



ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™

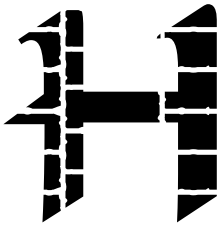


RESURGENCE

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Adventure Designer

Adventure Code: HILL 1-3



There is a spy in Hillsfar! Your job is to find him or her before the city has no defense against the oncoming Dark Fey that are fueled by a forgotten ally of Torin Nomerthal and their lust for revenge. A D&D Adventurers League adventure for characters levels 5-10 in Hillsfar.

A 4-hour adventure for 5th-10th level characters

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Resurgence, a D&D Adventurers League adventure, Part Three of the Dark Intentions Trilogy

This adventure is designed for three to seven 5th-10th level characters, and is optimized for five 8th-level characters. The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in and around the city of Hillsfar.

The D&D Adventurers League

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters' experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that continues their story.

If you're running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you'll need a DCI number. This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don't have a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the D&D Adventurers League home at:

www.dndadventurersleague.org

Preparing the Adventure

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Player's Handbook*.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

Before Play at the Table

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check
- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players with ineligible characters can make a new 1st-level character or use a pregenerated character. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character.

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide for reference.

If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now. Alternatively, they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting the Adventure

Throughout this adventure, you may see sidebars to help make adjustments for smaller/larger groups, and characters of higher/lower levels than the optimized group. Most of the time, this is used for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you may want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 8th-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters
- Divide the total by the number of characters
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table:

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH	
Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very Weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very Strong

Running the Adventure

As the Dungeon Master of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. Doing so is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating one. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.
- Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly
- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. Doing so helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master's Guide*[™] has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

Downtime and Lifestyle

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the D&D basic rules or the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services
- Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

Spellcasting Services

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a **maximum of three per day total**, unless otherwise noted.

SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Spell	Cost
Cure wounds (1 st level)	10 gp
Identify	20 gp
Lesser restoration	40 gp
Prayer of healing (2 nd level)	40 gp
Remove curse	90 gp
Speak with dead	90 gp
Divination	210 gp
Greater restoration	450 gp
Raise dead	1,250 gp

Acolyte Background

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

Disease, Death, and Recovery

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or are killed. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

Disease, Poison, and Other Debilitating Effects

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the *D&D Basic Rules*).

If a character doesn't resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

Death

A character who is killed during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A character subject to a *raise dead* spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after *raise dead* reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

Create a New 1st-Level Character. If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead. If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead. As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all experience and rewards from that session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

Adventure Background

Hillsfar has been through a lot in recent years. The Dark Prince Graz'zt's influence brought the city to the brink of complete madness. In the city's most desperate time of need, the Factions joined together and orchestrated a coup of the oppressive reign of First Lord Torin Nomerthal. The new leader, First Lord Vuhm Yestral, then joined with the Factions to defeat Graz'zt and bring sanity back to the southern shore of the Moonsea.

Hillsfar and its fledgling government again embarked on a military campaign, along with the Factions and leaders of the once-great Phlan, to wrest Phlan from the clutches of the Maimed Virulence.

With the success of that great battle, First Lord Yestral returned a victorious military leader. His next goal was to tackle the role of government leader. His revocation of the Great Law of Humanity - the law that banned non-humans from entering the city - was not popular with everyone. Hillsfar had become xenophobic, and many citizens actually liked it. Changing the law was easy. Changing the hearts and minds of the people of Hillsfar was a far more difficult task.

Then the attacks started. Monsters somehow entered the city and wrought havoc on the city's livelihood: trade. With shipments being lost to monstrous attacks, inventory being stolen, and the needless loss of life, Yestral's control is slipping. Several prominent citizens and a large contingent of Hillsfar citizens have called for Yestral's ouster. His Commandant of the Red Plumes, Jandra Gragdowel, has secretly been leading that underground rebellion.

Jandra Gragdowel holds First Lord Vuhm Yestral for the loss of many Red Plumes during the hostile takeover of the government. She feels that a leader who betrays their sovereign, no matter ideals the sovereign, is a traitor. A traitor cannot be trusted to put the best interest of the citizens foremost in the policies they implement.

Jandra sees the withdraw of The First Law of Humanity as proof that Yestral is endangering the citizens of Hillsfar. Helping to destroy the city will show the citizens and the council of merchants that the safety of the city is at risk under the leadership of Yestral. When she was approached by Malkyn Grenefeld to help bring The First Lord down, Jandra was more than willing to help.

A capable group of adventurers has stepped up and taken on the tasks of righting this setback. They quelled the monster attacks, investigated the cause of them, and brought news of a growing force of enemies in the Cormanthor Forest.

The adventurers also brought news of a returning threat. Malkyn Grenefeld seeks revenge for the death of her love, the former First Lord, Torin Nomerthal. She is the impetus behind the army amassing in the forest. She has also re-inhabited the ruins of Abarat's Folly, an ancient arcane experiment that tried to create a point from which travel through portals to many destinations was possible from a single place. Grenefeld has been able to alter some of the portals to breach Hillsfar, and she plans to use these portals to assault the city using enemy forces. Her plans were further enhanced by Hillsfar defensive secrets, obtained from a spy deep within the city government.

Overview

This adventure contains 4 parts.

Chapter 1. The characters start the adventure at the Classy Lady Inn, where they recover from traveling to Hillsfar from the Cormanthor Forest. The First Lord summons them to discuss the next course of action. He hires them to find the portals that Malkyn Grenefeld has created and, with the help of the Mage's Guild, destroy the connections. If they come across any information about a spy in Hillsfar, they are to report back immediately.

Chapter 2. The characters conduct an investigation, looking for clues to where the portals are located and how to render them useless. They pinpoint the location of two portals and enlist the help of a Guild Mage to disrupt them. Commandant Jandra Gragdowel has allowed Grenefeld to create a connection inside of the Red Plume garrison. She is also the spy from whom Grenefeld is receiving strategic military secrets.

Chapter 3. The group heads to The House of Happiness, the Temple to Lliira in the city, where one of the portals is located. They are faced with portal travelers who try to stop the Guild mage from rendering the portal unusable.

Chapter 4. The characters arrive at the Red Plume garrison to take care of the other portal to find that Gragdowel has put the facility on lockdown and has refused to let the Hillsfarian Guard inside. Upon entering, the adventurers find the Commandant and Malkyn Grenefeld preparing the portal.

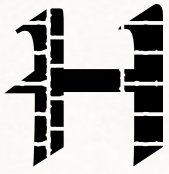
Adventure Hooks

You Should Stick Around a While or In Yestral's Service (Story Award)

The characters earned the trust of First Lord Vuhm Yestral in HILL1-2 *Exodus*. He would like you to get in touch with Elanil Elassidil at the Classy Lady Inn in Hillsfar. He wishes to discuss the information you retrieved in prior missions.

The Harpers (Faction). Elanil Elassidil contacts you and asks you to meet her at the Classy Lady Inn in Hillsfar. Your work has brought your skills to her attention and she may have a mission for you inside of the city.

The Lord's Alliance (Faction). Your contacts in the faction are in need of your help to ensure that Vuhm Yestral remains in power. You are to find Elanil Elassidil, who is expecting you at the Classy Lady Inn in Hillsfar.



CHAPTER 1.

URGENT MATTERS

Hillsfar is on the brink. Monster attacks within the city have caused trade to decline. An enemy army is amassing in the Cormanthor Forest, just south of the city. A rogue official of the former First Lord's court is attempting to open portals inside the city for that army to march through. Those are not even the worst of what the city faces! The worst? A spy, likely lurking among the city's fighting forces, is passing secrets about crucial defense strategies to the enemy. Hillsfar needs its heroes more than ever!

Elanil looks up from the message and sees that you have come down from your rooms. She motions to your group to join her at the table.

