some battles aren't worth fightin'."

If none of the PCs succeeded at their Listen check, read or paraphrase the following text:

As you stand at the fork in the tunnels, trying to decide which way to go, a couple of the dwarves suddenly take a few steps backward and raise their shields.

Brottor looks at them and frowns. "What's the matter now, milk for courage?"

"No offense, Brottor, but these caverns is unnatural, sir," says Dungar, the grey-bearded dwarf. "And I heard some magical sounding clanking and groaning down that corridor." He points straight ahead. "And if I had any fighting days in me when I was a whelp, Brottor, well, those days is long past."

Wort, the youngest of the dwarves, points to your group and tells Brottor, "Maybe we should just stay here and cover their backs." The other dwarves nod and express their consent, much to Brottor's discontent.

He pauses for a moment and listens. "Well, heroes, it seems there's something giving off a bit of noise down thataway. And it looks like whatever it is, ye'll have to face it on yer own. I'd get me boyos to follow you down the tunnel, but some battles aren't worth fightin'. At least, these spineless half-fey will have yer backs well-covered."

Of course, the PCs do not have to go straight down the cavern tunnel. It's just the "obvious" way. PCs who choose to go left may continue down the tunnel, unobstructed, until it ends a large iron door. Unfortunately for the PCs, this door is both locked mechanically (DC 30 Open Lock check) and magically. It is also trapped in the same manner as the iron door at the end of the other corridor (see Encounter 6D). It is 4 inches thick (Hardness 8, 120 HP), and if the PCs attempt to break it, they will inevitably alert the Necromancer (see Appendix C) who lairs behind the door. Should the PCs insist on breaking down the door, they will enter a room the Necromancer will have fled by the time they succeed, having ordered the undead ogre from Encounter 8D to this room before fleeing for the surface through the secret door opposite the iron door.

Encounter Six D: What's Behind Door Number One?

If the PCs continue straight down the corridor, they find that it ends at a large iron door.

You continue down the cavern tunnel, and the clanking and groaning becomes louder, though it seems somehow muted. Finally the tunnel bends left, and around the corner you find that the tunnel ends abruptly at an old, slightly rusted iron door. Whatever the clanking and groaning is, it clearly comes from something behind the door.

There are several things worth noting at this point. The iron door is 4 inches thick, but the fact that it is slightly rusted affects its sturdiness (Hardness 5, 100 HP). Its locking mechanism is also a little rusty (DC 25 Open Lock check). Finally, the door is trapped. PCs who have been looking for traps might have noticed several small gaps in the ceiling 10 feet back from the door (DC 15 Search check). Heavy iron bars fall from each gap when the door's insanity mist poison trap is triggered, effectively forming a portcullis. Each iron bar is 4 inches thick (Hardness 8, 120 HP) and rises mechanically whenever the door is opened. Typically, this allows the Necromancer to respond to the *alarm*. His plan is to be able to leave the other iron door and walk through the caverns to attack intruders from the rear, casting spells through the portcullis. However, in this case, if the PCs trigger the *alarm*, which they almost invariably will at this APL, the Necromancer ends up encountering Brottor and the dwarves (see Encounter 8D).

The iron door actually has two separate traps on it, each of which is triggered and/or disabled separately.

The insanity mist poison and portcullis trap is triggered whenever anyone stands on either of the squares directly in front of the iron door. The portcullis drops immediately. Four rounds later, hidden vents release insanity mist poison, which affects anyone between the iron door and portcullis bars.

Insanity Mist Poison and Portcullis: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas and portcullis; never miss; onset delay (4 rounds); poison (insanity mist, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Wis/2d6 Wis); multiple targets (all within 10-ft.-by-10-ft. room); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15; Market value: 1,900 gp.

The *alarm* trap has been modified to trigger whenever anyone comes within 5 feet of the door.

Alarm Trap: CR 1; magic device; proximity trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*alarm*, 1st-level wizard); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26; Market value: 550 gp; 80 XP.

Finally, not only is this door trapped, but it's heavy and a little bit stuck! If unlocked, it requires a DC 15 Strength check to open.

Encounter Seven D: The Strange Machine

Once the PCs get past the door, they find themselves in a seemingly abandoned evil temple. They have a chance to search the area, but along with some necromancer's journal, there are a couple traps.

Behind the door lies a circular room, roughly 40-feet in diameter. At its center is a large, slightly-rusted brass machine, a giant tangle of gears, levers, hooks and chains; it clanks and whirs and groans as its chains cause various arms to spin in circles, lifting one lever as another descends. Connected to the machine by a wire running along the floor, a hoop of mithral sparks with energy at irregular intervals. The purpose of this strange brass machine has got you stumped, but as you survey the rest of the room, the various depictions of a skeletal figure wielding a scythe that adorn the walls reveal this room to be a shrine of sorts to the Reaper. Tattered tapestries hang from the walls. The marbled floor is stained with blood. You see hooks hanging from the ceiling and a grate in the center of the floor, near the loud, strange machine. On the far side of the room sit a chair and table, and a desk littered with papers.

See *Appendix Two* for a map of the room.

A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check confirms that the skeleton and scythe imagery that covers much of the room does, in fact, represent Nerull, the Reaper, Neutral Evil god of Death, Evil and Trickery. Nerull is the Foe of All Good, Hater of Life, Bringer of Darkness, King of All Gloom, and Reaper of Flesh.

A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check suggests that the strange machine is somehow meant to power a portal (the mithral hoop). It does not appear to be functional at this time.

A *detect magic* reveals magic in two places: on the mithral hoop (DC 21 Spellcraft, *moderate necromancy*) and on something inside the chest (DC 16 Spellcraft, *faint illusion*).

