

BIS5-01

That's Rhomstaff!

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™ Bissel Regional Adventure

Version 1.1

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The undead plague from within the Barony of Rhomstaff has deeply affected the lives of many in the March. Many have suffered and perished at the hands of Evard's minions, and entire generations have been forever scarred ... now that's entertainment! Can you uncover the evil plot? Can you save the day? Can you think of a word that rhymes with 'Evard', finish the closing number, and bring the house down? A Bissel regional adventure for inquisitive PCs of APLs 2-12.

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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For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at rshah21@delic.com. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

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

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in *bold italics* provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on

running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the *Appendices*.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the 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.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

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

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

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	

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

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

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

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The undead plague from within the Barony of Rhomstaff has deeply affected the lives of many in the March. Many have suffered and perished at the hands of Evard's minions, and entire generations have been forever scarred ... now that's entertainment!

Recent events in the March have left morale very low amongst her citizens. Recognizing this, the Bardic Circle, Baron Darius Besselar, and several local nobles have commissioned a new theater in the capital township of Pellak, to serve as a source of entertainment and distraction for the discontented populace. Nearly completed, the Pellak Grand is intended to be the largest and best-appointed theater in the Sheldomar Valley. And what better way to show off the new landmark and boost morale, than with a play about national heroes?

Estander the playwright has written a musical about the evils of Evard and his minions, and the heroic adventurers that have stood against them. He quickly won favor with the sponsoring nobles, and was given funding to complete his work. Entitled 'That's Rhomstaff!', it was due to premiere two weeks ago, in Pellak.

Beneath the surface, things are fairly insidious. While researching his role in the play, the lead actor, Nicholar, naively ventured into Rhomstaff. He came looking for character inspiration, but all he found was domination by Evard's nefarious captains. He was outfitted with an arsenal of dark powers, and given one command: "Cause chaos in the March of Bissel."

Unfortunately for the forces of evil, the ritual of domination corrupted Nicholar's will, but left his mind intact. The self-centered actor could think of no better way to damage the March, than to keep a monumental theatrical production like 'That's Rhomstaff!' from ever seeing an audience.

The Pellak Grand Theater, amidst preparations for the play, is the perfect cover for Nicholar's shenanigans. His undead servants can roam freely... who would suspect that those zombies aren't really actors in costume? And the stagehand he 'recruited' has every excuse to wander the theater.

So far, Nicholar's sabotage has delayed the opening of 'That's Rhomstaff!' twice, without casting any suspicion on him. Of course, the worst he can do is ruin the play ... at least, until a greater opportunity arises ...

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs respond to an advertisement for work. The address leads to the new Pellak theater and Estander, the

playwright and director behind the theater's first production, 'That's Rhomstaff!'.

Estander suspects that the production's mishaps have been more than just bad luck. He hires the PCs to keep the production on course.

The PCs are given a tour of the new theater and may investigate the two previous mishaps. Clues at the scene point to deliberate sabotage and an inside player. They may also interview key members of the production crew.

On day two, two more acts of sabotage are perpetrated, giving the PCs direct information about the saboteur.

On day three, the worst mishap befalls the production. A giant, animated prop attacks the crew, and the PCs are forced to disable it.

With such major damage to the play, Estander solemnly announces that the production will be cancelled. Before the PCs can lament, however, a messenger arrives with great news: Saralind, the Regent of the March herself, will be backing the production and attending opening night. Excitement pours through the crew, and efforts to get underway are redoubled.

Nicholar now has an opportunity. Rather than sabotaging 'That's Rhomstaff!' again, he begins planning an assassination attempt for opening night.

Opening night arrives without further incident. During the first musical numbers, the PCs notice Nicholar's henchman messing around. Chase is given throughout the theater, ending in the lead actor's dressing room. Evidence there directly points to the plot and the true villain.

The PCs make it back to the stage for the closing number and confront Nicholar in a final dramatic battle.

Introduction: This Looks Like the Place

The PCs have learned of a job opportunity in Pellak. They show up at the given address, and it appears to be a nondescript warehouse. People bustle about, but no one has the time to stop and point the PCs in a direction.

Encounter 1: Sheep in Wolves Clothing

The PCs hear terrified screams from nearby. Investigating, they find several ghoulish creatures crouched over fallen people.

The PCs likely attempt to intervene, and it is quickly revealed that the 'ghouls' are actors, and that the 'warehouse' is the back end of the new Pellak Grand Theater.

Encounter 2: Evard, Regard, Discard...

The party is led to the Producer's office. He tells them about the disturbances that have delayed the opening of the play, and offers to hire the PCs to protect

the production from further harm. He warns them that the play is dangerously close to being cancelled.

Encounter 3: A Hint of Treachery

Encounter 4: Burning Down the House

In these two encounters, the PCs investigate the scenes of the previous two disturbances. A few clues indicate deliberate sabotage, and that the perpetrator had inside knowledge of the production.

Encounter 5: The Unusual Suspects

The PCs may decide to interview key members of the production. This will highlight several of the cast and crew members as suspects. These encounters can occur on any day of the adventure.

Encounter 6: No News Is Good News

On day two, two new acts of sabotage are reported.

Encounter 7: A Little Light Humor

Encounter 8: Silent But Deadly

In these two encounters, the PCs investigate the scenes of the two new disturbances. A few clues give direct information about the culprit. These encounters can occur on any day of the adventure, after the first night has passed.

Encounter 9: Large and In Charge

On day three, the PCs watch as the production crew tests a giant animated prop. In the middle of the test, control of the prop is wrenched from the crew and it begins to attack. PCs have to battle it and disable it. Clues at the scene indicate that the same culprit is behind the attack.

Encounter 10: Downs and Ups

The Producer tells the PCs, cast, and crew that the production will have to be cancelled. Midway through his speech, he is interrupted by a page with incredible news – Saralind, the Regent of the March plans to back the production herself, and will be attending on opening night.

A successful opening night in front of the Regent would make the production an instant success. Everyone doubles their efforts to get the show ready in time. The villain secretly has a new goal - assassination of the Regent.

Encounter 11: I Spy, With My Little Eye

On day four, the PCs may encounter a member of the Mist Chameleon organization, snooping around the balcony reserved for Saralind. He can provide some tidbits about the Regent.

Encounter 12: Live, From Pellak, It's Opening Night

Day five is opening night of the play, and the theater is packed. The play is progressing normally, when the PCs spot a crew member (matching the description from the clues they've uncovered) sabotaging part of the stage. When they try to intervene, he flees.

A chase ensues throughout the theater, ending in the lead actor's dressing room. The henchman is freed of the domination that controlled him and the lead actor is revealed as the villain.

Encounter 13: Ready For My Close Up

The PCs arrive around the stage just as the final number begins. The lead actor and his minions are preparing to assassinate Saralind, and no one in the crowd realizes anything is amiss. PCs must stop the villain in a final battle.

Conclusion

The plot foiled, the cast finishes the closing number. Depending on how flashy and dramatic the final battle is, the crowd either rewards the PCs with either a round of applause or a standing ovation. They gain the gratitude of the Regent, and may find themselves remembered as great actors.

INTRODUCTION: THIS LOOKS LIKE THE PLACE

The introduction takes place at the north facade and backstage foyer, locations A and B on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

The adventure begins with the PCs responding to an advertisement for work:

"Excuse me! EXCUSE me! Coming through!" Two burly men hurry past you, a pallet of cloth carried between them. Just as with everyone else in this bustling warehouse, they ignore you as they go about their tasks.

You're sure this is the right place. 'Seasoned Heroes needed For the Good of the March', the advertisement read. 'Apply in person to 13 Wayfinder Lane, Pellak'. Following the directions, you reached your destination: a large, unmarked building, similar to any other warehouse in this end of town, but noticeably of newer construction.

Proceeding inside, you've run into a dead end. People bustle about, but no one seems willing to stop and point you in a direction.

Other adventurers mill about, other respondents to the advertisement, apparently just as lost. You are afforded the opportunity to speak with

them, and it comes as a welcome contrast to the rest of the folk around here.

The PCs now have the opportunity to introduce themselves to each other. Once they have done so, proceed to Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: SHEEP IN WOLVES CLOTHING

This encounter takes place on the stage, location D on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

Suddenly, a terrible noise rips through the air. A scream of sheer terror comes from somewhere nearby.

If the PCs look for the source of the scream, continue on:

Rounding a corner, you find the source of the scream. Several ghoulish creatures are crouched over the bodies of fallen people. One of them moves, preparing to finish off one of the victims. Others stand nearby, helplessly watching the slaughter unfold.

Treat this as if it was a real combat - ask the PCs for initiative rolls, allow them to make a fake Knowledge (religion) check to falsely identify them as zombies, etc.

As soon as the PCs do something offensive, read the following:

Suddenly, one of the ghouls throws up its hands to ward you off. "Whoa! WHOA! What are you doing?" One of the 'victims' opens her eyes, and looks around in confusion. "That's not in the script ..."

A voice speaks up out of the crowd. "Stop! Stop! Out of the way..." An older human man pushes his way forward, and turns to address you. "What do you THINK you're doing? Who is your supervisor?"

Several of the ghoul forms before you waver and shift, and moments later appear to be no different than the other humans around you.

The 'ghouls' and 'victims' were a group of actors rehearsing, and the stage manager is really upset at being interrupted. When the PCs mention the advertisement, continue on:

When you mention the request for help, a mixed look of recognition and disgust crosses the manager's face.

"Oh, you're here to see Estander." He looks over at the remaining ghoul. "William, can you take them up to see the boss?"

"Yeah, no problem." The ghoul waves you on, and starts off towards a large curtain that forms one of the walls of this chamber.

Passing through the curtain, you find yourself on a large, ornate stage. Facing you are rows upon rows of comfortable, gilded seats. Above, many private balconies loom ominously. You have found your way into a rather well appointed theater.

William notices your looks of surprise. "Yes, isn't it impressive? When we open the show, the Pellak Grand will be the largest theater in Bissel." He looks visibly pleased. "Maybe even the greatest anywhere!"

He leads you to the front of the theater, through several passages, and through a well-disguised door. This section of the theater is noticeably plain, just like the backstage areas you came from.

If the PCs wish, they can make a Sense Motive check against the manager (DC 10). Success indicates that they notice that he is all too happy to get rid of William. The young actor has attention problems, and the manager was not interested in dealing with him any longer.

All APLs

◆ **William Robann:** Male human Com1 (Perform (act) +6); AL NG.

Proceed to Encounter 2.

ENCOUNTER 2: EVARD, REGARD, DISCARD ...

This encounter takes place in the Producer's office, location L on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

You are led to a door at the end of a hallway. A small brass plaque denotes this as the Producer's office. William knocks, and a deep voice bids you enter. The ghoulish actor opens the door for you, but remains outside.

The Producer's office is comfortably furnished, but the most notable features are the piles of paperwork and notes covering every surface.

A young man with Flan features sits at the desk, perched over a document. He mutters to himself. "... came to the ... staff ... Evard's ... hand ... hmm ..."

Suddenly, the man looks up at you. "Quick, I need a line that rhymes with 'To stand against Lord Evard's hand.' Something about heroes and valor. I've been stuck for days ..." He waits anxiously for your response.

This is Estander. He waits for the PCs to give him an appropriate rhyme. Be sure to write down what the PCs

come up with, as it will come up in Encounter 12. If they wish to know the full context, read them this:

*"But strong of heart did rally on ...
To stand against Lord Evard's hand ...
To darkest Ryphthorn marched ...
[Line PCs come up with]"*

If they come up with something decent, read this text:

"Oh, I like that!" The man quickly scribbles something down on the document before him.

"The muse flows within you, I see. Now, what can I do for you?"

If the PCs try to argue that this is a waste of time (Intimidate, DC 18) or honestly can't come up with something appropriate, read the following, instead:

The man sighs. "Well, I guess something will come to me." He crumples up the document before him, and tosses it into a nearby trash bin.

"So, what do you need?"

If the PCs mention the advertisement, read the following:

The man looks pleased. "Ahh, I was not expecting results so quickly. Wonderful!"

"Where are my manners? I am Estander Thomason. I posted that advertisement. Allow me to start at the beginning..."

"The Bardic Circle has intended to build a theater in Pellak for years, but until recently, the cost was prohibitive."

"Last year, a number of local... well, let us call them wealthy philanthropists... pledged the funding needed to commission the construction of this theater. It was believed that it would be a focal point, bringing together the people of Pellak. It would be a great step towards restoring our cultural identity. Culture is one of the first things to suffer during a war, you know..."

"Anyhow, it was decided that the theater should open with a bang... and that's when I had it! The greatest idea ever!" He leaps to his feet with an unearthly enthusiasm. "Everyone hears about Evard, and the undead, and all the suffering. But no one hears about the other side, about the men and women that fought for the good of the people, for Bissel!"

"And so was born my finest work..." He pauses dramatically. "That's Rhomstaff!"

"The Board of Directors quickly agreed with my vision. They decided that it would be a perfect opportunity to lift the spirits of our people, by

celebrating our triumphs. I got to work immediately.

“Now, we stand on the verge of the greatest theatrical success, ever.” He pauses, and begins to fidget nervously. “Except for a minor problem.”

“You see, ever since we began working on the production, we’ve had questionable luck. Several mishaps have occurred, and we’ve lost valuable time and money. Our opening has been delayed twice now.”

“We’re five days from opening. We can’t afford another accident. In fact, any more problems would jeopardize the entire show. We would have to cancel the...”

He swallows hard, and continues. “We can’t afford any more setbacks. I’d like to hire you to protect my show from further harm.”

He lowers his voice. “I’d also be interested in having you look into the problems we’ve had. I’m not entirely convinced that they’ve been accidents...”

