

NYR4-S03

A High Price to Pay

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Nyronde Regional Adventure
For New Characters

Version 1.0

Round 1

By Stephanie and J. Eddy Roberts

The youngest son of a wealthy merchant house has been kidnapped, and his family wants you to find out why, and by whom, and above all, safely return him home. Can you find out the who and why before the kidnapping destabilizes the delicate balance of power in Oldred, and an innocent life is lost? This is a Roll Playing intensive introductory Living Greyhawk scenario for new characters.

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

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

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire. Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the DM records the players and his or her RPGA numbers on the RPGA scoring sheet and provides the sheet to the event coordinator.

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

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

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure.

To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

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 being war

horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters 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.

Add Sidebar Table Here

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will 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 you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack

must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Kingdom of Nyronnd. Characters native to Nyronnd pay one Time Unit per round; all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Judge's Notes

This scenario is an introductory scenario for characters of first level.

It introduces a new Nyronnd story line concerning the city of Oldred. It is designed to introduce new players / characters to the kingdom of Nyronnd, its major NPCs and possible metagame opportunities for their enjoyment

There are several references to various Nyronnd locations, meta-organizations, and NPCs. Please check with the myriad Nyronnd resources available through the Nyronnd web site. The web site is located at:

<http://www.nyronnd.org/turbine/page/>

Please be sure to communicate the results of your running of this scenario to either the Nyronnd triad or the event coordinator so that these results can be recorded.

Backstory

Oldred is a city in delicate balance. Four major factions vie for power, each reluctant to disturb the current balance for fear of causing civil war.

The four factions are the Vardushi, Caerizar, and Bayfield families and Duke Korenfluss. (More information on these factions can be found in the respective appendices to this scenario.)

Recently, the Scarlet Brotherhood has become aware of weapons being shipped to the rebels in Onnwal from the Nyronnd port of Oldred.

In an effort to reduce, or stop altogether, these arms shipments, the Scarlet Brotherhood has placed agents in Oldred with instructions to disturb the balance of power.

The Agents in this scenario are very junior agents who the Brotherhood finds completely expendable. They were sent to Oldred on their first assignment, and their inexperience shows.

NOTE: The authors have been VERY careful to avoid the use of the words “Scarlet” and “Brotherhood” throughout the scenario. Please do likewise.

Adventure Synopsis

Josen Vardushi, the youngest son of Sir Elmain Vardushi (a personal friend of, and onetime military officer who served with, King Lynwerd) is kidnapped the night before the characters enter the City of Oldred.

As they enter the city at the beginning of the scenario, they are followed to the King’s Rest (a well-known and oft recommended inn) by a half-elf, who introduces himself as Anwyn Voleiir. The half-elf asks for the party’s assistance in an urgent matter, promising them a fine place to stay and a financial reward when the matter is resolved.

Following their acceptance of his invitation, Anwyn leads the party to the manor home that is the residence of the Vardushi family, and escorts them into a sitting room where they will eventually meet Rocco Vardushi. Rocco will explain that his fourteen year-old nephew Josen has been kidnapped and will ask for the party’s assistance in investigating several clues, and hopefully finding his nephew.

Rocco will take the party to the third story of the Vardushi manor and show them the crime scene. There they will meet Lieutenant Garan, an officer in the Oldred City Watch. At the crime scene, they will find several clues that will point them to two possible suspects: the Bayfield Family and the Caerizar family.

After investigating these possible suspects, the party will return to rooms that the Vardushis have provided for them. The next morning they will receive the first ransom note. Clues from this note will send them to a local merchant, the Navy, and to Duke Korenfluss’ residence. Again, they will find no real suspects, but they should come to realize that many people in this city might have a motive.

Upon returning to the Vardushi residence to report their findings, they will meet Margus Vardushi, the brother of Josen, and oldest son of Sir Elmain. Margus has received a second ransom note, which details a time and place for the party to make an exchange of 1500 Gold Pieces for Josen. Margus asks the party to perform this task for the family, and promises that they will be amply rewarded.

At the meeting place, the party meets the kidnappers. They make the exchange, and receive the dead body of Josen Vardushi; at which point they have a choice; they can either fight the kidnappers to recover the money and return it to the Vardushis or they can allow the kidnappers to take the money and leave. Both options are equally acceptable, but by allowing the kidnappers to take the money and leave, the party will miss out on some very valuable rewards and experience.

The kidnappers are very junior agents of the Scarlet Brotherhood. They were sent to Oldred to cause some chaos as their ‘initiation’. They were too ambitious and attempted to frame everyone, rather than focusing on just framing one party

Adventure Summary

Introduction: The characters arrive in the City of Oldred and are spotted by Anwyn Voleiir, a senior representative of the Vardushi family. He approaches the party and offers them employment and lodging.

Scene One: The Vardushi Manor – Having accepted the job offer, the party is then escorted to the Vardushis’ manor home, and there have the terms of their employment explained to them.

Scene Two: The Scene of the Crime – The PCs get their first look at the scene. They are introduced to City Watch Lieutenant Garan, and they should find the clues needed to start their investigation.