The chest is locked (DC 30 Open Lock) and trapped. Touching the chest triggers a scything blade, which swings horizontally, at a height of 3 feet (some halflings fiddling with the chest might

simply be too short to get hit), from the wall behind the chest.

Scything Blade Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +8 (1d8x3); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20; Market value: 1,700 gp.

The chest, however, is merely a distraction. Inside the chest, there is nothing more than a black rock with *Nystul's magic aura* cast on it.

The papers on the desk, though, contain the Necromancer's arcane notes. They are written in Abyssal. If any PC can read them, they detail the Necromancer's attempts to create a portal to the Plane of Shadow. His attempts have so far proven unsuccessful, though there appears to have been an interesting side effect. The machine seems to be able to transfer some of the strength from live victims which he tortured on the strange machine to undead he created near the mithral hoop, making them tougher and, also, easier for the Necromancer to command. It has also infused the Necromancer's underground complex with a small degree of negative energy, effectively infusing the complex with the effects of a permanent *desecrate*.

On the table are a number of instruments obviously dedicated to the sciences of dissection and torture as well as a few grisly pictures indicating as much. Old caked blood and dried up flesh line a gutter that rings the table.

In the southeast curve of the room, a tapestry conceals a secret door. A DC 20 Search check is required to find the door. It is unlocked and swings open with the slightest touch. Directly in front of the tapestry concealing the secret door is a 10-ft long pit trap, 5-ft. wide. DMs please note that, unless the PCs state they are using 10-ft. poles to move the tapestries or otherwise state a specific course of action that allows them to search behind tapestries without standing next to them, the Search check that finds the secret door necessitates that at least one PC steps onto the pit trap.

Deeper Pit Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (DC 25 Search); DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 23; Market value: 1,300 gp.

The switch to deactivate the pit trap is located in a secret panel behind the tapestry to the right of the trap.

Encounter Eight D: It's Big and Mean and Coming Straight For Us!

PCs who find the secret entrance gain admission to the complex's morgue where the necromancer's greatest creation, a skeletal ogre, guards a number of dead orc bodies and a chest filled with black onyx gems. While the PCs fight the skeleton, they suddenly hear the sounds of combat from far off, where the dwarves are fighting the necromancer himself!

Your light shines into the room beyond the secret door. The room is large, nearly 50 feet long by 30 feet wide, and it appears to be completely lined with dead orcs. The stench is overpowering, and just as you stifle your first impulse to gag, you see something moving toward you from the far end of the room, something skeletal, something very, very large!

DMs please note that the entire complex is effectively *desecrated* (effective caster level 7). The effects have been taken into consideration for the ogre skeleton's stat block in Appendix C. Additionally, all PCs in the room must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d3+1 rounds. If a PC uses a move action to wrap a cloth around his or her nose, allow the PC to retry the save with a +2 circumstance bonus.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Ogre Skeleton: hp 30; see *Appendix One*.

Tactics: The encounter level has been adjusted to include the influence of the room's stench and the complex's *desecrate* effect. The skeleton is mindless and simply attacks the nearest creature until it drops, then moves to the next living target.

Treasure: The chest at the far end of the wall is unlocked and contains 6 black onyx gems, each worth 50 gp.

APL 2: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 50 gp, Magic – +1 *chainmail* (108 gp).

Development: As the PCs fight the skeleton, the DM should allow them to spot a door, slightly ajar, in the north wall and a chest in the northeast corner of the room. After the battle ends, or if it has clearly turned to the PCs' advantage (as a DM, you expect the PCs to finish off the skeleton within 1 round), read or paraphrase the following text:

As your battle with the giant skeleton draws to a close, you hear the sounds of battle echoing down the hallway behind the door in the north wall of the room.

Allow each PC to make a DC 20 Listen check to recognize Brottor's voice as he shouts commands to his fellow dwarves.

Conclusion D: New Riches for Weeping Willow

When the PCs head down the hall toward the sounds of combat, they pass a plush bedroom, draped in black and scarlet velvets where an iron door, like the one through which they entered the necromancer's complex, stands open. In the caverns outside the door, the dead body of the Necromancer lies face down, a dwarven axe clearly lodged in the back of his neck. Brottor stands bloodied and winded, but alive. Two of the other dwarves survived, but the third is nothing more, now, than an emaciated corpse.

You find Brottor standing in the caverns, looking at the body of the fallen necromancer. It doesn't take an experienced priest to determine that the cause of the necromancer's death is the dwarven war axe lodged in the back of his neck. At first it appears that all the other dwarves are dead, but then you hear muttering coming from around a bend in the tunnel. When you go there, you find both Wort and Dungar alive, though they are so badly weakened, they can hardly lift their arms to remove their armor. Poor Taklinn, however, did not fare so well; the dwarf who was once so proud of his golden beard is nothing more now than an emaciated corpse. Brottor bends over his body and closes his eyes. With sadness evident in his voice, he asks you what you've found in the complex.

A character who investigates Taklinn's body may determine, with a successful DC 19 Spellcraft check, that Taklinn seems to have been emaciated by negative energy, such as caused by an *ervation* spell.

This is a chance for the PCs to role-play and/or go back to any treasure they might have left behind and collect it. Once they've done so, they help escort the dwarves back to Weeping Willow.

Treasure: The dead necromancer's cloak and tunic radiate as magical. He has 60 gp on his body as well as a masterwork spiked gauntlet.

APL 2: Loot – 25 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp), ring of protection +1 (167 gp)

Your return to Weeping Willow is longer and harder than it ought to be. With every step, you carry the weight of both the fallen dwarves and of the enfeebled Wort and Dungar.