Estander can relate the following information, if questioned:

- Estander will pay 100 gold coins per PC, upon the successful opening of the play.
- The latest two mishaps have not been ‘cleaned up’ yet and are available for the PCs to investigate.
- Three days ago, a large scenery panel fell from the backstage rigging, and shattered. A stage hand was struck, and was seriously injured.
- Yesterday, a storeroom full of costumes caught fire. Fortunately, many of the costumes usually stored there were absent at the time, and survived.
- Earlier mishaps included props being broken or going missing, posts of erroneous schedule changes, and odd changes to script drafts.

When the PCs are finished talking with Estander, give them Player Handout #1: The Pellak Grand Theater Map, and read the following:

“Well then, if we are in agreement, I will get you started on your way.” He rifles through a desk drawer for a moment, before pulling out what looks to be design plans for the theater.

Rising, he walks to the door, and opens it. Standing on the other side is [name of toughest looking PC], or at least someone that looks like him. There is a moment of stunned silence.

“Oh, um... sorry...” says the person at the door. His image shifts, and soon he appears to be a young Oeridian man.

Estander shakes his head. “William, will you please show these folks around? They will be helping us get back on track.”

With that, the playwright returns to his paperwork.

The PCs have several options at this point. They may investigate the broken scenery panel (Encounter 3) or the remains of the burnt costume storage room (Encounter 4) or question members of the cast and crew (Encounter 5).

All APLs

🔍 **Estander Thomason:** Male human Brd10 (Bluff +19, Diplomacy +8, Perform (act) +13, Sense Motive +15); AL NG.

ENCOUNTER 3: A HINT OF TREACHERY

This encounter occurs if the PCs decide to investigate the first act of sabotage, a ruined scenery panel. This encounter can occur on any day, but most likely will occur on Day 1.

This encounter takes place in the scenery storage room, location U on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

William pushes open a pair of wide double doors, and leads you into a dark and dusty room. You stop in your tracks at the scene before you... a portal leads out onto a barren plain, and dark stone mountains rise in the distance.

A few seconds later, your eyes adjust to the dim light, and you realize that the scene is just an illusion, emanating from a large backdrop.

William’s voice breaks the silence. “It’s over here. What’s left of it, at least...” Your guide points to the back wall of the room. Another scenery panel, this one vividly depicting a wide battlefield and blood soaked bodies, is leaned against the wall. A large crack runs up the middle, and a large chunk of the lower right corner is broken off entirely.

William can relate the following information about this mishap, if asked:

- This piece of scenery was supposed to be used during the big battle scene.
- These scenery panels are moved about and manipulated through the use of ropes and pulleys above the stage.
- During a rehearsal three days before the PCs were hired, this panel was being lifted off of the stage, when it fell about fifteen feet. The panel was severely damaged by the fall.

- A stage hand was struck a glancing blow by the falling panel, and it broke his arm. He still has not returned to work.
- Barton, the Lead Stage Manager, could probably tell them more. He is much more familiar with their intricate workings.

If the PCs think to move the scenery panel, they can see a pulley attached to one corner, and a similar mounting on the adjacent corner, where another pulley was attached. If an investigating PC makes a successful Disable Device (DC 18) or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) (DC 22) check, he can tell that the pulleys were weakened in such a way that they would break after a bit of heavy use, but would appear to be in fine condition. He can also tell that such weakening could not likely happen accidentally.

If the PCs decide to track down Barton, he is detailed in Encounter 5.

Nicholar's henchman, Adraeson, sabotaged this panel two days before it was used, and the accident occurred.

ENCOUNTER 4: BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

This encounter occurs if the PCs decide to investigate the second act of sabotage, the aftermath of a fire in the costume storage room.

This encounter can occur on any day, but most likely will occur on Day 1. This encounter takes place in the burnt costume storage room, location T on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

“I don't care what anyone else says, I think it's a sign of good luck.” William leads you to a hallway full of racks of costumes.

“Someone told me that the most expensive costumes were stored in that room. A fire breaks out, in there, right? Well, all the expensive costumes are out for cleaning, a day early. What are the odds?”

William pushes a hallway door open. The door jamb is marked, where it was previously forced open. “I think it means our bad luck has changed...”

The room you enter could have once been a storage room, but all that remains are a few metal racks, and soot-stained walls.

There isn't anything to find inside the room. Everything that was here, aside from the metal costume racks, was destroyed in the fire. The door is the only way in or out of the room.

A PC that makes a Search check (DC 15) realizes that there are scorch marks on all of the walls, not just at one point. This indicates that the perpetrator either wished to

destroy the entire room, or couldn't find what he was specifically looking for.

A PC that takes a close look at the door can make an Open Lock check (DC 10). Success means they can notice a lack of smoke stains in the marks on the door jamb, and can determine that the door was not forced until after the fire broke out – the door was forced open by a guardsman, not by the perpetrator. If the Open Lock check makes DC 20, the PC is also pretty sure the lock was not picked, as doing so would usually leave behind subtle scratch marks on the lock mechanism.

If PCs attempt to use magical means to locate the key, it is currently in a refuse bin outside the building, where it ended up after Adraeson discarded it.

William can pass on the following information, if questioned:

- This was one of four costume storage rooms in the theater.
- William does not know what distinguishes one from another.
- The night before the PCs were hired, a janitor found smoke pouring from around the locked door. He ran for a city watchman, but the contents of the room were totally lost before they could do anything.
- Gregan, the Wardrobe Manager, could probably tell them more. He is much more familiar with the costume storage rooms and the incident.

If the PCs decide to track down Gregan, he is detailed in Encounter 5.

Nicholar borrowed the key to the costume storage room from Gregan, and never returned it. He had his henchman, Adraeson, set fire to the room, not realizing that the costumes he hoped to destroy were elsewhere that night.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

The PCs may decide to interview key members of the production. This will highlight several of the cast and crew members as suspects. These encounters can occur on any day of the adventure.

GENERAL POPULACE

The PCs may want to speak with various members of the cast and crew that are not mentioned separately. They may gather bits of the following information by speaking with such an individual. In the case that they want to do a general Gather Information check, use the listed DCs:

- (DC 5) The cast and crew have been hired from all over Bissel, with the majority from the Pellak area.

- (DC 10) The musical was supposed to premiere two weeks ago. The delays are causing problems with the staff, many of whom have been away from family and friends since the beginning.
- (DC 15) The general cast and crew do not believe that the mishaps are intentional.
- (DC 20) Few members of the cast and crew are aware of how many mishaps have occurred. What they do know is only what they've heard about through whispered rumors.

LEAD STAGE MANAGER - BARTON

Barton can usually be found bustling around the main stage and backstage areas. He is a large and gruff man, of unobvious decent. He can provide the following information, if questioned:

- Barton believes that the mishaps are a combination of bad luck and crew members not putting enough effort into their work.
- During a rehearsal three days before the PCs were hired, a scenery panel was being lifted off of the stage, when it fell about fifteen feet. The panel was severely damaged by the fall.
- The damaged scenery panel was supposed to be used during the big battle scene.
- A stage hand was struck a glancing blow by the falling panel, and it broke his arm. He still has not returned to work.
- Barton used to work in a theater in Nyrond, where he first saw similar illusory scenery panels used. In fact, he's worked in several theaters, and never seen anywhere else use similar equipment.
- The scenery panels are moved about and manipulated through a complex system of ropes and pulleys above the stage. Barton doesn't think anyone outside of the stage crew could properly operate... or sabotage... the scenery panels.
- (After Day 2) The morning of Day 2, an orb from a lighting array came loose and shattered on the stage, below. Crew members that were present saw someone near the array that looked like one of the PCs.
- (After Day 2) Barton does not believe that the PCs are responsible for the damaged lighting array, as they would have nothing to gain.
- (After Day 2) While crew members worked to clean up the remains of the broken orb, Barton noticed that a second one from the same array was balanced precariously. He was unable to secure it, before it fell, as well.

- (After Day 2) After closer examination, Barton is convinced the array support wire was intentionally cut.
- (After Day 2) The production has extra lighting orbs, but it will take time to install a replacement... time already budgeted to other work.

All APLs

♣ **Barton Gardner:** Male human Com6 (Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +9); AL LN.

WARDROBE MANAGER - GREGAN

Gregan can usually be found around the main stage and wardrobe storage areas. He is a gnome, and many years of stressful work show on his aged face. Regardless of the topic of discussion, after a few moments he will tend to start talking to himself, mentioning unrelated tasks he needs to get done. He can provide the following information, if questioned:

- Gregan dismisses the idea that the mishaps were intentional. In reality, the only one he remembers is the fire in the costume room, and he's certain that was just an accident.
- The production uses a large number of costume, some with illusory enhancement. For instance, the Margrave's costume makes the viewer experience a slight feeling of awe respect and reverence when viewed. Evard's costume summons up feelings of dread.
- Many of the extras are supplied with *hats of disguise*. The prop manager, Jamin, takes care of those.
- The morning of Day 1, Estander told Gregan that a fire had broken out in Wardrobe Room 2, and that everything inside had been lost.
- The costumes are sorted between the four wardrobe rooms using a system only Gregan knows or understands. (actually, he has long since forgotten his own system, but he has convinced himself otherwise)
- Generally, the costumes for the lead roles - the most expensive ones - were kept in Wardrobe Room 2.
- Those costumes were supposed to be sent out for cleaning on Day 1. Due to a 'misunderstanding', they got sent out a day early. Gregan will not admit that he got confused, and caused this to happen.
- In Gregan's opinion, only someone close to the lead cast members would know where those costumes are kept. However, even the lead actors would only know which room they belong in, not where in the room they are kept.

- All of the costumes that were destroyed have already been replaced, but it is still a hurtful financial setback.
- If they want the key to the burnt costume room, Gregan pulls out a large ring of keys, and paws through it. After a moment, he frowns, and mentions that it is missing. He doesn't know whom he might have given it to.

All APLs

🧝 **Gregan Simoin:** Male gnome Com3 (Disguise +6); AL LG.

PROP MANAGER - JAMIN

Jamin can usually be found around the main stage and backstage areas, working on the vast assortment of props used for the production. She is a tall human woman, with distinctive Suloise features. She can provide the following information, if questioned:

- Jamin is a member of both the Bardic Circle and the Guild of the Arcane Path. When the chance arose to use all of her skills together, she jumped at it.
- Jamin believes that inter-department rivalry is responsible for the mishaps. If everyone would just try to get along, she says, things would work just fine. If asked to give examples of this rivalry, she will admit that she can't think of any examples, but she is 'sure that it exists'.
- The production of 'That's Rhomstaff!' is making use of many magical devices and gadgets, something not all that common in the theatrical world. When the production is complete, these items will belong to the theater, and will be used for future shows.
- Many of the extras are supplied with *hats of disguise*. This allows them to portray roles such as Evard's undead as convincingly as possible, and to switch costumes very quickly.
- The theater owns a single *ring of invisibility*. The intention is that it would allow a crew member to move about the stage, undetected by the audience, even during a scene. However, due to the extreme cost of such an item, it never leaves her sight.
- A few of the scenes in the musical are enhanced, through the use of wands of various illusion spells.
- Jamin keeps a very tight leash on the magical equipment. However, she noticed one of the *hats of disguise* has gone missing. She has not yet told Estander, as she fears his reaction.
- Almost all of the scenes feature wooden backdrops, enchanted with permanent illusion spells. Barton, the lead stage manager, would know more about them.

- The most expensive prop is a giant construct, representing Kanner the Tall, a hero of Bissel.
- (After Day 3) Jamin understands that the rogue construct had to be disabled. She does not blame the PCs for doing it.
- (After Day 3) Repairs to the construct will be costly, both in time, and materials.
- (After Day 3) The crew member that was operating the Kanner construct was in plain view moments before he was disabled and robbed of the control goggles and gloves. The crew member only remembers being struck from behind.

All APLs

🧝 **Jamin Witthew:** Female human Brd4 (Appraise +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +7); AL NG.

LEAD ACTOR - NICHOLAR

Nicholar can usually be found around the main stage and his dressing room. He is a tall human man, with slight Oeridian features. When he speaks, there is a condescending edge to his tone. He will grudgingly speak with PCs, if they emphasize the importance of their investigation.

Keep in mind that he is shielded from many divination spells (via a recently consumed *potion of nondetection* at APLs 2 and 4 and via a *ring of mind shielding* at APL 6 and above), and as a seasoned actor, also has a very good Bluff check.

He can provide the following information, if questioned:

- Nicholar has worked in dozens of productions, all over the Flanaess. He is natively from the Free City of Greyhawk.
- Nicholar was hired early on in the production to play Evard. Estander saw him in another villain role, and recruited him on the spot.
- Nicholar has played villains before, but Bissel villains are different than anything he's portrayed.
- Like any professional actor, he spent time researching the role.
- Nicholar firmly believes that the mishaps that have plagued the production are deliberate acts of sabotage, even if no one else will believe it.
- Estander may be less than committed to the success of the production. His salary was factored into the initial budget, so he has nothing to lose if the musical fails.

- The nobles backing the production have something to gain if the production fails. If that happens, they can say that the mishaps are evidence that Evard's influence has spread beyond the battlefield.
- Rival nobles also have something to gain. If the production fails, it will make the backers look bad in the eyes of the people.

In any situation, Nicholar will use his skills as an actor to appear unimportant with regards to the plot.

APL 2

🔮 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor4; hp 15; see *Appendix One*.

APL 4

🔮 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor6; hp 23; see *Appendix One*.

APL 6

🔮 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor8; hp 30; see *Appendix One*.

APL 8

🔮 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor10; hp 38; see *Appendix One*.

APL 10

🔮 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor12; hp 45; see *Appendix One*.