These clues will send the party to scene three...

Scene Three: The Investigation

Three A: The Caerizars – The Party meets the second of the major powers in the city. The Caerizars will vehemently deny involvement in the kidnapping.

Three B: The Bayfields – The party meets the third of the major powers in the city. The Bayfields will also deny any involvement in the kidnapping of Josen Vardushi.

Three C: Thugs - In the evening, two thugs set upon the party, representatives of the first House the party visited that day. The thugs will warn the party to not go poking around into in others' business.

Scene Four: Note – The party returns to their rooms at the King's Rest. The next morning, a note is delivered to the Vardushi manor. Clues from the note will give the party a couple new leads:

Four A: The Navy – At the Oldred Navy Yards, the party will meet with a junior officer who is an aide to Admiral Anhur. He will verify that the paper is in fact the same as the Admiral's official paper. He will inform the party that they just received a new order, and can provide the name and location of the papermaker who supplies the paper to the Navy.

Four B: Duke Korenfluss' Residence – At the ducal manor, the party will meet with the Duke's majordomo, who can confirm that it is indeed the ducal seal, and does match his signet ring, but there is no chance that his Grace is involved. The sealing wax is the wrong color and the paper is not the same as that which the Duke's household uses.

The majordomo will recommend that they try a local papermaker; he could probably identify the paper. He will also tell the party that there will be an investigation about the forged ducal seal.

Four C: Papermaker's Shop – The papermaker's shop has several important clues. The papermaker can confirm that he does make this paper on a special contract to the navy. They are the only customers for this paper, and he must strictly account for every sheet that he makes. He sent a new order to the navy base just three days ago.

Additionally, he rents his upstairs rooms to the kidnappers. They delivered the paper to the navy, and have been behaving suspiciously. If they investigate the rooms, they will find evidence that these are in fact the kidnappers, and will risk falling into a trap...

Scene Five: Second Ransom Note – The party returns to the Vardushi manor to report their findings. They meet Margus Vardushi, Vardushi family heir, who has received a second ransom note, this one with instructions for a trade.

Scene Six: At the Meeting Place – The party arrives at the time and place the note specifies, they meet the kidnappers, and they have to make an important choice.

Conclusion – The party returns to the Vardushi manor and delivers the body of young Josen. Actions in this scene will vary depending on the outcome of Scene Six.

Introduction

The Traveling Companions

Though the sun is shining brightly in a clear sky, the chill of winter still lingers on this early Redying morning. The journey has been pleasant, however, since you ran into a few other adventurers last night.

If they haven't yet, the players and their characters should now take some time to introduce themselves to each other.

The other adventurers are also just setting out on some of their first travels, and like you, have heard that the port city of Oldred in southeast Nyronid is a good place to find just about anything you are looking for.

Your group reaches the northeast gates of Oldred just before noon. At the gates there is a group of city watch guards, they are carefully watching the various people entering the gates, and are stopping nearly everyone who is carrying weapons. When you reach the gate a guard explains that all weapons of longsword size or longer must be checked, and locked in a nearby heavily guarded shed.

Characters who are allowed to freely carry weapons in Nyronde do not need to check their weapons, but they must have appropriate campaign documentation.

After checking your weapons and receiving a claim ticket to retrieve them when you leave, you are allowed to pass through the city gates.

Walking down the road that leads to the King's Retreat, a highly recommended inn and tavern located in the merchant district, you pass through a bustling market with booths selling everything from the morning's catch of fish and shellfish, to finely crafted weapons and imported wines. On many of the crates of imported goods is a stamp of a spread-winged seabird; a few others are stamped with a budding rose.

Knowledge (nature) DC 10, the bird stamped on the crates is an albatross.

Players can stop and purchase goods in the market; anything listed in the PHB can be bought here, at PHB prices. DO NOT let them spend too much time here though. If players ask shopkeepers about the stamps on the crates, the shopkeeper will tell them the name of the family that the symbol stands for, and which family does which kind of shipping [Vardushi - seabird - ocean shipping; Caerizar - rose - over land shipping] and that there is a long-standing feud between the two families, but they will not have much more information than that

Sometime as the party is in the market, and again as they are leaving the market, have a couple players make a spot check DC 20 to notice that a man in a gray cloak seems to be watching them, and discreetly following them through the market. (If the players ignore him or no one makes the spot check, the man will approach them as they leave the market and near the King's Retreat). The man is a half-elf with dark brown hair and

hazel eyes. Beneath his gray cloak, he is wearing fine clothes including a blue silk tunic with a silver albatross embroidered on the left breast. The half-elf will introduce himself as soon as he encounters the party:

"Greetings travelers," the half-elf says, his voice undercut with urgency, "my name is Anwyn Voleir. I have been observing you since you entered the city. My employer has need of a group of people such as you. He is willing to pay for a night's stay at the King's Rest for all of you if you will meet with him as soon as possible. My master is also prepared to pay out a substantial reward in return for your assistance."

