

Shattered

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Meta-Regional Adventure set in The Splintered Suns

Version 1.0

by Pierre van Rooden

Circle Reviewer: Pieter Sleijpen

Reviewers: Sampo Haarla, Thomas Ralph

Playtesters: William Boyle, Olaf van Essen, Sampo Haarla, Hannu Haavisto, J-P Hartikainen, Jouni Kallio, Robert Kerklaan, Floris Kraak, Tyvian van Morsveld, Thomas Ralph, Pasi Riita, Jukka Särkijärvi, Wouter Scheepe, Andy Scholman, Liz Smith, Ian Smith, Karin Westerbeek.

Once, Crystal Castle was the center for music and art, a memorial to all the great achievements of man. A masterpiece of architecture, it was one of the wonders of the Great Kingdom. Now it lays in pieces, and within its ruins only sorrow awaits.

A one-round meta-regional adventure set in New Keep for characters level 1-14 (APLs 2-12).

Part four of the “Trust or Treason” series. The other parts in this series are ESA3-01 *Stonecunning*, TSS4-01 *The Verdant Trail* and TSS5-01 *Ten Minutes*.

Resources for this adventure include *Heroes of Horror* [by James Wyatt, Ari Marmell and C.A. Suleiman] and *Libris Mortis* [by Andy Collins and Bruce R. Cordell].

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

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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) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

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Players Read No Farther

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

Preparing for Play

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule 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 non-player characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

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

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.

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 Splintered Suns Metaregional adventure, set in New Keep in the Kingdom of Sunndi. Characters native to the Splintered Suns meta-region pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

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

A character 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 DC 20 Survival check, the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In 580, when forces of the Great Kingdom occupied New Keep, a rebellion was mounted to rally the forces against the oppressor. The rebellion failed miserably. It was struck down by brute force, and its leaders were executed on the town square. (A full account of this can be found in Player's Handout 1).

One of the people executed was Alderon Musz, a member of the Queen's Halls, in function a herald tasked with maintaining contact with the Halls' many members. When Sunndi joined the Iron League, he was one of the people who joined the Veil of the Sun – a subsection of

the Jaded Mask, the Iron League's secret service. One of his tasks was to send and receive couriers with sensitive information through Ahlissa to and from Irongate, using his own function at the Halls as a cover. When the Kingdom occupied New Keep, his work become even more important. Through his contacts, he could gather enough information to plan a coup that could hopefully break the iron grip of the Hextorites, led by the fanatical General Stoan, on the town.

Somehow, the coup was compromised. A close friend to the authorities betrayed Alderon, his coup put down, and he and his accomplices publicly executed. His notebooks were confiscated and put in an archive for later study, but forgotten over time.

Now, the Veil has reason to believe that these notes may contain important information. Recently, it has come to light that Alderon Musz was instrumental in the passing on of information of a Scarlet Brotherhood double spy (chronicled in TSS5-01 *Ten Minutes*).

Apparently, Musz received information of the agent, and instructed couriers to pass it on to an accomplice in Irongate. For the Iron League, knowledge of who the agent was is of great importance. Unfortunately, with Alderon Musz dead, they have to seek for any information he left behind. Hopefully, his notebooks contain information regarding the agent, or, perhaps, information on the mysterious woman who took up his task after he died, and who sent the last message.

The League, however, is not the only one searching for this knowledge. Some information has leaked to Naerie, and from there, an unknown force is trying to find out more on this agent.

The Notebooks: Alderon Musz kept a set of notebooks, containing notes and clues on his work in case something would happen to him. Most of them are very cryptic, and it would take a Veil agent to decipher them. Still, Alderon was quite fearful that people would learn too much, so when he prepared the coup, he decided to hide several of his notebooks in case the coup failed. While most of his notebooks were confiscated, the last two were not, and have since disappeared.

Even the books that were found are now lost. Shortly before New Keep was re-conquered, an Ahlissan officer named Fenrus Galleon was coaxed into attempting to retrieve the books, to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands.

Unfortunately, he got caught. He attempted to escape, but was captured and thrown in the dungeons. Stoan left him with the stolen books in his cell, awaiting an execution that never came, for that night the castle was destroyed.

The forces currently looking for the papers know none of this.

The Ruins and the Web: Most people avoid the ruins. The anguish of the past events has caused a strange and disturbing effect on the structure. It is almost as if it is alive, eager to share its past with those who visit it. The first batch of adventurers to enter the structure searching for loot returned with tales on how they experienced horrible dreams while down in the dungeons. Some people who entered disappeared, and when some children went missing near the ruins, the city counsel had the gates chained to prevent others from entering.

Meanwhile, the keep is not entirely unoccupied. Profiting from people's fear of the dungeons, an organisation named the Web took residence in a tunnel network that lay under the castle, and which the blast had laid bare. For some time, this organisation operated slowly and discreetly, and managed to escape notice. Recently though, its numbers have swollen with refugees from the Calling Mines – escaped criminals, whose dark pasts link them to the Web. This influx meant that, for the first time, it gathered some attention. Through the Iron Band, a local smuggling organisation, the Veil has recently learned of its existence, and managed to link it to the Great Kingdom, and the days of the Ivids. Yet, the true purpose of the organisation is still unknown.

The Web's use of the ruins to stash contraband and refugees allied with it has remained a secret. The guardians placed by the Web are mostly responsible for the actual disappearances in the recent past, and to solve the disappearances, a confrontation with this organisation is likely unavoidable.

Marquesse: There is a third party looking for the notebooks. A woman named Marquesse [mar-KES], hired by an enigmatic employer, has started to investigate the ruins, looking for information on Alderon Musz.

While she has determined that the ruins are a source of information, she is also aware that it is not particularly safe – and so she has been putting off entering the ruins.

Appendix 1 contains a description of Marquesse and her involvement.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

ESA6-02 *Shattered* is a 1 round meta-regional set in the town of New Keep in the Kingdom of Sunndi. While the flow of events depend greatly on the actions of the PCs, certain things happen at specific times despite the PCs.

Introduction: The PCs are witness to a woman arguing loudly with a man about the New Keep guards' failure to find two missing teens. The woman is Cecila Avon, a member of the Queen's Halls, and the man is Lord Hugher, a cleric of Zilchus. Cecila is upset that the guards have not managed to find the two missing teens, one of whom is a niece of her, and that they seem unwilling to continue their investigation of the Shards – where the two young people disappeared. If the PCs approach her, she explains the situation, hoping that they will aid her in finding out what happened to the two youngsters.

Cecila has no ready money herself, but she may find Lord Hugher, who is the main administrator of an organization known as the Benefit, willing to sponsor the deal to improve the organization's standing with the citizens.

Encounter 1 [Marturo the Bard]: PCs in good standing with the Iron League may be hired by Marturo the Bard to search for a set of notebooks. The notebooks supposedly are in the Shards, where they were stored after the Ahlissans confiscated them during the war.

Encounter 2 [The Benefit]: If PCs have good standing with the Royal Guild of Merchant of Aerdy, Lord Hugher privately asks them to keep their eyes open in the ruins, and bring any old records they find to him. An Ahlissan contact seems to place value in it, and it would be profitable to the organization if he can satisfy that person's curiosity.

Encounter 3 [About the Shards]: Few people have ever been in the castle after its destruction, so information is scant. Some background information can be found in the Queen's Halls and among the people that live in the Shards, the district where the ruins are found.

Encounter 4 [Entering the Keep]: The PCs have to find entry into the keep. The gates are locked, but the gatekeeper may rent out the keys. Alternately, a way can be found inside the castle through a secret tunnel from the Queen's Halls, or through the city sewer system.

Encounter 5 [Down]: The ground levels of the castle do not contain much, except for a strange, uncanny feeling of unease. Getting lower, the PCs find that a large portion of the dungeons has collapsed in an underground tunnel system filled with cobwebs.

From the depths of these tunnels, monstrous creatures may mount an assault.

Encounter 6 [Dreams]: Now that the PCs have spent some time in the ruins, they are affected by a strange trance, forced one by one to succumb to an unnatural sleep.

Those that escape the trance may run into Marquesse, a strange lady who offers them a means to go after their fellow companions, who have entered a mysterious dreamscape.

Encounter 7 [Blast from the Past]: The PCs that succumbed find that they are in the past, on the day of the devastation of Crystal Castle. Here, they are caught between Great Kingdom soldiers and Sunndi freedom fighters. While trying to stay 'alive' in this strange dreamlike place, they may find out more about the last hours of Fenrys Galleon, and what happened to Alderon's notebooks.

Encounter 8 [Painful Awakenings]: The PCs wake to find themselves trapped, this time in the webs of a number of nasty spiders, under the control of a wererat named Lussher. The tunnels under the castle are used to hold contraband for the Web, some sort of thieves' guild. Lussher does not like the PCs meddling, and intends to feed them to his spiders.

Encounter 9 [The Notes]: If their adventure in the past was successful, the PCs have found out where the notes are – in the castle's dungeons, now blocked. Here, they also find the missing teens – one of which has turned into a monstrous undead, awaiting for his girlfriend to finally succumb and join him.

Once the PCs get the notebooks, Marquesse arrives and requests them.

Conclusion: If the PCs return the books to their employer, they receive a reward for their trouble.

They may suffer aftereffects of the castle, and, if they attend the funeral, may receive an additional reward from Fenrus Galleon's father.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

This scenario can potentially run quite long. You are advised to specially prepare Encounter 7, if you have a tight schedule, so you know what you can possibly skip, and can quickly guide the PCs through it if needed.

On conventions, you may want to cut a few corners, particularly by speeding the initial investigation and directing the dream sequence. In home games, when you have more time, try to let the PCs determine the flow, particularly in the dream sequence.

Before you start, determine whether any of the PCs have a good standing with either the Jade Mask, or with the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy.

PCs are regarded as having a good standing with the Jade Mask if they have no disfavor with the Iron League (including being marked as a 'High Risk'), AND either have a favor with the Iron League, the Jade Mask, or the Veil of the Sun, or are a member of the Jade Mask meta-organization. In particular, check whether any PC has played in *ESA3-01 Stonecunning*, *TSS4-01 The Verdant Trail* or *TSS5-01 Ten Minutes*, and if so, whether they received any favors or disfavor through these scenarios with the Iron League. Note that besides these three meta-regionals, favors and disfavor with these organizations have been handed out in various regionals, e.g. *SND5-03 A Few Bad Men*.

PCs are regarded as having a good standing with the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy if they are not wanted in the Kingdom of Ahlissa, AND if they have a favor with either the Royal Guild, the Church of Zilchus, or Lord Hugher of the Benefit. Note that favors with Zilchus or the Royal Guild also occur in some Core scenarios, e.g. *COR4-16 Frozen Spire* or the *Running with the Baatezu* series. These are equally acceptable.

It is not important that the entire party be on the same side. Any PC in good standing with either

organization may be contacted later – either by Lord Hugher or the Veil or perhaps even both – to retrieve records from Crystal Castle as they proceed in their investigation. Note that if both sides approach them, they cannot satisfy all. See the Conclusion for more information.

You may also want to determine in advance if PCs ever met Cecila Avon or Lord Hugher before. See Appendix 1 for the description of these NPCs and in which scenarios they make an appearance.

Timing: While the PCs may not become aware of it, they are running against a time limit. Eleonaer has been missing for quite a few days by the time the PCs are hired. She has kept herself alive drinking fetid water, but is now succumbing to hunger and dehydration, and is dying.

The PCs have roughly two days to find her before she dies and becomes a ghoul. You can take the time limit a bit liberally (don't worry about an hour or two), but if the PCs waste time, they fail to rescue the girl.

If the PCs tarry too long, you can have Cecila Avon ask them for results, and imprint a sense of urgency. In the end it should be up to the PCs to realize that two teens alone in a possibly hostile environment are not going to last long.

INTRODUCTION

This encounter starts in New Keep. It assumes that most PCs are here for private reasons, on business or traveling through, likely relaxing after their previous adventure.

PCs who are in good standing with the Jade Mask are an exception. A few days earlier, they received a request for a meeting with a bard named Marturo. The information was delivered verbally by a courier, who had no knowledge what the deal was about, only that the bard hoped to meet them in the Broken Glass Inn in New Keep, in the last week of Planting (low summer).

The Broken Glass Inn is busy on this summer afternoon. People from the New Keep Market district have flocked here to take their meals and a rest after a crowded day at the market.

PCs who were summoned by Marturo won't initially find him in the inn. If they check with the innkeeper, he acknowledges that a bard named Marturo rents a room, but he went out after breakfast. The innkeeper suggest they wait over a refreshment – he'll likely turn up sooner or later.

The place is so crowded that you have hardly places to sit, but you manage to improvise a table out of a bar stool on the inn's balcony on the second floor.

From here, you look out over the common room. Despite the noise below, the sound of an argument reaches your ears. Just about ten feet from you, a door has opened, and an older man and woman step out. The woman is arguing loudly.

The man and woman are Lord Marrec Hugher from the Benefit, and Cecila Avon from the Queen's Halls.

❖ **Cecila Avon:** Female half-elf Div7/ Loremaster2; AL CG; see Appendix 1.

❖ **Lord Marrec Hugher:** Male human (Oeridian) Clr5 of Zilchus; AL LN; see Appendix 1.

PCs may have met them before. See Appendix 1 for their description, and information for determining who might know them, and what may be known of them.

"...of your precious time!" the woman says, her eyes burning. "If you just talk..."

The man looks rather uncomfortable under her gaze. "You assume far too much power to be in my hands, dear. The guards are an affair of the count. I really don't think..."

"Think? This is my niece!"

"The guards surely have better things to do than look for a girl. Tensions are mounting, there have been requests to send people to the front... and, Cecila, dear, it is quite possible they just ran off together... young people..."

The man grows silent under the woman's glare.

"I can't help," he says "I am only a merchant. I would help if I could, but I can't direct the guards. Not even with coin, unfortunately. And..."

At that point, he notices a bearded man in the livery of Zilchus approaching, and his face clears "Ah... I am sorry, Cecila, but I see my appointment has arrived. I have some business to attend to now, but I will..."

The woman glares at him with annoyance.

"Business," she mutters. "Money. You have time for that! Well, I see that I have to do this alone, Marrec. Again!"

The man stares at her for a few seconds, then sighs and ushers the bearded man in. The door closes behind them, and the woman turns, rather annoyed, to look over the crowd.

Any adventurer worth his or her salt is likely to take an interest in Cecila Avon's problem. Of course, there are a lot of PCs who are a bit short of salt. Some PCs may simply show no interest. In that case, turn to the troubleshooting section at the end of this section on how to continue.

If the PCs approach Cecila, and show an interest to talk to her, she tries to hide her annoyance, though she realizes the PCs must have seen her outburst. She greets PCs that she has met before, slightly embarrassed, and introduces herself to others. If some PCs know her but do not approach, she may decide to approach them herself.

She explains:

"I am sorry that you had to see this... Marrec is a sweet man but, well... I think he believes that I am overreacting. It is just..."

She stares at you for a moment.

"Maybe... would you be interested to hear me out? Perhaps... you might be able to help me?"

If PCs instantly ask what's in it for them, she is a bit disappointed, and shows it. She has no ready cash—most of her money is invested in magical research—and she is not eager to instantly talk money. "It's all money these days", she mutters, "people won't even listen unless they get paid." and, until one of the PCs show an interest to at least hear her out without talking money, turns to stare out over the balcony again.

Otherwise, she joins the PCs' table, leaning close to them to explain her problem over the background noise of the tavern.

"I have a niece, a young woman of seventeen summers. A lovely girl called Eleonaer. She is, like me, a half-elf. Two weeks ago, she..." — a loud cheer in the bar, apparently for some arm-wrestling half-orc's victory, drowns out what she says.

She leans a bit closer and repeats.

"Two weeks ago — she disappeared. Together with another teenager, a boy called Ator. Her boyfriend, I guess. They were last seen near the Shards, but not a trace since then. I fear for what may have happened."

Obviously, Cecila is hoping for the party to offer their help. The following are questions she gladly answers — she tries to postpone any talks about rewards.

Let the PCs steer the conversation — don't simply read out everything below. If the PCs run out of questions or are simply not very inquisitive, you can have Cecila forward some information on her own, so PCs get at least either the link to Rembal Nunk or the reference to the Shards.

Q. Can you tell us more about the girl?

A. *"She a slender girl, with long dark hair and slightly point ears. Oh, and nice brown eyes. She is a quiet girl, very down to earth, very smart, too. She lives with her grandmother. Her parents died years ago, during the New Keep siege. I guess that left her with a curiosity for the past, for she often came to me with questions about all kinds of things... well... mostly factual things, really... never the stuff girls talk about. I think she sees me as her 'smart' aunt.*

Maybe that means I don't know her that well. But I have a good judge of character. She may be a bit curious for her age, but not impulsive, not in a way that she would have run off, as some people imply. That... wouldn't fit her character. Even if she was in love with that boy."

Q. What can you tell us about the boy?

A. *"I don't know him well. She mentioned him a few times, and I think Eleonaer liked him. He sounded decent enough, but I confess to never have taken much notice of him. She knew him for quite some time though, years even."*

Q. What can you tell us about the girl's grandmother?

A. *"Grandma Nonette lives in the Shards, that is one of the oldest districts in town. A nice but very old woman, of the girl's father's side. She doesn't go out much anymore. I tried to arrange for a new house in Garrison East, but she simply didn't want to move."*

Q. What can you tell us about their disappearance?

A. *"I don't know that much about it – the last person to have seen them that I know of was Rembal Nunk, he is an old friend of the family. According to him, they were fooling around near the Shards, I mean the castle ruins that the district where my niece lives was named after."*

Q. Any suggesting why they ran away?

A. *"Eleonaer? No, I cannot think why she would run off. No, no! Impossible! She was not that kind of girl."*

Q. What can you tell us about the Shards?

A. *"The Shards district is the oldest part of town, and the poorest – if you do not count the tent city outside the walls. It was named after the ruins, the remains of what used to be Crystal Castle. The castle got destroyed during the last war. A dramatic event, lots of people died... Ahlissans, but also locals at work in the castle."*

"There is a lot of history on the castle, too much to tell you all in a few minutes, actually. I suggest you go to the Queen's Halls if you want to know more, you can find a lot of information there."

Q. What can you tell us about Hugher/the Benefit?

A. *"Lord Marrec Hugher is a priest of Zilchus, originally from Naerie. He is the president of the Benefit, an organization that was set up to aid the Pelsand farmers against local banditry. They buy their grain and then arrange the transport, and protect the fields."*

"They have quite a lot of resources, but I have not been able to convince Marrec to have this investigated. Maybe he is right and the Benefit cannot spare the men, but it is so disappointing..."

Q. What can you tell us about the Queens Halls?

A. *"The Halls contain a vast amount of lore, both historical and magical. They have a lot of information on the former Great Kingdom, and likely whatever is known about Crystal Castle can be found there."*

A big part of the library is normally closed to the public, but I fathom most information is found in the public section. Ask Yasme Volongkech, the head librarian, she will surely help you find what you need."

Cecila Avon gives the PCs a note, which helps gaining Yasme Volonkech's assistance.

PCs who are uninterested in her plight and directly ask for money may ruin Cecila's view of the party – which in turn affects her attitude in the conclusion.

If the PCs ask about it though, she admits that she does not have ready money:

"Most of my coin is invested in research. Magical laboratories are expensive to maintain. I have little I can give you at this point. However, I am well known in the Halls, and I may be able to arrange some aid in the future."

"If you like money instead... I can perhaps ask Marrec... Lord Hugher... if he is willing to sponsor..."

Cecila is obviously reluctant to ask Hugher for this favor. She feels awkward for asking it – both because she hates borrowing money, and because she is still upset over him not helping her earlier.

If PCs ask for it though, she says she will try to arrange something with him, but they'll have to wait until he is available – which may take some time as he just went to talk to a client.

The door through which Hugher went is locked. Picking the lock or otherwise entering is an instant way to get PCs into trouble with the landlord and thrown out.

If the PCs insist on waiting, then for the next hour Cecila lapses into an awkward silence, as she is not in the mood to talk. Finally, Hugher and his guest come out of the room, and say goodbye. As the bearded man walks off, Cecila approaches Hugher to negotiate terms. Hugher calmly listens to her request, then thinks for a few moments, regarding the party. Finally, to Cecila's surprise, he nods.

"Very well. Let it not be said the Money Counters do not have heart for the pain of others. If you succeed to find this girl, assuming she has not run away but has indeed fallen to peril, I will provide a monetary reward."

If the PCs ask for details, Hugher offers them, as a group, a reward of APL x 150 gp.

He does however take notice of the PCs. If any PC is considered favorably by the Royal Guild of Aerdy (see Preparations above), he takes them briefly aside and asks them to come to the Benefit – alone – later in the afternoon, to discuss some details of a 'sensitive business nature'.

Troubleshooting: If the party, for some reason, does not show interest in Cecilia Avon's problems, you may desire to use either Marturo (if at least one PC was invited), or Lord Hugher (especially if the PCs has a favorable standing with the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy) as the main plot hook.

If this doesn't spur the PCs into taking up investigation, the adventure comes to a premature end.

ENCOUNTER 1: MARTURO THE BARD

PCs that were contacted by Marturo may decide to wait for a while. Shortly after Cecilia leaves, Marturo arrives. If the PCs don't wait, they miss him. He contacts them later when they rest. If they move too fast, they may actually already have the notebooks he desires when he contacts them.

A young blond man approaches you. He is exceptionally handsome, with a sweet smile and a naughty gleam in his eyes. He is well built and fit, though right now he seems slightly out of breath as he nods at you.

"My name is Marturo," he says. "Delighted to meet you. I am dreadfully sorry for the lateness. I was held up. Some girls just keep talking, you know..."

He winks. "But no harm done! You are still here. True heroes, eh? The stuff of legend?" He extends his hand to shake hands of the men and lightly kiss those of the women, before he gestures with his hand to the stairs.

"It's a bit noisy down here, and crowded. Shall we go upstairs? I have reserved a room for us, drinks will be served there and they are on me, of course."

❖ **Marturo:** Male human (Suel) Brd2/Rog3; AL N; see Appendix 1.

See Appendix 1 for Marturo's description, and information for determining who might know him and what may be known.

Marturo is a well-known bard. He is late due to a tryst, something he gladly admits, but he refuses to divulge with whom he was.

He ushers the people he invited upstairs. He politely asks PCs that were not invited to wait. The information is rather sensitive and, with his most trusting smile, he says that while he, of course, trusts the PCs completely, he has instructions that he plans to follow.

It is possible that PCs refuse to talk to him without their friends, in which case Marturo expresses his regret for misjudging the PCs – he had received the expression that discretion was as much of value to them as to him. If the PCs still refuse, he then nods, and leaves.

If any of the PCs he invited follow him, he takes them up to a room (you can elect to run this apart from PCs that are not invited). There he tells them the following:

"Good to see you. I'll be brief. A... mutual friend of ours has... lost something. Something they like to have retrieved, by people they trust.

It concerns a number of notebooks. A man named Alderon Musz wrote them. He was an administrator at the Queens Halls, during the occupation of New Keep by the Great Kingdom. During that period, he was discovered to be an agent, a spy, for the freedom fighters of Sunndi, and executed. His possessions, including the notebooks, were confiscated, and stored in Crystal Castle. As you may know, that castle was destroyed during the war. It is a ruin, and few have managed to scavenge anything from it – not even all the bodies of the dead were found.

Recently people have shown an interest in these notebooks of Musz. Apparently, they contain important information. Hence, I have been asked to find some people willing to enter the ruins to search for these notes.

Are you willing to do this?"

PCs may ask further questions, but Marturo has very little factual information. If not all PCs were invited you may want to run this quickly anyway. The following are questions the PCs may ask:

Q. What can you tell me about your employer?

A. *"I am sure we need not interchange names to know who we are working for?"*

If the PCs mention the Jade Mask, Iron League, or the Veil, Marturo frowns at such unprofessional behavior, then briefly nods.

Q. Why are you here and not Renath Borga or Mirana Rinak (the Green Lady)?

A. *"I don't know why I was asked instead of any... better known faces. But you can trust me."*

DM Note: These NPCs have been used in the past to hire PCs for the Iron League or the Veil of the Sun, respectively. Some PCs may find it odd that someone they don't know now hires them now.

Q. What can you tell us about the two teenagers (and their coincidental relation to the Shards)?

A. *Marturo looks surprised, but then nods: "Yes, we heard about it. The guards are reluctant to investigate the ruins, but no doubt soon enough someone will, with those disappearances. That is another reason why we want this done so suddenly.*

Of course, we do feel for these teens. Obviously, we hope you will find out what happened to them, too."

Q. What can you tell us about the Shards?

A. *"Well, they are just a bunch of ruins. I have my share of – likely false – tales on the ghosts that seem to haunt it, and it has quite a history. But it would likely be best to ask around, or perhaps check the library in the Queens' Halls."*

Q. What can you tell us about the notebooks?

A. *"I don't know what is supposed to be in them, but it is likely important. I was told that they are likely bound, but without cover, and that they are numbered. There are several books but I don't know how many."*

Q. What about a reward?

A. *"I do not have any coin to offer. However, if you return the books, I can offer you the gratitude of myself and my employer, which may open doors that are otherwise closed. Also, you will be doing much good for the Kingdom of Sunndi."*

Once all questions are answered, Marturo drains his wine glass, stands up, and, after greeting the PCs, leaves, leaving one final note:

"I hope to see you again soon. If you wish to find me, just ask Tussel, the bartender of this tavern. He'll know to find me. Of course... I trust you keep this to yourself. It would be wise to not inform your friends of too much either... the walls have ears."

ENCOUNTER 2: THE BENEFIT

Lord Hugher may have invited PCs for a small business talk later that day. It's up to them if they do so.

Note that it is possible for very fast PCs to do this after they went into the Shards. In that case, they may already have the records (if not, Marquesse likely has them by then).

The benefit is a large, two-storey building. It is normally only accessible by members from the Benefit or – since recently – those of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy, or for people with an appointment.

A receptionist queries the PCs on why they are there, and, when they explain their appointment with Lord Hugher, she checks their names on a list, and then asks them to wait in the lounge – a wide area with fluffy couches, small wooden tables, and a small bar, currently unmanned.

Only PCs who were explicitly invited may enter – the rest is asked to wait on the wooden seats in the halls.

About ten minutes later, Lord Hugher appears.

The portly merchant nods at you as he sits down in one of the chairs.

"Glad you could come. I have a small assignment that I was hoping you could resolve. I rather discuss it in private, especially as I didn't think Cecila would be so pleased if I would ask you so bluntly right after your offer to aid her.

But to business. Months ago, I received a request from a fellow merchant in Naerie. He has many contacts along the coast, and a few with parties that had dealing with Adder's Haven, as New Keep was known, in the past. Well, this merchant is apparently eager to obtain old records that reside in the old ruins, the Shards. They contain notes, apparently confiscated during New Keep's occupation. I don't know what they contain, but the information seems valuable for my client. I gather they are related to contracts, old dealings now long void, but perhaps of an embarrassing nature. I can speculate for ages, but to be honest, I am not particularly interested. All I know is that delivering these records would increase my standing in the eyes of the guild, and that would in turn be beneficial to the Benefit, and would surely stimulate the trade with the Kingdom. So I was, of course, interested in obtaining these records.

The Shards, though, are not something you send any group of people in. They are supposedly haunted."

If you are running this version of the scenario because the PCs decided to NOT help Cecila Avon, Hugher now asks them to enter the Shards for him, to seek the records.

"Well, I ask you to enter these ruins anyway. There is, apparently, some time pressure – though why this is so I cannot say, my contact has better information than I, it seems.

Hence, I would desire you to locate these notebooks for me.

Remember: the Money Counter never forgets a debt.

If they are helping Cecila, he is less blunt:

"You, however, may be set to enter these ruins anyway. Perhaps, if your investigation leads you there, you could do me a favor, and try to locate these notebooks for me?"

I do not expect you to enter the Shards for the mere retrieval of these records, of course. Simply, should the opportunity be there, I hope you will keep your eye open, and remember: the Money Counter never forgets a debt.

Hugher initially does not offer any money. He believes the Money Counter's debt is valuable enough in this case.

If the PCs actually refused to help Cecila Avon, and indicate that they do not plan to enter the keep without monetary reward, he reluctantly offers to pay them 150 gp x APL (the same amount he would have paid if the PCs had demanded a monetary reward from Cecila).

He does not have much information besides this. He does not know what the notebooks look like, and won't give details of the other contacts, as the rules demand he keeps that kind of information confidential. If asked if taking these notebooks from the ruins is not some form

of theft, he says he has already arranged the legalities with Count Donner, and that it should be no problem whatsoever.

Once he has offered them the deal, he leads them out. Before he does so, he adds:

“Do return here after your investigation. For now, please do not speak of this deal to anyone else. It is rather improper to speak of contract details in the eyes of the Money Counter, and while this is all strictly legal, the embarrassment to my contact may be great if it accidentally came out.”

For the same reason, Hugher does not reveal any details regarding the merchant who asked for the notes.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE SHARDS

Once the PCs accept the mission, they may set out to investigate.

There are a few avenues of information the party can try. This chapter lists the ones that most likely yield results. This is a role-playing encounter, and not everything needs to be used.

Appendix 3 has a map of New Keep, as well as a rough overview of the caverns and sewers under the city, and the route of the secret tunnel from the Halls to the Keep.

If you have little time to run the scenario, you can skip most of this encounter. The important thing is that the PCs become aware that they need to investigate the ruins. The encounters with Rembal Nunk or Grandma Nonette can be used for this. The Queen's Halls are a valuable source of information on the Shards ruins and its history, and you can use it to offer PCs an alternate way to enter the ruins through the escape tunnel. The third way into the castle is a lot more obscure and if you run this encounter fast the PCs likely won't find that out unless they somehow deduce it themselves.

If you have enough time, you can use as much of the encounters below as you wish.

The following leads are available:

The Shards	Information gathering can yield background information.
Queen's Halls	Contains historic information, and hides a secret tunnel into the keep.
The Guards	Can tell about disturbances at Coil's Cemetery.
Grandma Nonette	Can tell about Eleonaer's obsession with the ruins
Rembal Nunk	Can tell where Eleonaer was last seen
Count' an Coin	Holds the keep's key. Can tell about Eleonaer's request for the keep's key.
The Hollow Inn	Provides information on the caverns below the city, and the recent tremors in the hills.

Coil's Cemetery

PCs may find the tunnel through which Eleonaer entered the Keep. Local thugs may tell about monsters in the sewers and the secret tunnels.

The Underworld

THE SHARDS AND ENVIRONS

The Shards do not have a stellar reputation among the people of New Keep.

The following lists are rumors or facts that can be gathered. For a quick run, you can use a Gather Information check to get the info.