APL 12

🔮 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor14; hp 53; see *Appendix One*.

ENCOUNTER 6: NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

This encounter occurs at the beginning of Day 2, wherever the PCs happen to be when the cast and crew begin arriving.

Crew members have just begun arriving this morning, when a troll runs up to you, with an uncharacteristic enthusiasm in its step. "Hey there! Estander said I can lead you around again, if you want. Sure beats practicing lines..."

"Oh, before I forget... boss wanted me to give this to you..." William produces a sealed note from his pocket, and offers it to you.

Give the PCs *Player Handout #2 – The Note from Estander*. This message informs them of two new incidents that were discovered this morning: a broken lighting array and a tainted air vent.

The PCs have several options at this point. They may investigate the broken lighting array (Encounter 7) or the

tainted air vent (Encounter 8). If they have not yet done so, they may also visit the broken scenery panel (Encounter 3) or the remains of the burnt costume storage room (Encounter 4) or question members of the cast and crew (Encounter 5).

ENCOUNTER 7: A LITTLE LIGHT HUMOR

This encounter occurs if the PCs decide to investigate the third act of sabotage, a broken lighting array. This encounter can occur on any day after the first night, but most likely will occur on Day 2. This encounter takes place on the main stage, location D on *DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater*.

The stage is bustling with activity. William walks over to a beefy half-orc, and tugs on his sleeve. "Gort, what's going on?"

"The stage broked. Need new stage, me think. Dunno whut happen." He points to the crowd on the stage, which appears to be working diligently to clean something up.

If the PCs approach the group on the stage, continue with the following:

The stage hands are clearing away large glass shards. It seems that some large breakable object shattered here. Each of the pieces has a noticeable blue glow.

Allow any PC that has investigated the stage a Spot check (DC 20). If they succeed, read them the following:

You notice a pair of men up in the catwalks, high above the stage. They are laden with tools, and are working on an odd device that hangs from the beams above: a string of large glass orbs, connected via metal beams.

Whether they notice, or not, continue on:

Suddenly, there is a shout from above. A split-second later, a large glass sphere shatters against the stage. It erupts in a violent flash of light.

PCs that spotted the crew working overhead are allowed a saving throw (Reflex, DC 10 + APL). PCs that fail the saving throw, or did not notice the crew, are dazzled, as per the spell *flare* for 2d10 minutes. Don't reveal this duration - let affected PCs worry that the damage might be permanent.

Continue on with the following, after the accident:

A large man scrambles down the ladder at the edge of the stage. "Hells alive! Is everyone alright? I told him it was gonna fall..."

A young Baklunish man shouts a curse at the Stage Manager. "What are you trying to do to me, Barton? My eyes..."

“Hey, don’t use that tone with me! I’m not the one that messed around with the lights.”

A few moments of chaos ensue, as the crowd looks for someone to blame. Barton moves through the people, looking for injuries. It seems he is more concerned with everyone’s well being, than finding a scapegoat.

Suddenly, one of the gathered crewmen points at [random PC]. “Hey, that’s the one we saw cutting the line!” Several of the other crew members nod, and begin to move in your direction.

The man that appeared is Barton, the Lead Stage Manager. He can provide valuable information about this mishap, but he is currently preoccupied by the crowd.

Several crew members spotted Adraeson, just after he had sabotaged the lighting. However, he was using a stolen *hat of disguise* to look like the accused PC.

The PCs will need to provide an alibi for the accused, as well as some sort of explanation for what the crew saw. (For instance, someone could have been disguised like the accused PC). The PC talking to the crowd may make a Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 18). A successful result will make them less hostile, and a second success will convince them to disperse.

If a PC attempts to tend to the wounded, award a +2 circumstance bonus to any Diplomacy check made after that point, even by a different PC. The tending PC may make a Heal check (DC 15). Success reveals that no one suffered more than a few minor cuts and bruises, and the blindness will not be permanent.

If the crowd is not dealt with in three minutes, a minor brawl will break out. PCs can quell the fight through many means – non-lethal attacks, grappling, and sleep spells are just a few possibilities. If PCs attack for normal damage, the city watch will happily toss them into prison, removing them from the adventure.

All APLs

🔪 **Crew Member:** Com1 (Sense Motive +4).

After the crowd is dealt with, Barton will happily speak with the PCs. His list of helpful information is detailed in Encounter 5.

A PC can easily climb up the ladder to the catwalks above, but hanging on to the ladder and manipulating the broken lighting array requires a Balance check (DC 15) or a Climb check (DC 22). Failure by more than five means the PC falls fifty feet to the stage floor below, taking 5d6 points of damage.

Success reveals that even the slightest touch will cause the array to swing around quite a bit. Following up with a Search check (DC 12) will allow the PC to find a restraint line that was sawed through by some sort of bladed object. A successful Disable Device (DC 18) or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC

20) will confirm that a restraint was severed so that normal operation of the lights would likely cause one to break loose and fall.

If a PC makes a Spot check while up on the ladder (DC 18), he notices the glimmer of steel from the otherwise empty orchestra pit, just in front of the stage, almost directly below the sabotaged array. Further investigation produces a small serrated dagger, very likely the one that was used to cut the restraint line. This dagger is small, too small to be held comfortably by a medium size character. This suggests that the saboteur was smaller than the average human.

Nicholar’s henchman, Adraeson, climbed the stage ladder, and cut the restraint line this morning. He accidentally dropped the dagger, and was trying to locate it, when he was spotted. Fortunately, he was using a stolen *hat of disguise* at the time.

ENCOUNTER 8: SILENT BUT DEADLY

This encounter occurs if the PCs decide to investigate the fourth act of sabotage, a tainted air vent. This encounter can occur on any day after the first night, but most likely will occur on Day 2. This encounter takes place in the air vent, location Y on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

William leads you to the rear of the main theater seating. A large set of curtains cleverly hide a large air vent. As you approach, you notice two very distinct things: the horrible stench of rotting flesh, and the loud cursing of someone within the vent.

Any PC that approaches within 10' of the vent must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or become sickened by the stench, suffering a -2 penalty to all skill checks for the duration of the encounter.

A successful Knowledge [religion] check (DC 15) will allow a PC to immediately recognize the stench... it smells exactly like the foul odor that accompanies ghouls.

If the PCs investigate further, read the following:

Investigating further, you find that the grate from the front of the air vent has been detached, and someone is inside. A rather unhappy-looking gnome, armed with various cleaning supplies, appears to be the source of the cursing heard before. At his feet is a large puddle of an inky black fluid.

He notices you for the first time, and looks in your direction. He does not look pleased. “What do you want? This had better be good...”

This is Furvor Brundlebagger, one of the maintenance staff. He can provide the following information, if questioned:

- He showed up a few minutes late for work today, and was punished with the task of cleaning up this mess.
- He has no idea what the goo in the vent is, but it is making him sick. It is also proving very difficult to clean up.
- He doesn't know who found the goo in the vent. Considering the stench, he doesn't think it would be hard to find.
- After this, he will probably quit his job. A little tardiness is not worth this harsh a punishment.
- The theater is lucky. If this mess had not been discovered, and the ventilation system was turned on for opening night, the stench would have filled the entire building.

The vent area is a 5' cube, large enough for smaller PCs to enter without hindrance, and taller PCs if they duck. At the back of this space is a smaller duct, about 3' tall, which leads into the rest of the ventilation system.

A successful Craft (alchemy) check (DC 15) will allow a PC to identify the goo as a substance extracted from an intact ghoul.


A successful Search check (DC 18) will find footprints in the goo that do not match Furvor's boots. If a PC has the Track feat, a successful Survival check (DC 25) will allow him to sort out the sets of footprints. This new set appears to originate within the puddle (there are no such footprints leading into it), and head deeper into the ventilation system. The trail becomes fainter, and finally disappears 20' into the vent passageways. The footprints are small, probably from a halfling or gnome. William can confirm that these ducts lead throughout the entire theater, and so the perpetrator could have gone anywhere.

This is an important clue, as it tells PCs that the person they are looking for is a member of the smaller humanoid races.

Nicholar provided his henchman, Adraeson, with some ghoul essence, and instructed him to taint the ventilation ducts. Nicholar did not think the odorous substance would be detected until the vents were activated for opening night.

Adraeson made two mistakes. First, he placed the liquid too close to a well-trafficked area. Second, he stepped in the puddle, before heading back into the air shafts to escape.

All APLs

 **Furvor Brundlebagger:** Male gnome Com1; AL CG.

ENCOUNTER 9: LARGE AND IN CHARGE

This encounter occurs on Day 3, and is a major turning point in the plot. It takes place at the stage, location D on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater. The PCs start wherever they are currently exploring, and are drawn to the encounter location.

The bustle of activity around the theater has increased dramatically today. With just two short days before the opening of the new Pellak Grand Theater, everyone is scrambling to get last minute work done.

You are making your way through the theater, when a sudden cacophony tears through the air, the sound of metal and stone being shattered. A deep roar follows soon after. It sounded like something is going on near the stage.

If the PCs investigate, continue with the following:

The horrible noises continue as you make your way to the stage. A small crowd has gathered, all watching a giant creature lumber about. Standing about twenty feet tall, it looks like a bald human, with radiant skin and giant golden wings. Its eyes glow with tiny jets of flame, and it carries a giant wooden staff, adorned with a multitude of runes.

A tall Suloise woman nearby notices your interest in the creature, and nods proudly.

"Impressive, isn't he? Most expensive prop in the show... we weren't even sure we could have him done in time."

She turns back towards the construct. Shaking her head disapprovingly, she barks instructions at a man standing just offstage.

"No, no... He's still leaning to the right. Phin, back it up, and let's try again. Come on, people... we don't want to be here all night!"

The giant steps backwards, and stands straight. A number of stage hands hurry over to the still form, and start adjusting various parts of the beast.

This is Jamin, the Prop Manager. She will be happy to chat about the construct, while she waits for her adjustments to be made. She can impart the following information:

- The construct is the likeness of Kanner the Tall, a famous hero of Bissel during the Small War. He was a herald of Heironeous, the child of an archangel and a fire elemental lord. (He was much different than that, but Jamin doesn't know it).
- Brave adventurers met with Kanner, who gave up his legendary staff to help the March overcome the

Necromancer. (Jamin doesn't know this for certain, but is fairly convinced of it.)

- If a PC actually possesses *Kanner's Oakstaff* (from BIS3-03 *Oakstaff*) and show it to Jamin, she will look it over inquisitively, and then tell the PCs that she is sure the 'real' staff didn't look nearly that mundane.
- This construct is a feat of magic and machinery. It is controlled by a set of gloves and a pair of goggles. (He gestures past the beast, offstage, where the PCs can see a man wearing these items).
- Whatever the wearer of the gloves does, the construct mimics.
- The goggles allow the controller to see through the construct's eyes.

After the PCs have had a few moments, to ask questions, continue reading this:

Jamin claps her hands sharply and the stage hands give her their undivided attention.

"Alright, let's try this again, from the top..."

The stage workers scramble out of the way. Moments later, the beast animates once more. You don't really see any difference in its movement, but Jamin is visibly pleased.

"Outstanding! Phin, I think you've got it! That certainly looks more ominous!"

The beast turns sharply, and lumbers directly towards you and the Prop Manager.

"Perfect! I love it! Alright, let's shut him down. We've got more work to do."

The creature continues towards you.

"Uhh, Phin... that's enough. Thank you..."

The giant Kanner raises his staff to strike, flame jetting from his eyes.

Jamin and the other staff members will quickly get out of the way, leaving the PCs to deal with the giant prop. They need to disable it, or else it will damage them and the theater. Refer to *DM Aid – Map #3 – Encounter 9 Combat*.

If PCs think to look for the controller of the beast, they will find Phineas unconscious, behind a pile of boxes offstage. The gloves and goggles are missing.

Nicholar's henchman, Adraeson, subdued Phineas, and stole the controls for the prop. He is now in one of the offstage storage areas, and will use the prop to attack the PCs, stage crew, and anything related to the production that looks valuable.

APL 2 (EL 5)

👉 **Kanner Prop:** Huge construct; hp 90; see *Appendix One*.

APL 4 (EL 7)

👉 **Kanner Prop:** Huge construct; hp 150; see *Appendix One*.

APL 6 (EL 9)

👉 **Kanner Prop:** Huge construct; hp 210; see *Appendix One*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

👉 **Kanner Prop:** Huge construct; hp 270; see *Appendix One*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

👉 **Kanner Prop:** Huge construct; hp 330; see *Appendix One*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

👉 **Kanner Prop:** Huge construct; hp 390; see *Appendix One*.

Once the PCs disable the construct, read the following:

With a final shudder, the giant beast screeches to a halt. Cries and shouts rise from the stage hands – some of joy and gratitude, others of panic.

Jamin look devastated over the loss of her prop. "What...? How could this happen? What are we going to do, now?"

A few stage hands call out to her. "We found Phineas, ma'am. He was unconscious. And these..." One of them holds up the gloves and goggles used to control the giant machine. "We found these in one of the store rooms."

Jamin looks about ready to cry. "Who... would do such a thing? We're finished! How can we possibly fix this in two days?"

If the PCs take a close look at the goggles, allow them a Search check (DC 20). A successful result means they find a few strands of brown hair on the goggles, which do not match Phineas' hair. It is a fair (and correct) assumption that the hair belongs to the perpetrator.

Continue on to *Encounter 10*.

ENCOUNTER 10: DOWNS AND UPS

This encounter takes place in the Producer's office, location L on *DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater*.

The atmosphere in Estander's office is subdued. The producer has called for a meeting of all major cast and crew, and the news is not likely to be pleasant.