If the adventurers do not accept his invitation, Anwyn will emphasize the free night at the inn for just hearing his master out. If the adventurers still do not accept his invitation, Anwyn will leave and the adventure is over.

If they accept, Anwyn will walk with them into the King's Rest, pay for as many of the Inn's finest rooms as are needed to house the party, then gives the party a few minutes to deposit their extra gear, stable their horses, etc. When the party is ready, he will lead them to the Vardushi Manor.

Scene One

Vardushi Manor

Following Anwyn through what must be one of the wealthier districts of Oldred; you are lead towards one of the larger estates. The central building is a massive three-story structure built of dark grayish stone blocks. Surrounding the manor grounds is a gracefully curving but well-fortified wall, its length broken only by the iron gates that lead within. A large bronze shield displaying the heraldry of a Nyronde noble hangs on the wrought-iron arch above the front gates.

Within the gates are extensive gardens, and among them, groundskeepers busily prune bushes and plant flowers, bringing the dormant greenery back to life from its winter sleep.

Here and there, guards wearing blue and silver uniforms attempt to remain unobtrusive, but monitor the manor grounds closely. A long row of neatly pruned newly budding trees line the path that leads from the front gates up to the mansion's double doors.

Anwyn nods to the guards posted outside the mansion's main doors, then leads you inside. The inside of the manor house is as beautiful and carefully maintained as the outside. You do not have time to admire the decor, however, as Anwyn is quickly leading you down a hallway and to an informal sitting room.

Once the party is seated, Anwyn will excuse himself and exit the room. After a few minutes, a middle-aged Oeridian man will enter the room, followed closely by Anwyn. He introduces himself to the party.

"Greetings, my name is Rocco Vardushi, I have been left in charge of the household while my brother, Sir Elmain Vardushi, is in Rel Mord assisting in preparations for the King's wedding, and his son Margus is away."

"Last night, Sir Elmain's fourteen-year-old son, Josen Vardushi, was kidnapped. The city watch has been investigating since Josen was discovered missing early this morning, and the clues they have discovered so far are pointing in quite a few directions, some of them alarming, and some of them almost contradictory. I sent Anwyn to find a neutral party, a group of people who had just barely arrived in the city. The group would not have possibly had anything to do with my nephew's kidnapping, and would have little to no experience with the parties who may actually be involved with this crime."

Rocco Vardushi will ask for the party's assistance, and offer 50 gp each for their assistance in the investigation and recovery of Josen Vardushi

If the party accepts, Rocco will lead the party upstairs to the scene of the kidnapping, Josen's bedroom; additionally, if they inquire about weapons, Rocco will prepare writs vouching for their behavior and enabling them to retrieve their weapons from the city watch.

Scene Two

The Scene of the Crime

After climbing two flights of stairs, Rocco leads you to a doorway opening into what appears to be a bedroom. Standing outside the door is a man who is dressed in the uniform of the Oldred City Watch. Rocco stops, and introduces each of you to the watch lieutenant:

"Lieutenant Garan, these are the individuals that we have hired to look into the kidnapping. They are outsiders, so we are confident that they are not tied to one of the other families."

Lieutenant Garan nods to each of you, and then lets you into the room.

The bedroom is obviously the room of a teenage boy.

There are paintings of ships and exotic locales on most of the walls. Hung carefully on the wall at the head of the bed, in contrast to the other paintings, is a portrait of a thirty-something year old Oeridian man in armor, kneeling in front of an older man on a throne.

There are two windows into this room. One of them is missing a glass pane. You see that the missing pane has been placed carefully, on the floor, leaning against the wall just to the left of the window.

On the nightstand next to the bed is a display of dried flowers, with a single fresh red rose in the center of the display. The bed's sheets have been turned down, but it has obviously not been slept in.

On the other side of the room, resting on a stand, is a fine short sword in a well-made and finely decorated blue leather sheath.

Upon asking the Lieutenant and Rocco, the party will learn the following information about the clues in the room:

Window - The removed windowpane suggests that Josen was taken out of the room through it. There are no ladder prints in the ground outside,

however, which suggests that the kidnapers may have entered from the roof. Lt. Garan will tell the party that third-story entries are a specialty of Bayfield-trained thieves. The removed windowpane is a “trademark of Bayfield thieves”

Flowers – The fresh red rose is obviously not part of the dried flower display. Closer examination shows that the rose has a long stem that has been cleared of all other growth, except for a single thorn. When pointed out, Lt. Garan will tell the party that a ‘single-thorned rose’ is the main feature of the Caerizar family crest.

Short Sword -- If asked, Rocco will tell the party that the sword is Josen’s most prized possession, given to him by his father on his 14th birthday, he would never willingly leave the manor without it.

The Portrait – Is an artist’s depiction of Sir Elmain Vardushi being invested as a knight by King Archbold III

There may be a tendency for the players to get into “CSI” mindset. There is nothing else of significance that can be learned here.

Scene Three

The Investigation

The party now has two major clues. The rose points to the Caerizar family; and the window points to the Bayfield family. They will need to decide which order they wish to investigate them. Rocco will give the party directions to the two families’ manors.

Encounter A: The Caerizars

The Caerizar mansion is nearly as large as the Vardushis’, and almost as nice. Yet, where the Vardushi manor had an air of carefully maintained beauty, the Caerizar mansion seems to have a sense of being recently expanded and built up to its current grandeur.

A pair of guards wearing green uniforms trimmed in gold flanks the front gates. Their uniforms are embroidered with the house crest of a single-thorned white rosebud.

When the party approaches the gates, they will be stopped by the guards, who will send a runner up to the mansion to fetch a house representative. After a few minutes, a middle-aged Sueloise woman comes to the gate.

“Welcome, my name is Vilamia Caerizar, sister of Kolir Caerizar the head of the Caerizar family, I am manager of household communications. I hear you have some questions. Please, follow me.” Vilamia leads you past the front gates and into a richly-decorated sitting room just inside the Caerizar mansion.

“What can I help you with, friends?” Vilamia asks once you are settled.

When the party tells Vilamia about the kidnapping, she will express her sympathy for the boy’s family.

“How unfortunate, and right while Sir Elmain and Lady Celstinesa are away, too. The Vardushi family is powerful, and will not rest until the kidnapers are found, I am sure. But why are you here? The Vardushis cannot possibly think the Caerizars would be so stupid as to do something like this.”

When the party tells her about or shows her the rose found in Josen’s bedroom, Vilamia will have this to say:

“Hmm, very interesting, I can see how one could be confused. This rose is indeed similar to the rose on our family’s crest. But, if you will notice, this rose is red. The rose on the Caerizar family crest is a white rose. I can assure you that the Caerizar house is not involved, we understand the need for the current balance of power in this city, and would never do anything like this to disturb it.”

“The Bayfields or the Duke might reach for these heights, but I seriously doubt that as well. We all realize the consequences of such imbalance could be a civil war; and war tends to be bad for business.”

Once the party’s questions are answered, Vilamia will escort the party out of the mansion and to the front gate.

Encounter B: The Bayfields

The Bayfield mansion rises gracefully above the sturdy walls that surround the manor grounds. Six or so well-armed men can be seen patrolling the wall tops, and a pair of liveried guards flank the massive wooden front gate.

As you approach the gates, the guards will stop you and ask your business.

After the party gives their business:

One of the guards turns and knocks on the gate, a small window about eye level to an average human opens, and the guard mutters something to the face on the other side of the door. The small window closes. The guard turns back to you.

“Wait here, someone will be coming out to talk to you.”

After a few minutes, the sound of a heavy lock being slid back is heard, and the front gate swings partially open. A half-elf woman emerges, she is amazingly beautiful, and as she speaks, you are almost entranced by her lovely voice.

“Greetings, my name is Drucilia Nailo, I am an official representative of the Bayfield family. The guards tell me that you have some questions?”

No matter what the party says, Drucilia will strongly deny any involvement by the Bayfield family.

“Not to be rude, but do you think the Bayfield family crazy? Nay, suicidal? Our family wishes no trouble with the Vardushi family whatsoever. It sounds almost as if someone is trying to frame us. It sounds like something the Caerizars might try, but what would you expect from a family lead by an Anti-Paladin?”

“I hope for the city’s sake that you solve this mystery, an unbalance of powers in Oldred could cause many troubles...”

Drucilia will excuse herself as soon as she can, she will not have any more to say to the party.

Encounter C: The Thugs

Soon after leaving the second investigation site (the 2nd family), the party is accosted by members of the 1st family.

Leaving the manor of the _____ family, you head back toward the Kings Rest. After a few minutes of walking along some of the more deserted streets of Oldred, you hear a voice coming from a nearby alley. Stepping out of the alley is a human and a halfling.

“We’ve been following you, hirelings... You’ll not have the secrets of the _____ house to give to the _____.” (Insert the appropriate family names into the blanks)

The human and halfling are street operatives of the first family that the party investigated; the thugs have followed the party since they left the first house, and believe that the party is hired spies from the second family.

Thugs:

Jareel: Male Human Rogue 2; hp 14; See Appendix A.

And

Penter: Male Halfling Sorcerer 2; hp 11; See Appendix A.

Tactics:

The thugs’ intention is only to ‘rough-up’ the party, to teach them a lesson about interfering in Oldred’s business and maybe steal a few gold pieces (no more than 25 gp total from the party), they will only use subdual attacks, attempting to knock the party members unconscious. If the entire party is knocked unconscious, read the following text:

You wake up several hours later, to find that night has fallen, you have horrible headaches, and your purses feel somewhat lighter. Looking around, you see your friends are also slowly waking up, and it appears you have been drug into the same alley the thugs had jumped out of.

As the thugs are only using subdual attacks, the party should respond in kind. Killing the thugs will result in a loss of Story XP. See the Experience Point awards summary for details.

Scene Four

A Mysterious Note

After the encounter with the thugs, the party will most likely want to do one of the two following things: go straight to the King's Rest for the night, or, go back to the Vardushi manor to report their findings.

A guard at the Vardushi manor gates will escort the party into the mansion where Anwyn will meet them and receive their report.

Once they have reported in, Anwyn will thank them:

“You have done all you can do for today, thank you all. Please stay the night at your rooms in the King's Rest, and return here first thing in the morning.”

If the party is arriving here after having defeated the thugs, and has the thugs with them, Anwyn will summon a member of the city watch who will take the thugs into custody.

If the party is arriving here after being defeated by the thugs, Anwyn will apologize for them getting roughed up and will invite anyone he believes to be seriously injured in for healing by Lady Annia Vardushi (Sir Elmain's oldest daughter and Cleric 5 of Norebo).

The party should then continue on to the King's Rest, where they spend an uneventful night.

In the morning, if the party dallies and has not arrived at the Vardushi manor by nine bells, two Vardushi house guards will be sent to make sure the party has “recovered from last night's attack”.

Upon your return to the Vardushi manor, the house guards escort you downstairs to what is obviously a conference room. A massive hardwood table dominates the center of the room, surrounded on all sides by about twenty comfortable leather chairs. Mounted on the wall behind the head chair is a large, finely

detailed map of Oldred and the surrounding area.

The head chair is unoccupied, but a very worried-looking Rocco is seated in the chair directly to the left of it. Anwyn hovers nearby. The pair is studying a piece of paper. Rocco stands as you enter the room.

“This note-” he says, holding up the folded paper, “-was found tacked to our front door this morning.”

Give the players *Player Handout #1*.

“As you can see, the letter was sealed with Duke Regurd Korenfluss' signet. But in 'his Grace's' defense, not even he is stupid enough to send a message like this.”

When the players start asking about the paper, the following things are suspicious:

Paper – Rocco will tell the party that the note is written on a very expensive paper, it looks similar to the paper that Admiral Anhur of the Oldred Navy uses for his official dispatches and orders

Seal – Both Anwyn and Rocco will confirm that the impression in the wax seal does appear to be the Duke's signet, but they have no idea why the Duke would be getting involved in this matter, as “the Duke is not quite stupid enough to offend the Vardushi family like this.”

With a Bardic Knowledge DC 15, Knowledge (Nobility) DC 15, or Knowledge (Nyron) DC 20, the party member will realize that red sealing wax is an odd color for Duke Korenfluss to be using, as the Duke's colors are green and yellow.

The party should want to investigate the clues, and visit the Navy, the Duke, and/or the Papermaker.

Four A: The Navy

The Navy shipyards are located along the eastern edge of the crescent-shaped bay the city of Oldred has been built around. The shipyards are busy. The air is loud with the shouts of senior officers to their crews. The docks are crowded with stacks of provisions being loaded onto outgoing patrol ships and

groups of sailors leaving patrol ships that have just returned to port.

Anyone the party passes will be able to direct them to Admiral Anhur's offices, the building they are located in is not hard to find, as it is one of the largest buildings in the area.

The Oldred Navy's headquarters is a large two-story building made of grey stone. The building is simple and functional; the only real ornamentation is the Navy's symbol above the main doors.

Just inside the doorway a human woman in a uniform stops you.

"Greetings, I am Lieutenant Nivarra, is there something I can help you with?"

After they tell her who they are there to see, she will say the following:

"Admiral Anhur is in a meeting right now, but I am his personal aide, is there anything I can help you with?"

If they show him the paper, she will have the following information:

"Yes, this is the Admiral's custom paper, he uses it for official orders, and dispatches to the Duke. We received a new shipment of this paper three days ago, and noticed the order seemed a few pages short, but the papermaker is an older gentleman, and he may have miscounted by a few pages."

"This seal is the Duke's official seal, I have seen it many times before, that alone proves that this note was definitely not sent by the Admiral, the Admiral would have used his own signet. I would pay a visit to the Duke's household and see what his people have to say about this seal."

The Lieutenant will also tell the party where the Papermaker's shop is located, if the party asks.

Four B: Duke Korenfluss' Residence

Duke Regurd Korenfluss' residence sits on a hill right in the center of Oldred. It is a large structure, large for a residence, yet small for a

keep, which is what the building is patterned after.

The Ducal colors of green and yellow flutter from flagpoles and hang from upper-story windows. Many banners display the Duke's heraldry: Vert, Or bend with three bend-wise ship's wheels (a green shield with a diagonal yellow stripe containing three ship's wheels).

Guards at the gates will ask the party's business. Once the party has explained their purpose:

You are escorted into a small reception hall, where a tall, dark-haired human man wearing a white ruffed-sleeved shirt, dark leggings, and a green silk cape is waiting.

"I am Quillon Pantar, the His Grace, Duke Regurd Korenfluss' Majordomo. I have been informed that you have something you wish to discuss with His Grace. He is far too busy to be bothered by petty nonsense, so I am here to ascertain the relative importance of your visit."

If the party shows the Majordomo the note, he will look it over:

"Well, this letter is obviously a ruse." The Majordomo says, sniffing disdainfully, "His Grace Duke Korenfluss would never write something like this. This is also not His Grace's official paper; it looks like paper that Admiral Anhur uses for his missives. The seal, while it is an almost passable copy of His Grace's signet, it is done in red wax, His Grace always uses green wax for his official seal."

"I will begin an investigation into the forgery of His Grace's seal immediately. I suggest you 'adventurers' visit Admiral Anhur, or perhaps the Papermaker."

The Majordomo will discourage any further questions, and will have the party escorted from the Ducal residence as soon as possible.

Four C: Papermaker's Shop

The Papermaker's shop is located in a rather wealthy-looking area of Oldred's merchant district. The shops here are larger, and have

more specialties and more expensive goods. The Papermaker's shop is two stories tall, the bottom floor has a small display area in the front, a workshop and living area in back, and the upstairs looks to be storage or perhaps an upstairs apartment.

When they enter the store, the Papermaker, an elderly Gnome with thinning grey hair and a slight stoop in his posture, greets them warmly. He is hard of hearing, questions to him sometimes need to be repeated or spoken loudly. He tends to ramble a little as he speaks as well.

"Welcome, welcome! How can I assist such fine people as yourselves? Would you like to see a few samples of my papers? They are much finer than everyday animal hide parchments, for sure."

When the Papermaker is shown or described the paper the note is written on, he will have this to say:

"Ah, yes, that is some of the custom made paper that I create. This blue anchor-marked paper is a special commission from Admiral Anhur."

If the party asks if there has been any of this paper stolen from his shop, the paper maker will say:

"Stolen? No, no, I don't think so, I carefully count my packages of paper before they are delivered, there were only as many in the package as I had personally made."

Questions about who delivered the package of Anchor-marked paper, or questions about who might have stolen papers after or during delivery:

"Yes, that package was delivered by those two young men, I think they're brothers, they look very similar. They've been renting my upstairs apartment. They have been doing some deliveries for me as partial payment for their room; they delivered the Anchor-mark paper to the Naval base for me three days ago. They're very nice young men, a little bit odd, but very nice."

If the party asks about 'odd', he will continue:

"Well, coming and going at odd hours of the night, woke me up a few nights back, thought I heard some yelling, but the next morning they apologized, said they'd had an argument. I remember my brothers and I having some doosies of some fights when I was young..."

If the party asks when he last saw the young men:

"Hmm, haven't seen them since early this morning, I was just getting up. One of them was carrying a big sack, said they were making some deliveries for some other local merchants, and that they'd be back later, but I haven't seen them back yet."

If they ask to see the room, he will hesitate...

"Well, I don't know if I should, they might have property up there, I would not want any of their things to disappear."

...Unless the party mentions, or has mentioned already, that they are investigating a kidnapping and that his tenants may be involved:

"Oh, of course, come with me, I'll let you in." He leads you up the back stairs, talking as he goes. "I would hate to think those young men were involved in anything like that, but if they have been, I hope you find them, kidnapping is a bad business to be involved in." He unlocks the door with his house key, and then steps back, allowing you to enter the room.

The former tenants of this room have weakened the floorboards in a 10-foot square area in the center of the room, making a pit trap for the old man, or anyone who might come into the room searching for clues after they have gone. If characters with a total weight of over 100 lbs step on the trap, it is a DC 20 Reflex Save to avoid falling through the floor.

Camouflaged Pit Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger: no reset: DC 20 reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6 fall); multiple targets (all characters in 10 x 10 area; will not trigger without at least 100 lbs weight); search DC 24; not possible to disable.

A search check DC 10 will reveal some scraps of blue cloth; it is the same shade of blue as in the Vardushi family's colors. A DC 25 will find a piece

of parchment with a schedule of all ships sailing between Oldred and Scant this month.

In the neighborhood around the papermaker's shop are an Apothecary (where the players can obtain any potion that is available in the LGCS), a florist, and a candle maker. The Monks obtained the items that they have used at these shops. The merchants remember the two Suel boys, but cannot remember their exact purchases.

Scene Five

Ransom Note

It is late in the day when the party returns to the Vardushi Manor after investigating the three clues from the first ransom note. They are met at the gate by an anxious Anwyn (who has been watching for them).

“Good, you have returned! Master Margus is waiting for you down in the council room. Please hurry.”

“We have received more information about Josen.” Anwyn explains as he hurries toward the door of the manor house. Anwyn leads the way back downstairs to the same conference room that you met in earlier that morning.

Rocco Vardushi is in the same chair as he was earlier, but this time, the chair beside him is occupied. Seated in the head chair is a striking young man in his mid-twenties. He is dressed in fashionable, yet functional clothing in the family's blue and silver. He stands as you enter the room.

“Greetings, I am Margus Vardushi, Sir Elmain's oldest son and heir. My uncle Rocco tells me that you have been helping investigate the disappearance of my baby brother.”

“Just an hour ago, a small lad brought this note to the front door of the estate.” Margus hands you a piece of paper similar to the paper that the note this morning was written on.

Give the players *Player Handout #2*.

“As you can see,” Margus continues, “it looks like we will need your assistance to get my brother returned to us, in return for making this exchange for us, I'll increase the offered reward by 15 sterlings, for a total of 20 sterlings (200 gp).”

Margus will send Anwyn to collect the ransom money from the family treasury while the party reports the information they have gathered that day.

“I ask you to take this money to the menagerie and make the exchange. Your priority is to bring my brother back to me. If he has been harmed in any way, the gloves come off; and those involved must be brought to justice! If at all possible, they must be brought back for questioning. Do this favor for my family, and you will have our everlasting gratitude”

Scene Six

At The Meeting Place

It is just after dusk when your meeting with Margus has concluded. Anwyn has prepared a leather sack as instructed in the ransom note and assures you that all is in order for the exchange.

When the party is ready to leave, they will need to head toward the bay. The Menagerie is on the Island in the harbor.

Crossing the bridge to the island gardens, you are struck by the impressiveness of this bridge. It is several hundred strides long, and high enough that all but the largest ships can pass under it; it is hard to comprehend the effort that went into building it.

Finding the Menagerie is an easy task as it occupies a good portion of the island. As you look around you, you are amazed by the variety and exotic nature of the creatures held in the exhibits. All varieties of animals, and many beasts, and even some magical beasts are found on display here.

Arriving at the primate area, you realize that you are most likely early for the meeting.

Spot-check – DC 20 to see the monks moving about behind the baboon cages. – Use the following text.

Looking around, you finally see movement behind the baboon cages. Two figures are near a wagon. You don't think that they have seen your group yet.

If they fail the spot check, use this text:

Seeing no one around, you are surprised by the voice coming from near the baboons. "Did you bring the Platinum? Put the sack on the bench in front of the baboons, and walk carefully toward the girallon cage. When we get the money, we will tell you where you can find Josen Vardushi"

There are several possible outcomes here. The party can leave the money, at which point, they will be told Josen is in the wagon behind the baboons. He is, at least, his body is, he was killed about the same time the party was hired to investigate his disappearance.

Exchanging the platinum for the body is an acceptable outcome, but it will result in less gold, experience, and it will displease the Vardushis.

Fighting the monks is the preferred solution. If the party spotted them, use your best judgment to adjudicate the fight. The monks will attempt to flank and use their stunning fist ability to slow down the party.

If the party didn't spot the monks, they will be seriously disadvantaged in the fight, as the monks can bluff harm to Josen, or they will have to chase the monks who have taken the money and have hidden, waiting for a chance to escape. (If the party decides that they want to fight the monks [within 2-3 rounds of being told where Josen's body is], run them on a merry chase, and set up a location where the monks think that they can ambush them.)

SB Monks:

Korenth and **Doxam**: Male Suel-Human Monks 2 (2): hp 17 (each): See appendix A for details

At the Wagon:

Around behind the Baboon cage is a large wagon. Lying in the back of the wagon are several large burlap sacks, each labeled "Monkey Chow", opening the largest one you find the body of a teen-age boy who looks a good deal like Margus Vardushi. This must be Josen.

A Heal check DC 10 will reveal that a broken neck is the cause of death, and a Heal check DC 20 will tell that he has been dead for about a day and a half. (Josen was killed about the same time the party was hired to investigate the kidnapping).

Conclusion

The Wrap-up

As you round the corner approaching the Manor, Margus and several of the house guard rush out to meet you. "Where is Josen?" Margus asks.

Allow the party to explain what happened at the menagerie.

If the party killed the monks, use the following text:

"So you killed the kidnapers then. Did you happen to get any information about why they chose to kidnap and kill my brother?" Margus asks tersely. "That would have been useful information." After taking a deep breath, Margus continues, "I'm sorry about that, you don't deserve my frustration... Thank you for recovering Josen's body for a decent burial. For that, you will have my family's gratitude. We also want to thank you for your integrity in returning the ransom money. In this sack is an extra 20 Sterlings each. When you are in Oldred in the future, you can rely on the Vardushi family for hospitality."

If the party captures the monks, use this text:

"So these are the vile fiends that killed my brother. Guards, take them inside!" Margus orders. As the guards gather up the beaten kidnapers, Margus continues... "You did well to capture these fiends. They will pay for their crimes, but only after we find out the how and why of Josen's kidnapping and death. You've done well, and I appreciate your help in this

matter. I have many friends throughout the kingdom. Trust me, you will be able to count on them in time of need. The Vardushis will see this debt repaid. If you are ever in Oldred again, we hope that you will accept our hospitality. In token of our thanks, please accept this additional reward for the danger that you placed yourselves in for our family." Margus hands each of you a sack with another 20 platinum pieces in it.

If the party fails to bring the platinum that Margus sent with them, use the following text:

"What were you thinking? I sent you out to bring back my brother, and you buy a corpse. You only pay a ransom for a living captive." As you leave Vardushi manor, you realize that you have not made the best impression on some very important people in the kingdom, and that life may be more difficult in the future...