DC Rumor

- 0 The ruins are supposedly haunted, or infested with monsters, depending on whom you ask.
- 5 The tower exploded in the aftermath of the war, some say in retaliation by the Great Kingdom. Many were killed in the blast, including Viscount Donner's wife.
- 10 After the tower exploded, some people went in to look for the remains of those killed in the blast. Little could be found, and quite a few people simply couldn't stand working in the ruins – a few came out talking about horrible visions, voices in their head...

Initially it was presumed to be caused by the distress of facing the massacre, but when others who went in later exhibited the same problem, people came to believe the place haunted.
- 15 Moreover, some children went missing a few years ago. Their bodies were not found, and the few volunteers that went inside the castle did not return. As a reaction to this tragedy, the ruins were locked and nobody has entered them since.
- 20 With the disappearance of the two teenagers, rumors of the Shards have cropped up again. While most people think the two ran off, a few locals believe they fell victim to the castles ghosts.

Nobody has entered to search though – the locals wouldn't dare, and the guards are not interested in ghost stories.

All this information is also known to individuals the PCs may question, so you can provide it there if needed.

THE QUEENS HALLS AND THE JADED MASK

The Queen's Halls are the largest library on history and arcane matters in Sunndi. Originally set up as a bardic college, it is now run by the clergy of Lirr and Lydia. The church of Boccob also contributes to the library, mostly in the form of lore or finances - few Boccob priests are actual member of the staff. A fourth faith allied with the halls is the faith of Johydee. It is a public secret that some of her faithful mingle with the other clerics, but it is hard for most people – including part of the staff – to determine who is what.

The leader of the Halls is a priestess of Lirr named Timma Fyuro. Her consort, Moloxius Wyr, is a lore master who worships Boccob. Moloxius runs the Halls' finances. The two are said to have a relationship built not so much on love as a mutual passion for knowledge. Both Timma and Moloxius are not generally available. The head clerk, Balius Fyne, handles most day-to-day matters.

The Halls head librarian is Yasme Volonkech, a Lydian mystic theurge. She is an older woman of Suel descent, very strict when it comes to keeping the order in her library – and a tyrant when it comes to timely return of rented out books.

Appendix 4 has a map of the Halls. The building is vast – three floors of lore, and two wings with rooms for the resident students and staff.

The ground floor: This floor contains the chapel, which features a statue of an undefined female figure, and the public library, which is open to visitors. Information can be found there by browsing the shelves, but none of the books are rented out – people have to read it at the library. This part of the library can provide answers on Knowledge (local: the Splintered Suns), Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Knowledge (history), and bardic knowledge, as long as the question is limited to fairly common information regarding the Great Kingdom (such as the recent history of Sunndi, well-known nobles of the United Kingdom of Ahlissa, or the past alliances of the Iron League). Anyone can make a check using the library – even if they do not have the skill. PCs who do have the skill may make a second check if their first one (made without the library's use) failed. However, this section can only answer questions that have a DC not exceeding 15 (see Lore of the Halls, below).

The first floor: This floor contains a number of lecturing rooms, as well as the great library, which is open only to members of the Halls. PCs who are a member of the Queens Halls meta-organization have free access, but other PCs are not generally allowed. If a PC is a member of the Jade Mask, he can try to arrange a one time only pass. PCs who have a favor with the Jade Mask, and who think of it, may spend this favor for a similar attempt (see Lore of the Veil, below).

The second floor library is bigger and larger. It can answer, among other things, any questions on Knowledge (local: the Splintered Suns), Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Knowledge (history), and bardic knowledge regarding the Great Kingdom with a DC of up to 35. Any checks made regarding the history of Crystal Castle and the war have a +2 circumstance bonus on the check.

The PCs can try to contact the head librarian with their questions. While Yasme does not let any PCs in the library that has no pass, she is willing to help look for information. To a member who has access, this grants an additional +2 circumstance bonus on the check (for a total of +4). Otherwise, the PCs may query her on the

subject. In this case, she can provide any information up to DC 20 from the table below.


The second floor: This area is out of bounds. It contains, among other things, the private rooms of Halls leader Timma Fyuro.

The wings: The two wings contain classrooms and rooms for members that stay on site. Only staff and members are allowed in the wings. There is nothing of interest here.

Lore of the Veil: Jade Mask members may try to contact their organization (through the Veil) for information. Not everyone in the Halls is an agent, and those that are may not be available. It is not likely that a PC knows exactly who to ask specific questions (the head librarian, Yasme Volonkech, for instance, is not).

If a Jade Mask member spends some time talking to some of the staff about needing access to the 1st floor, a DC 15 Bluff check can convey the right innuendo to the right person (even though the member may not know who that was). If this succeeds, after some time, a young staff member named Allyn comes up presenting a one-day access pass to the library (for the Jade Mask member only). The pass is signed by Balius Fyne.

Allyn is the current student-assistant of Calastria Borm. He is willing to aid the PCs and guide them through the halls. He can give some background information of recent events regarding the Shards. He does not have much historical information as his own study subject is law and politics, but he knows all the rumors under *The Shards and Environs*, above. He denies being a Veil member if asked, and instead says that he is merely 'well informed'.

 **Allyn:** Male human Brd2 (AL NG).

While Allyn is indeed not a Veil member, he knows a lot more than he lets on. If asked about a secret tunnel, he denies knowing anything about it, but suggests people talk to Balius Fyne.

Lore of the Halls: Anyone who spends time in the library (either the common one or the great one) may learn some of the items from the table below, provided they make the appropriate DC on a Knowledge (local: the Splintered Suns), Knowledge (history), or bardic knowledge check. Each check takes roughly 20 minutes of research, and the PCs can retry. PCs can take 20 on this check if, and only if, they themselves have access to the upstairs library. Taking 20 keeps the PCs busy for at least six hours.

DC	Knowledge (History or local: The Splintered Suns) or bardic knowledge
5	From <i>The Great And Bountiful Kingdom of Aerdy – And How it Fell</i> : The tower history as known to most people. See Player Handout I.
10	From <i>The Making of a Kingdom</i> : The tower was

destroyed minutes after the liberators had entered the castle. Commander Stoan had then already left.

- 15 From *The Battle of Pelor's Hold*: Stoan must have been warned, since the liberators came through a secret tunnel. He left behind three commanding officers, who held the fort until it blew up. These were the mage Eberhast and the officers Chullendrea and Pryce.

Pryce was killed by the freedom forces moments before the tower exploded. Eberhast and Chullendrea's bodies were never found.

- 20 From *Foul and Deadly Uses of Magic*: The castle was warded against teleportation and planar intrusion – but only for those trying to get inside. Teleporting out was quite possible – it is likely Eberhast *teleported* away, and that he destroyed the castle. Evidence was found that it was caused by a *delayed blast fireball* spell.
- 25 In the back of *Meradrin's Notes on Fortifications*: A text and map show how the keep was entered. It describes a narrow brick-walled tunnel that was apparently dug in the soft earth years before the Halls were built. It starts near the Halls chapel and ends in the Keep's cellars, near what the cartographer marks as the kitchen.
- 30 A *Warrant for the Public Execution of Fenrus Galleon*. One in a stack of documents that was found in the ruins.

Notable as it was signed by Stoan on the day of the attack. An attached note by a diligent student indicates there must have been a second warrant on the same day, prior to this one, but that it has gone missing.

- 35 From *Debunking Ghost Stories*: A rather boring and longwinded treatise on mental intrusions' and 'empathic vibrations' in the stonework of the Shards, written by Moloxius Wyr. No conclusions, though there is a reference to a skill called Oneiromancy, of which the author only had passing knowledge. A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) reveals that Oneiromancy is magic lore related to dreams.

With a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) a PC recalls that Wyr is a Mage of the Arcane Order who is a resident of the Halls. (Members of the Queen's Halls gain a +5 circumstance bonus on this check).

Wyr is not easy to get hold of, but if the PCs are willing to wait they can make an appointment. Normally this takes several days, but if the PCs contain members of the Queen's Halls, they can arrange to meet him in the evening.

Wyr is an elderly wizard (Wiz 5/Mage of the Arcane Order 10), pale and very wrinkled, and totally bald, with a drooping dark red moustache. He is about as dry and academic as his works, but if PCs are patient he can relate some facts from newer research – he believes that the castle somehow is an entity of its own, like a collective

haunt, the conglomeration of the ghosts of the many dead. He thinks it is dangerous to enter the castle, but if the PCs go there anyway, is interested to hear of their experiences – should they return sane.

He can also give the PCs advice to how magic works differently regarding the castle – saving them embarrassment later on. He does not mention teleportation spells. If the PCs ask about the limit on teleportation from an earlier source, he replies that those wards are long gone.

When asked about Oneiromancy he replies it is magic related to dreams. Interestingly, he has recently talked to someone who studies that subject, a woman named Marquesse. She is a sage from Kalstrand who is in town, but he has no means to contact her.

The secret tunnel: An underground tunnel leads from the Queen's Halls to the ruins of Crystal Castle. The existence of the tunnel itself was long a deep secret, only known to a few people. Since it was used in the retaking of New Keep, this has changed. While not a common known fact, it is no longer entirely obscure – many older people in New Keep have at least heard rumors of it. Few however, know where this tunnel would be. Even the more recent works on the war's history don't mention it. In fact, the only work which describes it is an architectural work by Meradrin, the dwarf who build New Keep's walls, and who is rumored to have secretly aided the Veil during the war.

Even this reference doesn't mention where exactly the entrance is. For this, PCs need cooperation of the Halls, and the only way to get it is from Timma Fyuro (see below). No one else even admit the existence of the tunnel – let alone give permission to use it.

Should the PCs obtain permission, continue with encounter 4B: *the Secret Tunnel*, whenever they choose to use it.

Speaking to Timma Fyuro: Balias Fyne, the head clerk, arranges audiences for Timma Fyuro. At the moment though, she is unavailable — it might take weeks before she has any time for the PCs.

Balias therefore suggests the PCs put their request through him. If they desire it to be handled this day, he has to be made helpful. Balias attitude reflects that of his mistress. Normally, he is considered Indifferent (a DC 30 Diplomacy check). He is Unfriendly (DC 40) to parties that have disfavours with the Iron League, and Friendly (DC 20) to parties that have favours with the Iron league or Jade Mask, or that contain members of the Mask or the Queen's Halls. If the party contains both people with favours and disfavours, he is Indifferent. PCs who make covertly known that they work for Marturo get a +5 circumstance bonus on the Diplomacy check.

If the check succeeds, the request is passed on quite quickly, and within a few hours an answer is given. If it

fails, it takes at least 2 days before the PCs receive an answer.

Regardless of the outcome, if the PCs asked for permission to access the secret tunnel to get to the keep, they only get it if at least one PC is in favor with the Jade Mask (either through favors or because they are a member). Otherwise, the request is denied.

Requests to access the library are given as long as the Diplomacy check improved Balias' attitude to Friendly. The PCs may then, for one time only, enter the library and use its resources under the watchful eye of Yasme Volonkech.


It is not likely that the Halls are able to aid in any other requests. Use the above requests to judge success if the PCs come up with something clever and appropriate for a library of history and magic.

THE WATCH AND THE GUARDS

New Keep has two guard units. The City Guard, common known as the Watch, is under control of the city counsel. Pelsand's standing army, also named – confusingly enough – the New Keep Guards, guard the pass and patrol the countryside. The latter are loyal to count Donner and under command of his son Kahn.

While the Watch is in charge of maintaining order in the city, their influence is limited - their funds are low, and most people consider them rather ineffective, especially when compared to the better equipped – and very present – New Keep Guards.

The person the PCs are likely to speak with at the Watch is Captain Barden. He is a broad shouldered human male with long braided brown hair and a booming voice. Several scars show him to be a veteran.

 **Barden:** human male Ftr3 (AL NG).

Captain Barden is aware of two missing teens, but doesn't know too much specifics – he is overworked and currently more concerned with rumors of a gang war. The dead body of a thug named Burlap was dug up from the river several days ago, showing signs of violence. Barden does not disclose more information about it except that this has kept them quite busy. He could spare only one guard, a new recruit called Ebru, for the investigation. Unfortunately, she is not blessed with much insight and as such has not been getting far. Captain Barden can arrange for the PCs to talk to her.

Ebru is a slightly obese, young woman, enthusiastic but a bit dim. She tells the PCs about her investigation and the people she questioned – Granma Nonette and Rembal Nunk. She can provide all the information they can – though if you have the time and the players like a bit of investigation, you can make her turn out a bit too dim to remember everything and instead just provide their names.

Finally, she can provide one other clue: late in the evening of the day the girl disappeared there were complaints about lights and disturbances at Coils

Cemetery. When the guards arrived whoever had been wandering about was already gone.

PCs who approach the New Keep Guards won't find anyone interested in their story – if they are lucky they are directed to the Watch.

GRANDMA NONETTE

Eleonaer's grandmother Nonette lives by herself in a small house near the city walls. She is very old and quite deaf. She moves slowly, and spends most of her days at home. Time has caught up with her, and she has grown senile. She barely realizes that her granddaughter has gone missing, and if PCs ask about her she often says that she has gone out "to get some groceries" and that she "will come home soon".

Nonette's neighbour, Miss Prine, cares for her now that her granddaughter is gone. Without her help, the old woman would surely starve herself to death, as she can hardly look after herself.

Talking to Nonette is an exercise in patience. She doesn't really understand – and likely doesn't want to – that Eleonaer is missing. However, she can tell the PCs a few things if they diligently ask for it:

- Eleonaer is a young girl with long dark hair and large dark brown eyes. She is very slender. Her ears have a slight point, betraying her elven heritage.
- Ator is a short spotty boy, with curly black hair.
- Eleonaer's mother Saeen was a war bride, married to Alabor from Ahlissa, a soldier in the invading Great Kingdom army. Commander Stoa encouraged his men to mingle with the populace and take wives – to 'improve relations'. This didn't work as hoped - most people turned away from those that allied with 'the enemy'. They gave any of the brides – including her daughter - the cold shoulder. Nonette didn't understand this – the man her daughter married was a nice man – even if he was working under a wrong flag.
- Alabor died in the destruction of Crystal Castle. His body was never found.
- Saeen was the half-elf from whom Eleonaer inherited her elf blood (Nonette only smiles mysteriously when asked who Saeen's father was). She tragically died in childbirth, shortly after the war. Cecila Avon is Saeen's half-sister.
- Eleonaer developed an unhealthy interest in the history of the castle. She became obsessed with it and often wandered around the ruins. Luckily the gate was locked years ago.
- If the PCs inform about Alabor, Nonette only knows he was good friends with a man named Galleon, some kind of engineer, who also died in the blast and left a widow.
- Ator, Eleonaer's boyfriend, is a boy from the neighborhood. Nonette thinks he is kind enough, but not very smart and rather timid. She thinks her granddaughter could do a lot better.

REMBAL NUNK

Rembal Nunk is a chimney sweep, who spends most of his time on the roofs in the richer parts of town. He lives in the Shards, not because he is poor, but because he was raised there. He lives close to Commons. His house is on the lowest end of the sloping hill on which the ruins stand.

Rembal is the last to have seen Eleonaer and Ator. He saw them when he came home early in the evening, when dusk just set in. They walked ahead of him, coming from the Count'an Coin tavern, and then went up towards the Shards ruins. He shouted at them— the ruins are no place for young people – and they ran off in the direction of Temple district. He didn't see them afterwards.

Rembal knows the teens a bit. He knows that Eleonaer is too curious over the Shards – always asking questions. Everyone knows Ator is smitten with her, and would follow her in hell, but nobody thinks he has any chance. Rembal – like most people in the shards - won't discuss Eleonaer's parents.

He can give them a description similar to Nonettes. When he last saw her, Eleonaer wore a wide sleeved blouse and a long darks skirt and leather boots. Ator wore his customary mouse gray tunic and pants – both a size too large for him as they are his elder brother's hand downs.

THE COUNT'AN COIN TAVERN

This tavern in the Shards is a bit less shabby than its surrounding buildings and has a board above the door depicting, in peeling paint, a man holding up a coin.

The Tavern is almost exclusively frequented by locals. The fare is poor, rather bland but cheap. Most people come here because it's affordable, and the only tavern in this part of town. Some people come here only to drink – and those take their drinking seriously. Most people in the Shards are dirt poor, and it shows in the state of the tavern and its people.

The tavern's keeper is Yors, a bearded man who is well into his fifties. He has a hacking cough, and is worried as he feels his age catching up with him, with no one to take over his tavern. His wife is long dead, and his only son died in the war.

Yors saw Eleonaer and Ator on the day she got missing. They came in often enough. Eleonaer was fishing for information, as usual, about the castle. She had a fascination for it, since her dad died there. She often asks about how the castle looked like, and if it will ever be opened up. The reason to ask Yors is that he has the keys to the chains on the gate.

Yors was one of few people who entered the keep years ago to extract victims of the blast. He does not talk about the strange visions he had in there – though he still has occasional nightmares. He is convinced it is haunted, and as such has kept the key to the place safely tucked away. He is certain Eleonaer didn't enter the keep – at least not through the gate, as he has a view on it from the back of the tavern.

He is open enough about the fact that he has the key, but is reluctant to lend it to the PCs.

If the PCs do not alienate him through rude behavior, and if they tell they are looking for the missing girl and fear she is in the keep, he mellows a bit. He is willing to accompany them to the gate and open it for them, so that they can go in. He then locks the gate again behind them. He promises to keep an eye on the gate from his tavern and once the PCs return opens it again.

If PCs want to take the key to see it themselves, they have to succeed on a DC 30 Diplomacy check to make him Helpful. Note though that they may risk angering him. If they shift his attitude to Unfriendly (if they somehow get a check result of 0 or lower) he refuses to help them at all.

If the PCs ask about the layout of the castle, Yors tells them about the stairs near the battlements, which lead down into the dungeons. He never went there himself, as anyone that did had a horrid experience, and everyone believes those that perished haunt it.

THE HOLLOW INN

Anyone enquiring about tunnels or caverns below the city find them selves directed to the Hollow Inn. PCs who played SND3-M02 *Harsh Words* or the Sunndian introduction of TSS3-07 *The Lance of Osson* may know the inn and may have been there before.

There is little info to be found regarding Eleonaer's disappearance, as most of the people here have no interest, but asking about ways to get in the castle ruins, or about hidden tunnels or sewers comes up with the following. You can play this out by having PCs ask questions to locals (most are quite amicable once you get past the rough exterior), or use a Gather Information check if you are in a hurry:

- DC 10: There are many caverns in the Hollow Highlands, and a number of the tunnels run far under the city.
- DC 12: Many of these tunnels are used by smugglers to get their fare out of the city and over the border, past the New Keep Guards.
- DC 15: There are no direct ways into the caverns. Instead, the smugglers use the sewers to enter them. There are several secret entrances, but only a few know where they are. Of course, some people know the sewer a bit better than others. (If PCs inquire who those are, they can obtain the names of Garp and Ahtleen, the sewers keepers. See Encounter 4C on what those can tell the PCs)
- DC 18: The Watch and New Keep Guards know this, but do little to stop it. It is considered far too dangerous to enter the caverns to try and stop trespassers. Some think it also has to do with the rivalry of the two groups – each blames the other for the trespassing.

- DC 20: There is a secret tunnel to the ruins. It was used during the war to take the castle. It starts somewhere in the Queen's Halls, but few people now know where.
- DC 25: One gnome mentions that there may be other ways into the caverns. Recently, there have been various light tremors coming from the highlands. He has heard (from a friend who has a friend who heard it from his sister's neighbor's nephew) a number of those tremors caused collapses. There may be places where the caverns come close enough to the surface that a good quake may have caused them to get exposed. He doesn't know of any – but it is quite possible.
- DC 30: Well, ok, for a few gold, a gnome does remember that there was a dangerous cave-in recently at Coil's Cemetery. The aforementioned nephew apparently almost broke a leg when he fell in the hole.

COILS CEMETERY

PC may desire to investigate Coil's Cemetery if they heard of the disturbances there. Eleonaer and Ator were indeed here – in fact, they spied about as Eleonaer had heard, from one of the Shard's street gangs, that there was an entrance here that led into a secret tunnel. She indeed found it, and with Ator entered it to investigate, following it far below the keep. Unfortunately, she was blocked in when part of the roof collapsed – killing Ator – and she has since fallen victim to the keep.

Simply looking over the cemetery wall doesn't reveal much. It is a walled off section with a number of old graves. Some of them are well kept, but most are covered in moss. The iron gate is locked at dusk and opened at dawn, but it can be easily climbed.

A DC 20 Survival check on the premises finds a few tracks – the most recent ones lead to the riverside, where part of the ground has slid and collapsed into the river. There, they lead up to a grave near the river that has collapsed. If no PC has Track, they can also find this section if they take the time to search the entire grounds (which takes a good hour) and succeed at a DC 15 Search check.

Unkempt undergrowth hides most of it from view, but with the shifting of some of the rubble and a head stone that recently fell over, it is apparent that below it, a shaft of approximately fifteen feet deep opens up in what looks like a narrow, natural cavern.

In fact, the area around the grave is rather unstable. Heavy PCs who come close (within 5 feet) of the grave need to make a DC 10 Reflex save, to avoid collapsing the ground and falling down 15 feet into the tunnel below, incurring 1d6 points of falling damage. PCs accidentally find the tunnel this way if they failed their Search check by less than 5.

The tunnel is one of many natural tunnels that lay below the east side of the town. Only a few of the tunnels get this close to the surface. If PCs decide to enter and follow the tunnel, they can approach the keep through

the complex. If a PC has Track, a DC 24 Search check allows him to find scuff marks of Eleonaer and Ator's passing, which point the way to the keep. Continue with encounter 4C, in the caverns, but take note that the PCs did not come from the sewers.

THE UNDERWORLD

PCs who specifically ask for rumors in the world of thieves and smugglers in the shadier bits of town, may come across the following rumors.

Neat and tidy people need not bother as they will not be trusted, but those who know to blend in with the crowd (especially those that are members of a criminal orientated mate-organization) can find out the following:

- Several days ago, a dead guy was fished out of the river.
- Two other men are still missing.
- They were not well known, from outside town, but they had dealings with some shady people (though nobody recalls who these were).
- There are many rumors flying about what happened to them, including monsters in the sewers. Apparently, the body that was found had acid burns, and his armor was damaged beyond repair.
- The guards are investigating but didn't get very far yet.
- A woman named Marquesse asked about the deaths. She was apparently investigating on her own.

PCs who are members of the Iron Band Contraband Cartel can find some extra information if they ask their contacts:

- The men were members of the Iron Band.
- They were experienced smugglers, and their death and disappearance means they ran into something tough.
- They were from out of town, about to take some 'hot' wares into Naerie. The wares were never found.
- Several other smugglers met with some 'accidents' – so far none of these were lethal, but a few members were pretty badly beaten up. There are stories of oozes and monstrous vermin in the sewers.
- There is a suspicion that a rival group is doing some smuggling of their own. It is unknown who these are, but the wares are far from innocent, and include drugs and poisons.
- There are entrances in the cities were into caverns that lead into the Iron Hills. It is a popular smuggling route. It may be that the men were ambushed there.

ENCOUNTER 4: ENTERING THE KEEP

There are four ways to enter the keep.

The obvious one is through the gates. It is in plain view, so PCs may have to deal with any attention they draw if they go this way. Run encounter 4A if PCs go through the gates or climb/fly over the walls.

PCs who desire to be stealthy might seek an alternate way to get inside – they could use the old escape tunnel that leads into the keep. Information on that tunnel can be found in the Queen's Halls. Run encounter 4B if PCs use the tunnel.

The third way is through the sewers. This is how Eleonaer entered. Aside from following in her footsteps, there are a few hints that point to a connection. If the PCs try this route, run Encounter 4C.

A final way the PCs may try to enter is through teleportation. See below how to handle this.

SPELL EFFECTS AND THE KEEP

There are a number of spells that won't work as expected inside the castle. PCs may find this out the hard way, but it is also possible that they learned this from Moloxius Wyr from the Queen's Halls.

Below are some things to take into account:

Scrying: Any scrying spell (such as *clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*, or *scry*) cast inside the castle, or with an area inside the castle as target, fails. Instead of getting a view (or sound) of the area, a PC instead experiences the roar and flickering light of a blazing fire, like a perpetual explosion. A PC needs to make a DC 10 Fortitude save or be deafened (in case of sound) and/or dazzled (in case of sight) for 1d4 rounds.

While this does not apply to a spell such as *prying eyes*, the semi-tangible eyes of that spell are destroyed when they enter the castle.

Detect Undead: This spell always detects undead, but the number of auras is unclear, and they cannot be pinpointed.

Detect Thoughts: This spell produces a barrage of thoughts, all unintelligible. The number of thoughts is unclear, and they cannot be pinpointed.

In addition, the caster needs to make a DC 10 + ½ APL Will save or be affected by the castle's hauntings (see Encounter 6), and become fatigued. PCs that already are fatigued become exhausted.

Mind-affecting spells: Due to the pressing aura of the castle, all mind-affecting spells have a +2 circumstance bonus to their save DCs. This also goes for any spells cast while in the dreamscape (in area 7).

Teleportation: There used to be wards on the castle that prevented beings from teleporting in, as well as crossing

in through other planes. The Queen's Halls describe these wards. However, these wards needed to be periodically renewed. As such, they are no longer in existence, and hence – despite the impression PCs may have – teleportation spells generally work fine.

Note that this may be risky as it is impossible to scry the castle. Most likely, the PCs end up in the grounds. If PCs *teleport* in, use the info in encounter 4A or encounter 5 depending on where the PCs *teleport* to. If they *teleport* directly to the dungeons, do not forget to have them make a Will save against the haunted effects (as described in encounter's 4A - 4C).

Planar travel: While the castle wards no longer prevent planar travel, ethereal entry into the keep is not so easy. Any incursion in the ethereal plane – fully or partly – does not work inside the castle. If a creature goes ethereal outside the castle, and then enters, he is pushed back into the Prime Material Plane as soon as he is inside. Planar travel into and out of other planes is unhampered. Note that this also applies to other spells that work with the ethereal plane, such as *ghost form* or *blink*. The effect also destroys the eyes of a *prying eyes* spell.

In addition, anyone who attempts to enter the ethereal needs to make a DC 10 + ½ APL Will save or be affected by the castle's haunting (see Encounter 6), and become fatigued. PCs that already are fatigued become exhausted.

ENCOUNTER 4A: THE KEEP'S GROUNDS

The gates to the keep are locked. They are rusty, but the lock that keeps the chains is good and sturdy. If the PCs do not have the keys, they can open them with a DC 30 Open Lock check. The gates open with difficulty and make quite a lot of noise (unless the PCs think of oiling them first).

🔒 **Chained Gate:** 2 in. thick iron; hardness 10; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 30.

Nobody has entered the keep for years, and PCs who wander about for too long (longer than 5 minutes), or who act strangely (such as climbing the gates, flying, or digging under it in broad daylight) may draw attention (10% chance for each action or every 5 minutes). The attention can be avoided with a DC 10 Hide check.

Opening the gates makes noise and may draw guards (25% chance – 10% chance if the gates are oiled, 0% if the PCs use magic such as *silence*). Trying to break open the gate by force automatically draws attention, even at night (unless the action is *silenced*). If the PCs draw attention, a small patrol of guards comes to see what is going on.

👤 **Captain,** human War2; hp 16.

👤 **Guards (7):** Human War1; hp 9 each.

PCs are reprimanded if they are caught, but unless the PCs act aggressively, or if the damaged property, they are merely sent off. PCs can convince the guards that they have permission to enter the keep with a DC 15 Bluff check, or that they have important business there by changing the guards attitude to Friendly – normally the guards are Indifferent, so this only requires a DC 15 Diplomacy check.

If successful, the guards direct the PCs to the gatekeeper's house – the guards really don't care if some bunch of madmen wish to enter a haunted keep, but even if the PCs have good reasons they will not allow damage to the gates.

If the PCs fail the Diplomacy or Bluff, the guards simply send them off, unless the PCs somehow change their attitude to Unfriendly (normally if they fail a DC 1 Diplomacy check) or the ruse is really bad and arouses suspicions (DM's decision). In that case the guards demand they follow them to the station, where further questions are asked. While this is unlikely to get PCs in serious trouble, it holds them up for several hours as they spend time at the gatehouse explaining themselves.

PCs should have no reasons to attack the guards. If they do, they are in a load of trouble – not only do they become wanted, the people who hired them are not likely to want to have anything to do with them anymore. For them, the adventure ends here.

The keys to the gates can be obtained from Yors, the innkeeper of the Count' an Coin (see Encounter 3). If the PCs have the keys they get a +5 bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks with the guards should they somehow still attract attention.

Read or paraphrase the following once the PCs enter the keep grounds:

Crystal Castle may once have been grand. Now, however, there is little left of it. The great tower is a ruin. It must have once been more than 40 feet high, but now only 8 feet of wall is still in existence.

Of a smaller tower, in front of the main one, only the first floor is still intact, while the remaining buildings are almost entirely leveled - only a few walls still stand.

Rubble is strewn everywhere – most of it must have fallen from the tower when it was destroyed. Part of it obscures a well, and a large chunk has even slain a breach in the walls around the keep.

The Keep's intrusions: Have every PC who enters make a DC 10 + ½ APL Will save. Note down every PC that fails the save. Do not make known if a PC failed or not, but do write it down. The PC has been affected by the keep's haunts (see Encounter 6).

To the first PC to fail the save, Read or paraphrase the following:

From the corner of your eye, you though you saw something move near the breach in the outer wall. A shadowy form, a human?

PCs who check out the shadows find nothing.

The grounds are mostly in ruin (see map A in Appendix 7).

Inside, little of the castle remains. The outer walls are still intact, but it's near impossible to get on the battlements as all the stairs have collapsed.

From the Maidens Tower (area B), the kitchen and servant quarters (area C) and the original Crystal Tower (area E) only the outer walls remain – the upper floors however are gone, except for that of the main tower. The servant area is even missing the ceiling and opens into the sky.

The well (area D) is partly covered with rubble that fell from the Crystal Tower. If the party sifts through it they find a shaft that runs about twenty feet down until it hits the surface of the well's water. One side of the well there, just near the water surface, has collapsed and now opens up in the secret tunnel that leads into the keep's cellars (see map B and Encounter 5).

The more logical (and easier) approach is to use the stairs in the battlements near the main tower (area F). These are still partly intact, but partly hidden by rubble, so unless they know of them, the PCs need to make a DC 15 Search check to find them.

Tracking: There are no tracks on the castle grounds. Neither the teens nor Marquesse have actually set foot here yet.

Once the PCs go down, go to Encounter 5.

ENCOUNTER 4B: THE ESCAPE TUNNEL

An underground tunnel exists that leads from the Queen's Halls to the Keep. If PCs gain permission to use the tunnel (see Encounter 3), they are asked to wait until the evening. They are then led to its entrance by Balias Fyne.

The thin frame of Balias Fyne moves slowly before you, towards the chapel, which is now closed for all visitors. You are ushered in, and the door is closed and locked behind you.