Estander stands solemnly, and looks around at the assembly. "I... I don't know what to say." He laughs nervously. "I wish I could just pick up a script, and read my lines to you... not sure I like the ending of this one..."

He pauses, and takes a deep breath before continuing.

"We're being cancelled..."

Cries of protest and panic go up from the room.

"I know, I know... it's not what I want, either... but our sponsors are tired of the delays... and scared off by the... problems... we've lost our funding." He looks directly at you. "We did what we could..."

A dozen voices erupt at once. Estander fights to keep control.

"I know you've got children to feed, Jam... No, I don't know what will happen to the Grand... No, I just don't know..."

The sound of someone loudly clearing his throat causes the panic to die down, as everyone turns to look for the source. William stands in the open doorway. Behind him stands a page, dressed in a fine silk tabard.

PCs that succeed at a Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) or Knowledge (nobility) check (DC 15) recognize the page by his tabard as belonging to Viscountess Saralind Markavan, the Regent of the March of Bissel.

"Uh, ex... excuse me, sir," William stutters. "This fellow says he has a message for you?"

The page walks into the office, nose slightly upturned. He presents Estander with a sealed note, pivots on his heels, and quickly departs. The producer breaks the seal, and quickly looks over the message. His face displays confusion, then shock and amazement.

"How is this possible...?"

"What is it, Estander?" someone interjects. The rest of the room waits on the edge of their seats.

"We're... she's... see for yourself..." He passes the note around the room.

Give the PCs Player Handout #3 - The Note from Lady Saralind, and continue:

"Her Noble Ladyship... is going to back our production. And she's coming to the premiere..."

Jamin, the Prop Manager, looks up from the note, stunned. "We can afford to fix our broken props..."

Barton, the Lead Stage Manager, shakes his head. "In two days? You really think we could get this all back together in two days?"

Nicholar, the lead actor, stands, and turns to the group. "Do you know what this means? Once word gets out that the Regent is coming, every noble in Pellak will just HAVE to attend. They'll bring their entourages, and families, and... well, we'll be an instant success!"

An air of excitement begins to fill the room.

Estander nods. "It won't be easy... everyone, we must make this work. Double your efforts... whatever it takes to get the job done, do it. Barton, hire more hands if you need to."

The pleased chatter settles down, and there is a moment of silence.

"Well, don't just sit there... let's get to it... the show must go on!"

The cast and crew will quickly leave, to resume preparations for opening night. They are justified in their excitement - a successful opening night in front of the Regent would make the production a success.

Nicholar, however, now has a new goal – the assassination of Lady Saralind. He will no longer seek to sabotage the production, and will instead do what he can to help it reach opening night.

The PCs now have two days to continue their investigations as they see fit. They may investigate the mishaps (Encounters 3, 4, 7, and 8) or question the cast and crew (Encounter 5). In the latter case, emphasize how little time the staff has to speak with the PCs.

If the adventure is doing well on time, continue on to Encounter 11 (which is optional). Otherwise, once the PCs have completed all of their investigations, continue on to Encounter 12.

ENCOUNTER 11: I SPY, WITH MY LITTLE EYE

This encounter occurs in the afternoon of Day 4. This encounter begins in the common seats, location F on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

The premiere of 'That's Rhomstaff!' is now a mere 24 hours away, and the furious work of the cast and crew has settled down considerably; there is still much to do, but it is starting to look possible to complete on time.

As you make your rounds through the theater, various crew members nod to you respectfully. For

the first time in a week, a full day has passed without something going wrong. Rumor has it that your presence is responsible.

You are making your way through the main seating area of the theater, when [Random PC] sees movement out of his peripheral vision. Something is snooping around one of the balconies closest the stage. If you're not mistaken, that is the balcony reserved for the Regent.

If the PCs make any offensive moves, the figure notices, and steps into the shadows, hiding and going invisible, removing himself from their view. If they head for the balcony to investigate, proceed with this text:

Heading to the balcony, you find... nothing. Whoever was here just moments before has apparently vanished into thin air.

"Do you always go jauntin' about like that?" A voice comes from the empty air beside you. Moments later, that space is filled with a lithe man, features hidden beneath a concealing cloak.

"Seriously... never mind my noticing you. I'd bet old Evard heard you up in Thornward from here. Sneaking up on someone usually involves some degree of subtlety, ye ken?"

Noticing your reactions, the man cracks a slight smile. "No reason to worry about me. Padamiir Smithsman, at your service." He extends a hand in greeting. "I'm one of the Lady's personal bodyguards. Just makin' sure everything is alright for her appearance, tomorrow night."

This man is not Padamiir Smithsman, nor is he a personal bodyguard. This man is an agent of the Mist Chameleons, the (in)famous spy network loyal to Bissel and her rulers. If a PC wishes to make a Sense Motive check against him, allow it. However, keep in mind that the only thing he is lying about is his identity, and he is a very good liar.

If a PC is a member of the Mist Chameleons, have the agent make a Bluff check (DC 15). Success means the PC recognizes key phrases or gestures that are used by Mist Chameleon agents to identify each other. A nonmember may attempt a Sense Motive check against the Bluff result to attempt to intercept the message, but with a -20 penalty to account for insider information and frequently changed code words.

The PCs will likely not trust this man, or at least will probably think something amiss about him. Under no circumstances will he admit who he is, or whom he works for. He is shielded by a *mind blank* spell. If pressed, he will produce a writ from Regent Saralind, permitting him free access to all of Bissel. This is pretty much a blank check, allowing him to do anything he feels necessary to ensure national security.

If PCs demand he speak with Estander, the two of them will disappear into the Producer's office for a few minutes. Then Estander will emerge, pale-faced, and insist that the PCs do not obstruct the agent.


If the PCs attack the agent, he will likely win initiative, cast a quickened nonlethal substituted ray of frost (1d3 + 5d6 sneak attack), and then *dimension door* away before anyone can do anything. PCs will definitely not get the *Commendation of the Mist Chameleons* reward nor will they be able to use the Mist Chameleon half of the *Personal Favor of the Regent* reward.

He can provide the following information, if questioned peacefully:

- He has worked for Regent Saralind since she was elected to the position. He served Margraves Larrangin and Walgar before that.
- If a snide remark (or even a questionable comment) is made about Saralind, he snaps "She's good enough for US to invest our loyalty in. Why isn't she good enough for you? Or aren't you for the good of Bissel..?" He will not say who 'us' refers to.
- Tomorrow night, he and another bodyguard will be here in the balcony with Saralind and her guests.
- Saralind's guests are the baroness of Misty Hills, and the high priest of Heironeous. A Sense Motive check (DC 20) notices that he mentions the first name with some reverence.
- He is currently looking around for any security concerns. He is pleased to say he has found nothing amiss.

When the PCs stop bothering him, the agent will return to his inspection of the balcony.

All APLs

 **Mist Chameleon Agent:** Male human Rog3/Sor6/Arcane Trickster7 (+10 Init modifier, Bluff +18, Hide +34, Sense Motive +21); AL NG.

ENCOUNTER 12: LIVE, FROM PELLAK, IT'S OPENING NIGHT

This encounter occurs in the evening of Day 5. This encounter begins at the stage, location D on DM Aid – Map #1 – *The Pellak Grand Theater*. This encounter and the next are complicated and the PCs actions can make them even more so; be prepared to adapt the text as needed to move the action forward along the path defined below.

The tension in the air is thick, as Estander shouts out his warning. "Five minutes to curtain!"

Looking out from the side of the stage, you can see that the newly opened theater is packed. Every

private balcony is full, and everyone who is anyone is here.

The balcony just to the left of the stage is currently occupied by Lord Mayor Jacen Aldenvor and several local dignitaries. Sir Jerius Greenblade, the Chief of Staff of the Knights of the Watch in Bissel, is seated in the next section, along with a number of knights. Two balconies are filled with priests of Zilchus - not surprising, as high priestess Jorollane is one of the major backers of the production. Several more balconies are occupied by the lords of nearby baronies, and their entourages - Lord Marcomir of Davoniya, Lord Sollus of Paercium, and Lord Ceanatis of Kynneret.

Most notably, the balcony just to the right of the stage is occupied by Her Noble Ladyship, Lady Saralind, Regent of the March. On her right is Lady Imycina Trefeloess, baroness of the Misty Hills. On her left, Malto Aneur, high priest of Heironeous. The three seem to be caught up in some rather pleasant conversation.

PCs with true seeing or detect invisible can see that there are two invisible figures standing in the shadows behind the Regent and her guests. One of them is the agent from encounter 11.

If a PC wishes to attempt to read Saralind's lips, he can make a Spot check (DC 15). If he succeeds, he can tell they are exchanging jokes, and otherwise behaving like old friends. If the check fails by five or more, give them the cryptic phrase "I look inside myself, and see my heart is black. Be ready, for the attack comes after I dance."

All APLs

🔮 **Lady Saralind Markavan:** Female human
Wiz18; AL LG.

Once PCs are finished with any attempts to eavesdrop on the Regent, continue:

Below, the common seats are mobbed by many excited citizens of Pellak. Once word got out about the play, it quickly became the focus of all local gossip. Hundreds of people have turned out to hear stories of their favorite heroes, and their valiant struggles against the forces of evil.

The lights are suddenly dimmed, and a hush falls over the crowd. Softly, the orchestra begins to play a gentle, comforting melody. A pool of light appears in the center of the stage, and slowly broadens to show rolling hills and fields. A chorus of voices emanates from the stage.

*"Tell a tale of fair Ryphthorn...
Tradition long and grand...
And the man that ruled her...
Lord Evard Markavan...*

Baron Evard, wizard strong...

*Walgar's loyal man...
Hid from all, his dark deceit...
And shaped his conquest plan..."*

The scene changes, now showing a brightly lit hall. Three men step to center stage, dressed in the trappings of the Margrave Walgar and the Knights of the Watch. A dozen other men, in noble finery, enter and join them.

*"Assuring smile and gracious gaze...
Carefully hid the worst...
For 'mid the Barons Council...
Blood would quench his thirst..."*

One of the nobles, playing Lord Evard, raises his arms. Black arcane fire lances forth. Before it can strike Margrave Walgar, the two Knights of the Watch leap forth and sacrifice themselves to save him.

*"Treachery foul, the plot revealed...
In the eleventh hour...
Foul allies came, from dark of shadow...
To show Lord Evard's power..."*

The Margrave and the other Barons flee from the stage, leaving Evard alone. From every corner of the stage, other figures emerge - dark-robed wizards, humanoids, and foul undead.

Estander stands near you, watching his creation come to life. He silently mouths every word spoken, and looks very pleased at how things are progressing.

Continue reading this text, but substitute where indicated the line the PCs came up with in Encounter 1. If they did not come up with anything (or it wasn't appropriate), use the line "To rid this evil from the land..."

The scene changes again to show a rocky valley. At the end of the valley sits an impregnable fortress. A legion of soldiers marches onto the stage from each side.

*"But strong of heart did rally on...
To stand against Lord Evard's hand...
To darkest Ryphthorn marched...
[Insert PC line]*

*Calignosis! Calignosis!
Evard's hidden fortress keep...
Our soldiers left for death's front door...
Their widows were left to weep..."*

Suddenly, a look of slight confusion crosses Estander's face. "What is he doing?" he whispers under his breath.

You look across the stage, searching for the source of his dismay. A stage hand stands in the opposite wing, a halfling with brown hair. It appears

he is cutting one of the ropes that secure the scenery hanging from the catwalks above the stage.

“Quick!” Estander hisses. “Stop him before he ruins everything!”

It is very important that the PCs are not able to capture Adraeson until he reaches Nicholar’s dressing room. If they employ magic that would ensnare him, he will automatically make any saving throws to shrug it off. If they choose alternate tactics to try and chase him down, feel free to take poetic liberties to make it exciting, yet fruitless.

If the PCs move closer to investigate, continue reading:

You hurry behind the stage, anxious to reach the other side and the villain you’ve been pursuing. As you round the corner, the stage hand notices you. He turns, and scowls.

Suddenly, the stage lighting goes dark.

*“As Evard stood before defeat...
Darkness struck the valley blind...
Calignosis faded from the world...
The dark lord left the March behind...”*

If the PCs have darkvision, they see Adraeson grab one nearby rope and cut another. He is launched into the air, up to the catwalks. Continue reading this text:

The stage lights back up, now showing a barren, lifeless landscape of ash where Evard’s fortress once stood. You also find empty space where your quarry stood, just moments ago.

If the PCs did not see Adraeson flee to the catwalks, let them puzzle it out for a moment. If they specifically look up, or succeed on a Spot check (DC 15), continue reading:

Looking up into the catwalks above the stage, you see the halfling crouched on a catwalk section, peering back down at you.

The PCs can easily climb the ladders up to the catwalks, or find a different way up, if they prefer. Once they do, continue reading:

You quickly work your way up to the catwalks. It appears that your quarry has once again disappeared.

The scene below shifts. Once more, it shows the same rolling hills and fields of the Barony of Rypthorn. This time, however, the land is scarred from the great battle against Evard.

*“Lord Evard gone, the darkness purged...
Rypthorn was beset by peace...
The people started to rebuild...
And in their lives they gained new lease...”*

The scarred landscape fades, and is replaced by the same land today. Fields are green, and homes are rebuilt. However, the damage done by the Necromancer is still evident. Somewhere in the distance, a storm approaches. There is a flash of lightning, and the deep rumble of thunder.

*“A decade passed, the March moved on...
Deeper worries upon our brow...
Rypthorn - now a forgotten name...
Rhomstaff, as we call it now...”*

*The call went out, an army marched...
Wicked upon Arvinshire...
Lord Evard stood upon the field...
Bathed in cloak of unholy fire...”*

Suddenly, one of the lightning blasts erupts near the rear of the stage. For a brief moment, you see the shadow of a stage hand projected clearly against the back wall, as he runs towards the far end of the catwalks.