She waves over the server and says, "Give these fine heroes whatever they would like. You can put it on my bill." The girl takes the orders and goes off to put it in with the kitchen staff. Elanil gets right to the contents of the message. "The First Lord requests our presence after breakfast to discuss the matter at hand. He is concerned about the news brought from the Cormanthor Forest."

Reporting Back

The characters have procured lodging at the Classy Lady Inn with some help from Elanil Elassidil.

The aroma of fresh baked bread and cooked pork meets you in the common room of the Classy Lady Inn. The space is alive with activity. Servers carry platters full of food to tables full of customers. The inn guests converse over the morning's meal and get ready for their day in Hillsfar.

Your patron, Elanil Elassidil, sits at a table listening to a small boy as he hands her a message from within a satchel he wears over his shoulder. She smiles at him, hands him a coin, and he rushes out of the inn. She proceeds to open the sealed letter and reads it.

A character succeeding at a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the boy is wearing the livery of a messenger of the First Lord.

Catching Up

If for some reason the characters have not played the other parts of the Dark Intentions trilogy, an advisor is also in the room with Yestral. He tells of information that other adventurers were able to obtain:

- A large number of creatures, the size of an army, have gathered in the vicinity of Hillsfar.
- The numbers are well commanded and very organized for wild creatures. The legion is led by hags and drow.
- The creatures have gained access to the inside of a tower. The tower is still very unstable due to the magical "accidents" that happened therein. Portals are open throughout the structure.
- These portals seem to be very unpredictable, and can spit out creatures seemingly at random. Some are inactive while others seem to never sleep.
- While exploring the tower, the adventurers came across someone who had been forgotten about. Malkyn Grenefeld, the former First Lord's Chamberlain, was manipulating the portals. She escaped through a portal that seemed to lead to a ballroom that has mirrors on all the walls. Once through, she must have shattered the

mirror, breaking the connection.

- Evidence found in the tower indicates that Malkyn is the one gathering creatures to attack Hillsfar in retribution for the coup in which her beloved (First Lord Torin Nomerthal) was killed.
- She is working to get the portals linked to various places in Hillsfar in order bring enemy legions directly into the city. She is working to create ingested portal keys so creatures are less likely to lose a key.
- Further investigation has produced suspicion that someone within Hillsfar is feeding the military leaders of the monstrous forces strategies for the city's defense.

When the characters are ready to head over to the First Lord's Tower, read the text below:

The streets of Hillsfar are not as busy as they were before you left. The monster attacks have subsided, but there is still tension in the air. You are met with many sneers from Hillsfarrians along the way. The ingrained xenophobia of the city's population is slow to subside, especially with the damage to property and lives that the attacks brought to their home. Even with that, the citizens are not confrontational with a group that is as heavily armed as you.

Elanil presents the message at the Castle gates, and the guards bring you to the Tower. You are led through the main doors and past many rooms, including a ballroom where men are measuring a large blank space on a wall that is otherwise covered in large mirrors.

With a successful DC 15 Intelligence check, characters that played in HILL1-2 *Exodus* may recognize the ballroom that was the other end of a portal that Malkyn Grenefeld escaped through while in Abarat's Folly.

You make your way upstairs to what looks like a meeting room. A large table surrounded by chairs occupies the middle of a room decorated with many maps of Hillsfar. Partially filled bookshelves mostly contain tomes covering military history and strategy.

A large office lies beyond. It is dimly lit by the glow of a fireplace. A large mahogany desk is the centerpiece, surrounded by even more bookshelves. Papers litter the desk, on top of which sits a pair of spectacles and a quill.

In front of the fireplace, a set of leather chairs and a couch surround a low mahogany table. A man with greying hair, a weathered face, and broad shoulders stands staring into the fire. He wears a military uniform with a sword at his side.

As you enter he turns his head. "Ah, come in, come in. I am anxious to speak with you!" He turns to a servant who has been waiting quietly on the other side of the room, "Fetch us a bottle of wine and some refreshments, will you, Edmond?" The servant exits with a "Yes sir" thrown over his shoulder on the way out.

First Lord Yestral gets right to point of his summons:

- He has been meeting with his advisors all night planning the defense of the city against the army that threatens Hillsfar.
- They have what he believes to be a very good plan to fend off any attack from outside the city. This, of course, leaves the matter of portals opening inside the city and attacks from within.
- Since the characters did such a commendable job of obtaining this crucial piece of intelligence, it is his opinion that they would be the best to lead the search for portals in the city.
- However, that leaves the matter of a spy. This is another disturbing issue that must be addressed. He asks the adventurers, as they go about other tasks, to look for clues about who the spy might be.

He opens a desk drawer and takes out a piece of parchment. Dipping his quill in the ink pot, he writes. "This writ will allow you legal access to the entire city. It says that you are conducting an investigation on behalf of the First Lord and should not be impeded in doing."

Yestral gives the writ to the characters and tells them that finding all portals that provide access to the city is their priority. He reaches into a drawer in the desk and pulls out a *sending stone*. He tells the characters that they are to use the stone if they come across any information about a possible spy.

The first Lord gives the characters a couple of suggestions on where to begin:

- The Hydra's Den is a good place to find ale and hear some gossip. The proprietor, Brendon Tamesford, is a former adventurer and keeps his ears open to what is going on in the city.
- Isthana Ro, the head of the Rogues Guild, has eyes and ears throughout the city. She may have information about Grenefeld being in the city.
- The Mage's Guild has the largest library this side of the Moonsea. You may be able to talk with one of the sages there and figure out how these portals will work.

Finding Grenefeld's Journal

Characters that played HILL1-2 *Exodus* may have come across Malkyn Grenefeld's journal. If the group (or the majority, if the group did not play the adventure together) at the table found the book Yestral also gives this information:

- The Mage's Guild was given the journal to try and ascertain where Malkyn was planning on putting the portals.

If the characters did not find the journal, details are given in **Chapter 2: Needle in a Haystack** in The Rogue's Guild section on how the journal was discovered.

If the characters played HILL1-2 *Exodus*, they may recall that they were able to see a tavern through

one of the many portals. In the tavern there were many dancers and a band playing. Some characters may have identified the dancers as Joydancers, the followers of Lliira. If they mention this, Elanil speaks up and tells them this:

- There is a temple to Lliira in Hillsfar called the House of Happiness. The character's description of the tavern they saw seems to describe what the inside of the temple looks like.

First Lord Yestral offers 1,000 gp they find the spy and bring them in for questioning. He offers half now for the characters to use for equipment, and the loosening of tongues.

Edmond, the servant, returns with food and drink just as the characters are about to leave. There is wine and Underbough Half-Cakes on the tray he brings. There may be time for some refreshments!

Treasure

The adventurers receive 1,000 gp for bringing in the spy, half of which he provides them immediately. They are also given a *sending stone* in order to provide a direct line of communication to him.



CHAPTER 2.

NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK

In order to find the places that Grenefeld is using to link portals from Abarat's Folly, the characters venture into the city. Faced with trying to find such places in a large city, the citizens of Hillsfar are not always helpful.

Outside The First Lord's Tower, the citizens of Hillsfar go about their daily business. Some greet you with the tip of a hat, while others look at you with angry glares. One such man is bold enough to say, "You lot goin' ta' do sumthin' 'bout makin' it safe for us? I 'spect not, since you comin' outta there!" he points to the Tower. "Al'ays knew you 'venturin' types only cared 'bout fillin' your pockets from them that can pay ya'." He walks away continuing to grumble as he does so.

Each place the First Lord suggested they visit will give the adventurers a pertinent piece of information that will lead them to the location of Grenefeld or one of her portals.

The group may decide to follow up on what they learned from one of the suggested starting points rather than move to the next. This adventure is designed to allow the characters to finish all the tasks in whichever order they choose. Acting on information they receive from these roleplaying options just requires a bit of going back and forth between sections of the adventure.

The Rogues Guild

First Lord Yestral mentioned that Isthana Ro, the leader of the Rogues Guild, is an excellent source of information regarding the underbelly of the City of Trade.

