

SHLI-09

LORD TORKEEP'S REQUEST

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Shield Lands Regional Adventure

Version 1

by Rick LaRue

Your small group of Pathfinders has been ordered to scout near Torkeep in preparations for a possible offensive against Iuz. The first stop is the Ritensa Outpost along the northern border, but before you can continue, you receive a summons from Lord Torkeep. It seems he has an important request... An adventure for characters level 2-8.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

PREPARATION

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

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

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

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rule books during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a Living™ adventure, it is expected that players will bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, a character sheet, and a LIVING GREYHAWK log sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

LIVING GREYHAWK TIER STRUCTURE

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK campaigns, this adventure is tiered. Basically, the challenges in this adventure are proportioned to the average character level of the characters participating in the adventure. To determine the tier that you will use to run this adventure, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any cohorts or animals according to the values on their certificates. Cross-reference the total and the number of players participating in the game using the chart below to determine the tier used for this adventure.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 th
T4:	33-42	36-46	39-50	42-54	10 th

The level cap indicated is the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Note: These costs are slightly higher than average for Living Greyhawk events. This is intended to simulate the effects of the Shield Lands' serious overpopulation problem on the local economy.

Lifestyle	Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	17 sp	-2
Poor	5 gp	-1
Common	15 gp	0
High	300 gp	+1
Luxury	600 gp	+2

BACKGROUND

Since the reclamation of Critwall the Shield Lands have been able to recover and control an area of about thirty miles outside the city. To the north and east, a strong series of forts have been created along the border to protect the reclaimed lands. The northern most fort, the Ritensa Outpost, sits on a hill along the Ritensa River and occupies a small part of the lands belonging to the Baron of Torkeep.

Since the fort was built, Lord Torkeep has spent a great deal of time at the fort due to its location. He has made no secret of his displeasure that the Shield Lands have halted their progress mere inches from his ancestral home, Torkeep.

When Torkeep fell to Iuz, nearly seven years ago, it was assumed that Iuz's minions killed any who failed to

escape. Recently, Lord Torkeep has learned that there may yet be survivors. Divinations performed by his chief advisor suggest that as many as six Shield Landers are still alive and being held prisoner within the keep. Resigned to the fact that it will be more than a year (and most likely far longer) before a plan to retake Torkeep is considered, Lord Torkeep hopes to mount his own rescue mission.

Surprisingly, Lord Torkeep's information is indeed accurate. When Torkeep fell, nine people were taken captive and kept alive as slaves. Over the years, most of them died or were killed, but four still live. One, an old scribe named Engern was captured when he foolishly tried to retrieve a scroll he thought might help his comrades escape.

Weeks before the fall of the keep, Lord Torkeep had asked the scribe to research some bit of Heironean dogma and had a large group of scrolls brought from Torkeep Abbey. During his research, Engern discovered an old scroll containing a divine spell of summoning. The scroll had been mistakenly included with the others. The scribe gave little thought to the scroll at the time and set it aside to be returned with the other papers when he finished his task.

Weeks later, when the battle turned abruptly against the Shield Lands, the keep was rapidly evacuated. The inhabitants had little time to gather their belongings and flee. Engern remembered the scroll and afraid of what might happen if it fell into Iuz's hands and hoping instead to give it to Lord Torkeep, the scribe hurried back to his office to retrieve it. Old and slow, Engern never made it out in time.

Before his capture, Engern hid the scroll in the great hall of Torkeep, where it stayed until only a few weeks ago. For six years the scribe, now a slave of the keep's new occupants, tried to recover the scroll. Having a small amount of religious training, Engern hoped to use the scroll to rescue himself and the others. When his opportunity finally came, he attempted to cast the spell from scroll to summon a powerful celestial creature. Sadly, he bungled the spell, causing it to be cast with unexpected side effects. Engern knew he had done something wrong, but when the Avoral appeared, he ordered it to protect him and the other prisoners. That was the last chance he had to communicate in any meaningful way with the creature.

The avoral followed Engern's instructions and began systematically killing anything that might threaten the old scribe or his fellow prisoners. Iuz's followers fought back, but were no match for the powerful celestial guardian. Within a few hours, the avoral had killed every evil creature in the keep's main building. The rest had retreated to other parts of the keep where they still hide today.

As the slaughter continued well beyond the normal duration of the spell, Engern realized that something had gone wrong. When the avoral finished his grim chore, it returned to the great hall and began hovering about four feet off the ground. It ignored all attempts to communicate and refused to let any of the prisoners leave the keep. When they tried, it would appear and herd

them back inside, careful to keep them safe. A few times, the remaining followers of Iuz tried to reenter the main building to find food only to be killed by the creature.

Now, the Shield Landers are still prisoners, but with a different captor. They are safe from harm by Iuz's hordes (for the time being), but food is running short and reinforcements are sure to come eventually. It is unlikely the avoral can withstand a concerted effort to destroy it.

Mysteriously, the avoral is protected by powerful spells of non-detection, which prevent scrying within one thousand feet of him. This has made further divinations of the keep by Lord Torkeep's mage impossible since the avoral's arrival.

Luckily, Lady Katarina has ordered scouts to be sent to both Gensal, South Keep and Torkeep to assess the enemy's forces. One set of scouts (i.e., the PCs) are being sent to re-supply at the Ritensa Outpost (the border fort nearest Torkeep) before crossing the border. Seizing the opportunity, Lord Torkeep made plans to meet with the scouts when they arrive. He has one simple request. Rescue the prisoners of Torkeep and bring them home.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

As Pathfinders, the characters are ordered to scout the area around Torkeep and report back to Critwall on garrison strengths and troop movements of Iuz's forces. The first stop on their journey is the Ritensa Outpost along the border.

While there, Lord Torkeep requests an audience and explains that through various means he has determined there are survivors being held prisoner in Torkeep. He knows the Council of Lords would never agree to send a rescue party, so he asks the PCs to attempt a rescue while they scout out the area. Once they agree, he gives them directions to a secret entrance and description of the general layout of the keep.

The PCs travel across the border and encounter a very large (200+) enemy force moving slowly towards Torkeep. Realizing they must move quickly, the PCs make a run for the keep.

The next day, the PCs run across a scouting party from the main force they spotted the day before. Unmounted, the PCs avoid the scouts and continue their journey.

Once there, they find the secret entrance and navigate through the dangerous tunnels beneath the keep. Getting inside proves difficult, but not impossible and the PCs end up in a storage cellar below the kitchens.

They find the keep deserted until one of the PCs spots a figure darting out of sight down a darkened hallway. The figure is easy to catch (he's an old man) and they discover that he is one of the prisoners being held in the keep. He quickly brings the PCs up to date and tells them that he used a scroll to summon a celestial creature to try and help him and the other prisoners escape, but something went wrong. At first the creature did as it was told, but later after it had stayed long after the spell should have worn off, it stopped listening to the old man

and took up residence in the keep's great hall. Since then it has not let them leave. The old man warns the PCs that if they stay too long the creature will come after them and kill them.

After grilling the old man for information, the PCs decide to head to Torkeep Abbey, where the summoning scroll came from, to look for a way to send the creature back from where it came. The old man shows the PCs a quick way out through the keep's postern gate and they avoid the remaining hobgoblin guards on the way out.

Once the PCs reach Torkeep Abby, they are attacked by a band of gargoyles that have taken up residence in the abandoned abbey. A quick search of the ruined abbey leads the PCs into the catacombs below.

The catacombs are extensive and full of interned bodies. One passage leads away from the dead and down a long tunnel. The PCs avoid traps designed to keep the unfaithful out of the library beyond.

In the library the PCs find an old and quite mad hermit and an extensive collection of Holy Scripture and religious writings sacred to Heironeous. They also find a scroll of banishment (the companion scroll to the one the old man used).

The PCs return to the keep, sneak back inside and confront the creature armed with the scroll. After a tense, but short battle, the creature is returned to his home plane. Before it goes it gives the PCs a cryptic warning that a portal is now unguarded.

Unfortunately, the remaining hobgoblin and ogre guards have been alerted to the PCs mission and decide to try and reclaim the keep now that the PCs have banished the Avoral and are weakened from the battle.

The PCs fight the guards and then have a short amount of time to search the keep. Up stairs in the Lord's quarters they find a pile of important documents describing important strategic information on Iuz's troops in the occupied lands.

The PCs finish their search just in time to avoid Iuz's forces approaching the keep, the PCs and the former prisoners escape the keep and return to the Ritensa Outpost.

INTRODUCTION: THE REQUEST

Your unit of Pathfinders has been ordered on a dangerous scouting mission behind enemy lines. You are to scout the area surrounding Torkeep and report back your findings. Your first stop along the way is the Ritensa Outpost where you will briefly rest and re-supply before crossing the border.

The trip from Critwall to the Ritensa Outpost was uneventful and you arrived in mid-afternoon. You have a few hours to check in, get the lay of the land and find some barracks before getting a bite to eat. Just before sundown, a young officer surprises you with orders to meet with Lord Torkeep on the lookout tower in ten minutes.

Lord Torkeep is waiting for you when you finish the long, hurried climb to the top. He is a tall man in his late forties with

short dark hair and dark eyes. He stands with an easy confidence that inspires respect without assuming it. His clothing and armor mark him as a noble and a knight of Holy Shielding. You have all heard the tales of how Lord Torkeep and his companions recovered the Crook of Rao; an artifact used by Canon Hazen of Veluna to banish the fiends from the Flanaess.

Lord Torkeep is alone except for a few guards on watch duty. After introductions, Torkeep explains that he has heard good things about you and he believes you can help him. Pointing to the distant horizon to the north, Lord Torkeep says "I can almost see my keep from here... it's just over that rise." The keep is a bit farther than that, but to Torkeep it seems mere inches away, yet still beyond his reach. You can sense his deep frustration. He goes on explaining that he feels the time is ripe to attack, but the Council of Lords and Lady Katarina disagree. He is very careful to never directly speak poorly of the Council or Lady Katarina, but his displeasure is obvious.

He continues: "If waiting wasn't bad enough, I've recently learned that there are survivors being held prisoner in the keep." After mentioning this, a cloud of guilt washes over his face and he becomes very serious. "I would never have left the keep if I knew I was leaving anyone behind." It seems more like an attempt to convince himself than anyone else. He quickly regains composure and says "Since I'm not able to move against Iuz yet, I want you to divert from your scouting mission long enough to sneak inside Torkeep and rescue the prisoners. Will you help me?"

At this point the players have a chance to discuss things and ask questions. When the PCs accept, give them Player's Handout #1. Lord Torkeep has the following information:

- A secret entrance into the keep exists. Directions to it and instructions on how to use it (including its location, a key and a password) will be given to the PCs if they agree to go on the mission.
- There are no more than six survivors at the keep.
- They are scattered around the keep during the day, but sleep in the same area at night.
- The keep is mostly occupied by hobgoblins, but there are human servants of Iuz (probably priests) and a few ogres and other humanoid monsters.
- There may be a demon or other outsider.
- Scrying, the primary source of his information, has failed within the last few days. The cause or consequences of this are unknown. It began right after the outsider was first detected.
- There is no payment. As Pathfinders, it is the PCs' duty to serve the Shield Lands, but Lord Torkeep reminds them that he could not forget such outstanding service. (He doesn't tell them, but he will give each 50gp upon their return if they succeed.)
- The PCs must agree to compete secrecy regarding the mission.