Wait for players to indicate that they are continuing the chase. Then choose one or more PCs at random (see below).

You head after the saboteur, but the advantage appears to be his. He moves nimbly across the catwalks, completely comfortable with the terrain, even in this less than perfect light.

Suddenly, he turns and slices through a nearby rope with his dagger. Sandbags above swing wildly in your direction.

Point at the random PCs you selected above.

APL 2 (EL 1)

↗ **Swinging Sandbag:** CR 1; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; Atk +12 ranged (1d8 nonlethal, sandbag); Search NA; Disable Device NA.

APL 4 (EL 3)

↗ **Swinging Sandbags (2):** CR 1; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; Atk +14 ranged (1d8 nonlethal, sandbag); Search NA; Disable Device NA.

APL 6 (EL 5)

↗ **Swinging Sandbags (3):** CR 2; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; Atk +16 ranged (2d8 nonlethal, sandbag); Search NA; Disable Device NA.

APL 8 (EL 7)

↗ **Swinging Sandbags (4):** CR 3; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (3d8 nonlethal, sandbag); Search NA; Disable Device NA.

APL 10 (EL 9)

↗ **Swinging Sandbags (4):** CR 5; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; Atk +20 ranged (4d8 nonlethal, sandbag); Search NA; Disable Device NA.

APL 12 (EL 11)

↗ **Swinging Sandbags (5):** CR 6; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; Atk +22 ranged (6d8 nonlethal, sandbag); Search NA; Disable Device NA.

Any PC who takes more nonlethal damage than they have hit points is knocked unconscious and falls down upon the catwalk (narrowly averting a fall to the ground below). Have all of the conscious PCs make Balance checks (DC 10).

For those who fail the check:

You lose your footing. You fall from the catwalks, but manage to get a handhold and save yourself from certain death.

For those who succeed at the check:

You manage to avoid a deadly fall from the catwalks, but you are distracted from your target by your efforts to avoid a fall.

Read to all:

The stage hand glares in your direction, before leaping from the far end of the catwalks. He grabs a support line, and slides down to the backstage floor below, narrowly missing a few of Evard's undead minions, en route to terrorize the March. He hits the floor, and runs off towards the western hallways.

Once the PCs climb down and follow Adraeson, continue reading this text:

Following the western hallway, you come to the dressing rooms. One door stands ajar – the one belonging to Nicholar, the lead actor.

Just inside, you can see the halfling you've been chasing. He is holding his head in his hands, and looks very confused.

“What... what am I doing here? I just had the most horrible dream...”

This is Adraeson, the stage hand that is behind the mishaps plaguing ‘That’s Rhomstaff!’. Nicholar has been dominating him since the production began, and using him to cause all the disturbances.

Adraeson is stunned by what has gone on, but he will provide the following information if questioned:

- He was hired as a stage hand, during the first week of the production.
- Nicholar, the lead actor, called him into this dressing room about five minutes ago. (By Adraeson’s reckoning. This was actually months ago.)
- Upon entering the dressing room, he felt a bit dizzy. He started daydreaming.
- In his daydreams, he remembers sabotaging the play. He can describe the five mishaps in vivid detail.

- He remembers Nicholar repeatedly telling him to return here if anything went wrong.

Nicholar’s desk is covered in script pages. A PC that makes a successful Search check (DC 10) will find Nicholar’s journal. Give the finder *Player Handout #4 - Excerpts from Nicholar’s Journal*. It details Nicholar’s corruption and plot against the Regent. A PC that makes a successful Search check (DC 20) finds a secret drawer that not even Nicholar is aware of; it contains a number of items of value that belonged to the desks previous owner:

APL 2	Quaal’s feather token (anchor) Quaal’s feather token (fan)
APL 4	elixir of vision silversheen
APL 6	Quaal’s feather token (tree) Quaal’s feather token (bird)
APL 8	Quaal’s feather token (whip) Quaal’s feather token (swan boat)
APL 10	Heward’s handy haversack brooch of shielding
APL 12	chime of opening golembane scarab

When the PCs decide to head back to the stage, continue on to Encounter 13.

ENCOUNTER 13: READY FOR MY CLOSE UP

This encounter occurs at the common seating and stage areas, locations D and F on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Pellak Grand Theater.

The doors to the main room swing open, just in time for a huge wave of water to wash over you. The audience gasps.

The destruction of Clunther complete, the illusion of Lake Hasra fades away. It is replaced by a single pool of light on the stage. Nicholar, portraying Evard the Necromancer, steps into the light. Behind him in the darkness, you can just make out several prominent Bissel landmarks, all shrouded in shadow. He raises his arms towards the balconies, and his voice fills the air.

***“Too long has Bissel run astray ...
Fires of weakness too long been fanned ...
My strength will heal the March’s sins ...
The time for change is now at hand ...”***

As he finishes, Nicholar turns to face Lady Saralind’s balcony. He slowly advances, intoning the

words of a spell. It is then that you notice the dark shapes in the shadow around him, waiting to defend their master.

Please refer to DM Aid – Map #1 – Encounter 13 Combat. The PCs may immediately make a Spellcraft check (DC 10) to notice that he is really casting a spell.

If the PCs immediately decide to intervene, they will get a surprise round. Different things will happen, during the first combat round, depending on the actions of the PCs.

PCS HARM NICHOLAR DURING THE SURPRISE ROUND OR READY TO STOP HIS SPELLCASTING:

Nicholar will break off his assault on the Regent and will attack the PCs instead. He will save his *phantasmal killer* spell for his original target. His undead servants will move to intercept the PCs.

PCS STAND IDLE, DO NOT REACH NICHOLAR IN TIME, OR ATTACK HIS SERVANTS INSTEAD:

During the first combat round, Nicholar will cast *phantasmal killer* from a scroll at Lady Saralind. The Regent will succeed on the saving throw but is still very badly injured. Several Mist Chameleon bodyguards will leap from the shadows and pull the wounded lady away to safety.

If Nicholar is allowed to harm the Regent, the PCs will not receive the *Personal Favor of the Regent* or *Commendation of the Mist Chameleon* rewards.

More is at stake during this combat than just the Regent's life. 'That's Rhomstaff!' needs to have a successful opening night, and the closing number could make or break the entire show.

As the combat begins, start a counter at zero. For every combat round that passes, increment the counter. Every time the PCs do something flashy or dramatic, describe the reaction of the audience, and increment the counter as below:

1 point	Each round of combat.
1 point	Each critical hit by a PC.
1 point	Each battle cry by a PC.
1 point	Each time a PC tumbles.
2 points	Each time a PC wields a flashy weapon (once per weapon only).
2 points	Each PC bard who sings to enhance his comrades in battle.
3 points	Each time PC speaks lines of poetry that could be part of play.
3 points	For each time a PC casts a spell with a flashy visual component.

At the end of combat, if the counter totals less than 13 + the APL, continue to Ending A in the Conclusion. Otherwise, the counter has reached the required score for Ending B in the Conclusion. If the PCs obtain the required score, they receive the *Favor of Estander the Playwright* and *On Tour!* rewards.

APL 2 (EL 6)

☛ **Nicholar:** Male human Sor4; hp 15; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Troglodyte Zombies (3):** hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual* page 265.

APL 4 (EL 8)

☛ **Nicholar:** Male human Sor6; hp 23; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Shadows (3):** hp 19 each; see *Monster Manual* page 221.

APL 6 (EL 10)

☛ **Nicholar:** Male human Sor8; hp 30; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Wraiths (3):** hp 32 each; see *Monster Manual* page 257.

APL 8 (EL 12)

☛ **Nicholar:** Male human Sor10; hp 38; see *Appendix One*.

☛ **Spectres (3):** hp 45 each; see *Monster Manual* page 232.

APL 10 (EL 14)

👉 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor12; hp 45; see Appendix One.

👉 **Greater Shadows (3):** hp 58 each; see Monster Manual page 221.

APL 12 (EL 16)

👉 **Nicholar:** Male human Sor14; hp 53; see Appendix One.

👉 **Dread Wraiths (3):** hp 104 each; see Monster Manual page 257.

CONCLUSION

ENDING A

Use this ending if the counter (in Encounter 13) totaled less than 13 + the APL.

With a final blow, Nicholar drops to his knees, one arm outstretched, as if clinging to the air above him. The orchestra pit is silent, and the audience watches on breathlessly. The actor takes one last look at you, and whispers a single word: "Upstaged..." He collapses, never to move again.

There is a flurry of movement from the off-stage wings, and a group of actors rush out onto the stage around you. They begin to sing, as if this was all just part of the play:

*"Tell a tale of Bissel strength...
Against great odds, we stand as one...
We take a lashing at the dawn...
And win the fight as day is done..."*

*Though Evard's evil is so strong...
Never forget the other half...
Valiant heroes gave their lives...
And thaaaat's Rhommmstaff!"*

There is a long moment of silence. There are a few confused murmurs from the audience, followed by applause. The entire cast comes to the stage for their curtain call, and they insist that you stay for this moment of triumph, as well. There is a sense of relief from all those assembled.

A few minutes later, you depart the stage, and are met by Estander.

"My friends!" he exclaims. "You've done it! You've broken our streak of bad luck. I knew you would, right from the moment I met you."

One of the cast speaks up. "Your play is a hit, Estander."

"So it would seem..." he shrugs. "It didn't get the reception I had hoped. It needs more flash and flare. Maybe I should take it back to the drawing board."

Estander flashes a grin. "Perhaps I'll leave out the dastardly plot, this time."

"I can't think of how..." Estander trails off, looking at something behind you.

If the PCs saved the Regent from harm, read this text:

You turn, and standing before you is Her Noble Ladyship, Lady Saralind, and her retinue of guards.

"I understand that you've done a great service to the March, today... and as well, a great service to me."

She looks your group over with careful eyes. "I still do not yet understand fully what has taken place. But, rest assured, I always repay my debts." With that, the Regent and her guards turn, and depart.

Estander looks at you with a grin. "What do you know? Not just heroes of the production, but heroes of Bissel..." He chuckles slightly, as a crew member passes him a wine glass. "Well then, my heroes, tonight we drink to honor our success. And we owe that success to you."

With that, cast members uncork bottles of wine, and the celebration begins.

If the PCs did not save the Regent from harm, read this text:

You turn, and standing before you is a page, dressed in the colors of the Barony of the Misty Hills.

"Her Prominence, Lady Imycina, wishes me to inform you that Her Noble Ladyship was seriously injured in the attack this evening, but that she will recover. Of course, there will need to be a full investigation... She will be in contact, very soon." With that, the page turns and departs.

Estander looks at you with a pensive gaze. "Regrettable, that we could not do anything else to prevent this." He shakes his head in dismay. "Well, no sense in dwelling on something we cannot change." A crew member passes him a wine glass. "Well then, my heroes, tonight we drink to honor our success. And we owe that success to you."

With that, cast members uncork bottles of wine, and the celebration begins.

ENDING B

Use this ending if the counter (in Encounter 13) totaled 13 + the APL or more.

With a final blow, Nicholar drops to his knees, one arm outstretched, as if clinging to the air above him. The orchestra pit is silent, and the audience watches on breathlessly. The actor takes one last

look at you, and whispers a single word: "Upstaged..." He collapses, never to move again.

Instantly, great cheers go up from the audience. There is a flurry of movement from the off-stage wings, and a group of actors rush out onto the stage around you. They begin to sing, as if this was all just part of the play:

*"Tell a tale of Bissel strength...
Against great odds, we stand as one...
We take a lashing at the dawn...
And win the fight as day is done..."*

*Though Evard's evil is so strong...
Never forget the other half...
Valiant heroes gave their lives...
And thaaaat's Rhommmstaff!"*

A mere moment later, the theater erupts with activity. Every man, woman, and child in the audience is on their feet, applauding with all their might. The entire cast comes to the stage for their curtain call, but afterwards even they are cheering to you, as the true stars of this show.

A few minutes later, you depart the stage, and are met by Estander.

"Outstanding!" he exclaims. "You've done it! Not only did you uncover the dastardly plot, but you were brilliant on stage!"

One of the cast speaks up. "Your play is a hit, Estander."

"No, no way..." he retorts. "That wasn't my play, out there. I mean, it may have been born as my play, but these paragons of theater gave it life!" He gestures towards you. The rest of the cast nods in agreement.

"I can't think of how..." Estander trails off, looking at something behind you.

If the PCs saved the Regent from harm, read this text:

You turn, and standing before you is Her Noble Ladyship, the Regent Saralind, and her retinue of guards.

"I understand that you've done a great service to the March, today... and as well, a great service to me." She looks your group over with careful eyes. "I still do not yet understand fully what has taken place. But, rest assured, I always repay my debts." With that, the Regent and her guards turn, and depart.

Estander looks at you with a grin. "What do you know? Not just heroes of the production, but heroes of Bissel..." He chuckles slightly. "Well then, my heroes, I have a question to ask you. After seeing you on that stage, tonight, I realize that my vision for 'That's Rhomstaff!' was lacking something. The

adventure, the struggle, the excitement... I only write about them, while you've been there, actually experienced them. I want you... nay, need you, in our production. What do you say?"

As Estander waits for your reply, cast members uncork bottles of wine, and the celebration begins.

If the PCs did not save the Regent from harm, read this text:

You turn, and standing before you is a page, dressed in the colors of the Barony of the Misty Hills.

"Her Prominence, Lady Imycina, wishes me to inform you that Her Noble Ladyship was seriously injured in the attack this evening, but that she will recover. Of course, there will need to be a full investigation... She will be in contact, very soon." With that, the page turns and departs.