Roleplaying Isthana Ro

Isthana Ro is the leader of the thieves' guild in Hillsfar. In the new government, she is a member of the senate. The role of the senate is yet to be determined in its infancy.

She is wickedly smart and doesn't care about anything other than her guild. This sense of self-preservation is tempered with an amazingly acute business sense and the ability to think ahead. With the new regime in place, she hopes to use her connections among the merchants to give First Lord Yestral what he needs to get the city back on its feet. This will, of course, put the new leader in her debt.

The Rogues Guild is located in the Merchant's District of the city, a short distance from Hillsfar Castle. A rather plain building from the outside, it shows a lot of activity. A plaque bolted to the wall near the door has a simple black mask painted on it, under which the letters "RG" are carved into the wood.

When the group decides to enter the building, read:

The inside of the building is richly decorated. Dark wood, warm paint tones, large paintings, exquisite wall tapestries and rugs complement luxurious furniture made for lounging. A dramatic staircase winds its way to the second floor, covered with a bright blue runner. A hallway to the right of the staircase extends further into the building. Its walls are lined with portraits.

People lounge in a sitting room off of the main foyer, while some play chess or read books. Across from that room, on the opposite side of the foyer, are a set of closed doors that open to let a cloud of smoke out, along with a person or two.

An older man in a servant's uniform greets you as you take in the scene, "Welcome to The Guild. May I be of assistance?"

If the characters ask for Isthana Ro, the gentleman apologizes and says that, unfortunately, Miss Ro is indisposed. If they bring out the writ, he looks a bit flustered but bids you to wait a moment while he goes to let Miss Ro know you are here. He ascends the stairs and is gone for a fair amount of time.

A figure carrying a rapier and wearing a chain shirt, black leather chaps, and a helmet casually descends the stairs with the servant walking a short distance behind.

As they get closer, the armored figure takes off the helmet to reveal a woman, whose hair is soaked with sweat, smiling widely at your group.

"So, the First Lord stamps his foot and we are all supposed to come running?" she says, after which she attempts to blow a piece of hair from her face. She looks your group over and continues, "Well let's not conduct this interview here at the entrance. Let us go to my office." She turns on her heel and quickly walks down the hallway to the left of the stairs.

She stops at the end of the hall, opens a door, and motions you through. She closes the door behind her before moving to a desk, which is bare save for a crystal globe with a map etched into it.

She sets the helmet on a coat rack next to the chair behind the desk and removes the chain shirt revealing a black shirt underneath. As she sits, the door opens and the servant that greeted you comes in with wine and several glasses. She says, "Oh Fritz, you always know exactly what I need!" She gives him a peck on the cheek as he pours her a glass. She takes the glass and sits back in her chair as Fritz leaves. "OK what is so important that I needed to cancel my fencing duel?"

If the characters bring out the writ again, she tells them that bullying will get them nothing from her. She is unimpressed by the First Lord using his power to interrupt her day.

As the characters speak, she listens quietly, sipping her wine. It seems intentional that she has not offered any to the party. When they have finished explanations, she puts her glass down and smiles at them.

"So, the First Lord needs my help once more to save his city. That's what he calls it, you know: his city. He will come to understand that this city has never belonged to one man alone. When he learns that, I am sure his luck will turn. Vuhm is a good man. He just needs to share." She smiles widely, "Care for some wine? I might be persuaded to give you some information that will help your investigation. Has the First Lord sent you with payment? My help is never free."

She will take nothing less than **50 gp** to relay what she knows. She starts the negotiation at 100 gp.

Once compensation is made, she gives the characters the following information, all the while sipping on her wine and pacing the floor:

- She has heard rumors that Malkyn Grenefeld was traveling through the city in disguise. Isthana's "eyes" have seen Grenefeld frequenting the Red Plume garrison just next door, as well as the House of Happiness.

- On Isthana's request, one of her boys followed Grenefeld to a tavern at the docks, where she met with a physically fit woman with long black hair.
- She eventually learned this woman was Commandant Jandra Gragdowel, the leader of the Red Plumes. "The girl has never been seen without a uniform on before."
- The two met for hours, with Jandra doing most of the talking. The Commandant looked nervous, constantly scanning the room. Grenefeld took notes the entire time.
- Just this morning, before the sun came up, Jandra returned from the Tower looking quite nervous. She entered the Red Plume garrison, and minutes later a messenger left in a hurry. It was the same messenger, Isthana's informants believe, she has been using for her correspondences with Grenefeld.

Finding Grenefeld's Journal

If the characters did not find Grenefeld's journal in HILL1-2 Exodus, Isthana tells the characters the following:

- Feeling a little nimble-fingered, Isthana's informant thought it prudent to find out what Grenefeld was writing down. They followed Grenefeld for a bit after she left Jandra, and managed to borrow the journal.
- The journal had strange notes about portal magic and keys. Knowing that it was of no use to her without translation, Isthana took it to the Mage's Guild to be interpreted into "plain Common". Master Ladron is still looking it over.

Once Isthana is finished, she pours herself more wine, and elegantly sits back in the chair once again. If the characters have any questions, she will do her best to answer them.

She goes not disclose the identity of her informant. All she says is that she trusts them and that there would be little reason for them to misinform her. "People around here know the consequences for making me look the fool."

Fritz returns and clears his throat:

"Excuse me Miss Ro, your...upstairs guest is getting a little impatient. Shall I tell him you are nearly finished?"

Isthana stands, puts her wine glass down, and grabs her gear. "I believe we are done here?" she asks. "Tell Vuhm I expect his support at the next council meeting." With that she strides out of the room. Fritz waits to escort you out.

If the characters would like to immediately go to the Red Plume garrison, go to **Chapter 4: The Spy Revealed**.

Otherwise, the characters can continue with their investigation.

Hydra's Den

The characters were told by First Lord Yestral that the Hydra's Den is a tavern they can go to find rumors and a pint.

The sign outside of this tavern depicts a mug of ale with the many heads of a hydra popping out of it. It swings lightly in the afternoon breeze, as a man stumbles out of the establishment and starts down the street.

Once the characters decide to go in, read the following:

The inside of the tavern is busy. The tables are filled with merchants, laborers, and guards. All seem to be enjoying the food and atmosphere. The smell of roasted vegetables mixes with the musty smell of ale to create a unique fragrance. There are several open tables, and a couple of open stools at the bar.

There are several opportunities for the characters to interact with the patrons and workers in the Hydra's Den. If they sit at a table or at the bar, a server asks for their orders:

- Brendon Tamesford, the owner and manager of the Hydra's Den, works at the bar. He busily fills mugs of ale and helps the servers clean the tables as people finish their meal.
- There are a group of five men, laborers from the looks of their clothing and grimy faces, hurriedly eating their meal. The men are friendly enough. They know nothing about any portals, a spy, or anything pertinent to the character's investigation. When they finish eating, they politely excuse themselves citing that they have to get back to work.
- A couple sits near the front of the establishment, lost in each other's company. They are so wrapped up in each other that they never notice a server dropping an entire tray of empty plates right behind them. If the characters interrupt the couple rudely, they will get up, give them a sneer, and walk out. This will cause disadvantage on any Charisma checks the group may have to make while talking with Brendon, as he is not happy about the lost customers. If the characters are polite, they will answer the questions in passing, while gazing into each other's eyes. They remember Grenefeld, "nice lady," but haven't seen her since the new government took over.
- A group of three men sit at the bar, conversing over their pints. One seems quite intoxicated and talks loudly about the First Lord, about how he refuses to keep "them" out of the city, and because of that, his business has gone from seven barrels of fish sold a day, to two. If the characters confront the man, he is not happy with being challenged, but his friends quickly lead him away from the confrontation. This makes Brendon start neutral to the characters if they approach, resulting in the characters not getting a free pint of ale during the talk.