- No one will come to rescue them if they fail or are captured.
- Their primary goal is to scout the keep and rescue the prisoners, not fight Iuz's forces. They are not to engage the enemy unless they have no other choice.

If they don't make it back, Lord Torkeep will send another scouting party to complete their original mission.

If the PCs refuse to help Lord Torkeep, he thanks them for coming and allows them to leave. Run Encounter One to play out the scouting mission and then the adventure is over.

ENCOUNTER 1: OVERWHELMING FORCE

After your meeting with Lord Torkeep, you have a few hours to sleep and gather supplies. Lord Torkeep wants you to leave as soon as possible. He told you that how and when you travel after you cross the border is up to you, but taking horses is probably a bad idea. From looking at the maps, you know that if you push yourselves, you can make the keep on foot in about two days.

The DM should play up the tension of crossing the border and make the PCs feel like they're being watched or walking into a trap.

Your trip across the border begins with an increasing feeling of being watched. The landscape takes on a dark, surreal aspect that you aren't sure is genuine or a figment of your imagination. Before long, the normal sounds of nature disappear, replaced by an odd silence broken occasionally by distant howls and abruptly ending cries. The land seems devoid of life and the longer you travel, the more isolated you feel.

The unease you feel continues to haunt your trip throughout the day. Just before sundown on the first day you hear a great deal of noise off in the distance. It sounds like a large number of soldiers marching and chanting something in a harsh language.

If the PCs move up to see what's going on, read the following:

As you quietly move up and take up positions in a small stand of trees, you see a very large, slow moving force of hobgoblins and ogres carrying several large banners bearing Iuz's symbol. In all there are easily more than two hundred humanoid soldiers in the column. There are other figures moving amongst the humanoids, most likely priests and other servants of Iuz, including a few giants. They are following the road towards Torkeep and you estimate they will reach the keep only a day or so after you.

This group of Iuz's minions has been sent to investigate why Torkeep has not reported in over a week.

This is not intended as a combat encounter since fighting them is pretty much suicide. This should be obvious to the PCs from the size of the force. If the PCs

want to attack, let them and show NO mercy. From this, the PCs should realize that time is of the essence.

On the second day (or the second half of the first day if the PCs are mounted), the PCs will run into a mounted scouting party from the main force.

If the PCs are on foot, they have time to hide before being spotted. Read the following:

After a few hours of travel, you hear the steady hoof beats of approaching riders. You think they are far enough away that they haven't seen you yet. If you move into hiding now, you might avoid them altogether.

If the PCs move into hiding, read the following:

From your hiding places, you can see six hobgoblins mounted on light warhorses. They seem to be a scouting party from the main force you spotted yesterday. Their pace is steady as they scan the area. One looks directly in your direction, but doesn't seem to spot you. After a few tense moments they've passed you by and continue on their way.

If they PCs are mounted, read this:

After a few hours of travel, you hear the steady hoof beats of approaching riders. From atop your mounts you can see six mounted humanoids rein in their mounts and stop about 400 feet to the west. They have spotted your group as well and seem to be trying to decide what to do.

Give the PCs one round to decide how to respond and then read the following:

The scouts turn their mounts back the way they came and spur them to a gallop.

If the PCs decide to face the scouts (regardless of being mounted or not) use the following stats.

ALL TIERS (EL 5)

👤 **Hobgoblin** (6): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

🐎 **Horse, Light War** (6): hp 22 each; see *Monster Manual* page 197.

Tactics: The scouts will not willingly face the PCs. Their orders are to scout the area and report back immediately if they see anything unusual. If the PCs force a fight, five hobgoblins will stay and fight and one will return to the main force.

Treasure: The hobgoblins have a total of 47 sp and 28 gp. The coins consist of knights (gold) and shields (silver) minted in the Shield Lands.

Development: If even one escapes after spotting the PCs, the main force will be alerted to the PCs' presence and increase speed to Torkeep, cutting the PCs' lead in half.

ENCOUNTER 2: JUST USE THE BACK DOOR

The directions given to you by Lord Torkeep lead you along a shallow ravine south of the keep. You must move upstream about a mile before you reach the bridge under which the secret entrance supposedly waits. As you approach the keep and the ruined town surrounding it, you notice it looks oddly quiet, but definitely occupied. Activity looks to be clustered on the western side of the keep.

If the PCs arrive at night, read the following:

The flickering light of torches and bonfires can be seen in a few places, but very little noise can be heard. Occasionally a silhouette will be outlined in the torchlight, but not nearly as often as one might expect in a keep occupied by evil humanoids. The whole scene seems to be holding its breath waiting for something to happen.

If the PCs arrive by day, read the following:

The keep looks eerily desolate in the autumn sunlight. A few shapes wander along the tops of the western walls, far fewer than one might expect in a keep occupied by evil humanoids. No sounds emanate from the keep as if the whole scene were holding its breath waiting for something to happen.

If the PCs wait and watch, they will see no patrols outside the wall, but an occasional guard will pass along the keep's wall. A spot check, followed by a Sense Motive check (both DC 15) indicate the guard seems more concerned with watching things inside the keep, than outside.

The town has been completely destroyed by fire and the only traces are the crumbling remains of charred buildings.

The bridge the PCs are looking for is about 400 feet to the southeast of the keep along a road leading to a gate in the wall. The PCs must move out of whatever cover they may have found to cross the last 50 yards and reach the bridge. Anyone on the wall has a good chance to spot them. The DM should ask for Hide and Move Silently checks (DC 13).

Medium size (and above) PCs must stoop under the bridge, but small PCs can stand normally. A Search check (DC 10) reveals a wooden plank with a large iron ring in the center of it covering a 3' diameter hole. The perimeter of the wooden plank is sealed with tar. This is the entrance to the passageway described in the instructions. Unfortunately, something has burned away about three inches of the bottom of the plank. A Str check (DC 15) by a single PC or two PCs working together can pull the plank from the hole. About a foot behind the plank, set in the face of the riverbank behind some debris is a rusted metal gate. The grate is hinged (but rusted shut, opening

makes a LOT of noise), but locked by a good lock (DC 20). The key to the lock was given to the PCs with the map. The metal grate is also missing the bottom few inches and the remaining stubs are scarred as if the metal had been burned away.

Once the lock is opened and the hinges are forced free the PCs can crawl down the three-foot round passage. The passage slopes downward at a gradual angle for about 30'. The slope is slick with slime, but with care, it is an easy climb (i.e. Climb or Dex check DC 10). At the bottom, it widens into a 6' square passage of rough mortared stone blocks leading northwest.

Stagnant, filthy water fills the passageway to about 2' deep and water stains on the walls are visible to the ceiling. The passageway is wet, musty, rank, and crawling with normal rats. The DM should make the PCs uncomfortable by describing rats swimming by them and bumping into their legs or dropping on them from above. The passageway continues for about 500 feet (well beyond the outer bailey wall of the keep). The trip is difficult due to built up slime and mud along the floor and walls. If the PCs try to travel faster than half their base move a Dexterity check (DC 18) is required to avoid slipping and falling in the nasty water. On a roll that misses by 10 or more, the clumsy PC takes 1d6 points of damage from the fall and needs to make a successful Fortitude save (DC 16) or become infected with *blinding sickness* (DMG p. 75) from swallowing tainted water.

At the end, a short staircase climbs up about 10'. 5' beyond the stairs is an iron bound wooden door. Directly in front of the door is a patch of *gray ooze*. If anyone approaches, it attacks. A successful Spot check (DC 15, -2 for every 10' from the ooze) will alert the PCs to the ooze before it strikes. The ooze is non-intelligent and attacks on instinct only considering anything it encounter to be food.

TIER 2 (EL 5)

Gray Ooze, advanced 5 HD (1): CR 5; Medium-size Ooze; HD 5d10+10; hp 40; Init -5; Spd 10; AC 5 (touch 5, flat-footed 5); Atks +4 melee (Slam 1d6+1 and 1d6 acid); SA Improved grab, acid, corrosion, constrict 1d6+1 and 1d6 acid; SQ blindsight, cold and fire immunity, ooze, camouflage; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref -0, Will -4; Str 12, Dex 1, Con 11, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the gray ooze must hit with its slam attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Acid (Ex): A gray ooze secretes acid that quickly dissolves organic material and metal. Any melee hit deals acid damage. The ooze's acidic touch deals 40 points of damage per round to wood or metal. Armor or clothing dissolves and become useless immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 19). The acid cannot harm stone. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes the ooze also dissolves immediately unless it saves at a Reflex save (DC 19).

Constrict (Ex): A gray ooze deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The

opponents clothing and armor suffer a -4 penalty to Reflex saves against the acid.

Camouflage (Ex): It takes a successful Spot check (DC 15) to recognize a motionless gray ooze for what it really is.

TIER 3 (EL 6)

➤ **Gray Ooze, advanced, large 7 HD (1):** CR 6; Large Ooze; HD 7d10+28; hp 62; Init -5; Spd 10 ft.; AC 6 (touch 6, flat-footed 6); Atks +11 melee (Slam 1d8+6 and 1d8 acid); SA Improved grab, acid, corrosion, constrict 1d8+6 and 1d8 acid; SQ blindsight, cold and fire immunity, ooze, camouflage; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -2; Str 23, Dex 1, Con 19, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Acid (Ex): Gray ooze secretes acid that quickly dissolves organic material and metal. Any melee hit deals acid damage. The ooze's acidic touch deals 40 points of damage per round to wood or metal. Armor or clothing dissolves and become useless immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 19). The acid cannot harm stone. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes the ooze also dissolves immediately unless it saves at a Reflex save (DC 19).

Constrict (Ex): Gray ooze deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The opponents clothing and armor suffer a -4 penalty to Reflex saves against the acid.

Camouflage (Ex): It takes a successful Spot check (DC 15) to recognize motionless gray ooze for what it really is.

TIER 4 (EL 7)

➤ **Gray Ooze, advanced, large 9 HD (1):** CR 6; Large Ooze; HD 9d10+36; hp 89; Init -5; Spd 10 ft.; AC 6 (touch 6, flat-footed 6); Atks +11 melee (Slam 1d8+6 and 1d8 acid); SA Improved grab, acid, corrosion, constrict 1d8+6 and 1d8 acid; SQ blindsight, cold and fire immunity, ooze, camouflage; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -2; Str 23, Dex 1, Con 19, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the gray ooze must hit with its slam attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Acid (Ex): A gray ooze secretes acid that quickly dissolves organic material and metal. Any melee hit deals acid damage. The ooze's acidic touch deals 40 points of damage per round to wood or metal. Armor or clothing dissolves and become useless immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 19). The acid cannot harm stone. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes the ooze also dissolves immediately unless it saves at a Reflex save (DC 19).

Constrict (Ex): A gray ooze deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The opponents clothing and armor suffer a -4 penalty to Reflex saves against the acid.