When you explain your discoveries to Myrindil, he expresses his gratitude, and the rest of the hamlet soon follows. You are feasted and celebrated while you rest to heal your wounds. Myrindil declares Brottor and his clan mates the true friends of Weeping Willow, and the hamlet holds a moving funeral for the fallen dwarves.

Meanwhile, when he can get free from the formal events, Brottor takes out his sorrow and anger with a pick against the rock of the newly opened caverns. The day you are scheduled to leave, he meets you in the street to tell you that his dwarves have made an astonishing discovery: the caves hold traces of adamantine. It looks like the hamlet of Weeping Willow will become a rich mining town, and it seems likely, too, that the area will soon host an influx of dwarves and gnomes.

The End.

Encounter Four E: The Elven Path

When Myrindil announces your decision to seal the caverns and mine, Tharivol steps forward and addresses you. "You have chosen wisely. Perhaps in the years to come, even these dwarves may appreciate how your wisdom will safeguard this city."

Brottor, the red-bearded dwarf, scratches his jaw and walks quietly to Myrindil and speaks in tones so hushed, you can barely hear them, but even so, the edge in his voice is unmistakable. "Ye've made yer choice, Myrindil. And the fate of Weeping Willow and this region is on yer head. Me and my mates aren't going to stay to be farmers. We'll seek our riches elsewhere."

Myrindil says nothing, but nods farewell.

Then the wood elves introduce themselves to you and lead you through the woods to a nearby camp. Obviously a temporary site, it

consists of eight tents sitting in the moon light piercing the forest canopy. A half-dozen elven women sing melodious tunes while they gut rabbits, crush herbs, and boil water. In the center of the camp, a very old elf sits near a fire that gives off a purplish smoke. His hair is white as snow, and he looks up at you as you arrive. He lifts one bushy eyebrow and asks Tharivol, "Who are these guests of yours?"

"They are friends of the balance. They helped me convince Myrindil to seal the mine for good."

The old elf smiles, "Then you have my thanks, adventurers. Perhaps there is something else you can do for us. We may yet need your help."

The old, white-haired elf's name is Mithrinnor. A priest of Ehlnennestra, he has an old scroll of planar binding that he intends to use to call an earth elemental to seal the mine and caverns. However, the nomadic wood elves have little to offer in return. Mithrinnor's dreams have not only shown him that something stalks the woods, but they have seemed to indicate that his dark, mysterious predator is somehow connected to the nature spirits' recent disquiet. Thus, he expects the earth elemental may request that the elves kill this predator, and Mithrinnor hopes to enlist the PCs' aid in this matter, fearing that its defeat is beyond the capabilities of his small band. Of course, this is merely his speculation, as he doesn't know how his negotiations with the earth elemental will fare.

At this point, DMs should allow the players a chance to introduce themselves to the wood elves. The wood elves names and some pertinent details are listed below:

Rythillin / Alavin: These young brothers (97 and 89 years of age, respectively) have noticed a recent decline in the number of orcs in the surrounding area. They're not exactly discouraged by the orcs' declining number, but they find it curious. It doesn't make sense to them, given what they've been taught about orcs. Lacking a better explanation, they suppose that the enraged nature spirits may have begun to slaughter the green-skinned monsters.

Navarel: An experienced tracker, trapper and tanner, Navarel is the elf who most recently encountered the tracks of the "dark predator." He expects the predator is a cat somewhat larger than an elf. He wears a wooden holy symbol of Ehlnennestra as well as some handcrafted wards made from wood and dried berries. A DC 20

Knowledge (religion) check identifies these wards as the product of old, ineffectual superstitions.

Melthane: Melthane was once chosen to follow in Mithrinnor's footsteps as the tribe's priest, but he was too impatient for the training. A highly solitary and reclusive individual, Melthane is reluctant to spend time with the PCs even after the elves have befriended him (unless the PCs succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check). Initially, he regards the PCs with skepticism, doubting their commitment to nature and its delicate balance. However, Melthane is, perhaps, the most intelligent and well traveled of all his tribe. He can describe all of the surrounding lands in detail, and if the party takes the time to acquaint themselves with Melthane (and succeeds at the Diplomacy check), they gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all of their Knowledge (geography) and Survival checks related to the surrounding area (including those to Track the shadow panther).

Allaura / Nytheria / Lysieria: These women cook, perform chores, and care for the children among this patriarchal tribe of elves. As such, they have not seen much that can help the PCs, but they have noticed, lately, that the animals their husbands have had slightly less flavor than they should. They have had to use herbs and spices to flavor their meals. Even the vegetables they've gathered have proven mysteriously bland. Allaura will even mention that it is as though the color has started to fade from the land; everything she's cooked of late has started to look grayer and grayer. When she mentions this, the other women reflect for a moment, then quietly confirm that Allaura's observations match their own, now that they think of it.

Encounter Five E: Negotiations with the Nature Spirits

As you watch, Mithrinnor draws an old scroll from a wooden case. The scroll is written on tanned animal hide, and as Mithrinnor reads the words, the air around you begins to hum with magic, and the earth, itself, trembles. Then Mithrinnor finishes, and for a moment, there is silence. The elves stand around him in a circle, watching and waiting. The elven women cast glances toward their children. Then there is another rumbling, coming from near the center of the circle, and a creature made all of rock and mud seems to form itself from the very ground before the old, white-haired elf until it towers above him, at least

twice its height. Vaguely humanoid, the lump that would be its head bows down to look at the old elf, and the rumble that is its voice fills the air. Mithrinnor addresses it in a similar series of rumbles and growls, though they sound strange coming from the thin wood elf. Unmistakable, though, is Mithrinnor's respect for the massive elemental.