Role Playing Brendon Tamesford

Brendon has long blond hair and deep blue eyes, and a stocky, muscular build. He is polite and kind to everyone that he meets. He is especially fond of adventurers, having earned the money to purchase the Hydra's Den while adventuring.

Tamesford is happy that Vuhm Yestral has taken on the role of First Lord. He is especially pleased that the first thing he did was get rid of the Great Law of Humanity. As an adventurer he had many non-human friends, and he is happy to know that they will now be able to visit him and have a few pints. His familiarity with the plight of the common man in Hillsfar has gained him a seat on the newly reformed senate of the city.

Tamesford

Brendon Tamesford is busy but by no means unapproachable. If a character tries to get his attention, he politely tells them he would be happy to talk with them in just a moment. They can wait at the bar for him. Tamesford quickly finishes the task at hand and joins the characters at the bar. As long as the characters were friendly to the others in the tavern while waiting, Brendon offers each of them a mug of ale on the house.

Brendon Tamesford walks behind the bar and sets out a mug for each of you. He fills them to the brim with some ale from a keg, and leans on it as he says, "So what can I do for you?"

If the characters engage in pleasantries before getting to the point, Brendon plays along. He gladly engages about the weather, the new government, or whatever subject the characters choose.

If the characters are rude to him, any staff, or any patron, Brendon is reluctant to converse any further than pleasantries. It takes a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince him that helping them would be the right thing to do. The characters will not, however, get out of the Hydra's Den without a lecture from him on the finer

points of diplomacy.

If the characters show him the writ they received from First Lord Yestral, he immediately tells them to put it away and be careful where they show it. “The First Lord is not a favorite of many around here,” he says rather quietly. And gives them the information below:

- The citizens of Hillsfar trust him enough to reveal their true feelings about matters. They know that, while in his company, there is no danger of repercussions for speaking out against the First Lord or the wealthy. They also know he loves gossip and rumors, as it is what gives him so much to talk about.
- The other day, a regular who usually comes in at the end of the work day with a good friend of his, came in by himself and looking a bit glum. When asked what was bothering him, he said that the two of them were attacked on the way home from “The Den.”
- His friend recognized a woman walking toward them and greeted her. This startled her and she lashed out with some sort of energy spell. His friend has been in the infirmary all night and day. It all happened so fast, but he thinks his friend called the woman “the Chamberlain.”
- The regular said that the woman just left him there injured and laying in the street. She continued to head into the House of Happiness. He carried his friend to the infirmary.
- The only woman Chamberlain that Brendon can remember was Malkyn Grenefeld. She was First Lord Torin Nomerthal’s Chamberlain, rumored to be in love with him. She hasn’t been seen since she left with the former First Lord to go to The Waydown for an inspection of the fortress that was built there. On that trip, the First Lord and his entourage ended up being killed and Vuhm Yestral took command of the city after that.

After relaying the information, and finishing his ale in one last gulp, he wipes his mouth on his arm and says:

“Well, it has certainly been a pleasure talking with you all, but I must get back to work. Come again and we can share stories of our exploits.” A smirk creeps onto his face as he continues, “Unless you have some juicy information that I can hand out to the next lucky fellow who sits down to have a pint with me?”

If the characters relay rumors to him, he thanks them with a broad smile and he moves to clear a table of dishes from a group that is walking out the door.

Brendon doesn’t know where the customers he mentioned live or where the injured man may be recovering.

If the group decides to head to the House of Happiness go to **Chapter 3: Dancing for Joy**. Otherwise, the characters can continue with their suggested stops.

The Mage’s Guild

The First Lord told the party that the Mage’s Guild may be able to help them make sense of the magic behind the portals that Grenefeld is using.

The Mage’s Guild is a short distance from the First Lord’s Tower in the Hillsfar Castle complex. The guild seems like a mini fortress on its own. It consists of five 3-story towers, surrounded by a 10-foot-high stone wall. At the entrance to the complex is a large two-story gatehouse.

Entry into the gatehouse is fairly easy. The doors open into a large common room. The stone floor has two large carpets that separate the room into sections. A large fireplace, open on all sides, sits in the middle of the room. The two carpeted sections have several large leather chairs that are well cushioned, complete with matching ottomans. (continued)

A bar sits against one wall in an uncarpeted area. Several small tables, with two chairs at each, rest near the bar. Several stools provide seating at the bar.

Lastly, in a non-carpeted area next to the door is a counter at which a spectacled man with grey hair is sitting half-asleep while reading a book.

If the characters approach the man at the counter, he lazily looks up at them from his book.

Rather surprised by your presence in front of him the man stammers, "I-I-I apologize for being in a daydream. W-w-welcome to the Mage's Guild, my friends! I am Zaberos. How can I help you today?" Looking over your group, he continues, "Are you looking to converse with one of our sages? Their subject knowledge is exceptional, and I am sure you will find satisfaction in the information they impart."

When the characters tell them why they have come and/or show him the writ from the First Lord, he nervously comes out from behind the counter and shouts for a boy of teen years to hurry over.

"Bring these important guests straight to Master Ladron. And no bothering these fine folks by asking about their exploits. They don't have time for your childish curiosity." Embarrassed, the young man shyly tells you to follow him, and he leads you into the Mage Tower gardens.

A stone pathway winds around the five towers, with beds of flowers and topiary decorating the open spaces. Benches and small fountains make for a very tranquil space among the looming towers.

He continues to the center tower, where one large room encompasses the entire diameter of the first floor. Your guide continues up the stairs there, stopping to knock on a heavy oak door. A grunt from the other side indicates that he may enter. The boy holds the door for you to enter and closes it behind you. Every available surface in this room is covered in books or papers. There is not even a place for your group to sit. (continued)

A middle-aged woman stands among the sea of books, with a large tome held open against her body with one hand. In the other, she holds a journal. She looks back and forth between the two as if comparing them. After a moment, she shakes her head, closes the tome, and places it on one of the piles she is standing next to.

She looks up at your group, "There is just one part that stumps me. The keys. They are so very different from normal portal keys. Nonetheless, I do have a way to change how the portals interact with them."

Roleplaying Master Torsha Ladron

Master Ladron is the ranking member of the Mage's Guild and regarded as one of the most knowledgeable people in all of the Moonsea. She also serves as First Lord Vuhm Yestral's Chancellor. Her knowledge on just about everything makes her invaluable to him.

Torsha is very energetic and always has a book in hand. A page within the library is often assigned to walk with her in order to pick up the pages that she accidentally drops as she strolls. From the moment she starts talking, it is apparent that this woman is a wealth of information, trivial and pertinent.

Zaberos announced the groups arrival via a sending stone so that Master Ladron would be ready. Torsha knows it is urgent that the unfettered access to the city be sealed quickly and has not slept since receiving Grenefeld's journal. She has learned several important things from her research:

- Grenefeld is having a very difficult time altering the portals inside of Abarat's Folly. The wild magic that caused its creator to disappear was uncontrollable from the start. The magical surge during the Spellplague further changed them from their original design.
- Grenefeld has spent countless hours deciphering Abarat's original notes and dealing with the alterations made through Faerûn's history.

- The former Chamberlain has been primarily focused on creating portal keys that allow one to use the portals. None of Abarat's keys were found in the tower's ruins.
- In the short time she has had possession of the journal, Master Ladron, without access to Abarat's notes, has been able to devise a method to negate Greenfield's link between the keys and the portals.
- The concerning part about the keys is that each affects the user in some way once it interacts with the wild magic of the portal. Grenefeld has been unable to stop this (sometimes harmful) effect. Unfortunately, Master Ladron has been unable to find a fix.
- Torsha has also ascertained the locations of the portals that Grenefeld has successfully activated. There is a portal that opens into the House of Happiness and the second is located somewhere inside of the Red Plume barracks.