Camouflage (Ex): It takes a successful Spot check (DC 15) to recognize a motionless gray ooze for what it really is.

The door is locked and trapped. The key given to the party by Torkeep will open the lock; otherwise, the lock is DC20. Opening the door will set off a *fire trap* spell (DC29 to locate, 1d4+10) unless the password (also supplied by Lord Torkeep) is spoken by whomever opens the door. The password is "rowena".

ALL TIERS (EL 3)

➤ **Fire Trap:** CR 2; 5-ft. hemisphere blast of fire (1d4+10); Reflex save (DC 16) avoids; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29).

Beyond the door, the passageway continues for another 150 feet before proceeding up a spiral staircase. The stairs lead up about 50', ending at a trapdoor in the ceiling.

The trapdoor is locked and cannot be picked. It can be opened by a *knock* spell or by use of the concealed lever located about 5' back down the stairs on the left side (when coming up). The location of the lever is included in the instructions from Lord Torkeep, but a successful Search check is required to find it (DC 15). Once unlocked, the door must be forced open. Something heavy now lies on top of the trapdoor. A successful Str check (DC 20) is needed to force open the trapdoor. Once open the trapdoor leads into a storage room below the keep's kitchens. From above, the door is well concealed and difficult to find without knowing it was there (Search, DC 30).

ENCOUNTER THREE

After leaving the secret passageway, you arrive in a storage room beneath the keep's kitchens. This room connects to four others, a wine cellar, a root cellar, a dry goods storage room and an ale cellar, all of which have been ransacked and pillaged. Almost nothing of value remains, but evidence that a well-stocked wine cellar once existed in one room is obvious. Casks, barrels and glass bottles are discarded carelessly.

A Search check (DC 10) will find beneath one pile of debris an unbroken bottle of vintage Celenese Nectar Wine.

A single staircase leads from the cellars to the kitchens above.

This section of the keep includes the kitchens, servants' quarters, and the great hall. The PCs are free to explore, but all they'll find is either ransacked rooms or filth and refuse from the humanoid occupiers. Almost immediately, the PCs should recognize that things are too quiet. There are signs of occupation, but the keep is empty of life.

Let the PCs look around a bit, but before they can move much beyond the lower section of the keep (and definitely before they enter the Great Hall), ask for a Spot check (DC 10). Read the following to anyone who succeeds:

You catch a glimpse of movement from the corner of your eye. It comes from a direction you've yet to explore and was gone before you could tell what it was. It may have been your eyes playing tricks on you.

If the PCs give chase, they will eventually catch an old man. If the PCs hurt him (1 hp or more damage), the celestial creature from Encounter 6 will appear 3 rounds later and attack. Otherwise, they can talk with him. He knows the following:

- He is Engern the sage, servant of Lord Torkeep.
- He and three others have been prisoners since the keep fell six years ago. Originally there were nine, the last to die passed away only a few weeks ago.
- During the occupation, they were used as slaves. Some were tortured and/or sacrificed to Iuz. The few who survived this long had useful skills or amused the leader of Iuz's minions (he amused the leader).
- The other survivors are Grena, Leute and Benel. They are hiding in one of the guest quarters not far away.
- Engern was coming to check on the outsider in the great hall to see if he was still there.
- Most of Iuz's minions are dead (as far as he knows). The outsider killed them. If it finds the PCs, it will kill them too.
- Engern summoned the outsider (good celestial creature) using an old scroll.
- When Lord Torkeep ordered the retreat from the keep, Engern was hustled out of his workroom before he could grab the scroll. It had come into his possession when he was asked to find some obscure fact for Lord Torkeep and a number of documents, scrolls and books had been brought to him from Torkeep Abby. When he first found it, he thought nothing of it and was planning on returning it to the Abby with the other papers. When the order came to evacuate, he snuck back inside to get the scroll (hoping it could help them escape or at least keep it out of enemy hands) but didn't make it back out in time. He hid the scroll and has been trying to get to it for six years. Only a few weeks ago did he finally get a chance.
- When he used the scroll, he ordered the summoned creature to protect him. It did, by killing all of Iuz's followers in the keep. When the troops stationed outside the keep came in to see what was wrong, it killed them too. There are a few left, but they won't come in here and for some reason, they haven't left.
- Engern and the other survivors can't leave. Every time they try, the creature blocks their path until they go back inside.
- The sage knows the spell should have ended by now, but has no idea why it hasn't. This is partially a lie. He

knows that when he activated the scroll something went wrong. The creature acted oddly from the beginning and his behavior is getting worse. He suspects that his bumbling of the spell damaged the creature's mind and trapped it here. (He's right, but he doesn't know that for sure).

- The survivors are running out of food and are all extremely scared of the creature. They are afraid it will one day decide to kill them as well.
- Engern warns the PCs that the creature is extremely powerful. He watched the creature destroy the high priest of Iuz in a blast of holy fire and cut through the rest of the troops like a scythe through wheat.
- Torkeep Abby is a religious Abbey dedicated to Heironeous. It sits (or sat) a few miles to the east. If the PCs don't pick up on it, Engern will suggest that since the scroll he used to summon the creature came from there, perhaps something else could be found there to return the creature to where it came from. He has never been to the Abbey and cannot give the PCs any more detailed information than general directions to finding it. The Abbey is about a mile to the east.

☞ **Engern, male human Clr1/Exp3**: CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8 + 3d6; hp 17; Init +0; Speed 30 ft.; AC 10; Atks 1 melee (1d3 subdual, unarmed strike); AL LG, SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +2, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (law) +7, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Listen +5, Profession (Scribe) +8; Alertness, Skill Focus (Knowledge [Religion]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [Law]), Skill Focus (Profession [Scribe]).

Possessions: Crude wooden holy symbol of Heironeous, tattered old robes, small knife.

Spells prepared (2+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*create water, cure minor wounds, purify food and drink*; 1st—*cure light wounds, protection from evil, sanctuary*.

☞ **Grena** (female human Com1, LG; Profession (Cook) +4) middle-aged cook.

☞ **Leute** (male human Com1, LG) Grena's "slow" son.

☞ **Benel** (male human War2, N) former keep guard. Benel was a collaborator with Iuz's forces, but the other prisoners don't know this. Iuz's forces gave him increased rations and (slightly) better treatment for telling them everything he knew and reporting on the other prisoners. He has a Bluff skill modifier of +4.

During his captivity he has learned to speak and write a little bit of the goblin language. As soon as the PCs leave for the Abbey, Benel will toss a message to the hobgoblin guards telling them of the PCs' plan. This is how they know when to attack in Encounter 12.

Development: Let the PCs interact with the prisoners for a little while, but make sure Engern continues to warn them about the “winged creature”.

All of them are happy to see the PCs and barrage them with questions about what’s been going on, when someone will rescue them, etc.

Leute is a little slow, but don’t play him as a total fool. Anyone who’s rude or cruel to him should get an earful from Grena.

Benel will seem a bit nervous around the PCs, but only tell them that after you make a secret Sense Motive roll (DC 18) to sense his unease. If questioned about it, he’ll say he’s worried about the creature.

ENCOUNTER 4: SORRY TO DISTURB YOU

If the PCs spend more than an hour within the keep or enter the great hall, the avoral will sense their presence and come looking for them. If Engern or any of the other prisoners are with them, he will first take them to a safety and then returns to destroy the PCs. Once he finds the PCs he will pursue them until they are dead or leave the keep, focusing on the most immediate threat. He will then return to the great hall and resume his position. If the PCs encounter the avoral, read the following:

Floating soundlessly in mid air before you is a beautiful creature the likes of which you have never seen before. He has the body of a tall, muscular human with wings in place of arms and hands at the midpoints. His lower legs end in strong talons and long, feathery vanes sprout from the backs of his calves. His face is more human than avian, but his hair is a feathery cowl and the eyes are bright gold. You feel as if his face should bear a proud and confident expression, but instead it has been replaced by a look of pain and confusion.

The avoral is a celestial creature from the outer planes. He does not (or will not) communicate with anyone because of the damage done to his mind by the miscast summoning spell.

TIER 2 (EL 9)

☛ **Avoral (Guardinal), advanced, 10 HD:** CR 9; Medium-size Outsider (Good); HD 10d8+10; 54 hp; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 21 (+3 Dex, +8 natural); Atk +9 melee (2d6+2, 2 claws); or 2 wings +9 melee (2d8+2, wing); Spell-like abilities, fear aura; SQ Damage reduction 10/+1, celestial qualities, lay on hands, animal telepathy, true seeing; SR 25; AL NG; Fort +6; Ref +8; Wil +8; Str 15; Dex 17; Con 12; Int 15; Wis 16; Cha 16;

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +10, Concentration +8, Knowledge (any two) or Craft (any two) +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +9, Spot +18; Improved Initiative and Flyby Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will - aid, blur (self only), command, detect magic, dimension door, dispel magic,

gust of wind, hold person, light, magic circle against evil (self only), magic missile, and see invisible; 1/day - lightning bolt. These abilities are as the spell cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Fear Aura (Su): Once per day an avoral can create an aura of fear in a 2-foot radius. It is otherwise identical with *fear* as cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (DC 17)

Celestial Qualities: Electricity and petrification immunity, cold and acid resistance 20, tongues, +4 save against poison.

Lay on Hands (Su): This works just like the paladin’s ability, but the avoral can heal as much damage per day as its own undamaged hit point total.

Animal Telepathy (Su): An avoral can mentally communicate with animals as a free action. The works exactly like *speak with animals* as cast by an 8th-level druid but does not require sound.

True Seeing (Su): This is identical with true seeing as cast by a 14th-level cleric, except that it has personal range and the avoral must concentrate for 1 full round before it takes effect. Thereafter it remains in effect as long as the avoral concentrates on it.

Skills: An avoral’s sharp eyes give it a +8 racial bonus to Spot checks.

TIER 3 (EL 10)

☛ **Avoral (Guardinal), advanced, 12 HD:** Increase the avoral’s hit dice to 12d8+12 and his hit points to 65.

TIER 4 (EL 11)

☛ **Avoral (Guardinal), advanced, 14 HD:** Increase the avoral’s hit dice to 14d8+14 and his hit points to 76.

Development: As long as they leave the keep within an hour and don’t try to face him directly, the avoral will not sense them. Even if he does, he won’t pursue them if they leave the keep.

If the avoral moves outside the great hall, the hobgoblins (and ogres) will hide. Their fear should be pretty obvious to the PCs.

About an hour after a confrontation, the avoral will forget about the PCs. If they reenter the keep, it will take another hour (or a direct confrontation) for the avoral to sense them again and resume his attack.

ENCOUNTER 5: A SHORT TRIP

If asked, the old sage leads the PCs through the keep, out into the courtyard and out the postern gate. Otherwise, the PCs are free to use the secret passage again to get out. Engern is unable to follow them beyond this point, but tells them the Abbey is only a few miles away to the east. They just have to follow the path that crosses the bridge (the same bridge the secret passage is under). If the PCs are careful and quiet and head directly towards the Abbey,

they should have no problems. The sage tells them he will leave the postern gate unlocked, but he must return to the keep, before the creature begins to miss him.

If the PCs insist on being stupid and try to scout around the keep or otherwise look for trouble, have a few of the remaining hobgoblin guards spot them and fire crossbow bolts at them from the walls. The guards will not harm Engern. They know the creature is protecting him and know to stay far away from him.

TIER 2 (EL 7)

👉 **Ogre** (2): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual* page 144.

👉 **Hobgoblin** (8): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

TIER 3 (EL 8)

👉 **Ogre** (4): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual* page 144.

👉 **Hobgoblin** (8): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

TIER 4 (EL 9)

👉 **Ogre** (8): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual* page 144.

👉 **Hobgoblin** (8): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

Tactics: If the PCs try to take out the hobgoblin archers, they will send out a large force to capture/kill the PCs. During the attack, hobgoblins on the walls will continue to pepper the PCs with bolts. Each archer has twenty bolts. There is a cumulative 10% chance per round of a battle attracting the attention of the avoral. If he joins the battle, he will focus his attacks on evil creatures first, but then turn on anyone who is still inside the keep and is not one of the 4 prisoners under his protection.

Development: While it's unlikely any PC from the Shield Lands will willingly work with Iuz's minions, it's not completely impossible. The hobgoblins and ogres are scared. They stay because they fear Iuz's priests and what they might do to them if they abandon their posts. They are also frightened of the avoral, but figure that as long as he stays in the keep they can hold out until reinforcements arrive. If the PCs approach them attempting to parlay an alliance against the avoral, they hobgoblins might accept if the PCs make an offer in their favor. The hobgoblins are not stupid (they have average Intelligence) so they should not be played like morons. They won't willingly sacrifice themselves at the PCs command and they will attempt to take advantage of whatever situation arises. If the battle turns against them (whether they are fighting the avoral alongside the PCs or against the PCs) they won't hesitate to retreat. If they sense they have an advantage, they'll take it and merrily

betray the PCs. DMs should play them as cunning foes, not cannon fodder.

ENCOUNTER 6: MY, WHAT REALISTIC LOOKING STATUES

It takes you about an hour to reach Torkeep Abbey. As you approach, you can see the battered walls of the Abbey and the burnt, crumbling remains of the building beyond. Rusted iron gates hang precariously from their hinges, twisted and bent from the invader's attack.

Once the PCs enter the Abbey grounds read:

Beyond the gates, only the stone buildings survive. All of the wooden structures have been burnt, leaving only a few blackened timbers to remind visitors that anything existed at all. While blackened and ruined by fire, the stone walls of the Abbey's main building still stand, as do a few of the statues along their tops. Some depict battleaxe-wielding warriors in heroic poses and others are long since ruined and unidentifiable. A pathway lined with statues, both broken and whole, leads from the gates to the Abbey doors.

If the PCs take the time to look more closely at the statues, give them a Spot check (DC 15, 12 per 10' distance) to notice the gargoyles. If the PCs notice the gargoyles or move at least half way towards the main building, the gargoyles attack (see Map 4 – Torkeep Abbey, Area #1).

TIER 2 (EL 6)

👉 **Gargoyles** (2): hp 38 each; see *Monster Manual* page 94.

TIER 3 (EL 8)

👉 **Gargoyles** (4): hp 38 each; see *Monster Manual* page 94.

TIER 4 (EL 10)

👉 **Gargoyles** (8): hp 38 each; see *Monster Manual* page 94.

Treasure: 190gp, 6 10gp gems

Tactics: The gargoyles will remain in the air as much as possible. They know they have the advantage while flying and will not land unless forced to. The gargoyles will attack in pairs, flanking their target. They will always focus on the PC who poses the most immediate threat, ignoring those who have shown they are unable to seriously harm them.

ENCOUNTER 7: SO THIS IS TORKEEP ABBY?

What remains of the front door of the Abbey opens into a small foyer with three exits. An open doorway opposite the entrance leads to a large open room beyond. Two smaller doorways (also lacking doors) exit to the left and right. The Abbey's main building is a deserted ruin. The roof was destroyed in the fire that claimed most of the Abbey and only short, blackened rafters remain.

The large room (see Map 4 – Torkeep Abbey, Area #2) was the used to be where the Abbey's inhabitants went for services. Most furnishings were destroyed in the fire and anything that survived has either been removed or destroyed as nothing of value remains. The sky is visible above.

The walls of this room have been covered with graffiti written in blood and filth in the goblin and orcish languages. The altar at the far end of the room has been desecrated and fouled by followers of Iuz. Behind it, a large statue of Heironeous has been knocked over and smashed to pieces. An eerie quiet fills the place, broken occasionally by a bird taking flight from its nest in the ruined rafters or a rat scurrying through the rubble.

The PCs may search for as long as they like, but won't find anything of value.

The rest of the Abbey is in the same shape and consists mostly of small rooms where the inhabitants used to live. There is also a large communal eating hall, a kitchen, storage rooms and a library (the books are either burnt to ash, torn apart or ruined by water).

A successful Search check (DC 20) in the library (see Map 4 – Torkeep Abbey, Area #3) will reveal a secret door hidden behind one of the books cases that is still intact. Once found, it is easily opened. Behind is a simple passage down a stone spiral staircase into the catacombs below.

ENCOUNTER 8: INTO THE CATACOMBS

The narrow spiral staircase leads down into darkness, descending fifty feet into the earth. The stairs seem to be carved directly into the earth and stone beneath the Abbey. At the bottom, the stairs open into a small man-made cavern with numerous tunnels leading off in all directions. The walls are carved with images of Heironeous engaging in various acts of heroism.

The entire area (including the tunnels) is under the effects of a *hallow* spell cast at 10th-level and radiates evocation magic if detected for.

A total of seven passages ways lead off into the pitch black. A successful Search or Tracking roll (DC 15) will

reveal that one tunnel looks much more heavily traveled than the others. The other six lead into a confusing mess of tunnels that form a twisting web of intersecting passageways. All of these passages are roughly 5 feet wide and are lined with small alcoves (usually a pair at each location) containing the remains of former inhabitants of the Abbey. All of the bodies (more than 100) are wrapped in burial cloths of deep blue material with silver trim. It is obvious that some of the bodies have been here for a very long time.

All of the bodies have a silver holy symbol of Heironeous around their necks, but have nothing else of value. Anyone who removes a holy symbol from a body earns a curse from Heironeous for disturbing the rest of his faithful followers (and gains the Brand of Heironeous cert).

The remaining passageway does not lead to more burial alcoves. It leads to a secret Abbey library of their most sacred religious texts and scrolls. While not designed to repel a determined army of looters, the tunnel leading to the library is designed to discourage intruders, particularly those who do not follow Heironeous. About 30 feet down on the left is a small five-foot by five-foot alcove. It contains a small shrine to Heironeous and a small altar upon which rests a silver statue of Heironeous, a pair of silver candle sticks (with blue wax candles) and an incense burner (with a few pieces of sandalwood incense). On the floor in front of the altar is a small blue pillow with silver trim (now partially destroyed by rats) for kneeling in front of the altar. The same curse applies to these items as applies to the holy symbols in the burial alcoves and removing them gains the PC the Brand of Heironeous cert.

The shrine is actually the first line of defense for the library. The clerics of the Abbey reasoned that since only the faithful of Heironeous would be allowed to enter the library, anyone who entered the catacombs and failed to pause for a moment to offer a prayer at the shrine was not a true follower of the Archpaladin and should not be permitted to continue. As a result, they placed a pressure plate beneath the pillow that deactivates the pit traps farther down the tunnel. To disable the traps, a PC must kneel on the pillow long enough to offer a simple prayer to Heironeous (about a minute or so), after which a Listen check (DC 15) will reveal a distant "clunk" as the traps are disabled. The traps reset after an hour.

About thirty feet beyond the shrine is the first of two pit traps. Since thieves expect valuables to be guarded by traps, the clerics of the Abbey decided to give them one. The first trap in the set is a 20' deep pit trap. It is designed to be easy to locate, but difficult to disable. The aim is to make unwanted intruders jump over the pit and into the second trap of the pair.

ALL TIERS (EL 1)

➤ **Pit Trap (20 Ft. Deep):** CR 1; no attack roll necessary (2d6); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 25).

Located immediately adjacent to the first, the second trap is a bit more devious. Once the would-be thieves bypass the first pit trap, they will hopefully have lowered their guard long enough to walk right into the second trap. This trap is a more deadly version of the first and is much harder to locate and avoid.

TIER 2 (EL 3)

↗**Pit Trap (40 Ft. Deep):** CR 2; no attack roll necessary (4d6); Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

TIER 3 (EL 4)

↗**Pit Trap (60 Ft. Deep):** CR 3; no attack roll necessary (6d6); Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

TIER 4 – PIT TRAP (EL 5)

↗**Pit Trap (80 Ft. Deep):** CR 4; no attack roll necessary (8d6); Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

Anyone making it past the pit traps will come to another shrine identical to the first thirty feet beyond the pits.

Ten feet beyond the second shrine is an unlocked door leading to the library. The door bears a *glyph of warding* and is designed to be triggered by anyone attempting to pass the door who is not a faithful follower of Heironeous.

Written in common above the door is the following prayer:

“May Heironeous watch over you and grant you the wisdom to dispense true justice.”

TIER 2 (EL 2)

↗**Lightning Blast Glyph:** CR 2; The intruder and anyone within 5 ft. (3d8); Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

TIER 3 (EL 3)

↗**Lightning Blast Glyph:** CR 3; The intruder and anyone within 5 ft. (4d8); Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

TIER 4 (EL 4)

↗**Lightning Blast Glyph:** CR 4; The intruder and anyone within 5 ft. (5d8); Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Intruders making it this far must face one final obstacle. A divine forbiddance spell cast at 13th-level by a lawful good cleric protects the library. Anyone entering the room must recite a prayer to Heironeous (for example,

“May the Axe grow great!” or “May you find valor in His name!” etc.) or activate the spell.

TIER 2 (EL 0)

No trap.

TIERS 3 & 4 (EL 6)

↗**Forbiddance:** CR 7; Like alignment, no damage, alignment differs with respect to either law/chaos or good/evil (3d6), alignment differs with respect to both law/chaos and good/evil (6d6); No save; No chance to detect or disable without spells.

ENCOUNTER 9: SO, YOU MUST BE THE LIBRARIAN!

If the PCs overcome the traps in the passageway outside the library, they can finally reach their destination. If they made a lot of noise on the way in and/or set off the *glyph of warding*, the library’s only inhabitant knows they’re coming.

As the door opens, you hear the frantic sounds of someone trying to hide. You can’t quite make out what he’s saying, but it sounds like the ravings of a madman. He sounds very afraid.

Once the PCs enter the room and can get a better look, read the following.

Inside you see a tremendous clutter of books and scrolls. Amidst them is an old man in tattered, filthy robes. Madness burns in his cloudy eyes as he vainly tries to hide a pile of books and scrolls under a table. As you enter, he looks up and says, “Oh, praise Heironeous! It’s only you Meldorin. Did you bring the supplies I asked you for? What took you so long boy! It feels as if I’ve been waiting years for you to return!”

Surprisingly, the library’s caretaker is still alive. He’s been trapped down here since the Shield Lands fell. A young cleric left him here to go check on what all the commotion was. The boy never returned and fearing the worst the librarian stayed where he felt safe. He ventured out once or twice, but always retreated back to the library in fear. Eventually, the loneliness and fear drove him mad and he embraced his insanity like a warm blanket, forgetting almost everything except his beloved library and Heironeous. He has survived by casting *create food and water* and using *light* spells to see. He remembers nothing of the fall of the Shield Lands, what happened to the Abbey, how long he’s been down here, or even his name. Any questions about these subjects get vague answers that end up being about the library or Heironeous.

The librarian is harmlessly mad. He poses no threat and cares only that his precious books and scrolls are safe.

When the PCs arrive, he thinks the first one to enter is his old assistant, Meldorin. Iuz's forces killed Meldorin when they overran the Abbey almost seven years ago. If the PCs are kind to him, and particularly if they give him parchment, paper and/or ink, he will help them locate the scroll they're looking for. He will not leave with them under ANY circumstances. He won't allow them to take any thing from the library except the scroll, but if they give him paper and ink, he'll reward them with a book of hymns called "Hymns to the Archpaladin" (see Treasure Summary).

Development: Although quite mad, the old cleric should be played for laughs, tinged with sadness. Think of a tragic Miracle Max from *The Princess Bride*. He is very old and in poor health, but shows no signs of being a danger to himself. If left alone, he would most likely live a few more months, perhaps a year at most, and die peacefully. At one time he knew about the fall of the Shield Lands, but if told again, he will ignore the information and change the subject to something about the library. Unless the PCs correct him, he will continue to call the first one into the room "Meldorin", at which point he will look very sad and say "Yes, you're right. Meldorin is gone, isn't he!" and again change the subject.

The scroll the PCs are looking for takes about an hour to locate (longer if the old librarian isn't helping them look). The scroll contains a single *banishment* spell cast at 15th level.

As the PCs leave, the old librarian scolds them and reminds them to bring back the scroll when they're done. His last words are:

"Meldorin. Hurry back and don't forget to bring those supplies!"

ENCOUNTER 10: JUST USE THE BACK DOOR, AGAIN

Once the PCs have retrieved the scroll, they can return to the keep and reenter by whatever means they prefer. Even if their departure alerted the hobgoblin guards, the postern gate is still unlocked and odder still no patrols can be seen along the walls. If they decide to use the secret passage, see Encounter Two for details.

The hobgoblin and ogre guards received a message from Benel as soon as the PCs left for Torkeep Abbey. The message explained why the PCs were there and what they were going to try and do. In response, the guards have decided to let the PCs try and then attack them (or the weakened Avoral) afterwards.

If the PCs have taken too long with the adventure, it's possible the troops they saw in Encounter One have arrived. If that is the case, they have failed. The combined might of the troops is enough to eventually overwhelm the avoral and reclaim the keep. Once they do, the prisoners will be killed. Their best option if this happens is to head back to the Ritensa Outpost and report what they've found. Trying to sneak back in after the troops

have returned is suicide, but let the PCs try if they like. Eventually they will likely be overwhelmed and taken prisoner, interrogated and killed. At this point, it's up to the DM to determine how things play out.

ENCOUNTER 11: THIS HAD BETTER WORK!

With the scroll in hand, the PCs must now banish the creature. As before, he will be in the great hall unless the actions of the PCs have drawn him somewhere else. If the PCs have encountered him before, he will not immediately sense their return. If the party hasn't encountered him before, use the description and stats from Encounter Four.

He will use his celestial abilities to his best advantage, attacking or disabling with spells the foe who poses the most immediate threat. When the spell on the scroll begins being cast, he will know what is happening and focus any attacks he has that round at the character using the scroll.

To successfully activate the scroll, the caster must make meet the requirements listed on p.203 of the DMG and make a caster level check of DC16. Even if the player fails the roll, the spell will still take effect. The nature of the misfired summoning spell is such that it only takes a nudge to send the Avoral home. If no PCs are able to use the scroll, Engern will volunteer to make things right.

Due to the side effects of the miscast summoning spell and the avoral's mission on Oerth, the magic of the banishment spell won't take effect immediately. The battle will continue for a few more rounds just to make things interesting. If the caster makes the caster level check for activating the scroll, reduce these numbers by one round.

Tier	Rounds
2	4
3	5
4	6

At the end of the last round of combat, read the following:

As the spell from the scroll finally takes effect, the pain and confusion fade from the creature's face and he speaks for the first time.

"At last...my mind clears, but too late! I have failed. The portal...lies unguarded!"

His last words echo throughout the great hall as he fades from sight, returning to his home. In the silence that follows, you are left to ponder what his warning might mean for the Shield Lands.

A future Shield Lands event will describe the avoral's mission and the meaning of his cryptic warning.

ENCOUNTER 12: THANKS FOR THE HELP... NOW DIE!

Due to Benel's treachery, the remaining hobgoblin and ogre guards will know why the PCs are in the keep. They are more than happy to let the PCs face the Avoral for them. The guards plan to wait and see if the PCs plan works and attack the weakened survivors hoping to reclaim the keep for themselves.

After the battle with the Avoral, give the PCs two rounds to regroup before the guards rush in and attack. These are the same guards from Encounter Five, so subtract any the PCs may have killed already. If the remaining number of guards is less than 25% their original number, they do not attack the PCs. Read the following as the guards attack:

Your battle with the celestial creature has just ended. You barely have a moment to catch your breath when you hear the guttural hoots and shouts of hobgoblins and ogres getting closer. As you turn, you see one more foe standing before you. The leader stands before you mockingly brandishing a shield that bears the symbol of the Shield Lands. In broken common he shouts:

"You have done our work for us. We thank you by killing you quick!"

Without another word, the guards attack.

TIER 2 (EL 7)

➤Ogre (2): hp 26 each; see Monster Manual page 144.

➤Hobgoblin (8): hp 5 each, see Monster Manual page 119.

TIER 3 (EL 8)

➤Ogre (4): hp 26 each; see Monster Manual page 144.

➤Hobgoblin (8): hp 5 each, see Monster Manual page 119.

TIER 4 (EL 9)

➤Ogre (8): hp 26 each; see Monster Manual page 144.

➤Hobgoblin (8): hp 5 each, see Monster Manual page 119.

Treasure: If the PCs manage to banish the avoral and defeat the remaining guards, they may have time to search the guards and the keep.

The bodies of the guards contain mostly armor and weapons and a few minor bits of gold and silver. The leader carries a masterwork steel shield bearing the symbol of the Shield Lands. There is also a scrap of parchment with a message written in crude goblin (give players Handout #2).

In the rest of the keep they find little of value except for a desk full of documents and military reports describing Iuz's troop strengths in the area and an arcane spell book with a few low level spells in it. Both of these items are found in the Lord's Quarters on the third floor of the keep (see the map).

The message was written by Benel and thrown out an upstairs window to the hobgoblins. If confronted, he will offer no resistance and tell the PCs everything as long as they promise to bring him back to the Shield Lands to face justice (He thinks he'll go to prison. He's wrong; they'll execute him for treason.).

CONCLUSION: THE TRIP HOME

At this point, the party still has to escape the keep before Iuz's troops arrive. If there's time and the party isn't beaten up too badly, the DM should feel free to make the trip home as challenging as he likes. The PCs are in enemy territory after all. An extra encounter using the stats from **Encounters One or Five** can add extra excitement on the way home. Otherwise, just make the experience seem stressful and dangerous by describing close calls with patrols and other hazards.

Once back at the keep, news of prisoners being rescued from Torkeep will spread like wildfire through the outpost. Lord Torkeep and his advisors will of course debrief the PCs. They pay particularly close attention to the current defenses of Torkeep, the news of the survival of the library at Torkeep Abbey and the cryptic warning from the avoral.

Once the questioning is over, Lord Torkeep dismisses his advisors and speaks with the PCs alone.

"I can't begin to thank you for your efforts. Since I learned of the prisoners, I have felt as if a dagger was stuck in my chest. You have relieved that agony by returning my people to freedom."

Lord Torkeep then takes out a small coffer and removes several bags of coins. He hands one to each of you and says,

"It isn't much, but I wanted to do something to thank you. If there is ever anything I can do in return, please come to me."

And with that, Lord Torkeep stands, shakes each of your hands in turn and leaves.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the

game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One

Avoiding main force of enemy troops without combat	25 XP
Avoiding or defeating scouts without being detected	50 XP

Encounter Two

Traversing the secret passageway	50 XP
Defeating the Gray Ooze	50 XP

Encounter Three

Finding Engern and the Prisoners and learning about the avoral	25 XP
--	-------

Encounter Four

Avoiding the Avoral without a fight	25 XP
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Encounter Five

Avoiding the remaining guards or	25 XP
Defeating the remaining guards in combat	25 XP

Encounter Six

Defeating the gargoyles	100 XP
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Encounter Eight

Avoiding the traps in the catacombs	50 XP
-------------------------------------	-------

Encounter Nine

Retrieving the scroll from the library	50 XP
--	-------

Encounter Eleven

Use the scroll to return the avoral to his home plane	100 XP
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Encounter Twelve

Defeat remaining hobgoblin and ogre guards	100 XP
Discovering Benel is a collaborator	25 XP

Total experience for objectives	700 XP
Discretionary roleplaying award	0-50 XP

Total Possible Experience 750 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter One

- 6 Suits studded leather armor (25 gp each)
- 6 Small wooden shields (3 gp each)
- 6 Longswords (15 gp each)
- 6 Javalins (1 gp each)
- 6 Light war horses (150 gp each)
- 6 Sets of saddle, bit & bridle (16 gp each)
- 28 gp
- 47 sp

Encounter Two

- Blinded, (0gp; n/a; n/a; No; Unusual; 0 lb.) You have been struck blind from having contracted a severe case of blinding sickness after consuming tainted water in the secret passageway below Torkeep. As a result, you cannot see at all and everything has full concealment to you. You have a 50% chance to miss in combat and lose your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any). Anyone attacking you gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls as if they were invisible to you. You move at half speed and suffer a -4 penalty on most Strength and Dexterity-based skills. You cannot make Spot skill checks or perform any other activity

(such as reading) that requires vision. This disability can be cured by the 3rd-level divine spell Remove Blindness.

Encounter Three

- A bottle of Celenese Nectar Wine (75gp) An old bottle of fine nectar wine from the Geledh vineyards of Celene. The vintage of the wine is 544 CY.

Encounter Five

Tier 2

- 2 Huge greatclubs (5 gp each)
- 2 Huge longspear (5 gp each)
- 8 Suits studded leather armor (25 gp each)
- 8 Small wooden shields (3 gp each)
- 8 Longswords (15 gp each)
- 8 Light crossbows (35 gp each)
- 8 Quivers of 20-(# of arrows fired) bolts (1 gp each)

Tier 3

As for Tier 2 plus:

- 2 Huge greatclubs (5 gp each)
- 2 Huge longspear (5 gp each)

Tier 4

As for Tier 3 plus:

- 4 Huge greatclubs (5 gp each)
- 4 Huge longspear (5 gp each)

Encounter Six

- 190gp
- 6 assorted gems (10gp each)

Encounter Eight

- Brand of Heironeous, (ogp; n/a; n/a; No; Unusual; 0 lb.) As punishment for stealing from Torkeep Abbey, Heironeous has marked you as a thief. Your brand is invisible to all save clerics and paladins of Heironeous, who see it blazing clearly upon your forehead, even if covered. Because you are marked as a criminal, you receive a situational penalty of -10 when attempting to use Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Hide or Perform against clerics and paladins of the Archpaladin. Only a break enchantment, limited wish, miracle, remove curse or wish spell cast by a 12th or higher level spellcaster can remove the brand from your brow.
- Influence Point, (ogp; n/a; 1; No; Common; 0 lb.) You have gained an influence point with the Church of Holy Shielding for informing them of your discovery of the intact library at Torkeep Abbey.

Encounter Nine

- Book – Hymns to the Archpaladin, (25gp; n/a; n/a; Yes; Uncommon; 1 lb.) This fine leather-bound book has a silver etching of Heironeous' holy symbol on

the cover and contains two-dozen hymns praising the Archpaladin. In several places throughout, there are ragged edges as if someone tore pages out randomly. Oddly, the missing pages do not cause the hymns to be incomplete.

Encounter Twelve

Note: Items claimed from Encounter 5 are not duplicated here. See adventure text.

Tier 2

- 2 Huge greatclubs (5 gp each)
- 2 Huge longspear (5 gp each)
- 8 Suits studded leather armor (25 gp each)
- 8 Small wooden shields (3 gp each)
- 8 Longswords (15 gp each)
- 8 Light crossbows (35 gp each)
- 8 Quivers of 20-(# of arrows fired) bolts (1 gp each)

Tier 3

As for Tier 2 plus:

- 2 Huge greatclubs (5 gp each)
- 2 Huge longspear (5 gp each)

Tier 4

As for Tier 3 plus:

- 4 Huge greatclubs (5 gp each)
- 4 Huge longspear (5 gp each)

- Important Strategic Documents: These documents include numerous reports on troop movements in the northwest section of the occupied territory. They also include many correspondences between the former Iuzian commander of Torkeep and several other commanders of Iuz-occupied forts.

- Masterwork Large Steel Shield, (180gp; Large; n/a; Yes; Common; 15 lb.) This large steel shield is emblazoned with the coat of arms of the Shield Lands.

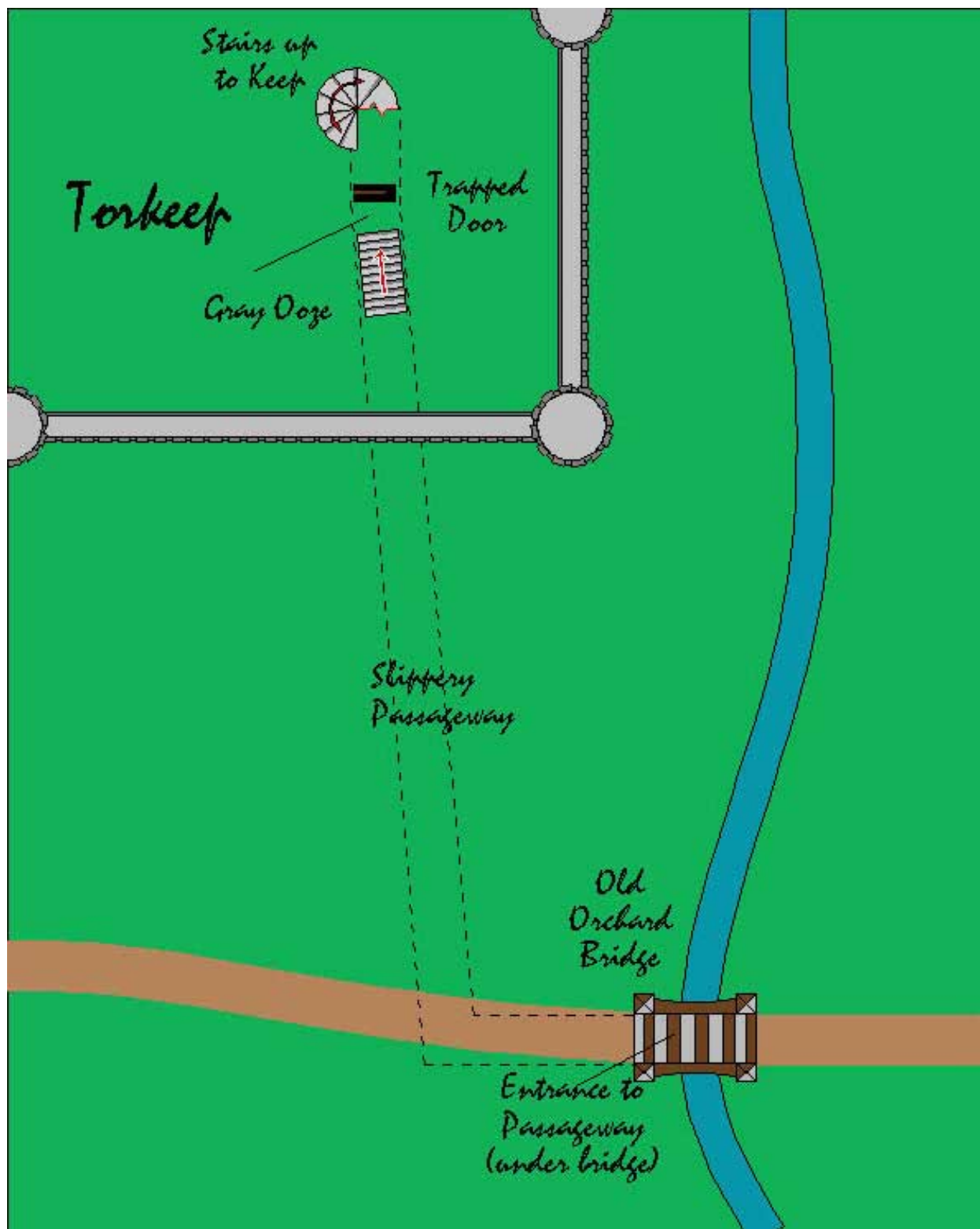
- Arcane Spell Book, (615gp; Large; n/a; Yes; Common; 3 lb.) By the looks of it, the former owner of this leather-bound spell book had just begun to copy spells onto its pages. Only the first six pages are used, containing one 1st-level spell (pages 1 and 2) and one 2nd-level spell (pages 3 through 6). The rest of the pages in the book are blank. The spells are Hold Portal and Knock.

Conclusion

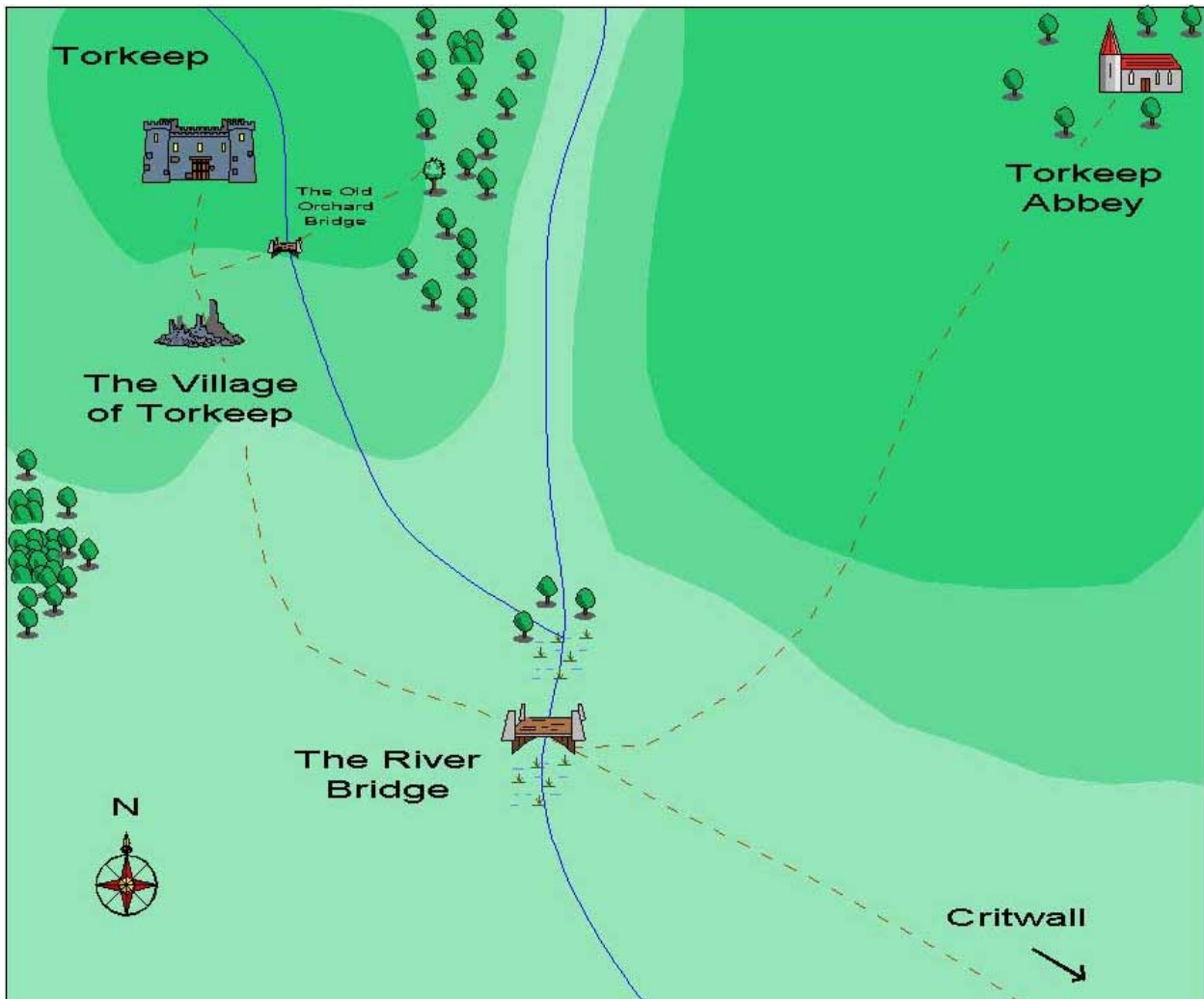
- 50gp to each PC
- Recognition of Lord Franz Torkeep, (ogp; n/a; 1; No; Common; 0 lb.) For rescuing the prisoners from Torkeep, you have gained the recognition of Lord Franz Torkeep, a member of the Council of Lords of

the Shield Lands and Knight of Holy Shielding. As repayment, he has sworn to help you at some point in the future. The judge at the table will determine the availability and type of help he can offer. This cert is the equivalent of two Influence points with Lord Torkeep or one Influence point with the Council of Lords or Knights of Holy Shielding.

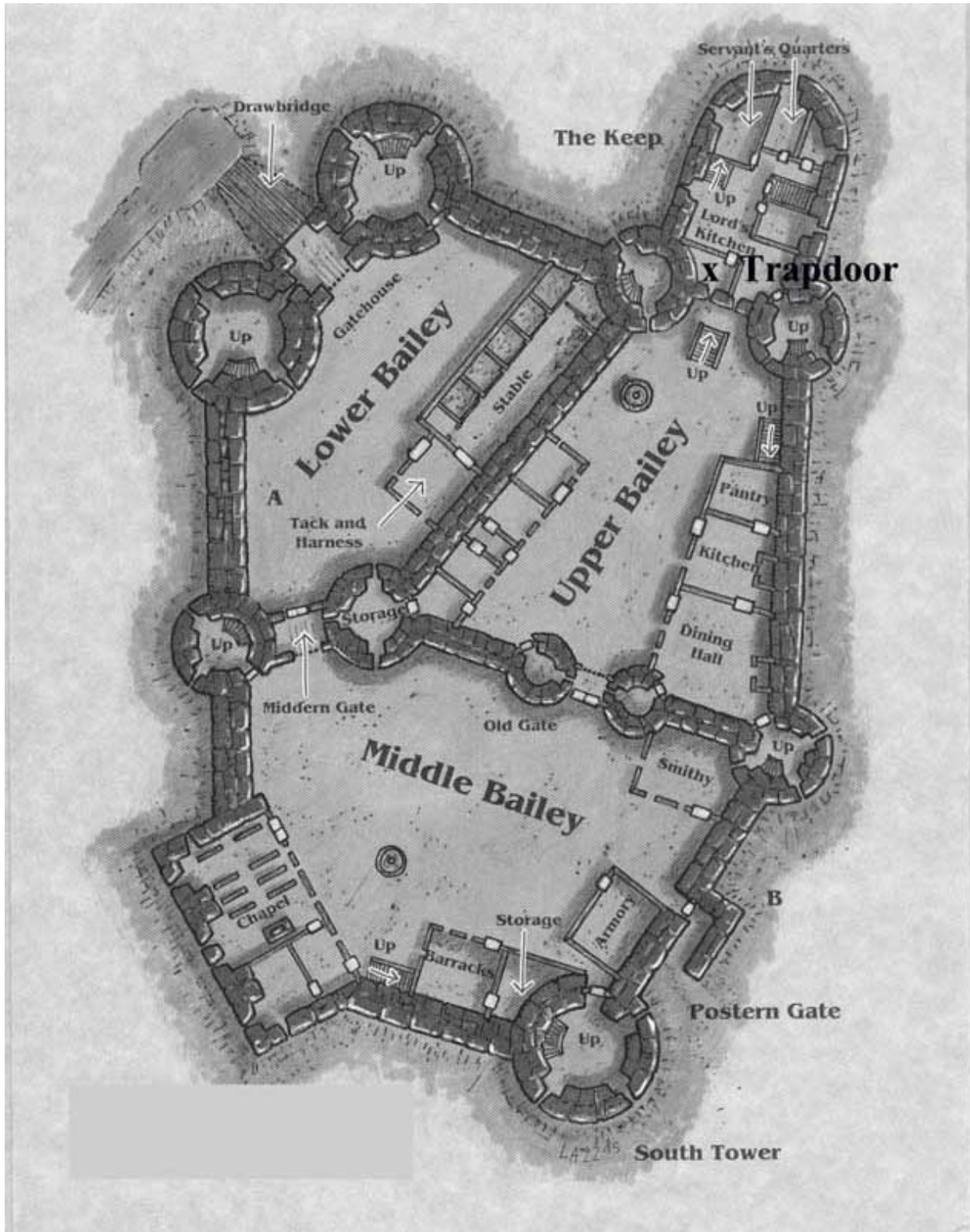
MAP 1 – SECRET PASSAGEWAY INTO TORKEEP (DM'S COPY)



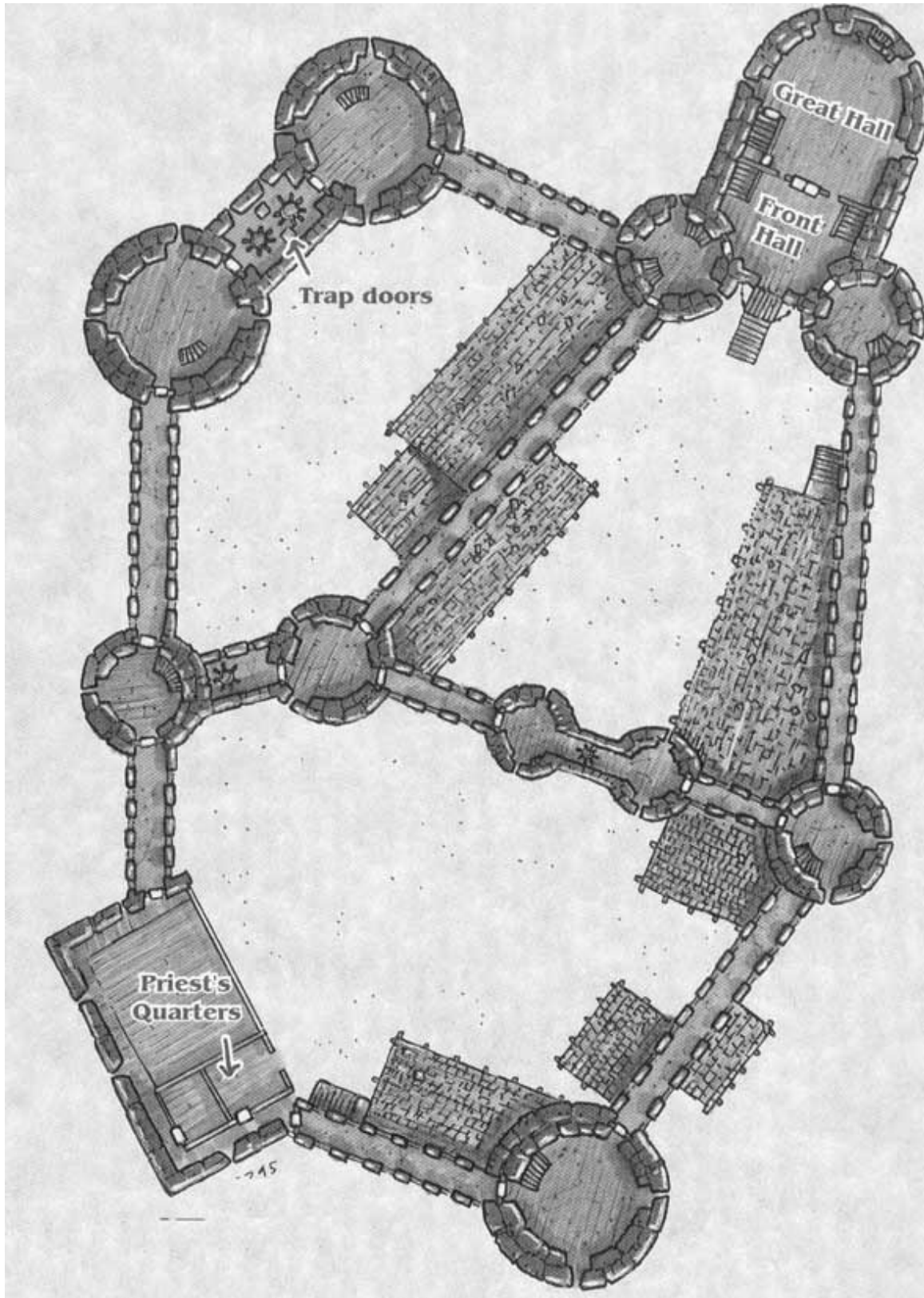
MAP 2 – TORKEEP & SURROUNDING AREA



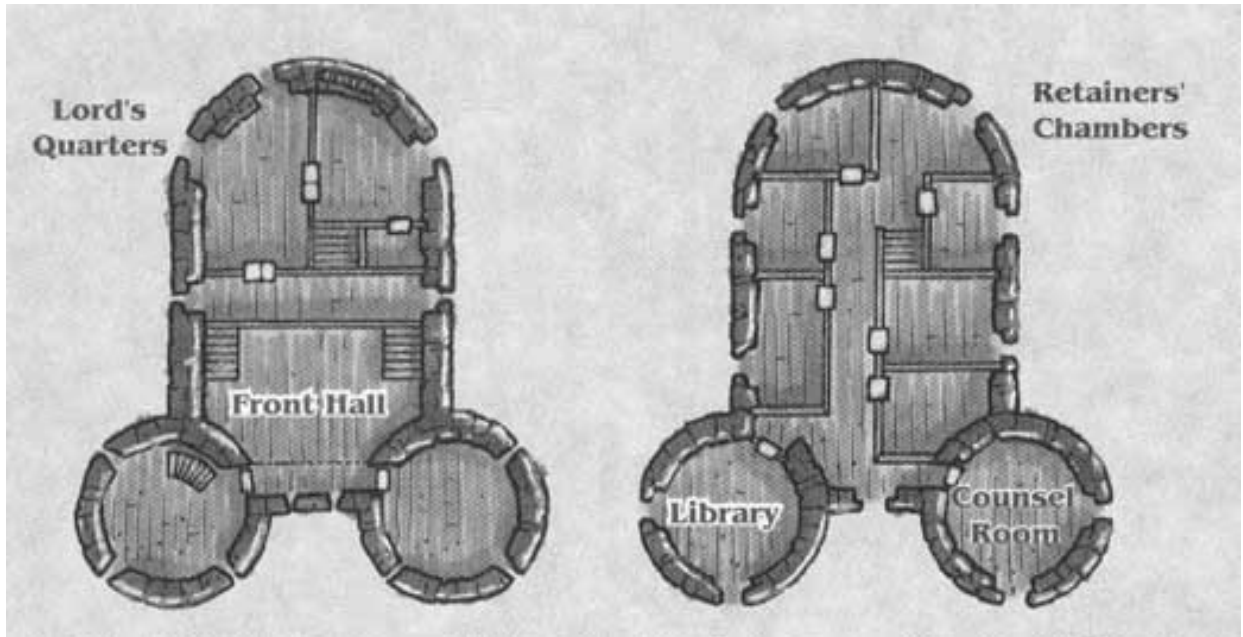
MAP 3A – TORKEEP LEVEL 1



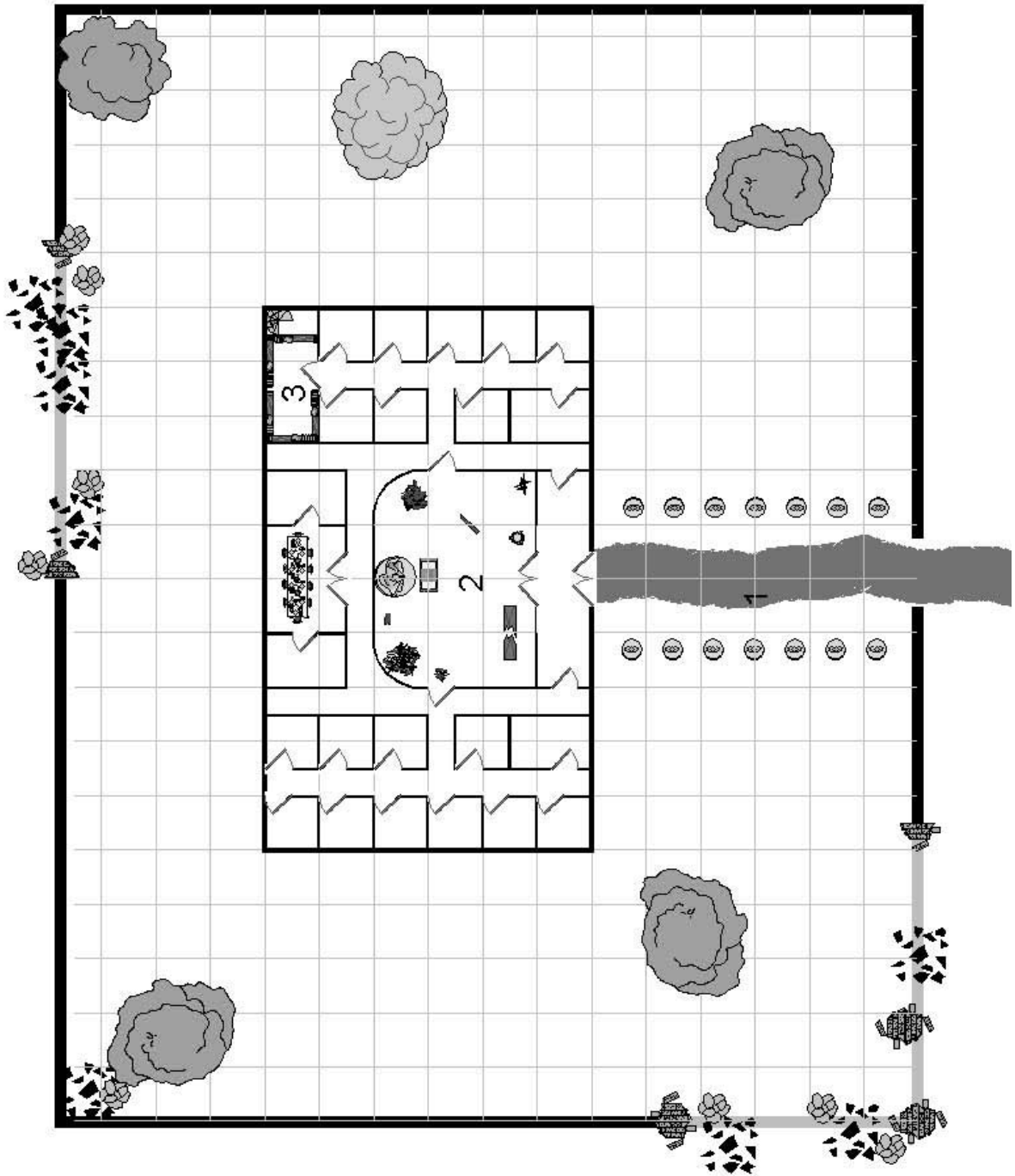
MAP 3B - TORKEEP LEVEL 2



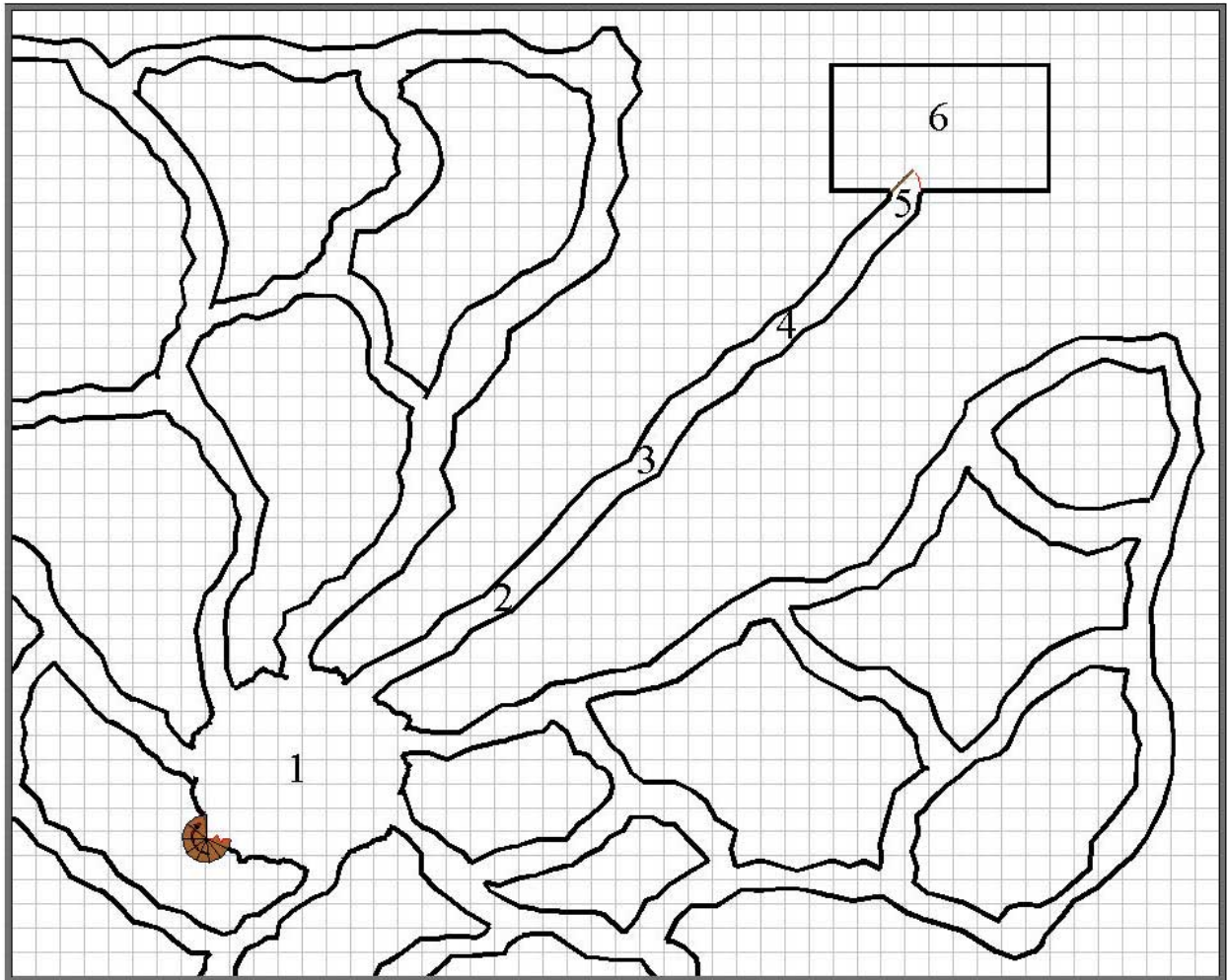
MAP 3C - TORKEEP LEVELS 3 & 4



MAP 4 - TORKEEP ABBEY

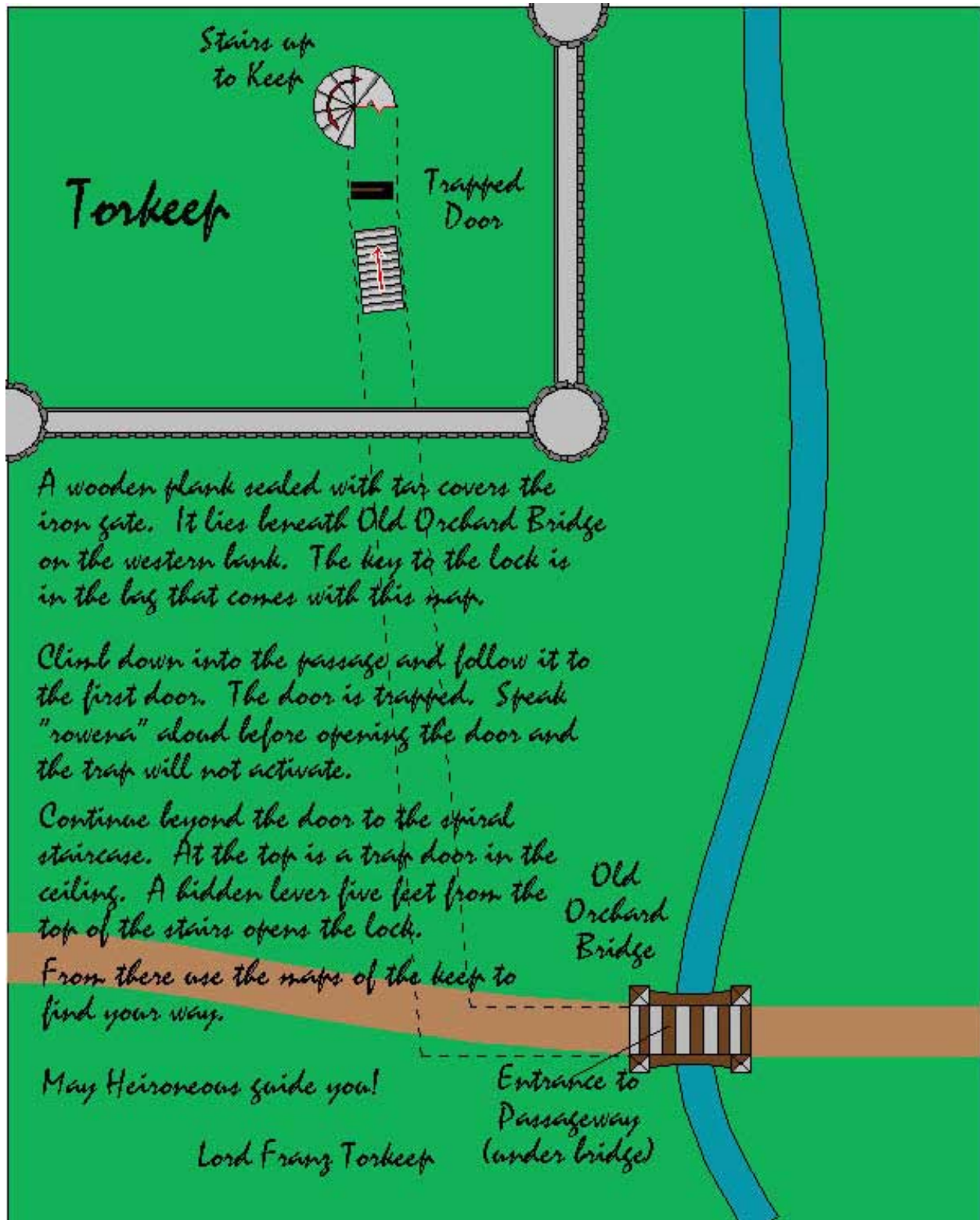


MAP 5 – TORKEEP ABBEY CATACOMBS



- 1 – Entry Cavern
- 2 – Alcove #1
- 3 – Traps
- 4 – Alcove #2
- 5 – Door
- 6 – Library

PLAYER HANDOUT #1 – SECRET ENTRANCE INSTRUCTIONS



PLAYER HANDOUT #2 – MESSAGE IN GOBLIN

MUST WARN

SHIELD PLACE

SOLDIERS COME GET
RID OF CREATURE AND
TAKE SLAVES BACK

B