"Come then," the man says in a dry voice, as if the whole exercise is tremendously boring, "this way. Here."

He walks up to a statue of a woman. It is a strange statue, almost featureless. The face is almost faded away from age. One can imagine that she looked beautiful once, but it is impossible to tell now.

She is dressed in a long gown or dress, which must once have been studded with what looks like small little gems, as it has little pockmarks all over it where they were pried out. Her hands are out, as in offering protection or guidance.

The man bends forward and brushes his hand against his lips. As he does so, he faintly whispers – almost impossible to hear.

PCs who want to hear what he says need to make a DC 25 Listen check. Those who succeed hear the words “empress, deceive us”. PCs can use these words to open the tunnel from the inside, provided they do so before 8 o'clock the next morning (at which time the password has changed).

Almost instantly, the statue moves aside, silently, allowing a small hole to appear beneath her feet.

“Through there,” the man says as he waves at the hole, apparently feeling you hadn’t noticed something utterly dull like a secret tunnel.

“Enter here, crawl away. Get out at the other end – I’m not coming back to open it for you. Now if you would just move on... I have more stuff to do.”

The tunnel is dark, narrow and low - only 5ft. either side - dug out of earth, and studded at places with wooden bars. It is muddy – at times water from the river seeps in – and all but the smallest PCs have to crouch, so progress is likely slow.

It is an uneventful and safe journey. Occasionally, sounds penetrate from above ground through long, tiny ventilation holes. Breathing gets a bit hard at places where those holes have been clogged.

After traveling for over an hour, the tunnels widens somewhat, before it suddenly opens up in a small cavern.

Part of the wall here has collapsed, and to the right, a pool of clear water is visible. Above the pool leads upward and a small beam of light can be seen from above.

Up ahead is a wall of large grey stones. There is a breach in the wall where there might possibly have been an entrance once, but it is hard to reach due to a large heap of loose stones and earth in front of it.

The PCs enter in room L on map B in Appendix 5.

Part of the tunnel broke and opened up in the well after the Keep exploded.

The rubble from the wall can easily be pulled apart, allowing PCs to enter the Keep’s cellar (room B). If they decide to first investigate the well, see room A in encounter 5.

The Keep’s intrusions: Have every PC who enters make a Will save. Note down every PC that fails a DC 10 + ½ APL save. Do not make known if a PC failed or not, but do write it down. The PC has been affected by the keep’s haunts (see Encounter 6).

To the first PC to fail the save, Read or paraphrase the following:

From the corner of your eye, you though you saw something move near the barrels. A shadowy form, a dog, perhaps?

If the PC looks directly at where the movement was nothing can be seen.

ENCOUNTER 4C: THE SEWERS

New Keep has a sewer system, a network of half-flooded tunnels that was dug prior to the fortification of the city to loose both the wastes and large amounts of water after the seasonal down pours.

The pipes pick up water from an underwater stream and empty in the Pawluck River after running through the city, picking up waste. As such, the sewers in the south are the filthiest, and at places clogged with waste. Once in a while, two people scamper through the sewers to kill rats and unclog pipes.

There is a secret passageway in the New Keep sewer system that gives access to the caverns that lead far into the hollow highlands. Parts of these tunnels brush the ruins of the Shards. There, a few tunnels caved in, creating a narrow opening into the Keep’s dungeons. This location and surrounding tunnels is what the Web uses as a temporary headquarters. Almost nobody knows about these tunnels – even the Iron Band (local smuggling organization) avoids this area as it is infested with oozes, and is not of use to them. They blame some of their own ‘lost’ colleagues on these creatures, but are not aware that the last group of disappearances was due to a run-in with the Web.

PCs may think of using the sewers – perhaps if they talked to people in the Hollow Inn, or simply by deduction. Finding the actual route is difficult. No member of the Iron Band openly admits that there are tunnels – let alone point them out. Members of this organization can learn about these entrances, but sharing them with non-members is a quick way to be kicked out. Instead they are asked to try and get the others use another route into the Keep.

If the PCs seek someone with knowledge of the sewer system, a DC 10 Gather Information check leads them to Garp and Ahtleen, the man and woman who clean the sewers. Members of the Iron Band meta-organization know this automatically.

Garp and Ahtleen are quite aware that the thieves of New Keep use the sewers for smuggling activities, and are even aware of some of the secret entrances in the sewers, but they are paid well to be quiet about it. Therefore, they don’t forward this information to inquisitive PCs unless the PCs make them Helpful with a DC 30 Diplomacy check, or the PCs bribe them (50 gp minimum). A successful Intimidate check, or a DC 15 Diplomacy check lowers the price to 25 gp.

If the PCs manage to make them Helpful, they can point out a secret entrance that leads into a natural tunnel complex (no Search check needed), part of which might run past the keep (they do not know for sure as they are

smart enough to avoid the tunnels). The smugglers use it, and they have heard stories of shapeless horrors that dwell there.

The PCs may also simply wander the sewers and try to find the entrance themselves. This can take days, which means Eleonaer dies and the PCs get noticed, allowing Lusscher to be fully prepared when they arrive.

If the PCs try to find the entrance this way, they need to roll a DC 40 Search check, for each day they are searching (the check DC and duration factors in that the PCs do not know where to search, and may be searching the wrong section of the sewers). The PCs can assist each other. They can take 10 or 20 on this roll, but the PCs need be aware that taking 20 means it takes 10 days to search.

Note that the sewers are smelly, and the stink clings to anyone wandering through them at any length. A thorough bath (or well applied prestidigitation) is needed to get it off – at least partly. While he stinks, a PC has a -2 circumstance penalty on Hide (except in the sewers) and on any Charisma based skill. Also, this negates any benefits from rich or luxury upkeep for the duration of the adventure (even once washed off, it still clings a bit). Finally, most NPCs or monsters smell the PC coming and are unlikely to be surprised.

The entrance opens easily once found, and reveals a large tunnel complex. It is a maze far more confusing than the sewer system.

The Caverns: A DC 24 (+ 1 for each day the party spend searching the sewers) Search check finds the tracks of two people, who passed roughly two weeks ago. These are tracks made by Eleonaer and Ator, who entered the cavern through another entrance (see the Coils Cemetery description in Encounter 3). Following these tracks leads the PCs to the keep.

A good sense of direction can also point the PCs in the right way. With a DC 15 Survival check a PC can find its way towards the Keep. Note that the PCs can take 10 on this check.

If the PC misses the Survival check, they bumble about for one hour, before they can make a new one. If they miss the DC by more than 5, they totally get off track and get hopelessly lost. After one day of fumbling around, they emerge in the Hollow Highlands, about an hour's travel from the city.

If all goes well, and the party finds its way towards the keep, they find that a large section of the tunnels there have collapsed.

A DC 15 Search check reveals a narrow passageway – just large enough for a grown human to squeeze through. The passage is about 20 feet long. It is slimy and slippery, and smells sour (though it is possible the PCs still smells worse from the sewers).

Behind it is a smaller passage, filled mostly with rubble, that slopes upward.

The Keep's intrusions: Have every PC that passes through the passageway make a DC 10 + ½ APL Will

save. Do not make known if a PC failed or not, but do write it down. The PC has been affected by the keep's haunts (see Encounter 6).

For the first PC to be affected read the following:

From the corner of your eye, you though you saw something move in the shadows of a wall. A shadowy form, perhaps a human?

If the PC looks directly at where the movement was, however, nothing can be seen.

Once the PCs continue forward, move to Encounter 5.

ENCOUNTER 5: DOWN

Regardless how the PCs approach, they eventually need to move into the ruins dungeons. See map B in Appendix 7.

If the PCs enter through the keep and go down the stairs, they arrive near the dungeons (area D). If they came through the secret tunnel, they arrive in the cellar (area B). If they come through the sewers, they arrive in the giant cavern from below (from area G).

Following is a description of the dungeons.

For dramatic tension, it is best if the PCs experience the dreams (Encounter 7) before they find Eleonaer (who is trapped in Area I) and the booklets (which can be found in area K).

The text below assumes that the PCs will enter area H before they find Eleonaer, and handles the dreaming sequence there.

If the PCs decide to dig themselves towards area I before having entered area H, you can have them succumb to the castle's dreams as they are digging or moving into the area.

Note that in the latter case, the encounter with Lusscher and his spiders at the later stage will be different (see encounter 8), as the PCs have not been captured.

A – WELL

The well is filled with clear water, but it is only about four feet deep. Some rubble at the bottom of the pit makes the ground uneven.

If anyone searches the bottom of the well, A DC 15 Search check yields a small silver ring. On the inside of the ring, words have been engraved: "FG, Fireseek 2, 582". The ring is worth 6 gp.

Treasure:

Finding the ring

All APLs: Loot–0 gp; Coin–1 gp; Magic–0 gp.

B CELLAR

The stairs that originally lead into the cellar have collapsed. They are filled with rubble and the exit at the top is blocked.

There is a rupture in one the wall, and the other has entirely collapsed, leading into a natural cave.

The rupture in the wall is actually a half-open secret door, now stuck. A bit of investigation reveals that a medium or smaller character can squeeze through the opening. Behind it is a tunnel that leads slopes downwards towards the north (area L).

C CAVERNS

Rough walls and floors strewn with rubble open up into the castle cellars. A few dark passages lead into the earth, though most stop short after several yards, blocked by rocks and debris.

These caverns were merely a hollow space that opened up during recent tremors, and now connects the cellar with the Keep dungeons.

A part of the cavern leads deeper, and slopes down gradually until it finally meets a dead end.

D STAIRS UP

A set of stone stairs lead down from the open air above into a small corridor and what was once a store room. Parts of the walls have caved in, revealing a large gap leading, past what looks like a natural tunnel, into another room.

The corridor is unblocked and leads further into the keep's dungeons.

These stairs go up to the keep grounds. This is the way the PCs enter if they choose to enter through use the keep grounds.

E GUARD ROOM

This room is strewn with rubble, as most of this place. However, it still contains a table – mostly intact with only a few scratches, though partly covered with dust and rocks.

Someone has wiped part of the rubble on the table away, revealing a ledger, though the paper on it is illegible.

Near the door are a number of hooks set in the wall

A bit further on in the corridor, the ceiling has caved in, blocking the way.

If you have not yet run Encounter 6, have the PCs make another Will save. If they have thus far only need to make one save, use the save effect from Encounter 5, room F. If they made two, run Encounter 6 instead.

Trap: If the PCs take time to study the area around the cave-in, a DC 15 Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check – or a DC 15 Search check if people take the time to search - reveals that part of the collapse was very recently, but inexpertly, cleared. The corridor must have collapsed again afterwards – moreover, if the DC exceeds 20, the PC also notices that further collapse, over quite a large area, is eminent – and it doesn't need much to trigger.

The collapse is triggered whenever someone tries to shift debris in the collapsed area (i.e. to create a space to crawl through). The collapse involves a 10 by 20 feet area directly in front of the collapse (including part of room E and the hallway leading to area D).

Disabling the collapse involves either adding supports, or triggering a controlled collapse.

Once the tunnel has collapsed, the danger is gone, though it may take some extra hours to dig through the rubble.

APL 2 (EL 2)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling:** CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no reset; Atk +12 melee (2d6, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 4 (EL 3)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling:** CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no reset; Atk +14 melee (4d6, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 6 (EL 4)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling:** CR 4; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no reset; Atk +16 melee (5d6, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 8 (EL 5)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling:** CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no reset; Atk +18 melee (7d6, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 10 (EL 6)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling:** CR 6; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no reset; Atk +21 melee (8d6, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 12 (EL 7)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling:** CR 7; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no reset; Atk +23 melee (10d6, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

With several hours of diligent work (or an appropriate spell) a crawling space can be created, allowing passage for a small or medium (but not large) person.

Note: if the PCs attempt to get past, and have not yet had the dreams, they may succumb now. Run Encounter 6 (and 7) before allowing them to actually enter the dungeons at area I.

F WET CAVERN

Here, part of the rock has given way, causing the dungeons to open up in the caverns.

This is a large cavernous room, plentiful of puddles and dripping stalagmites. While it is natural, someone must have made use of it – crates and barrels are stacked against the walls, and the floor is covered in shards, splintered woods and other debris of broken bottles and boxes.

Most crates and barrels are empty. One barrel, when opened, gives a hiss as a small amount of gas escapes. It holds a residue of a smelly, tarry substance – a DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check identifies it as thickened and oxidized – and hence now useless – carrion crawler brain juice (used to make poison). Since carrion crawler brain juice can affect the mind, PCs might mistakenly see this as the cause for their fatigue later on.

One crate still holds a barbed dagger, wrapped in cloth, and a set of masterwork longspoon thieves' tools (see Appendix 7).

The Keep's intrusions: Every PC that enters the cavern should roll a DC 20 + ½ APL Will save (unless they already had to make two saves – in that case, skip this section). Do not make known if a PC failed or not, but do write it down. The PC as been affected by the keep's haunts (see Encounter 6). Note that PCs that failed the first save are not further affected, but do not make this known.

For the first affected PC to enter the cavern (even if he was affected earlier), read the following:

For a moment you think you can hear, through the sound of dripping water, a voice. It's hard to make out, but it sounds like a man, whispering.

There is nothing there if the PC turns to the sound, and when he listens again, he doesn't hear it any more.

In addition, all affected PCs (who failed one or more Will saves) feel the pressure of the castle:

A fatigue comes over you. Your arms are heavy and you find moving takes much more effort. It feels as if you have exerted yourself too much.

Each affected PC is now fatigued. A fatigued character can neither run nor charge and takes a -2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. Doing anything that would normally cause fatigue causes the fatigued character to become exhausted. After 8 hours of complete rest, fatigued characters are no longer fatigued (however any times spent in the ruins does not count towards these hours).

Spells or abilities that eliminate fatigue remove the fatigue for one minute per spell level (or one minute if no spell level applies), after which the affected PC once again becomes fatigued.

Creatures: Several guardians wander the network of tunnels below the keep. Most of these do not normally come too close to the surface, due to the mental attacks of the keep.

Recently the Web placed a few oozes, immune to the effects, to guard the entrance to the tunnel. They have been forced to move shop. While the keep's haunted reputation thus far kept most people from prying, they anticipate someone will eventually investigate now these two teens went missing. While the city guards have been manipulated to dismiss the keep as a location of interest, they don't think it will be long for some obnoxious adventurers to come looking.

The creatures are placed so they attack anyone who comes within their reach. They spring their attack from hiding. Since the oozes don't move until they attack, and as they are half hidden in the junk in the cellar, they are hard to spot. A DC 14 Spot check is needed to notice them at all – and, due to the obstructions, only once the PC gets within 15 feet of an ooze.

Since they match the environments and looks mostly like wet stone or pools, spotting a gray ooze is even harder - a DC 19 spot check is needed to see them.

Note: Due to the expectation that some or all PCs are fatigued, and the possibility that the oozes gain surprise, the EL of this encounter is one higher than normal.

Destroyed equipment: Especially at higher APLs, having ones armor or weapons destroyed can be painful. However, equipment 'dissolved' by an ooze's acid attack can still be repaired.

If the PCs do not have the required feats to repair an item, they can turn to the Queen's Halls for expertise. If a PC gains the favor with Cecila Avon, he can spend it to have his items repaired for free.

See the LGCS, chapter Six: beyond the core rules, for more information on repairing items in the Living Greyhawk campaign.

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛ **Gray Ooze:** hp 31; *see Monster Manual* page 202.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Gray Ooze:** hp 31; *see Monster Manual* page 202.

☛ **Ochre Jelly:** hp 69; *see Monster Manual* page 202.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Ochre Jelly:** hp 69; *see Monster Manual* page 202.

☛ **Black Pudding:** hp 115; *see Monster Manual* page 201.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Black Pudding (3):** hp 115; *see Monster Manual* page 201.

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **Elder Black Pudding:** hp 290; *see Monster Manual* page 201.

APL 12 (EL 15)

☛ **Elder Black Pudding (2):** hp 290; *see Monster Manual* page 201.

Tactics: The oozes attack anyone that comes too close. They rely on surprise, staying hidden until the last moment, then lash out once someone is near, focusing at the nearest creature, and attacking it until it is dead and can be consumed. If the target retreats where they can't follow, they turn on the next nearest creature.

Oozes cover the entire area their size indicates, even if it's obstructed, and can even overlap with each other. They are not considered squeezed under these circumstances.

The cellar floor is strewn with stuff, which acts as difficult terrain. It halves movement, and charging or running is impossible. Tumbling has a -2 penalty, while hide checks get a +4 bonus.

In general, the terrain is to the ooze's advantage, but since they are not intelligent they won't actively use it – smart PCs who find that an ooze is hard to reach due to terrain can bait it out simply by tactically retreating to an open space, letting the ooze follow.

While the Oozes could conceivably squeeze themselves into the narrower corridors, they don't pursue the PCs beyond room F (mostly as the cavern is a fine wet environment, the way they like it).

Treasure: The oozes were placed here quite recently to guard the cellar. Before that, they roamed the sewers, where they were quite a menace. At least one bunch of rogues met their doom in one ooze.

Most of the ooze's victims' equipment was absorbed over time. Still, some remains that were indigestible were carried about, and if the PCs pick through the ooze – not a most pleasant experience – they can find a bunch of non-digested gems and coins, light enough to be carried about in the ooze's body. One gem (a pearl) detects as magic.

The PCs may also locate the barbed dagger and the masterwork longspoon thieves' tools.

APL 2: Loot-15 gp; Coin-250 gp; Magic-pearl of power (1st level) (83 gp).

APL 4: Loot-15 gp; Coin-400 gp; Magic-pearl of power (1st level) (83 gp).

APL 6: Loot-15 gp; Coin-17 gp; Magic-pearl of power (2nd level) (333 gp).

APL 8: Loot-15 gp; Coin-367 gp; Magic-pearl of power (2nd level) (333 gp).

APL 10: Loot-15 gp; Coin-233 gp; Magic-pearl of power (3rd level) (750 gp).

APL 12: Loot-15 gp; Coin-600 gp; Magic-pearl of power (4th level) (1333 gp).

Detect magic results: Pearl of power (all) (Strong Transmutation).

G – TO THE SEWERS

This is the location through which PCs enter if they came through the sewers, or if they followed Leonaera's trail from the graveyard.

For more information see Encounter 4C.

H – WEBBED CAVERN

Halfway through this passage, a thick layer of webs blocks the entrance into the cavern beyond.

The webs can be identified with a DC 11 Knowledge (nature) roll as being from monstrous spiders. To determine what the spider's size is, the PC has to beat the DC on the following table:

APL	DC	Result
2	15	small
4	16	medium
6	18	large
8	22	huge
10	30	gargantuan
12	35	gargantuan

Trap: A magic trap has been set up around the entrance. It can be bypassed safely by whispering the pass phrase ('Ivid reigns').

The trap does not reset.

APL 2 (EL 2)

↗ **Burning Hands Trap:** CR 2; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (burning hands, 1st-level wizard, 2d4 fire, DC 11 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

APL 4 (EL 3)

↗ **Burning Hands Trap:** CR 3; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (burning hands, 5th-level wizard, 5d4 fire, DC 11 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

APL 6 (EL 4)

↗ **Lightning Bolt Trap:** CR 4; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (lightning bolt, 5th-level wizard, 5d6 electricity, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL 8 (EL 5)

↗ **Fireball Trap:** CR 5; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (fireball, 8th-level wizard, 8d6 fire, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL 10 (EL 6)

↗ **Flame Strike Trap:** CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (flame strike, 9th-level cleric, 9d6 fire, DC 17 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 12 (EL 7)

⚡ **Chain Lightning Trap:** CR 7; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); no reset; spell effect (chain lightning, 11th-level wizard, 11d6 electricity to target nearest center of trigger area plus 5d6 electricity to each of up to eleven secondary targets, DC 19 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Once the PCs push or cut through the webs and past the trap:

This cavern is dark, and stretches out for at least fifty feet. Everything is covered with thin, stickly white threads.

If the PCs can look past fifty feet, or once they move forward, describe the rest of the room:

The sticky layer gets thicker further in the cavern, and to the sides, a large, thick web has formed. Strange lumps – like cocooned bodies - can be seen on the sides.

The bodies are all that remained of a number of smugglers that run into Lussier and his spiders.

Once PCs enter get here, they are close to finding out what is going on – but not before the castle gets a grip on them.

If the PCs have not experienced the dreams yet, go to Encounter 6. If they have (i.e. because they first entered area I), go to Encounter 8, and keep in mind that the PCs, in that case, have not been ensnared.

The end of the cavern continues into a new network of tunnels. These do not lead back to town. There is nothing to be found there. PCs planning to go deeper need to make a DC 15 Survival check to prevent getting lost. If lost, they spend half a day roaming until they come out in the Hollow Highlands, about an hour's walk from town.

I – KEEP DUNGEONS

These are the Keep's dungeons, where criminals were detained. It was cut off from the rest once the corridor towards it collapsed.

Continue at Encounter 9. It is advised that you run Encounter 6 before running this encounter.

K GALLEON'S CELL

This area, like area I, is described in Encounter 9.

L: TUNNEL

This is how the PCs enter the keep if they use the secret tunnel from the Queen's Halls. While it can be followed back to the Halls, unless the PCs know how to open the other end, they won't be able to get out this way.

Part of the tunnels' walls were badly damaged and caved in, opening up into the keep's well (area A).

To get out of the tunnel at the keep, a stone secret door led into the keep's cellar. Due to the force of the explosion when the keep was destroyed, that door was heavily damaged. It no longer functions, but the force broke it open wide enough for any creature of medium or smaller size to squeeze through. Squeezing through is a one round action for a medium sized creature, a standard action for a small creature, and a move-equivalent action for a creature of tiny or smaller size. The opening is normally too narrow for creatures of large or larger size. While the ooze from area F can squeeze through it with ease (as a move-equivalent action), they won't follow the PCs this far unless compelled in some way.

ENCOUNTER 6: DREAMS

By the time the PCs get here, they have been long enough in the dungeons to succumb to the castle.

This means they should have had to make at least two saves against the keep's intrusions. Unless the PCs made a few very strange calls the natural flow of the dungeon means this happens when they either enter the webbed cave (area H) or attempt to enter the dungeons (area I).

Every PC should roll a DC 30 + ½ APL Will save. Do not make known if a PC failed or not, but do write it down. The PC has been affected by the keep's haunts.

For the first affected PC to enter the room (even if he was affected earlier) read the following:

Your skin feels searing, blisteringly hot, as if it was hit by a sudden blast of heat. A faint but distinctive smell of burned flesh hits your nostrils – and for a moment it feels like your are smelling your own skin, burning away...

There is nothing wrong with the PC's skin even though it feels blistered. Nobody else feels the heat, and the feeling slowly subsides.

By now, all PCs feel the pressure of the castle. Read the following, regardless of whether PCs failed or not:

The walls seem to press up on you from all sides. It is as if you haven't slept for days. It is hard to shake off the urge to lay down your head and sleep.

Unaffected PCs are now fatigued, while affected PCs are exhausted. An exhausted character moves at half speed and takes a -6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. After 1 hour of complete rest, an exhausted character becomes fatigued (though time spend in the ruins does not count).

Let the PCs describe their initial reactions.

One round later, the PCs that failed all three saves (when entering the keep), fall unconscious on the floor.

On the second round, the PCs that failed two saves (when entering the ooze cavern, area F, or the guard room, area E), fall unconscious.

On the third round, the remaining PCs that failed one save falls unconscious.

Note that elves, or other creatures normally immune to sleep, have no immunity against this effect.

Those that didn't fall any save are now the only ones conscious. They won't be affected during this scenario, though by now, they feel a strange urge to sleep.

Obviously, PCs have several rounds to take action. If they are in room F, some of their actions may be to investigate the webs. See Encounter 8 for more information on their ensnarement. Note that the spiders do not emerge at this moment.

If all the PCs fall asleep: Once all PCs are asleep, run Encounter 7. While they sleep, the spiders drag them into their webs. When they wake, they find themselves entangled - in Encounter 8.

If one or more PCs stayed awake: It is possible that some PCs managed to hold off the haunting, and are still awake. These PCs have the opportunity to do something while the rest sleep.

Among the actions open to them, PCs can stand guard, try to wake or move the other PCs, or explore on their own.

Standing guard: As long as the PCs stand guard over the others in any area other than Area H, little will happen. Lusher may be aware of their presence, but won't try and retrieve bodies if the PCs haven't yet reached the room where he keeps his spider pets.

However, if PCs stand guard over their companions in area H, he won't pass up the opportunity. Allow the PCs some time to retreat. If they don't, Lusher sends in his spiders. His aim is to incapacitate, not kill – he wants to know how much the PCs know, and whether he has been compromised.

Run the combats as shown in Encounter 8, but the spiders ignore a PC once he or she is down (below 0 hp). Any PC that goes down enters the dreams. Lusher later stabilizes these PCs so he can question them.

Lusher won't reveal himself until his spiders won. If they loose, he flees. If he wins, he ties the overcome PCs – proceed to Encounter 8, and run it as if everyone was asleep.

Moving the others: PCs that are awake can attempt to revive the others or take them outside. Waking them is impossible as long as they are inside the castle. Anyone that is brought outside the castle walls can be woken normally, but by then likely already has experienced the dreams.

If a PC instantly teleports everyone outside, it is likely they did not get much of the dream – in that case, run the initial dream encounter and then break off the dream.

Anyone who awakens outside the castle is safe when he awakens. If PCs enter the castle again, they do not need to save again, but if they desire they can choose to enter the dream voluntarily.

Exploring: PCs who go off exploring may run into some serious trouble. Those who try to push beyond Room F run into Lusher and his spiders, who instantly attack. Run the combats as described above.

Meeting Marquesse: The PCs are not the only ones investigating the ruins. The sage Marquesse has for some days now determined that the keep is a source of information for her own investigations (see Appendix 1).

She has not yet dared enter the ruins, as she has conjectured that there may be monsters lurking – if not worse. She does, however, know much about the keep's intrusions. While she knows how to resist the keep, her skill of oneiromancy (dream magic) allows her to enter the keep's dreams voluntarily.

She has learned a bit more this way, but has not yet been able to get more than glimpses without help. With the PCs present, she hopes that she can ride with them on their dreams, and obtain more information.

Marquesse has paid some attention to the PCs, and (through her gather information skill) has learned their interest in the keep.

Some time after the PCs have entered the keep, Marquesse follows (using *dimension door* to get inside the keep grounds). From there, she enters the PCs dreams.

Normally, PCs meet Marquesse in the dream (see encounter 7, random encounter II). However, previous to entering the dreams, Marquesse tries to use a *message* spell to ascertain anyone is still awake.

Anyone awake will hear the following whisper:

“Hello, friend. Are you awake? I am using a message spell to contact you. Have your friends fallen asleep? Victim of the keep's mind? I can help you reach them.”

If PCs do not answer, Marquesse presumes all the PCs fell asleep. She then settles somewhere out of sight (in area B), and enters the dreams, hoping to experience the dream in full, and possibly dealing the PCs some advice.

If PCs react, Marquesse is surprised to find someone so strong of will. She is suitably impressed.

PCs likely have many questions for Marquesse. She is willing to answer some, though she is secretive of her true goal, as she doesn't fully trust the PCs. She also is not likely to admit that she needs the PCs asleep – she would rather not that the PCs learn that she is using them for her own gain.

See Encounter 7, random encounter II, for possible answers to questions. Take note that since she has only glimpsed the dreamscape, she does not at this moment know much of its properties, but can tell them when she is inside.

Marquesse attempts to convince the other PCs to join the dream, so they can 'aid their friends'. She can guide them there if they desire, and promises that this way, they can leave whenever they want. She honestly does not know if the PCs that failed their saves can, actually, leave the dream.

If the PCs do not seem eager, if they insist on waking their friends, or if they threaten her, Marquesse gives up, and ends the *message* spell. She then casts *alarm*, and enters the dreams.

If the PCs agree, she offers to meet them in the keep grounds, since she has to touch them to allow them to enter the dreams with her. She does not desire to enter the dungeons too deep at this moment, but is willing to compromise and meet at the bottom of the stairs (area D).

A woman in the mid 30s awaits your arrival. She is thin but still shapely, with long dark hair and a midnight blue dress. A broad belt of dark leather, hung with scrolls, gives her figure some more lift.

Her dark brown eyes take you in, questioningly, inviting, but yet on guard.

All APLs

☛ **Marquesse:** female human (Flan) sorcerer 8; hp 44; see Appendix 2.

Once the PCs accept, she casts *alarm*, then asks any PC willing to follow her to join hands. She then casts her oneiromancy spell, *dream walk*. Note that due to the unique circumstances in the keep, Marquesse does not need to be within 30 feet of a dreamer.

PCs that enter this way in a dream have a few advantages:

- Unlike those who failed their saves, the PCs can leave the dream by making a DC 15 Survival check as a standard action. This may allow them to avoid the final encounter. Of course, leaving means abandoning their fellow PCs to the dream, and without Marquesse they can't return. Those who have the Oneiromancy feat (like Marquesse) can make a Knowledge (the planes) check instead.
- The PCs form their own body upon entering the dream – they don't need a host. This has the advantage that they are not affected by their host's emotions.
- Unlike PCs who have a host, those who enter this way are treated as if they are not there at all – at least until they interfere.
- The PCs have dream versions of their equipment. However they still cannot use any of their magic items.

If the PCs followed Marquesse's suggestions and moved far enough away from the webs, they are safe from discovery by Lussher. They are not found and dragged to Area H and when they wake up are not entangled (as PCs dragged to area H are). Marquesse wakes up a few minutes after the PCs, so she may not be able to participate in a fight with Lussher's spiders.

ENCOUNTER 7: BLAST FROM THE PAST

A darkness has overwhelmed you. It's hot and dry, as if you are near a scorching flame. There is a buzz, which slowly rises in volume, until you realize it is a hundred voices muttering – talking – screaming... all at once.

And then, it is gone. Silence. Cool, almost cold, air brushes your skin. Beneath your feet, you feel smooth stone tiles. The sound of footsteps approach.

And you open your eyes.

The PCs have entered a dreamscape – a world made of dreams, not unlike a small pocket plane. Rules and suggestions for dreams are found in *Heroes of Horror*, though this scenario contains everything you need to run this encounter.

Carefully read Appendix 6 for the rules of the dreamscape in which the PCs have landed. The Appendix also lists the encounters in the castle.

Let not, initially, PCs know (or admit) they are in a dream. They are likely to find out soon enough.

For a map of the Keep (and a summary of the rooms), as it appears in this dream, see Appendix 5.

STARTING ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters are start encounters. They introduce the PCs to their hosts, and give a start from which to explore the keep.

You can have all affected PCs start together (in start Encounter I), or, if you have the time, you can select a few PCs for an alternate start encounter (Encounters II-IV). Note that you can easily bring people together again when needed (using the malleability of the dreamscape), though if you keep the encounters brief, you can have separate encounters for PCs it that works for your party.