Estander looks at you with a pensive gaze. "Regrettable, that we could not do anything else to prevent this." He shakes his head in dismay. "Well, no sense in dwelling on something we cannot change. I have a question to ask you. After seeing you on that stage, tonight, I realize that my vision for 'That's Rhomstaff!' was lacking something. The adventure, the struggle, the excitement... I only write about them, while you've been there, actually experienced them. I want you... nay, need you, in our production. What do you say?"

As Estander waits for your reply, cast members uncork bottles of wine, and the celebration begins.

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 9

Defeat the Kanner Construct

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 12

Survive the sandbag trap

- APL 2: 30 xp.
- APL 4: 90 xp.
- APL 6: 150 xp.
- APL 8: 210 xp.
- APL 10: 270 xp.
- APL 12: 330 xp.

Encounter 13

Defeat Nicholar and his minions

- APL 2: 180 xp.
- APL 4: 240 xp.
- APL 6: 300 xp.
- APL 8: 360 xp.
- APL 10: 420 xp.
- APL 12: 480 xp.

Story Award

Settling the disgruntled crew members in Encounter 7

- All APLs: 20 xp.

Prevent Nicholar from harming the Regent in Encounter 13

- APL 2: 30 xp.
- APL 4: 60 xp.
- APL 6: 90 xp.
- APL 8: 120 xp.
- APL 10: 150 xp.
- APL 12: 180 xp.

Discretionary roleplaying award

- APL 2: 40 xp.
- APL 4: 55 xp.
- APL 6: 70 xp.
- APL 8: 85 xp.
- APL 10: 100 xp.
- APL 12: 115 xp.

Total possible experience

- 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. Because this is a Regional adventure, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 12:

APL 2: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *Quaal's feather token (anchor)* (4 gp), *Quaal's feather token (fan)* (17 gp).

APL 4: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *Quaal's feather token (anchor)* (4 gp), *Quaal's feather token (fan)* (17 gp), *elixir of vision* (21 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *Quaal's feather token (anchor)* (4 gp), *Quaal's feather token (fan)* (17 gp), *elixir of vision* (21 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp), *Quaal's feather token (tree)* (33 gp), *Quaal's feather token (bird)* (25 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *Quaal's feather token (anchor)* (4 gp), *Quaal's feather token (fan)* (17 gp), *elixir of vision* (21 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp), *Quaal's feather token (tree)* (33 gp), *Quaal's feather token (bird)* (25 gp),

Quaal's feather token (swan boat) (38 gp), Quaal's feather token (whip) (42 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Quaal's feather token (anchor) (4 gp), Quaal's feather token (fan) (17 gp), elixir of vision (21 gp), silversheen (21 gp), Quaal's feather token (tree) (33 gp), Quaal's feather token (bird) (25 gp), Quaal's feather token (swan boat) (38 gp), Quaal's feather token (whip) (42 gp), Heward's handy haversack (167 gp), brooch of shielding (125 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Quaal's feather token (anchor) (4 gp), Quaal's feather token (fan) (17 gp), elixir of vision (21 gp), silversheen (21 gp), Quaal's feather token (tree) (33 gp), Quaal's feather token (bird) (25 gp), Quaal's feather token (swan boat) (38 gp), Quaal's feather token (whip) (42 gp), Heward's handy haversack (167 gp), brooch of shielding (125 gp), chime of opening (250 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp).

Encounter 13:

APL 2: L: 25 gp, C: 0 gp, M: bracers of armor +1 (83 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), ring of protection +1 (167 gp), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster) (58 gp).

APL 4: L: 25 gp, C: 0 gp, M: bracers of armor +1 (83 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), ring of protection +1 (167 gp), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster) (58 gp), amulet of natural armor +1 (167 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp).

APL 6: L: 25 gp, C: 0 gp, M: bracers of armor +2 (333 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), ring of protection +1 (167 gp), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster) (58 gp), amulet of natural armor +1 (167 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp).

APL 8: L: 25 gp, C: 0 gp, M: bracers of armor +2 (333 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), ring of protection +1 (167 gp), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster) (58 gp), amulet of natural armor +1 (167 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp), ring of sustenance (208 gp).

APL 10: L: 25 gp, C: 0 gp, M: bracers of armor +3 (750 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), ring of protection +2 (667 gp), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster) (58 gp), amulet of natural armor +1 (167 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp), ring of sustenance (208 gp).

APL 12: L: 25 gp, C: 0 gp, M: bracers of armor +3 (750 gp), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp), ring of protection +2 (667 gp), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster) (58 gp), amulet of natural armor +1 (167 gp), potion of barkskin +2 (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp), cloak of charisma +4 (1,333 gp), ring of sustenance (208 gp).

Conclusion:

All APLs: L: 0 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 25 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 354 gp – Total: 479 gp (450 gp).

APL 4: L: 25 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 588 gp – Total: 713 gp (650 gp).

APL 6: L: 25 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 1,563 gp – Total: 1,688 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 25 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 2,184 gp – Total: 2,309 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 25 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 3,393 gp – Total: 3,518 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 25 gp, C: 100 gp, M: 4,851 gp – Total: 4,976 gp (3,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

☛ **Favor of Estander the Playwright:** This PC has earned the favor of Estander, the author and producer of 'That's Rhomstaff!'. Estander has agreed to sell some of the theater's excess magical gear. You may spend this favor during a Bissel Regional or Sheldomar Valley Metaregional adventure to gain access (Frequency: Adventure) to purchase one, and only one, of the following items (circle the one selected): *hand of the mage*, *hat of disguise*, *lyre of building*, *Nolzur's marvelous pigments*, *ring of invisibility*, *ring of telekinesis*. Mark this favor as USED when spent.

☛ **On Tour!** This PC has helped 'That's Rhomstaff!' become a success and has agreed to tour as part of the production cast. You must immediately spend 6 additional TUs or cross off this reward and lose its benefits. If you do spend time touring, you earn an additional 100 gp (above and beyond the gp cap for your APL) in salary. You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Perform checks made during any adventure set within Bissel due to your fame as a star on the stage.

☛ **Personal Favor of the Regent:** You have saved the life of Her Noble Ladyship, the Regent Saralind, and she always repays her debts in full. You may retain this favor for some future use or spend it (marking it as USED) during any Bissel Regional or Sheldomar Valley Metaregional adventure to gain one, and only one, of the following benefits (circle the one chosen):

- You may have one *raise dead* spell cast on your behalf at the Temple of Heironeous in Pellak at a cost of 4,000 gp and 2 TUs.
- You may request the assistance of the Mist Chameleons, the spy network loyal to the rulers of Bissel. You may inquire about one subject of interest. Information about this subject is discretely delivered to you 12 hours later. In all other regards, this is similar to the use of a *legend lore* spell. Results are at the discretion of the DM.

☛ **Commendation from the Mist Chameleons:** This PC, a member of the Mist Chameleons metaorganization, has done an exemplary job of protection the Regent from harm. This PC's superiors have noticed. This adventure may be counted as one TU towards the yearly TU cost for the Mist Chameleons metaorganization.

Item Access

APL 2:

- *Arcane Scroll of Phantasmal Killer* (7th level caster; Adventure; DMG)
- *Quaal's Feather Token - Anchor* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Quaal's Feather Token - Fan* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Elixir of Vision* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Silversheen* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 6 (all of APLs 2, 4 plus the following):

- *Bracers of Armor +2* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Quaal's Feather Token - Bird* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Quaal's Feather Token - Tree* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Ring of Mind Shielding* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6 plus the following):

- *Quaal's Feather Token - Swan Boat* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Quaal's Feather Token - Whip* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Ring of Sustenance* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 10 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6, 8 plus the following):

- *Bracers of Armor +3* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Brooch of Shielding* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Heward's Handy Haversack* (Adventure; DMG)

- *Ring of Protection +2* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 plus the following):

- *Chime of Opening* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Cloak of Charisma +4* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Golembane Scarab* (Adventure; DMG)

APPENDIX 1 – MONSTER AND NPC STATISTICS

APL 2

ENCOUNTER 9

Kanner Prop: CR 5; Huge Construct; HD 8d10+40; hp 90; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. fly 10 ft. (Clumsy); AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Grp +18; Atk +8 melee (1d8+6, slam); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+6, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Eye fire; SQ Construct traits, hardness 5; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -3; Str 18, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Eye Fire (Ex): The Kanner Prop can project a 10-foot cone of fire from its eyes once every 2d4 rounds. Damage 1d6 fire, Reflex DC 14 half. The save DC is Con-based.

ENCOUNTER 13

Nicholar: Male human Sor4; CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d4+4; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Perform (act) +6, Perform (dance) +6, Spellcraft +7; Combat Casting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/4; save DC 13 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, light, mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – cause fear, mage armor, magic missile; 2nd – scorching ray.

Possessions: masterwork dagger, bracers of armor +1, potion of cure moderate wounds, ~~potion of nondetection~~, ring of protection +1, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster), ~~arcane scroll of dominate person (9th level caster).~~

APL 4

ENCOUNTER 9

Kanner Prop: CR 7; Huge Construct; HD 16d10+40; hp 150; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. fly 10 ft. (Clumsy); AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +12; Grp +26; Atk +16 melee (2d6+9, slam); Full Atk +16 melee (2d6+9, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Trample, eye fire; SQ Construct traits, hardness 5; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 22, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Eye Fire (Ex): The Kanner Prop can project a 10-foot cone of fire from its eyes once every 2d4 rounds. Damage 2d6 fire, Reflex DC 18 half. The save DC is Con-based.

ENCOUNTER 13

Nicholar: Male human Sor6; CR 6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d4+6; hp 23; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Concentration +10, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Perform (act) +7, Perform (dance) +6, Spellcraft +9; Combat Casting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/6/4; save DC 13 + spell level, 14 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0 – detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – cause fear, disguise self, mage armor, magic missile; 2nd – invisibility, scorching ray; 3rd – lightning bolt.

Possessions: masterwork dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +1, potion of barkskin +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, ~~potion of nondetection~~, ring of protection +1, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster), ~~arcane scroll of dominate person (9th level caster).~~

ENCOUNTER 9

Kanner Prop: CR 9; Huge Construct; HD 24d10+40; hp 210; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. fly 10 ft. (Clumsy); AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +18; Grp +32; Atk +24 melee (2d6+12, slam); Full Atk +24 melee (2d6+12, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Trample, eye fire; SQ Construct traits, hardness 10; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 26, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Trample (Ex): The Kanner Prop can trample creatures of Medium size or smaller, dealing damage equal to its slam damage +1-1/2 times its Strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the Kanner Construct can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier) to halve the damage. Damage for this attack is 2d6+12, and the save DC is 30.

Eye Fire (Ex): The Kanner Prop can project a 10-foot cone of fire from its eyes once every 2d4 rounds. Damage 3d6 fire, Reflex DC 22 half. The save DC is Con-based.

ENCOUNTER 13

Nicholar: Male human Sor8; CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d4+8; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15, Concentration +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Perform (act) +9, Perform (dance) +7, Spellcraft +11; Combat Casting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/7/6/4; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0 – acid splash, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – cause fear, color spray, disguise self, mage armor, magic missile; 2nd – ghoul touch, invisibility, scorching ray; 3rd – lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion; 4th – phantasmal killer.

Possessions: masterwork dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +2, potion of barkskin +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +1, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster), ~~arcane scroll of dominate person (9th level caster).~~

ENCOUNTER 9

Kanner Prop: CR 11; Huge Construct; HD 32d10+40; hp 270; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. fly 10 ft. (Clumsy); AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +24; Grp +42; Atk +32 melee (2d6+15, slam); Full Atk +32 melee (2d6+15, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Trample, eye fire; SQ Construct traits, hardness 10; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 30, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Trample (Ex): The Kanner Prop can trample creatures of Medium size or smaller, dealing damage equal to its slam damage +1-1/2 times its Strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the Kanner Construct can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier) to halve the damage. Damage for this attack is 2d6+15, and the save DC is 36.

Eye Fire (Ex): The Kanner Prop can project a 10-foot cone of fire from its eyes once every 2d4 rounds. Damage 4d6 fire, Reflex DC 26 half. The save DC is Con-based.

ENCOUNTER 13

Nicholar: Male human Sor10; CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d4+10; hp 38; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +18, Concentration +14, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Perform (act) +11, Perform (dance) +8, Spellcraft +13; Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/7/7/6/4; save DC 15 + spell level, 17 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0 – acid splash, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – cause fear, color spray, disguise self, mage armor, magic missile; 2nd – false life, ghoul touch, invisibility, scorching ray; 3rd – dispel magic, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion; 4th – Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer; 5th – hold monster.

Possessions: masterwork dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +2, cloak of charisma +2, potion of barkskin +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +1, ring of sustenance, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster), ~~arcane scroll of dominate person (9th level caster).~~

ENCOUNTER 9

Kanner Prop: CR 13; Huge Construct; HD 40d10+40; hp 330; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. fly 10 ft. (Clumsy); AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +30; Grp +50; Atk +40 melee (2d6+18, slam); Full Atk +40 melee (2d6+18, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Trample, eye fire; SQ Construct traits, hardness 10; AL N; SV Fort +14, Ref +13, Will +9; Str 34, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Trample (Ex): The Kanner Prop can trample creatures of Medium size or smaller, dealing damage equal to its slam damage +1-1/2 times its Strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the Kanner Construct can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier) to halve the damage. Damage for this attack is 2d6+18, and the save DC is 42.

Eye Fire (Ex): The Kanner Prop can project a 10-foot cone of fire from its eyes once every 2d4 rounds. Damage 5d6 fire, Reflex DC 30 half. The save DC is Con-based.