If any of the PCs speak Terran, allow them to listen to the conversation between the elemental and Mithrinnor. The elemental's first words are, "Who summoned me? Why do you call me here?" Mithrinnor's reply is, "My name is Mithrinnor. I am chosen by my people to help restore balance to this land." Beyond that, the DM has freedom to role-play the negotiations between the caster of the *planar ally* spell and the large earth elemental. However, the negotiations proceed quickly, and any PC attempting to cast *comprehend languages* will catch only the final words spoken by each party.

Mythrinnor: "It is as I suspected. It will be done."

Elemental: "I will know and return when the task is completed."

Mythrinnor: (As the elemental begins to sink back into the earth) "Until then, farewell."

At that point the elemental disappears into the ground, only to return to clear the caves once the shadow panther has been destroyed.

Mythrinnor and the elemental speak to each other for a few short moments. Then the elemental suddenly begins to sink back into the earth. As it disappears, the old elf stands straight and addresses Tharivol. "It is as I suspected. The nature spirits are offended by the dark predator. They wish it slain. Then our noble earth friend will close the caverns forever."

"Then we will slay it," says Tharivol.

"No," says the old elf. "In my dreams, when you have hunted the dark beast, our women and children swim in a sea of red. There is something else in the woods. I fear you must not abandon the women and children to hunt the beast."

"Then," says Tharivol, "perhaps we can ask these heroes to aid us."

The old elf nods. "That is what I had hoped." Mythrinnor turns to you. "I will not deceive you, heroes. This predator may be dangerous, and the nature spirits nearest it may be turned to anger. Yet this land must be

restored to balance. If the spirits turn against us, then all of this land will be lost. But it seems your gods may have allowed Ehlnennestra to bring you to us. I can give you little aid, but to what I can give, you are welcome. I have a couple scrolls, and from my younger days, I still have a spear that may serve you in your efforts. Will you slay this beast?"

If the PCs do not agree to slay the beast, their adventure is over. They are allowed to leave the elven village and gain experience only for encounters 1 and 2.

If the PCs agree to slay the beast, they most likely will have a number of questions for the wood elves. Below are listed some of the likely questions and responses:

- **What is the beast? / Has anyone seen the beast?** Mythrinnor: *"I do not know. In my dreams, I see only a dark shape and eyes of red. It is a predator. It stalks. When I wake, I feel my heart shadowed by its menace."* Tharivol: *"Our scouts have found prints in the woods that look as though they would belong to a cat, but one much larger than any I have ever seen. Judging from the distance between the prints, the beast is fast. Very fast."*
- **Where can we find the beast?** Tharivol: *"We have seen tracks in the deeper woods to the north of us, roughly one hour's march. We fear to scout much further north because the nature spirits have been so irritable. They make it difficult for us to travel. Nonetheless, the dark beast's tracks have come closer and closer to us. It is expanding its territory."* Mythrinnor: *"I know the monster is a creature of the night, and you must hunt it at night. You will not find it during the day."*
- **You mentioned that you could help us. / What did you say about scrolls and a weapon?** Mythrinnor: *"I can offer you four scrolls. They are old, from my days as a young adventurer, but they should serve you well. Two are scrolls of magic weapon, one is a scroll of protection from evil, and the other is a scroll of shield other. If I remember correctly, shield other requires the use of two rings. I will have Tharivol find them for you. The weapon I mentioned you may also borrow. It is my greatest souvenir of my younger days, a magical long spear. Many times it has saved me, and I hope that it will aid you as well."* (Note: The scrolls are all divine, written at caster level 3rd, and the long spear is a +1

long spear that sheds light like a torch – 20 ft radius, 40 ft shadowy illumination.)

- **What payment will we receive for this task?** Tharivol: *"Look around you. Look at what little we have to offer. Are your hearts not moved to know that you will help bring peace to these woods and to the hamlet of Weeping Willow across the creek?"* Mythrinnor: *"I apologize if Tharivol's words seem harsh, but he is right. We have little to offer. What scrolls you do not use, you may keep. Perhaps, if all goes well, I may be willing to part with my long spear."*
- **We need to rest to prepare for the battle.** Mythrinnor: *"You know yourselves best, though I fear the dark stalker comes closer and closer. My dreams are full of red. Blood will soon be spilt."*
- **Can any of you come with us?** Tharivol: *"Mythrinnor's dreams show that our women and children are weak. We dare not leave them. We need all our strength to defend our camp."*

The PCs are free to do as they wish. If they set out that night in pursuit of the predator, Tharivol will direct them to the edge of the woods where he last spotted the beast's tracks. From there, the PCs may Track it with a DC 20 Survival check or simply head north as Tharivol suggested. Either way, they will walk toward the dryad's grove (Encounter 5E) and ever closer to the dark predator.

PCs who go any other direction get lost before finding their way back to camp shortly before dawn. When they return, they find an elven guard dead, as below.

If the PCs choose to rest, let them. However, during the night, shortly before dawn, one of the wood elf hunters at the opposite edge of camp is attacked while he stands guard. He manages to sound a hunting horn before he dies. When the PCs find him, he is already dead, but with a DC 15 Heal check they identify the wounds that killed him as claw and bite marks. A DC 13 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check identifies the claw and bite marks as those that would belong to a medium size cat. The wood elves, meanwhile, are duly saddened by the guard's death, but they do not blame the PCs, only encourage them not to delay any further and to pursue the beast that following night.

Encounter Six E: I'm Not a Lumberjack and I'm Okay

As the PCs head north, they approach a ring of trees in the center of a steep valley on the far side

of a small stream the PCs must cross to hunt the dark beast.