PCs that entered with Marquesse can likewise start anywhere, but they don't gain host bodies (adapt their introduction text accordingly), and find that Marquesse has disappeared (she ends up elsewhere in the dream, and may be encountered again later).

All NPCs in the dreamscape can relate the following:

- The PCs are at Pelor's Hold, also known as Crystal Castle, on the battlements. The view is of Adder's Haven.
- It is autumn, Patchwall 27, 583CY. When the PCs enter, it is 10 in the morning (this rapidly increases in the chronological encounters).
- A PC who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (history) check realizes that is the day Adder's Haven was liberated, and Crystal Castle destroyed. If the PC makes DC 20, he or she also knows that the castle was destroyed at dusk, approximately 6 in the evening.

I – Guard Duty

The PCs become Great Kingdom Guards.

Location: Map #34 and #35

Time: 9:45 AM

While you still feel cold stone below your feet, you are no longer in the damp dungeons. As your eyes adjust at the light, you notice that you are standing near the battlements of the keep. How you got there is unknown, but you feel strange. Someone replaced your clothes, dressing you in ill-fitting scale mail.

Most strange is the sight. The town you look is recognizable as New Keep, but it is, somehow... different. It is smaller, and you see houses you didn't know existed. The Great Keep is only half constructed, and the bridge over the Pawluck is gone – there is only a flat rope-towed ferry.

But the strangest of all are the battlements. They are undamaged, untouched by the devastation. There are the sounds of marching, and, turning, you see the castle. But it is a ruin no more. Armed men are everywhere, wearing scales and tabards showing the sun of the Great Kingdom.

And most magnificent, rising above the castle, is a tower of such beauty it takes away your breath. It towers five floors above you, and as the sun rises at the horizon, leading in the dawn, it sparkles like crystal.

The PCs are at location 34 and 35 of the New Keep map (divide them over these locations as you wish). They are dressed as guards (unless they entered the dream with Marquesse's help). Several other guards are about, manning the battlements and looking over the castle. For statistics of the guards see Appendix 2 – All APLs.

The guards who are near the PCs are called Gastor (at area 34) and Perino (at area 35).

PCs are likely full of questions. They can attempt to ask the guards, who may likely be able to answer the more simple questions – though any questions related to why they are on the battlements, or why they are dressed like this, are met merely with laughter. Some questions may be odd (such as what year it is), but while the guards guffaw they answer these truthfully. Trying to explain the situation is futile – the guards don't believe the PCs tale, and otherwise seem to almost instantly forget what is being told.

PCs who followed Marquesse are not noticed by the guards at all – and they initially don't react to them. PCs can grab and shake a guard to get him to acknowledge their presence and answer questions, but after one or two answers their faces go blank, and they forget about the PCs again.

The guards can tell the following:

- The guards that host the PCs are Walker, Amarin, Pyek, Loudig, Slem, and Pryor. All are men (Stoan had almost exclusively men in his company).
- The guard's direct commander is lieutenant Alabor. He falls under captain Chullendra, who deals with

castle security. Chullendra is spoken off with fear. She is cruel and malicious, and has a penchant for torture.

- Captain Pryce is in charge of town forces. He is strict but fair.
- Captain Onys is in charge of men at the new keep and the town walls.
- The wizard Eberhast (officially a lieutenant, but never referred to that way) is commander Stoan's advisor on arcane matters. Stoan, however, is suspicious of magic. The two don't like each other.
- Lieutenant Veyn, a Hextorite cleric, takes care of 'spiritual' matters, but he has only just left the castle, to investigate commotions in the Queen's Halls.
- There have been some disturbances in town. Last night, there was an alarm raised when there was the sound of an explosion in the north district, where the dwarves that build the wall live. Nobody found anything though. The guards have been placed on alert since then.

For the PCs, there is likely not much they can do here, but they are soon relieved by a fresh quad, and sent to the main tower (the former ballroom, room #18) for instructions.

Let the PCs decide what to do, and then go to the next encounter.

If you have PCs starting in other encounters, you can direct them to the courtyard (or miraculously turn up there), so they can meet each other after you run the other starting encounters.

II – The Lady in The Tower

The PC becomes Annes, servant girl of the imprisoned Viscountess Yafanelle Donner.

Location: Map #29

Time: 9:45 AM

The darkness makes place for a soft red glow. Slowly, the surrounding become clear, and you can see that the slow comes from daylight falling through the thick red curtains in front of a window before you.

You're upright, holding something. A... tray? Yes, with a fine porcelain teapot, steaming, a faint hint of mint in the air.

Looking to the right, you see a woman, in a simple, dark blue dress, a bonnet on her head, also holding a tray.

"Annes, will you serve me my tea?"

The voice comes from behind you, and you automatically turn, as if you are not in full control of your own body.

The woman behind you is an amazingly beautiful half elf woman with long blond hair, who looks at you curiously. She is sitting on the edge of a large bed, wearing a nightgown, but you only register it half... for as you turn, the woman next to you follows suit. Or... are you following her? For a

moment, confusion sets in, and then you realize that there is no woman there.

It's a mirror.

The involuntary reaction of the PC to turn is caused by the PC's host - a servant girl named Annes.

Annes is an Adder's Haven local, who has a great admiration for Yafanelle, and who fears Stoan tremendously. You should play up these background emotions when appropriate.

Annes is the chambermaid of lady Yafanelle, viscount Donner's wife, who is a prisoner at the castle. Yafanelle resides in room #29 on the map (this is where the PC currently is). Annes herself sleeps on a rickety bed behind a curtain in room #28.

The half-elf woman that speaks is, of course, Yafanelle. She is not nearly as beautiful as depicted here, but Annes's own insecurity makes her look amazingly beautiful and awe-inspiring.

For more info on talking to Yafanelle, see random encounter IV.

Once the PC has finished talking, Yafanelle asks 'Annes' to help her dress, then sends her out to 'arrange breakfast'.

Whether the PC follows up is up to him (and available time), but this does allow the PC to get out and meet his friends in the courtyard.

III – The Hub of the Castle

The PC becomes Beck, as stable boy.

Location: Map #6

Time: 9:45 AM

You feel the cool darkness on your skin, but somehow the dungeons are not the same. When your eyes adjust to the darkness, you see that you are in a different place.

It's a cellar. Crates and barrels around you are neatly stacked, and there is a rack of wine in front of you. A rickety staircase leads upstairs.

Your hand is on a bottle, as if to pull it out.

A woman's voice drifts down the stairs. "Hurry up with that wine, you stupid boy!"

The PC's host is Beck, a stable boy. Beck is an unassuming youth, so others often ignore him – an advantage if you want to snoop around.

Beck has just been sent down to the cellar (room #6 on the map) to get a bottle of wine for the afternoon meal.

The only exit out of the cellar are the stairs, which lead into the kitchen (room #15).

See random encounter V for a description of the kitchen and the servants, and what they know. After describing the kitchen, the woman (Sella the cook) turns towards the PC:

The large, fat woman glares down at you. A strange, unnerving fear comes over you.

"Where is the wine?"

Sella's imposing demeanor always frightens Beck. His feeling causes the strange fear (which the PC can shake off but still lingers in the background).

Sella expects 'Beck' to have brought the wine. If he did, she grabs it out, and shoos him outside. If he didn't, she yells at him for being a useless good-for-nothing, but then goes strangely quite, only to shift gear and shoo him out.

The PC need not obey, of course: he can stay a while to talk to the servants – Sella ignores the disobedience.

Once the PC leaves, he can join his friends – now guards – at the courtyard.

CHRONOLOGICAL ENCOUNTERS

The encounters listed below are in chronological order. How you get the PCs to be present in an encounter depends on the PCs actions.

If you are pressed for time, you can select encounters as they occur and place the PCs – or some of them – there whenever you desire, even when a PC merely blinks. This is a dream, after all, and you need not follow the normal rules of 3 dimensional space: if a PC moves from one room to another, this may be an excellent time to move him or her to the next encounter – even if that encounter takes place in an entirely different location than that of the PC.

Of course, if you have a bit of time, you may initially let the PCs determine how they move through the castle. If they don't follow the hints provided in their starting encounters, you can always force the issue later.

Each encounter starts with a summary of what happens. You can use this to ad-lib if the actions of PCs interrupt the normal flow of events.

It follows with a suggested location –in most cases you can easily change the location to anywhere in the castle if it helps the flow of the story. It then lists the time the event takes place (though as time flows relatively, this is something the PCs are not likely to notice).

It concludes with a description of the encounter, along with some special rules that may come in play (i.e. when the party interferes).

I – Guards on Alert

An alarm is sounded. There are riots in the streets, and guards are dispatched from the castle to deal with rebellious forces.

Location: Map #5, 7-12, 16-18 (grounds, battlements, halls and former ballroom)

Time: 10:00 AM

Over the walls, to the north, comes the sudden sound of a horn. It's a low wail, which is abruptly cut off. The sound causes some commotion from the guards. A number get up on the battlements, while several others haste themselves to the courtyard, where a mustached man is barking his men in order.

The man is Captain Pryce, who is reacting to the sound by calling his men together. Soon after, a squad is sent into the town to investigate.

PCs who ask about may learn, from guards or servants, that the alarm may mean a riot. There haven't been riots recently – the people are quite subdued – but the explosion last night may have shaken up some people.

As the day progresses, the stories get wilder (speaking of mass riots, wild animals, and armed rebels), and at noon it is official: several armed men have penetrated the walls and are in the town. At this point, a large amount of guards is sent out to deal with the intruders.

II - Reports

Stoan discusses rumors of invading forces. He orders the arrest of the dwarf architect Meradin, and questions Alabor about Galleon's wife.

Location: Map #18 (Former Ballroom)

Time: 11:00 AM

The hall you have entered once has been a great ballroom, with large, glass stained windows from floor to ceiling bathing the room in light.

Now, it looks like a war zone. Racks with arms and armor line the walls. A large table holds a sheet of rough paper, on which the outline of the town is drawn, divided in sections marked with pieces of what looks like some kind of chess set, in black and white. A group of soldiers move about, collecting swords and crossbows, and heaving themselves in heavy mail embossed with the symbol of a sun.

A towering man of fearsome aspect paces the room, sweeping a cold aura of terror in his wake. Two other men, with the regalia of officers, tremble under the terror of his voice.

The former ballroom has been converted by Stoan into an armory. Most of the arms are kept here and distributed to his forces.

The towering man is, of course, Stoan. The two men are Captain Pryce and Lieutenant Alabor.

The following is the conversation that takes place (according to the memories of Alabor and Pryce). Note that the PCs can butt in at any time, so you may want to pace the reading so to give them an opportunity.

Stoan: Nothing??! You found nothing at the Hill?

Pryce: All we found is in the report, sir.

Stoan: Bah! Nothing I didn't know! No arrests, no suspects, no witnesses! I put you in control of this town! I expect results!

Pryce: The dwarves don't cooperate well, sir. We are interrogating the architect's assistant, but he has let nothing slip so far.

Stoan: Keep him confined. And bring Mergadin before me. IF you can find men capable enough to actually find him!

Alabor: Mergadin? But sir, he built the walls! He is on our side! Galleon trusts him!

Pryce (to Alabor): And how trustworthy is your friend, then? Good buddies with this dwarf? He hired those men! Who did he hire them for, eh?

Alabor (hissing): What are you implying about my friend, Pryce?

Pryce: Oh, I think you can fill in the gaps! That wife of his, moving about the place... interfering...

Alabor: Galleon is a loyal man! He would never betray us!

Stoan: I think I'll be the judge of that! Pryce, leave us!

Pryce: But... Yes, sir.

Pryce leaves the room.

Stoan: Now, about your friend. He has a wife from this town?

Alabor: Yes, sir. About a year ago. I was his witness. Not a remarkable girl. A bit plain, but Fenrus.. ehm... Galleon was keen on her. They had a good rapport. She helped him out with everything.

Stoan: I see...

Alabor: Sir?

Stoan: Bring me Galleon as soon as he enters the castle.

Stoan turns abruptly, and marches out of the room, leaving Alabor staring at the retreating man in fear.

If PCs try to converse with Alabor, or Pryce before he leaves, any ongoing conversation stops, and the men shift their attention to the PCs. Their answers are short and to the point, and they may give the impression that the PCs are asking improper questions, but they answer nonetheless.

For more information about Pryce, see Random Encounter III, below.

A PC who can make a DC 20 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check, knows that Meradin and some of his men had been convinced by the Veil of the Sun to introduce a weakness in the walls, allowing the rebels to sneak into the town. Characters from the Splintered Suns meta-region gain a +5 circumstance bonus on this check.

A PC who can make a DC 30 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check knows the obscure story of how the dwarves, at the very last moment, uncovered a traitor in their midst. The treacherous dwarf was about to reveal the plans in exchange for a handsome amount of money. He was killed in a fight, but managed to set off the explosives, which killed several of his attackers. The event almost caused the invasion to fail.

Talking to Alabor: Alabor can tell most of what Pryce can tell (except Pryce's suspicions), and the following as well:

- He is the lieutenant in charge of protecting the Keep.
- His friend, Fenrus Galleon, is a lieutenant who was given the assignment to oversee the construction of

the wall round the town. The wall was to be built by the dwarves of North Hill, under the lead of the dwarf architect Meradin.

- Galleon married a girl from this town, about a year ago. Since then, she has aided him in his work.
- Alabor is afraid some of the men Galleon hired may turn out to be saboteurs. If that is the case, he is in big trouble.
- Alabor has his own secrets. His wife Saeen has introduced him to the faith of Pelor after their marriage. He has since turned from the worship of Hextor. He knows the commanding forces won't appreciate this much.

Special: Stoan never died at the castle. As such, his presence in the dream is based on memories of the ones that died. He does not have an actual description – PCs perceive him as a terrifying commander, a fearsome man – there are not more details. PCs also feel a sense of respect bordering on fear.

These are not their own emotions – they feel the emotions of their hosts. However, anyone who attacks Stoan or tries to interfere with him must make a DC 15 + ½ APL Will save or be shaken for the remainder of the encounter. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Since Stoan is not 'real', he does not respond to the PCs and attacks or magic can't affect him – it merely passes through him. Stoan ignores the PCs, as if they aren't there, even when attacked. Depending on how you want to flow the game, guards present (up to 12) may attack the PCs. Stoan either continues as if nothing happens – even if battle erupts around him – or he fades away (which may mean the PCs miss what happened).

III – The Note Books

Galleon searches the archives for the items – which turn out to be notebooks, and claims them.

Location: Map #43

Time: 3:00 PM

You have entered a small, stuffy room. It is hot in here. A small window brings in some meager light from the outside, casting it on a lectern, where a fat man is busy penning on a scroll, muttering under his breath.

He looks up as a blond man enters, a young handsome man with a trimmed moustache.

"Ah, hello Lieutenant Galleon. How can I help you?"

Dreyfes, the fat man, is the keep's accountant. He is currently engrossed in the recording of last month's expenses, and is, despite his politeness, not really interested in what anyone is doing here – aside from keeping him from his work.

Lieutenant Galleon is here to obtain a number of notebooks – Alderon's notes. He is doing this on the request of his wife, but tries to hide this – which, lucky for him, isn't hard.

The young man looks about uneasy.

"Ah, Dreyfes. I need some eh... old records. Halls' notes."

The man named Dreyfes frowns.

"Notes from the halls? Here? I don't think I know of any."

Galleon nods, "Yes, they were, well, confiscated, years ago, during the riots?"

"Those?" Dreyfes raises an eyebrow. "There's not anything of interest in those. What do you need those for?"

It does not look like the question was asked out of actual interest, but it unnerves the lieutenant.

"Ah... uhm... something to do with the eh... tax records of the construction. Those were kept at the Halls, so eh... we are just checking up on stuff."

Galleon looks uneasy, and hardly convincing, but the fat man doesn't seem to notice. He merely shrugs, having apparently not even listened.

"They are in that cupboard. Take them if you want them."

Once Galleon learns where the notebooks are, he digs them up, briefly leafs through them, and then heads off.

If PCs interrupt the conversation, the NPCs take time to answer questions, after which they pickup where they were interrupted. PCs also have ample time to talk to Galleon once he has the books.

Dreyfes is a simple accountant who has nothing to tell (except about tax records). He has read through the notebooks a bit, and knows they are a diary of some sort, but it does not seem to contain much interesting info.

Galleon knows quite a bit more, and if the PCs sympathize with him, he may reveal the following:

- He is Lieutenant Fenrus Galleon. He falls under the command of captain Onys. He currently commands the guards on the city walls.
- He was in charge of the wall's construction, taking care of its protection, and keeping an eye on all aspects that dealt with security, including the hiring of workers.
- He is collecting a set of notebooks. The books were once property of a man named Alderon Musz, who was executed two years ago when he led a revolt.
- He is collecting the notebooks on suggestion of his wife.
- Two years ago, he married a local girl. Her family didn't like it much, and didn't attend the wedding. He only ever met her sister, and didn't really delve into it.
- Last night, his wife confessed her true allegiance, because she needed his help. Galleon was shocked to find out that she had not married him for love. She was an agent of the Jade Mask, sent to infiltrate the military structure.
- Galleon believes that due to her influence, he may have hired people that sabotaged the walls – though

he doesn't know specifics. (With a DC 15 Knowledge (history) or Bardic Lore check a PC can recall that the wall contains a secret entrance inside the town – and that that entrance was used during the liberation).

- Galleon helps her because he loves her. He does not know what else to do, but fears his treason will come out and be the death of both of them.
- He does not know what is important about the books. His wife says it is 'personal'.

If the PCs ask for the notebooks, they can look at them. They seem to be filled with uninteresting stories on the weather, work, family life, and especially gardening, with many notes on attempts to grow the finest roses and magnolias in the Halls' gardens.

The last page of one book seems unfinished. Hand over Player's Handout #1 if the PCs find it.

If a PC decides to keep the notebook, Galleon protests, but otherwise doesn't stop the PCs, and you can let a PC hang on to the books until encounter IV.

Special: PCs with loyalties to Ahlissa may find that delivering Galleon to the authorities is the right move. Galleon, however, does not submit without a fight.

Should violence break out, Dreyfes' action is to run. If the PCs allow him, he disappears. Galleon fights the PCs till the 'death' if attacked, but he can't actually die – If the PCs 'kill' him he just goes unconscious.

In that case, run Encounter IV, but change it so it appears that the PCs captured Galleon. You may have to find a way to move the PCs to the well – even if this means forcefully changing the scene.

If Galleon manages to flee, and the PCs follow him, lead them to Encounter IV (though if you have time you can throw a random encounter in during the chase, to keep the players on their toes). A meeting with Marquesse would be a possibility.

IV – The Arrest

Galleon waits at the well to give the notebooks to his wife – but she doesn't show.

Instead, Stoan turns up, who has him arrested for treason. Stoan shows him a ring – which was taken from his wife's finger – and casts it into the well. He then orders Galleon to be taken away.

Location: Map #8 (well)

Time: 3:30 PM

The courtyard is filled with guards assembling for duty, stable boys readying horses, and servants running to and fro.

By now, everyone in the castle knows that rebel forces have entered town. In the hustle and bustle of the crowd, just one other officer would seem to go unnoticed – except by you. Somehow, your gaze is drawn to the blond man, standing near the well, as if waiting for something. He seems very uncomfortable.

"Fenrus Galleon." – a sudden voice booms over the square and the temperature seems to drop several degrees.

Commander Stoan strides forth through the gathered guards, more terrible than ever.

Galleon freezes, his face etched with fear. Several guards flank Stoan, and at a gesture they move forward, their weapons drawn.

This may be a moment where PCs desire to interrupt and defend Galleon. If so, let them (see the special section below).

All APLs

➤ **Dreamscape Keep Guard (4):** Male human (Oeridian) War2; hp 12; see Appendix 2.

If they don't, Galleon does not fight. He surrenders, knowing he can't win.

The officer is quickly surrounded. There is no resistance as he is grabbed, and disarmed.

Stoan moves forwards, menacing.

"Waiting for someone? I can tell you she will not show... But perhaps we should, first, see what this is all about, shall we?"

If any PC at this point has the notes, Stoan demands that they hand it over. If the PC refuses, there is a moment of silence, in which an irrational feeling of fear washes over the PC – but as sudden as it came, it passes, and then Stoan continues as described below, as if nothing happens.

If the PC doesn't have the notes, Stoan orders a guard to search Galleon (a PC could step in to do so if he desires). The guard finds three small notebooks, which he then hands to Stoan.

The commander looks at his captive with utter loathing.

"Traitor!" He snarls. "Defector! An enemy of the state! What is it that makes it worth it to betray the Great Kingdom? To allow entrance in our city to anarchist scum?"

If he has been given the notes, he now takes a moment to leaf through them.

His eyes blaze with fury. He eyes Galleon with loathing.

"I should have known the ungrateful wenches of this place would corrupt the hearts of our men. Was it love, she promised you? Was it lust that drove you to please her? What weakness! Pathetic! You make me sick."

He pulls something out of his pocket, and holds it up.

"I like a bit of spirit in a woman," he says softly. "It gives me more pleasure in breaking her."

In his hand, held inches from Galleon's face, glitters a ring.

"I should have recognized her. Your wife. I saw her before. At the execution of the traitor Alderon. His... daughter, well. It will give me great pleasure to do to her what I did to her father. Let us see if she can keep as silent as he did. But first... let's end this sham of a marriage."

And with that, he tosses the ring towards the well.

A PC can catch the ring as Stoan tosses it by making a touch attack against AC 18, or try to dig it out of the well later.

The ring is the same one as found under Encounter 5, Area A.

After this, Stoan gestures.

The guards holding Galleon grab him by the shoulders, and drag him off. He looks fearful behind him, at the well where the ring disappeared.

Galleon is taken to the dungeons, where he is thrown in a cell.

Special: As described in encounter II, Stoan is not 'real'.

PCs that have some manner of allegiance to Ahlissa may have tried to capture Galleon earlier. In that case, you may desire to adapt this scene so they come out as the guards that caught Galleon. Instead of using the events as described here, the PCs come upon the courtyard to find Stoan ready to take Galleon (and the notebooks) from their hands.

It is also possible that PCs try to free Galleon. If they do, let them. Stoan simply fades away when combat breaks out.

If Galleon is freed, he disappears at a later point – somewhere before Encounter V – preferably unobtrusively (i.e. during a flight), but he could be gone in a blink of an eye if needed. Do, however, allow PCs to question him if they desire. Talking to Galleon is described in Encounter III.

V – The Interrogation

Stoan interrogates Galleon, confronting him with his treason. Alabor tries to defend his friend, but Stoan lashes out in anger, and kills him.

Location: Map #4

Time: 17:00 PM

This scene takes place in the dungeons. Encounter IV is likely to prompt the PCs to go there, i.e. by following Galleon or Stoan. It is also possible to have Marquesse appear to give them a push in the right direction (see Random Encounter II). If all else fails you can also just dump them there.

The following starts once Stoan arrives at Galleon's cell:

"So," the commander says, as he steps into the tiny cell that makes up Galleon's prison. "This is what becomes of traitors."

The former officer is on the floor, his wrist in shackles that are chained to the wall. He looks lost, desperate.

"Please..." he whispers "Don't.. hurt her."

Several guards appear, their lieutenant, Alabor, looks shocked at his friend in the cell.

"No!" he exclaims.

"Oh, yes," Stoan says, towering over the man, "This man is a saboteur. A traitor."

He holds up his hand, which contain a set of note books.

PCs that actually had held on to these books now realize that they aren't holding them any more.

"These were found in his possession. Notes, obtained from the anarchist Alderon Musz. Nonsense stories... are they? Why are they important, Galleon?"

The man on his knees shakes his head.

"I... I don't know."

Stoan narrows his eyes.

"You don't know? Your caring loving wife did not trust you with this information? How ironic. Duped, by the one you love?"

The man looks up, a bit of confusion on his face.

"You... believe me?"

Stoan looks impassive as he continues.

"Oh yes. Of course, it does not matter. You will die anyway. As will your wife."

At this revelation, Alabor steps forward, horror on his face.

"But sir... You can't..."

Stoan turns to him in fury.

"I can't? I bloody well can, lieutenant!" The last word is spat out. "But maybe I should make it clearer. Maybe I should show where your loyalty should lie. I ordered you to bring me Galleon. Is this man above the law, that you did not respond to it at once?"

He unfastens a wicked looking, heavy flail, and whips it through the air.

"Or maybe we are facing more than one traitor?"

PCs can try to interfere at this point. They can try to block Stoan (in which case he hits them, dealing 43 points of damage with a critical hit – the hit that would normally have killed Alabor). They can also use another trick (such as teleporting Alabor out, making him invisible, etc).

If they don't the scene continues as follows:

Alabor's face is now edged in terror.

"No! Sir! I have been loyal! I have been faithful! I..."

"Faithful? To what authority? To what god?"

The man swallows. Instinctively, his hands go up to chest, touching something invisible below his armor.

"Mercy..."

It's his last word. The flail connects with the man's head, throwing him against the prison wall. He slowly slides down, his eyes still open.

"That is what I think of mercy," Stoan snarls. He looks down at Galleon, who only stares blankly at his dead friend.

"You will not be long. I already signed the papers. Maybe, while awaiting the axe, you desire to read up on your wife's secrets."

With that, he tosses the notebooks in the straw in front of the prisoner.

With a sneer, Stoan turns, and steps out of the cell.

At this point, Stoan leaves. If a PC follows him, he heads upstairs to room #18, where he briefly meets up with the wizard Eberhast and Pryce before he leaves the castle, towards the Keep. Following him outside the castle is impossible.

Special: This is likely the encounter where the PCs can cause the most mayhem. They can fight almost anyone here except Stoan. Smart PCs, using their abilities against the weak dream guards, could easily save everyone – quick thinkers may even prevent Alabor from being killed if they know to get him out of harm's way.

Stoan is untouchable as in previous encounters. If a fight erupts, he moves through the battle towards Alabor to kill him. Once he kills him, or when he is prevented from doing so, he tosses the notebooks to the floor and fades away.

Resolve the remainder of a fight as the dice fall, and let PCs rescue whoever they manage... in a few minutes it does not matter any more.

Saving Alabor earns the PC one extra use of the 'Never Forget' favor on the AR.

VI – The Invasion

The rebel forces break through, coming up through the kitchen cellars. Fighting starts, and then an enormous explosion shatters the tower.

Location: Starts at Map #6 (cellar), continuing to 8-18, 19 (1st and 2nd floor of the castle)

Time: 17:50 PM

Noise from the courtyard penetrates to your location. Shouting, like arguments, at first, hard to make out, but then the shouting turns to cries of panic, and the clash of steel on steel can be heard.

The 'rebels' – Viscount Donner and a group of men loyal to him – have entered the keep, using the secret tunnel from the Queen's Halls. The PCs are likely to quickly run into skirmishes in the Tower's halls. The two forces initially clash in the keep's courtyard, with the invaders coming up through the kitchen, but the battles slowly continues up the battlements and into the main tower, until it has spread to the first and second floors.

The PCs can easily get out of any building – occasionally a rebel may assault them, but one warrior is

likely easy to deal with. There are no concentrated efforts made to fight the PCs if they focus on getting outside. PCs may also decide to stay and fight, but the number of opponents seems endless, and lingering is a bad idea - time is running out. On top of that, PCs that get 'killed' while engaged in battle do not rise again - they are unconscious until the end of the dream.

One potential thread is the mage Eberhast (see Random Encounter I). Only use this if you have some time to run an extra encounter.

The wizard's spirit does not rest well and attacks everyone in sight. PCs eager to stop him may try so - but obviously this means placing themselves close to the blast area. Should PCs decide to fight him, Eberhast tosses a number of his more impressive spells at them, before he decides to flee.

All APLs

✦ **Eberhast:** male human (Oeridian) wiz9; hp 46; see Appendix 2.

If the PCs are unable to incapacitate him in two rounds, Eberhast prepares to teleport away, but gets interrupted when Kars, his assistant, attacks him from behind, disrupting his spell. The next round, as he turns towards his assistant for vengeance, the *delayed blast fireball* goes off, killing him and everyone in sight (see below).

PCs that get outside see the following scene:

The courtyard is in utter chaos. Kingdom soldiers and leather-armored humans and elves - some in the green of the Rieuwood - fight each other over the space.

A young man, not even in his twenties, single-handedly strikes down two men in front of him, but others step in his place, bloodlust in their eyes.

One of the men suddenly collapses, as a young dark-haired woman in chainmail suddenly appears out of thin air, striking him down with her mace.

At the other end of the battlefield, you can spot a half-elf woman, obviously not a combatant, holding a young girl. The men around her seem to ignore her, but she has no chance of getting through, and instead slowly backs to the wall.

The gate is shut - there seems to be no way out, as more men burst from the kitchen to fight the soldiers.

Most men are simple warriors, though a few special forces are amongst those that broke into the castle.

The young man is Kahn Donner, the viscount's son. The viscount himself is in the kitchen building, having moved up to the upper floor in order to get access to the Maiden tower - unaware that his wife is in the courtyard.

The dark haired woman is the Hall's Guide, Timma Fyuro - before she became the Hall's lead priestess.

The half-elf woman is, of course, Yafanelle Donner and her daughter - the PCs may have already met her.

As the battle continues to rage, both Kahn and Timma continue to fight their way towards the tower. They are too occupied with fighting soldiers to notice Yafanelle.

Yafanelle herself retreats to the wall, trying to shield her daughter from harm.

Let the PCs act as they want. They normally have 5 rounds to do something before the explosion goes off. They may try to fight their way through the battle to get out in time, or save people, even though you can't change history. This is a very fatalistic encounter: PCs should know what is about to happen, but there is simply nothing they can do to prevent it.

Marquesse, if she is somehow still with the party, takes this time to leave the dream.

Once the castle explodes, read or paraphrase the following - adjust to account for PCs actions where needed (especially when they attempt to shield Yafanelle):

It feels like you are moving through water. Everything around you seems to slow through a crawl, as if time comes to a halt.

There is shouting from the tower, but it is hard to make out... do they call for you to run? You can't make it out, as a strange hum, like something vibrating, drowns out the voices. People - soldier and servant, guard and invader, men and women turn towards the sound, to look at the great crystal tower. It towers high above you, glowing red in the downing sun.

From the corner of your eyes, you see the dark haired woman start to cast a spell - the half-elf lady draws her child close, shielding it with her body as she looks at the tower in fear. A door in the centre, smaller tower opens, revealing a large man with a drooping moustache, rushing out, towards the woman, but he moves as slowly as you, as if in slow motion.

The tower explodes.

A giant fireball shatters the glass, breaks through the stone, and cascades over the crowd. Several people are hurled out of the glass tower, plummeting to their deaths. The men closest to the towers are almost instantly incinerated, save for a select few people clustered around the dark haired woman, where a sudden wall of force shields the few around her.