Master Ladron tells the characters that she plans to send a Guild mage to render the portals useless. She asks if the characters would be willing to accompany the mage, as the portals are active, and any tampering may alert those that desire to keep the portals open. If alerted, they may come through the portals to intervene. If the characters do so, she offers to make each character a potion of their choice (uncommon).

If the characters agree to accompany the mage, she informs them that the Guild mage has already traveled to the House of Happiness to get started. She has sent word to the First Lord that a portal is in the Red Plume barracks. He has taken on the task of securing the area until you arrive. However, she acquiesces to wherever the characters wish to start.

If the group wishes to first head to the House of Happiness, continue on to **Chapter 3: Dancing for Joy**. If the characters would like to immediately go to the Red Plume garrison, go to **Chapter 4: The Spy Revealed**.



CHAPTER 3.

DANCING FOR JOY

The characters arrive at the House of Happiness looking for a portal that leads into the festhall from Abarat's Folly in the Cormanthor Forest.

From the outside, the House of Happiness looks like any tavern in the city. The sounds of revelers enjoying the entertainment that the clergy of Lliira bring rings forth from the building. The only evidence of this being a temple is the sign above the door that shows a triangle made of six-pointed stars, Lliira's holy symbol.

Suddenly screams erupt from within rather than laughter. Patrons flee through the front door. One notices you and shouts, "Monsters came right out of the wall!"

The characters enter into a chaotic scene. Change the description to match the monsters based on encounter difficulty.

Inside the building, people flee from a giant-like creature and a dark-skinned elf. Tables and chairs are overturned as the giant knocks tries to get at the fleeing patrons. A mage lies unconscious on the floor near the door.

General Features

Ceilings. The ceilings in this room are 10 feet high.

Lighting. The room is lit by the candles of three large crystal chandeliers, supplying dim light.

Smells. The room is an unusually pleasant mix of perfume and stale ale.

Sounds. The sounds of the raging ettin and crying from the patrons that remain fill the room.

Portal. The wall next to the entry door contains an active portal. A black void is surrounded by a purple energy. See **Development** for an explanation of the portal's part in this scene.

The House of Happiness is being destroyed by a **drow elite warrior** and an **ettin**. They both came out of the wall (a portal from Abarat's Tower) when the **Guild mage** attempted the ritual Master Ladron instructed him to perform. There are five **commoners** still in the temple. The dancers are already unconscious on the stage, on which the ettin now stands.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

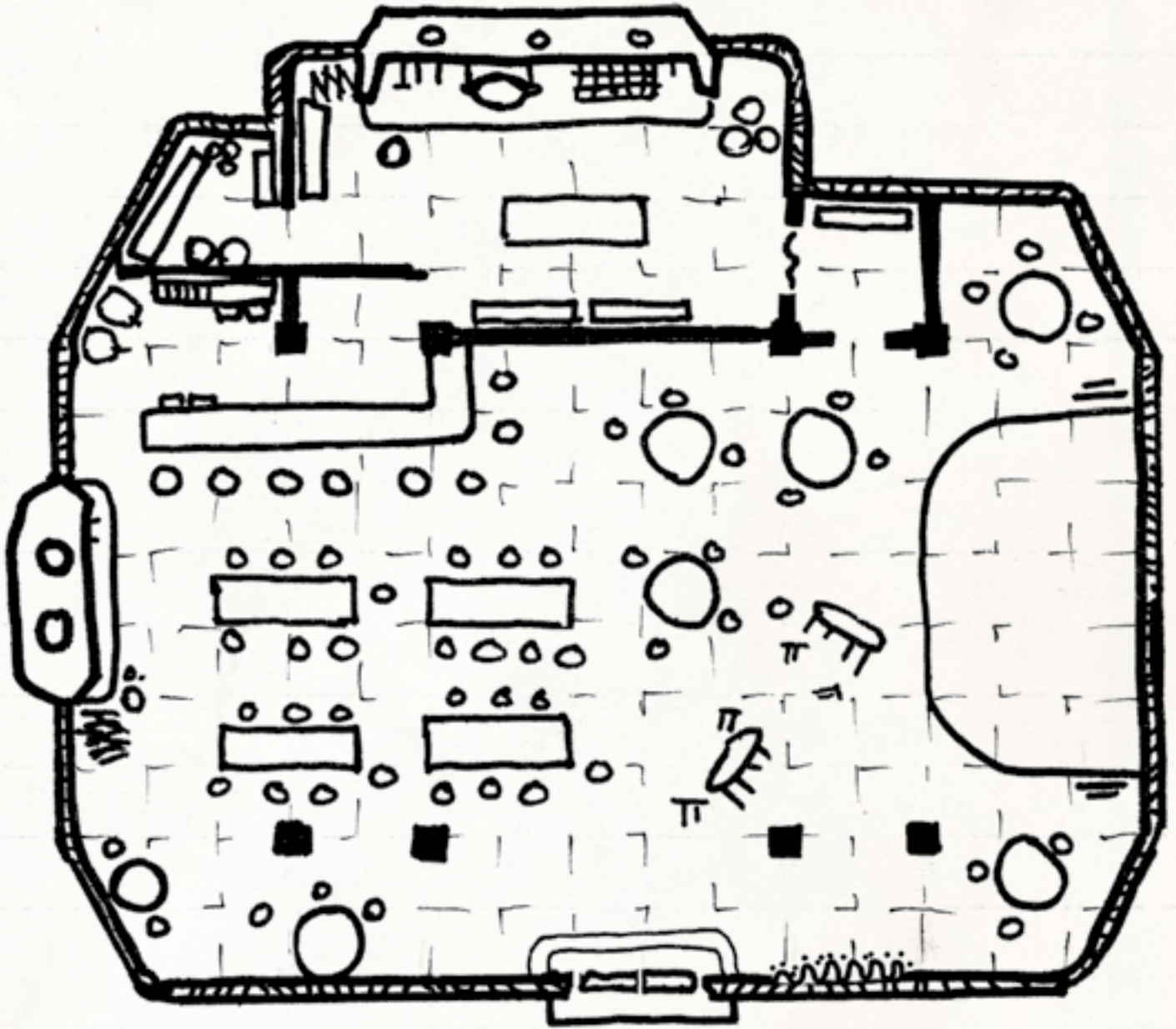
- **Very Weak Party:** Remove one **ettin** and one **drow elite warrior** and add two **hobgoblin captains**
- **Weak Party:** Remove the **ettin** and add one **hobgoblin captain**
- **Strong Party:** Remove the **drow elite warrior** and add two **hobgoblin captains**
- **Very Strong Party:** Remove the **ettin** and the **drow elite warrior** and add one **fomorian** and one **drow**.

Tactics

The drow tries to command the ettin as much as possible to fulfill his mission: disrupt any attempt to tamper with the portal. He knew it was a suicide mission before he came through. The corrupted wild magic has given him renewed confidence that he and the ettin can succeed. He fights to the death.

The ettin is determined to destroy anything in its path. It attacks the commoners as if their cries and pleas for help are actually causing it harm. It fights to the death.

Map: House of Happiness



Developments

On initiative 0 of the first round, the portal disappears. No additional enemies are able to come through.

The ettin's sense of hearing has increased because of its travel through the portal. Because of this, the slightest sound causes it pain. Every round a commoner is still in the room, the ettin breaks engagement with a combatant to attack a commoner instead. If the characters make a loud noise, the ettin attacks them instead, with disadvantage. If a spell caster casts *thunderwave* or any other loud spell, the ettin has disadvantage on the saving throw and takes double the damage if it fails, and full damage if it saves. Similarly, if *deafen* is cast on the ettin, it doesn't go after the commoners at all.

If the characters are able to stabilize and heal the Guild mage, he continues to work on the portal. This causes the portal to once again become active. The Guild mage needs to continue his ritual for four rounds.

There are six more drow waiting on the other side of the portal in Abarat's Folly. They were given orders to raise the alarm and go through the portal if it activates. The alarm brings two more drow through every three rounds. If the Guild mage is able to finish his ritual, the portal no longer allows passage. The keys they possess no longer work.