Your journey northward through the woods is haunted by strange lights that twinkle and disappear. Drifting on the slight breeze, as though from far away, you could swear you hear a fiddle melody, but then the leaves rustle in the breeze, and the sound is gone. The stars and moon shine, but the deeper you head into the woods, the colder they appear to be.

The thick foliage and underbrush slows your pace, and you have to hold your hand before your face to keep the branches from slapping it. Then, when you crest a small hill, you see moonlight dancing off the slow current of a small brook running below you. The hill slopes downward to the brook and a flat expanse of tall grass and a ring of trees. Clearly imprinted in the mud near the edge of the brook are the paw prints of a large cat.

If the PCs carefully search the area near the brook (DC 20 Search or Survival check) they will find not only the paw prints, but they will find a set of booted humanoid prints further down the way. If a PC with the Track feat succeeds at a DC 15 Survival check, he or she can determine that both sets of prints appear to head toward the ring of trees.

As the PCs approach the ring of trees, allow them to make DC 20 Spot checks. To any who succeed, read or paraphrase the following text:

The grove of trees forms almost a perfect circle. A shape off to your left lies on the ground and looks roughly humanoid. As you study it, out of the corner of your eye, you catch a remarkable sight. A creature blossoms out the bark of a large oak tree, at first appearing as a new branch before solidifying into a decidedly female shape. She has a wild, unfathomable look in her large eyes, and her hair has a pronounced, leafy texture while her skin looks like burnished wood. As you watch she notches an arrow to her bow and barks a few words at you in a language almost too fluid for the task.

To the PCs who failed their Spot checks, read or paraphrase the following text:

The grove of trees forms almost a perfect circle. The moonlight catches on the leaves of the hardwood trees, like sun glinting off water.

The place is almost too beautiful to hunt an evil monster. As you walk forward with your companions, you suddenly hear harsh words spoken in a language almost too fluid for the task. Looking about you, you see a humanoid figure in the shadows. It appears to be female, holding a bow with an arrow notched and pointed right at you.

The “roughly humanoid” form on the ground is the body of one of two dead orcs near the dryad’s grove. It has already been looted by the dryad.

The dryad speaks Common, Elven, and Sylvan. It first speaks in Sylvan. Any PC who can understand her, hears her warn them, “*Bring your blades near my trees, and I will slay you.*”

Have the PCs roll initiative. If the dryad beats them, she readies an action to attack the first PC who takes a threatening action (draws a weapon, moves toward her in a threatening manner, begins casting a spell, etc.).

APL 2 (EL 3)

Dryad: hp 14; see *Monster Manual 90*.

Tactics: Many parties will attempt to negotiate with the dryad, even if they do not initially understand her. Let them. The dryad begins the encounter as Unfriendly and immediately becomes Hostile (and attacks the PCs) if any of the PCs take a threatening action. Once she becomes hostile, she prefers to use her *suggestion* (in Common) to send away the character with the biggest blade. In this matter, an axe counts as larger than a sword of the same size. Her *suggestion* is worded reasonably (“*If you wish to save your people, leave the woods and tell them their weapons are not welcome here.*”), so any PC who is not Chaotic Neutral, selfish, and slightly crazy (DM’s judgment as to how the PC has been played to that point) will suffer a –2 penalty. After she uses her *suggestion*, she will try to find cover in the trees, and disable the remaining PCs through use of her *deep slumber*, *charm person*, and *entangle* abilities. She avoids resorting to ranged or melee attacks until her other options are depleted. If any PC actually attacks her tree (the largest oak, near the center of the ring), she will focus her attentions toward that PC as if her life depended on it (because it does) and will absolutely no longer participate in any negotiations. Meanwhile, if the PCs attempt to negotiate with the dryad, they may attempt Diplomacy check to bring her to Indifferent. The DC is 15 if the PCs have not yet made her hostile. If the PCs have provoked her to hostility, the DC increases to 25, and PCs must take the –10

penalty to make the check as a full-round action. If they choose to speak a language the dryad does not understand, increase the Diplomacy check DC to 25. If a PC attempts to negotiate with the dryad in Sylvan, give that PC a +2 circumstance bonus. At that point, she will lower her bow, but she will still demand an explanation for the PCs' presence.

Treasure: As noted below in the "development" section, the dryad has hidden a *wand of enlarge person* with 10 charges remaining. PCs who search the dead orc bodies find them both dressed in chain mail armor, lying next to masterwork great axes, and carrying a total of 30 gp in coins and gems.

APL 2: Loot – 78 gp, Coin – 5 gp, Magic – wand of enlarge person (12 gp).

Development: If the PCs enter discussions with the dryad, she may mention their "green-skinned brethren's" hostility to her grove (which may confuse the PCs), and through role-playing, the PCs should be able to determine that a number of orcs were threatening the woods not long ago. They cut down many trees not far away, and the dryad destroyed a couple that approached her grove. She believes (falsely) the orcs are connected to the shadow cat she once saw prowling the area at night. She has just slain two out of three members of a band of orcs and fears the remaining member will return to destroy her trees. However, she will not leave her grove. Instead, she asks the PCs if they will help her by slaying the orc and bringing her his head as proof he's dead. If the PCs are willing, she will send them on their way toward the orc (one half-hour east). If the PCs mention that they intend to kill the dark, predatory cat, the dryad offers to help them if they kill the orcs. She has seen it and knows that it is not natural. It clings to the shadows as though it is one of them. It does not belong in the forest, and she will allow the PCs to continue traveling through her grove to destroy it so long as each of them swears not to harm her trees. If the PCs kill the orc for her, she will offer them a *wand of enlarge person* (30 charges remaining) she found on one of the dead orcs and had hidden in her grove (DC 35 Search check to find it in the grove if the PCs kill her).