ENCOUNTER 13

Nicholar: Male human Sor12; CR 12; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d4+12; hp 45; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Concentration +16, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Perform (act) +12, Perform (dance) +8, Spellcraft +15; Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/7/7/7/6/3; save DC 15 + spell level, 17 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0 – acid splash, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – cause fear, color spray, disguise self, mage armor, magic missile; 2nd – false life, ghoul touch, invisibility, mirror image, scorching ray; 3rd – blink, dispel magic, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion; 4th – dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer; 5th – hold monster, telekinesis; 6th – disintegrate.

Possessions: masterwork dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +3, cloak of charisma +2, potion of barkskin +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +2, ring of sustenance, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster), ~~arcane scroll of dominate person (9th level caster).~~

ENCOUNTER 9

Kanner Prop: CR 15; Huge Construct; HD 48d10+40; hp 390; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. fly 10 ft. (Clumsy); AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +36; Grp +58; Atk +48 melee (2d6+21, slam); Full Atk +48 melee (2d6+21, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Trample, eye fire; SQ Construct traits, hardness 15; AL N; SV Fort +16, Ref +15, Will +11; Str 38, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Trample (Ex): The Kanner Prop can trample creatures of Medium size or smaller, dealing damage equal to its slam damage +1-1/2 times its Strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the Kanner Construct can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + creature's Str modifier) to halve the damage. Damage for this attack is 2d6+21, and the save DC is 48.

Eye Fire (Ex): The Kanner Prop can project a 10-foot cone of fire from its eyes once every 2d4 rounds. Damage 6d6 fire, Reflex DC 34 half. The save DC is Con-based.

ENCOUNTER 13

Nicholar: Male human Sor14; CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 14d4+14; hp 53; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7/+2; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA -; SQ -; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 23.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +23, Concentration +18, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Perform (act) +14, Perform (dance) +9, Spellcraft +17; Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/8/7/7/7/6/3; save DC 16 + spell level, 18 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0 – acid splash, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – cause fear, color spray, disguise self, mage armor, magic missile; 2nd – false life, ghoul touch, invisibility, mirror image, scorching ray; 3rd – blink, dispel magic, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion; 4th – dimension door, enervation, Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer; 5th – dominate person, hold monster, telekinesis; 6th – disintegrate, globe of invulnerability; 7th – finger of death.

Possessions: masterwork dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +3, cloak of charisma +4, potion of barkskin +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +2, ring of sustenance, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (7th level caster), ~~arcane scroll of dominate person (9th level caster).~~

DM AID – THE PELLAK GRAND THEATER

The Pellak Grand Theater, when completed, will be the finest theater in the March of Bissel.

Please refer to DM Aid – Map #1 – Map of the Pellak Grand Theater.

A) North Facade

This side of the building is nondescript, looking like any one of the nearby warehouses. This side does not bare any markings or signs to indicate the buildings purpose.

B) Backstage Foyer

This entrance bustles with activity. Cast and crew members enter and leave the building here, and deliveries are often received here during the day.

C) Backstage

This large chamber is constantly full will cast and crew coming and going. The floor and walls are noticeably plain and unadorned.

D) Stage

This is where the musical is intended to be performed. A huge red velvet curtain spans the south end of this room, separating the stage from the audience. Bolted to the adjacent walls are tall ladders that go up to a maze of catwalks, fifty feet above the stage floor.

During performances, a heavy black curtain (indicated on the map by a dotted line) is lowered from above, separating the stage area into two distinct sections. The section containing the doors to backstage is often referred to as the “wings”, and it provides a buffer between the stage and the noise of backstage.

E) Orchestra Pit

This shallow pit is where the orchestra is located, during a performance.

F) Common Seats

These rows of seats make up the majority of the audience. Priced for the average citizen, they cost a silver piece per ticket.

G) Balconies

These private balconies are reserved for the wealthy and prestigious members of the audience. The balconies farthest from the stage cost ten gold pieces to reserve, while the closest ones cost ten times that amount.

H) Main Entry

Here is where patrons enter the theater. The marble floor is inlaid with a mosaic of the March of Bissel crest. Tapestries depict various scenes of the muses dancing

and playing. Small booths by the door sell tickets for the common seats.

I) South Facade

This side of the building is lavish, built from fine white marble, accented with dark grey granite.

During performances, the area before the front of the building is lit by ornamental continual flame torches with deep red flames. An observant patron might notice that the color scheme of the theater facade and torches is the same as the colors in the March of Bissel crest. This was intended by its designers.

J) Balcony Hallways

These passages lead from the main entry to the balconies. They are decorated similarly to the main entry. Tapestries hang from the outside walls.

If the tapestries are lifted, one can find locked service doors that lead to Area K.

K) Concealed Doors

These passageways lead to the various offices and dressing rooms of the theater.

One wall of each passageway contains three service doors that lead to Area J. From this side, these doors are plainly visible, and do not require a key to open.

L) Producer's Office

A sign on this office indicates that it is currently occupied by Estander, the writer and producer of the musical. It contains a desk, several chairs, and a small folding cot (Estander sometimes stays here after long nights). Script drafts and theater diagrams can be found in piles on the desk and floor.

M) Lead Stage Manager's Office

A sign on this office indicates that it is currently occupied by Barton, the Lead Stage Manager. However, the room is essentially empty (except for dust). Barton spends all of his work time around the stage and backstage areas, and never uses the office he was provided.

N) Prop Manager's Office

A sign on this office indicates that it is currently occupied by Jamin, the Prop Manager. It contains a desk and chairs, and several crates full of design specifications and schematics. The desk is covered in correspondence between Jamin and her prop manufacturers.

O) Wardrobe Manager's Office

A sign on this office indicates that it is currently occupied by Gregan, the Lead Stage Manager. Unlike the other offices, it is well decorated. A throw rug adorns the floor, there are several paintings on the wall, and each corner sports a potted plant.

P) Dressing Rooms

Sign on each of the doors to these rooms indicate that they are dressing rooms belonging to some significant actor within the production. Each contains an armoire, a small desk and mirror, and a comfortable chair.

Q) Lead Actor's Dressing Room

This does not appear any different than the other dressing rooms, other than being slightly larger. There is nothing of interest here until Encounter 13.

R) Lavatories

These lavatories serve the needs of both cast and crew.

S) Wardrobe Storage

These storage rooms house the thousands of costumes (and replacements) needed for the musical.

T) Burnt Wardrobe Storage

This room contained costumes, until it was struck by a fire. It is detailed in Encounter 4.

U) Scenery Storage

This large storage room contains the dozens of large illusory scenery panels used in the musical. It is detailed in Encounter 3.

V) Prop Storage

These storage rooms contain all of the miscellaneous props needed for the musical. They are meticulously sorted and arranged.

W) Makeup Rooms

These rooms contain rows of makeup tables and mirrors, but otherwise, little of interest. Cast members come here to have their makeup applied before and during a show.

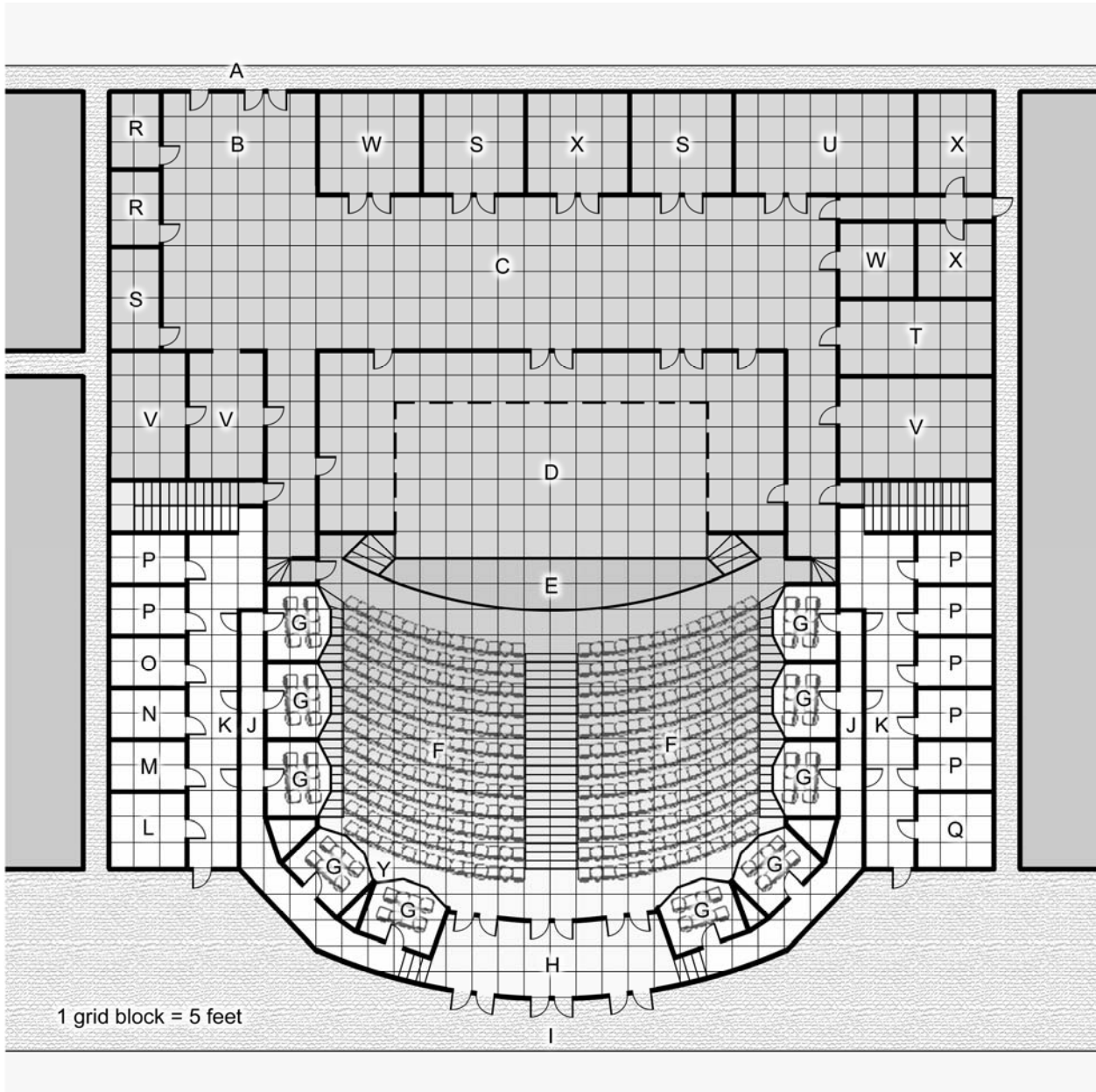
X) Miscellaneous Storage

These storage rooms have not been assigned a purpose for this production. However, at any given point one can find a number of crates and pallets here, awaiting more permanent storage elsewhere.

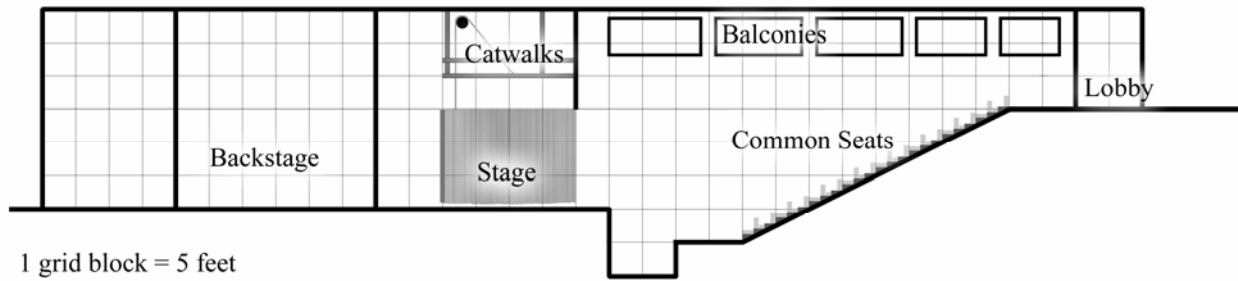
Y) Tainted Air Vent

This wall contains one of the many large ventilation ducts that provides the audience with fresh air. This one is the subject of Encounter 8.