Treasure

The drow elite warrior has a belt pouch with 50 gp and wears an onyx and gold spider cloak pin worth 100 gp.

Experience Points

The characters receive 100 xp each if the guild mage is able to complete the ritual. They also receive 50 xp each for every commoner that was saved from the ettin.



CHAPTER 4.

THE SPY REVEALED

The characters head to the Red Plume garrison in Hillsfar Castle with evidence that Commandant Jandra Gragdowel might be the spy giving military secrets to Malkyn Grenefeld.

The Red Plume garrison at Hillsfar Castle has been surrounded by a contingent of the First Lord's Guard. First Lord Yestral himself commands them, putting himself at considerable risk by doing so. Elanil Ellassidil is there as well, pleading with Yestral. Elanil sees your arrival and greets you: "Aren't you a sight for sore eyes? Yestral is planning to lead a charge into the garrison. He was worried by what might happen if we waited for you. With you here, he will hand the reigns to you, I'm sure."

Yestral is speaking to a group of soldiers, pointing to the garrison, and then to some of the men. Elanil walks to them and bids you to follow. She says to Yestral, "They are here now, so you can let them take point on this."

Yestral looks up, and with a somewhat disappointed look addresses you. "Ah, wonderful, let me catch you up on what is going on here."

Yestral explains the situation to the group:

- Yestral conducted his own investigation and learned that Jandra Gragdowel has been acting strangely since Abarat's Tower was discovered.
- Yestral didn't want to wait to confront Gragdowel, as she might try to escape. He sent a contingent of City Guards to bring Jandra back. They found that the garrison was on lockdown and that they were not letting anyone inside—especially those representing the usurper of the title of First Lord.
- That is when Yestral decided that there was no time to waste in breaking down the door and taking back control of the garrison.
- The soldiers inside have vowed to protect the garrison from attack. It is engrained in them

that it doesn't matter who the attack is from, they are only doing their duty. He asks that the adventurers don't kill anyone, including Jandra Gragdowel. "Besides, we need them if there is an army on the way, right?"

Yestral is able to give the characters a map of the garrison showing where everything is. He doesn't think the layout has been changed much from when he commanded it. He also insists that the Guild mage not go in until they have secured the area.

The iron-banded double doors to the garrison are barred from the inside. The city guard can provide a battering ram for the group to use to break down the door. A successful DC 10 Strength check is required to break down the doors.

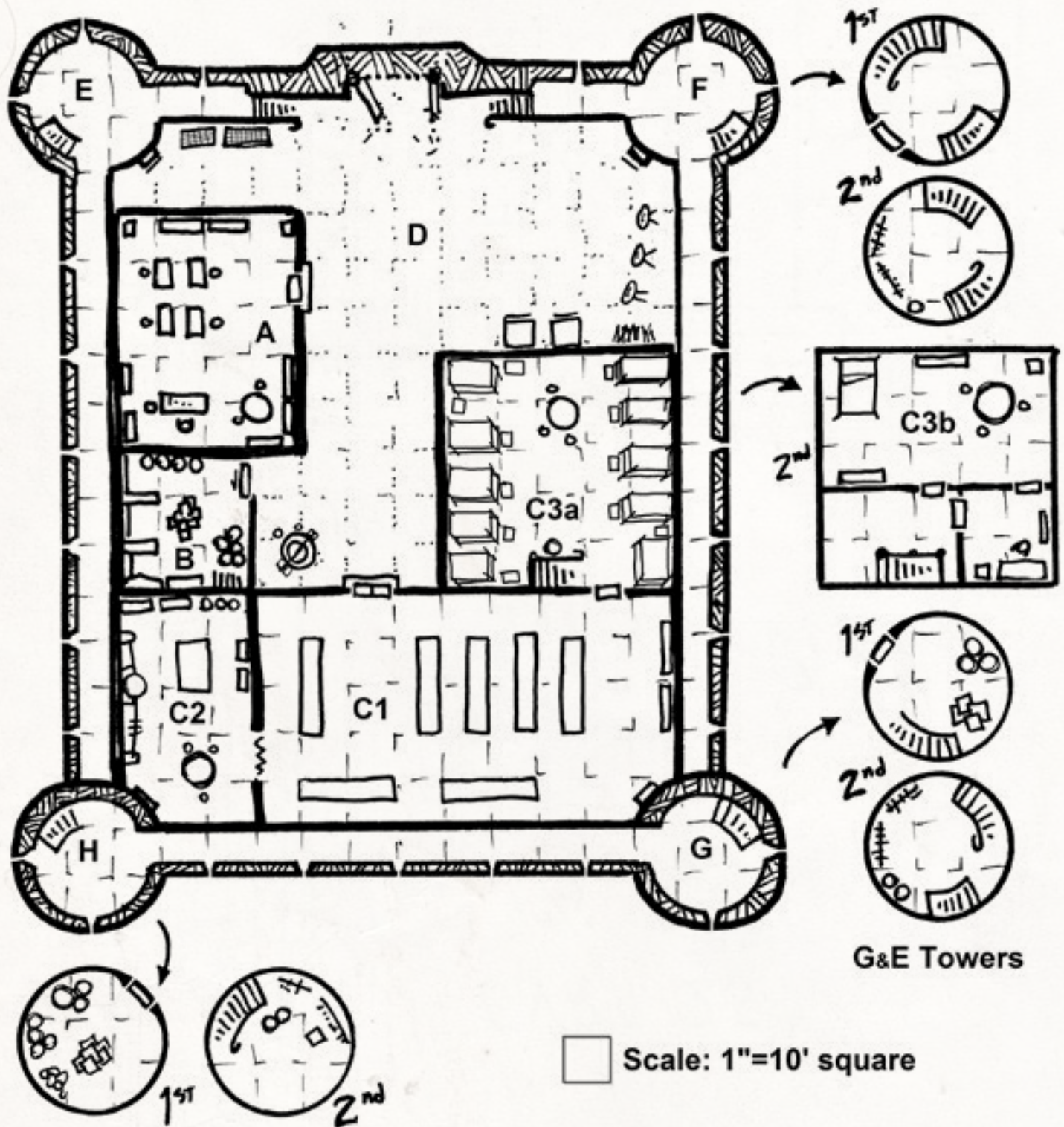
General Features

Ceilings. The ceilings in all the areas are 10 feet high.

Lighting. The rooms are brightly lit with torch light, except when indicated in the description of the room.

Sounds. The buildings are unusually quiet. If the characters ask, a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to hear anything from the other parts of the complex.

Map: Red Plume Garrison at Hillsfar Castle



A. Administration

This large one roomed building has a sign hanging above the door that reads, "Administration".

The inside is sparsely decorated. The stone walls have no paintings or wall coverings. The floor is wooden and there are spaces between some of the more worn boards. Some of the boards are newer than others.

Three simple desks, with three chairs around them, are the only furniture in the room. The desks all have an ink pot and quill on the desk. On one desk there is also a book. A larger desk has a candle, a hunk of wax, and a seal on it along with the writing instruments.

There are three banded wooden doors along one wall of the building. Each door has a small barred opening in it. You can hear cries of help coming from behind one of the doors.

This building serves as the garrison's administration building. The Commandant, Warden, and senior officers work here when not in the field. The Commandant's desk is the biggest in the room.

The Warden and senior officers' desk drawers are not locked. In the officer's desk the group will find scrolls that have orders from the Commandant and the First Lord. There is nothing incriminating in the orders.

The Warden has a book on his desk that records the prisoners, charges, and sentence for anyone in the jail. The beginning of the book is quite full of names. Most of the sentences in that part of the book are "Death in Colosseum." Recently dated pages are not as full, and most sentences are only for days in prison. The last entry in the book, dated today, is Foster Grimes. His crime was pick-pocketing. There is no sentence written next to his name.