Glass and debris fly everywhere, knocking out and slashing others. You feel glass cutting you, fire enveloping you.

A shard of glass catches your eye. It hurled through the air, down towards the lady, whose dress is almost ripped to shreds by the fiery blast. She looks up, her hair scorched, her child beneath her. The glass hits her, slicing her throat, and, without even a sound, she topples forward, her body still over her daughter.

A harrower cry escapes the lips of the mustached man that was running towards her. He is

badly scorched, but yet runs towards her, his arms outstretched.

And then the pain in your own body becomes too much. The world spins.

And then all is dark.

Note it down if PCs protect or save Yafanelle or her daughter (Yafanelle died protecting Elia with her body). They may gain her spirit's gratitude – even if their protection was, ultimately, in vain.

Special: Timma Fyuro, Elia Donner, and Kahn Donner are unaffected by anything the PCs do, as they merely exist in the memory of the Keep's spirits. They simply won't react to the PCs – hence pointing out Yafanelle won't make them change their course. If the PCs desire to 'save' Yafanelle, they have to do so themselves.

PCs fleeing find it almost impossible to do so – it is hard to maneuver in the throng of battle, and the gates are shut. The moment any of the PCs manages to open the gate (possibly through magic) or the secret tunnel (fighting their way through other people), the castle blows up (even if 5 rounds have not yet passed).

Flying or teleportation won't help – the PCs can't leave the keep's grounds, and either get turned around or end up in random location in one of the towers.

The only exceptions are PCs who arrived with Marquesse. They can leave the dream in time before the blast, by making a DC 15 Survival check as a standard action.

Unfortunately for the others, 'dying' in the blast may also have some repercussions when they wake – anyone who was killed in the dream (including due to the blast) need to make a DC 15 + ½ APL Will save or suffer 1d4 Wis and 1d4 Cha damage. If PCs work to somehow insulate themselves against the blast (with magic, shelter, or other means), you can waive this save as long as the PCs did not get killed elsewhere in the dream – while they still 'die', the trauma is less severe.

VII - The Dead (optional)

Aftermath.

Location: Map #8

Time: 18:30 PM

Darkness. Pain. Trouble breathing, like something pressing on your chest.

In the distance, you hear voices. A woman.

"Mistress Peyt!"

"Timma. Did you find it?"

"No, mistress. We found the archives – or what was left of it. Much is burned, but I am certain it wasn't there. Someone took it."

"It must still be here. Have people search. Covertly."

"Yes, mistress. Though it will be difficult. People are scared... there is... something... about this place... voices... And... this feeling of... despair..."

There is a small, hesitating pause.

"What is the matter, Timma?"

"I was thinking, mistress. All these dead. All these wounded. The ruins.... The pain... Is this victory... is it worth it?"

The other woman is silent for a moment. An intake of breath indicates she is about to answer, but then another voice, much closer, cuts her off.

"Mistress Fyuro! This one is still alive. He is..."

And then all goes silent.

The voices were those of Timma Fyuro and Evia Peyt. Peyt was the former leader of the Queen's Halls. She resigned seven years ago, handling Timma Fyuro the reigns.

Members of the Queen's Halls, or anyone making a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) or Bardic Lore check knows who Timma Fyuro is. A DC 25 Knowledge (religion) or Bardic Lore a PC is needed to know about Evia Peyt.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Each of the below encounters provides additional information regarding one individual NPC that can be encountered in the castle. You can use these encounters if you have enough time to space the scenario a bit, and if the PCs are inquisitive.

Most of these encounters can be run at any time, and almost anywhere – some can also be used to expand the chronological encounters.

All encounters are optional, though it is advised you run the encounter with Marquesse, especially if the PCs remain clueless.

I – Eberhast

The mage Eberhast talks to his assistant about dealing with riots in the streets... and heralds the disaster he is to wreck.

Location: Anywhere in the castle

A large man dressed in dark blue robes marches through the corridors, followed by a young man in a similar lighter outfit.

The man is massive – broad shouldered and muscled – though he is obviously not a soldier. He has short cropped black hair, and large sideburns. The young man, whose face shows several bruises, is hurrying after him, having some difficulty to stick to the man's side.

The man stops to look out over the castle.

The man is Eberhast, the wizard assigned to Stoan. He is a violent man, who bullies the people around him. With Stoan, who is suspicious of magic, holding him back, he outs his frustrations by abusing his assistant, Kars.

All APLs

➤ **Eberhast:** male human (Oeridian) wiz9; hp 46; see Appendix 2.

➤ **Kars:** male human (Oeridian) wizi; hp 7; see Appendix 2.

Eberhast despises his position. He is loyal to the throne but believes himself a better commander than Stoan. He knows that forces are in town, but has no desire to actually stop them yet, or even inform Stoan. Rather, he plans to kill as many of the rebels as possible when they arrive at the castle – if it takes out some of his allies, then that's just too bad.

"There," he says, "the town is in riot, forces are up and about to undo our reign. And yet Stoan has us believe we can keep them quiet."

Remember, boy, you cannot merely keep people down with fear. You need to have the means to put them down. To keep them quiet. A few well-placed magical compulsions go a long way, but better yet... is a show of force. If Stoan would let me have my way it would be a lot quieter down there, I can tell you."

PCs who approach may find – possibly to their surprise – that Eberhast reacts to them.

Despite what people think (and what the PCs may have read), Eberhast died in the castle. His assistant in fact, struck him from behind after he placed the *delayed blast fireball* spell that would destroy the castle – a payback for years of abuse. Nobody found much of his body, as it was almost entirely destroyed when the castle blew up.

Eberhast spirit is angry and vengeful. Unlike any other people encountered, he is not at all eager to talk to the PCs.

PCs should handle him with some care. If they annoy him with too many questions, or try to be intimidating, he lashes out, and attacks them with his spells. At lower APLs, he'll be impossible to defeat, but it is fairly easy for the PCs to retreat, as he doesn't pursue.

The only question Eberhast answers is if the PCs ask him about how he would stop the rebels. He may even take a standard action during combat to gloat about it:

"Ah... I have something special planned. Oh, let them come, these rebels, these scum. They'll walk right into my little trap... I have the spell right here" – he taps a scroll at his side – "to deal with them. Oh yes... delayed spells are so much fun."

If the PCs defeat Eberhast, they'll find the scroll unreadable – it's an arcane spell scroll, but *read magic* doesn't work (this is because nobody in the castle really knew what was on the scroll). PCs may deduce that the spell was the *delayed blast fireball* that destroyed the castle. They can take the scroll, but it won't change things.

Kars doesn't dare talk to the PCs – even if his master is defeated. However, if they ask him about his bruises or Eberhast's violent nature, his eyes get a strange gleam, and he add:

"One day... one day. I will show him. I'll kill him. One day."

If combat should break out, Kars stands by and does nothing.

II – Marquesse

The PCs meet Marquesse.

Location: Anywhere in the castle

A woman stands near the glass outer wall of the castle, looking out over the town below. She has long, dark hair, and wears a silky black dress. There is something odd about her. She seems entirely out of place.

"Sad," she says, and you realize she is talking to you, even though she is staring outside. "to know that when dusk falls, all this will be destroyed."

She then turns towards you.

"And there is nothing we can do about it."

This is Marquesse, an oneiromancer investigating the shards for their past. By the time the PCs meet her in the dream she has already deduced that she might learn more from the notes that Fenris Galleon took.

Marquesse is here partly to help the PCs – but mostly, she needs the PCs to safely enter the dreamscape. While she does not wish the PCs harm, she is a bit of a manipulator, hoping to steer them so she can experience the dream up till the end.

at his end, she answers any questions the PCs may have to the best of her capabilities.

Q. Who are you?

A. "My name is Marquesse. I am originally from Kalstrand. I am at home in the world of magic, but dreams, specifically, are my domain."

Marquesse asks the name of the PC that asks the question.

Q. Where is your body right now?

A. "I am in the keep, like you. My abilities allow me to enter your dream, and assist you, if you will assist me."

Q. Are you alone?

A. "I have my companions, at times, but right now, I am alone. I am sure that anyone who would follow me here would fall to the powers of this place, and get lost in nightmares."

Marquesse asks who the party's members are.

Q. Why are you here?

A. "I was looking into the cause of recent murders – a few roguish fellows – smugglers – were lifted from the waters of the river some days ago, and research led me to seek underground. Still, if the murderers are here, they are not natural – this place does something to your mind. Well, you can see the result."

Marquesse at this point does not reveal the true reasons she is here – she does not trust the PCs that much, and also doesn't feel it would be wise to let on that the dreams of an insane gnome led her here. A Sense Motive check opposed by her Bluff check (+18 modifier) reveals she is withholding something.

Obviously, Marquesse also wants to know what the PCs are doing here. While she has heard about the missing teens, she has never connected them to the murders she was investigating, and so never spent much thought on it.

Still, it may explain how she originally managed to catch the first glimpses. It may have been Eleonaera dreaming that allowed it.

She is careful in revealing that information, as she doesn't wish to alert the PCs to the fact that she needs them to walk the dream.

She is quite sure the girl is not dreaming at this point though – she would have sensed it.

Q. Why are you really here?

A. *Well, since I can't deceive you... I am looking for information regarding this castle's past. Specifically, I have reasons to believe there is information in this castle dealing with a man named Alderon Musz. I would be grateful for any help in obtaining such information.*

If pressed, Marquesse reveals she is working for a client, but she does not know his motives. It takes some convincing to tell her how she obtained her information, as, generally, people react poorly to her dream telling powers.

Q. What can you tell us about the keep?

A. *"This is a dark place. Years ago, a terrible tragedy killed dozens of people – good and bad, man and woman, young and old.*

Their spirits still haunt this place. I can feel it. It encroaches on your mind, and draws you into their nightmarish world, if you are not of exceptional will. That is what happened here."

Marquesse is interested in anything the PCs know of the castle, particularly its history.

Q. What can you tell us about these nightmares?

A. *"The keep desires us to know something. I think this is why it sends us dreams, and attempts to draw us inside its own world, forcing us to sleep and relive through a projection of the past.*

If the PCs met her while still awake, she adds:

I hope you will help me. I can take us inside, but don't know exactly what we will find in there. Many, many people died... it may not be safe."

Q. What can you tell us about the dreamscape?

A. *"The dreamscape seems to be much like our world, though some things may not work well. It's inhabitants are much like ghosts – magic that manipulates the mind, or that works on the living, may not be effective."*

If PCs enquiry further, Marquesse can provide all the information of the dreamscape. She only learns this information once she enters the dreamscape, so can only provide it to dreaming PCs.

Q. How do we get in?

A. *"I have a talent with dreams. I can manipulate them, read someone's dreams, and interpret them. I am very good at it. Using my talents, I can enter the dreamscape, and take people with me, if willing."*

Marquesse's 'talent' is called Oneiromancy (see Appendix 7).

Q. How do we get out?

A. *"Getting out is perhaps less easier... I generally only know once I have entered."*

To dreaming PCs, she adds:

"I fear the only way is to ride out the dream. This may be hard – violent acts may daze you and damage your mind. Avoid violence, unless you must. Seek refuge at dusk, when the castle... well, we know what happened to the castle."

Q. Can we change events?

A. *"This is history. You cannot change anything. But then again..."*

This is a collective dream. A collective haunting. Appeasing spirits can be done in many ways. Perhaps, if you do interfere, if you do the good thing, in the end... it won't work... it won't really matter to us... but it could matter to, well... to the dead.

Does that make sense?"

While Marquesse is willing to answer questions, she is not planning to aid the PCs actively. She won't interfere with the dream and prefers to watch.

Once the PCs move on, or if they tally too long, she disappears, continuing to watch out of sight. You can make her return whenever her knowledge may be of assistance.

Special: Marquesse has some control over the dreamscape, and is able to step from one scene to another if needed. If PCs for some reason attack her in the dream, she simply disappears (and won't show herself again).

Should PCs for manage to damage her, she regenerates like they do, but also needs to make a DC 14 Fort save or suffer 1d4 Cha and 1d4 Wis damage when she wakes.

III – Pryce

The PCs meet captain Pryce of the town forces.

Location: Anywhere in the castle

A man in uniform stares out over the men in the courtyard. He has short trimmed back hair, a neatly trimmed moustache, and the uniform of an officer.

He seems nervous. Occasionally, his moustache twitches, and he has a annoying tendency to crack his knuckles.

This is captain Pryce, a dutiful if narrow-minded man. Pryce is a loyal soldier, a man who follows the law to the letter and runs his orders by the book. He is not particularly evil, but years of war have made him dispassionate and cold.

All APLs

☛ **Pryce:** male human (Oeridian) Ftr5; hp 52; see Appendix 2.

If the PCs approach him, he is short and snappy with his answers. He frowns at any irregularity and repeatedly comments that the PCs are wasting his time, but if they continue to ask he tells the following:

- He is the captain in charge of the town forces.
- Yesterday, an explosion occurred in North Hill, in one of the stores that held construction works, which included explosives.
- Some of the men that died in the accident were workers on the town wall.
- The dwarves say the explosion was an accident. However, one of the men had a slashing wound, as if from an axe. Pryce believes there was a fight prior to the explosion.
- The wall's architect, Meradin, has not been seen since then.

IV – Donner's wife

The PCs meet viscountess Yafanelle Donner.

Location: Map #13

Yafanelle has been treated with respect, partly due to her bravery. She takes her fate in stride, though she worries much about the effect this has on her daughter Elia. Elia is not here at this moment (she is in the kitchens). Yafanelle occasionally wonders whether the girl, who is only 12, is actually aware of the peril she is in.

It may be hard for the PCs to realize that they are facing not a soldier of war but an innocent woman who is about to die at the end of the day. It may be even harder once they realize that there is simply nothing they can do about it.

All APLs

☛ **Viscountess Yafanelle Donner:** female elf Ari2; hp 10.

Yafanelle is well aware of what goes on in the castle, and willing to tell the PC what she knows. She is quite lonely and desperate to talk to people – she is one of the few people who do NOT ignore any PCs that entered by following Marquesse.

The following is what Yafanelle knows:

- Stoan and his men happened upon Adder's Haven quite by accident – they were seeking a way out of the Hollow Highlands when they arrived.

- Their subsequent attack came as a total surprise. Yafanelle's husband and son were out there, fighting, but driven back. Yafanelle could not manage to leave the castle in time, and when the castle was taken she became a prisoner.
- Stoan now uses her as leverage to prevent an open attack on the town.
- She is treated well. She may roam free in the castle, but she hardly ever does.
- Stoan made some advances to her, but she rejected them, saying she wouldn't touch him if he were the last man on Oerth. He didn't take that well. He has definitely his eyes on her. He hasn't forced himself on her, following some twisted code of honor, but she prefers to stay out of his way.
- She expects that she will be freed eventually. She has faith.
- She knows there is supposed to be a secret entrance in the castle. She doesn't know where it is otherwise she would have used it to escape.
- The captain who lords the castle, Chuleidrea, is a vicious woman, as evil and rotten as Stoan.
- Lieutenant Alabor is a fair man though. He seems to be decent, not as heartless as most other officers.

Yafanelle won't follow PCs out of her tower, even if the PCs claim to know where the secret tunnel is. She stays in her room until the end of the day (see Chronological Encounter VI).

V – Donner's daughter

The PCs meet Elia Donner, daughter of the viscount.

Location: Map #15

You enter a kitchen, dominated by a large stove. A great wooden table is in its center, with a brittle old man and a positively cute little girl each sitting on an edge. The girl is eating porridge; the man is just staring into his cup of tea.

A large, fat woman, who seems to fill the entire room, is stirring in a pan of soup.

The woman is the castle cook, Sella, and the old man is McPayne, the carpenter. Sella is a domineering woman, a tyrant in her own kitchen.

The girl is Elia, the daughter of viscount Donner, and a prisoner in the castle. As he did not die – and thus her spirit is not part of the castle – she doesn't respond much to the PC, except to giggle occasionally.

However, the servants know a lot about her, and they answer any questions about her. Sella relates her info with reluctance, unhappy to be bothered during her cooking, but McPayne is happy to chat, and can relate the following:

- All the servants in the castle are from Adder's Haven. Most of the soldiers, however, are Ahlissans. While a few local youngsters were drafted in Stoan's army, these all serve at the new –almost completed – keep in the north.
- He heard an explosion last night. Can't tell what happened – the guards' won't say – but it seemed to come from the dwarf's district.
- Elia (the girl at the table) is the daughter of Yafanelle Donner. She is held in the castle. While the viscountess is allowed out, she hardly ever leaves her tower. Some say she avoids Stoan, who frightens her – and, for that matter – anyone in the castle.
- Elia spends most of her time in here. The soldiers scare her. Elia's best friend is Beck, the stable boy. (Elia giggles every time Beck is mentioned or talks to her.)
- She can leave the castle under the supervision of a soldier, but her mother hardly ever agrees to let her go out as she is fearful something might happen. The girl resents her mother for that.

Special: Like Stoan, Elia cannot be affected by the PCs. The servants, however, are protective of her and attempt to defend her should the PCs attempt to harm her or grab her (even though the PCs hands go right through the girl).

VI – Chullendrea

The PCs meet captain Chullendrea.

Location: Anywhere in the castle

A woman with bright red hair in an officer's uniform walks the halls. She is stunningly beautiful, but there is a feeling of dread over her, a palatable aura of cruelty. The way she looks at the men around her, she seems to not look at them as people, or even subjects – but as if they are no more than cattle.

Whatever PCs do, the woman refuses to acknowledge them. Any people about seem to make an effort to not get noticed by her – they stop talking and try to get past her as quickly as possible.

Special: Like Stoan, Chullendrea survived the keep's destruction and is merely a memory. This encounter is likely short, and merely serves to point out her possible survival.

ENCOUNTER 8: RUDE AWAKENINGS

At some point, the PCs should wake again. There are three possible outcomes for this: all PCs fell asleep, or one or more stayed awake.

All PCs fell asleep: In that case, Lussher likely has located them, and have them dragged to the center of area H, stuck in the web that spans part of the room.

Note that it is possible that the PCs fell asleep at a location where Lussher won't search. Any PCs that fell asleep or were moved beyond area E are not found, and thus awake on their own. They are safe. If there are any PCs that did get found, they may want to hurry to aid their friends – if no PC was found, they can advance as normal and you should treat this as if one or more PCs stayed awake (see below).

To anyone that did get found, read the following:

You slowly wake, groggy, the memory of pain and heat, still in your mind. You find trouble moving, as if you somehow were still down in the courtyard, in the rubble of the keep.

Slowly your eyes adjust, and you see that you are back in the caverns under the keep. A strange grey haze is in front of your eyes, and you suddenly realize why you can't move – you are encased in spider webbing.

From the corners of your eyes you can see shadowy, many-legged forms move about, but it is luckily still some distance away from you.

Then there is a nasty, shrill laugh.

From the shadows steps a short man with sticky dark brown hair and uneven teeth. He grins at your predicament.

"Not so tough now, are we?" it says, "now that you are caught in my webs..."

All PCs are automatically entangled and stuck to the floor. They take a -2 penalty on attacks and a -4 penalty on Dexterity. They also can't move. A PC can break loose with a DC 20 Strength check or a DC 20 Escape Artist check as a full round action. This allows them to move, though they are still considered entangled as long as they stay in the spider webbing.

If PCs try to hide their attempts to break free, the DC for breaking the webbing or wriggling free is increased by 10 (offer this option to PCs who state they want to break free).

Lussher has not shown a particular interest in the PC's items, as he considers it stuff that is too 'hot', and he doesn't really have any means to take it with him anyway. He is a bit too confident in his spiders, and as such does not even realize that PCs might break free.

The PCs still wear armor and clothing. Most of their weapons, backpacks, and hand-held items are strewn about, except tiny weapons such as daggers, shuriken etc, which are still on their person. Assume the other items

from a PC are within 5 ft. (in a nearby square). They can reach out and take it as a move-equivalent action once they can move, but this draws attacks of opportunity as normal.

Should PCs break out, Lussher panics and runs off immediately, instantly ordering his spiders to attack. If they don't break out, or hide the fact that they are trying to, he approaches and starts to speak.

"I guess you were just too curious for your own good? Better tell me what you know about Lussher and his web, eh? I could be merciful you know... if you tell me everything you know."

We can't have more people like you nosing about... so we'll just have to make you... disappear. Lucky I'm good at making disappear. Now, tell me what you are doing here, and how much you know of us!"

Lussher is eager to learn what the PCs found out about him (which is likely nothing). He listens to any answers they give, trying to judge what they know. Feeling in control, he does not himself give many answers, except for the following (should the PCs ask).

Q. What do you know about the missing teens?

A. Uh, kids, in here? Haven't seen them. Probably fell to my sweeties. They're always hungry. Pity. I could do with a nice bite myself.

Q. Who are you?

A. "You don't need to know. I work for... powerful people. People who value the old rule, if you catch my drift. Heheh... not that it matters. You'll be dead soon anyway..."

Q. What can you tell us about the dreams?

A. "Aren't they nasty? It's hard to concentrate, isn't it? Feel a bit groggy? Heheh. My sweeties aren't troubled with it though. And you can get used to it... but I don't think you'll get that opportunity..."

As implied, Lussher has grown used to the keep's intrusions (he has suffered through it a few times, but now manages to shake it off). His spiders are unaffected as they are either mindless or have a far too alien mindset to be affected.

Q. Who are the others in the webs?

A. "They stumbled in some time ago. Smugglers, I guess. Competition, so to speak. Been prying a bit too much in my business, too. Walking around like they own the place..."

Lussher doesn't tell for whom he works, or how he manages to control the spiders and the oozes.

At some point, either Lusscher tires, or the PCs break free. At that point, he commands his spiders to attack, and walks off (or runs, if the PCs break free and seem a threat). Once out of the room, he disappears in the tunnels – the PCs have 3 rounds to get near him before he is gone.

The spiders meanwhile attack.

One or more PCs stayed awake: In this case, those PCs may have had the opportunity to do something while the rest slept.

It means that these PCs either already fought the spiders and won, that they moved the others, or that nobody had (yet) entered the webbed cavern.

In either case, the PCs are not ensnared and therefore may have a slightly easier fight ahead.

In this case, Lusscher is less subtle. He simply orders his spiders to attack from the shadows, using their webbing first. Once he has given his command, he flees, not really interested in the outcome, knowing that the location is compromised and soon others will follow.

A DC 25 Listen check hears him whisper his command from the shadows to his spiders, before he hurries off into the caverns, where he soon disappears. PCs have about three rounds to find him before he is gone.

PCs that failed the Listen check and did not succeed to spot the spiders (use an opposed Spot check with the spiders Hide skill) are surprised.

PCs that made the Listen check but fail the spot check have a surprise action but may not be able to target the spiders.

Terrain: The grey areas on map B in Appendix 7 are sticky webbing. Approaching creatures must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice these webs, except for the squares that already contain a character (PC or NPC), as the webbing is visible there. Those who fail stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack (see the monster entry). Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has the hit points given on the table, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/—.

Creatures: Lusscher is a wererat, a murderer who escaped from the Calling Mines over a year ago. Out of his luck, he found a new employer who was willing to hire uncouth people who don't ask much questions. Lusscher is now one of the lower dregs of an organization known as the Web. The Web used to be a wide-branched organization of spies and assassins, used by former king Ivid V – the Undying – to eliminate potential threats to his rule.

After the events at Rauxes and the apparent death of Ivid, the Web seemed to disappear from Oerth – many thought it was vanquished with its despotic ruler.

News of the resurfacing of the Web will worry people – it's not likely that the organization's goals will be

beneficial. Of course, if it is up to Lusscher, the PCs won't ever tell anyone of its existence.

Lusscher's task is to clean up the place and remove any evidence that the Web has ever been there. He has been given some limited control over the guardians of the place – a number of spiders are left behind to deal with any interlopers.

Lusscher can hold them back or command them to attack, as he desires. He has no control over the oozes in the cavern – though these creatures do know not to attack him.

Lusscher has no idea how the control over the creatures is established. A dark haired woman gave him control over them, but he doesn't know her name. The names he does have are of fellow thugs that escaped from the mines. None of these are of any importance.

ALL APLS

🐾 **Lusscher:** Male human wererat; hp 12; see *Monster Manual* page 171.

Note: All the spiders below are web spinners. Note that the fiendish spiders at APL 12 are no longer vermin, but this may not be readily apparent unless a PC succeeds to identify it with a DC 26 Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (arcana) check.

APL 2 (EL 2)

🐾 **Small Monstrous Spider (4):** hp 4; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

APL 4 (EL 4)

🐾 **Medium Monstrous Spider (4):** hp 11; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

APL 6 (EL 6)

🐾 **Large Monstrous Spider (4):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

APL 8 (EL 8)

🐾 **Large Monstrous Spider (3):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

🐾 **Huge Monstrous Spider (2):** hp 52; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

APL 10 (EL 10)

🐾 **Medium Monstrous Spider (3):** hp 11; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

🐾 **Gargantuan Monstrous Spider (2):** hp 104; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

APL 12 (EL 12)

🐾 **Medium Monstrous Spider (5):** hp 11; see *Monster Manual* page 288.

🐾 **Fiendish Gargantuan Monstrous Spider (2):** hp 104; Appendix 2 (APL 12).

Tactics: The spiders use their web in the surprise round if possible. After that, they try to enter melee as quickly as possible, preferably with the ones that are stuck in the webbing.

Lussher runs as soon as the PCs fight back (down the tunnel at the end of Area H).

Treasure: The cavern contains a few bits and pieces of left over smuggling wares. Most of it consists of light weapons and armor, thieves tools, dark clothes and masks.

All APLs: Loot–25 gp; Coin–0 gp; Magic– none.

Development: The spiders fight till the death. Lussher tries to escape – but it is possible that fast thinking PCs capture him before they lose track of him in the caverns.

If they capture him, he is amazingly eager to talk. He promises all kinds of secrets, though in reality he knows almost nothing – all of which is described above. That doesn't stop him from claiming to know of all kinds of plots, but when pressed for details he comes up short.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE NOTES

To find the notes, the PCs have to enter the dungeons (area I on map B). Entering the dungeons is its own challenge due to the danger of a collapse (see Encounter 5, area I).

Once they enter, the PCs see the following:

The area behind the collapse is dry, a layer of rock and fine sand coats the floor. A small, dragging trail streaks across the floor.

At the end of it, against the wall, sits a person, cradling a young woman in his arms.

Creatures: The creature holding the girl is Ator. The girl is Eleonaer, unconscious and almost starved.

The two teens tried to free space and crawl inside, thinking they might find some clue of the fate of Eleonaer's father. They did – however, as Ator crawled inside after Eleonaer, the tunnel collapsed. Ator shielded Eleonaer, but a rock broke his neck, and he almost instantly died. Eleonaer, herself wounded and unable to move, eventually submitted to the Keep's dreams, and fell unconscious. It is a miracle that she is still alive when the PCs find her. Eleonaer does not herself appear in the Keep's dreams – she has already experienced them, and is now in a dreamless, unconscious state.

Ator, meanwhile did not die restfully. The keep granted him new life, and woke him as one of the restless dead, to watch over the girl he loved in life.

While Ator has all the signs and statistics of a ghoul or ghastr, he does not crave flesh... he craves love, something his former girlfriend is unlikely to give him. Ator sits at the end of the room. His stench (if he's a ghast) is hardly noticeable until the PCs come close.

Eleonaer died: If the PCs took too long (more than two days, not counting their 'dream' period), Eleonaer has died, and is now a ghoul. She is ravenously hungry, and if the PCs approach instantly attacks:

"It'll be fine..." you hear the whisper from the man, who does not seem to have noticed you. He strokes the girls' hair, holding her close.

He is looking down at her, but she instead turns her head towards you. Dead eyes stare out of a dessicated young woman's face, hungrily.

"Flesh!"

The girl jumps up and attacks. Ator, surprised, follows one round later.

ALL APLs (EL 1)

☛ **Eleonaer, Ghoul:** hp 13; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

Eleonaer lives: More likely, Eleonaer is still alive – though barely. In that case, they may need to save her from Ator:

"It'll be fine..." you hear the whisper from the man, who does not seem to have noticed you. He strokes the girls' hair, holding her close.

"You'll be better, soon... just wake, wake... and we'll be together... oh... for ever... I'll keep you... safe."

The man hugs her, then raises his head towards you, and you see the red, unnatural glare in his dead eyes.

Aside from Ator, at APL 4 and higher one or more shadows are present in this room, somehow drawn to the despair of the undead teenager. They stay hidden until Ator attacks – at that point, they join the fray.

APL 2 (EL 3)

☛ **Ator, Ghast:** hp 29; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

APL 4 (EL 5)

☛ **Ator, Ghast:** hp 29; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

☛ **Shadow:** hp 19; see *Monster Manual* page 221.

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Ator, Advanced Ghast:** hp 57; see Appendix 2 (APL 6).

☛ **Shadows (2):** hp 19; see *Monster Manual* page 221.

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Ator, Advanced Ghast Ftr3:** hp 78; see Appendix 2 (APL 8).

☛ **Shadows (4):** hp 19; see *Monster Manual* page 221.

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **Ator, Advanced Ghast Ftr4:** hp 85; see Appendix 2 (APL 10).

☛ **Greater Shadows (2):** hp 58; see *Monster Manual* page 221.

APL 12 (EL 13)

☛ **Ator, Advanced Ghast fighter 6:** hp 99; see Appendix 2 (APL 12).

☛ **Advanced Greater Shadows (3):** hp 86; see Appendix 2 (APL 12).

Tactics: Ator's undead form is obsessed with Eleonaer, to protect her, and hold her. While he does not initially attack the PCs, he does as soon as they try to take her out of his arms, or try to aid her, for instance with magic healing. Up till then, they can talk to him, and he'll relate how they got here, and how he was 'injured', and now he waits for his girl to wake and they will 'be together forever'. To him, they are happy like this. If the PCs do not intervene, the girl does, eventually, die, and rise as an undead... giving the PCs two undead to deal with. The only way to save Eleonaer is to destroy Ator.

Ator seeks to get into close combat. He focuses his attacks to those that 'threaten' his loved one, but otherwise tries to paralyze as much people as possible. The shadows do not follow a plan - they attack anyone they can get close to, until that character's Strength is drained.

Marquesse: If Marquesse was forced to reveal herself (see Encounter 6), she is likely present. In that case, she hangs back and lets the PCs take initiative. Marquesse does not know of the unstable ceiling or the undead Ator.

Treasure: The two teens have little of value, but Ator is in the possession of a ring of rusty keys (which he took from the room E).

There are fourteen keys on the ring. One is meant for a door that originally blocked access to area I. That door was destroyed when the corridor collapsed. Another key was for a iron grate that led into an interrogation room - which now opens up in the caverns in area F. The remaining keys, which area bit smaller than the other two, are meant for the individual cells in Area I.

Development: Once Ator is destroyed, the PCs can try to revive Eleonaer. She is at -6 hp, and severely dehydrated. Cure spells won't restore her to health unless she is also given at least 1 quart to drink.