Encounter Seven E: There's Always Time to Kill an Orc

Parties who chase the orc for the dryad find him roughly one-half hour east of the dryad's grove. He is actually a half-orc cleric. He has used the last of his scrolls and potions to cure the wounds suffered during his previous encounter with the

dryad and has started eating just before the PCs arrive.

Tell the PCs they see the glow of a fire over the crest of a hill. Make a Listen check for the half-orc cleric. If the PCs try to Move Silently, use his Listen check to oppose their move silently checks. See the map on *Appendix Three* to judge distances and assess penalties accordingly.

The dryad's directions have led you uphill through the woods until you see the glow of a campfire before you in an open clearing roughly 30 feet in diameter. A canvas tent sits back in the dark. A small kettle boils over the campfire, causing a terrible stench to carry to you on the slight breeze.

If the PCs' Move Silently checks beat the half-orc cleric's Listen check, read or paraphrase the following text:

Dipping a ladle into the foul concoction is a big, burly, green-skinned orc. He wears full plate armor. A massive shield and spear lean against a tree to his left.

If the half-orc cleric's Listen check beat the party's Move Silently checks, he casts *enlarge person* as the PCs move toward him. Read or paraphrase the following text:

As you move carefully toward the fire, a low voice cries out, "Me can hear you racket stomp through woods. Now me dinner gonna be more good!"

From behind the tent steps a giant orc, roughly 12 feet tall, wearing full plate and a shield and wielding a massive spear.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Half-orc Cleric: hp 21; see *Appendix One*.

Tactics: If taken by surprise, the half-orc cleric casts *shield of faith* before engaging the PCs in melee combat. If he hears the PCs' approach and *enlarges himself*, he will use his first round action to cast *shield of faith*. As soon as he has cast both spells, he will rage and attack the PCs in melee combat. If possible, he will first attack PCs in light or no armor. He uses his Strength domain's feat of strength on his first melee attack against a heavily armored character, increasing both his attack and damage for that round by one. Once in a rage, the half-orc cleric fights to the death.

Treasure: The half-orc cleric has a coin purse containing 60 gp in gems.

APL 2: Loot – 151 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – 0 gp.

Encounter Eight E: Here, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty!

This encounter happens either after the PCs' deal with the dryad or after the PCs defeat the dryad and head north. PCs capable of Tracking the dark predator must succeed at a DC 20 Survival check to follow it north; otherwise, a party may simply continue north from the druid's grove. A party that heads north without having successfully Tracked the shadow panther takes 1d6+1 hours to find the altered forest described below. If they take more than 3 hours, the sun begins to rise, and the party will not find the beast that night. They will have to either return to the elves' encampment or set up their own camp near the hardened, rocky hills. This could potentially lead to an ambush if the PCs do not establish a watch or fail to beat the shadow panther on Listen checks against its Move Silently. However things play out, the party eventually confronts a shadow panther (templated leopard) in mortal combat.

Heading north from the dryad's grove, you find that the land starts to change. The air feels colder, and the stars and moon seem further away. The forest canopy shrivels, and the silhouetted leaves appear shriveled and rough, almost blurry. The ground dries. Clay and loose rock take the place of soil. Then the thick forest comes abruptly to an end. Before you lies a clearing that runs as far back into the darkness as you can see. Numerous small hillocks, like sand dunes, rise from the earth. They are covered in rocky soil and weeds. The small trees that dot the clearing are gnarled and black. Once again you think you hear the eerie sound of a far off fiddle, but this time it seems to play a sad, haunting tune. Again, it stops so suddenly you're left wondering if the tune had ever truly sounded. Striding forward, you are left with the definite impression that you are being watched.

Though the trees in this clearing are much smaller and weaker than those outside of it, they still loom as high as 30 or 40 feet above the ground. Some of them are as much as 5 feet in diameter. The shadow panther watches the party as they enter from its perch 10 feet up on the branch of a larger

tree. Silently it stalks the party as they move forward, looking for a chance to catch a straggling party member in the rear or to the side of the main group.

The DM should have the PCs make some Listen checks and compare them to the results of the shadow panther's Move Silently checks. Remember to account for the penalties the PCs suffer to their Listen checks due to distance.

If any of the PCs hear the shadow panther's approach, then they may turn and see a pair of red eyes in the tree branches 10 ft above them and 30 ft away. Just as the PCs notice the eyes, a shadow form leaps from the branches and attacks an unwary PC in the rear of the group (or away from the party). This is the surprise round. PCs who succeeded at Listen checks may take their partial actions in this round.

As the shadow panther springs forward, read or paraphrase the following:

Suddenly, a pair of glowing red eyes appears in the dark, rushing toward your party. With a snarl, you see something, almost indistinguishable from the shadows around it, leaping through the air at (PC's name)!

APL 2 (EL 3)

Shadow Panther: hp 19; see *Appendix One*.

Tactics: The shadow panther has total concealment in conditions other than total daylight. It uses its surprise round to attack an unwary PC standing apart from the rest of the party (or the straggler in the back). If it succeeds at its bite, it uses his Improved Grab to try to gain two rake attacks. It will not remain in a grapple after it takes its rake attacks, releasing the PC from the grapple as a free action. An unintelligent, but natural predator, it prefers hit and run tactics to a straight-up fight. Additionally, it will attempt to flee if dropped to 5 or fewer hit points. Its preferred method of attack is to charge one PC apart from the group, getting its bite, claws, and rakes, then to spend the next round fleeing into the dark and shadows before charging back in on the following round. If the PCs form some sort of a line or use a strong tactical formation, the shadow panther is unlikely to charge at the group at all. The hard ground requires a DC 15 Survival check to Track the shadow panther if the PCs scare it off. Each time the PCs need to Track the beast, they spend 5 minutes between combats (enough to cause many spells to end). If the party does not have a PC with the Track feat (or fails their Survival checks), they may follow the shadow panther with DC 20 Search checks, though this increases the

time between combats to 45 minutes. The shadow panther will continue to fight with the same tactics, retreating three times, if possible, before the PCs manage to corner it in a 20 ft by 60 ft clearing between a wide river and a tall cliff.