The Commandant's desk drawers are locked. A successful DC 10 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check or a DC 10 Strength check is required to open or break the lock. Inside the drawer are correspondences from Malkyn Grenefeld. The correspondences are

to the Commandant, and threaten to tell the First Lord that Jandra Gragdowel was the leader of a growing resistance movement in the city if she did not provide Grenefeld with key defense secrets of the city.

If the characters investigate the cries for help, the door is locked. If they look through the barred opening, read the following:

Beyond the door, is a small room with a pile of straw along one wall. A face suddenly appears just on the other side of the opening inside the room. "Hey! Get me outta here will 'ya?"

The man in the cell is Foster Grimes. He has recently come to town and was caught pick-pocketing in the market. He was not exonerated for his crime, because he is not yet part of the Rogue's Guild in Hillsfar.

The keys are on the Warden's belt. The Warden is currently not in the garrison. He was meeting with Isthana Ro when the garrison went on lockdown.

A successful DC 25 Dexterity check is necessary to open the lock on the door. If the characters do manage to open the lock, Foster tries to escape past them. He is easily kept from getting out, no check needed. If the characters let him go, Foster is able to get away from the forces outside of the garrison.

XP

If the group finds the letters from Grenefeld to Jandra Gragdowel, they each receive 100 xp.

B. Storage

The small storage building contains mostly maintenance supplies for the garrison.

C. Barracks

This large building houses the members of the Red Plumes that are not on duty.

1. Mess Hall

The large room contains many large tables and benches. There is no one in the room, however, there are many plates still full of food.

2. Kitchen

There is a hearth, a butcher's block, and a table in this small room. There is a door that looks to lead into one of the back towers.

The door is locked. A successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check breaks or opens the lock.

The round room is a food storage area. As the door opens, you hear crying inside the dark room. Hiding behind crates are a man and a woman holding tightly to each other. "P-p-please don't hurt us! We are just servants," the man says.

The two do not know where everyone went. Two Red Plume soldiers locked them in here when the alarm was raised.

There are no other exits from this room. The characters can escort the two from the garrison and return without any consequences.

XP

If the characters escort the two servants out of the garrison, they each receive 100 xp.

3a. Barracks

This large room houses many bunk beds. There are approximately ten bunks, each with a chest at each end.

The chests contain off duty clothing, cleaning supplies for weapons, and tools for repairing weapons and armor. None of the chests are locked.

Treasure

Among all of the chests, the characters find 50 gp and a pair of ivory dice worth 75 gp.

3b. Commandant's Quarters

This is a luxurious bedroom. The bed has a silk canopy, curtains, and sheets. A thick rug lies in the middle of the floor. An oak wardrobe contains many beautiful gowns. There is a fireplace that is lit in the room.

A door in the room leads to an office with a table and comfortable chair. There are no drawers in this desk. There is parchment, ink, a quill, wax, a seal and a candle on top of the desk. There is a small bookshelf with some books on it.

The Commandant uses this area as her personal office. She writes letters to family from here. One of the books on the shelf is a first-edition signed copy of a famous work. Another book is hollow. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds it among the other books.

Treasure

The First edition book is worth 300gp. Inside the hollow book are 20 pp.

D. Courtyard

The doors fly open as the battering ram breaks the bar that kept them closed.

Inside, soldiers wait for the attackers to pour in. There are four soldiers and two large dogs that ready to attack when you enter the courtyard.

Three veterans and three mastiffs wait to keep the intruders out. The combatants fight until incapacitated.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak Party:** Remove one **veteran** and two **mastiffs**
- **Weak Party:** Remove one **veteran** and three **mastiffs**, and add one **dire wolf**
- **Strong Party:** Remove three **mastiffs**, and add one **dire wolf**
- **Very Strong Party:** Remove three **mastiffs**, and add one **veteran** and two **dire wolves**

Treasure

The soldiers have a total of 50 gp on them.

E and G. Towers

These two towers each have three floors that are identical. The **first floor** simply has a staircase that winds around the inside and goes up.

The room on the **second floor** is full of weapon racks. Longswords, short swords, and heavy crossbows are on the racks. There are six arrow slits in the walls of this room as well. Barrels of crossbow bolts are next to each slit.

The **third floors** of these towers also have arrow slits with barrels of crossbow bolts next to them.

As you emerge onto the second floor of this tower, there are seven soldiers at the ready, swords drawn and ready to defend their garrison.

There is an opening in this room that leads outside to the top of the wall that surrounds the garrison. The wall leads to another tower. Inside the room are several arrow slits with barrels of crossbow bolts next to them.

The two **veterans** and five **guards** fight till incapacitated. The soldiers were keeping watch and they saw the characters come into the barracks.

The opening in the tower on this floor leads to the top of the crenelated wall that surrounds the garrison. The wall along the southern side of the garrison leads to **Tower H**.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak Party:** Remove five **guards**
- **Weak Party:** Remove five **guards**, and add one **veteran**
- **Strong Party:** Remove two **guards**, and add one **veteran**
- **Very Strong Party:** Remove five **guards**, and add two **veterans**

Treasure

The soldiers have a total of 50 gp among them.

F. Tower

The **first floor** of this tower differs from the others in that it also has stairs going down. The stairs lead to **Area I**. This tower also doesn't have any soldiers on the top floors.