Once revived, she can recount the tale on how she got here, and that she thinks she found her father lying in one of he cells.

Area I contains twelve cells. All cell doors have survived, and all are locked. The keys from area E can be used to unlock it. Only cell K had occupants when the

castle was destroyed, and this is where Eleonaer found what she believes to be her father.

This cell still contains two former occupants – now reduced to skeletons. One skeleton lies in a corner, the other close to the door.

Scattered about the skeleton in the corner are leaves of paper, as well as three booklets from which the pages apparently were ripped with some force.

This was Fenrus Galleon's Cell. The skeleton near the door is his body. The one in the corner, which has a crushed skull, is that of Alabor, Eleonaer's father. The PCs should probably recall this from their dreams (see Encounter 7).

Both bodies are void of items, except for a ring. The rings are engraved on the inside. Alabor's ring is gold, and contains the words "Saeen, Patchwall 11, 581", Fenrus' ring is silver and has the words: "XM, Fireseek 2, 582"

The booklets is what Marquesse is after – and what the PCs may have been asked to return.

The PCs are likely first to take the booklets. They contain mostly notes on gardening, family life, and more things that seem mundane and unimportant. The last page is unfinished. Hand the PCs Player Handout 2.

Once the danger is over and the notebooks discovered, Marquesse makes her entry. The PCs can hear her approach, stumbling through the cellars. If they didn't clear the area so she can enter, she approaches them once they leave, or uses a *message* spell to contact them. If they teleport out, she may entirely miss them. In that case, they don't get her favor.

A woman with long, dark hair, and a silky black dress stumbles through the dungeons of the keep towards you. She doesn't look at ease, and seems grateful to see you.

"It is good to see that you are... safe," she says.

If the PCs didn't meet her in the dreams, she now introduces herself as Marquesse. She can answer questions as above but now things are over is more open on why she is here.

"Let me get to the point. I am hired to obtain information regarding past events. Events that, I have to admit, I have little personal knowledge of.

The notebooks you have there are of value for my research, and I would be grateful if I could obtain them from you."

Marquesse doesn't have any money, but she can offer her tutelage in esoteric matters, if the PCs give her the books. If the PCs desire to hold on to it, she offers to copy the books for them – she knows a scribe that could make a quick copy (using magic, within a few hours) quite easily. She would prefer the originals, but if the PCs play it hard will settle for the copies.

If even that doesn't work, she asks if she can at least study them, which would take about an evening.

Marquesse confesses that she doesn't know what the whole books are about. She doesn't know the motives of Runner, the man who hired her, and she isn't entirely sure what she will do with her knowledge yet. If the PCs know more about the background, they may feel enticed to tell her. If she finds out what is at stake, she starts doubting whether it is wise to get involved, but still asks to study the books.

If the PCs still refuse, she is disappointed, but accepts their decision. She finally offers her help with bringing Eleonaer into safety.

Troubleshooting: If the PCs somehow decide to 'give' Ator the girl (and let her die), no combat ensues... even the shadows don't attack. The PCs, however, do not get XP for this encounter in that case. Also, letting her die while they were able to rescue her is an evil act.

If she dies while they are there (rather than after they leave), Eleonaer is ravenously hungry and instantly attacks the PCs.

Attacking Marquesse is unnecessary and may even be an evil act. If they do, she tries to use her powers to calm or charm the aggressors. If she somehow succeeds in this, she won't feel guilty about turning it to her advantage and obtaining the books that way.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs save Eleonaer, Cecila is immensely grateful. If PCs asked for a monetary reward, she'll arrange for Lord Hugher to pay the money. Otherwise, they'll gain **access to the Halls**.

Treasure: PCs either get Cecila's favour, or Lord Hugher's reward. **They can't get both!**

If the PCs take Cecila's favour, they won't reach the gold cap in the scenario.

APL 2: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 50 gp, Magic – none.

APL 4: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 100 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 150 gp, Magic – none.

APL 8: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 200 gp, Magic – none.

APL 10: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 250 gp, Magic – none.

APL 12: Loot – 0 gp, Coin – 300 gp, Magic – none.

The PCs have various choices as to what to do with the notebooks – provided they see any use in them at all, of course. They can give them to Marquesse, to Lord Hugher (if he hired them), or to the Veil (if they did). Unaffiliated PCs may even choose to deliver them to the Queen's Halls – after all, the library has shown interest in obscure documents before, and these are of historic value.

PCs may even try to please everyone – after all, the books can be copied.

While Marquesse (as noted in Encounter 9) and Hugher prefer to obtain the originals, they will be pleased enough with copies. Hence, PCs can easily earn

the **favor of Marquesse** or **gratitude of the Benefit** by giving them either the originals or a copy. Note that if the PCs demanded payment rather than the Money Counter's gratitude in Encounter 2, they do not earn this favor, as Hugher considers the deal closed.

The Veil, however, is not pleased if any of these people get away with the books – even if they themselves get the originals. Their goal is to keep the books out of the hands of others, and if the PCs give them away, they have ruined the mission. The PCs only gain the **favor of the Jaded Mask** if they give the notebook to no other group than Marturo or the Queen's Halls. Note that this means that PCs who accidentally deliver the notebooks there may earn the favor.

Any PC who entered the dream gains the **never forget** entry. A PC normally may use the haunting four times. If a PC also actively attempted to save Alabor or Yafanelle, they gain one extra use of the haunting. Cross any excess uses off the AR.

One PC may keep the **marriage ring** – if they found the ring in the well, that is.

Finally, there is the issue of Fenrus Galleon and Alabor's bodies. If the PCs make notice of what they found to anyone, a brief while later the Halls have their bodies retrieved (if they weren't already), and an official funeral is arranged, for which the PCs receive an invitation.

If they attend, paraphrase the following (modifying where needed):

The sky is clear and sunny on this solemn day, when the bodies of the two former soldiers are being interred, at Coil's Cemetery.

Few people have shown up. Besides you, there are Eleonaera and Nonette, Cecila Avon alongside an Oeridian man with dark hair, and a much older man who is almost entirely bald, carrying something wrapped in cloth.

The interment is brief, little is spoken and the few gathered take their farewells in silence.

If the PCs told anyone about her, Marquesse was also invited, and is present.

The man with brown hair is called Aemous Lethandar. He won't speak to the PCs during the funeral, and leaves shortly thereafter. Cecila Avon can tell them he is from Dunn, but what he does or why he was here she doesn't know.

The old man is Fenrus Galleon's father, and he has some final things to say.

As people part, the old man looks sideways at you.

"Good people, ahm. I did not think I had the opportunity yet to thank you? My name is Amus. Amus Galleon. You found my son, am I right?"

He has waited for more than ten years for his son to be found, and he is grateful for the PCs to have discovered it.

If the PCs did not take Galleon's ring, he holds it up for the PCs to see. Otherwise, he enquires of the PCs found a ring near his son's body - as it was strangely missing. He does not take offence to the PCs taking it, but asks them if he can have it back.

"The ring of my son, a last momentum of his last hours. A small thing to remember him by. I value it much."

If the PCs show the other ring, he adds:

"Ah. The wife. I have to say, I never met her. I live in Kalstrand, far from here. I wish I could have met her. She must have been quite lovely. As it is, I don't even know her name."

Provided the PCs are kind enough, and do not demean his son, he then continues:

"As it were, I did get sent some of my son's possessions. But they are not something an old man like me likes to hang on to. I would rather grant it to you, as a token of my thanks for returning my son to me."

He unwraps the item he is carrying, revealing an elegant looking blade.

"This was his sword, sent to me years ago. It is of outstanding quality, and I would like you to have it."

If the PCs instead insult his son (i.e. by calling him a traitor) he looks at them, shocked, and then walks away.

Treasure: The PCs can keep Galleon's blade provided they let Amus keep his son's ring. It's an ornamental magical blade, the exact nature of which is dependent on the APL. At APL 2 and 4, it is a masterwork cold iron longsword. At higher APLs, it is magical.

All PCs can get access to the sword, provided at least one attended the funeral, and they are polite enough.

APL 2: Loot-27 gp; Coin-0 gp; Magic-none.

APL 4: Loot- 27 gp; Coin-0 gp; Magic-none.

APL 6: Loot-0 gp; Coin-0 gp; Magic+1 cold iron longsword (360 gp).

APL 8: Loot-0 gp; Coin-0 gp; Magic+1 cold iron longsword (360 gp).

APL 10: Loot-0 gp; Coin-0 gp; Magic+2 cold iron longsword (1027 gp).

APL 12: Loot-0 gp; Coin-0 gp; Magic+2 cold iron longsword (1027 gp).

3. Did any PCs get hired by the Jade Mask or the Benefit?
4. Did the PCs 'save' Alabor or viscountess Yafanelle Donner?
5. Did the PCs save Eleonaer?
6. Did the PCs capture Lusser? Alive or dead?
7. Who received the notebooks (or copies thereof)?

CAMPAIGN CONSEQUENCES

At the conclusion of this module the DM should answer the following questions regarding how events transpired. These answers should be emailed to gomez@gryphonhill.com and rolspeel@planet.nl.

1. What was the composition of the party?
2. At what APL was this event run?

Of course, besides the answers to these questions, a short summery of what transpired and a review of the scenario is welcome as well. If there are any things you or the players particularly liked or disliked, let us know as well.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 5 – Down - F

Encountering the oozes:

APL 2	150 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Encounter 5 – Down - H

Encountering the trap near the web cave:

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	75 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	105 XP
APL 10	120 XP
APL 12	135 XP

Encounter 5 – Down - I

Passing the collapse:

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	75 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	105 XP
APL 10	120 XP
APL 12	135 XP

Encounter 5 – Down - I

Saving Eleonaer from Ator:

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP

Encounter 8 – Rude Awakenings

Encountering Lusscher's spiders:

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	300 XP
APL 12	360 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP

APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP

Total possible experiences

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP
APL 12	1,575 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.

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

Encounter 5F: Wet Cavern

APL 2: Loot: 15 gp; Coin: 250 gp; Magic: *pearl of power* (1st) (83 gp).

APL 4: Loot: 15 gp; Coin: 400 gp; Magic: *pearl of power* (1st) (83 gp).

APL 6: Loot: 15 gp; Coin: 17 gp; Magic: *pearl of power* (2nd) (333 gp).

APL 8: Loot: 15 gp; Coin: 367 gp; Magic: *pearl of power* (2nd) (333 gp).

APL 10: Loot: 15 gp; Coin: 233 gp; Magic: *pearl of power* (3rd) (750 gp).

APL 12: Loot: 15gp; Coin: 600 gp; Magic: *pearl of power* (4th) (1333 gp).

Encounter 8: Rude Awakenings

All APLs: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp.

Conclusion (Hugher's payment):

APL 2: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 50 gp; Magic: none.

APL 4: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 100 gp; Magic: none.

APL 6: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 150 gp; Magic: none.

APL 8: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 200 gp; Magic: none.

APL 10: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 250 gp; Magic: none.

APL 12: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 300 gp; Magic: none.

Conclusion (Galleon's Blade):

APL 2: Loot: 27 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: none.

APL 4: Loot: 27 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: none.

APL 6: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: +1 *cold iron longsword* (360 gp).

APL 8: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: +1 *cold iron longsword* (360 gp).

APL 10: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: +2 *cold iron longsword* (1027 gp).

APL 12: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: +2 *cold iron longsword* (1027 gp).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Loot: 67 gp; Coin: 300 gp; Magic: 83 gp; Total: 450 gp

APL 4: Loot: 67 gp; Coin: 500 gp; Magic: 83 gp; Total: 650 gp

APL 6: Loot: 40 gp; Coin: 167 gp; Magic: 693 gp; Total: 900 gp

APL 8: Loot: 40 gp; Coin: 567 gp; Magic: 693 gp; Total: 1,300 gp

APL 10: Loot: 40 gp; Coin: 483 gp; Magic: 1777 gp; Total: 2,300 gp

APL12: Loot: 40 gp; Coin: 900 gp; Magic: 2360 gp; Total: 3,300 gp

Special

Never Forget: A part of the spirit of Crystal Castle has stayed with you. You can occasionally feel its influence, when you dream at night, or when you catch things moving out of the corner of your eyes.

As a result, once a day, due to forewarning, you may choose to take a +2 circumstance bonus when rolling for

initiative. You need to declare whether you use this favor before you roll the die.

This effect lasts for four to six times, depending on your actions in the dream, after which the benefit disappears – though you still, occasionally, dream of the tragedy witnessed.

Cross of for each time used:

[] [] [] [] [] []

Access to the Halls: At the beginning of each scenario set in the Splintered Suns metaregion, you may petition Cecila Avon for the use of an arcane or divine scroll, for the duration of the scenario, containing any single Core access spell costing up to 50 gp. If you are a member of the Queen's Halls, the scroll may cost up to 100 gp.

The scroll does not have to be returned when used. At the end of the scenario, if the scroll is unused, you may also buy it.

A PC may spend this favor to have any of his magical armor, weapons, or rings repaired when these are destroyed after any scenario set in the Splintered Suns metaregion. Cross of the favor when used in this way.

Favor of Marquesse: Marquesse is willing to train you in the following feats from Heroes of Horror: Dreamtelling, Haunted Melody, Oneiromancy, Improved Oneiromancy, Spirit Sense, and Unnatural Will.

Gratitude of the Benefit: This counts as a favor with the church of Zilchus and the Royal Guild of Merchants in Aerdy.

You can use this favor to gain one-time access to one special item you have had access to in the past through the items found section at the bottom of the AR, for a 5% increase in the price. Members of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy do not have to pay the 5% increase. Write "used" across this favor when used.

Favour of the Jade Mask: This counts as a favor with the Jade Mask.

As long as you have this favor, you have metaregional access to the starred items in the Items Found section below. A PC with this favor cannot have either the Favor of the Benefit or that of Marquesse.

A Marriage Ring: You found a small silver ring. On the inside of the ring, words have been engraved: "FG, Fireseek 2, 582"

Only one PC may leave the table with the ring.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

APL 2:

- Barbed Dagger (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)
- Longspoon Thieves Tools (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)
- *Potion of Healthful Rest** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Oil of Iron Silence** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Pearl of power (1st)* (Adventure,DMG)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Possum Pouch** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Oil of Sonic Weapon** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Pearl of power (1st)* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 6 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Papyrus of Deception** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Oil of Absorb Weapon** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Pearl of power (2nd)* (Adventure,DMG)

APL 8 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Wand of Healthful Rest** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Pearl of power (2nd)* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 10 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Wand of Iron Silence** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- +2 *cold iron longsword* (Any, DMG, 12,330 gp)
- *Pearl of power (3rd)* (Adventure,DMG)

APL 12 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Wand of Sonic Weapon** (Metaregional, Complete Adventurer)
- *Pearl of power (4th)* (Adventure,DMG,)

This section details a number of NPCs encountered in this adventure. Since the PCs will have the opportunity to talk to these people at length, this section details their background, and basic motivations as far as it is relevant for (or can be deduced during) this scenario.

NON COMBATANTS

The people below are not people the PCs are likely to fight. They hire the PCs and supply them with information. They are people that are either well known or powerful, and as such the PCs may know something of them simply by name.

Each entry lists an abbreviated stat block, the skill that can be used to recognize the personality, looks, background information, and motivations. The background block contains DCs to determine what a person knows when he makes the check using the skill mentioned in the stat block. Most can also be obtained by questioning the right people in this scenario.

You can substitute bardic knowledge for these skills.

Cecila Avon [se-SEE-la a-VON]

Female half-elf, Div7/Loremaster 2, AL CG.

Recognize Skill: Knowledge(arcana), +5 if member of the Queen's Halls

Cecila Avon occurred very briefly in *ESA3-01 Stonecunning*. She may be known to the PCs if they played that scenario and started in Sunndi. She also appeared in *SND4-01 Arrows from the Sun*.

Appearance: Cecila is a half-elf, with long blond hair that is tied into a bun. She is a bit pale, but has captivating grey eyes. She would likely look quite beautiful if she would work a bit on her image – but she doesn't seem to care.

Background: [DC 15] Cecila is a member of the Queens Halls. She counts as an expert in magical enchantments and elemental magic, and, as an apprentice to court wizard Lanaerra A'Quillan, has some knowledge of current politics and political history. She acts as an advisor on these matters.

[DC 20] Cecila only shows true interest in people who have solid arcane knowledge, and who have interest in magical theories. She is not a powerful wizard herself, but has many contacts.

[DC 30] Cecila's father is Avonabada, a grey elf bard who had a 'fondness' for humans.

Personality: Cecila is a nice woman, but rather detached. She thinks logical and is not very empathic, which means that she has difficulty seeing other people's views.

She tends to keep her own personal life to herself.

APPENDIX 1: NPCS

Lord Marrec Hugher [MA-rek YOU-gar]

Human (mixed) Clr5 of Zilchus, AL LN.

Recognize Skill: Knowledge (nobility&royalty), Knowledge (local: the Splintered Suns) or Knowledge (religion) if the PC is a worshipper of Zilchus, +2 if member of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy.

Lord Hugher appeared in the Sunndi regionals *SND2-01 United We Stand*, *SND4-01 Arrows from the Sun* and the Sunndian introduction of the meta-regional *TSS3-07 The Lance of Osson*.

Appearance: Lord Hugher is a portly man, quite a match in his earlier years but with age showing. He has a small moustache and uneven teeth, but a catchy smile and a warm voice. He dresses in loose fitting clothes, decent but not very opulent. He wears a prominent silver symbol of Zilchus.

Background: [DC 12] Lord Hugher is a senior priest of Zilchus, and the most visible face of the Benefit. He is Senior Administrator, and conducts all businesses with the farmers. He reports to Lady Counselor Elyda Velsher.

[DC 17] Hugher is originally from Naery. He is a distant member of house Darmen – like Donner - and openly supports open trade between Ahlissa and Sunndi.

[DC 20] Hugher followed up Meladrin, a man who turned out to have been cooperating with bandits for as yet unknown purposes. Meladrin's treason has done quite some damage to the Benefit's reputation, and Hugher has had his work cut out to restore confidence in the organization.

Personality: Lord Hugher is a typical merchant, friendly and at first sight eager to please. He is, however, also someone who has many responsibilities, and he takes those seriously.

He is honest in his dealings, and if needed points out where his loyalties lie – just to avoid confusion. If crossed, he can become cold and distant, though he never lets his personal feelings affect the outcome of a deal.

As someone once said: "He is a Zilchan – so by default his finances are in order."

Marturo [mar-TOO-roh]

Male human (Suel) Brd2/Rog3, AL N.

Recognize Skill: Knowledge (local: The Splintered Suns), +2 if member of the Iron band, the Jade Mask, or the Lyre (cumulative).

Appearance: Marturo is a handsome young man with bright blue eyes, short blond hair and a thin moustache. He dresses in fine but subdued clothing, and carries a small earring in his left ear. There is a hint of elven ancestry, but it is too faint to actually qualify him a half-elf.

Background: [DC 15] Marturo is a well-known and likeable bard, a womanizer who is a talent with the lute and even more with the pickup line.

[DC 20] Marturo is known as a broker, at his best when getting people together for a deal.

[DC 25] He has a friendly rivalry with a man named Edhardt the Eye. For some reason, the two manage to frequently hire groups that oppose each other.

[DC 25 (Iron Band Members only)] Marturo is a member of the Iron Band, a smuggling organization that operates from New Keep. While not a smuggler himself, he provides the Band with information on what is needed where, and by whom.

[DC 30 (Jade Mask Members only)] Marturo is a known contact from the Veil, the Sunndi branche of the Jade Mask. On occasion, he has hired muscle for them, or set up deals with smuggler groups when the Jade Mask needed something transported elsewhere without people noticing. His true loyalty lies with himself, but since his reputation depends on his discretion when making deals in secret, he has never betrayed a partner, and as such the Veil has given him a modicum of trust.

Personality: Marturo appears likeable, generous, and sympathetic to other people's problems. Part of this is an act, a part of his charlatan-and-information-broker life. He is a man who can adjust his outward personality as easy as someone else can change his clothes. He can be dead serious or lighthearted, a conversationalist or a quiet listener, depending on what the situation demands. In heart, he is a bit of a schemer – he likes complex plots and be part of it. The thrill of knowing just a little bit more than others is what drives him most.

Marquesse [mar-KES]

Female human (Flan) sorceress, AL N.

Recognize Skill: N.A.

Appearance: A woman in her mid 30s, with dark brown eyes and long dark hair. She is thin but still shapely, with a midnight blue dress. A broad belt of dark leather, hung with scrolls, gives her figure some more lift.

Background: Marquesse is a woman of some standing in the environment of Kalstrand, where she is known as a mystic and interpreter of dreams. She is frequently consulted for esoteric matters. While she is not exactly an adventurer, she has been known to take on complex cases and travel all over the world to solve a mystery. She is frail but incredibly clever, and there are few cases she hasn't solved. Occasionally, she herself hires adventurers to aid and protect her.

In this scenario, she has been hired by a man she only knows as "Runner", to follow a trail left by a bandit named Spannek. Apparently, this man was once active in the region. He was apprehended but during his transfer to the state prison in Naery city mysteriously disappeared – the state is silent on his

actual fate. It is assumed that someone aided him in what is either an escape or a very definite way out. It was clear that the man had secrets. What these were, though, was unknown. Runner was willing to pay a handsome amount of money if Marquesse would try to seek out what it was he knew.

The reason Runner came to her was that he only had one clue: He had managed to find a covert report on a strange event in the north of Naerie, which had almost decimated an entire village. There were few survivors, but Runner knew the location of one: a crazed gnome which had been interred in an Asylum in Minetha. Interrogation so far had, however, been fruitless.

There would have been little Marquesse could learn from this gnome, were it not for her dream walking powers. Using these, she managed to glean a few glimpses from past events – an effort that exhausted her greatly and almost drove her mad in turn. What she learned was a name: Alderon Musz, a man who died years ago in the war, must have known more.

Now, she is in town to investigate the fate of Musz, and find out what he may or may not have known. In exchange for information on the man and his death, Marquesse accepted an assignment from a man named Edhart, to investigate a few local murders. It was quite soon though, that her own clues – in fact, her won dreams - pointed her in the direction of the Shards.

Personality: Marquesse is inquisitive, ever delving deeper in the secrets of dreams. She has an interest in the psychology of man, and studies history to learn more of it.

She considers herself a professional, able to detach herself from moral dilemmas when on the job, but yet, the human psyche occasionally troubles her and makes her wonder whether she does the right thing.

Marquesse has not yet decided what she will do with her investigation once she has learned enough. She feels she is several steps behind in a race she can't win, even if she does manage to uncovering the secret. She isn't even sure that she wants to know. She does not trust Runner, and everything points to the involvement of the Jade Mask. But as a hired force, should she care?

Note: It is possible PCs may confuse Marquesse (upon hearing her name) with Markessa the Red, a villain of some repute. They are – obviously – not the same person.

APPENDIX 2: ALL APLS

ENCOUNTER 7: BLAST FROM THE PAST

Dreamscape Keep Guard: Male human (Oeridian) War2; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d8; hp 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 shield, +0 Dex, +0 size); Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk +2 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword) or +1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +2 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword) or +1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Rejuvenation; AL LN/LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +3, Listen +4, Profession (soldier) +2, Spot +4; Alertness, Weapon focus (longsword).

Languages: Common.

Rejuvenation (ex): While dreamscape NPCs do not regenerate (as the PCs do), they cannot really be killed.

Possessions: Longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, dagger x2, scale mail, heavy steel shield.

Lieutenant Alabor: Male human (Oeridian) Ftr3; CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 28; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +0 shield, +2 Dex, +0 size); Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/19-20, longsword) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SQ Rejuvenation; AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Profession (soldier) +5, Ride +4, Spot +6; Alertness, Dodge, Point Blank, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (light crossbow).

Languages: Common.

Rejuvenation (ex): While dreamscape NPCs do not regenerate (as the PCs do), they cannot really be killed.

Possessions: Longsword, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, dagger x2, chainmail.

Lieutenant Fenrus Galleon: male human (Oeridian) Ftr3; CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 28; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+2/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Rejuvenation; AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +5, Knowledge (local: the Splintered Suns) +4, Listen +2, Profession (soldier) +5, Ride +7, Spot +2; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Weapon focus (longsword).

Languages: Common.

Rejuvenation (ex): While dreamscape NPCs do not regenerate (as the PCs do), they cannot really be killed.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, dagger x 2, chainmail.

Captain Pryce: male human (Oeridian) Ftr6; CR 6; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 52; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 shield, +1 Dex, +0 size); Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d8+6/19-20, +1 longsword) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+6/19-20, +1 longsword) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Rejuvenation; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +9, Listen +5, Profession (soldier) +10, Ride +10, Spot +5; Cleave, Endurance, Improved Sunder, Great Cleave, Leadership, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Languages: Common.

Rejuvenation (ex): While dreamscape NPCs do not regenerate (as the PCs do), they cannot really be killed.

Possessions: +1 longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, dagger x2, scale mail, heavy steel shield.

Eberhast: Male human (Oeridian) Wiz9; CR 9; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 9d4+18; hp 46; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10 (+0 armor, +0 shield, +1 Dex); Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, +1 longsword); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, +1 longsword); SQ Rejuvenation; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14 (+18 when casting on the defensive), Knowledge(arcana) +15, Knowledge(history) +15, Knowledge(local: the Splintered Suns) +9, Knowledge(nobility and royalty) +9, Knowledge(religion) +9, Knowledge(the planes) +15, Spellcraft +17; Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Martial Weapon Proficiency (longsword), Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Evocation).

Languages: Ancient Sueloise, Common, Draconic, Old Oeridian.

Spells Prepared (4/5/5/4/2/1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—daze, detect magic, resistance, virtue; 1st—chill touch, grease, mage armor, mount, shield; 2nd—darkness, flaming sphere*, protection from arrows, scorching ray, shatter*; 3rd—dispel magic, displacement, fireball*, hold person; 4th—empowered lightning bolt*, Evard's black tentacles; 5th—wall of force.

* Evocation spell. Base DC = 15 + spell level.

Rejuvenation (ex): While dreamscape NPCs do not regenerate (as the PCs do), they cannot really be killed.

Possessions: +1 longsword, wand of magic missile (5th lvl caster), scroll of delayed blast fireball*.

* Expended when met in the final encounter.

Kars: Male human (Oeridian) Wiz1; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+0 armor, +0 shield, +1 Dex); Base Atk +0; Grp -1; Atk -1 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +1 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk -1 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +1 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Decipher Script +5, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +4; Endurance, Toughness, Scribe Scroll.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Old Oeridian.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): o—detect magic, prestidigitation, resistance; 1st—expeditious retreat, hold portal;

Rejuvenation (ex): While dreamscape NPCs do not regenerate (as the PCs do), they cannot really be killed.

Possessions: dagger.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE NOTE BOOKS

Marquesse: Female human (Flan) Sor8; CR 8; Medium humanoid (Human); HD 8d4+8; hp 33; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+0 armor, +0 shield, +2 Dex); Base Atk +4; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +18, Intimidate +9, Diplomacy +16, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Profession (psychologist) +8, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +8; Dreamcasting*, Oneiromancy*, Improved Oneiromancy*, Skill Focus (Knowledge (the planes)).

Languages: Ancient Flan, Common, Draconic.

Spells Known (6/5/4/**; base DC = 14 + spell level): o—detect magic, disrupt undead, flare, mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation, read magic; 1st—alarm, charm person, color spray, protection from evil, restful slumber*; 2nd—detect thoughts, invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter; 3rd—hold person, suggestion; 4th—dream walk*;

Possessions: Quarterstaff, cloak of charisma +2, circlet of persuasion, light crossbow, crossbow bolts, scroll of glitterdust, scroll of detect secret doors.

* see Appendix 7.

** spells cast this day already deducted.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOING DOWN

Ator: male advanced ghaſt; CR 5; Medium undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 57; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural, +5 Dex); Base Atk +4; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d8+5 plus paralysis, bite); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+5 plus paralysis, bite) and +9/+9 melee (1d4+2 plus paralysis, claw); SA Ghoul fever, paralysis, stench; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 20, Dex 20, Con -, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +11, Hide +16, Jump +15, Move Silently +16, Spot +9; Improved Multiattack, Multiattack, Toughness.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: none.

Ghoul Fever (Su): Disease—bite, Fortitude DC 19, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a ghaſt's bite or claw attack muſt ſucceed on a DC 19 Fortitude ſave or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Even elves can be affected by this paralysis. The ſave DC is Charisma-based.

Stench (Ex): Living creatures within 10 feet muſt ſucceed on a DC 19 Fortitude ſave or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A creature that ſuſſeſſfully ſaves cannot be affected again by the ſame ghaſt's ſtench for 24 hours. A delay poiſon or neutralize poiſon ſpell removes the effect from a ſickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poiſon are unaffected, and creatures reſiſtant to poiſon receive their normal bonus on their ſaving throws. The ſave DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOING DOWN

Ator: male advanced ghaſt Ftr3; CR 7; Medium undead; HD 8d12+3d12+3; hp 78; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural, +5 Dex); Base Atk +7; Grp +12; Atk +12 melee (1d8+5 plus paralysis, bite); Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+5 plus paralysis, bite) and +12/+12 melee (1d4+2 plus paralysis, claw); SA Ghoul fever, paralysis, stench; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 20, Con -, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +11, Intimidate +14, Hide +16, Jump +15, Move Silently +16, Spot +9; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Multiattack, Multiattack, Improved Trip, Toughness.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: none.

Ghoul Fever (Su): Disease—bite, Fortitude DC 20, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a ghaſt's bite or claw attack muſt ſucceed on a DC 20 Fortitude ſave or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Even elves can be affected by this paralysis. The ſave DC is Charisma-based.

Stench (Ex): Living creatures within 10 feet muſt ſucceed on a DC 20 Fortitude ſave or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A creature that ſuſſeſſfully ſaves cannot be affected again by the ſame ghaſt's ſtench for 24 hours. A delay poiſon or neutralize poiſon ſpell removes the effect from a ſickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poiſon are unaffected, and creatures reſiſtant to poiſon receive their normal bonus on their ſaving throws. The ſave DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOING DOWN

Ator: male advanced ghaſt Ftr4; CR 8; Medium undead; HD 8d12+4d12+3; hp 85; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural, +5 Dex); Base Atk +8; Grp +13; Atk +14 melee (1d8+7 plus paralysis, bite); Full Atk +14 melee (1d8+7 plus paralysis, bite) and +13/+13 melee (1d4+2 plus paralysis, claw); SA Ghoul fever, paralysis, stench; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 20, Con -, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +11, Intimidate +16, Hide +16, Jump +15, Move Silently +16, Spot +9; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Multiattack, Multiattack, Improved Trip, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Specialization (bite).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: none.