Treasure: The shadow panther, itself, has no treasure, but as a show of their gratitude, Mythrinnor gives the PCs his magical longspear, and allows them to keep whatever scrolls they did not use.

APL 2: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 scrolls of magic weapon (2 gp each), scroll of protection from evil (2 gp), scroll of shield other (12 gp), +1 longspear (192 gp).

Development: Once the PCs defeat the shadow panther, they may return to the wood elves. By the time they arrive, the elemental will have already acknowledged the dark predator's death and will have concluded its negotiations with Mythrinnor, setting about its task to seal up the caverns.

Conclusion E

You return to the wood elf encampment, wearied from your battle, only to learn that the earth elemental already concluded its negotiations with Mythrinnor as you traveled back. Tharivol takes you to the former mining site. The dwarves' tent stands open. Several tools, picks and pitons, still lie on a long wooden table, but the tent is mostly empty. Apparently, the dwarves were quick to begin packing up to leave the area.

The most astonishing sight, though, is the large rocky mound that stands where once there was a gaping hole in the earth. The mine is completely sealed. Tharivol tells you that not only is the entrance closed, but there literally is no more mine. It has been completely sealed. In fact, the elemental had found several other entrances to the caverns and had sealed them as well. Once it had finished its task, but before it returned to the earth, it had told Mythrinnor that inside the caverns, it had encountered worked stone. Whatever was in there, though, was sealed in forever, behind dozens of feet and thousands of tons of rock.

You can spot the white-haired old elf sitting with a pair of young elves, maybe only 30 or 40 years old, and even from a distance, you hear from them the call and repeat of low, rhythmic rumbling. With an awesome respect, the young elves learn the old ways from their elder.

Dawn breaks, and you return wearied to Weeping Willow. The villagers feast you and celebrate your efforts. You find your rest sweet. Once you are set to leave, Myrindil approaches you and with a smile says, "Now, look at what you've done!" He waves his hand at the farmers in their fields. The crystal blue sky seems to bless them. The green fields bend in the wind. "All is as it was meant to be," says Myrindil. "Thank you, heroes. You have our gratitude."

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

Negotiating peace between the dwarves and elves
APL 2: 30 xp

Encounter Two

Defeating the orc skeletons
APL 2: 90 xp

Encounter Six D

Disabling or encounter the portcullis and insanity mist trap
APL 2: 60 xp
Disabling the alarm trap
APL 2: 30 xp

Encounter Seven D

Disabling or encounter the scything blade trap
APL 2: 30 xp
Disabling or encounter the deeper pit trap
APL 2: 30 xp

Encounter Eight D

Defeating the ogre skeleton
APL 2: 90 xp

Dwarven Path Story Award

Clearing the caverns:
APL 2: 45 xp

Dwarven Path Discretionary role-playing award

APL 2: 45 xp

Dwarven Path Total possible experience:

APL 2: 450 xp

Encounter Six E

Defeat the dryad with violence

APL 2: 90 xp

Or

Negotiate an alliance with the dryad

APL 2: 150 xp

Encounter Seven E

Defeating the half-orc cleric

APL 2: 90 xp

Encounter Eight E

Slaying the shadow panther

APL 2: 90 xp

Elven Path Story Award

Restoring Weeping Willow to balance:

APL 2: 45 xp

Elven Path Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2: 45 xp

Elven Path Total possible experience:

APL 2: 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 Items.

Encounter Two:

APL 2: L: 22 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Encounter Eight D:

APL 2: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 50 gp, Magic – +1 chainmail (108 gp).

Conclusion D:

APL 2: Loot – 25 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp), *ring of protection +1* (167 gp)

Dwarven Path Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: L: 47 gp; C: 60 gp; M: 358 gp - Total: 465 gp (450 gp max)

Encounter Six E:

APL 2: Loot – 78 gp, Coin – 5 gp, Magic – wand of enlarge person (12 gp).

Encounter Seven E:

APL 2: Loot – 151 gp, Coin – 10 gp, Magic – 0 gp.

Encounter Eight E:

APL 2: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 *scrolls of magic weapon* (2 gp each), *scroll of*

protection from evil (2 gp), *scroll of shield other* (12 gp), +1 *longspear* (192 gp).

Elven Path Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: L: 251 gp; C: 15 gp; M: 222 gp - Total: 488 gp (450 gp max)

Appendix One – APL 2

Encounter One

Brottor Holderhek: Male Dwarf Ftr2/Exp2; CR 3; medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 2d10+2d6+16; hp 36; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18; touch 11; flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +9; Atks +7 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +5 melee (1d3+2, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (1d10/19-20, masterwork heavy crossbow); SQ dwarf traits; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +1, Listen +6, Profession (blacksmith) +4, Profession (miner) +4, Profession (farmer) +0, Search +5, Spot +6; Alertness, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (warhammer)

Possessions: masterwork warhammer, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork heavy crossbow, acid flask (2), tanglefoot bag (2), alchemist's fire (2)

Notes: When the PCs first encounter Brottor, he is not wearing any armor or carrying his shield. His AC is 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10.