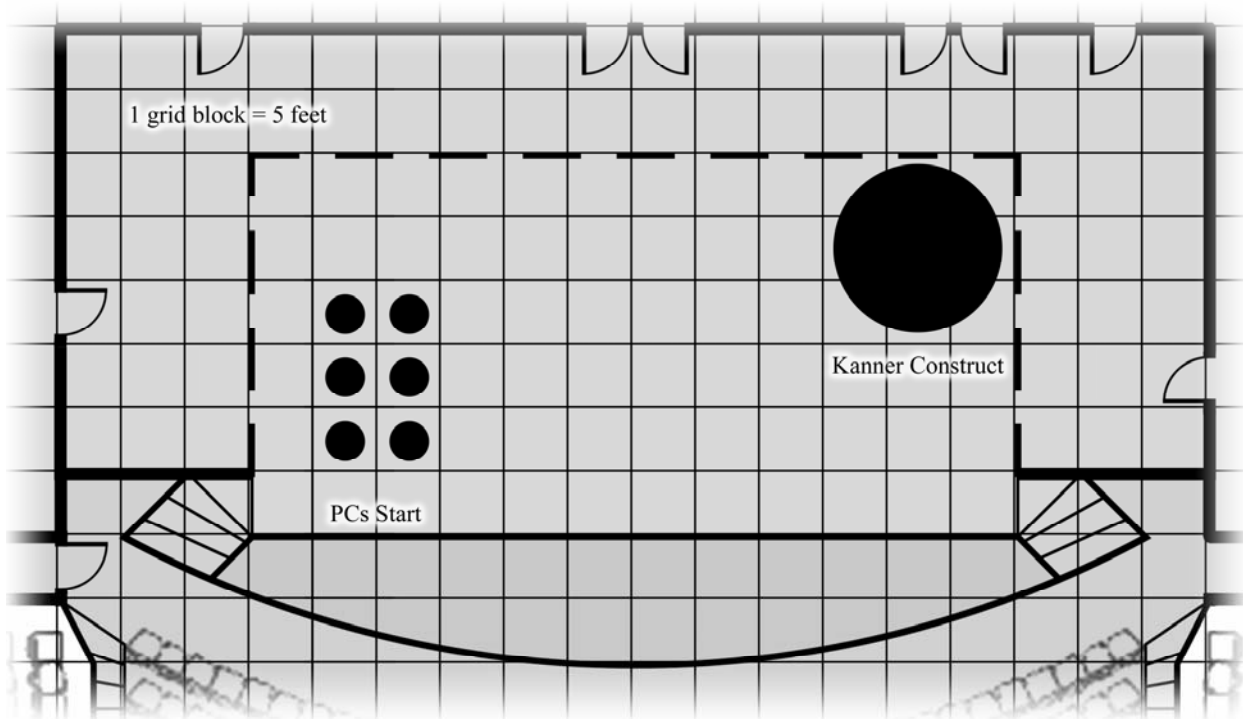
DM AID – MAP #1 – THE PELLAK GRAND THEATER



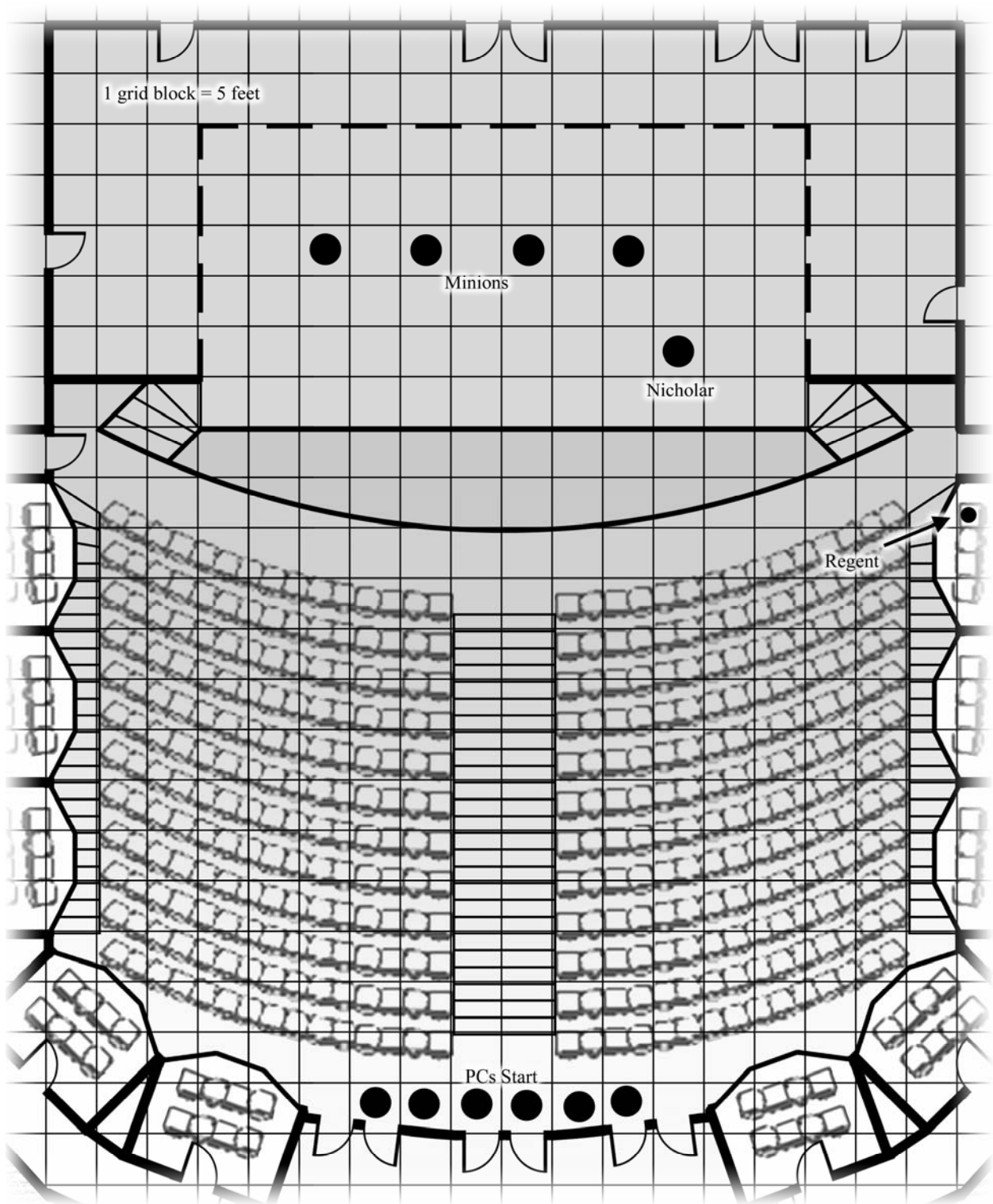
DM AID – MAP #2 – THEATER SIDE VIEW



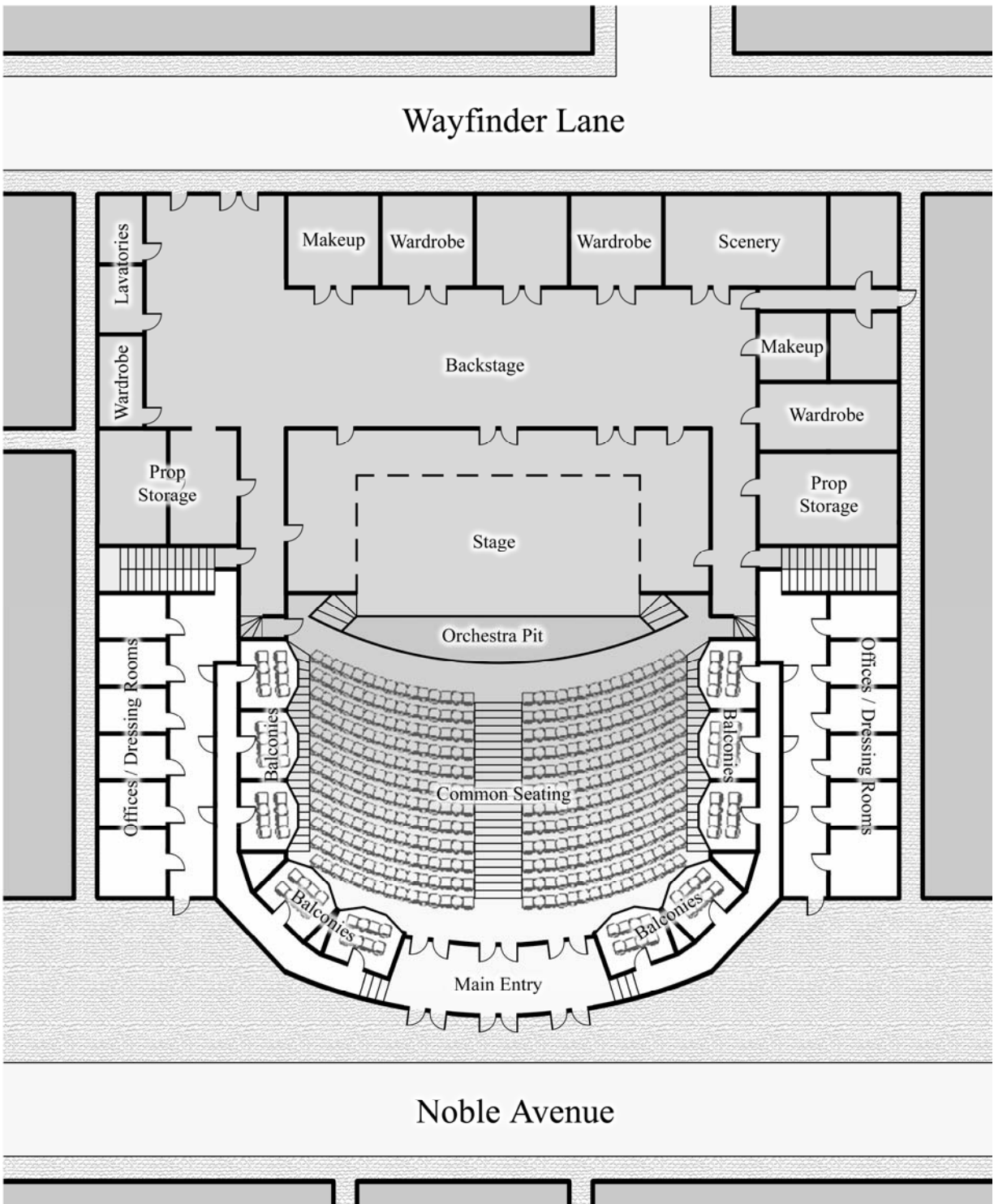
DM AID – MAP #3 – ENCOUNTER 9 COMBAT



DM AID – MAP #4 – ENCOUNTER 13 COMBAT



PLAYER HANDOUT #1 –THE PELLAK GRAND THEATER MAP



PLAYER HANDOUT #2 – THE NOTE FROM ESTANDER

My most esteemed colleagues:

It has come to my attention that, during the night, two more incidents have been discovered. Understand that I hold you at no fault - I could not expect you to jump right in to the situation, and immediately solve all of our problems.

I ask that you please include these two locations in your investigations.

First, something has occurred with part of the lighting system. I've been told that one of its parts fell to the stage below, and was destroyed.

Second, several crew members have reported a foul odor near the rear of the common seating. I've dispatched someone from the maintenance crew to take a look, but I'd feel much better if you did, as well.

Please let me know if you learn anything of substance.

Regards,
Estander

PLAYER HANDOUT #3 – THE NOTE FROM LADY SARALIND

Dear Estander:

Word has gotten to me of the patriotic work you have been doing, in the guise of theater. As well, I have heard of the troubles you have faced.

Current events have certainly cast a depressing spell over the minds of our people. However, the worse it has gotten, the brighter by contrast have shined our heroes. I am of the mind that our people would be better spending their energies focusing on the valiant deeds of these beacons, rather than the darkness around them. Your work is a laudable step in that direction.

I understand that the families that had initially promised funding have reneged on the arrangement. I have made plans with high priestess Sorollane, of the church of Zidhus. Between our personal pecuniary assets, you will have everything you need to finish your work.

In return, I ask but a single request. I wish to attend the opening night performance, to see the fruits of your labors. I would appreciate it greatly if a balcony were reserved for my use.

May the Archpaladin bless and strengthen your endeavors.

Viscountess Saralind Markavan

Regent of the March of Bissel

PLAYER HANDOUT #4 – EXCERPTS FROM NICHOLAR'S JOURNAL

An entry, dated about fifteen weeks ago:

Ahh, a wonderful day! Today I was formally offered the role of lead actor in that new play in Pellak. Not that I doubted for a moment that I would receive it.

An entry, dated about fourteen weeks ago:

Having looked over the entire script, I must say I am surprised. I've played villains before ... masterfully. But this Evard is a different sort. Like any professional, I will research the role before attempting to take it on. Tomorrow I leave for Rhomstaff, once the barony controlled by the man I shall portray.

An entry, dated about twelve weeks ago:

Yes, I will obey. I must obey. I never realized how wrong I... Yes, I will obey. I can feel them in my mind. They are teaching me to be powerful. His minions are making me stronger. But they are watching me. Commanding me. Cause chaos in the March of Bissel? How do I do that? I must think on this...

An entry, dated about nine weeks ago:

I have it! And just in time, for it appears my education is complete what is more important to the people of Bissel than their theater? It is so obvious! I shall return to Pellak and the production, and I shall make the people suffer by keeping them from ever seeing the musical reach the stage. My masters will be pleased, I just know it!

An entry, dated five days ago:

It seems my mischief has finally struck a chord. I have heard that Estander has hired outsiders to investigate our 'bad luck'. I wonder what triggered this response. Surely not the fire? Potentially damaging, yes, but how was I supposed to know the blasted costumes would be missing? It must have been the scenery. Yes, that must have been expensive.

An entry, dated three days ago:

These newcomers may as yet pose a problem. I think my biggest handicap, however, is the bumbling idiot I chose to enslave. First, he pours the unguent I gave him too close to the vent mouth, so it is obvious. Then, he knocks one of the stage lights loose while rigging it. Good help is so hard to find.

No matter. I have something a bit bigger in mind, for today.

An entry, dated two days ago. The handwriting is noticeably shaky, as if the writer was excited:

A new opportunity has presented itself. Through it, I can better fulfill my mission. As well, pursuing it means that I will no longer seek to harm the production. All the better for my interests.

The most recent entry, dated today:

The time has finally arrived. Tonight, my genius will be recognized twice. I will command the stage, and prove myself to be the strongest actor to ever seize the spotlight. And I will fulfill the mission I have been questing after for nearly two months. I will slay the Regent of Bissel.

CRITICAL EVENT SUMMARY – *BIS5-01 THAT'S RHOMSTAFF!*

1) Did the PCs defeat Nicholar?

2) Was the Regent injured in the final combat?

3) Did the cast get a standing ovation on opening night?

4) If so, did any of the PCs accept the invitation to tour with the production? How many accepted?

If you run this adventure in February or March 2005, please e-mail the results from this critical event summary to a member of the Bissel Triad by April 1, 2005, or have your Senior Gamemaster do so.