Ghoul Fever (Su): Disease—bite, Fortitude DC 21, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a ghaſt's bite or claw attack muſt ſucceed on a DC 21 Fortitude ſave or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Even elves can be affected by this paralysis. The ſave DC is Charisma-based.

Stench (Ex): Living creatures within 10 feet muſt ſucceed on a DC 21 Fortitude ſave or be ſickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A creature that ſuſſeſſfully ſaves cannot be affected again by the ſame ghaſt's ſtench for 24 hours. A delay poiſon or neutralize poiſon ſpell removes the effect from a ſickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poiſon are unaffected, and creatures reſiſtant to poiſon receive their normal bonus on their ſaving throws. The ſave DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOING DOWN

Ator: male advanced ghastr Ftr6; CR 10; Medium undead; HD 8d12+6d12+3; hp 99; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural, +5 Dex); Base Atk +10; Grp +13; Atk +16 melee (1d8+7 plus paralysis, bite); Full Atk +16 melee (1d8+7 plus paralysis, bite) and +15/+15 melee (1d4+2 plus paralysis, claw); SA Ghoul fever, paralysis, stench; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 20, Dex 20, Con -, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +11, Intimidate +22, Hide +16, Jump +15, Move Silently +16, Spot +9; Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Multiattack, Multiattack, Improved Trip, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Specialization (bite).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: none.

Ghoul Fever (Su): Disease—bite, Fortitude DC 22, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a ghastr's bite or claw attack must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Even elves can be affected by this paralysis. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Stench (Ex): Living creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same ghastr's stench for 24 hours. A delay poison or neutralize poison spell removes the effect from a sickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures resistant to poison receive their normal bonus on their saving throws. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Advanced Greater Shadow: CR 10; Medium undead; HD 12d12; hp 86; Init +2; Spd fly 40 ft. (good); AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection, +4 Dex); Base Atk +6; Grp -; Atk +10 touch (1d8 Str, touch); Full Atk +10 touch (1d8 Str, touch); SA Create spawn, strength damage; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +6 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10; Str -, Dex 18, Con -, Int 7, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Hide +18 (+22 in shadows, +14 in bright light), Listen +13, Search +8, Spot +13; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Turn Resistance*, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Languages: none

Possessions: none.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a greater shadow deals 1d8 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

* see Appendix 7

ENCOUNTER 8: RUDE AWAKENINGS

Fiendish Gargantuan Monstrous Spider: CR 10; Gargantuan magical beast; HD 16d8+32; hp 104; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+10 natural armor, +3 Dex, -4 size); Base Atk +12; Grp +31; Atk +15 melee (3d8+10 plus poison, bite); Full Atk +15 melee (3d8+10 plus poison, bite); SA Poison, smite good, web; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR 10/magic, resistance cold 10 and fire 10, SR 21, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 25, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Hide +3 (+11 when using their webs), Jump +7, Move Silently +11 (+19 when using their webs), Spot +4; Awesome Blow, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack, Power Attack, Snatch.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 20, initial and secondary damage 2d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

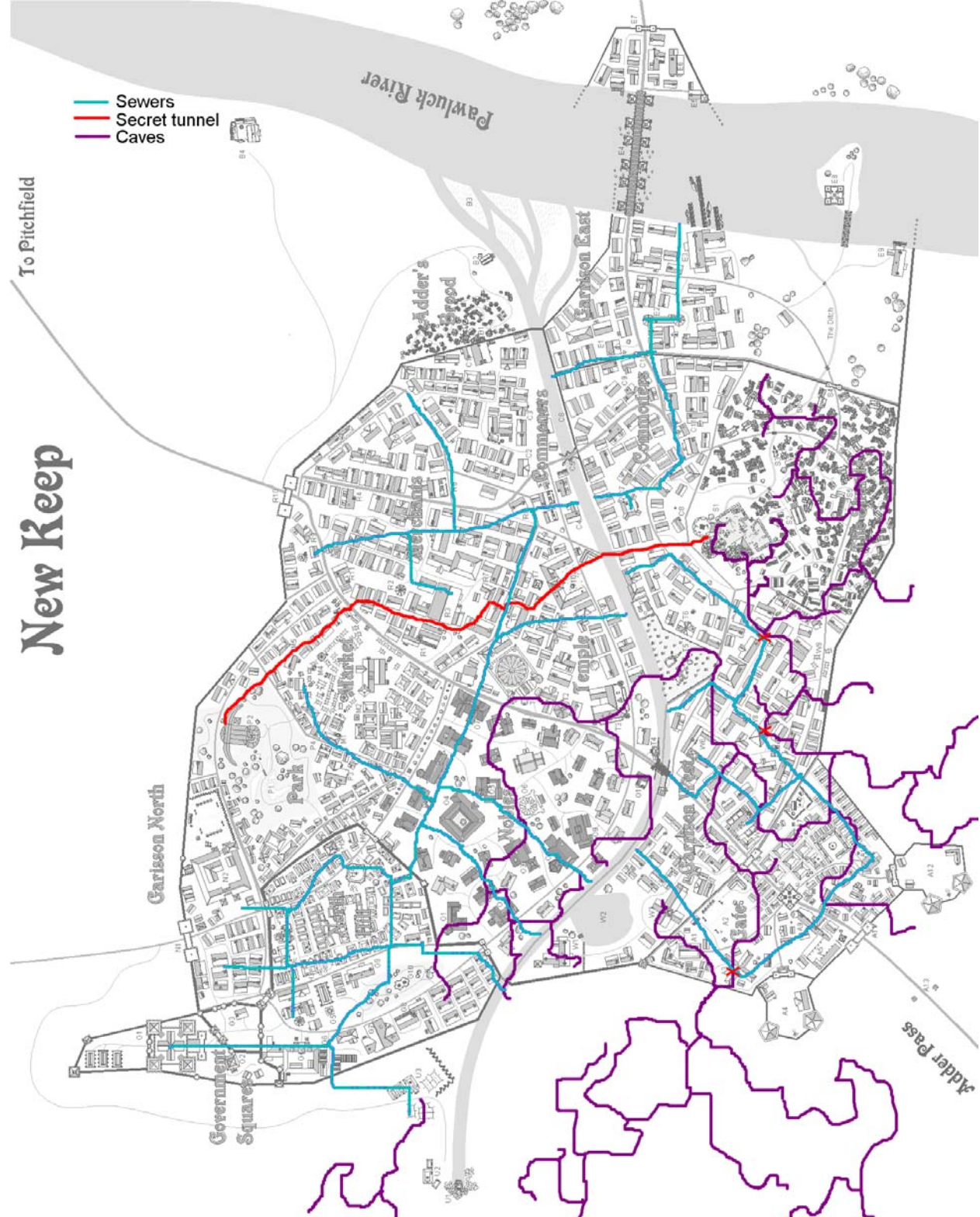
Smite Good (Su): Once per day the spider can make a normal melee attack to deal 16 points of extra damage.

APPENDIX 3: NEW KEEP AT A GLANCE

NEW KEEP, CY 595



CITY SEWERS, SECRET PASSAGEWAY, AND CAVES



👑 **New Keep (large town):** Conventional; AL NG; gp limit 3000 gp; Assets 1500 gp; Population 2,800, (55% humans, 30% dwarves, 12% gnomes, and 3% other);

Authority Figures: Count Emuld Donner of Darmen (count of Pelsand), Commander Kayne Donner (son of count Donner and commander of the Pelsand Guards), Mayor Huelyn (mayor of New Keep, chairman of the city counsel), Captain Barden (Sheriff, Head of the New Keep Watch), Lady Counselor Elyda Velsher (city counsel member and treasurer), Lord Marrec Hugher (Chairman of the Benefit, representative of the merchants of New Keep), Xibyan Mettoc (city counsel member on arcane affairs, and head of the Arcane Order), Mergadrin (city architect)

Important Temples: The Dome (temple of Pelor, Temple district), The Fortress of Liberty (temple to Trithereon, Temple district), The Queens Halls (temple to Boccob, Lirr, Lydia, and Yohydee, Park), The Big Gamble and Arena (temple to Norebo, Commoners district), Shrine of the Ruby Heart (shrine to Ulaa, outside city gates), The Hall of Stone (Samryntar, North Hill), The Benefit (includes shrine to Zilchus, Market)

Description: New Keep is a heavily fortified town. Despite its relatively small population it has the air of city, more seven than that of the kingdom's capital, Pitchfield. This in part due to the stone walls and the large military structures, including Pelor's Keep, the main fortress from which count Donner rules over Pelsand.

The town is a nexus of trade for Sunndi with the Principality of Naerie and the Hollow Highlands. It is however, also a fort – it guards the Adder Pass, and has been the location of many conflicts with the principality with which it now trades.

As such, the feelings of the populace about the of Kingdom of Ahlissa vary wildly. Many people, scarred by the war and the occupation of the Great Kingdom, distrust Ahlissans deeply. The efforts of Count Donner to establish free trade with the kingdom has met with some dissent, and over the last year the city has become divided over these matters. While merchants praise the opened up trade routes, others claim that the Ahlissans have simply evaded again – and this time the government is welcoming them in.

Part of the division is seen in the way that law is enforced in New Keep.

While New Keep is a part of Pelsand, Count Donner does not have actual political power in the town. On insistence of the Counsel of Lords, a separate counsel decides in city matters. The counsel consists of twelve members, appointed by various guilds and groups of influence of the town. It is headed by the mayor, who is appointed by the count, giving him at least some political control.

Aside from deciding on political and economical issues, the counsel has control over their own guards – the New Keep Watch. The watch is headed by captain Barden, and keeps order in town.

Donner himself has his own army, commanded by his own son, but its tasks are to provide security in his county, and to guard the borders. The forces are ever present in the city though, as they man the walls and gates. They also patrol, and virtually control, Gate district. In any other districts, they are forced to leave matters to the watch.

Many feel that Donner and his guards favour the Ahlissans too much – the counsel has already voiced its concern about harassment of Hollow Highlanders by the Pelsand guards. Few find it palpable that Donner would support a people that are responsible for so many suffering – including the death of his own wife.

Still, a large group also supports the new trade agreements, and welcomes the opportunities it brings. The counsel has yet to find a way to deal with the growing number of conflicts and brawls over this sensitive issue, and with the appointment of Lord Huelyn – originally chairman of the Benefit – as the new mayor, it may become problematic to calm the dissidents.

Districts: New Keep is divided in the following districts: Commoners, Garrison East, Garrison South, Gate, Government Squares, Market, Merchant Quarters, North Hill (mostly dwarves), Noble district, The Shards, Temple, and Park.

There are a number of key locations in town, aside from the Shards. Numbers refer to the map in the appendix.

Pelor's Keep (G1): This large keep is count Donner's residence. Most of his forces are stationed here. The Keep is in the north of town, looking out over Government squares.

The Shards (S1): This is the ruin of the original Crystal Castle. Nobody has entered it for years. The gate is locked with a thick iron chain, the keys of which are kept at the Count's Coin tavern (S2).

The Dome (T1): The temple of Pelor is located in the temple district. It is the largest temple in town, with a large glass dome and a pleasant garden. As most Pelor temples it has a small hospital, where the poor can receive treatment for their ailments.

The Benefit (M3): This is a merchant hall, next to the town's main market square. It is a relatively new building. The organization is fully called "The Union of Traders for the Benefit of the People of Pelsand". It is run partly by Zilchus priests.

The Queen's Halls (P2): the Halls are located in the enormous park in the center of town. They are maintained by the College of Concriscent Lore, and the priesthoods of Lydia and Lirr, with occasional – mostly material or financial – support from the priesthood of Boccob. Not commonly known, but no

longer a secret, is that the Halls also hold clergy of Johydee, and members of the Veil of the Sun. Some of these priests actually pose under the flag of another faith, most often Lirr or Boccob.

To the people of New Keep, it is no secret that not all the members of the Halls are what they seem - but it is hard to determine who is a simple gatherer of lore, or who serves as a secret agent for the Iron League. Most feel the distinction is only a formal one, anyway.

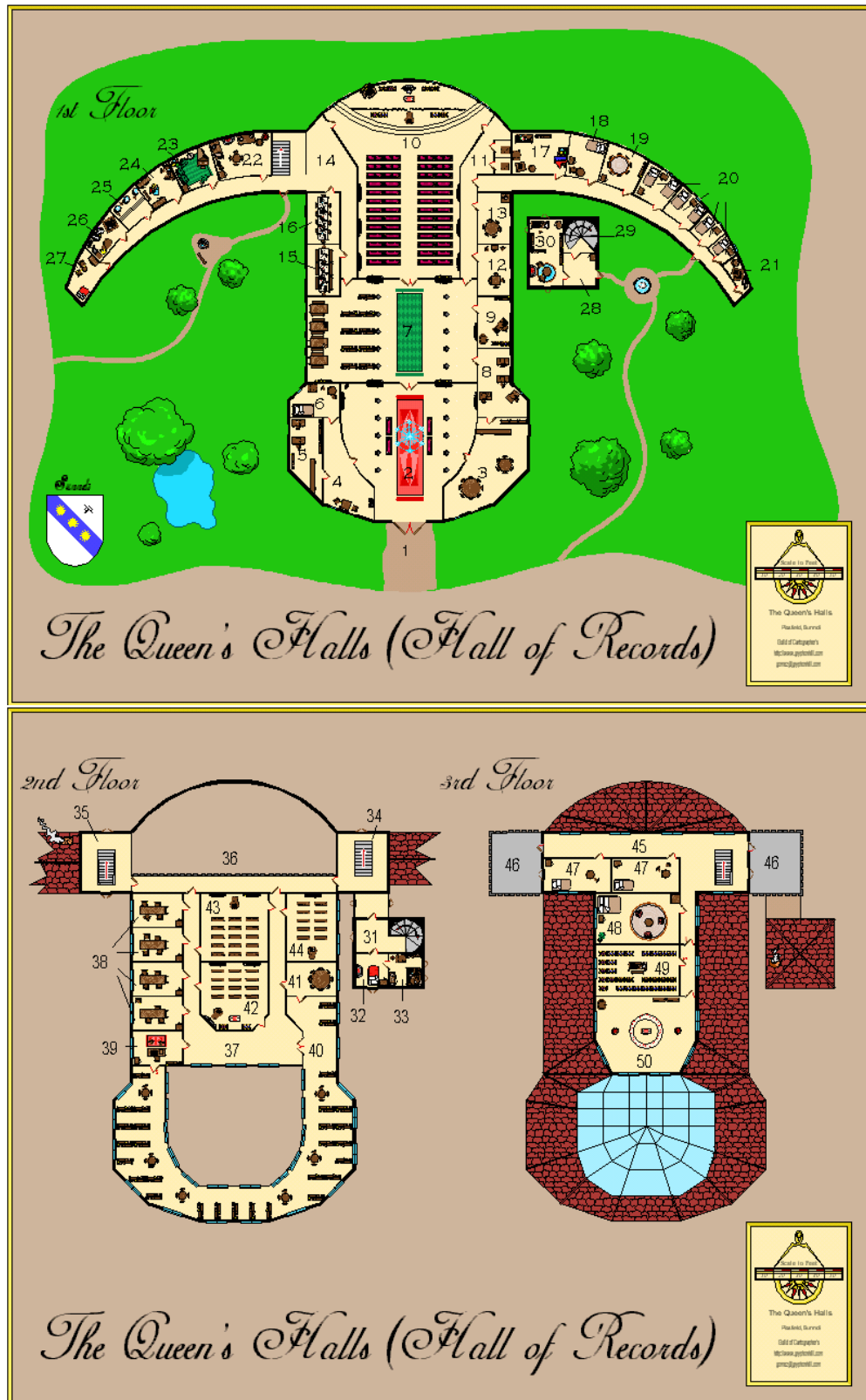
Gates (A11, R10, N1, E7): There are four gates into the city: a well-guarded gate to the west (A11), into the pass, another gate to the road to Pitchfield (R10), and two smaller gates to the north (N1) and east (E7). The southern gate leads to Viceroc, a farming community. The northern gate is hardly ever used, the badly traveled road leading northward to the Rieuwood and the Hollow Highlands.

Adder's Brood (B1): Outside the city lies a crime-infested tent town, a community for those too poor to a house in town.

Barcious' Mill (E9): South of town, only just hemmed inside the walls, is Barcious' Mill, a water mill powered by the Pawluck River stream. It looks out over Lessel's Isle (E8), whose guard tower watches for trespasser attempting to enter the city unwatched by crossing the Pawluck.

Shrine of The Ruby Heart (U1): In a cavern in the hills west of the town, lies the Shrine of The Ruby Heart, devoted to Ulaa.

APPENDIX 4: THE QUEEN'S HALLS

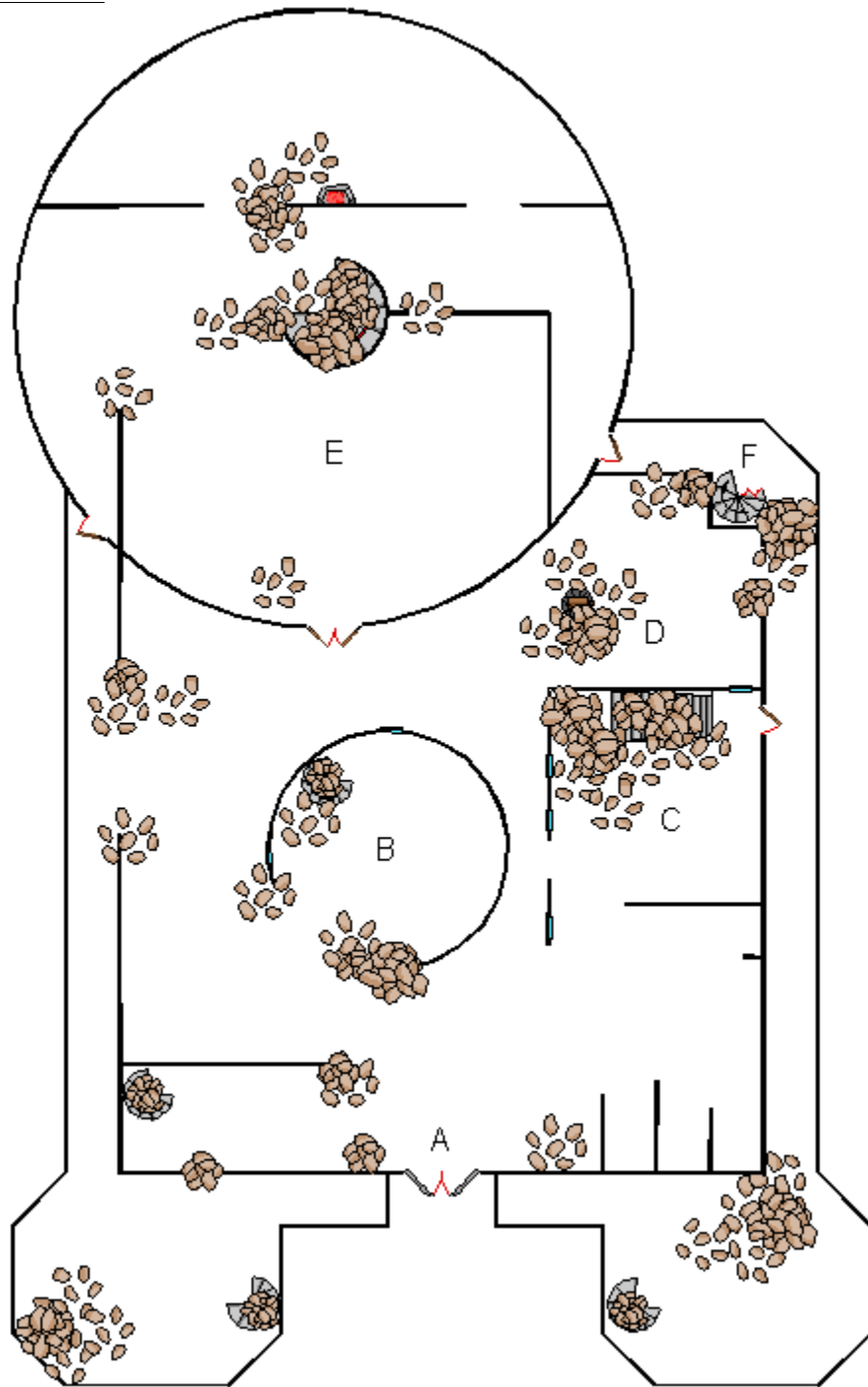


THE QUEEN'S HALLS LEGEND

1. Halls' Garden
2. Great Hall (aka The Red Hall)
3. Onnwal temporary embassy (originally held the tax collector's scribes)
4. Waiting room and guard post
5. Tax archive (currently Corul River area only)
6. Brett Olmby and Dunar Fint's room (guard's quarters, formerly tax collector's office)
7. Public Library (aka The Green Hall)
8. Scribes and Clercs
9. Balias Fyne's office (master cleric)
10. Aula (aka Purple Hall)
11. 'Students' Wing
12. Conference room
13. Conference room
14. 'Servants' Wing (aka the Wing of Song)
15. Dinner Room (main staff)
16. Dinner Room (students and clerics)
17. Preparation room
18. Calastria Borm's room (student supervisor)
19. Dormitory
20. Student rooms (acolytes)
21. Storage room
22. Kitchen
23. Music practice room
24. Thespian's room
25. Baths
26. Props room
27. Jovis and Marca Bullware's room (gardener and cook)
28. Tower entrance
29. Stairs to second floor
30. Xibyan Mettoc's private library (resident wizard/sage)
31. Tower entrance second floor
32. Xibyan Mettoc's bedroom
33. Private laboratory
34. Staircase to 3rd floor
35. Staircase to 1st floor
36. Aula balcony
37. Corridors
38. Study rooms
39. Yasme Volongkech's room (head librarian)
40. Great Library
41. Conference room
42. Lecture room (aka White Room)
43. Lecture room (aka Rainbow Room)
44. Lecture room (aka Black Room)
45. Third floor
46. Balcony
47. Guest/lecturer's rooms (unoccupied)
48. Bard's room (now occupied by head priestess Timma Fyuro and her consort Moloxius Wyr)
49. Hidden Library
50. Chapel

APPENDIX 5: CRYSTAL CASTLE

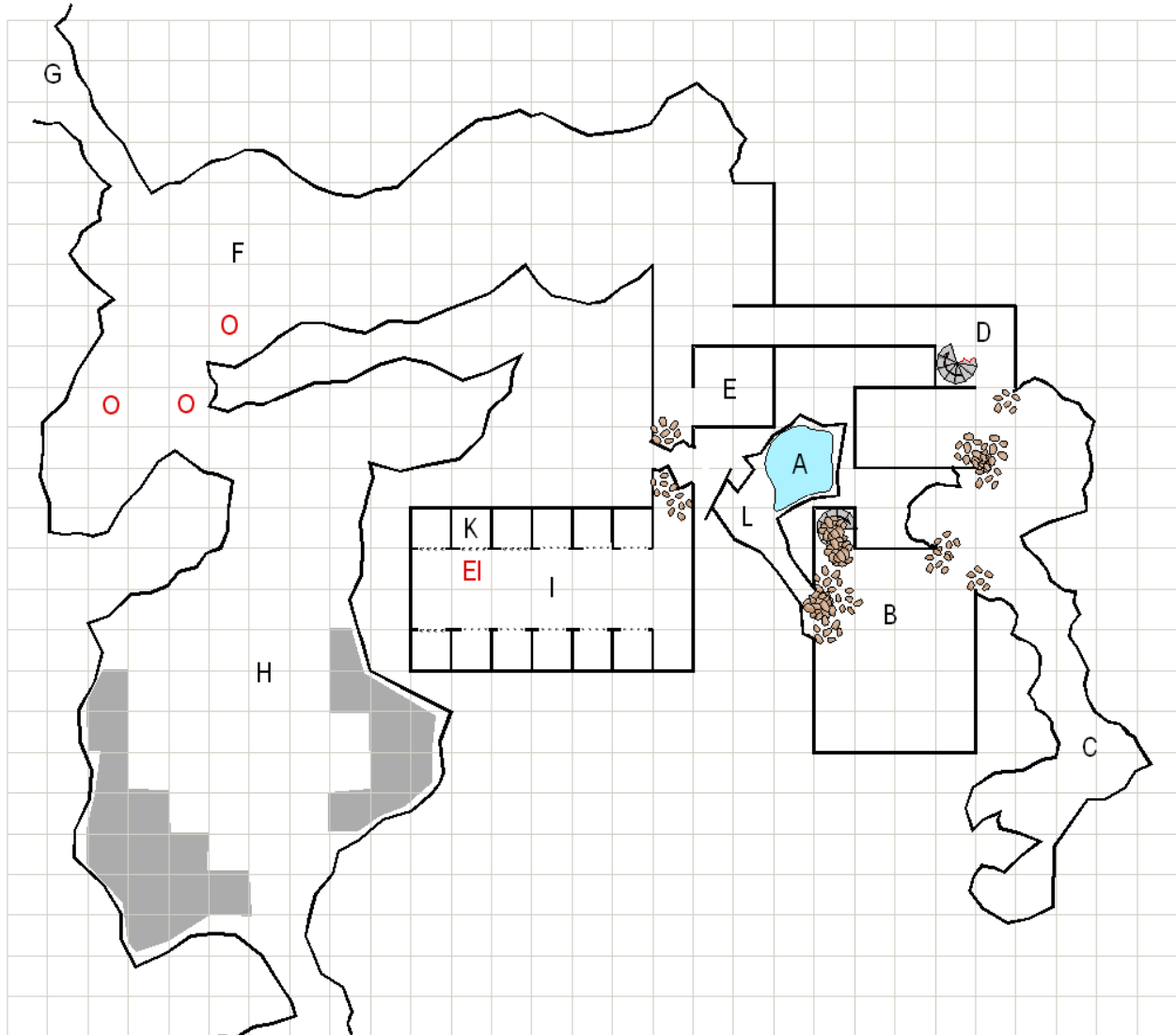
A: CASTLE RUINS



- A Gate
- B Maiden's Tower
- C Kitchen/Servant quarters
- D Well
- E Crystal Tower
- F Stairs Down

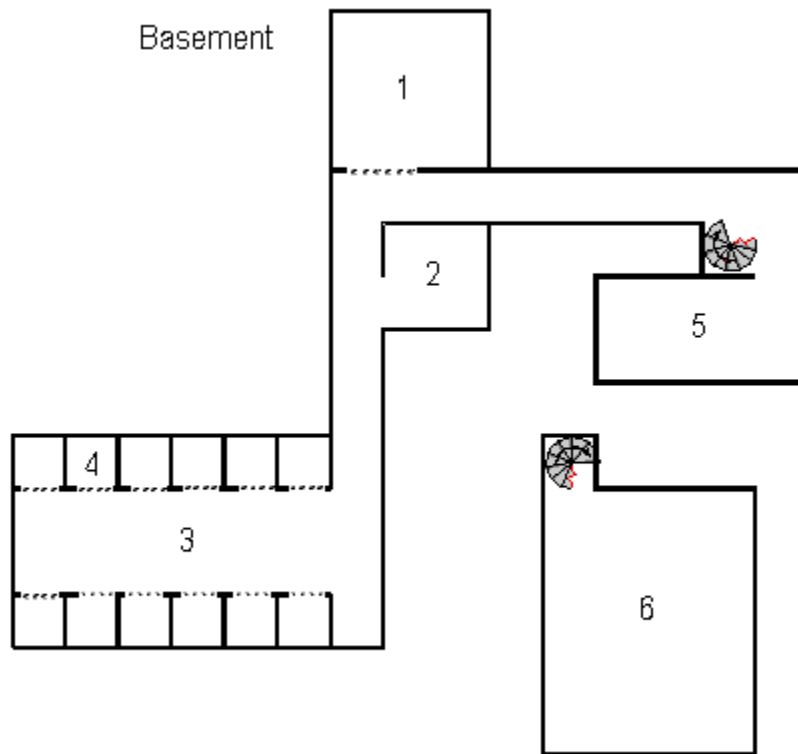
B: CASTLE DUNGEONS

1 square = 5ft.