Dwarven Miner: Male Dwarf Exp1; CR 1/2; medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d6+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14; touch 10; flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atks +0 (1d8, heavy mace) or +0 (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ dwarf traits; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Appraise +4, Craft (metallurgy) +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Profession (blacksmith) +4, Profession (miner) +7, Search +4; Skill Focus (profession: miner)

Possessions: heavy mace, light crossbow, chain shirt

Notes: When the PCs first encounter the dwarven miners, they are not wearing any armor. AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10.

Tharivol Galanodel: Male Wood elf Rgr2/Exp2; CR 3; medium humanoid (elf); HD 2d8+2d6+4; hp 22; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16; touch 13; flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atks +5 melee (1d8+3/19-20, masterwork longsword) and +5 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork dagger) or +6 melee (1d6+3, sap) or +7 ranged (1d8+3/x3 masterwork composite [str +3] longbow); SQ elf traits, wild empathy; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Profession (hunter) +4, Spot +11, Survival +10;

Alertness, Skill Focus (survival), Track, Two-weapon Fighting

Possessions: masterwork longsword, masterwork dagger, masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork composite [str +3] longbow, sap

Elven Trapper: Male Wood elf Exp1; CR 1/2; medium humanoid (elf); HD 1d6-1; hp 3; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13; touch 11; flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp +1; Atks +1 melee (1d8+1/19-20, longsword) or +1 ranged (1d8/x3 longbow); SQ elf traits; AL CN; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +6, Profession (trapper) +4, Spot +6, Survival +4; Track

Possessions: longsword, dagger, longbow, leather armor

Encounter Two

Orc Skeleton: CR 1/3; medium undead; HD 1d12; hp 7; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16; touch 11; flat-footed 15; Base Atk +0; Grp +3; Atks +3 melee (1d12+4/x3, greataxe) or +3 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws); SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60', immunity to cold, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 13, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Improved Initiative

Possessions: studded leather armor, greataxe

Encounter Eight D

Ogre Skeleton: CR 2; large undead; HD 4d12+4*; hp 30*; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15; touch 9; flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +11; +7 melee (1d6+6, 2 claws)*; SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60', immunity to cold, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2*, Ref +2*, Will +5*; Str 21, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Improved Initiative

Possessions: +1 chain mail

***Notes:** The ogre skeleton's stats reflect the presence of a *desecrate*-type effect caused by the necromancer's complex's weak tie to the plane of shadow. Additionally, Charisma checks made to turn the ogre skeleton suffer a -3 profane penalty to the roll.

Necromancer: Male human Wiz7 (necromancer): CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d4+27*; hp 49*; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16*; touch 12; flat-footed 15*; Base Atk

+3; Grp +4; +5 melee (1d4+1, masterwork spiked gauntlet) or +4 touch ranged touch; SQ summon familiar (rat); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +2, Spellcraft +15, Spot +4; Alertness, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Split Ray

Wizard Spells Prepared: (5/6/5/4/2; save DC 13 + lvl; his prohibited schools are Evocation and Transmutation); 0—*detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 15); 1—*cause fear* (DC 16), *charm person*, *chill touch* (DC 16), *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*; 2—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *command undead* (DC 17), ~~*extended mage armor*~~, ~~*false life*~~, ~~*glitterdust*~~; 3—*dispel magic*, *halt undead*, *ray of exhaustion* (DC 18), ~~*split ray of enfeeblement*~~; 4—~~*animate dead*~~, ~~*enervation*~~

Possessions: masterwork spiked gauntlet, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1.

***Notes:** Stats include bonuses for *extended mage armor* and *false life*.

Encounter Seven E

Half-orc Cleric: Male half-orc Bbn1/Clr1: CR 2; medium humanoid (half-orc); HD 1d12+1d8+4; hp 21; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21; touch 11; flat-footed 20; Base Atk +1; Grp +4; +6 melee (1d6+3/x3 masterwork shortspear) or +2 ranged (1d10/19-20, heavy crossbow); SQ darkvision 60', feat of strength 1/day, rage 1/day; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3, Intimidate +2, Listen +5, Survival +5; Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (shortspear)

Cleric Spells Prepared: (3/2+1; save DC 11 + lvl); 0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *detect magic*; 1—*enlarge person**, ~~*protection from good*~~, *shield of faith*

*Domain spell; *Deity:* Gruumsh; *Domains:* Strength (feat of strength 1/day); War

Possessions: masterwork shortspear, full plate armor, heavy steel shield, heavy crossbow

Power-up Stats (*enlarge*, *raging*, *shield of faith*): large humanoid (half-orc); HD 1d12+1d8+8; hp 25; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21; touch 11; flat-footed 20; Base Atk +1; Grp +11; +8 melee (1d8+6/x3, masterwork shortspear) or

+0 ranged (2d8/19-20, heavy crossbow); SQ darkvision 60', feat of strength 1/day, rage 1/day; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 23, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Encounter Eight E

Shadow Panther: Fiendish shadow panther (leopard) CR 3; medium magical beast (extraplanar); HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init +4; Spd 60 ft.; AC 15; touch 14; flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atks +6 melee (1d6+3, bite) and +1 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA improved grab, pounce, rake 1d3+1, smite good; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, resist cold 8 and fire 5, shadow blend, spell resistance 8; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +11, Hide +8, Jump +11, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Spot +4; Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

Improved grab (Ex): To use this ability, the portal guardian must hit with its bite attack. It can then start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes hold and can rake.

Pounce (Ex): If the portal guardian charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rakes.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +6 melee, damage 1d3+1.

Smite good (Su): Once per day, the portal guardian may make a normal melee attack against a good creature which, if successful, deals an extra 3 hit points of damage.

Shadow blend (Su): In conditions other than full daylight, the portal guardian can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

Appendix Two: Map of the Mine



Appendix Three: Map of the Woods