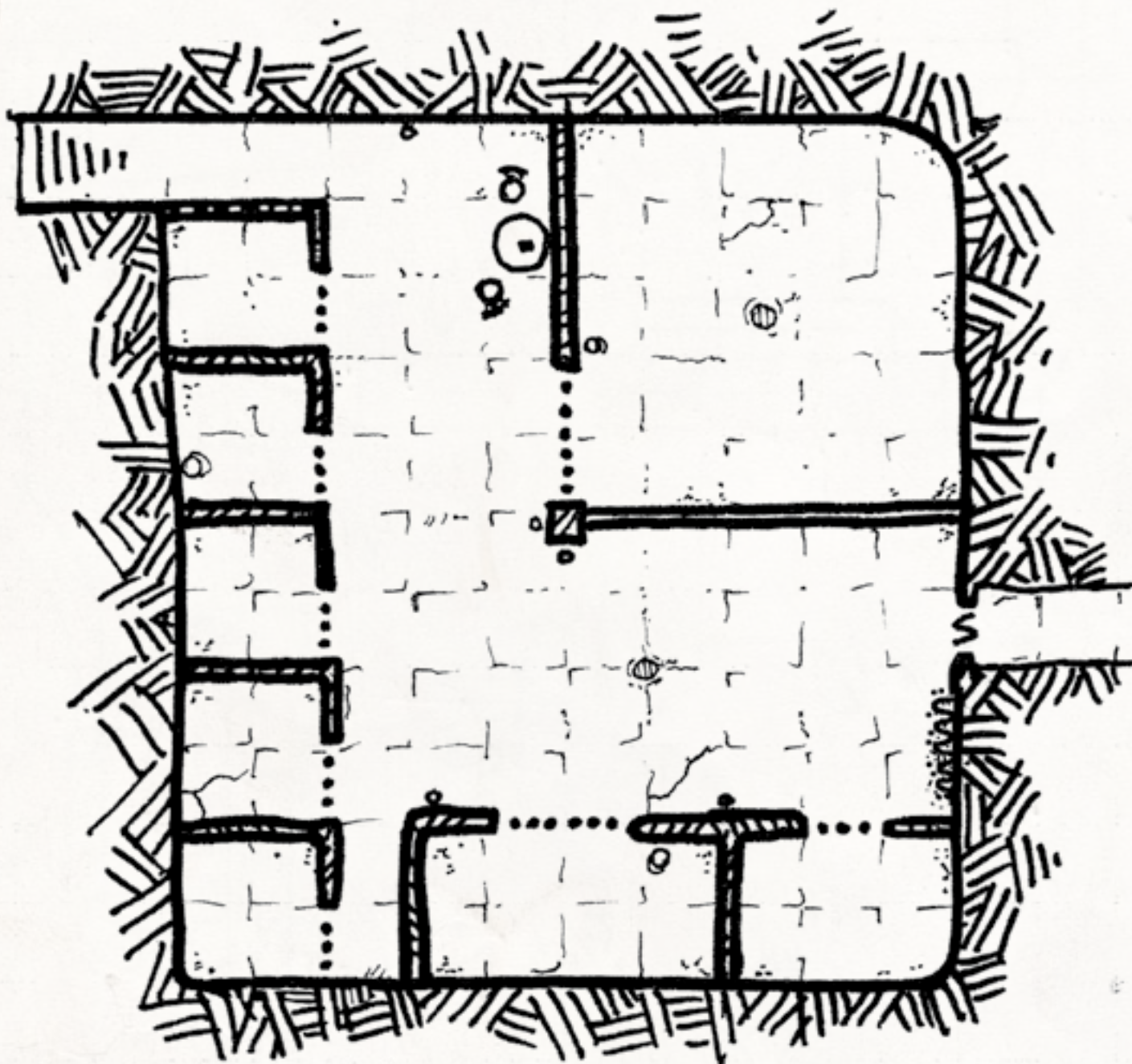
H. Tower

This tower differs from the others in that the first floor is a storage room in the barracks (see **Area C2**). The other floors of this tower are the same as the others. There are no soldiers in this tower.

I. Dungeon

This is where prisoners are kept to serve out their sentences. Malkyn Grenefeld has successfully connected a portal to the others waiting in Abarat's Folly. When the characters arrive, Malkyn is leaving through a secret door in the room that leads to the sewers.

Map: The Dungeon



This large room is damp, smells of waste, and is lined with prison cells. A bright purple light illuminates the otherwise dimly lit room. Along with a Red Plume soldier and a drow is a middle aged woman with raven hair dressed in chainmail armor. Jandra greets you, "Hello heroes of Hillsfar! It seems that we are on different sides of this little disagreement. First Lord Yestral will not take me alive!"

The purple glow comes from an active portal on the wall of the dungeon. A female mage stands near the portal, opening a secret door on the wall. "You may know the onslaught is coming, but you have no idea the strength of the storm coming toward Hillsfar." She steps through the door and the warriors move to protect her escape.

There is no negotiating with the group. A human **veteran**, a **drow elite warrior**, and **Jandra Gragdowel** protect Malkyn Greenfield's escape with their lives.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak Party:** Remove one **drow elite warrior**, and add two **drow**
- **Weak Party:** Remove the **veteran**, and add one **drow**
- **Strong Party:** Add one **veteran**
- **Very Strong Party:** Add two **veterans**

Tactics

The veteran and drow elite warrior move to engage the characters, trying to target spell casters.

Jandra stays back waiting to engage a character who attempts to give chase after Malkyn. Otherwise, she engages the strongest-looking character.

Development

If Jandra Gragdowel has 20 or less hit points left on her turn, she uses her action to ingest a vial of poison. Only characters administering an antitoxin

or using a spell to neutralize the poison can keep Jandra from dying. The other combatants fight until Jandra is dead. At that time, they surrender.

Treasure

Malkyn left spell components worth 500 gp at the foot of the portal. A character can choose which components they would like them to be, up to the value given.

XP

The characters receive 100 xp each if they manage to keep Jandra from dying.

Conclusion

First Lord Yestral is very grateful to the characters for their help in closing the portals.

After you have secured the garrison, the Guild mage is taken to the portal to perform the ritual to disable it. First Lord Yestral thanks you for again saving Hillsfar from itself. [If the characters saved Jandra's life, he says, "The information we get from Jandra will help us greatly in defending the city against what Grenefeld has planned for us."]

First Lord Vuhm Yestral pays the characters the remainder of the fee he owes them.

The characters also receive the **Savior of Hillsfar** story award, and **5 Hillsfar Government Influence Points**.

Rewards

Make sure the players note their rewards on their adventure logsheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all **combat experience** earned for the defeated foes and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For **non-combat experience**, the rewards are listed per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Dire Wolf	200
Drow	50
Drow Elite Warrior	1800
Ettin	1100
Fomorian	3900
Guard	25
Hobgoblin Captain	700
Jandra Gragdowel	700
Mastiff	25
Veteran	700

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Char.
Guild mage completes ritual (C3)	100
Find Grenefeld's letters to Jandra (C4, A)	100
Escort Servants Out of Garrison (C4, C2)	100
Keep Jandra from Dying (Chapter 4)	100

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **4,500 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **6,000 experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

Treasure Awards

Item Name/Location	GP value
First Lord's reward (C1)	1000
House of Happiness (C3)	150
Commandant's Quarters (C4)	500
Courtyard (C4)	50
Tower E(C4)	50
Tower G (C4)	50
Dungeon (C4)	500

Permanent Magic Item Distribution

D&D Adventurers League has a system in place to determine who is awarded permanent magic items at the end of a session. Each character's logsheet contains a column to record permanent magic items for ease of reference.

- If all the players at the table agree on one character taking possession of a permanent magic item, that character gets the item.
- In the event that one or more characters indicate an interest in possessing a permanent magic item, the character that possesses the fewest permanent magic items gets the item. If there is a tie in the total number of permanent magic items owned by contesting characters, the item's owner is determined randomly by the DM.

Audience Stones (Sending Stones)

Wondrous item, uncommon

These smooth stones made of marble have the crest of Hillsfar carved into them. As well as the properties described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pg. 199), these stones also have the ability to directly contact the First Lord of Hillsfar: You have been assured that he always keeps the stone close at hand. Contacting the First Lord expends the single use the stones gain every dawn.

Potion of Greater Healing

Potion, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Growth

Potion, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Renown

Each character receives **one point of renown**.

Downtime

Each character receives **10 downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Story Awards

Characters have the opportunity to earn the following story awards during this adventure.

Savior of Hillsfar. Your actions in finding the portals created by Malkyn Grenefeld have given the army of Hillsfar a chance against the incoming Dark Fey. The citizens of Hillsfar recognize you when you are in a public tavern or inn. The first round of drinks and food are paid for by grateful patrons. Your first night of stay at any inn is on the house as well.

Special Brew. Master Landon has promised to brew one potion of your choice (common or uncommon) to thank you for ensuring the safety of her Guild Mage.

DM Rewards

For running this adventure, you receive **1500 XP, 750 gp, and 10 downtime days**.

Appendix: Monster Statistics

Commoner

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Ettin

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d10+30)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Giant, Orc

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Two Heads. The ettin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

Wakeful. When one of the ettin's heads is asleep, its other head is awake.

Actions

Multiattack. The ettin makes two attacks: one with its battleaxe and one with its morningstar.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) slashing damage. (continued)

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) piercing damage.

Drow Elite Warrior

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 71 (11d8+22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +10

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate (self only)*

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

(continued)

Reactions

Parry. The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Drow

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: dancing lights

1/day each: darkness, faerie fire

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Fomorian

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 149 (13d12+65)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +3

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Giant, Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The fomorian attacks twice with its greatclub or makes one greatclub attack and uses Evil Eye once.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

Evil Eye. The fomorian magically forces a creature it can see within 60 feet of it to make a DC 14

Charisma saving throw. The creature takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Hobgoblin Captain

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 10 (3d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

(continued)

Actions

Multiattack. The hobgoblin makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the hobgoblin can utter a special command or warning whenever a non-hostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the hobgoblin. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the hobgoblin is incapacitated.

Veteran

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Mastiff

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (1d8 + 1)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The mastiff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely hearing or smell.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Dire Wolf

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d10+ 10)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+1)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The dire wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The dire wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the dire wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Guard

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one languages (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Jandra Gragdowel

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 +20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +6, Dex +4, Wis +2

Skills Athletics+6, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elven

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. Jandra makes two melee attacks with her longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10+4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10+4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Reactions

Parry. Jandra adds 2 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a weapon.