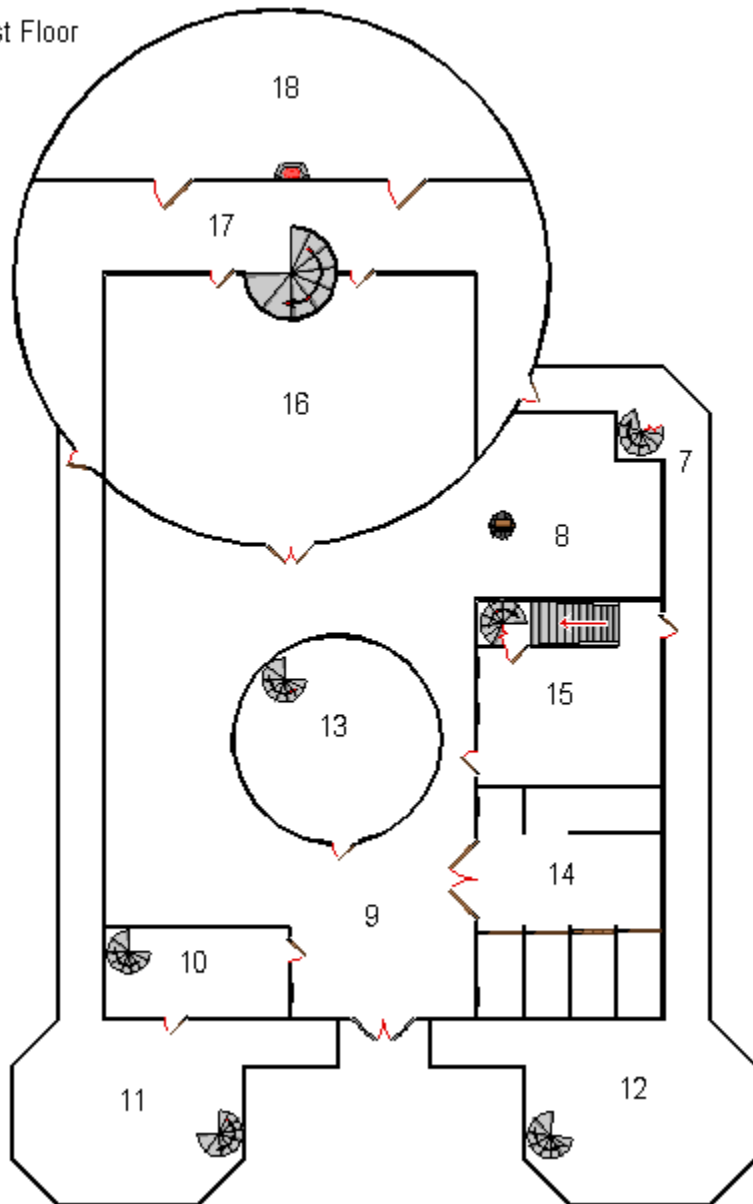


- | | | | |
|---|----------------|----|------------------------|
| A | Well | O | Oozes starting place |
| B | Cellar | El | Eleonaer (unconscious) |
| C | Caverns | | |
| D | Stairs up | | |
| E | Guard Room | | |
| F | Wet Cavern | | |
| G | To Sewers | | |
| H | Webbed Cavern | | |
| I | Keep Dungeons | | |
| K | Galleon's Cell | | |
| L | Secret Tunnel | | |

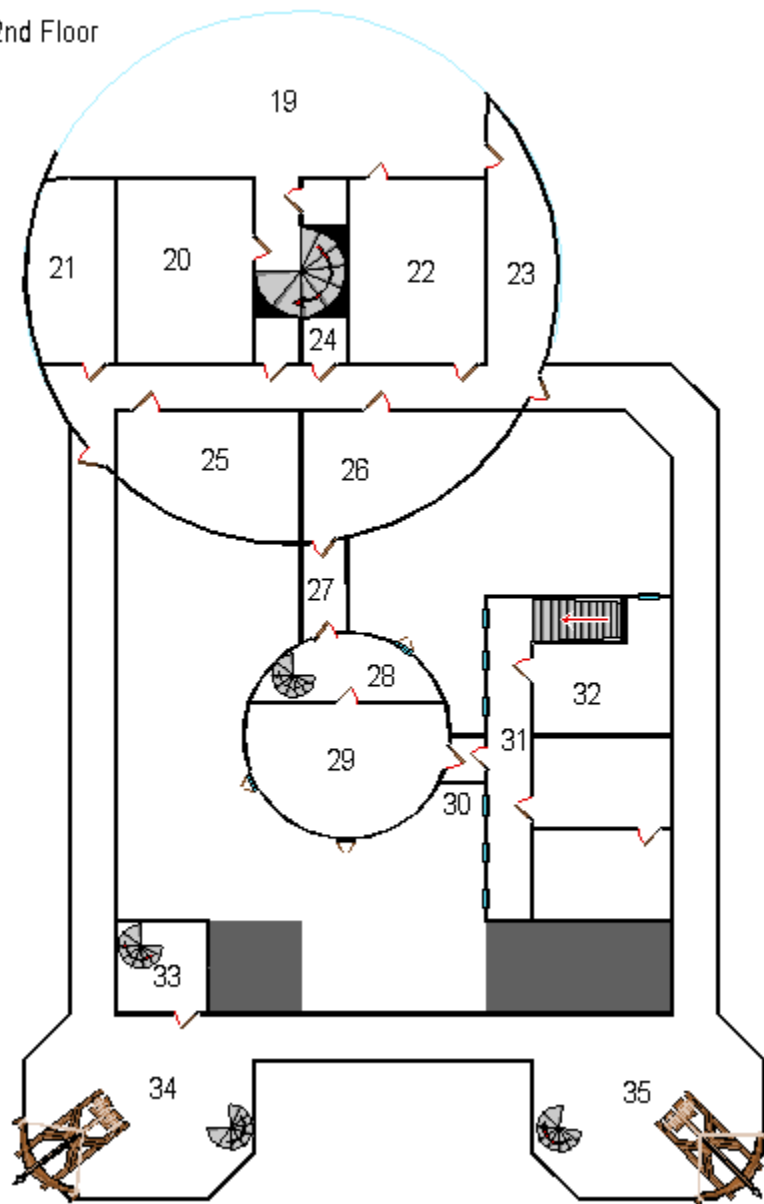
C: CRYSTAL CASTLE



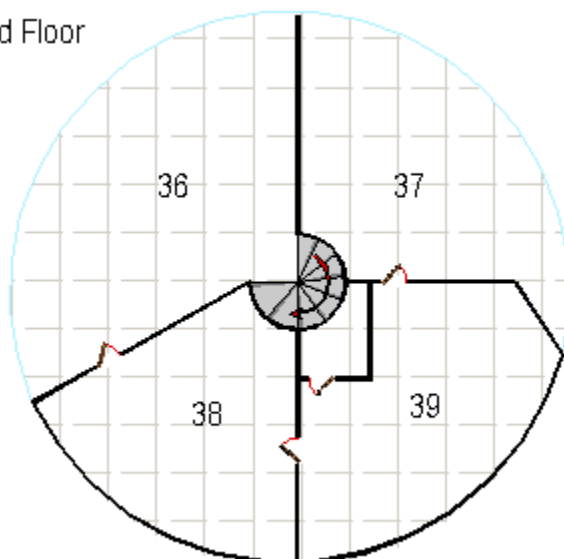
1st Floor



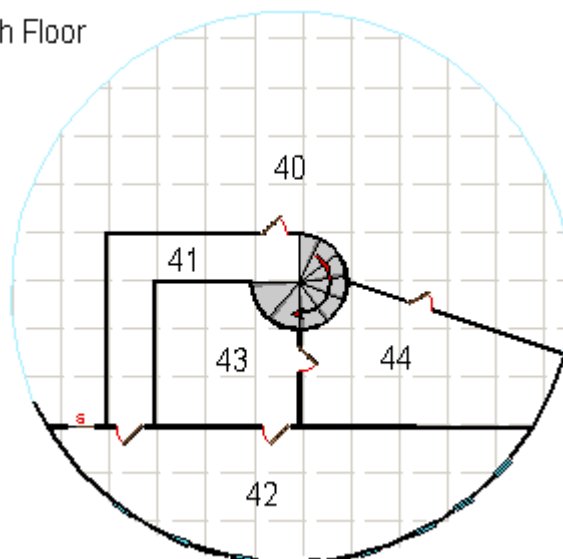
2nd Floor



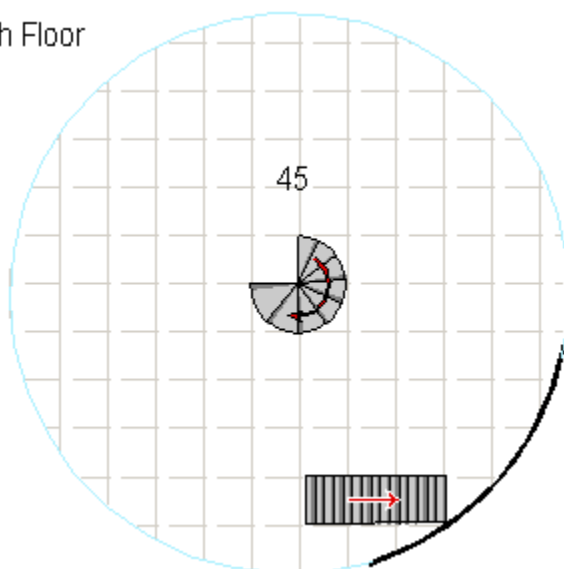
3rd Floor



4th Floor



5th Floor



6th Floor



LEGEND

- 1 Questioning Room
- 2 Prison Guard Room
- 3 Dungeons
- 4 Galleon's Cell
- 5 Storage
- 6 Cellar
- 7 Wall patrol passage
- 8 Well
- 9 Courtyard
- 10 Guard quarters
- 11 Lower western guard tower
- 12 Lower eastern guard tower
- 13 Maiden's Tower, living quarters
- 14 Stables
- 15 Kitchen
- 16 Crystal Tower entrance hall
- 17 Corridors
- 18 Former ballroom, now strategy room
- 19 Library
- 20 Guest bedroom (now occupied by Eberhast)
- 21 Archives
- 22 Main Study
- 23 Corridors, guards
- 24 Latrines
- 25 Guest bedroom (now occupied by Chullendrea)
- 26 Ladies room
- 27 Bridge from Crystal Tower to Maiden's Tower
- 28 Maiden's tower, hall
- 29 Maiden's tower, lady's bedroom
- 30 Bridge from servant quarters to Maiden's Tower
- 31 Servant quarters, corridors
- 32 Servant bedrooms (partly taken by guards)
- 33 Guards rest room
- 34 Upper western guard tower
- 35 Upper eastern guard tower
- 36 Dining room (mundane)
- 37 Master Bedroom (now taken by Stoan)
- 38 Exhibit room (armor and weapons)
- 39 Exhibit room (stuffed animals)
- 40 Music room, still contains a large harp mounted to the floor
- 41 Corridors
- 42 Formerly an exhibition room (now Eberhast's laboratory)
- 43 Tea room, contains family portraits
- 44 Smoking room
- 45 Entertainment room
- 46 Roof top dining room
- 47 Crystal Tower view

APPENDIX 6: THE KEEP'S DREAMSCAPE

This section described the rules of the dreamscape in which the PCs find themselves. The rules are based on rules and suggestions made in *Heroes of Horror*, page 54-58.

Any rules presented here supersede any rules in *Heroes of Horror*.

FEATURES OF THE CRYSTAL CASTLE DREAMSCAPE

The dreamscape acts as a pocket plane. It has the following general features.

Normal Gravity.

Subjective Time: Time passes differently in the dreamscape. It is hard to measure – PCs may sleep for mere minutes or hours while experiencing the dream. In addition, time in the dreamscape is not constant. While the entire event described in this scenario takes place over the course of a day, it may be experienced in much shorter time as time jumps – almost unnoticeably – from event to event.

Finite Size: The dreamscape only contains the castle and grounds. While the village can be seen from the walls, anyone who attempts to leave the castle in any way is either turned around or transported to a random room, or a specific event, depending on the time of day.

Subjectively Morphic: To most people entering the dreamscape, it appears as an alterable morphic plane. However, since most of the events are replays of things that have already happened, changes only last as long as a character is aware of it. A PC may break a window, and it will stay broken while he is present, but if he walks out of the room and back in, it will have been remade.

No Elemental or Energy Trait.

Alignment: Mildly Neutral.

Limited Magic: Most magic seems to work normal at first. Cast spells are expended just like if they were cast in the real world, and in most cases there should be little change.

Any changes made by magic are however subject to the subjectively morphic nature of the dreamscape (like all actions), and thus likely temporary.

Magic cannot alter the dreamscape's rules, i.e., one cannot *teleport* out of the castle (the caster instead ends up in a random room or the courtyard).

Using magic in a dream is tricky. Unless the PC has the *Oneiromancy* feat (like *Marquese*) each spell has a chance of going awry.

Each time a character casts a spell, roll 1d20 + the spell level. If the result is 21 or over, the spell is twisted by the mutable nature of the realm. Roll 1d20 again and consult the following table to determine the impact on the spell.

d20	Result
1-5	The spell functions normally but is cosmetically changed (different colors, flashing lights, pdd sounds, and so on).
6-7	The spell functions as 1d4 caster levels higher than normal.
8-9	The spell functions as 1d4 caster levels higher than normal.
10-11	The spell functions normally, but affects a target or area other than the one the caster intended, determined randomly.
12-13	The spell does not function; instead, the caster produces another spell of the same level, determined randomly; this need not be a spell the caster knows or has prepared.
14-15	The spell does not function; instead, the caster produces another spell of 1d4 levels lower (to the minimum level the caster can cast), determined randomly; this need not be a spell the caster knows or has prepared.
16-17	The spell does not function; instead, the caster produces another spell of 1d4 levels higher (to the maximum spell level the caster's can cast), determined randomly; this need not be a spell the caster knows or has prepared.
18-19	The spell simply fails to materialize.
20	Roll twice, ignore this result if rolled again.

PCS IN THE DREAMS

While the PCs experience the dream, they become parts of the history that is being presented. The PCs themselves were not actually there, of course, but in a way the dream makes it appear so, by having them replace another person in the dream.

Essentially, every PC (except those that entered with *Marquese*, who take an exceptional route) takes on the looks and characteristics of one specific person that died in keep's destruction – a guard, a servant, etc. The starting encounters in *Encounter 7* list the characters the PCs 'become' as they enter the dream.

From there, they can experience the various encounters, as if they had been there. They can even interfere – though that may not work as expected (see below).

Despite their different looks, PCs keep their own stats, classes and abilities. They lose any equipment, but any other abilities are still present – so a mage that becomes a servant girl will still be able to cast spells, even though the person he replaces never could.

There is one side effect to the 'transposition' of another character. The PCs are tempted to see the view of the events from the perspective of the person they replace – the spirits of those people affect how they perceive their environment. This means that they may experience feelings of anxiety, fear, or surprise when

their own, more jaded, character would not. It is up to the PCs to react to these feelings – and to realize that they are not their own.

In general, PCs have replaced people that were relatively free to travel the castle – and for whom it was not unlikely that they were present during most of the events.

PCs that desire to explore may very well walk from one encounter to another (though you can ‘aid’ them by moving them to the right rooms – however they move). In general, their presence is ignored – they are either treated as if they aren’t there, or as if they were part of the scene and belonged there. Unless the PCs interfere, they can waitness the events untroubled.

INTERFERING IN THE DREAMS

The PCs are likely to try and interfere on several occasions. Attacking an NPC, taking or destroying items, or trying to talk or intimidate an NPC into certain acts, like freeing a prisoner.

There is no problem with this – PCs should be able to use their abilities. Unfortunately for them, nothing they do can actually change history. Then again, history is not as clearly written, especially not the massacre at Crystal Castle... so who is to say the PCs actions do not somehow represent what actually happened?

In any event, some actions the PCs may undertake may have an effect on how the spirits of the keep regard the PCs, even though they cannot actually change history.

In particular, you should take note if any attempt of the PCs to do the following:

- Save or arrest Fenrus Galleon in encounters IV or V.
- Save the life of Alabor in encounter V.
- Save the life of Yafanelle Donner in encounter IV

These acts may have effect later on (see the Conclusion).

Therefore, if the PCs change something (like taking the notebooks at an appropriate moment), you should simply let them do this and keep the change for as long as it does not actually impact the story (to the end if possible). It is fine, for instance, for encountered minor NPCs (such as guards) to stay wounded or even ‘dead’, or for minor items to stay in the PCs possession.

Once the change would make a difference though, you can reverse it (i.e. when Stoa produces the notebooks, the PCs suddenly find they are no longer holding them). On occasion, you may make this clear more quickly for effect. I.e., if the PCs fought a guard and killed him, they may encounter that same guard again minutes later, i.e. as soon as they leave the room. The guard appears fully healthy, with no memories of his ‘death’. This may help to make clear that things are not as they seem. Note that of all the dead, only Alabor died - at Stoa’s hands - before the castle’s destruction, so you can return any NPC to ‘life’ if needed. Do not

over do this though. Players (rather than their PCs) may get frustrated if nothing they change stays changed. It is fine to give them the feeling that they make some difference, even if – in the grand scheme of things at least – they probably didn’t.

Due to the nature of the dreamscape, a few acts will not work at all. This includes a few forms of magic, as noted in the features section.

In addition, Intimidate, Bluff, and Diplomacy do not work properly against dreamscape characters – so it is almost impossible to coax them into doing things they would not normally do. Most dreamscape people are quite willing to talk to the PCs though, even if they would not normally be inclined to do so to the person the PC replaces. This particular behavior stems from a desire of the dead to tell their story. Of course, not every dreamscape character has interesting things to tell.

The encounters described below may also include a few extra rules on what happens if PCs interfere.

Note that some of the boxed text is quite long. Try to space reading or paraphrasing to allow PCs to interrupt if they desire.

COMBAT IN THE DREAM

PCs are an aggressive lot, and it may be that they will resort to violence. If this happens, you can run combat using the following additional rules.

All servants in the castle are all Com1, AC 10, with 4 hp. They do not fight or even defend themselves.

Yafanelle is an Ari1, AC 11, hp 8. She likewise does not fight.

All the keep guards are 2nd level warriors. A generic statblok is included in Appendix 2. This appendix also lists stats for Galleon, Alabor Pryce, Eberhast, and Chullendra.

Damage gained in combat in the dreamscape is not permanent, though it does pose a risk.

All damage done to PCs (including the ones that entered with Marquesse) is non lethal, though this may not necessarily be apparent (a DC 15 Heal check after a wound is sustained reveals this).

Any damage sustained in the dream heals very quickly, at the rate of 1 hp per minute (as measured in the dream).

The damage does not transfer to the PCs body. However, anyone who got injured during the dream (which includes anyone who experiences the blast in the final encounter) may run a risk of gaining 1d4 points of Wis damage and 1d4 points of Cha damage. A DC 15+1/2 APL Will save avoids the damage, though those who were injured in combat (not due to the blast), sustain at least 1 Cha damage.

DREAM ENCOUNTERS

The following is an overview of the encounters in the castle.
All encounters are described in Encounter 7.

Starting Encounters				
Nr	Title	Room	Time	Description
I	Guard Duty	34/35	9:45 AM	The PCs become Great Kingdom guards
II	Lady In the Tower	29	9:45 AM	The PC becomes Annes, the servant of the imprisoned viscountess
III	Hub of the Castle	6	9:45 AM	The PC becomes Beck, a stable boy.
Chronological Encounters				
Nr	Title	Room	Time	Description
I	Guards on Alert	5, 7-12, 16-18	10:00 AM	An alarm is sounded. There are riots in the streets, and guards are dispatched from the castle to deal with rebellious forces.
II	Reports	18	11:00 AM	Stoan discusses rumors of invading forces. He orders the arrest of the dwarf architect Meradin, and questions Alabor about Galleon's wife
III	The Note Books	43	3:00 PM	Galleon searches the archives for the items – which turn out to be notebooks, and claims them.
IV	The Arrest	8	3:30 PM	Galleon waits at the well to give the notebooks to his wife – but she doesn't show. Instead, Stoan turns up, who has him arrested for treason. Stoan shows him a ring – which was taken from his wife's finger – and casts it into the well. He then orders Galleon to be taken away.
V	Interrogation	4	5:00 PM	Stoan interrogates Galleon, confronting him with his treason. Alabor tries to defend his friend, but Stoan lashes out in anger, and kills him
VI	The Invasion	6, 8-18, 19	5:50 PM	The rebel forces break through, coming up through the kitchen cellars. Fighting starts, and then an enormous explosion shatters the tower.
VII	The Dead	8	6:30 PM	Aftermath
Random Encounters				
Nr	Title	Description		
I	Eberhast	The mage Eberhast talks to his assistant about dealing with riots in the streets... and heralds the disaster he is to wreck.		
II	Marquesse	The PCs meet Marquesse.		
III	Pryce	The PCs meet captain Pryce of the town forces.		
IV	Yafanelle Donner	The PCs meet viscountess Yafanelle Donner.		
V	Elia Donner	The PCs meet Elia Donner, daughter of the viscount.		
VI	Chullendrea	The PCs meet captain Chullendrea.		

ITEMS

Barbed Dagger

Barbed daggers, as their name implies, look like normal daggers but with long barbs covering the blade. The design makes the weapon more difficult to wield properly than a normal dagger, but it allows those skilled in the weapons use to deal more damage with a well-placed attack.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Slight of Hand and use a barbed dagger, you gain a +2 bonus on damage rolls on any successful sneak attack made with the weapon as it twists in the wound. This bonus also applies (and is therefore doubled) on successful critical hits with the weapon.

Characters proficient with the barbed dagger can treat it as a dagger for the purpose of any of the following feats: Greater Weapon Focus, Greater Weapon Specialization, Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialization.

Thieves' Tools, Longspoon

These specially modified thieves' tools are mounted on long thin handles, enabling the user to manipulate latches, tinker with locks, and probe traps from a position up to 5 feet away and well off to the side of the target device. A 1-inch diameter mirror mounted on a long handle gives the user a good view of the object being manipulated. Though some traps can inflict harm even at a distance, these tools make it possible for a wary rogue to avoid many common hazards, such as poison needles, spurring acid, and the like.

Using these tools is more time-consuming and less accurate than taking a direct approach; longspoon tools add 2 rounds to the time required to make a Disable Device or Open Lock check and impose a -2 penalty on any Disable Device or Open Lock check for which they are used.

Longspoon thieves' tools are available in normal or masterwork versions. The masterwork version provides a +2 bonus on Disable Device and Open Lock checks, but the time required to make a check is not reduced.

FEATS

Dreamtelling

You can use your Knowledge(the planes) skill to interpret your dreams or the dreams of others, thus glean useful information and insights.

Benefit: You can interpret the basic symbolism of a dream to figure out what sorts of concerns or fears are likely to have inspired it.

This use of the feat is not used in this scenario.

This feat also allows Knowledge(the planes) to function in place of Survival when used within a dreamscape. This skill can be used to retrace your steps and return to a known person's dream, or to attempt to track a creature across the dreamscape.

APPENDIX 7: NEW RULES

Source: Heroes of Horror. pg 122

Improved Oneiromancy

With the Improved Oneiromancy feat, you gain additional dream-related Spellcasting abilities.

Prerequisites: Dreamtelling, Oneiromancy, spellcaster.

Benefit: Your spell list expands to include a number of dream-related spells (*dreamwalk* and *restful slumber* are described later in this chapter), regardless of what sort of caster you might be. You must still learn or prepare these spells normally; they are added to your class list, not necessarily to the list of spells you personally know.

1st Level: *restful slumber*

4th Level: *dream walk, manifest desire, manifest nightmares.*

5th Level: *dreaming puppet*

7th Level: *dream sight*

Source: Heroes of Horror. pg 123

Improved Turn Resistance [Monstrous]

You have a better than normal chance to resist turning.

Prerequisite: Undead type

Benefit: You are less easily affected by cleric or paladins than you normally would be (see Turn or Rebuke Undead, page 159 of the PHB). When resolving a return, rebuke, command, or bolster attempt, add +4 to your character level (monster Hit Dice plus class levels) to determine your Hit Dice for turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts.

Source: Libris Mortis. pg 27

Oneiromancy

You gain a number of abilities related to dreams and magic

Prerequisites: Dreamtelling, ability to cast spells of any sort.

Benefit: Oneiromancy grants you a number of interrelated bonuses. First, when casting spells in a nightmare realm, your spells always work as normal; you do not risk the same mishaps that other casters experience.

Second, while in the dreamscape, you are considered to have Spell Focus (enchantment) and Spell Focus (illusion), due to your ability to manipulate the thoughts of dreamers and the stuff of dreams. If you already have Spell Focus in one or both of these schools, the DC bonus to saves stacks so long as you remain within the dreamscape.

Third, you can target your offensive spells at a target's dream self, rather than his physical form. Because this deals mental damage only, it transforms all damage dealt by that spell to non-lethal damage. This effect functions only on creatures that both sleep and dream: constructs, plants, undead, and elves are immune to this effect. Only spells that target a single

creature or specific number of creatures benefit from this effect; you cannot apply it to spells that target an area.

Special: Because you are more tightly connected to the world of dreams, you are more susceptible to certain types of mental manipulation. You take a -1 penalty to saves against enchantment and illusion spells and effects when in the physical realm. If you are slain while mentally traveling the dreamscape, your physical body dies, whether or not this is the case for most travelers.

Normal: Casters I nightmare realms have a chance of mishap when casting spells. In some instances, those who die in a dreamscape experience effects other than death in the real world. See Appendix 6, and *Adventuring in Nightmare Realms* in *Heroes of Horror*, pg 54.

Source: *Heroes of Horror*, pg 123

SPELLS

Dream Walk

Conjuration (Teleportation)

Level: Oneiromancy 4

Components: V,S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched, or up to eight willing creatures joining hands

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You move yourself or some other creature into a dreamscape. You must either be able to see the dreamer whose dreams you wish to enter or be within 30 feet of her. The spell otherwise functions exactly as *plane shift*.

Source: *Heroes of Horror*, pg 129

Restful Slumber

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Oneiromancy 1

Components: V,S

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One living creature

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You allow another creature to gain a full night's sleep, uninterrupted by nightmares. If you attempt to cancel the nightmares imposed by an outside source, such as a curse or another spellcaster, you must make a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against a DC of 11 + the caster level of the nightmare's source.

Source: *Heroes of Horror*, pg 132

PLAYER HANDOUT I

New Keep is one of the main cities in Sunndi, a thorough fare for all trade between the kingdom and the Principality of Naerie. When Sunndi was still part of the Great Kingdom, the village was called Adder's Haven, after the Adder Pass, in turn named for its twists and turns through the Hollow Highlands.

The hill overlooking the Adder Pass was once the site of a castle tower named, at least officially, Pelor's Hold. Built by Lord Merinious Darmen of Aerdy, it stood on a strategically important hill, overlooking the only safe road through the Hollow Highlands. The village of Adder's Haven was built at the base. For a long time, it was merely a place of rest to travellers. Only in recent years did it turn to become a place of trade. It is quite possible that had the following events not taken place it would still only have been of little import to the merchants of Sunndi.

Merinious Darmen was a minor noble. Unlike most member of his house, he was not devoted to Zilchus, but reserved that to the god Pelor. He also had a love for arts and bardic traditions, though he had no talents himself. He compensated his failure in the arts by donating handsomely to his charges, bards and the like in the county of Sunndi.

A great deal of his money went into construction of a glass tower on top of the hold. While he named it Pelor's Hold, as a token of his devotion, the locals quickly came to call it "Crystal Castle". Another part of his donations went to the construction of the Bard's Hall, a few miles west of the castle. Later this would become the famous Queens Halls, Sunndi's largest library on history and the arcane.

When Merinious died, his wife Arynne Donner allow her family to live there. Shortly after this, Sunndi joined the Iron League and war with the Great Kingdom was unavoidable. For the Donner family, difficult times were ahead. They felt no love for the Ivids, but they had no plans to oppose the kingdom. For a while, they managed to stave off conflict, trying to stay neutral in disputes. Eventually, military conflict was unavoidable, and after the first skirmish at the pass moth, many incursions in their territory would follow.

While Crystal Castle was a wonder to behold, it failed in it's defensive qualities. The castle always changed hands in the fights it saw over the years of the Greyhawk Wars. Not blessed with a large amount of forces, and often dependent on those of others, the Donners hardly ever resisted. Over time the family became known as quick to surrender their lands, and to accept occupation if it kept their own family assets, as well the lives of their subjects, safe.

In 578, when Adder's Haven had seen relative peace for several years under Sunndi rule, general Reynard invaded the county's north, and in a series of brutal strikes a small task force, led by a Hextorite named Stoan managed to sneak southwards, through a pass between the Hollow Highlands and the Rieuwood. They brutally burned part of Adder's Haven to the ground, and took the castle and the remainder of the town. Then viscount Emuld Donner, the viscount at that time, and his son Kayne, had been away from the town, and found their return impossible. His wife Yafanelle – a niece of Count Hazendel – and daughter Elia were taken hostage by the Hextorites as a means to enforce their rule on the populace, and incidentally to discourage the viscount from retaliating. For the next years, Reinaerd managed to hold on to Pelor's Hold and it's surroundings, partly due to intimidation, and partly by a cunning use of existing defences, including the half-finished wall around the town.

Stoan's forces also took the Bard's Halls – now known as the Queen's Halls – and commanded it refitted so his own staff could use the building for administration of taxes, forcing some of the original members to aid him.

Reinaerd had the wall finished and fortified, and also ordered the building of a separate, better fortified keep. The wall was to enclose the grounds of both the Bard's Halls and the two keeps, as a defence should Sunndi's armies take the area again. Part of this work had been started years previously by viscount Donner, but was stalled by lack of funding.

Few knew that a number of the people that manned the Bard's Halls were affiliated with the Iron League, and were in fact spying for its states. So when the Kingdom took Pelsand and started the building of the wall

and keep, the Queen's Halls gathered the information it could, making sure that their allies would receive the information and be able to resist the invaders.

This still proved rather difficult, but Sunndi was able to hold off a full invasion for some time, and actually gained back some terrain, though Adder's Haven stayed in the enemy's hands for almost five years.

In early 580, a small group of heroes attempted to rally the people of New Keep to take up arms against the oppressor, but this rebellion was quickly put down.

Commander Stoan had suspected treachery for some time, as he had found that the building of the new keep was being delayed, forcing him to stay in residence at the Crystal Castle.

The rebels, led by Perrina Waslyn and Alderon Musz, members of the Bard's Halls, were executed in the market square.

After the execution, Stoan had the Halls searched. A secret room on the third floor was revealed, but no incriminating evidence was found there, and eventually the Halls were allowed to continue their business.

In 583, the Glorioles army invaded the North. They swiped the nation, but were confronted at last at Rieuwood by the armies of Ossoon. The Kingdom's forces in New Keep, weary already from the constant attacks of the Sunndi rebels, were now plagued with the arrival of the armies of Ossoon, and their moral diminished.

In late 583, the Queen's Halls aided an elite strike force to circumvent the wall, and led them through a secret tunnel that led from the Halls to Pelor's Hold. Their hopes were to take the Hold and free Donner's wife and daughter before the Hextorites could react. The coup itself was successful, and commander Stoan fled southwards, but the victory came at a great loss.

To make sure the castle would not be used anymore to withstand the armies of the Great Kingdom – and some say, out of spite – the mage Eberhast created a magical trap. When the Sunndi rebels entered the tower, a magical spell caused the tower to erupt in a fiery explosion that could be heard many miles from the site.

There were several dozen of deaths and injured people. Viscount Donner's daughter escaped the blast, but his wife was killed when a shard of glass cut her throat. She died in his arms. Donner swore revenge and finally turned his back on the Great Kingdom.

With Adder's Haven regained and the nobles on their side, Sunndi claimed its independence. Pelsand became of strategic importance. The Crystal Castle, however, was not to be rebuilt. It's ruins are now part of New Keep's slums and are named "The Shards".

Viscount Donner –made count after Sunndi turned into a kingdom – instead decided to take into use the new fortress. He also invested heavily in armed forces, drawing his men from the mercenaries who had aided in the retaking of the castle. The city, now fortified with stone walls and three well guarded gates, came to house the armies of Sunndi, to be ready for any invasion. The city was renamed New Keep, although some elders still refer to it as Pelor's Keep or Adder's Haven.

While Count Donner turned his back to the Kingdom, family ties are still strong. When Sunndi formed as a Kingdom, Olvenking Hazendel, Protector of the South, instructed all nobles to renounce their connection to the former Great Kingdom by renaming their Aerdy-descended houses. Donner refused to change the name of his house, the noble house of Darmen. His refusal has caused some enmity between him and several more fanatic factions, and some have questioned his loyalty to the kingdom.

Except from "The Great And Bountiful Kingdom of Aerdy – And How it Fell"

PLAYER'S HANDOUT II: LAST PAGE

There is not much time left. Tomorrow, we take a bit of leave. I wonder how the roses in our garden will grow, we have worked on them hard enough. Tomorrow we see if they'll blossom.

I fear though, that not all is well. I found some signs of frost, not something clear, but better to be careful, or there will be no blooms. Tomorrow I will ask my fellows on advice. Maybe my hunch is just due to the tension of seeing these flowers finally grow to full bloom.

Still, it would be a shame if my efforts are in vain, and I may not easily get another chance to start such a garden. If I fail it may take a long time to grow again...

And what of the secrets of my other work, the efforts of years of hard work, of tending and caring? What if such knowledge is lost?

Better, I guess, to leave my remaining notes on the secrets of my well tended roses and magnolias in the hands of a future gardener or two.

After all, they are my greatest treasure.

And they'll be safe, for coming generations to pursue, for sure.