If they return with only the money, or empty handed:

"You fools! I can't believe that I trusted you with such an important task. You realize that you have likely caused my brother's death." Margus rants. "Trust me, word of your incompetence will spread. I have some important friends, and they will hear the details of your failures." As you leave Vardushi manor, you realize that you have not made the best impression on some very important people in the kingdom, and that life may be more difficult in the future...

Experience Point Summary

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

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

Total possible experience points

**Scene three - part C.
The Thugs (EL 4)**
Defeat the Thugs 120 XP

**Scene four – part B.
The Kidnappers Apartment (EL 4)**
Find the clues and avoid the trap 120 XP

**Scene six
The Meeting (EL 4)**
Defeat the Monks 120 XP

STORY AWARD
Subdue or Arrest the Thugs 30 XP
Award this XP if the party subdues the thugs. If they kill them, do not give this award.

STORY AWARD
Recovery of Gold and Body 30 XP
Award this XP if the party returns both the Platinum and recovers the body of Josen Vardushi.

STORY AWARD
Good Role-Playing and Problem Solving 30 XP

TOTAL POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE 450 XP

Treasure Summary

The following list details the possible treasure from each encounter. The amount given is for each PC, regardless of the number of PCs present. It is divided by APL, so be sure to look at the appropriate value for your PCs. In some cases, the PCs may have needed to take specific actions to acquire the treasure, while in other cases; some of the items could have been used during the scenario (by the players or the NPCs). Take the total amount of treasure recovered, covert to the listed gold piece value (value listed is the correct resale value) and divide by the number of players present. Should only part of the available treasure from an encounter be

collected, refer to the appropriate NPC description for further details.

Total possible monetary reward

Scene One: 50 gp
Initial Offered Reward

Scene Five: 50 gp
Additional Reward for the Exchange

Conclusion: 200 gp
Final Reward for returning the platinum with Josen's Body.

Salvaged Equipment: 150 gp
The total value of all salvaged equipment.

TOTAL POSSIBLE TREASURE 450 gp

Text for the Adventure Record:

Vardushi Family Favor:

You have earned the favor of the Vardushi family. For recovering the body of Josen Vardushi, Sir Elmain Vardushi and his family owe you their gratitude. This favor can be used to pay for free adventurer's standard upkeep for Nyron Regional scenarios starting in the city of Oldred.

Margus Vardushi Favor:

For bringing in the kidnappers of Josen Vardushi for interrogation and punishment, you have earned the favor of Margus Vardushi; Margus is impressed with your abilities, and will vouch for your character with his associates. This counts as a favor from "Parties loyal to the King".

Vardushi Family Disfavor:

For allowing the Kidnappers to escape with either Josen Vardushi's Body or the 150 Sterlings, you have disappointed the Vardushi family. All future interactions with any member of the Vardushi family or their close associates the character suffers from a -2 circumstance penalty to diplomacy checks

Appendix A. Encounters

Scene Three – Part C, Thugs

Jareel: Human Male Rog 2; CR 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d6+2; hp 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (touch 12, flat footed 13); Base Atk +1; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, 20/x2 Sap); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, 20/x2 Sap); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding; AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Climb +7, Disable Device +5, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +7, Move Silently +6, Tumble +8; Acrobatic, Dodge.

Evasion (Ex): If this rogue is exposed to any effect that would normally allows him to attempt a Reflex Saving throw for half damage, he takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Possessions: Leather Armor, Sap, Thieves tools.

Penter: Male Halfling Sor 2; CR 2, Small Humanoid (Halfling); HD 2d4+4; hp 11; Init +3; Spd 20 ft; AC 14 (touch 14, flat footed 11); Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk +5 Ranged (Spell) or -3 Melee (1d4-1, 20/x2 Sap); Full Atk +5 Ranged (Spell) or -3 Melee (1d4-1, 20/x2 Sap); SA --; SQ Empathic Link, Share Spells, Rat Familiar; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Climb +1, Concentration +3, Hide +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +2; Dodge.

Sorcerer Spells Known: (6/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0-Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Ghost Sound, Touch of Fatigue; 1st-Color Spray, Sleep.

Possessions: Sap, Spell Component Pouch

Rat Familiar: This creature grants its master a +3 bonus on Fortitude Saving Throws. It also grants alertness as long as it is within 5 feet. The familiar uses the better of its own and its masters save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Rat Familiar: CR -; Tiny Magical Beast; HD 1; hp 5; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., Climb 15 ft., Swim 15 ft.; AC 15 (touch 14, flat footed 13); Base Atk +1, Grp -11; Atk +5 melee (1d3-4, 20/x2 Bite); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3-4, 20/x2 Bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA --; SQ Improved

Evasion, Low-light Vision, Scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +10, Hide +14, Move Silently +10, Swim +10; Weapon Finesse.

Scene Six – At The Meeting Place

Korenth: Male Human (Suel) Monk 2; CR 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+4; hp 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 14, flat footed 12); Base Atk +1, Grp +7; