

VER7-08

Race the Spirit's Lightning

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Verbobonc Regional Adventure by Ron Lundeen and Gregory Hanigan

Circle Reviewer: Tim Sech

Reviewers: Michael Maenza and Vernon L. Vincent

Verbobonc has changed dramatically since Magister Har sent you on a simple mission years ago. Enemies have become allies, and allies now seem untrustworthy. Triangles of lightning flash in the sky. Are these omens of doom, or heralds of a powerful transfiguration? Find out what lies at the end of the road to adventure. This is the final adventure in the Skyroad Series, which should be played in order. PCs with *Gnomish Spectacles* are encouraged to play. A one-round Verbobonc regional adventure for character levels 2-12 (APLs 4-10).

Metaorganizational Focus: House Estival, House Galans, House Shannus, Protectors of the Iron Wood, Mounted Borderers, the Wrinkle Academy.

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

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

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

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, LIVING GREYHAWK, D&D REWARDS, RPGA, *PLAYER'S HANDBOOK*, *DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE*, AND *MONSTER MANUAL* ARE TRADEMARKS OF WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC, IN THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS MATERIAL IS PROTECTED UNDER THE COPYRIGHT LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. ANY REPRODUCTION OR UNAUTHORIZED USE OF THE MATERIAL OR ARTWORK CONTAINED HEREIN IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC. THIS PRODUCT IS A WORK OF FICTION. ANY SIMILARITY TO ACTUAL PEOPLE, ORGANIZATIONS, PLACES, OR EVENTS IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL. © 2005 WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at www.rpga.com.

For questions specific to this document and your region, visit the Verbobonc website at www.verbobonc.net and e-mail your triad point of contact (POC). 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, 2008.

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 rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read

aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer PCs (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL

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

Living Greyhawk LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

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

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of PCs playing in the adventure. Round 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 PCs to reach the objectives.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level PCs 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 PCs to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Verbobonc regional adventure. All PCs native to Verbobonc pay 1 Time Units per round; all others pay 2 Time Units per round.

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

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20

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

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

PREVIOUS ADVENTURES SUMMARY

Magister Obble Har is an enigma. He came to Verbobonc City in 591 CY and doggedly founded a wizards' school in the middle of a city known for fear and paranoia of wizardry.

In the first adventure of the Skyroad Series, VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*, the PCs assisted Magister Har in securing an odd arcane rod to the top of the Wrinkle Academy. The PCs then traveled on the Magister's behalf to a gnomish monastery in the south Kron Hills to recover an ancient elven map of Verbobonc showing the location of three anchors of the Skyroad, called the Pylons.

In the second adventure of the Skyroad Series, VER6-07 *Ride the Merchant's Highway*, the PCs activated the Pylon near Taymouth and, at Lord Galans' request, rode the Skyroad at breakneck speed to the Pylon in the Kron Hills.

In the third adventure of the Skyroad Series, VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*, Lord Galans asked the PCs to accompany him to the town of Glory to convince the local noble there, Lord Shannus, to activate the final Pylon. While there, the PCs encountered Gurtom Starcheek, a halfling warlock in Lord Shannus' employ. Gurtom may have confided in the PCs that he intended to steal a hoard of silver from Lord Shannus. Despite Lord Galans' best efforts, Lord Shannus refused to permit the Pylon to be activated. The Pylon was activated anyway, and now the entire Skyroad system is up and running.

The Skyroads have been active for months, and used without difficulty. Lord Galans has become a very wealthy man, starting with this adventure, however, the Skyroads show signs of occasional failure, with dramatic results. Furthermore, this adventure reveals Magister Har's interest in the Skyroads and reveals a significant threat in the Viscounty to the PCs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As this is the last adventure in the Skyroad Series, it is now time to reveal the secrets of the Skyroad and Magister Har's decades-old plan.

Secrets of the Skyroad

Review **Appendix 3: DM Overview** of the Skyroad to learn the background of the Skyroad. The conditions of the Skyroad's deactivation have not been revealed before now, but are of key importance.

The ancient elves of Verbobonc shut down the Skyroad many centuries ago when Vecna's lieutenant, Kas, discovered a ritual to use the massive energies of the Skyroad to fuel his unholy lust for power. The Skyroad system suffered several complete—and devastating—failures when Kas drew off the energy for his own use as a massive magical battery. This siphoning had to occur at a spot centrally located within the Skyroad system, on the banks of the Velderdyva River at the location where Verbobonc City would one day stand.

With the energy of the Skyroad contained within his undead frame, Kas gained a substantial amount of power. The rest of Kas' story is told elsewhere—including the forging of his infamous sword and his eventual betrayal of Vecna.

Realizing that the Skyroad's energy could be siphoned off and possibly used for evil, the elven druids realized that they had their opportunity to lobby to have the Skyroad system shut down for good. Even the elven artificers that built the Skyroad couldn't argue that such an event wouldn't happen again—perhaps fueling another evil—and the Skyroad system was turned off. The druids trapped the pillars and hid them away with illusions, intending that the Skyroads never be used again.

Secrets of Magister Obble Har

In 555 CY, the gifted student Obble Har learned the secret history of the Skyroads, including their use as a powerful magical battery. Har realized that the power of the Skyroad could be used for more than mere mortal power. With the right kind of amplification, the power of the Skyroad could be enough to ascend to become the proxy of a deity, nearly on par with the gods themselves.

Obble Har set into motion a far-sighted plan to become a quasi-deity.

First, Har had to collect a reservoir of magical power to contain—even for a few moments—the magical power of the Skyroad. To this end, Magister Har came to Verbobonc City in 591 CY and established an academy for wizards. This academy was founded in one of the

extradimensional wrinkles of space that dot the Viscounty. The Wrinkle Academy was born. Although Obble Har—now Magister Har—was genuinely interested in providing magical education to the residents of the Viscounty, this was a small part of his plan. Within the extradimensional space of the Wrinkle Academy, Magister Har created a Spellpool, a storage area of magical energy. Every member of the Wrinkle Academy has continually had a small amount of his or her arcane ability slowly drawn away—usually imperceptibly—to grow the Spellpool. In recent years, members of the Wrinkle Academy have begun to notice the energy siphoned off (this was reflected as the “spell cost” for being a member of the Wrinkle Academy meta-org for the past couple of years).

The Spellpool in the Wrinkle Academy takes the form of an infinitely large library, with an infinite number of books, all on different topics. High-level adventurers stopped a formian invasion of the Endless Library in the special event *VERS4-02 Gala at the Wrinkle Academy*.

With the Spellpool developing nicely, Magister Har turned to the task of reactivating the Skyroads. The Skyroad Series has been all about this task, and the PCs have played a vital role. When necessary, Magister Har has intervened directly to ensure the Skyroads would be activated (such as by sending his dust mephit familiar Threnodee to do the job at the end of *VER7-02 Storm the Dragon's Bastion*).

At the same time, Magister Har has been preparing to collect the energies of the Skyroad and funnel them into the Spellpool within the Wrinkle Academy. Magister Har found that silver was the best metal to conduct this magical energy. To this end, Magister Har has festooned the Wrinkle Academy with silver lightning rods to collect the Skyroad's energy, and purchased miles and miles of silver cable to channel the energy into the Spellpool. Magister Har has been buying so much silver, in fact, that it has resulted in a silver scarcity within the Viscounty over the past several months. Yet still, Magister Har needs more silver before he can enact his plan.

It should be stated that Magister Har's personality has always been of a bookish wizard, more concerned with collecting power for its own sake than performing evil—or good—acts with it. Magister Har would become a proxy of Boccob, impartial god of magic and scholars.

Gurtom Starcheek's Role

Gurtom Starcheek, a warlock-for-hire that has dogged the steps of the PCs throughout the Skyroad Series, has a greater role than even he imagines in this story. For the past few years, Gurtom has been an agent of Lord

Shannus of Glory. Lord Shannus, hearkening to the dire whispers regarding the Skyroad from his elven heritage, resisted the activation of the Skyroads since the beginning. Lord Shannus learned very early on that Magister Har was hoarding silver. Although Lord Shannus wasn't sure why the wizard would need so much silver, Shannus knew for himself that he needed the silver to create silver weapons to fight the lycanthropes of the Iron Wood.

Gurtom Starcheek learned of his master's silver hoard and, out of sheer greed, decided to steal it all for himself. Before enacting the theft, Gurtom put the word out, looking for anyone interested in buying several tons of silver. Magister Har was all too willing to pay top dollar, so Gurtom has arranged to steal Lord Shannus' silver and sell it at a premium to Magister Har.

Gurtom doesn't know that Lord Shannus was hoarding silver just to keep it away from Magister Har. Gurtom also doesn't know what Magister Har needs all that silver for—but he wouldn't care, so long as he gets paid for it.

Secrets of Threnodee and the Prophecy

About 20 years ago, Magister Har called to his side a mephit familiar. Threnodee the dust mephit received this call, and has served as Magister Har's loyal, if gloomy, familiar ever since.

But Threnodee has another master: Wee Jas, goddess of magic, death, and vanity, has long foreseen that a mortal may attempt to extend Boccob's reach through a prophesied ritual. Threnodee has been a loyal servant of Wee Jas for many centuries in the outer planes. Wee Jas has no desire to see a mortal elevated to become the proxy of another god of magic, and secretly sent out to many of Oerth's talented wizard's familiars as gifts. And so Threnodee found himself being sent to Obble Har. Threnodee's mission is to observe his master, and if he determines that Magister Har is the subject of the prophecy (as described below), Threnodee is to do whatever is necessary to keep Har from completing the ritual and becoming the Proxy of Boccob. Magister Har does not suspect that his own familiar is a secret traitor to his plan.

Threnodee knows of a prophecy about a mortal rising to become a proxy that has circulated among Wee Jas' court for many centuries:

***I speak this prophecy to the three,
The Ruby, the Book, and the speaker of Lies
Skilled above all in the domain of his god,
A master and servant from Oerth will arise.***

***Knowledge is the path to his ascension,
and magic will be the key to the door.***

***Death will greet him and embrace him,
secrets once seen will no longer obscure.***

***For when traders fall and traitors strike,
the humbled master will grasp his role.
Then the brave at heart must stem the striving,
and keep the master from his goal.***

Threndoe knows that Magister Har, although not a particularly religious gnome, reveres Boccob (represented by the Book) more than any other deity. Threnodee has been told that if a mortal were to become the proxy of Boccob it would eclipse the powers of Vecna (represented by the Speaker of Lies) and Wee Jas (the Ruby Lady, represented by the Ruby). In this adventure, Threnodee will try to prevent Magister Har from becoming the proxy of Boccob but, in the final moments of Magister Har's ascension, Threnodee will be incapacitated.

Threnodee's interpretation of the prophecy, however, is wrong. Magister Har is indeed mentioned in the prophecy, but not as "the humbled master". Instead, Magister Har is "the brave at heart". The prophecy does not warn against the rise of a proxy of Boccob. Instead, it warns against the rise of a proxy of Vecna.

The prophecy actually predicts that Halmadar (a servitor of Vecna and once master of Vecna's forces, who lay dormant beneath the Kron Hills for many years) will try to usurp Magister Har's ritual in the final moments and attempt to become a proxy of Vecna instead. Magister Har is destined to stop Halmadar from stealing away the power Magister Har has so painstakingly collected over the years.

Much will be revealed about Halmadar and his machinations in future Verbobonc adventures, but for now his role is that he will attempt to wrest control of the Skyroad-charged Spellpool away from Magister Har in the final moments of the ritual. Whether Halmadar succeeds in this gambit will depend on the actions of the PCs.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

The PCs will interact with several NPCs in the course of this adventure. As these characters reappear throughout the entire Skyroad Series and other Verbobonc adventures, it is important that they are roleplayed consistently by all DMs, so players will recognize these NPCs when they meet them again.

Lord Wellborn Estival: Lord Estival is an early middle-aged noble who recently arrived in Verbobonc. After proving his connection to the Estival line he took possession of a very small amount of land surrounding

his family estate and castle. Lord Estival has since labored to reverse the evil reputation his family received during the Short War (CY 436). During that time, the Estivals supported the oppressive and expansionist Keoish forces. When the combined forces of Veluna, Furyondy and Verbobonc finally routed the Keoish forces, the family fled. Since his arrival, Lord Wellborn Estival has provided food to the Viscounty during the winter famine and upheld the Viscount's authority.

Lord Roland Galans: Lord Roland Galans, known as “the Grand” both due to his girth and his mode of dress, outwardly presents a jovial and welcoming personality. Those that make the mistake of not looking past this friendly exterior miss the cunning business mind he possesses. Lord Galans maintains two very distant holdings: fertile fields in the southern Viscounty, and an immense shipping yard in the northeastern tip of the Viscounty. Lord Galans stays very informed about the goings-on in both of his holdings, but he actually spends most of his time in Verbobonc City. Inside his lands, Lord Galans also has the nickname of “the Sampler” from those merchants who traverse his domain. Lord Galans will ‘sample’ a small portion of the very best the merchant carries; as recompense, the taxes the merchant pays are significantly reduced. This is a beneficial situation for all parties except the Viscount, who relies on the taxes. As yet, the Viscount's investigators have been unable to uncover any serious corruption, and Lord Galans has become one of the wealthiest nobles in Verbobonc. Lord Galans is also well-known as a trader and breeder of high-quality horses. Most of the horses the Mounted Borderers ride are raised in Lord Galans' southern holdings.

Lord Galans is a friendly, fiery man who possesses keen business acumen and is a good judge of character.

Lord Galans has taken full advantage of the Skyroad system. This magical highway is an incredible boon for Lord Galans, as he requested—and obtained—the right to charge tolls for its use. Lord Galans tolls are quite minimal, however, and the Skyroad has seen a lot of use in the past several months. Lord Galans has invested heavily in its operation.

However, this adventure opens with a terrible accident on the Skyroads. For a split second, the entire Skyroad system shuts down, spilling all manner of people, cargo, and animals to their deaths. Although the Skyroad reactivates almost immediately, it is prone to sudden glitches and no one has any desire to use such a dangerous, unreliable road.

After the end of this adventure, the Skyroad system has completely burned out, and Lord Galans is ruined.

Gurtom Starcheek: Gurtom Starcheek is a self-serving halfling warlock. Gurtom is in his late fifties, which is the far side of middle-aged for a halfling, but still spry. He's Chaotic Neutral, which means he's out for himself and doesn't mind if others get hurt along the way, although he won't really go out of his way to harm anyone. Gurtom thinks nothing of breaking his word. Gurtom is no fool, and he doesn't go anywhere without a clever escape plan in mind. He is often surrounded by thugs and goons, although he prefers attractive, sycophantic ones. Gurtom Starcheek gets his name from a livid purple birthmark across the left half of his face in the shape of a five-pointed star (Gurtom thinks its evidence that his mother consorted with something unnatural, and believes that it's the source of his magical powers). Although the PCs may have run afoul of Gurtom in VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*, the halfling doesn't bear the PCs any ill will, and Gurtom may have regained some of their trust in VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*.

Until the events of VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*, Gurtom was in the employ of Lord Shannus as a freelance agent. It was under Lord Shannus' instruction that he confronted the PCs in VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*, and he may have attempted to woo the PCs to Lord Shannus' side in VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*.

Several months ago, Gurtom learned that Lord Shannus is hoarding an incredible amount of silver. This wasn't immediately surprising to the halfling: after all, Lord Shannus equips his allies and underlings with silver weapons on a regular basis. However, the sheer amount of silver that Lord Shannus is hoarding—silver bars, silver coins, silver jewelry—is incredible. Gurtom's thought was how best to get all that wealth for himself, and he hit upon a plan to steal it. Gurtom left Lord Shannus' employ shortly after the events of VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*, but he never quit planning how to return and take the silver for himself.

Just the night before this adventure opens, Gurtom Starcheek used his *flee the scene* ability to enter Lord Shannus' vault with a *portable hole* he had acquired. Gurtom filled the *portable hole* with all of the silver he could jam into it, and then fled the vault. Gurtom had to get out of the Iron Wood as fast as possible, and that is along the Skyroad. Although he could have gone to Taymouth just as easily, Gurtom decided that he would head into the Kron Hills, and head to Verbobonc City from the south.

Gurtom commissioned a few assistants to help with his getaway. First, he sent a group of halflings ahead of him on the Skyroad to prepare for his arrival in the Kron

Hills. He also commissioned a carriage with a few sycophantic human guardians to protect him on the Skyroad.

Unfortunately, just after Gurtom started heading south on the Skyroad, it failed. Gurtom and his entourage dropped right into the edge of the Iron Wood and were almost immediately beset by hungry lycanthropes. Never one to trouble himself with the fate of his hirelings, Gurtom immediately escaped using his *flee the scene* ability. All of his hirelings were attacked and left for dead. Gurtom, meanwhile, makes his way to Verbobonc City and delivers his load of silver to Magister Har, well ahead of the PCs.

Threnodee: Threnodee the dust mephit is the familiar of Magister Obble Har, the powerful head of the Wrinkle Academy in Verbobonc City. Threnodee looks like an ordinary dust mephit, but he wears a tattered brown cloak with holes cut into it for his wings. Threnodee has a morbid and depressing fixation with death. He always thinks any situation will turn out for the worst, probably in a way that will end up killing himself and everyone around him. He mopes a lot. Threnodee has all the statistics of a dust mephit from the *Monster Manual*, but he's practically invulnerable: he has an Armor Class of 27, improved evasion, spell resistance of 25, and several dozen hit points. Despite these qualities, Threnodee spends most days thinking he'll never live to see the next one, so what's the point? Although not a coward, Threnodee isn't particularly brave, either. Like Magister Har, he's Neutral in alignment. Threnodee speaks in a dusty rattle, and starts sentences with morbid thoughts like, "I know that it won't matter when we're jumped by bandits and left to die on the road, but..." or "Not that you're anything but dead men walking anyway, but I think..." or "...and then we'll all get killed and can rest in the peaceful sleep of the ages." Play Threnodee like a gloomy mortician.

The PCs may know Threnodee from the previous adventures in this series, when he tagged along with them on Magister Har's behalf. In this adventure, Threnodee aids the characters, but maneuvers them against the party, as he believes (erroneously, it turns out) that an ancient prophecy means that Magister Har is destined to turn against Threnodee's true mistress, Wee Jas.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Encounter One: Dropping In

The PCs experience tragedy on the Skyroad, and are assisted by Lord Wellborn Estival.

Encounter Two: Two Visitors, Two Requests

The PCs receive two offers. First, Gurtom's cronies sell out their master in the hopes of getting a cut of his stolen silver hoard. They direct the PCs to Gurtom's crash site (see Encounter Three). Second, Threnodee arrives to learn more about Magister Har and his connection to the Skyroad and the prophecy. Threnodee has prepared a magical ritual for bearers of the Gnomish Spectacles (see Encounter Four).

Encounter Three: Old Friends

While seeking Gurtom's crash site, the PCs encounter some dangerous lycanthropes. If they have previously been on good terms with the Mist Children Elves, they may receive a warning of this combat, or bypass it entirely. The PCs learn that Gurtom has fled toward Verbobonc City.

Encounter Four: The Old Stomping Grounds

The PCs enact Threnodee's ritual and learn about a terrible accident in Magister Har's past by exploring his old home. Unfortunately, agents of an inquisitive mind flayer are on the scene, as well.

Encounter Five: To Verbobonc City

The PCs find that a peculiar magical catastrophe has afflicted the entirety of Verbobonc City and must find a way to get inside by guile or stealth.

Encounter Six: In the Frozen City

The PCs may encounter a team of opportunistic looters at work in the city, and have the opportunity to put a stop to them.

Encounter Seven: At the Wrinkle Academy

The PCs arrive at the Wrinkle Academy and must scale to a high balcony to gain entrance. There, they find two unpleasant surprises: first, magical energy flow through the silver wire snaking through the Wrinkle Academy, discharging dangerously at irregular intervals. Second, Threnodee the dust mephit has been incapacitated in a chunk of amber. The PCs may be able to learn more from Threnodee via charades or telepathy.

Encounter Eight: The Forgotten Librarian

The PCs must interact with a forgetful scholar in order to gain access to the Endless Library, the secret inner sanctum and Spellpool of the Wrinkle Academy.

Encounter Nine: The Endless Library

In the Endless Library, the PCs confront Gurtom and Magister Har. Before Magister Har can complete the ritual, he identifies an intruder: Halmadar. Halmadar invites a character to be the receptacle of Vecna's power. When Gurtom accepts, the PCs must battle the power-

bloated halfling warlock. Meanwhile, Magister Har does his best to stop Halmadar's ascension.

Conclusion:

The fallout of the ritual within the Wrinkle Academy is revealed: the Wrinkle Academy of Magic and its master are no more.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

PCs that are members of certain meta-organizations or have played previous events in this series should be identified before play.

- **Player Handout 1.** All of the PCs are aware that a triangle of safe, fast aerial highways connect the far-flung reaches of the Viscounty of Verbobonc. Give the PCs **Player Handout 1**, which shows the location of the highways. Explain that, when the adventure begins, they're on the Skyroad to the south of the town of Rhynehurst, west of the Celeb'vara River, near Castle Estival.
- **Played VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*:** PCs that played VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon* have met Gurtom Starcheek before, and probably don't like or trust the halfling warlock. This comes in to play particularly in **Encounter Nine: The Endless Library**, where the PCs finally confront Gurtom Starcheek. Any PCs that earned **Scaled the Wizard's Tower** from this adventure are in for an unpleasant surprise in **Encounter Seven: At the Wrinkle Academy**, where they learn that their previous contact with the silver wire makes them more susceptible to its powerful energies.
- **Played VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*:** PCs that played VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion* have met Gurtom Starcheek in a more amiable setting. Gurtom may have mentioned, in vague terms, that he intends to liberate Lord Shannus' hoard of silver at some future time (which is, of course, now).

More significantly, PCs that played this adventure have received either **Attacked the Mist Children Elves** or **Defended the Mist Children Elves**. This will come into play in **Encounter Three: Old Friends**.

- **The Family:** Identify PCs that are members of the Family metaorganization, as the halflings specifically approach them in **Encounter Two: Two Visitors, Two Requests**.

- **Gnomish Spectacles** (from VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*): In each adventure of the Skyroad Series, any character wearing the Gnomish Spectacles, available in VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*, earns a special benefit.

In this scenario, PCs with the Gnomish Spectacles can meet the gnome whose spirit inhabits their spectacles, and earn a special boon in Encounter Four.

INTRODUCTION

The adventure begins with the PCs traveling with a caravan of human and halfling traders making their way along the Skyroad. Let the PCs know that the Skyroad is a safe, fast method of travel, commonly used by merchants, traders and messengers. Lord Roland Galans collects a toll on the road for all passengers upon it, but this toll is very small and the Skyroads are usually quite busy. Today is no exception.

The DM should answer any questions the PCs have about the Skyroads, with reference to **Appendix 3**. The players should understand, at a minimum that they are traveling along a beam of force hundreds of feet above the ground, along with many other people, animals, and wagons.

The PCs should also know that it has been raining for several days. PCs that succeed on a DC 20 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check are aware that the rainstorms have been unnatural, as though fiercer and more long-lasting than should be expected. There is no apparent cause for this effect, and it occurs throughout the Viscounty.

As the PCs have been traveling together along the Skyroad (and with the caravan) all morning, you should have them introduce themselves to each other before moving on to the first encounter.

ENCOUNTER ONE: DROPPING IN

You should briefly ask to review the spell lists and MILs of each of the PCs at the table. You shouldn't tell them what you are looking for, and should do your best to keep it a secret. You should identify PCs with the following:

- The spell *feather fall* currently prepared (if a wizard) or among spells known (if a sorcerer or bard).
- *A ring of feather falling*.
- *A safewing emblem*, which takes up the throat slot (that is, if the character has an amulet as well as a *safewing emblem* listed in their neck

slot and if it is not clear which is currently being worn, you should ask).

These PCs are able to survive the fall in this encounter, and it's better if you know who these PCs are ahead of time.

You can also use this opportunity, while reviewing the PCs' information, to identify any unfamiliar items or spells they may have available.

When you are ready to begin, read the following:

Lightning cracks overhead and rain pours down. But in the Skyroad it is dry as the caravan you're traveling with rolls south toward the Kron.

"Will we see Uncle Ulf's farm?" The young halfling asks her father as the edge of the Iron Wood passes and the rolling vineyards around Castle Estival appears. Her father shakes his head. "I'm sorry, pet, but I doubt that with this rain we'll see much of anything..."

The driver's words are cut short by a long rolling crack, as lightning arcs along the length of the Skyroad in strange, jagged, triangular shapes. There's a moment of sick weightlessness. The world whirls, the Skyroad flickers, and the caravan plummets towards the ground hundreds of feet below.

Remind the PCs that they are traveling with a family of eight halflings, four humans, and six horses. There are many others on the Skyroad as well, but none appreciably near the PCs. Barring any method of arresting the fall, the PCs plummet 180 feet to the ground below.

Typically, this would result in 18d6 falling damage and end the adventure for most parties. However, by sheer luck, the PCs land in the branches of a large willow tree. The PCs crash through the branches of the tree, along with the wagon and many of the traders they travel with, dropping the PCs to the ground in a clatter of splintered branches and torn leaves. This reduces the falling damage to 5d6 lethal damage and 5d6 non-lethal damage to all falling PCs.

Once the PCs have taken the fall, read the following if any PCs remain conscious:

It is a blessing that your wagon crashed down through the branches of a tall willow tree rather than on land. Others were not so lucky. All about the length of where the Skyroad ran there are smashed wagons, wounded or dead people, horses, and livestock. Above in the rain, the Skyroad flickers a few more times and then comes back on again.

Already, an acolyte of St. Cuthbert is examining the wounded, while blood flows freely from his own scalp. He lifts his holy symbol, speaks a word, and saves yet another life.

The acolyte notices you and shouts to you through the rain. "I would request, good sirs that you assist me in saving those we might save. The wounded need our aid."

Allow the PCs to discuss briefly what if any actions they're taking to assist, and note what items they are using and spells they are casting. Remember that a healing spell cast upon a target suffering from both lethal and nonlethal damage cures a like amount of damage of both damage types.

Feel free to describe the terrible magnitude of this tragedy: splintered wagons, dead animals, and wounded and dead travelers litter the tidy grape fields in a perfectly straight line running from the northwest to the southeast (that is, directly under the Skyroad).

After the PCs have done what they can, the acolyte consults with them. If the PCs were all rendered unconscious by the fall, this is the point at which they are awakened by the acolyte's ministrations (the acolyte tries to bring cleric-looking PCs around first, if obvious).

The acolyte, Hurbert, is in a terrible quandary. He knows that people are in serious need of help. However, he is not sure where to take them. He asks the PCs their advice.

"Good sirs, we've got dozens and dozens of people that are in bad need of help, and soon. I see only a few options before us."

Present the following options in the form of a dialogue with Hurbert, rather than as running text:

- Rhynehurst: 10 miles. ***We could try to make it to Rhynehurst, the closest town of any size. Rhynehurst is not known for its healing, but there are plenty of people who could help. Rhynehurst is ten miles to the north.***
- Abbey of the Valorous Knight: 18 miles. ***The village of Larneystoe is to the southwest, about fifteen or so miles away. They have an abbey full of holy men there, the Abbey of the Valorous Knight. Surely, those people will be able to help. But it's very far, and across the Celeb'vara River, too.***
- Castle Estival: ½ mile. ***Very near at hand is Castle Estival. Some say the new lord is a good man, who feeds the hungry and helps***

the sick, but Castle Estival has such a dire reputation that I'm not sure whether the rumors of kindness should be trusted. Castle Estival is quite near.

The acolyte points to the southwest, and a burst of lightning illuminates the craggy rise upon which towers Castle Estival. It is no more than a half-mile from you.

The best option here is to seek aid from Castle Estival. Virtually none of the wounded are conscious; those that are will lapse into unconsciousness at any strain. Any wagons that might have been used to haul the wounded, as well as the animals to pull the wagons, have been smashed to bits. However, rather than give the players this solution, you should let them come to this decision on their own.

As the PCs make their way to the castle (or before the PCs get too far away, if they decide to go somewhere other than Castle Estival), Lord Estival rides to help. Read:

Through the fields thunders a massive mare. On her back rides a middle-aged man with graying hair, his fine clothes drenched with rain and sweat. He pulls up short, swings himself off his horse, and rushes up to the acolyte (and any obvious divine-caster PCs). He pants, "Saw it happen...from a balcony...came as fast as I could." As the man catches his breath, he hands out several scroll tubes and neatly labeled healing potions. "My men are on their way. How else can I be of help?"

This is Lord Wellborn Estival, and his offer of help is a genuine one. He has brought his personal stores: eight scrolls of cure light wounds, four scrolls of cure moderate wounds, ten potions of cure light wounds, and three potions of cure serious wounds. By the time Lord Estival catches his breath, a dozen of his men arrive with carts and horses. All are eager to help the wounded. They also set about preparing the dead.

PCs who met Lord Estival in VER6-01 *Discontent of Our Winter* or VER6-03 *Castle Estival* may know that Lord Estival is a decent, caring man who has recently arrived from Keoland in order to reclaim his family's heritage and dispel the dark stain his family left on local history many generations ago. Because of this stain, many people distrust the new Lord Estival. PCs who have not met Lord Estival recall this information with a DC 10 Knowledge (local: VTF) roll.

Once it is clear that Estival's men have things well in hand (including taking the wounded by cart up to Castle Estival), Lord Estival invites the PCs to the castle to be his

guests. He praises their quick thinking, luck, and heroic devotion. Move on to the next Encounter.

ENCOUNTER TWO: TWO VISITORS, TWO REQUESTS

Once inside Castle Estival, the men lay out the dead in the courtyard and bring the wounded into the large refectory. Read:

The wounded are arrayed in the grand refectory of Castle Estival, now a makeshift hospital. A fire blazes in the hearth, warming the room. Lord Estival continues to direct the rescue efforts, sending his men with their carts further northwest and southeast along the path of the Skyroad, with instructions to bring back anyone they can save. Pages, maids, and other servants tend to the wounded here.

A well-groomed butler approaches Lord Estival, clears his throat, and whispers something into his ear. A DC 18 Listen check reveals the butler's words to be "Milord, you have a strange visitor requesting a private audience...some sort of...little monster, if you'll pardon the expression, milord." Lord Estival politely excuses himself, with a puzzled look on his face. If any PC expresses the desire to accompany Lord Estival, then Lord Estival allows that PC—and that PC only—to accompany him to meet his visitor on a DC 25 Diplomacy check.

If any adventurers succeed at this Diplomacy check, describe Lord Estival going to meet the dust mephit Threnodee. Threnodee asks whether there are any surviving first-hand witnesses to the Skyroad failure, and Estival offers to introduce Threnodee to the rest of the party.

First Visitors: Halflings with an Angle

Once Lord Estival has stepped away, a couple of halflings with a business proposition approach the party. These halflings speak to members of the Family (after flashing the secret sign to the party). If no members of the Family are present, the halflings speak primarily to the toughest-looking, shadiest-looking PC of the party (that is, to a barbarian, ranger or rogue over a paladin or monk). They do not particularly care if the other PCs overhear, as they assume all of the PCs will have to work together to recover the silver they seek.

From the crowd of wounded a pair of halflings approaches. One has his arm in a sling, the other hobbles along with a stick fashioned as a crutch. "You've got the look of someone who can take some punishment," the one with the sling says with a smile.

“Milo and me here have information that may prove to be valuable to people who can take punishment...”

Milo clears his throat. “When we came through Glory we got approached by this older halfling named Gurtom—Gurtom Starcheek it was. Said he had a line on a magic bag full of silver. Said that we could get a share just by setting up some horses and the like.”

Milo motions to the north. “Seems what with him plannin’ on leaving after us, him and that great big magic bag of silver must have landed in the Iron Wood.”

“We figure blokes that could take some punishment could backtrack, and pick up some easy treasure.” The first halfling says. “Might even share with the fellas who pointed you ‘twards it. Finder’s fee and the like.”

Allow the PCs to haggle with the halflings to determine the particular percentage the PCs will give for this information. The halflings would like a promise of at least five percent, but they’ll take whatever they can get. The halflings intend to collect their “finders fee” at a later date. If pressed on this issue, one will chuckle, *“Oh, we’ll be able to find you later on. We come from a big family, you see, and we’re all over the Viscountry.”*

The halflings describe Gurtom Starcheek’s appearance in detail, if the PCs have not previously met him.

It is up to the PCs whether they would like to take on this mission, the terms under which they negotiate with the halflings, and whether they even decide to tell Lord Estival about it. If the PCs do decide to tell Lord Estival, he asks only that they speak with Threnodee before they set off.

Second Visitor: The Dust Mephit

Before the PCs can pack up and chase off into the Iron Wood, Lord Estival returns with his guest. Read or paraphrase the following:

Lord Estival returns the refectory, looking anxiously around for you. Plodding along at his side is a small, dingy creature wearing a dusty gray cloak. The creature perks up upon noticing the wounded, reaches inside his cloak and starts pulling out copper coins in anticipation. Its cloak, you realize, is the creature’s dusty gray wings.

Lord Estival notices the creature’s actions and quickly interjects, “Good sir, we’re trying to save these people, not help them pass along.” With a dejected grunt, the creature stuffs its copper coins back into its pouch. Lord Estival continues, “We’ve placed the dead in the

courtyard, for now.” At this, the dust mephit brightens again, straining to look out into the courtyard. Estival catches your eye. “Ah, here are the heroes I told you about.”

This dust mephit is Threnodee, who has appeared many times throughout the Skyroad series of adventures. Lord Estival waits to see whether the dust mephit and the PCs recognize each other. If they do not, he graciously introduces them to each other: *“My friends, this is Threnodee, a dust mephit, and the familiar of Magister Obble Har of the Wrinkle Academy.”*

Threnodee is glad to find the PCs, as he was sent to determine the cause of the Skyroad failure from a first-hand account. Threnodee is happy that the PCs survived (but, it is clear, he is a little saddened, too).

The following is what Threnodee knows about the Skyroad accident.

- Magister Har noted the Skyroad failure and sent Threnodee to investigate the extent of the failure.
- Magister Har was experimenting with his lightning rods when Threnodee left. Magister Har seemed exceptionally engrossed in the experiment he was performing.
- Threnodee teleported to the area and followed the dead and dying to Castle Estival.
- The failure of the Skyroad appears to be temporary—the Skyroad is now back in working order. Although Threnodee doesn’t know the cause, he suspects it might have had something to do with the lightning experiments Magister Har was performing.

Threnodee attempts to get as accurate a description from the PCs as possible as to what was occurring immediately prior to the Skyroads failing as well as what happened afterwards. He is particularly keen to hear about the pulse of triangular-shaped lightning, as this confirms his theory that Magister Har may be somehow responsible.

In addition to determining the reason for the Skyroad failure, Threnodee is also looking for any PCs that possess the Gnomish Spectacles from VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard’s Dungeon*. If none of the PCs have the spectacles, Lord Estival bought a pair as a curiosity, and Threnodee has asked to use the spectacles (and it is Estival’s spectacles, not a PCs that are the focus of the discussion that follows).

Threnodee explains that Magister Har began his experiments into the lightning energy—and the

Skyroads—long before he called Threnodee as a familiar. Threnodee wants to use a ritual he knows, along with a pair of the Gnomish Spectacles, to peer back into Magister Har's past.

Where to Go Next?

From here, the PCs have the option to head into the Iron Wood after the missing silver, or undergo Threnodee's ritual. There isn't any one they should do first, and they can in fact do both if they desire. Both of these directions provide important clues that point to Verbobonc City, and the PCs may choose to head off to Verbobonc City after only one of these two encounters. This is fine. The party will have the opportunity to "make up" the missing experience with the combat in Encounter Seven.

Should the PCs choose to go after the silver, proceed to Encounter Three. Should the PCs choose to take part in Threnodee's ritual, proceed to Encounter Four.

ENCOUNTER THREE: OLD FRIENDS

This encounter deals with the PCs' trek through the Iron Wood in search of Gurtom Starcheek and his bag of stolen silver. Gurtom is actually long gone with his silver, but the PCs do not discover this until the end of the encounter—where they also learn where Gurtom has gone.

The trek to the Iron Wood along the path underneath the Skyroad only takes an hour or so from Castle Estival. Although the PCs pass other signs of damage and death, the wounded have all been collected and brought back to Castle Estival by this time. Once within the Iron Wood itself, travel is more difficult, as the PCs are not on any road (which means they do not encounter any of Lord Shannus' patrols, either, which is fortunate).

Once in the Iron Wood itself, the PCs meet some of the mysterious and aloof Mist Children Elves. Depending on past relations with the Mist Children Elves, the PCs may receive a warning regarding a group of powerful lycanthropes prowling in this part of the Iron Wood.

The rains do not penetrate the thick forest canopy of the Iron Wood except as a misty drizzle. The trail of wreckage here in the Iron Wood leads through the dark mists, thinning out as your party works its way through the woods. Presumably most of the people had left early enough in the day to clear the wood before the road failed. Although you do not see any animals along the damp ground, you hear bird-calls

from within the trees above you. This forest is an eerie place, but it is apparently not devoid of life.

Have the PCs make DC 12 Listen or Knowledge (nature) checks. If none of the PCs succeed, then skip the encounter with the Mist Children Elves and go right to the lycanthrope attack. If any of the PCs succeed, read:

The animal cries you hear are not natural noises, but instead calls made by people to signal to each other. In the trees above, you can just make out the forms of a few lanky elves dressed in crude leathers. They are stepping from tree branch to tree branch above you.

If they have been noticed, the Mist Children Elves stop to parlay with the PCs. Otherwise, the Mist Children Elves move on, to leave the PCs to their fate. If the PCs attack the elves, they flee through the trees branches above. If the Mist Children Elves parlay, read:

One of the elves, a muscular, bare-footed man holding a large spear, squats on a branch 15 feet above your head. "Rare to see travelers in these dire days," he says in thickly accented common. "I am Velrien. What brings outsiders within these dangerous woods in such weather?"

Velrien is cautious, as the lives of the four hunters with him are his responsibility, and dangerous lycanthropes are near. He worries that the PCs could bring danger. If the PCs communicate with Velrien, have them make a Diplomacy check. Any character that participates in the conversation may assist with this check.

The PCs may have had prior dealings with the Mist Children elves. The DM should review the players' ARs from VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*, if played with this same character. For each "Defended the Mist Children Elves" in the party, apply a +5 circumstance bonus to the Diplomacy roll. For each "Attacked the Mist Children Elves" in the party, apply a -10 penalty to the Diplomacy roll. Any PC affiliated with House Shannus or the Protectors of the Iron Wood gains a +10 bonus to his or her Diplomacy roll (and to his or her Diplomacy check only; this is not a bonus to the total, like the other modifiers above).

Consult the Diplomacy results in the *Players Handbook*. Velrien and the elves start as Unfriendly to the PCs.

- If Velrien is Hostile or Unfriendly, he decides the PCs are dangerous, but might be useful to draw off the lycanthropes nearby. Velrien gives a derisive sniff, and he and his group move off quickly. Once out of sight, he and his fellows give several loud whoops, which brings the lycanthropes running to the area within a

couple of rounds. In this case, the PCs may not make the Listen check to hear the lycanthropes coming (see below).

- If Velrien is Indifferent, he decides to let the PCs be. He finishes the conversation abruptly, and he and his group leave through the branches quickly. On a DC 20 Sense Motive, the PCs get the sense that the elves are being very quiet and fleeing from the area for some reason, but aren't sure why. If they detect the elves' caution, give them a +4 circumstance bonus on the Listen checks to hear the lycanthropes approaching (see below).
- If Velrien is Friendly, he decides to provide the PCs some warning before going on his way. He finishes the conversation abruptly with the warning "Sharpen your senses and be wary, for enemies are very near; prepare to hide or fight" before leaving through the branches with his group. Give the PCs a +4 circumstance bonus on the Listen checks to hear the lycanthropes approaching (see below).
- If Velrien is made Helpful, he decides to help the PCs. He cautions the PCs to hide as well as they can, because powerful enemies are coming this way. Velrien points out a good hiding place and descends to the ground long enough to leave some confusing tracks and scents in the area. This assistance gives each of the PCs a +4 circumstance bonus on the Listen checks to hear the lycanthropes approaching and a +8 circumstance bonus on their Hide checks to avoid detection by the lycanthropes.

A minute or two after the PCs finish their conversation with Velrien, a band of lycanthropes patrolling the area stumble upon the PCs. If Velrien was made at least Indifferent, and if the PCs succeed at a DC 20 Listen check, they earn one round of preparation time before the lycanthropes are upon them.

If the PCs are hidden, have the lycanthropes make Spot checks opposed by the Hide checks of the PCs. If the lycanthropes detect the PCs, they leap into combat with savage glee.

APL 4 (EL 4)

Lycanthropes (2): wererats, hybrid form; hp 15 each; see *Monster Manual* page 173. These are natural lycanthropes, and therefore have DR 10/silver.

APL 6 (EL 6)

Lycanthrope: werewolf, hybrid form; hp 20 each; see *Monster Manual* page 174.

Lycanthrope: were dire wolf Barbarian 1, hybrid form; hp 72; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 8)

Lycanthropes (2): were dire wolf Barbarian 2, hybrid form; hp 83 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 10)

Lycanthropes (4): were dire wolf Barbarian 2, hybrid form; hp 83 each; see Appendix 1.

Development: The Better Part of Valor. If the PCs successfully hide from the lycanthropes, the lycanthropes move past them in a couple of rounds. The PCs earn full experience for defeating this encounter if the lycanthropes pass them by.

Treasure

APL 4: L: 10 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 50 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 25 gp per character.

APL 8: L: 100 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potions of cure moderate wounds*(2), 25 gp per character each.

APL 10: L: 201 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potions of cure moderate wounds*(4), 25 gp per character each.

Moving On

After the lycanthrope encounter, the PCs are free to move on under the Skyroad. After about a half-hour of travel, read:

About 30 feet ahead the dark form of a carriage looms out of the mist. The once ornate cabin has been smashed to kindling and strewn about the wreck are a half dozen dead men. It is clear from the blood stains on their drawn weapons they did not die from the fall. Their fine clothes barely cover the dozens of gaping wounds on their torsos. From the far side of the carriage comes a bubbling, feeble, cough.

Allow the PCs to approach and take whatever preparations they wish. Then read or paraphrase the following:

A young blond man has propped himself up against the carriage, his rapier resting loosely in his hand. His breath comes in laborious gasps. Sensing your presence, he grasps his weapon and attempts to raise it.

The blonde man is named Jal Haylen. Jal is a sell-sword from Dyvers. He is currently conscious and disabled at -4 hit points. Without medical care it's entirely possible that he will cease to be stable and begin to die. Naturally, being healed and cared for is very prominent in his mind,

he is grateful to any PC that provides him with any healing. Below is what he knows:

- He was hired in Glory to provide security for a merchant early this morning.
- He is aware that the “merchant” was a cover story, but was willing to go along.
- The “merchant” was a middle aged halfling with a large purple birthmark in the shape of a star on his face.
- The “merchant” didn’t have any cargo, only a small black pocket handkerchief that he clutched at all times, as though it were particularly valuable (note: this is Gurtom’s *portable hole*).
- The “merchant” was on his way to the Kron Hills, to meet up with some friends and then travel to Verbobonc City, where he would meet with some sort of “head gnome.” The merchant chuckled about how the “head gnome” had a real desire for silver. The merchant spoke as though he was going to bring the “head gnome” a lot of silver, but the merchant didn’t have any cargo with him. Jal speculates that he was going to the Kron Hills to pick up his cargo of silver (which is not correct, but a reasonable assumption on Jal’s part).
- Later this morning, they rapidly left Glory and reached the Skyroad pylon shortly thereafter. Everything went well until the Skyroad failed.
- He and his companions were attacked by lycanthropes shortly after the Skyroad failure.
- If the PCs have been particularly kind to Jal, he adds: the merchant is probably a warlock. When the lycanthropes attacked, he blasted one with magic energy and then escaped by using a series of short teleports. Jal has heard something of warlocks, and knows that these are powers typical of that class.

Where to Go Next?

The PCs should realize that Gurtom is long gone, and suspect that he has gone directly to Verbobonc City to meet this “head gnome” (as he had no need to go to the Kron Hills; he already has the silver with him). The “head gnome” is in fact Magister Har, headmaster of the Wrinkle Academy.

The PCs might head directly for Verbobonc City. If so, go to Encounter Five. If the PCs return to Castle Estival to undergo Threnodee’s ritual, go to Encounter Four.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE OLD STOMPING GROUNDS

This Encounter details Threnodee’s ritual and the PCs exploration of the Gribnix (the gnomish library/monastery where Obble Har first learned about the Skyroads). By relying upon the memories of the gnome spirit trapped within the *Gnomish Spectacles*, the PCs are thrust back in time forty years to the day the terrible accident overtook the Gribnix and killed everyone inside (except for Obble Har, who was working in the kitchen at the time). This Encounter typically ends after 50 minutes (the duration of the *magic circle against evil* spell), but you can move on once the PCs have defeated Lorsch and/or his minions and had the opportunity to explore the Gribnix as much as they would like.

When the PCs are ready, read:

Threnodee the dust mephit looks at each of you critically and takes a professorial tone. “Ahem. There is a certain ritual that will hurl you into the memories of another and let you experience for a short duration—less than an hour, usually—events of the past. Now, I only know this ritual from a purely academic understanding. In practice, it may rend your souls from their mortal shells, casting you adrift as naught but ghosts. But it’s worth the risk, particularly as I won’t be going along myself. Pay attention to everything during your temporal sojourn, as anything might be something key. Now, do any of you gasping meatbags have any of the magic circle spells prepared, hmm? What about detect thoughts?”

If the PCs can cast these spells, Threnodee looks very pleased. If the PCs can’t currently cast these spells, Threnodee produces a divine scroll of *magic circle against evil* and an arcane scroll of *detect thoughts*. If any PCs state that they could prepare these spells tomorrow, Threnodee snorts, *“Tomorrow?! Never look to tomorrow! What if the spell was the only thing to keep your life force from being snuffed out today?”*

If none of the PCs can use one or both scrolls, Threnodee looks exasperated but he can cast either of them (or both) himself.

Threnodee explains that the PCs must take a pair of Gnomish Spectacles with them inside a 10 foot circle. Around the PCs, a *magic circle* spell must be cast (the inward-facing version of the spell). Then, the *detect thoughts* spell must be cast on the spectacles. This allows a brief visitation to the past, as known by the soul trapped within the spectacles. The trip lasts the duration of the

magic circle spell (for the spell cast from the scroll, 50 minutes).

Although Threnodee and Lord Estival intend to be present for the ritual itself, neither of them accompanies the PCs on their journey.

Hopefully, the PCs have among them a pair of Gnomish Spectacles (if they have more than one, they must pick one pair to use). If not, Lord Estival provides a pair that he purchased as a curiosity. Once the PCs enact the ritual as described above, everything goes dark.

The Trip Into the Past

This Encounter briefly describes the areas of the Gribnix each time the PCs see them. Refer to **Map 2** for a map of the Gribnix. The PCs have little opportunity to interact with their environment, however, and are merely observers as the tragedy occurs (with a few exceptions, as described below). Each room plays out like a scene from a dream or flashback played over and over.

The Other Visitors: The PCs are not alone in this trip to the psychic past of the Gribnix.

A mind flayer by the name of Lorsch discovered the Gribnix several years ago (in fact, PCs that played VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon* may have discovered his tracks). In the intervening years, Lorsch has learned that the time of great catastrophe in the Gribnix also heralded a strong release of magic. Lorsch has projected a few hardy minions (and himself, at APL 10) into the past via psionic means, in order to tap into the power at the moment of catastrophe. The PCs can interact with Lorsch and his minions.

Lorsch has two or more kobold slaves. These kobolds serve Lorsch as slaves and spies, as he can see through their eyes (they all have the voidmind template from *Monster Manual III* and are linked to Lorsch alone). Note that even at APLs where Lorsch is not present in the Gribnix (APLs 4 to 8) Lorsch can still use his psionic abilities through his voidmind kobolds.

Lorsch is aware of the PCs almost immediately upon their arrival, due to his *detect thoughts* ability. His minions react to the PCs once they are aware of their presence.

The PCs generally face the voidmind kobolds at the library door (area A), then again in the foyer (area B), and finally in the dining room (area C) or the dormitories (area E). AT APL 10, where Lorsch is present, fee free to locate him anywhere in the Gribnix that causes the PCs the most terror (for example, a lone PC charging after a fleeing kobold minion may run into Lorsch while on his own).

APL 4 (EL 4)

Voidmind kobold minions (2): hp 36 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 6)

Voidmind kobold minions (4): hp 36 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 8)

Voidmind kobold minions (8): hp 40 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 10)

Lorsch, mind flayer: hp 44; see *Monster Manual* page 187.

Voidmind kobold minions (8): hp 40 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: These minions prefer hit-and-run tactics, particularly when they can catch many PCs in their cone of slime.

Treasure: None of the kobold's possessions can be removed from this psychic journey.

Combat Effects: PCs that are *plane shifted* away by Lorsch or his minions are simply forced out of the Gribnix (ending the ritual for them) and may not return. PCs that are killed or wounded, however, are actually killed or wounded when their sojourn in the Gribnix ends.

General Features and Movement: The halls and rooms of the Gribnix are wide but low (not more than six feet high). The walls, floor and ceiling are well-crafted flagstone and masonry. The doors and furnishings are dark, durable wood in fine condition. The gnomes here live simply, so the Gribnix lacks much by way of ornamentation or valuables. The library is well-lit by *continual flame* torches and the rest of the Gribnix is sparsely lit by candles (any character with low-light vision has plenty of light to see by, but other PCs may find the Gribnix a bit dark for their liking).

The PCs, in their present state, are as mere ghosts: they can move through objects and doors, but not walls, in the Gribnix. However, they cannot leave the Gribnix by any means. Lorsch and his minions are similarly restricted.

Use of the Spectacles: PCs that own *Gnomish Spectacles*, even if they were not used as the focus to bring the PCs into this Encounter, find that the spectacles have no powers (and are not inhabited by any intelligence) while in the Gribnix of the past.

Arrival: The Library

When the PCs first arrive in the Gribnix, they appear as ghosts in the library. The library is filled with industrious scholar-gnomes toiling away. Read:

The final words of the spell echo in your mind over and over, sounding stretched out and hollow. The words blend into one phrase, repeated over and over: "AHA, AHA, AHA!" With a cry of triumph, a gnome stabs a stubby finger onto the page of a musty tome. "That's it!"

The gnome looks up at you with triumph, and you can't help but feel flushed with the gnome's successful research. Then you realize that the gnome is looking off into space, staring right through you.

The PCs are surrounding the gnome whose spirit will soon be thrust into the spectacles that are the focus of the spell the PCs are using. To find out what this gnome looks like, what the gnome's discovery is, and the miraculous effect of this discovery on the PCs, refer to **Appendix 4**. Note that the effects of this discovery only last for the duration of this Encounter.

If the PCs were supplied with *Gnomish Spectacles* by Lord Estival, then they receive no discovery effect. Choose one of the gnomes in **Appendix 4** at random.

When the PCs look around, read:

This room is tall, allowing even a tall man to stretch his arms above his head. The walls are lined from floor to ceiling with shelves. The shelves are full of scroll cases, books, and various mechanical contraptions. The center of the room is filled with over a dozen small tables, each piled with books, beakers, gears, and other such paraphernalia. Each of the desks is occupied by a hard-working gnome, spectacles perched on the end of each nose.

Your gaze is drawn to a metal rod stuck through the ceiling like a spear. Silver wires stretch from the rod to some contraption on the desk beneath it. The rod crackles ominously with lightning and emits a low hum, but none of the gnomes seem to notice.

The PCs are free to examine the library as much as they'd like, but they are unable to interact with any item or any gnome. The gnomes carry on in their research, completely unaware of the PCs' presence. The PCs should quickly get the sense that they are merely ghosts here.

The one exception is the metal rod and the contraption beneath it. Touching either results in one point of electricity damage (no save). Other than this painful zap, the PCs cannot interfere with the rod or the contraption.

A DC 15 Search check or a DC 12 Knowledge (history) check reveals that some of the very newest of the books here are still over 40 years old. If either check beats a DC of 20, the character notices that one of the gnomes is examining a star-chart with a date of 545 CY.

Area A: The Library Entrance

At the end of the short corridor leading away from the library is a solid-looking pair of wooden doors with an ornate iron handle and lock.

Before the PCs can explore the rest of the Gribnix, they must realize that closed doors (which they cannot manipulate or open) are no impediment to their ghostly status. As the PCs examine these doors, Lorsch makes his first move against the PCs. Determine the PCs' position relative to the doors (that is, draw them out on the battle map) and read:

Before you can get a close look at the thick-looking door, a burly kobold floats through the door from the other side. Unlike the dream-like gnomes, this kobold has a malicious, all-too-real appearance. The kobold scowls at you and a spray of slime explodes from a dribbling wound in the center of his forehead.

In this surprise round, the kobold minion uses its cone of slime ability on the PCs. Roll initiative after this surprise round. On its turn, the kobold retreats through the doors and rejoins its companions in the foyer. If the PCs don't pursue, feel free to drop out of the initiative order. See above regarding the hit-and-run tactics of Lorsch's voidmind kobold minions.

Once the PCs pass through the door, read:

Immediately to the left and right of the door, narrow hallways lead off and bend out of sight. Above the door, carved into the stone, a few words are engraved.

The words are in Gnome, and read "Progress Through Unity."

The left and right hallways bend around to doors that look identical to the library door. These doors aren't locked. However, these doors don't actually go anywhere (they don't open and there is nothing but blank stone behind them). These doors disarm a trap on the library door, but the trap cannot harm, or even be triggered by, the PCs.

Some of Lorsch's minions may be lurking down these narrow, twisted halls to later ambush the PCs from behind.

Area B: The Foyer

This is a small, cozy foyer. Ten sets of hooks line the walls here, about four feet from the floor. Most of the hooks contain small heavy cloaks, just the size to

keep the rain and cold off of a gnome's back. Four exits lead out from this chamber, one in each of the cardinal directions. The door to the south is heavy wood, and has the look of a door to the outside.

The passage to the PCs' left indeed leads to the outside. However, the PCs cannot open or pass through this door at all. The passage straight ahead leads to the dormitories and the passage to the right leads to the kitchen.

Lorsch's minions likely attack *en masse* here. If overwhelmed, they retreat to fight in the dormitories or the dining room.

Area C: The Dining Room

Two long tables dominate this simple dining room. Dishes from a past meal are stacked up on each table, waiting to be cleared away.

This large, low room has two long tables that are low enough to hinder movement (difficult terrain to move over a table) and provide cover. Medium creatures gain cover from attacks coming from across a table. Small-sized creatures can take cover more easily under the tables and benches; Small creatures gain cover whenever in the same square as a table, regardless of where the attacks originate.

Here, Lorsch and his minions prefer to use their cone effects. The kobolds maneuver around to flanking positions if possible (taking full use of the cover provided by the tables to deny the PCs attacks of opportunity).

Area D: The Kitchen

Obble Har was on kitchen duty at the time of the arcane discharge in the library that incinerated the other gnomes in the Gribnix. Har did not realize that he had dramatically underestimated the power of the discharge, or that working in the kitchen would save his life.

This large room is clearly a well-stocked kitchen. Stores of food are neatly shelved and bright copper pots and kettles hang from hooks from the low ceiling. Stooped over a large basin is a young gnome, scrubbing a few remaining pots hurriedly. As you enter, the gnome turns to look at you.

Any PC that has met Magister Obble Har before clearly recognizes this gnome as a much younger version of that venerable wizard.

Although Obble Har is looking toward the PCs, a DC 10 Sense Motive reveals that he is not looking at the PCs, but at a pile of notes on a table near the door to the dining room. These are Har's notes regarding the arcane discharge. Har doesn't actually know that the PCs are there and he quickly turns back to his work.

The gnome turns back to his hasty scrubbing, muttering to himself in Gnome. If any PC speaks Gnome, continue with: "Kitchen duty today of all days! I need to make my calculations and calibrations," the gnome flings a soapy hand in the direction of a pile of notes near the door. "And here I am struggling to emancipate baked-on brisket! Oh, the arcane discharge will occur any minute, and I'm bound to miss it!"

As long as the PCs remain, Har keeps up his hasty scrubbing. However, he seems to get no further in his work. If the PCs leave and return, re-read the text above: the scene has re-set.

If the PCs look at the notes, they are a dense collection of hastily-scribbled arcane and mathematical formulae. A crude diagram of the metal rod descending from the ceiling of the library is also sketched on the page, along with its accompanying contraption.

PCs examining the page in detail can make a DC 20 Intelligence or DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check. Although the PCs cannot make heads or tails of the esoteric formulae (at least in part because of Har's sloppy handwriting), success reveals a mathematical error in one of the computations. Due to some hasty math, the output of the computation is far too low—about one ten-thousandth of the correct result. Put another way, the output of the equation is going to be ten thousand times stronger than Obble Har has estimated. As a result, Har has dramatically underestimated the energy that the arcane discharge will produce. In his haste, Har made the error that will doom the gnomes of the Gribnix.

Area E: The Dormitories

This long, low hall contains many doors made of dark wood with simple handles. The hall extends for a very long way, with dozens of doors leading off to either side. The faraway end of the hall bends off to the right.

Have the PCs make DC 12 Spot checks. To those that succeed, read the following (PCs that walk down the hall also discover the mirror as soon as they reach it).

You realize that the hallway is only half as long as it appears, as on a wall at the far end of the hall is a tall mirror. The hallway in the mirror is unoccupied; it was not immediately recognizable as a mirror, because your reflections are not present.

This hall is fifty feet long, with a full-length mirror permanently mounted at the end of the hall from the PCs. The mirror's brass frame is intricately carved, containing many large (but not very valuable) gems.

Each of these doors (there are eighteen) leads to a single simple room only five feet square. Each has a gnome-sized bed, a bedside table with a basin, and a chest with personal effects. These rooms belonged to the gnomes of the Gribnix, and still have most of their things. Each of these rooms contains slightly different items, based on the personality of the gnome living there. See Appendix 4 for the gnomes' personalities, and throw in appropriate items accordingly (for example, a vain gnome may have a fine silver mirror, an absent-minded gnome will have a bed unmade and clothes strewn about, and so on). As the gnomes of the Gribnix live very simply, there is nothing of real value in these rooms.

Obble Har's dormitory is located at the end of one of the rows. A DC 10 Wisdom check will allow any character who played VER6-02 *Delve the Wizards Dungeon* to recall which dormitory was cleaned out and packed away. Regardless of how they find the dormitory, read or paraphrase the following.

This dormitory appears to have been hit by a whirlwind. Crumpled pieces of paper are strewn on the floor; books are piled precariously on every horizontal surface, and the walls are covered with broad sheets of paper filled with diagrams, notes and scribbles.

Obble Har's room can be searched simply by looking around, but only one PC can reasonably fit into this room at a time. The following is what may be found, based on the Search check:

DC 10	Numerous notes and diagrams, DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft reveals that the diagrams relate to the nature of raw magical energy
DC 15	Specific diagrams of a metal rod, complete with metallurgic composition. DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or DC 15 Wisdom check to identify that these drawings—and the rod currently thrust through the ceiling of the library—indicate a progenitor of the numerous metal rods that now festoon the Wrinkle Academy.
DC 20	A map of Verbobonc, with notations as to relative levels of background magic energy. DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or DC 10 Wisdom check to note that the various plotted points define a large triangle of magic that centers on Verbobonc City. This is the path of the Skyroads.

DC 25	<p>A scrap of a poem, the top of which is sticking out of one of the books. It reads:</p> <p>I speak this prophecy to the three, The Ruby, the Book, and the speaker of Lies Skilled above all in the domain of his god, A master and servant from Oerth will arise.</p> <p>A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the Ruby as Wee Jas, the Book as Boccob, and the speaker of Lies as Vecna.</p> <p>A DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check reveals that the prophecy concerns the ascension of a mortal to become the representative of a god on Oerth.</p> <p>A DC 20 Bardic Knowledge check reveals that the poem is the first stanza of a prophecy delivered millennia ago to Wee Jas. The other gods mentioned may also have received the prophecy.</p>
DC 30	A collection of somewhat understandable magical formulae. A DC 35 Knowledge (arcana) or DC 30 Spellcraft check reveal that the formulae relate to channeling magical energy, transmuting that magical energy through written text, and then storing that magical energy in a matrix of some extradimensional nature.

The End of the Dream

When the PCs are out of time, or have otherwise finished their explorations, end their dream experience with the following text.

A sudden, explosive whine emanates from the library. Triangles of crackling energy tear through the gnomish monastery, burning the gnomes to cinders in a single, horrible instant. Over a dozen lives are suddenly snuffed out. You hear Obble Har's voice calling from the kitchen in surprise and rage: "No! I wasn't ready yet! Next time, next time, I'll be ready! Next time, the power will be mine!" Then all goes black, and you find yourself blinking up at a concerned-looking Lord Estival and an eager Threnodee, flapping in the air.

Threnodee is particularly excited to hear what the PCs experienced. Lord Estival is merely curious at what the PCs discovered. He feels he has a right to know what happened, since he hosted the ritual in his own castle. If the PCs press Lord Estival for privacy, however, he grants it.

If the PCs discovered the prophecy and mention this, Threnodee turns white, clutches at a chain about his neck, and repeats the first portion of the Prophecy. If the PCs demand he explain what he knows, Threnodee visibly pulls himself together and relates conversationally the following:

- The Prophecy deals with the rise of a proxy serving one of the three main gods of Magic.
- The Prophecy warned the other two gods that their power would diminish if someone from Oerth rose to the position of proxy of one of the other gods of magic.
- Threnodee fears that Magister Har may be drawing upon the power of the Skyroads to try to become the proxy, and that Threnodee must leave immediately to try and stop him.
- If the PCs ask about which god Magister Har follows, Threnodee explains that Magister Har is not a particularly religious gnome, but he follows Boccob more than any other god.

Regardless of whether the PCs found the prophecy, Threnodee becomes very concerned if any of the PCs detail Har's failed experiment.

Threnodee suggests that the PCs make their way as quickly as possible to the Wrinkle Academy in Verbobonc City. Threnodee feels that Magister Har must be stopped (although Threnodee admits that he doesn't want to see innocent people obliterated, his true reason is his mission from Wee Jas). If the PCs balk at trying to stop Magister Har, Threnodee reminds them what happened the last time Har tried to perform a similar ritual. Threnodee must travel back more quickly, lest Magister Har get suspicious. Threnodee tells the PCs he will meet them at the Wrinkle Academy and teleports away using his *boots of teleportation*.

If the PCs require swift transportation, Lord Estival will provide them with horses.

Where to Go Next?

After the PCs discuss their experiences with Threnodee, Threnodee encourages them to go to Verbobonc City and meet him there, so they can stop Magister Har. Threnodee departs for Verbobonc City as well, to return to Magister Har's side and gather more information. Threnodee intends to teleport to Verbobonc City, so he will arrive well ahead of the PCs. Threnodee encourages the PCs to find him in the Wrinkle Academy so they can discuss specific plans.

If the PCs want to take the time to investigate Gurtom's crash site and look for the missing silver, go to Encounter Three.

Threnodee is disturbed that the PCs would take a "side job" at a time like this, but he isn't in any position to stop them from doing so. Lord Estival doesn't particularly care one way or another.

The PCs might head directly for Verbobonc City. If so, go to Encounter Five.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: TO VERBOBONC CITY

The overland trip to Verbobonc City takes most of a day. The heavy rains make travel slower than is typical in the Viscounty. Because the PCs are coming from the western Viscounty, the fastest route is to take the River Road. This means the PCs arrive at the western gate to Verbobonc City. This adventure assumes that the PCs have pushed themselves (and mounts) hard to arrive a couple of hours past sundown. You may have to adjust this and subsequent encounters if this is not the case. At any rate, the party arrives after Magister Har has enacted an exceptionally powerful spell.

Magister Har remembers all too well the disaster he inadvertently caused at the Gribnix forty years ago. Magister Har believes that his attempts to marshal the Skyroad energy tonight will not cause any similar widespread harm, but does not want to take any chances that he might hurt the residents of Verbobonc City. To this end, Magister Har has recently completed casting a spell of epic proportions. The effect of this spell is that all of the residents of Verbobonc--as well as every building, item, and creature in the city--are trapped in a force field substantially similar to the effects of the *sepia snake sigil* spell. However, the spell has affected all creatures, items, and structures in the city without requiring any reading and without allowing a saving throw. The duration of this effect is 1d4+22 hours, rather than days. The spell can be dispelled, but Magister Har's caster level for the purpose of this spell is 22nd, and a successful dispelling only applies to the specific person, item, or structure targeted. It would take thousands of castings to free the entire city. It is worth reviewing the *sepia snake sigil* spell description, as few players are familiar with this limited-use spell.

The visual effect is that the entire city seems blanketed in inches-thick amber. From a distance, it is as though a yellow-orange snowfall has covered the city. All of the covered people and structures are in a state of suspended animation. People and items can still be damaged

normally (although this may not be immediately obvious) and items and people can even be picked up and moved around, subject to usual weight limits.

PCs can make a DC 23 Spellcraft check to identify that the city is under a *sepia snake sigil* effect, although it is supposedly impossible to affect objects with the spell, and a casting over the area of an entire city should be impossible. Clearly, incredibly powerful magic is at work here.

Magister Har's spell effect exploded outward from the Wrinkle Academy and blanketed the city just prior to sundown this evening. The effect is only a couple of hours old. People outside the city are confused and terrified (as many had friends and family inside the city). Virtually no one has any idea what is going on.

Two groups have responded to the disaster immediately. The first is the Mounted Borderers, who acted with their usual speed and military precision. The Mounted Borders immediately quarantined Verbobonc City, stationing troops at all of the entrances to the city. No one is allowed into the city until superiors in the organization arrive (this won't be until after midnight, long after Magister Har's ritual is complete).

The second group to respond is Lord Roland Galans and his retinue. Lord Galans was arriving in Verbobonc City to demand some answers from Magister Har about the recent Skyroad failures. By lucky coincidence, Lord Galans was just outside the city's western gates when Magister Har's spell activated. Galans has set up tents, emergency services and riot control at the western gate to the city. Lord Galans has kept much of the crowd dry and calm, but he has no idea of what has occurred.

As the PCs get closer to Verbobonc City, describe the city's strange appearance. When the PCs approach the gate, read or paraphrase:

It is difficult to make out the famous motto "Earth and Stone, Man and Gnome" over the city gate. Due to the way the glittering amber covers the sign, it appears to read "Earthly no more, Master Gnome."

There is a crowd of people clustered around the gate in the pouring rain, but a few Mounted Borderers are keeping them out of the amber-encrusted city. Off to the left a few large pavilions have been erected, and several other people are huddled under the pavilion tents, listening to a well-dressed man speak.

A flash of triangular lightning and a sudden peal of thunder rip through the night sky.

If the PCs approach the gates, they learn that the Mounted Borderers have quarantined the city after the

unusual effect occurred only a few hours ago. The Mounted Borderers are not letting anyone into the city. The crowd has family and friends inside the city, and is agitated. If the PCs want to investigate any of the other gates, all have been similarly interdicted by the Mounted Borderers.

If the PCs approach the tents, they see that the people under the tents have been provided with towels, warm drinks, and other care. PCs that played VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion* recognize the speaker as Lord Galans' bard retainer. The bard is saying:

"Now, stay calm. No one is being hurt. The spell effect on the city is an obscure but harmless effect called sepia snake sigil. Anyone caught inside it is suspended and preserved, without any need to eat, drink or breathe. They don't even know that time is passing. Although we don't know what caused this effect, and it can last as many as a few days, there isn't anything to worry about."

A voice from behind you interjects in a low voice, "that's not exactly accurate." Behind you is Lord Roland Galans. "We should talk." Lord Galans motions you to an empty corner of the pavilion tent.

Assuming the PCs go with him, Lord Galans explains that the spell effect is massive and unprecedented. Lord Galans has erected these tents and is trying to keep people calm, but he has no idea what is going on. He feels fortunate that he was still just outside the city, and not within it, when the effect occurred. Lord Galans also knows that, although people imprisoned in a *sepia snake sigil* are in stasis, they are still susceptible to harm.

Lord Galans asks the PCs what they know. He suspects that Magister Har is behind the recent disasters (the Skyroad failures and the *sepia snake sigil*), but he tries to get more information from the PCs regarding what they know. Lord Galans is insistent, but not rude.

In the end, the PCs must get into the city. There are many ways for them to do this, at DM discretion. These include:

- Spend 3 Influence Points with the Mounted Borderers.
- Spend 3 Influence Points with Lord Galans, to use his pull with the Mounted Borderers to let them pass.
- Incite a riot at the gate and slip into the city while the Mounted Borderers are trying to contain it (a DC 20 Bluff or Diplomacy check is sufficient to accomplish this).

- Climb the walls of the city (DC 25 Climb check, increased above the usual DC 20 due to the rain).
- Use magic (such as *dimension door* or *fly*) to bypass the Mounted Borderer guards.
- Swim along the Velderdyva River and get into the city via the docks (which requires a DC 15 Swim check followed by a DC 15 Climb check).
- If the PCs are friendly with Lord Galans, and remember the events of VER7-02 *Storm the Dragon's Bastion*, they might recall that Lord Galans' bard can cast both *invisibility sphere* and *silence*. If the PCs are not unfriendly to Lord Galans, and they ask his bard for these spells, the bard casts them on the party.
- Any other reasonable method the PCs can devise.

ENCOUNTER SIX: IN THE FROZEN CITY

Note: *If the PCs played through both Encounter 3 and 4, you may skip this encounter and move on to Encounter 7. This encounter is included to provide sufficient challenge to those parties that did not follow up on the plan to find the stolen silver. Of course, if you have a lot of play time available, and your players are hungry for another fight, feel free to run this encounter. However, the PCs earn no extra experience for it.*

The Wrinkle Academy is located in the western side of Verbobonc City. The walk to the Wrinkle Academy takes the PCs through the affluent Church District in the northwest corner of the city, occupied mostly with shrines, high-end businesses, and several houses for the moderately wealthy.

While traveling through the Church District, the PCs overhear a band of looters. Read:

The eerie stillness of the entombed city is broken by the noise of one man shouting at another over the rain.

These voices belong to a team of looters that are taking advantage of the events in the city to steal all they can. Have the PCs make Listen checks to hear the voices over the rain. To those that beat a DC 16, read:

"Don't tell me they had nothing! Each house here has at least one married couple. That means silverware, little presents from husband to wife, and at least two wedding rings. I don't care if you've got to cut off fingers to get them, I want that bag filled with plunder in four minutes' time. (Then, in a slightly louder voice) Let's move, people! I want to work down

this street and up Ash Horn Street before the hour is out. No telling how long these rich birds will be stuck in their amber nets and I will not let this...incident...pass by without taking full advantage."

There are several thugs working under the command of a hexblade named Evan Carison. Carison was one of Gurtom Starcheek's flunkies to ambush the PCs at the beginning of VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*. Carison was just outside of the city when Magister Har's spell entombed it. He slipped inside, realized the opportunity for plunder, and slipped back out of the city to round up some help. He and his men are systematically looting the Church District of Verbobonc City. Carison and his men are all hard-hearted cutthroats.

Because the looters have not seen anyone else active in the city, they do not expect to encounter the adventurers. This means the PCs are likely able to surprise the looters. Have the PCs make Move Silently and/or Hide checks, as applicable, to sneak up on the looters. Remember that the looters have a -4 penalty on Spot and Listen checks due to the storm.

The looters are right around the corner from the PCs. If the PCs do nothing, one of the looters comes around the corner in about two minutes and spots the PCs there.

If the PCs just charge around the corner to confront the looters without any pretense of stealth, the looters are not surprised: go right into initiative. The looters are uninterested in any discussion, and seek to kill the PCs before their activities are exposed.

Because the PCs have a good opportunity to earn a surprise round in this encounter, the ELs of this encounter are all reduced by 1.

APL 4 (EL 4)

Carison: human Hexblade 3; hp 25; see Appendix 1.

Looters (6): Human Warrior 1; hp 8 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 6)

Carison: human Hexblade 3/Rogue 2; hp 35; see Appendix 1.

Looters (6): Human Swashbuckler 1; hp 15 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 8)

Carison: human Hexblade 4/Rogue 3; hp 47; see Appendix 1.

Looters (6): Human Swashbuckler 2; hp 23 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 10)

Carison: human Hexblade 6/Rogue 3; hp 61; see Appendix 1.

Looters (6): Human Swashbuckler 3/Rogue 1; hp 37 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: Carison uses his curse as soon as possible. The looters use their alchemical items, and then move in to make flanking attacks. Any character brought to less than one-third of his hit points tries to flee.

Treasure: Take the gear from the looters.

APL 4: L: 49 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

APL 6: L: 98 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

APL 8: L: 98 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

APL 10: L: 98 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

Development: Keeping the Loot. The looters all carry clearly valuable plunder that is obviously not theirs. If the PCs wish to keep this loot, they will suffer for it eventually: refer to the “Looted the Looters” AR entry for those PCs who choose to keep the loot instead of returning it to its rightful owners (which can be done at the end of the adventure).

Development: Stop in the Name of the Law! The looters are particularly worried that they might be discovered by the Mounted Borderers or the Gentlemen of the Watch in the commission of their crimes. If the PCs are obviously law enforcement types (wearing tabards of the Mounted Borderers, Gentlemen of the Watch, or any Noble House), the looters may panic and run. Have each of the looters (except Carison) make a DC 12 Will save at the start of combat, or become panicked.

Development: Walk Aways. The PCs may overhear the looters and decide to just circle around them, avoiding a confrontation. If so, the PCs receive no experience or treasure for this encounter.

ENCOUNTER SEVEN: AT THE WRINKLE ACADEMY

When the PCs arrive at the Wrinkle Academy, read the following:

The grand Wrinkle Academy of Magic stands out from the other manor houses around it more than usual this evening. To begin with, it is the only building mostly free of the glittering amber resin that has coated much of the city. All of its entrances are

sealed except for one balcony approximately fifteen feet up off of the ground. From that balcony extends a long pole wrapped in silver wire, jutting up into the sky like the mast of a ship.

Triangle-shaped lightning crackles in the sky overhead, striking this mast and several others like it all over the building. In a flash, the lightning is channeled down the silver wire and into the depths of the Wrinkle Academy.

PCs that played VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon* may recall this pole, and may have climbed it in order to attach the silver wire. Note whether any of the PCs have “Scaled the Wizard's Tower” from VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon*. To that character, read:

The palms of your hands feel strange here. Upon closer look, you can see that incredibly small slivers of silver, which must have wedged under your skin when you climbed that tower many months ago, are beginning to shift and move about. The sensation is strange, but does not seem immediately harmful.

It is up to the PCs to enter the Wrinkle Academy in the only uncovered entrance, up on the balcony. The PCs have to devise some way to reach the balcony, 15 feet up off the ground. A DC 25 Climb check suffices, as does any number of other ways the PCs can devise.

Once the PCs are on the balcony, refer to Map 2 for their location. This Encounter details their travel through the Wrinkle Academy and into the Administrative Suite.

The Silver Wire

The thick silver cable channels the energy of the lightning, which is drawn from the Skyroad. This silver wire funnels the Skyroad energy directly into the Spellpool of the Wrinkle Academy (the Endless Library).

It cannot be moved, severed, or damaged by any means short of a *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish*.

Every 1d10 rounds, a lightning strike is funneled along the silver wire. Anyone in a square touched by the wire takes the following damage as energy flows by. Half of this damage is electricity, the other half is raw energy (of no type).

PCs that earned Scaled the Wizard's Tower have this energy drawn to them due to the slivers of silver under their skin, whether they like it or not. Such PCs automatically fail their Reflex saves against these energy surges.

APL 4: 3d6 damage (Reflex DC 13 half)

APL 6: 5d6 damage (Reflex DC 15 half)

APL 8: 8d6 damage (Reflex DC 17 half)

APL 10: 11d6 damage (Reflex DC 19 half)

The first energy surge occurs 1d10 rounds after the first PC arrives on the balcony. After that, the PCs likely learn to avoid the wire. However, they must follow it to its end in order to complete their quest.

If the PCs want to explore the rest of the Wrinkle Academy, describe dull classroom wings, academic storage, libraries, and other similar areas. No one is in the rest of the Wrinkle Academy this night.

Threnodee

In the square marked is Threnodee the dust mephit, caught by the *sepia snake sigil* that coats the city and its inhabitants. Read:

In this hall, a pillar of the amber resin extrudes from the wall and encompasses a halfling-sized creature. Peering through the resin, you see Threnodee the dust mephit encased in the amber. Unlike the other, immobile prisoners of the amber field, Threnodee seems at least somewhat animate: he gives you a small wave and an unhappy frown.

Threnodee is indeed captured, an inadvertent side effect of Magister Har's *sepia snake sigil* spell. Threnodee was approaching the Administrative Suite when the spell effect occurred, and he was caught with it. However, Threnodee still retains his awareness, and can move within the stasis field to a small degree. He can speak, but none of the PCs can hear any noise that he makes through the field.

There are a few ways of interacting with Threnodee in his current state:

- **Free him.** If the PCs can dispel the *sepia snake sigil* around Threnodee (caster level 22), then he is grateful for his release. The PCs can also free Threnodee by channeling negative energy at the *sepia snake sigil* via a rebuke undead attempt. This particular method is available due to Threnodee's close connection with Wee Jas.
- **Telepathy.** If the PCs have means of speaking telepathically, they can speak with Threnodee directly.
- **Charades.** For most parties, the only practical method of speaking with Threnodee is via charades or exaggerated body language. If it is fun to do so, you can act out the frustrated Threnodee's antics within the stasis field. At a minimum, Threnodee can share the text of the Prophecy by holding a small copy he has up to

the resin. Provide the players with **Player Handout #5**

Once the PCs have determined a way to communicate with him, Threnodee has the following information:

- Threnodee is a devout follower of Wee Jas, and served in her court for centuries. To prove this he will show off his holy symbol of Wee Jas, given to him by the Stern Lady herself.
- Threnodee's devotion to Wee Jas is even greater than his devotion to Magister Har.
- Several millennia ago, a prophecy was delivered to Wee Jas, and presumably to Boccob and Vecna as well.
- The prophecy warned of a mortal from Oerth becoming the proxy of his god, and that if that occurred the influence of the other gods of Magic will diminish.
- Wee Jas decided that no other god except her should have a proxy. To accomplish this, she sent thousands of her servants and outer-planar followers (like Threnodee) to serve as familiars to Oerth's most talented wizards.
- Threnodee was one of these familiars sent out by Wee Jas, but in the centuries of service he had been lulled into complacency.
- The recent failure of the Skyroad reminded him of the Prophecy, and now he fears that Magister Har is about to attempt to become the proxy of Boccob.
- Magister Har must be stopped by any means necessary, not just for the sake of Wee Jas, but because the ritual would kill people all throughout Verbobonc City.
- Threnodee knows that he lacks the capability to stop Magister Har. Threnodee needs the PCs help.
- If the PCs ask why Threnodee just doesn't *teleport* out of his amber prison, the mephit insists that he has tried, but is unable to do so.

Threnodee gladly provides the PCs with his copy of the Prophecy. Give the players **Player Handout 5**.

*I speak this prophecy to the three,
The Ruby, the Book, and the speaker of Lies
Skilled above all in the domain of his god,
A master and servant from Oerth will arise.*

Knowledge is the path to his ascension,

*and magic will be the key to the door.
Death will greet him and embrace him,
secrets once seen will no longer obscure.*

*For when traders fall and traitors strike,
the humbled master will grasp his role.
Then the brave at heart must stem the striving,
and keep the master from his goal.*

If asked to explain the Prophecy, Threnodee points out that the first stanza warns that a proxy will arise.

The second stanza presents the signs that mark the proxy. Threnodee believes these signs point to Magister Har: Threnodee himself (an agent of the goddess of death) had greeted and embraced Har, and the PCs have seen Magister Har's secrets in the Gribnix through the Gnomish Spectacles.

The third stanza sets the time of the prophecy coming to fruition: the Skyroad failure is noted in the first line, and Magister Har trying to grasp his role as the proxy of Boccob is noted in the third. In order to spur the PCs on, Threnodee insists that they must be the brave at heart.

Note: Threnodee's interpretation should sound believable to the PCs, but it isn't correct. In fact, Halmadar is the proxy warned about in the Prophecy. Halmadar's back story is not yet fully revealed, but Halmadar fits each element of the Prophecy better than Magister Har does.

The Administrative Suite

The Administrative Suite of the Wrinkle Academy contains a few dull offices and one door that leads to the extradimensional space the gives the Wrinkle Academy its name.

This area is off-limits to all but Magisters of the Wrinkle Academy. Members of the Wrinkle Academy have heard tales of the fabled Administrative Suite, but have never actually been there (except perhaps during the special event VERS4-02 *Gala at the Wrinkle Academy*).

Past this door is a long hall (see **Map 2**). Determine a party marching order at this time. Forgotten by most of the Magisters is a magical trap placed here to prevent unauthorized visitors. Magisters of the Wrinkle Academy do not trigger this trap, but other visitors do (such as the PCs). The location of the trap is marked on the map. Note that PCs who are Magisters of the Wrinkle Academy cannot trigger this trap, but they don't know it's here, either (no one ever told them and, as Magisters, they've never triggered it).

PCs that want to take 20 searching for traps should be reminded of the energy blast that travels along the silver wire every 1d10 rounds.

All APLs (EL 3)

Scorching ray trap: CR 3; magical; *true seeing* trigger; Immediate reset; No save (*scorching ray*, +8 to hit 4d6 damage); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27.

This trap resets immediately, and is therefore capable of hitting anyone that passes by (PCs that pass over this trap more than once can be effected by the trap multiple times).

When the PCs reach the octagonal room beyond the hall, read:

The door opens into a large octagonal room, about forty feet across and ten feet high. The floor is covered with a thick carpet, and three doors lead out of here: one to the left, one straight ahead to the right, and one to the immediate right. The silver wire snakes through this room and under the door to your immediate right.

The other doors all lead to endless corridors, rooms, libraries, laboratories, and the other countless rooms that make up the infinite expanse of this extradimensional space. None of them are of interest to this adventure.

Once the PCs arrive in the anteroom just outside of the Endless Library, go to the next Encounter.

ENCOUNTER EIGHT: THE FORGOTTEN LIBRARIAN

Eventually, the PCs arrive at the foyer before the Endless Library. Read the following:

In this room, you see enormous doors to your left. They are a heavy black stone, and carved with books written in uncounted languages. The doors are closed with a palpable finality.

The only furnishing in this room is a desk and a leather chair. Seated at the chair, looking despondently down at the desk, is an old human man. He shakes his white-whiskered head, looking at something on the desk. There is a nameplate on the desk, but it is cracked and broken, and there is no name in it.

The door is shut fast and magically warded. The PCs cannot open the door with any amount of strength or any mortal magic, and ancient wards protect the library from extradimensional travel. If a character tries to *teleport*, *dimension door*, or the like, he just ends up back in the octagonal room in Encounter Seven.

The librarian looks up when the PCs approach him, and he darts under the desk if they seem at all threatening.

On the desk are the librarian's broken nameplate, and the broken pieces of the nameplate (pass out **Player Handouts 3 and 4**). If the PCs talk to the man, or ask him about the door or the Endless Library, he says the following:

"The password to enter the Endless Library is my name...but I've forgotten it...long ago. I didn't need to remember it, you see, since it was on my nameplate. But when the star-cheeked man came by earlier with Magister Har, I knew they were up to something secret and powerful. I hid under my desk and my nameplate fell over, and broke. I can't seem to fit it all back together. Can you help me put my name together again?"

For the PCs to proceed, they have to help the old librarian put his name back together. Give them the Nameplate Outline (**Player Handout 3**), and cut out and distribute the nine pieces of the broken nameplate (**Player Handout 4**). When the PCs start fitting the pieces together, read:

The old librarian adds helpfully, "I don't think the whole thing was my name. I think I had a title, too, and the title was also on the nameplate...but I don't remember my title, either."

This puzzle is basically a word jigsaw puzzle. Since the PCs have to solve this puzzle to go on, you may need to give them some help if they are having a hard time. If they come up with something wrong, have the librarian say, "No, I don't think that was my name." Two possible clues you can give are to either have the librarian "remember" where a couple of the pieces go (and let the players figure out the rest of his nameplate), or for the librarian to remember that he is a Scrivener (this is a big clue, and should only be used if the players are *really* stuck).

The properly assembled nameplate will read, "Elder Scrivener Artemis Clerk." When the PCs say the name "Artemis Clerk" aloud anywhere in this room, the doors to the Endless Library open. Go on to Encounter Nine.

PCs who are Magisters of the Wrinkle Academy (particularly those with levels in Mage of the Arcane Order) may insist that they remember the librarian's name, since they've been here before. Assure such a player that they certainly have been here before, and they remember this man, but they have not memorized his name, since they've always overlooked him (and, most of the time, the large doors to the Endless Library are open). If such a character succeeds at a DC 15 Intelligence check, he or she remembers that the librarian's last name is somewhat "bookish," but does not remember what it is.

Once the doors are opened, the PCs can follow the silver wire into the Spellpool of the Wrinkle Academy, the Endless Library.

ENCOUNTER NINE: THE ENDLESS LIBRARY

When the PCs finally enter the Endless Library, read:

Shelves of books extend from these doors down the length of this room. The room is about thirty feet wide, thirty feet high, and longer than your vision stretches; at least several miles long. Each shelf contains thousands of books. You were not aware that this many books existed in the whole world.

The silver wire runs through the center of this room, small cords played out to connect to each of the bookshelves. Bursts of energy move lazily along the lines of wire, flashing when they reach a book, and then, much brighter than before, continue on further in the Endless Library.

If the PCs want to poke around a little bit, then they can find a book on virtually any topic they care to research here in the Endless Library. Finding a book on a specific topic, however, requires a DC 40 Search check, as it is like finding a needle in a mountainous haystack.

Other heavy double doors lead off of the Endless Library every half-mile or so. These doors lead to the other corridors and rooms of the extradimensional Administrative Suite.

The Endless library is not a uniform width. Its walls are varying widths along its infinite length.

The damaging arcane discharge does not occur while in the Endless Library. Instead, the energy is collected and funneled through the infinite knowledge of this place. The silver wires burst and sparkle from time to time, but do not damage anyone near them here.

Once the PCs travel a half-mile or so down the length of the library, read or paraphrase the following:

Several bookshelves have been moved around here in order to clear out a wide area in the middle of the library strewn with pages and silver wire. A middle-aged halfling with a purple birthmark in the shape of a star is standing by the confluence of wires, watching the pulses of energy flow along their lengths. With a friendly smile he gives a little wave to you. "Came to see the show?" He asks nonchalantly.

Gurtom has already delivered Lord Shannus' stolen silver to Har, and has yet to hightail it out. While he appreciates the amount of magic energy in the room, he

is uncomfortable that Har might not know exactly what he is doing. If asked he will express this to the PCs.

Magister Har steps out from one of the bookshelves, a spool of silver wire trailing behind him. With a twinkle in his eye he speaks. "While I appreciate you bearing witness to my ascension, I'm afraid I won't be allowing you to stop me."

You realize that Magister Har wasn't speaking to you when a man-shaped creature clothed in shifting darkness steps out of one of the Library walls. "Did you think that my master would not similarly receive the prophecy?" the creature asks, menace in its voice.

"Oh, I'm sure Vecna knew," Har replies as he lays down the final silver cable. "I didn't think that he would share that secret with a follower fallen out of favor, such as you—Halmadar."

The being Halmadar draws back visibly when he hears his name. "The secret of that name will die with you, wizard." The head of Halmadar turns in your direction. "Which of you wishes the power to destroy this pitiful old man?"

Give the PCs the option to accept the power of Vecna, if any accept remind them that to do so would remove their PCs from the campaign. If they insist, refer to the Development below.

Assuming none of the players volunteer, Gurtom does. Read the following:

Gurtom Starcheek tilts his head a bit, as though thinking. "Well...I've always been a big fan of power. I accept."

"So it will be." Halmadar hisses as a burst of black light surrounds Gurtom. As the being named Halmadar points, the black light floats slowly towards Magister Har. "I will seize the secrets of this place for my master. Then he will grant me his boon."

"Ah, Halmadar", sighs Magister Har, "As you have chosen your champion, so I will choose my champions. And as you have blessed your champion, so shall I bless mine. And their contest shall determine which of us shall ascend."

There is a sudden flickering, and time itself slows to a lazy crawl.

Explain to the PCs that they have each received a *time stop* spell, and can use the time to prepare themselves. Roll 1d4+1 per PC, as usual, as none of the PCs know how long their spell will last. As usual for the *time stop* spell, the PCs cannot affect anyone else, including their

companions—each person must prepare alone, although they will fight together.

Gurtom receives 5 rounds to prepare. As most of Gurtom's invocations last 24 hours, they are already active at the start of combat. Gurtom spends his *time stop* summoning allies and using his magic items on himself to prepare for combat. How Gurtom spends each of his rounds are described in each APL, below.

Gurtom spends his five *time stop* rounds as follows:

- Move across the room drawing his *wand of false life*, use his *amber amulet of vermin* or *elemental gem*.
- Retrieve his *elemental gem*, use his *wand of false life* to gain 1d10+3 temporary hit points.
- Move into position, flying 20 feet off of the ground at APL 6 and above. At APL 4, use his *wand of false life* again in the hopes of getting a better result (the temporary hit points do not stack; they overlap). At APL 6 and above, use his *elemental gem*.
- Retrieve his *salve of minor spell resistance*. At APL 4-8, use his *wand of false life* again in the hopes of getting a better result. At APL 10, use *caustic mire* in the area of the party instead.
- Activate fiendish resilience (at APL 6 and above); use his *salve of minor spell resistance*.

APL 4 (EL 7)

Gurtom Starcheek: halfling warlock 6; hp 38 plus *false life*; see Appendix 1.

Monstrous scorpion, large: hp 32, see *Monster Manual* page 287.

APL 6 (EL 9)

Gurtom Starcheek: halfling warlock 8; hp 50 plus *false life*; see Appendix 1.

Monstrous scorpion, large: hp 32, see *Monster Manual* page 287.

Earth elemental, large: hp 68, see *Monster Manual* page 97.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Gurtom Starcheek: halfling warlock 10; hp 62 plus *false life*; see Appendix 1.

Giant stag beetle: hp 52, see *Monster Manual* page 285.

Earth elemental, huge: hp 152, see *Monster Manual* page 97.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Gurtom Starcheek: halfling warlock 12; hp 74 plus *false life*; see Appendix 1.

Giant stag beetle: hp 52, see *Monster Manual* page 285.

Earth elemental, greater: hp 199, see *Monster Manual* page 97.

Tactics: Gurtom blasts away with his *eldritch blasts* as effectively as possible, concentrating on wounded PCs and taking cover behind his summoned allies. If a PC presents a clear threat—such as an effective archer or a melee fighter threatening him, Gurtom switches to that target instead. If he hits consistently and easily with his *eldritch blasts*, he fights defensively in order to add 2 to his Armor Class.

Gurtom maximizes his *eldritch blasts* early in the fight to impress his opponents with a lot of damage and empowers them thereafter.

At APL 8 and 10, Gurtom has the *eldritch chain* invocation, allowing him to affect multiple opponents. At APL 8, Gurtom can't empower or maximize his *eldritch chain*, so carefully consider whether to do a lot of damage to one target or less damage to three targets. At APL 10, Gurtom can empower and maximize his *eldritch chain*, so he uses that as often as it seems reasonable to do so.

Gurtom uses the charges from his *gloves of eldritch admixture* slowly over the first three rounds of combat if possible, spending one charge each round. Note that Gurtom can't use the *gloves of eldritch admixture* in a round when he has used his *cloak of elemental protection*, as the cloak requires an immediate action (so Gurtom doesn't have a swift action left in his turn, which is required to activate the gloves).

Development: In Vecna's Service. If a PC wishes to take up Halmadar's offer, remind the player that the PC is permanently removed from play. If the player still agrees, that PC also receives 5 rounds to prepare to fight the rest of the PCs. You can run Halmadar's representative yourself, or let the player control his or her traitorous PC against the other PCs. At any rate, the PC is removed from play.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs fail in their battle against Gurtom Starcheek, Halmadar laughs and lunches at Magister Har. Caught off guard, the wizard is immediately slain and Halmadar assumes the power coursing through the Endless Library for himself, becoming a proxy of Vecna. Halmadar

allows any surviving PCs to flee, his laughter ringing in their ears.

If the PCs win, Halmadar is no less treacherous. As soon as the PCs get the upper hand over Gurtom, they can see Halmadar make a surprise lunge for Magister Har. Magister Har counters this attack, and the two beings battle fiercely. Once Gurtom falls, Magister Har cries out to the PCs, "*Begone, friends! This treacherous coward seeks to steal by force what his champion could not win him by right. I can keep him from his goal, but the cost is high. I would not have you pay it with me! Run!*"

The Endless Library slowly begins collapsing, with shelves falling every which way and paper fluttering through the air. Once the last of the PCs leaves the extra-dimensional Administrative Suite, read:

Blackened timbers frame the doorway to the Administrative Suite. Singed pages of lore float to the ground like wounded birds. Inside, the fabled Administrative Suite is a drab, ordinary room, no longer the endless corridors with magic flowing through them. Magister Har's body, broken and bloody, lies in the middle of the room, his head cradled in Threnodee's lap. The dust mephit slowly places two copper pieces over the eyes of his master, a tear trickling down his dirty face. Then, solemnly wrapping his dingy wings around both of them, the mephit and his master shimmer for a moment and disappear.

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 Three: Old Friends

Defeat or bypass the lycanthropes:

APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	300 XP

Encounter Four: The Old Stomping Grounds

Defeat Lorsch and/or his minions:

APL 4	120 XP
-------	--------

APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	300 XP

Encounter Six: In the Frozen City

Defeat the looters (award *only* if the character did not already get experience from both Encounter 3 and Encounter 4):

APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	300 XP

Encounter Seven: At the Wrinkle Academy

Survive, disable or bypass the trap:

All APLs	90 XP
----------	-------

Encounter Nine: The Endless Library

Defeat Gurtom Starcheek:

APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP

Story Awards

Aid the wounded after the Skyroad disaster in Encounter One:

APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP

Bypass the interdiction of the city in Encounter Five:

APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP

Reassemble the librarian's name in Encounter Eight:

APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, PCs 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 PCs cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that PCs 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), PCs may return to retrieve loot. If the PCs 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 PCs may want to use them during the adventure. Many times PCs 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 PCs total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

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

Encounter Three: Old Friends

Loot the werereatures.

APL 4: L: 10 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 50 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 25 gp per character.

APL 8: L: 100 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potions of cure moderate wounds*(2), 25 gp per character each.

APL 10: L: 201 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potions of cure moderate wounds*(4), 25 gp per character each.

Encounter Six: In the Frozen City

Take the gear from the looters.

APL 4: L: 49 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

APL 6: L: 98 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

APL 8: L: 98 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

APL 10: L: 98 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds*, 2 gp per character.

Encounter Nine: The Endless Library

Loot Gurtom Starcheek.

APL 4: L: 208 gp; C: 8 gp; M: *+1 chain shirt*, 104 gp per character, *cloak of elemental protection*, 83 gp per character, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 25 gp per character, *salve of minor spell resistance*, 112 gp per character, *wand of false life*, 105 gp per character.

APL 6: L: 208 gp; C: 8 gp; M: *+1 chain shirt*, 104 gp per character, *chasuble of fell power*, 666 gp per character, *cloak of elemental protection*, 83 gp per character, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 25 gp per character, *salve of minor spell resistance*, 112 gp per character, *wand of false life*, 105 gp per character.

APL 8: L: 208 gp; C: 8 gp; M: *+1 chain shirt*, 104 gp per character, *chasuble of fell power*, 666 gp per character, *cloak of elemental protection*, 83 gp per character, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 25 gp per character, *salve of minor spell resistance*, 112 gp per character, *wand of false life*, 105 gp per character.

APL 10: L: L: 208 gp; C: 8 gp; M: *+1 chain shirt*, 104 gp per character, *chasuble of fell power, greater*, 1500 gp per character, *cloak of elemental protection*, 83 gp per character, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 25 gp per character, *salve of minor spell resistance*, 112 gp per character, *wand of false life*, 105 gp per character.

Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 4: 650 gp

APL 6: 900 gp

APL 8: 1,300 gp

APL 10: 2,300 gp

Special

Gnomish Spectacles Upgrade: Based on experiences in this adventure, this PC may upgrade the Gnomish Spectacles from VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon* with the following powers at the following cost after any Verbobonc regional adventure:

- +2 Intelligence. Cost: 1,500 gp; +1 to Ego score. If this raises two attributes to 14 or more, the spectacles gain the power of speech (Common, Gnome and Dwarf) and 120 ft. low-light vision and hearing.
- Protection from evil* on the wearer 1/day. 1,000 gp; +1 to Ego score.
- Once per day, the PC can cast *spiritual advisor*^{cc} as the spell (caster level equals character level). Although the mechanics of the spell are unchanged, the advisor is the spirit within the spectacles. 16,000 gp; +2 to Ego score.

Metaorganizational Access: Members of the Wrinkle Academy at the time of this adventure receive Frequency [Regional] access to those items obtained in the *Items Found During the Adventure* section.

A Loyal Companion? You have learned that Wee Jas sent several of her agents to mortal wizards as familiars in order to further her own designs. Although your familiar won't admit to being a secret agent of the Stern Lady, you have your suspicions. Whenever your familiar is within arm's reach, in addition to the benefits of the Alertness feat (as usual) you also gain a +2 insight bonus on all saving throws against necromancy spells and effects and death effects. If you do not currently have a familiar, cross out this entry.

Looted the Looters: You elected to keep some of the treasure that was clearly looted from the citizenry of Verbobonc City while they were incapacitated.

- You spend 10 TU trying to avoid serious punishment for a crime you did not commit.
- You forfeit all gold earned for this adventure, including any gold as a result of rewards from other adventure records.
- You receive -10 affiliation points if you are a member of the Church of Heironeous, the Church of Pelor, or the Church of Rao. This increases to -20 affiliation points if you are a member of the Church of Saint Cuthbert.
- You receive -5 promotion points if you are a member of the Mounted Borderers.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Metaorganizational Access: Members of the Wrinkle Academy may upgrade any of the items below from Adventure access to Regional access.

Item Access

APL 4

- ❖ *Cloak of elemental protection* (Freq: Adventure, MIC)
- ❖ *Salve of minor spell resistance* (Freq: Adventure, MIC)
- ❖ *Wand of false life* (CL 3rd, 14 charges) (Freq: Adventure, DMG, 1260 gp)
- ❖ *Amber amulet of vermin* (large monstrous scorpion) (Freq: Adventure, MIC)

APL 6 (as APL 4 plus the following)

- ❖ *Chasuble of fell power* (Freq: Adventure, MIC)

APL 8 (as APL 4-6 plus the following)

- ❖ *Amber amulet of vermin* (giant stag beetle) (Freq: Adventure, MIC)

APL 10 (as APL 4-8 plus the following)

- ❖ *Chasuble of fell power, greater* (Freq: Adventure, MIC)

APPENDIX 1: APL 4

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE OLD STOMPING GROUNDS

VOIDMIND KOBOLD MINION CR 2

Male and female kobold Warrior 4

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 armor, +5 natural)

hp 36 (4 HD); **DR** 5/magic

Immune ability damage, ability drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities

SR 15

Fort +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee spear +7 (1d6+3/x3) and tentacle +7 (1d4+2 and improved grab)

Ranged spear +7 (1d6+2/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacle)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +2 (+6 with tentacle)

Attack Options cone of slime 1/day (4d6 acid, Reflex half and Fortitude partial, DC 15), constrict 1d4+3, improved grab, mind flayer host (CL 8th: *charm monster* (DC 17), *detect thoughts* (DC 15), *levitate*, *plane shift* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 16)), sentient tentacle

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 7

SQ mind flayer host

Feats Ability Focus (cone of slime), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +2, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Escape Artist +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +2, Listen +1, Move Silently +3, Profession (miner) +1, Search +2, Spot +2, Survival +2

Possessions studded leather armor, three spears, ragged clothes

Cone of Slime (Su) Once per day, a voidmind kobold can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from inside its skull that deals 4d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 15 half). Any creature damaged by the slime takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and is sunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fortitude DC 15 negates the stunned effect). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex) A voidmind kobold deals 1d4+3 points of damage with a successful grapple check while grappling with its tentacle.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a voidmind kobold must hit a Small or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind kobold has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Sentient Tentacle (Ex) A voidmind kobold's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it

to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind kobold that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Mind Flayer Host (Su) A voidmind kobold's mind flayer master, Lorsch, is instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of the range of his control (5 miles), or is the target of any magic. Also as a result of this bond, Lorsch can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of his bonded kobold to a range of 5 miles. Maintaining this link requires Lorsch to concentrate, but Lorsch remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally. Finally, Lorsch can take control of the voidmind kobold at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind kobold in this fashion, Lorsch can manifest his own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind kobold as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of Lorsch's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect to the voidmind creature. So, for example, Lorsch can use *plane shift* to send the voidmind kobold to another plane, or it could send itself to another plane. Likewise, Lorsch could use *suggestion* on a target it sees through the eyes of the voidmind kobold.

ENCOUNTER SIX: IN THE FROZEN CITY

EVAN CARISON CR 3

Male human Hexblade 3

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

Languages Common

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16

(+1 Dex, +4 armor, +2 shield)

hp 25 (3 HD)

Fort +2 (+4 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Ref** +1 (+3 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Will** +2 (+4 vs. spells and spell-like effects); mettle

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee masterwork bastard sword +6 (1d10+2/19-20)

Ranged dagger +4 (1d4+2/19-20)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Attack Options hexblade's curse 1/day (Will negates, DC 13)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15

SQ arcane resistance, mettle

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Shield Proficiency

Skills Bluff +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Spellcraft +3

Possessions combat gear plus chain shirt, heavy wooden shield, masterwork bastard sword, daggers (2), traveler's outfit, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

Arcane Resistance (Su) A hexblade adds his Charisma bonus (minimum +1) to saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Hexblade's Curse (Su) Once per day, as a free action, a hexblade can unleash a curse upon a foe. The target must be visible to the hexblade and within 60 feet. The target of a hexblade's curse takes a –2 penalty on attacks, saves, ability check, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls for 1 hour thereafter. A successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 hexblade's class level + hexblade's Cha modifier) negates the effect. Any effect that dispels a curse eliminates the effects of a hexblade's curse.

Mettle (Ex) If a hexblade makes a successful Will or Fortitude save against an attack that normally would have a lesser effect on a successful save (such as any spell with an entry of Will half or Fortitude partial), he instead completely negates the effect. An unconscious or sleeping hexblade does not gain the benefit of mettle.

LOOTERS

CR 1/2

Male human Warrior 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

Languages Common

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13
(+1 Dex, +3 armor)

hp 8 (1 HD)

Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee heavy flail +2 (1d10+1/19-20)

Ranged dagger +2 (1d4+1/19-20)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Combat Gear alchemist's fire

Abilities Str 12, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10

Feats Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local: VTF) +1

Possessions studded leather armor, heavy flail, dagger, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

ENCOUNTER NINE: THE ENDLESS

LIBRARY

GUR TOM STARCHEEK

CR 6

Male halfling warlock 6

CN Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*, see normally in darkness, Listen +2, Spot +0

Languages Common, Draconic, Halfling

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15, *entropic warding*
(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 38 (6 HD); **DR** 1/cold iron

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7 (+9 against fear)

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Ranged *eldritch blast* +9 touch (3d6 plus 2d6 acid, fire or cold 3/day; see *gloves of eldritch admixture*)

Melee dagger +4 (1d3-1/19-20)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** -1

Atk Options maximize spell-like ability 3/day, *entropic warding*, *flee the scene*

Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection**, *gloves of eldritch admixture**, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14

SQ *detect magic*, deceive item

Feats Extra Invocation (beguiling influence), Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell-Like Ability

Skills Bluff +15, Climb +1, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +2 (+4 to act in character), Hide +7, Intimidate +10, Jump +1, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +5, Use Magic Device +11 (may always take 10)

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *amber amulet of vermin** (large monstrous scorpion), *wand of false life* (15 charges), *salve of minor spell resistance* (2), dagger, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect magic*

Invocations (Sp): A warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beguiling Influence (Sp): You can invoke this ability to beguile and bewitch your foes. You gain a +6 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate checks for a period of 24 hours.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): The first ability a warlock learns is *eldritch blast*. A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects.

An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 1d6 points of damage at 1st level and increases in power as the warlock rises in level. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell.

An *eldritch blast* is subject to spell resistance, although the Spell Penetration feat and other effects that improve caster level checks to overcome spell resistance also apply to *eldritch blast*. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. Metamagic feats cannot improve a warlock's *eldritch blast* (because it is a spell-like ability, not a spell). However, the feat Ability Focus (*eldritch blast*) increases the DC for all saving throws (if any) associated with a warlock's *eldritch blast* by 2.

Devil's Sight (Sp): You gain the visual acuity of a devil for 24 hours. You can see normally in darkness and magical darkness out to 30 feet.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.)

Flee the Scene (Sp): You can use *dimension door* as a spell-like ability, although the range is limited to short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels). When you use this ability, you leave behind a *major image* of yourself in your place that lasts for 1 round. The image reacts appropriately to attacks as if you were concentrating on it.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as *see invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60 feet for a period of 24 hours.

Detect magic (Sp): Beginning at 2nd level, a warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks at 3rd level and above, gaining damage reduction 1/cold iron. At 7th level and every four levels thereafter, a warlock's damage reduction improves by 1.

Deceive Item (Ex): At 4th level and higher, a warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other PCs. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE OLD STOMPING GROUNDS

VOIDMIND KOBOLD MINION

CR 2

Male and female kobold Warrior 4

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Draconic**AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 20

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +4 armor, +5 natural)

hp 36 (4 HD); **DR** 5/magic**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities**SR** 15**Fort** +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** spear +8 (1d6+3/x3) and tentacle +7 (1d4+2 and improved grab)**Ranged** spear +8 (1d6+2/x3)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacle)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +2 (+6 with tentacle)**Attack Options** cone of slime 1/day (4d6 acid, Ref half and Fort partial, DC 15), constrict 1d4+3, improved grab, mind flayer host (CL 8th: *charm monster* (DC 17), *detect thoughts* (DC 15), *levitate*, *plane shift* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 16)), sentient tentacle**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 7**SQ** mind flayer host**Feats** Ability Focus (cone of slime), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative**Skills** Bluff +2, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Escape Artist +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +2, Listen +1, Move Silently +3, Profession (miner) +1, Search +2, Spot +2, Survival +2**Possessions** masterwork chain shirt, three masterwork spears, ragged clothes**Cone of Slime (Su)** Once per day, a voidmind kobold can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from inside its skull that deals 4d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 15 half). Any creature damaged by the slime takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and is sunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fortitude DC 15 negates the stunned effect). The save DCs are Constitution-based.**Constrict (Ex)** A voidmind kobold deals 1d4+3 points of damage with a successful grapple check while grappling with its tentacle.**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a voidmind kobold must hit a Small or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind kobold has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.**Sentient Tentacle (Ex)** A voidmind kobold's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A

voidmind kobold that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Mind Flayer Host (Su) A voidmind kobold's mind flayer master, Lorsch, is instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of the range of his control (5 miles), or is the target of any magic. Also as a result of this bond, Lorsch can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of his bonded kobold to a range of 5 miles. Maintaining this link requires Lorsch to concentrate, but Lorsch remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally. Finally, Lorsch can take control of the voidmind kobold at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind kobold in this fashion, Lorsch can manifest his own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind kobold as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of Lorsch's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect to the voidmind creature. So, for example, Lorsch can use *plane shift* to send the voidmind kobold to another plane, or it could send itself to another plane. Likewise, Lorsch could use *suggestion* on a target it sees through the eyes of the voidmind kobold.

ENCOUNTER THREE: OLD FRIENDS

WERE DIRE WOLF (HYBRID FORM)

CR 5

Male human were dire wolf barbarian 1

CE Large humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, Listen +8, Spot +9**Languages** Common**AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +4 armor, +5 natural armor)

hp 72 (7 HD); **DR** 10/silver**Fort** +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** masterwork greatsword +14 (3d6+13/19-20) and bite +9 (1d8+4)**Ranged** javelin +7 (1d8+10)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +18**Atk Options** Curse of lycanthropy, Power Attack, rage 1/day**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds***Abilities** Str 29, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8**SQ** Alternate form, fast movement, wolf empathy**Feats** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Climb +14, Hide +7, Intimidate +1, Jump +13, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +9, Survival +11, Swim +11**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork greatsword, masterwork chain shirt, 3 javelins**Alternate Form (Su)** A were dire wolf can assume a human form or the form of a dire wolf.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Rage (Ex) while raging, the were dire wolf's stats change as follows:

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 16

hp 86

Fort +14, **Will** +11

Melee* masterwork greatsword +13 (3d6+22/19-20) and bite +8 (1d8+8)

Ranged javelin +7 (1d8+11)

Grp +20

Abilities Str 33, Con 24

Skills Climb +16, Jump +16, Swim +13

*3-point Power Attack

ENCOUNTER SIX: IN THE FROZEN CITY

EVAN CARISON

CR 5

Male human Hexblade 3/Rogue 2

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages Common

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +2 shield)

hp 35 (5 HD)

Fort +2 (+4 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Ref** +4 (+6 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Will** +2 (+4 vs. spells and spell-like effects); evasion, mettle

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee masterwork bastard sword +7 (1d10+2/19-20)

Ranged dagger +6 (1d4+2/19-20)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +6

Attack Options hexblade's curse 1/day (Will negates, DC 13), sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15

SQ arcane resistance, evasion, mettle, trapfinding

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Shield Proficiency

Skills Bluff +8, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +8, Listen +3, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (local: VTF) +4, Search +4, Spellcraft +3, Spot +3

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, heavy wooden shield, masterwork bastard sword, daggers (2), traveler's outfit, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

Arcane Resistance (Su) A hexblade adds his Charisma bonus (minimum +1) to saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Hexblade's Curse (Su) Once per day, as a free action, a hexblade can unleash a curse upon a foe. The target must be visible to the hexblade and within 60 feet. The target of a hexblade's curse takes a -2 penalty on attacks, saves, ability check, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls for 1 hour thereafter. A successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 hexblade's class level + hexblade's Cha modifier) negates the effect. Any effect that dispels a curse eliminates the effects of a hexblade's curse.

Mettle (Ex) If a hexblade makes a successful Will or Fortitude save against an attack that normally would have a lesser effect on a successful save (such as any spell with an entry of Will half or Fortitude partial), he instead completely negates the effect. An unconscious or sleeping hexblade does not gain the benefit of mettle.

LOOTERS

CR 1

Male human swashbuckler 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 armor)

hp 15 (1 HD)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee rapier +4 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged dagger +3 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Combat Gear tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Bluff +4, Jump +4, Sense Motive +5, Tumble +5

Possessions combat gear plus studded leather armor, rapier, dagger, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

ENCOUNTER NINE: THE ENDLESS

LIBRARY

GURTOTM STARCHEEK

CR 8

Male halfling warlock 8

CN Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*, see normally in darkness, Listen +2, Spot +0

Languages Common, Draconic, Halfling

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15, *entropic warding*

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 50 (8 HD); **DR** 2/cold iron

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9 (+11 against fear)

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 20 ft. (good)

Ranged *eldritch blast* +11 touch (5d6 plus 2d6 acid, fire or cold 3/day; see *gloves of eldritch admixture*)

Melee dagger +6/+1 (1d3-1/19-20)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +1

Atk Options maximize spell-like ability 3/day, *entropic warding*, *flee the scene*, fiendish resilience 1

Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection**, *gloves of eldritch admixture**, *elemental gem (brown)*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 15

SQ detect magic, deceive item

Feats Extra Invocation (beguiling influence), Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell-Like Ability

Skills Bluff +15, Climb +1, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +2 (+4 to act in character), Hide +7, Intimidate +10, Jump +1, Listen +2, Move

Silently +5, Sense Motive +5, Use Magic Device +11 (may always take 10)

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *amber amulet of vermin** (large monstrous scorpion), *wand of false life* (15 charges), *chasuble of fell power**, *salve of minor spell resistance* (2), dagger, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect magic*

Invocations (Sp): A warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beguiling Influence (Sp): You can invoke this ability to beguile and bewitch your foes. You gain a +6 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate checks for a period of 24 hours.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): The first ability a warlock learns is *eldritch blast*. A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects.

An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 1d6 points of damage at 1st level and increases in power as the warlock rises in level. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell.

An *eldritch blast* is subject to spell resistance, although the Spell Penetration feat and other effects that improve caster level checks to overcome spell resistance also apply to *eldritch blast*. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. Metamagic feats cannot improve a warlock's *eldritch blast* (because it is a spell-like ability, not a spell). However, the feat

Ability Focus (*eldritch blast*) increases the DC for all saving throws (if any) associated with a warlock's *eldritch blast* by 2.

Devil's Sight (Sp): You gain the visual acuity of a devil for 24 hours. You can see normally in darkness and magical darkness out to 30 feet.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.)

Fell Flight (Sp): When you use this invocation, the powers of darkness bear you aloft as you sprout a streaming, winglike cape of shadows. You can fly at a speed equal to your land speed with good maneuverability for 24 hours.

Flee the Scene (Sp): You can use *dimension door* as a spell-like ability, although the range is limited to short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels). When you use this ability, you leave behind a *major image* of yourself in your place that lasts for 1 round. The image reacts appropriately to attacks as if you were concentrating on it.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as *see invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60 feet for a period of 24 hours.

Detect magic (Sp): Beginning at 2nd level, a warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks at 3rd level and above, gaining damage reduction 1/cold iron. At 7th level and every four levels thereafter, a warlock's damage reduction improves by 1.

Deceive Item (Ex): At 4th level and higher, a warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other PCs. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

Fiendish Resilience (Su): Beginning at 8th level, a warlock knows the trick of fiendish resilience. Once per day as a free action, he can enter a state that lasts for 2 minutes. While in this state, the warlock gains fast healing 1.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE OLD STOMPING GROUNDS

VOIDMIND KOBOLD MINION

CR 2

Male and female kobold Warrior 4

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Draconic**AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 20

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +4 armor, +5 natural)

hp 40 (4 HD); **DR** 5/magic**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities**SR** 15**Fort** +10, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** spear +8 (1d6+3/x3) and tentacle +7 (1d4+2 and improved grab)**Ranged** spear +8 (1d6+2/x3)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacle)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +2 (+6 with tentacle)**Attack Options** cone of slime 1/day (4d6 acid, Ref half and Fort partial, DC 16), constrict 1d4+3, improved grab, mind flayer host (CL 8th: *charm monster* (DC 17), *detect thoughts* (DC 15), *levitate*, *plane shift* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 16)), sentient tentacle**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 7**SQ** mind flayer host**Feats** Ability Focus (cone of slime), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative**Skills** Bluff +2, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Escape Artist +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +2, Listen +1, Move Silently +3, Profession (miner) +1, Search +2, Spot +2, Survival +2**Possessions** masterwork chain shirt, three masterwork spears, *amulet of health* +2, ragged clothes**Cone of Slime (Su)** Once per day, a voidmind kobold can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from inside its skull that deals 4d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 16 half). Any creature damaged by the slime takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and is sunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fortitude DC 16 negates the stunned effect). The save DCs are Constitution-based.**Constrict (Ex)** A voidmind kobold deals 1d4+3 points of damage with a successful grapple check while grappling with its tentacle.**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a voidmind kobold must hit a Small or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind kobold has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.**Sentient Tentacle (Ex)** A voidmind kobold's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A

voidmind kobold that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Mind Flayer Host (Su) A voidmind kobold's mind flayer master, Lorsch, is instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of the range of his control (5 miles), or is the target of any magic. Also as a result of this bond, Lorsch can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of his bonded kobold to a range of 5 miles. Maintaining this link requires Lorsch to concentrate, but Lorsch remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally. Finally, Lorsch can take control of the voidmind kobold at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind kobold in this fashion, Lorsch can manifest his own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind kobold as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of Lorsch's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect to the voidmind creature. So, for example, Lorsch can use *plane shift* to send the voidmind kobold to another plane, or it could send itself to another plane. Likewise, Lorsch could use *suggestion* on a target it sees through the eyes of the voidmind kobold.

ENCOUNTER THREE: OLD FRIENDS

WERE DIRE WOLF (HYBRID FORM)

CR 6

Male human were dire wolf barbarian 2

CE Large humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, Listen +9, Spot +9**Languages** Common**AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18; uncanny dodge

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +4 armor, +5 natural armor)

hp 83 (8 HD); **DR** 10/silver**Fort** +13, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** masterwork greatsword +16/+11 (3d6+15/19-20) and bite +11 (1d8+5)**Ranged** javelin +8 (1d8+10)**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +20**Atk Options** Curse of lycanthropy, Power Attack, rage 1/day**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds***Abilities** Str 30, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8**SQ** Alternate form, fast movement, uncanny dodge, wolf empathy**Feats** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Climb +15, Hide +7, Intimidate +1, Jump +14, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Spot +9, Survival +12, Swim +11**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork greatsword, masterwork chain shirt, 3 javelins

Alternate Form (Su) A were dire wolf can assume a human form or the form of a dire wolf.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Rage (Ex) while raging, the were dire wolf's stats change as follows:

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 16

hp 99

Fort +15, **Will** +11

Melee* masterwork greatsword +15/+10 (3d6+24/19-20) and bite +10 (1d8+9)

Ranged javelin +8 (1d8+10)

Grp +22

Abilities Str 34, Con 24

Skills Climb +17, Jump +17, Swim +15

*3-point Power Attack

ENCOUNTER SIX: IN THE FROZEN CITY

EVAN CARISON

CR 7

Male human Hexblade 4/Rogue 3

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Common

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +2 shield)

hp 47 (7 HD)

Fort +3 (+5 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Ref** +6 (+8 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Will** +4 (+6 vs. spells and spell-like effects); evasion, mettle

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee masterwork bastard sword +9/+4 (1d10+2/19-20)

Ranged dagger +8 (1d4+2/19-20)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +8

Attack Options hexblade's curse 1/day (Will negates, DC 16), sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15

SQ arcane resistance, evasion, mettle, summon familiar (weasel), trapfinding, trap sense +1

Feats Ability Focus (hexblade's curse), Alertness^B, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Shield Proficiency

Skills Bluff +9, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +9, Listen +7, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (local: VTF) +6, Search +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, heavy wooden shield, masterwork bastard sword, daggers (2), traveler's outfit, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

Hexblade Spells (CL 2nd):

1st—*Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 13)

Arcane Resistance (Su) A hexblade adds his Charisma bonus (minimum +1) to saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Hexblade's Curse (Su) Once per day, as a free action, a hexblade can unleash a curse upon a foe. The target must be visible to the hexblade and within 60 feet. The target of a hexblade's curse takes a –2 penalty on attacks, saves, ability check, skill checks,

and weapon damage rolls for 1 hour thereafter. A successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 hexblade's class level + hexblade's Cha modifier) negates the effect. Any effect that dispels a curse eliminates the effects of a hexblade's curse.

Mettle (Ex) If a hexblade makes a successful Will or Fortitude save against an attack that normally would have a lesser effect on a successful save (such as any spell with an entry of Will half or Fortitude partial), he instead completely negates the effect. An unconscious or sleeping hexblade does not gain the benefit of mettle.

LOOTERS

CR 2

Male human swashbuckler 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 armor)

hp 23 (2 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** -1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee rapier +5 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged dagger +4 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3

Combat Gear tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Bluff +5, Jump +7, Sense Motive +6, Tumble +8

Possessions combat gear plus studded leather armor, rapier, dagger, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

ENCOUNTER NINE: THE ENDLESS

LIBRARY

GURTOTM STARCHEEK

CR 10

Male halfling warlock 10

CN Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*, see normally in darkness, Listen +2, Spot +0

Languages Common, Draconic, Halfling

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15, *entropic warding*

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 62 (10 HD); **DR** 2/cold iron

Resist electricity 5, sonic 5

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10 (+12 against fear)

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 20 ft. (good)

Ranged *eldritch blast* or *eldritch chain* +12 touch (6d6 plus 2d6 acid, fire or cold 3/day; see *gloves of eldritch admixture*)

Melee dagger +7/+2 (1d3-1/19-20)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +2

Atk Options empower spell-like ability 3/day, maximize spell-like ability 3/day, *entropic warding*, *flee the scene*, fiendish resilience 1

Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection**, *gloves of eldritch admixture**, *improved elemental gem (brown)*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 15

SQ detect magic, deceive item

Feats Empower Spell-Like Ability, Extra Invocation* (beguiling influence), Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell-Like Ability*

Skills Bluff +16, Climb +1, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +2 (+4 to act in character), Hide +7, Intimidate +12, Jump +1, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +5, Use Magic Device +11 (may always take 10)

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *amber amulet of vermin** (giant stag beetle), *wand of false life* (15 charges), *chasuble of fell power**, *salve of minor spell resistance* (2), dagger, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect magic*

Invocations (Sp): A warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beguiling Influence (Sp): You can invoke this ability to beguile and bewitch your foes. You gain a +6 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate checks for a period of 24 hours.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): The first ability a warlock learns is *eldritch blast*. A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects.

An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 1d6 points of damage at 1st level and increases in power as the warlock rises in level. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell.

An *eldritch blast* is subject to spell resistance, although the Spell Penetration feat and other effects that improve caster level checks to overcome spell resistance also apply to *eldritch blast*. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. Metamagic feats cannot improve a warlock's *eldritch blast* (because it is a spell-like ability, not a spell). However, the feat Ability Focus (*eldritch blast*) increases the DC for all saving throws (if any) associated with a warlock's *eldritch blast* by 2.

Devil's Sight (Sp): You gain the visual acuity of a devil for 24 hours. You can see normally in darkness and magical darkness out to 30 feet.

Eldritch Chain: This blast shape invocation allows you to improve your *eldritch blast* by turning it into an arc of energy that "jumps" from the first target to others. An *eldritch chain* can jump to two secondary targets within 30 feet of the first target, allowing you to make additional ranged touch attacks and deal damage to the secondary targets if you hit. You can "jump" the chain to two secondary targets (for a total of three targets). Each new target must be within 30 feet of the previous one, and you can't target the same creature more than once with the *eldritch chain*. If you miss any target in the chain, the *eldritch blast* attack ends there.

Each target struck after the first takes half the damage dealt to the first target. This reduction in damage to the secondary targets applies to any effect that increases the damage of your *eldritch blast* (such as the *gloves of eldritch admixture*). You must make separate spell penetration checks for each target, as applicable.

The *eldritch chain* is the equivalent of a 4th level spell, not a 1st level spell (as is usual for *eldritch blast*). Therefore, Gurtom cannot maximize an *eldritch chain*.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.)

Fell Flight (Sp): When you use this invocation, the powers of darkness bear you aloft as you sprout a streaming, winglike cape of shadows. You can fly at a speed equal to your land speed with good maneuverability for 24 hours.

Flee the Scene (Sp): You can use *dimension door* as a spell-like ability, although the range is limited to short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels). When you use this ability, you leave behind a *major image* of yourself in your place that lasts for 1 round. The image reacts appropriately to attacks as if you were concentrating on it.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as *see invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60 feet for a period of 24 hours.

Detect magic (Sp): Beginning at 2nd level, a warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks at 3rd level and above, gaining damage reduction 1/cold iron. At 7th level and every four levels thereafter, a warlock's damage reduction improves by 1.

Deceive Item (Ex): At 4th level and higher, a warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other PCs. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

Fiendish Resilience (Su): Beginning at 8th level, a warlock knows the trick of fiendish resilience. Once per day as a free action, he can enter a state that lasts for 2 minutes. While in this state, the warlock gains fast healing 1.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER FOUR: THE OLD STOMPING GROUNDS

VOIDMIND KOBOLD MINION

CR 2

Male and female kobold Warrior 4

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Draconic**AC** 23, touch 14, flat-footed 21

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +4 armor, +5 natural, +1 deflection)

hp 40 (4 HD); **DR** 5/magic**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities**SR** 15**Fort** +10, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** spear +8 (1d6+3/x3) and tentacle +7 (1d4+2 and improved grab)**Ranged** spear +8 (1d6+2/x3)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacle)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +2 (+6 with tentacle)**Attack Options** cone of slime 1/day (4d6 acid, Ref half and Fort partial, DC 16), constrict 1d4+3, improved grab, mind flayer host (CL 8th: *charm monster* (DC 17), *detect thoughts* (DC 15), *levitate*, *plane shift* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 16)), sentient tentacle**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 7**SQ** mind flayer host**Feats** Ability Focus (cone of slime), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative**Skills** Bluff +2, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Escape Artist +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +2, Listen +1, Move Silently +3, Profession (miner) +1, Search +2, Spot +2, Survival +2**Possessions** masterwork chain shirt, three masterwork spears, *amulet of health* +2, *ring of protection* +1, ragged clothes**Cone of Slime (Su)** Once per day, a voidmind kobold can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from inside its skull that deals 4d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 15 half). Any creature damaged by the slime takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and is sunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fortitude DC 15 negates the stunned effect). The save DCs are Constitution-based.**Constrict (Ex)** A voidmind kobold deals 1d4+3 points of damage with a successful grapple check while grappling with its tentacle.**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a voidmind kobold must hit a Small or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind kobold has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.**Sentient Tentacle (Ex)** A voidmind kobold's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without

hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind kobold that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Mind Flayer Host (Su) A voidmind kobold's mind flayer master, Lorsch, is instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of the range of his control (5 miles), or is the target of any magic. Also as a result of this bond, Lorsch can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of his bonded kobold to a range of 5 miles. Maintaining this link requires Lorsch to concentrate, but Lorsch remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally. Finally, Lorsch can take control of the voidmind kobold at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind kobold in this fashion, Lorsch can manifest his own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind kobold as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of Lorsch's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect to the voidmind creature. So, for example, Lorsch can use *plane shift* to send the voidmind kobold to another plane, or it could send itself to another plane. Likewise, Lorsch could use *suggestion* on a target it sees through the eyes of the voidmind kobold.

ENCOUNTER THREE: OLD FRIENDS

WERE DIRE WOLF (HYBRID FORM)

CR 6

Male human were dire wolf barbarian 2

CE Large humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, Listen +9, Spot +9**Languages** Common**AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18; uncanny dodge (-1 size, +3 Dex, +4 armor, +5 natural armor)**hp** 83 (8 HD); **DR** 10/silver**Fort** +13, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** masterwork greatsword +16/+11 (3d6+15/19-20) and bite +11 (1d8+5)**Ranged** javelin +8 (1d8+10)**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +20**Atk Options** Curse of lycanthropy, Power Attack, rage 1/day**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds***Abilities** Str 30, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8**SQ** Alternate form, fast movement, uncanny dodge, wolf empathy**Feats** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Climb +15, Hide +7, Intimidate +1, Jump +14, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Spot +9, Survival +12, Swim +11**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork greatsword, masterwork chain shirt, 3 javelins

Alternate Form (Su) A were dire wolf can assume a human form or the form of a dire wolf.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Fort DC 15 or contract lycanthropy.

Rage (Ex) while raging, the were dire wolf's stats change as follows:

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 16

hp 99

Fort +15, **Will** +11

Melee* masterwork greatsword +15/+10 (3d6+24/19-20) and bite +10 (1d8+9)

Ranged javelin +8 (1d8+10)

Grp +22

Abilities Str 34, Con 24

Skills Climb +17, Jump +17, Swim +15

*3-point Power Attack

ENCOUNTER SIX: IN THE FROZEN CITY

EVAN CARISON

CR 9

Male human Hexblade 6/Rogue 3

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Common

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +2 shield)

hp 61 (9 HD)

Fort +4 (+7 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Ref** +7 (+10 vs. spells and spell-like effects), **Will** +5 (+8 vs. spells and spell-like effects); evasion, mettle

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee masterwork bastard sword +11/+6 (1d10+2/19-20)

Ranged dagger +10 (1d4+2/19-20)

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +10

Attack Options hexblade's curse 2/day (Will negates, DC 18), sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 16

SQ arcane resistance, evasion, mettle, summon familiar (weasel), trapfinding, trap sense +1

Feats Ability Focus (hexblade's curse), Alertness^B, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Shield Proficiency, Spell Focus (enchantment)^B

Skills Bluff +12, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +12, Listen +7, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (local: VTF) +6, Search +5, Spellcraft +6, Spot +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, heavy wooden shield, masterwork bastard sword, daggers (2), traveler's outfit, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

Hexblade Spells (CL 3rd):

1st—*tasha's hideous laughter* (2) (DC 15)

Arcane Resistance (Su) A hexblade adds his Charisma bonus (minimum +1) to saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Hexblade's Curse (Su) Once per day, as a free action, a hexblade can unleash a curse upon a foe. The target must be visible to the hexblade and within 60

feet. The target of a hexblade's curse takes a –2 penalty on attacks, saves, ability check, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls for 1 hour thereafter. A successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 hexblade's class level + hexblade's Cha modifier) negates the effect. Any effect that dispels a curse eliminates the effects of a hexblade's curse.

Mettle (Ex) If a hexblade makes a successful Will or Fortitude save against an attack that normally would have a lesser effect on a successful save (such as any spell with an entry of Will half or Fortitude partial), he instead completely negates the effect. An unconscious or sleeping hexblade does not gain the benefit of mettle.

LOOTERS

CR 4

Male human swashbuckler 3/rogue 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages Common

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13

(+3 Dex, +3 armor)

hp 37 (4 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee rapier +8 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged dagger +6 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Attack Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Bluff +6, Jump +8, Listen +3, Search +3, Sense Motive +7, Spot +3, Tumble +9

Possessions combat gear plus studded leather armor, masterwork rapier, dagger, various goods looted from the immobilized citizens of Verbobonc City

ENCOUNTER NINE: THE ENDLESS

LIBRARY

GURTOM STARCHEEK

CR 12

Male halfling warlock 12

CN Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*, *see normally* in darkness, Listen +2, Spot +0

Languages Common, Draconic, Halfling

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15, *entropic warding*

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 74 (12 HD); **DR** 3/cold iron

Resist electricity 5, sonic 5

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +11 (+13 against fear)

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 20 ft. (good)

Ranged *eldritch blast* or *eldritch chain* +14 touch (8d6 plus 2d6 acid, fire or cold 3/day; *see gloves of eldritch admixture*)

Melee dagger +9/+4 (1d3-1/19-20)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +4

Atk Options empower spell-like ability 3/day, maximize spell-like ability 3/day, *entropic warding*, *flee the scene*, *wall of perilous flame*, fiendish resilience 1

Combat Gear *cloak of elemental protection**, *gloves of eldritch admixture**, *greater elemental gem (brown)*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16

SQ detect magic, deceive item

Feats Empower Spell-Like Ability, Extra Invocation* (beguiling influence), Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell-Like Ability*

Skills Bluff +17, Climb +1, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +3 (+5 to act in character), Hide +7, Intimidate +13, Jump +1, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +5, Use Magic Device +12 (may always take 10)

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *amber amulet of vermin** (giant stag beetle), *wand of false life* (15 charges), *greater chasuble of fell power**, *salve of minor spell resistance* (2), dagger, traveler's outfit, 45 gp

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will—*detect magic*

Invocations (Sp): A warlock does not prepare or cast spells as other wielders of arcane magic do. Instead, he possesses a repertoire of attacks, defenses and abilities known as invocations that require him to focus the wild energy that suffuses his soul. A warlock can use any invocation he knows at will, with the following qualifications:

A warlock's invocations are spell-like abilities; using an invocation is therefore a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. An invocation can be disrupted, just as a spell can be ruined during casting. A warlock is entitled to a Concentration check to successfully use an invocation if he is hit by an attack while invoking, just as a spellcaster would be. A warlock can choose to use an invocation defensively, by making a successful Concentration check, to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity. A warlock's invocations are subject to spell resistance unless an invocation's spell description specifically states otherwise. A warlock's caster level with his invocations is equal to his warlock level.

The save DC for an invocation (if it allows a save) is 10 + equivalent spell level + the warlock's Charisma modifier.

Finally, unlike other spell-like abilities, invocations are subject to arcane spell failure chance. Because the somatic components required for warlock invocations are relatively simple, a warlock can use any of his invocations while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Beguiling Influence (Sp): You can invoke this ability to beguile and bewitch your foes. You gain a +6 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate checks for a period of 24 hours.

Eldritch Blast (Sp): The first ability a warlock learns is *eldritch blast*. A warlock attacks his foes with eldritch power, using baleful magical energy to

deal damage and sometimes impart other debilitating effects.

An *eldritch blast* is a ray with a range of 60 feet. It is a ranged touch attack that affects a single target, allowing no saving throw. An *eldritch blast* deals 1d6 points of damage at 1st level and increases in power as the warlock rises in level. An *eldritch blast* is the equivalent of a 1st level spell.

An *eldritch blast* is subject to spell resistance, although the Spell Penetration feat and other effects that improve caster level checks to overcome spell resistance also apply to *eldritch blast*. An *eldritch blast* deals half damage to objects. Metamagic feats cannot improve a warlock's *eldritch blast* (because it is a spell-like ability, not a spell). However, the feat Ability Focus (*eldritch blast*) increases the DC for all saving throws (if any) associated with a warlock's *eldritch blast* by 2.

Devil's Sight (Sp): You gain the visual acuity of a devil for 24 hours. You can see normally in darkness and magical darkness out to 30 feet.

Eldritch Chain: This blast shape invocation allows you to improve your *eldritch blast* by turning it into an arc of energy that "jumps" from the first target to others. An *eldritch chain* can jump to two secondary targets within 30 feet of the first target, allowing you to make additional ranged touch attacks and deal damage to the secondary targets if you hit. You can "jump" the chain to two secondary targets (for a total of three targets). Each new target must be within 30 feet of the previous one, and you can't target the same creature more than once with the *eldritch chain*. If you miss any target in the chain, the *eldritch blast* attack ends there.

Each target struck after the first takes half the damage dealt to the first target. This reduction in damage to the secondary targets applies to any effect that increases the damage of your *eldritch blast* (such as the *gloves of eldritch admixture*). You must make separate spell penetration checks for each target, as applicable.

The *eldritch chain* is the equivalent of a 4th level spell, not a 1st level spell (as is usual for *eldritch blast*). Gurtom can both maximize and empower his *eldritch chain*.

Entropic Warding (Sp): When this invocation is activated, chaotic energies swirl about you, deflecting incoming arrows, rays and other ranged attacks (as *entropic shield*). You leave no trail (as *pass without trace*) and cannot be tracked by scent. (You can still be detected normally by scent, just not tracked.)

Fell Flight (Sp): When you use this invocation, the powers of darkness bear you aloft as you sprout a streaming, winglike cape of shadows. You can fly at a speed equal to your land speed with good maneuverability for 24 hours.

Flee the Scene (Sp): You can use *dimension door* as a spell-like ability, although the range is limited to short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels). When you use this ability, you leave behind a *major image* of yourself in your place that lasts for 1 round. The image reacts

appropriately to attacks as if you were concentrating on it.

See the Unseen (Sp): When you use this invocation you can activate great powers of vision, allowing you to see invisible creatures and objects (as *see invisibility*). You also gain darkvision out to 60 feet for a period of 24 hours.

Caustic Mire* (Sp): You can use *caustic mire* as the spell. If you use this invocation a second time while a previous *caustic mire* is still present, the previous effect ends.

Detect magic (Sp): Beginning at 2nd level, a warlock can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. His caster level equals his class level.

Damage Reduction (Su): Fortified by the supernatural power flowing in his body, a warlock becomes resistant to physical attacks at 3rd level and above, gaining damage reduction 1/cold iron. At 7th level and every four levels thereafter, a warlock's damage reduction improves by 1.

Deceive Item (Ex): At 4th level and higher, a warlock has the ability to more easily commandeer magic items made for the use of other PCs. When making a Use Magic Device check, a warlock can take 10, even if distracted or threatened.

Fiendish Resilience (Su): Beginning at 8th level, a warlock knows the trick of fiendish resilience. Once per day as a free action, he can enter a state that lasts for 2 minutes. While in this state, the warlock gains fast healing 1.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES ITEMS

NEW FEATS

Extra Invocation (*Complete Arcane*)

You learn an additional invocation.

Prerequisite: Ability to use lesser invocations.

Benefit: You learn one additional invocation from the list available to you, choosing an invocation of one grade lower than the highest grade of invocation you know. For example, a 6th-level warlock could learn a least invocation, while a 16th-level warlock could learn any least, lesser, or greater invocation.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time, you gain an extra invocation of any grade (least, lesser or greater) up to one lower than the highest grade of invocation you can currently use.

Maximize Spell-Like Ability (*Complete Arcane*)

You can use a spell-like ability to its maximum effect.

Prerequisite: Spell-like ability at caster level 6th or higher.

Benefit: Choose one of your spell-like abilities (subject to the restrictions below) to use at maximum effectiveness up to three times per day (or the ability's normal use limit, whichever is less). All variable, numeric effects of the spell-like ability are maximized, dealing maximum damage, curing the maximum number of hit points, affecting the maximum number of targets, and so on. For example, a 10th-level warlock's maximized *eldritch blast* deals 36 points of damage (rather than 6d6) three times per day. Saving throws and opposed checks (such as the one you make when you cast *dispel magic*) are not affected, nor are spell-like abilities without random variables.

An empowered maximized spell-like ability gains the benefit of each feat separately (getting the maximum result plus one-half the normally rolled result).

The spell-like ability you wish to maximize can be chosen only from those abilities that duplicate a spell of a level less than or equal to 1/2 your caster level, minus 2. For a summary, see the Caster Level to Empower column in the table on page 304 of the *Monster Manual*.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time, you apply it to a different one of your spell-like abilities.

NEW SPELLS

Caustic Mire (*Complete Mage*)

Conjuration (Creation)

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)

Area: 20-foot radius spread

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You cover the ground in an acidic slime, roughly the consistency of thick mud. The sludge is sticky; entering any square affected by the *caustic mire* costs 2 squares of movement. In addition, each square entered deals 1d6 points of acid damage to the creature moving. A creature who stands in the area without moving from its space takes 1d6 points of damage per round at the end of its turn.

The fumes rising out of *caustic mire* are flammable. Any effect that deals fire damage within an area of *caustic mire* deals an extra 1 point of damage per die (minimum +1 damage).

NEW ITEMS

Amber Amulet of Vermin (*Magic Item Compendium*)

This item summons a giant vermin that appears and obeys your commands for 1 minute (as if summoned by *summon nature's ally*). At the end of the duration, the creature vanishes.

Several varieties of the *amber amulet of vermin* exist (see below). An *amber amulet of vermin* works once per day. An *amber amulet of vermin* requires a standard action to activate.

Large monstrous scorpion. Moderate (DC 20) transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *giant vermin*; Price 700 gp; Weight —.

Giant stag beetle. Strong (DC 24) transmutation; CL 19th; Craft Wondrous Item, *giant vermin*; Price 1,200 gp; Weight —.

Chasuble of Fell Power (*Magic Item Compendium*)

While wearing a *chasuble of fell power*, your *eldritch blasts* or spells you cast that have the chaotic descriptor deal an extra 1d6 points of damage. Only a chaotic spell that deals hit point damage can benefit from this effect.

Moderate (DC 18) evocation; CL 6th; Craft Wondrous Item, *chaos hammer* or *eldritch blast*; Price 8,000 gp; Weight —.

Chasuble of Fell Power, Greater (Magic Item Compendium)

As a *chasuble of fell power*, except the greater chasuble adds an extra 2d6 points of damage to your *eldritch blasts* or damaging spells you cast that have the chaotic descriptor.

Moderate (DC 18) evocation; CL 6th; Craft Wondrous Item, *chaos hammer* or *eldritch blast*; Price 18,000 gp; Weight —.

Cloak of Elemental Protection (Magic Item Compendium)

When you activate a *cloak of elemental protection* (as an immediate action), you gain resistance 10 against a single energy type of your choice (acid, cold, electricity, fire or sonic). This protection lasts until the start of your next turn.

A *cloak of elemental protection* functions once per day. You must wear a *cloak of elemental protection* for 24 hours before you can access its abilities. If it is taken off, it becomes inactive until worn for an additional 24 hours.

Faint (DC 16) abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *resist energy*; Price 1,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Elemental Gem, Superior

The *elemental gem* described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* is only the least of a series of functionally similar magic items. An *improved elemental gem* summons a huge elemental and a *greater elemental gem* summons a greater elemental. These *superior elemental gems* appear identical to ordinary *elemental gems*, only their magical auras differ.

Strong (DC 21) conjuration; CL 11th (*improved elemental gem*) or 13th (*greater elemental gem*); Craft Wondrous Item, *summon nature's ally VI (improved elemental gem)* or *summon nature's ally VII (greater elemental gem)*; Price 3,300 gp (*improved elemental gem*) or 4,550 gp (*greater elemental gem*); Weight 1 lb.

Gloves of Eldritch Admixture (Magic Item Compendium)

Warlocks prize these which allow them to enhance their eldritch blasts with pure energy. Gloves of eldritch admixture have 3 charges, which are renewed each day at dawn. Spending 1 or more charges (a swift action) adds extra damage to the next eldritch blast you make before the end of your turn. This damage can be acid, cold, or fire, as chosen by you each time you activate the gloves.

1 charge: +2d6 damage

2 charges: +3d6 damage

3 charges: +4d6 damage

Faint (DC 16) evocation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *Melf's acid arrow* or *vitriolic blast* invocation, *scorching ray* or *brimstone blast* invocation, *ray of ice* or *hellrime blast* invocation; Price 2,500 gp; Weight —.

Salve of Minor Spell Resistance (Magic Item Compendium)

Upon spreading this salve upon your skin (a full-round action), you gain spell resistance 17 for 5 minutes.

Moderate (DC 19) abjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *spell resistance*; Price 1,350 gp; Weight 1/2 lb.

APPENDIX 3: DM OVERVIEW OF THE SKYROAD

WHAT IS THE SKYROAD?

The Skyroad is a system of three magical, aerial causeways built to facilitate trade around the lands now known as Verbobonc.

Three massive stone towers stand in far-flung spots of the Viscounty. These towers are called Pylons. The Pylons have been obscured by powerful and ancient illusion magic for years, but the old illusions are easily disbelieved once interacted with. Each Pylon looks like an immense chess pawn: it is a thick tapering shaft crowned by a flat platform upon which sits a stone ball forty feet in diameter. The interior of the Pylon is an open area, like would be found in a tall tower or keep. The platform and stone ball are dozens or hundreds of feet off the ground. It is not easy to reach the platform (usually, it requires a long ladder, massive lifting cranes, or magic), but the platform of a Pylon is a safe place. The platforms are sixty feet square, providing plenty of room around the huge sphere attached to the center of the platform. Objects and creatures that walk to the edge of the platform experience a light but strong gust of air that gently pushes them back from the edge. This gust is not strong—a halfling could jump from the platform, if he really wanted to—but it's powerful enough to keep most objects or creatures from accidentally falling off the platform.

The ball is the center of the Pylon's power. Extending out in a straight line from the ball atop each Pylon is a column of magical energy forty feet wide. This beam of energy is arrow-straight over a hundred miles, connecting each ball to the others. Since there are three Pylons, each Pylon has two beams extending from it to the other two Pylons. These beams create a triangle of magical energy, like aerial ley lines, over the Viscounty.

These beams of magical energy are semisolid cylinders of air forty feet wide. These beams are normally invisible, but they show up clearly against mist or rough weather, as the air within the beams is always calm and clear. Items and creatures within the beams are subject to a magical effect much like the air walk spell, allowing them to move within the airy beams as though on solid ground. Creatures can walk up, down, forward or backward within the cylinder quite easily. Unattended objects generally hang in the air wherever they are placed, but they do have momentum; you could throw a rock at someone else while in the column, for example. Pushing into the beam is easy, but pushing back out again is more difficult. Creatures and objects attempting to leave the

cylinder experience a gust of air similar to, but more powerful than, the gusts that ward the edges of the platforms on the Pylons. Pushing out of a beam from the inside, or pushing an item out, requires a DC 12 Strength check.

The air within the beams is always calm, dry and slightly warm. Rain striking the beam rolls off its sides, keeping those within dry. Strong winds are deflected by the beam, as the air within is always calm. Unpleasant weather effects are an exception to the general rule that items can easily enter one of the beams. This weather-deflecting effect is why the beams are easy to discern in bad weather although they are normally invisible (as they are made of only air and magical energy). Weather effects created within the beams—such as from a gust of wind spell—work normally, but if the effect leaves the beam it cannot reenter.

TRAVEL ON THE SKYROAD

A traveler can easily walk any direction, including up and down, within the beam. Although he is walking on air a hundred feet or more above the ground, he feels firm ground beneath his feet, angled slightly down as though to make walking easier. Even animals can walk within these beams, although most require a little extra training or encouragement in order to overcome the unfamiliar sensation of being high above the ground.

Birds and other flying creatures can travel in the beams easily by simply flying, but the gusts of wind can keep very small and weak birds from leaving the beams. Travelers can trap birds captured within the beams fairly easily, and therefore travelers along the beams have a ready source of food while in the beams. Thrusting a hand or a cup outside the beams during a rainstorm allows a traveler to collect clean rainwater to drink.

Wagons and carts are particularly easy to use in the beams, since the slight downhill grade makes pulling them easier. Reduce the weight of a wagon, cart, or anything carried inside a wagon or cart by half for the purposes of pulling it, to reflect the ease in pulling it along in the beams. More impressively, a four-wheeled vehicle—such as a wagon or carriage—given a good shove will roll on its own along the beam, picking up speed as it goes. The gust of air is generally sufficient to nudge a wagon straying near the edge of the beam back on track. A wagon will quickly pick up speed over about fifteen minutes until it reaches a top speed of about 30 miles an hour (or 300 feet per round). Any conveyance had best have good brakes, or the wagon is sure to smash

into splinters against the ball at the other end of its journey.

One of the Pylons is found in the Gnarley Forest, several miles east of the town of Taymouth. Another is found high in the Kron Hills, in the isolated hills between the town of Kron and Gallow's Corner. The third is deep in the Iron Wood, several miles northwest of the town of Glory. The beams are perfectly straight and perfectly horizontal, so the Pylons anchoring the beams to the ground are of different heights. The Pylon in the Gnarley Forest is the tallest, at just under two hundred feet. It rises above all but the tallest trees of that vast wood. The Pylon in the Iron Wood also rises above the mist-shrouded trees of that wood, just over one hundred and fifty feet tall. The Kron Hills Pylon is the shortest, as it is set high in the hills, and is only seventy feet above the ground; the ball is larger than the tower it sits on, making this tower look like a huge stone ball on a tall, round base.

Traveling the beams is safe and fast. Bandits, rough terrain and bad weather pose no difficulty. At a moderate walking pace, a journey of 100 miles along a beam (from one end of the Viscounty to the other) takes a walking man only four days. In a wagon rolling along on its own, but kept to a reasonably safe speed of 10 miles per hour by regular braking, the journey can be made in a single day. For all these reasons, the beams are popularly called the Skyroad.

WHO MADE THE SKYROAD?

The Pylons and the Skyroad were built by elven artificers long before the coming of man to the region now called Verbobonc. The elves would lift themselves and their cargo to the tops of the Pylons with a kind of mystic elevator, a modified version of *Tenser's floating disk*.

The Skyroad was used for generations by the elves, but resistance to its use grew over time. Elven druids saw the artificiality of the Skyroad as a danger, as the Skyroad disrupted natural weather patterns. Worse, some terrible tragedy occurred to the Skyroad system. Perhaps an evil creature siphoned off the immense energies powering the Skyroad and enacted some terrible, long-forgotten ritual. Perhaps the druids sabotaged the Skyroad, causing catastrophic failures (and many deaths by falling). In any case, the Pylons were shut down by the elves and trapped by the druids to prevent anyone from reactivating the Skyroad again. The Pylons were concealed by powerful illusions.

In time, knowledge of the Pylons and the Skyroad faded. The once-proud elves retreated into isolated communities. Only a few of their number now remain as the Mist Children elves of the Iron Wood. Their

ancestral legends speak, but only in the vaguest terms, of the danger the Pylons represent.

The Pylons have stood for hundreds of years, thought by most that have discovered them to be just three more of the mysterious elven ruins that dot the forgotten places of the Viscounty of Verbobonc. None remembered their interconnectedness and significance as the anchors of the Skyroad.

MAGISTER HAR AND THE SKYROAD

Forty years ago, a young gnome wizard working in a secluded library in the Kron Hills learned of the Skyroad from an ancient elven text. This gnome, named Obble Har, had been performing experiments in collecting the residual magical energies of Verbobonc for years. Obble Har had already discovered that three immense beams of magical energy had been seared through the skies of Verbobonc, centuries old but now powerless. He learned of the Skyroad, the Pylons, and the boon to travel they had been. The clever gnome also realized the Skyroad might have another effect as well, but he kept all of this lore to himself. Perhaps, after many years of preparation, Obble Har could empower the Skyroad again and set his plans into motion...

APPENDIX 4:

PERSONALITIES OF THE LIBRARY

If one of the PCs' Gnomish Spectacles are being used, refer to the character's VER6-02 *Delve the Wizard's Dungeon* AR and note the alignment, skill and traits of the gnome. Then read across to find the gnome's name and appearance, discovery, and benefit that all of the PCs receive for the time they are in the Gribnix.

Traits	Name and Appearance	Discovery	Effect
AL: LN Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (history) Traits: doddering, senile, long-winded.	Pumbledour. An ancient, doddering old gnome with swollen joints and unkempt whiskers. He is incredibly senile.	The gnome has just discovered that "Old Ironjaw," a minor dwarven leader in the Hateful Wars, was in fact Hurgin Rockhall of Clan Rockhall. However, this gnome has discovered this "fact" several times before. He just keeps forgetting it.	Discovered Lore, Again! Each character gains a +2 bonus to any skill check that the character had attempted in the previous round (whether or not the roll in the previous round succeeded or failed).
AL: NG Gender: female Specialty: Knowledge (local: VTF) Traits: grandmotherly, gossipy.	Minika, a warm, grandmotherly old gnome with her hair tied up in a bun. She obsesses over recipes and science.	This gnome has just discovered a particularly tasty toffee recipe in a book of old Baklunish lore.	Tastes Just Right! Each potion used by the PCs in the Gribnix is maximized, as per the metamagic feat.
AL: N Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (nature) Traits: easygoing, nature lover.	Baeraskor, a young, rustic gnome with a pipe thrust jauntily between his lips and a stein of beer close at hand.	This gnome has just discovered a method of crossing a powerful—but unpleasantly pungent—variety of pipeweed with a weaker smoother variety for a most excellent blend.	An Affable Fellow! All PCs have a +2 bonus to their Charisma score while in the Gribnix.
AL: CN Gender: female Specialty: Knowledge (history) Traits: poetic, women's rights supporter.	Lenaenn, a pretty young gnome with a distracted look in her eye surrounded by heaps of poetry in many languages	This gnome has just reinterpreted a lost Suloise poem and discovered that the hero is very likely a woman in disguise, in order to escape notice in a patriarchal society.	Rise Up, Repressed Sisters! Female PCs are under the effects of the <i>heroism</i> spell while in the Gribnix. Males merely gain a +1 to all Wisdom checks and Wisdom-based skill checks.
AL: LN Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (geography) Traits: mercantile, good memory for numbers.	Palleras, a gnome with a sturdy build, the look of a workman, and a clipboard at hand.	This gnome has just discovered that by insisting that all incoming goods be tied off with twine, he need not place any orders for twine ever again.	Well supplied! Each time a character uses a consumable item in the Gribnix roll a d6. On a 1, the character discovers he has a spare hidden some-where on his person (and the consumable is not marked off).
AL: N Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (nature) Traits: green thumb, elitist gourmand.	Baertikk is a dirty gnome with muddy hands, digging into a pot of flowers.	This gnome has just discovered that his chives have grown particularly well due to mulched parchment being introduced into the soil.	A Talent for Growing! All <i>cure</i> spells used on a character in the Gribnix are empowered, as per the metamagic feat.
AL: NG Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (dungeoneering) Traits: cautious, experienced adventurer.	Urna Arum is a lithe, wiry gnome with the look of an athlete and wearing an outfit with an inordinate number of pockets.	While reviewing journals of long-dead adventurers, this gnome has realized that the very hills in which the Gribnix is built are very near a connection the Underdark.	Underdark Scholar! PCs need not roll d20 for Knowledge (dungeoneering) in the Gribnix; each roll is instead treated as though the character had rolled a natural 20 (note that untrained PCs are still limited to results of DC 10 or less). This ability may help to identify Lorsch and his minions' characteristics.
AL: NG Gender: female Specialty: Knowledge (nobility and royalty) Traits: romantic, matchmaker.	Wannivara is a round-faced gnome woman, pretty in a wholesome sort of way, with thick hair carefully braided.	This gnome has just realized that, if certain implications in certain decades-old letters are to be believed, then Elise Stefania had an affair in 532, and Mikel Augustin was not Lord Gordon	Hopeless Romantic Against Impossible Odds! PCs gain +2 on any skill check where the DC is 25 or higher and +2 on any attack roll against an AC of 25 or higher.

Traits	Name and Appearance	Discovery	Effect
<p>AL: CN Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (arcana) Traits: bookish, surly, studious.</p>	<p>Wedakaer is a wizened old gnome with a permanent grimace. His eyebrows are knotted together with displeasure and he smells of rare chemicals.</p>	<p>Avgustin's true son. This gnome has made a startling discovery about the nature of force effects and their resistance to <i>antimagic</i> effects.</p>	<p>Magical Resistance Is No Barrier! PCs gain a +2 bonus to overcome SR while in the Gribnix. Furthermore, PCs gain a +2 to all damage rolls against creatures with SR while in the Gribnix.</p>
<p>AL: NG Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (history) Traits: military history buff, long-winded.</p>	<p>Hedfen is a fussy-looking old gnome with and all the appearance of an absent-minded professor.</p>	<p>In an unrelated tome, this gnome has uncovered the most complete catalog of the forces of good marshaled at Emirdy Meadows to date.</p>	<p>Battle Against Evil Together! In addition to the usual bonuses for flanking, PCs that flank an enemy gain +2 to damage rolls while in the Gribnix.</p>
<p>AL: LN Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (nobility and royalty); Traits: deferential, social climber.</p>	<p>Erfienn is a handsome gnome with a thick head of blonde hair and very fine silk clothes</p>	<p>This gnome has just uncovered a letter penned by the fourth in line to the throne of the Caliphate of Ekbir in 510 CY. This letter was signed with the complete name of the man, with a half a page of heretofore unknown titles.</p>	<p>Pride Before Your Superiors! Each character gains +2 on all skill checks, ability checks, and attack rolls as long as an ally with a greater number of Hit Dice is within 60 feet.</p>
<p>AL: NG Gender: female Specialty: Knowledge (religion) Traits: flighty, wondering, pious.</p>	<p>Lunoaena is a flighty gnomish woman with a distant look in her eye. Her clothes are worked with several different kinds of holy symbols.</p>	<p>This gnome has just discovered that Solonor Thelandira, elven god of hunters and archery, is in fact the brother of the feral elven god Fenmarel Mestarine.</p>	<p>A God Among Archers and Kin to Grugach! All PCs have a +2 bonus on missile weapon attack rolls. Additionally, the duration of a character's rage effect is increased by 2 rounds.</p>
<p>AL: CN Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (the planes) Traits: studious, wanderlust, skittish.</p>	<p>Nebcallad is a studious, serious older gnomish man with a look of intense concentration.</p>	<p>This gnome has just realized that succubi and erinyes are, despite other scholarship to the contrary, the same classification of creature, a kind of fallen angel.</p>	<p>Unparalleled Focus! PCs making concentration checks to cast spells defensively always succeed in the Gribnix. Furthermore, all attack rolls gain a +1 insight bonus.</p>
<p>AL: N Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (arcana) Traits: fascinated by magic, curious about Magister Har.</p>	<p>Diniadd is a bright-eyed eager gnomish youth with an inquisitive look.</p>	<p>This gnome has just mastered a basic understanding of the interplay between time and distance in magical lore.</p>	<p>Arcane Connections! Arcane spells cast by the PCs are automatically extended, as the metamagic feat. Spells with an instantaneous or permanent duration are instead enlarged, as the metamagic feat.</p>
<p>AL: NG Gender: female Specialty: Knowledge (local: VTE) Traits: flirtatious, social butterfly.</p>	<p>Garnherl is a pretty, thin young gnomish woman in ribbons and silks.</p>	<p>This gnome has just discovered evidence of a secret tryst by Sergei Chondell, heir to Lord Chondell's name, in a diary penned by one of Sergei's erstwhile friends.</p>	<p>Look Dashing, No Matter What You Do! All PCs may make Tumble checks, regardless of whether they have ranks in Tumble or wear encumbering armor, and all PCs gain a +4 bonus to Tumble checks.</p>
<p>AL: N Gender: male Specialty: Knowledge (architecture and engineering) Traits: opinionated architect, snide.</p>	<p>Garetf is an elderly gnomish man with sturdy clothes a complicated collection of rulers and slides close at hand.</p>	<p>This gnome has just realized that the foundation of Castle Greyfist is a nearly-exact duplicate of a fortress in the Abbor-Alz Hills built ages ago.</p>	<p>Like a Rock! If a character does not move in a round, he or she gains a +2 insight bonus to Armor Class until the start of his or her next turn.</p>
<p>AL: NG Gender: female Specialty: Knowledge (local: Core) Traits: trivia master, innocent, wondering.</p>	<p>Varenn is an incredibly beautiful gnomish woman. Her wavy hair is tousled and kept out of the way with a few pencils stuck into her hair at strange angles.</p>	<p>While consulting her own genealogy, this gnome has discovered that a few of her distant relatives settled near Blackmoor many generations ago and appear to have thrived there.</p>	<p>Draw Resolve From Your Varied Travels! Each character gains a bonus to his or her Constitution score equal to the number of separate regions reflected on his or her last 6 ARs (to a maximum of +6, if all of the last 6 ARs are from 6 different regions).</p>

APPENDIX 5: ILLUSTRATIONS

LORD WELLBORN ESTIVAL



LORD ROLAND GALANS



GURTOM STARKCHEEK

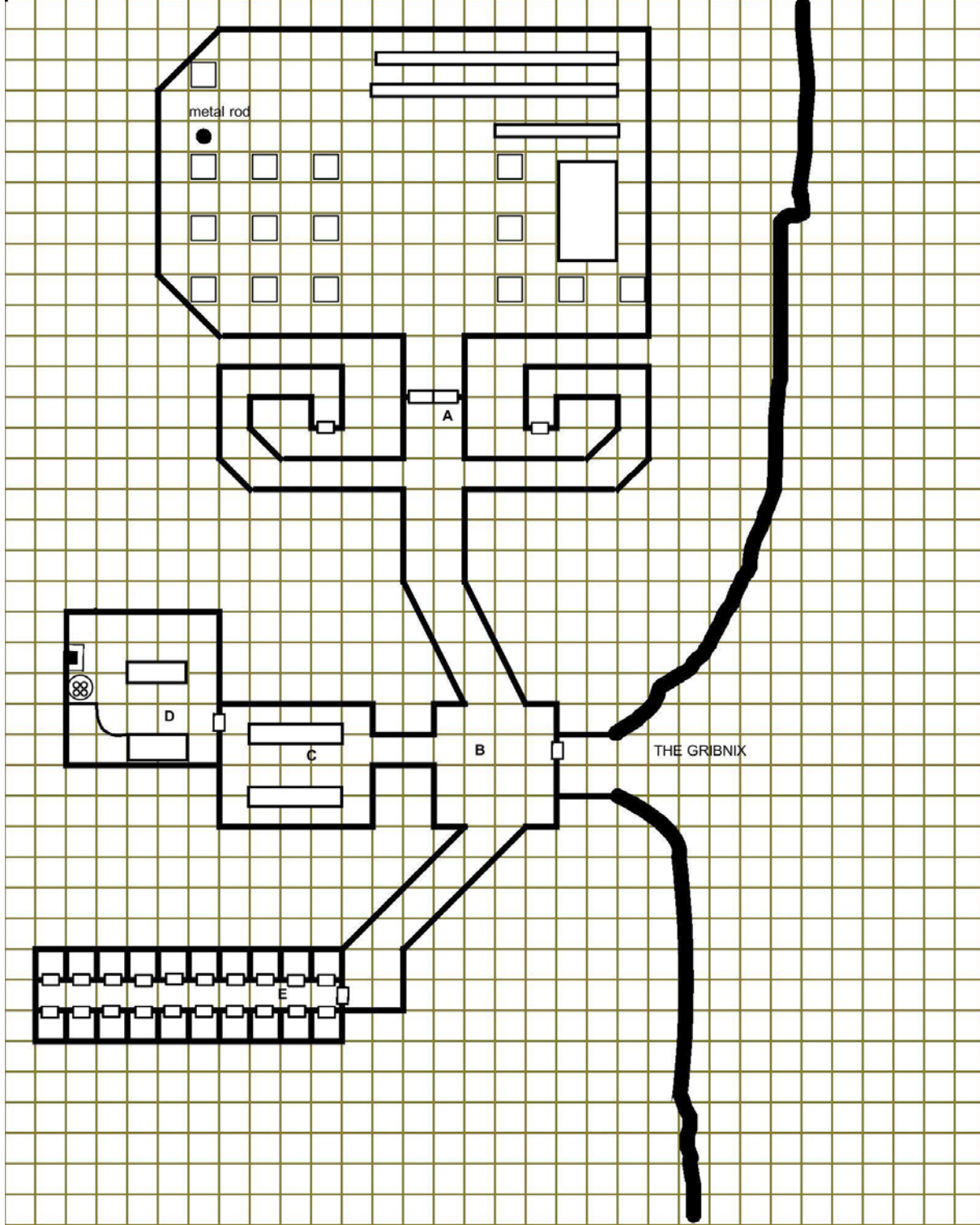


MAGISTER OBBLE HAR



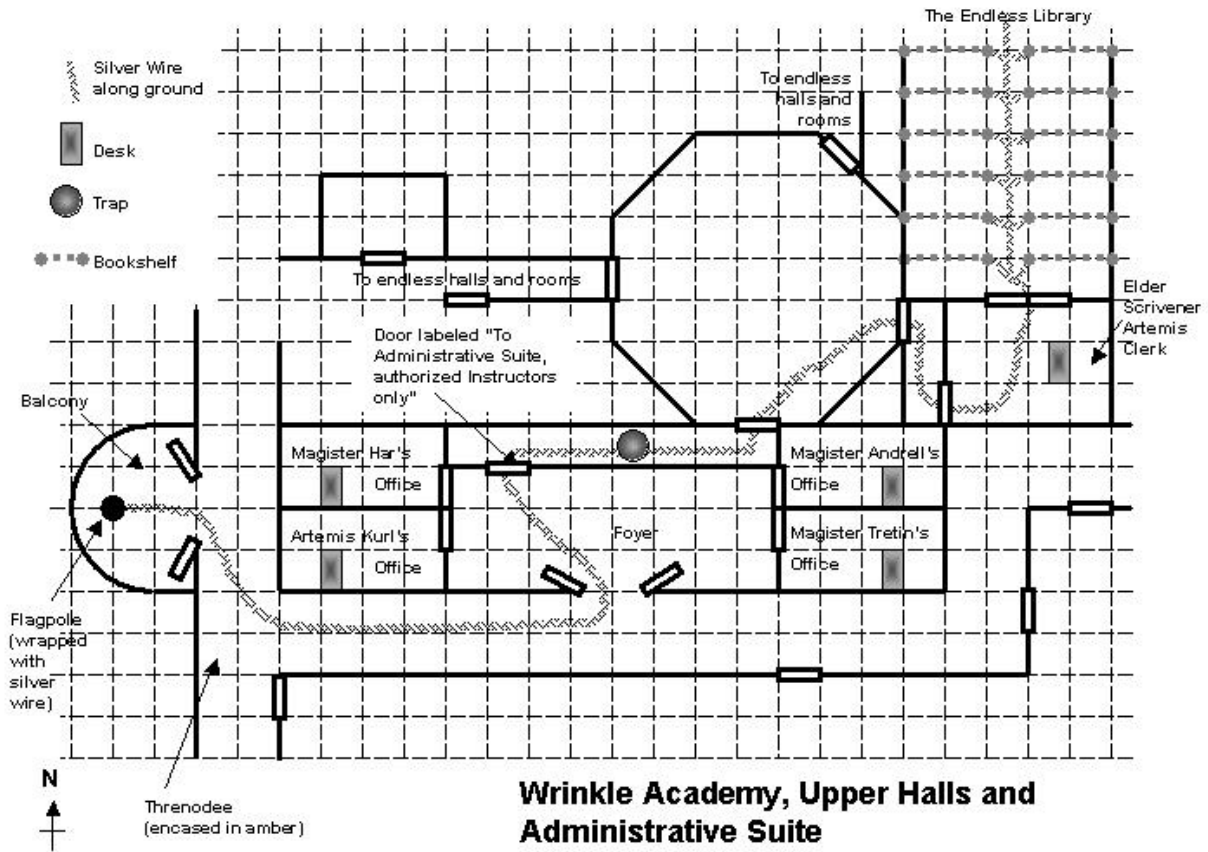
MAP 1: THE GRIBNIX

This map shows the layout of the Gribnix.



MAP 2: THE ADMINISTRATIVE SUITE

This map shows the layout of the Administrative Suite of the Wrinkle Academy.



PLAYER HANDOUT 1: MAP OF THE SKYROADS

This map shows the location of the Skyroads. In the first encounter, the PCs land just to the northeast of Castle Estival.



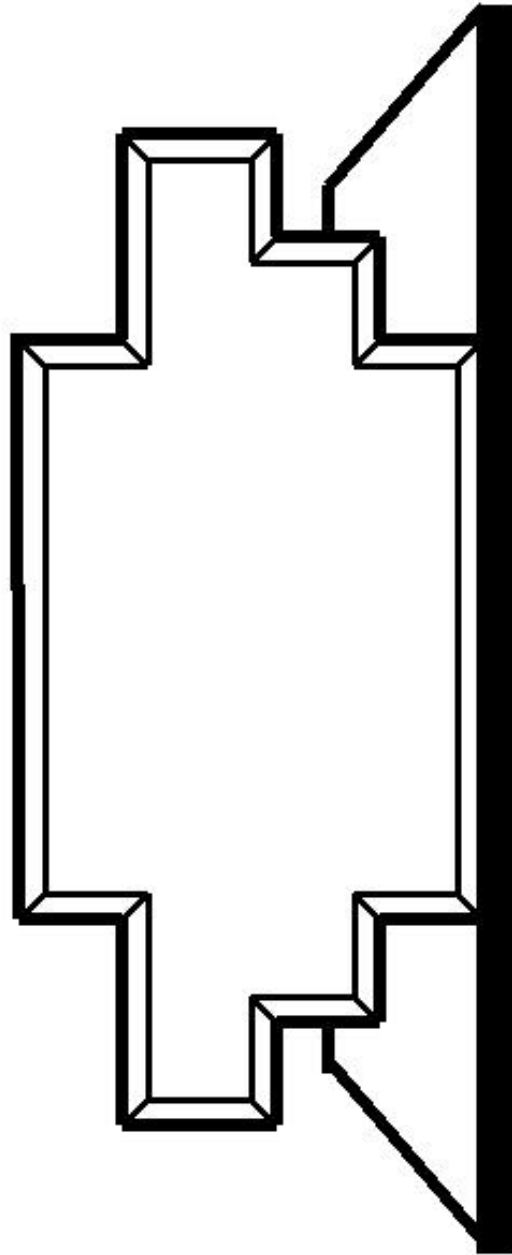
PLAYER HANDOUT 2: MAP OF VERBOBONC CITY

This map shows the layout of Verbobonc City. The Wrinkle Academy is location 52 (near the center of the city's east wall).



PLAYER HANDOUT 3: NAMEPLATE FRAME

The pieces of the broken nameplate fit into this frame.



PLAYER HANDOUT 4: NAMEPLATE PIECES

These are the pieces to be assembled in the nameplate frame.

M I
K

R
E N

R I
R

E
E R

S C
A

T
C L

D E
V

E L

E R
S

PLAYER HANDOUT 5:
THE PROPHECY OF THE THREE

*I speak this prophecy to the three,
The Ruby, the Book, and the speaker of Lies
Skilled above all in the domain of his god,
A master and servant from Oerth will arise.*

*Knowledge is the path to his ascension,
and magic will be the key to the door.
Death will greet him and embrace him,
secrets once seen will no longer obscure.*

*For when traders fall and traitors strike,
the humbled master will grasp his role.
Then the brave at heart must stem the striving,
and keep the master from his goal.*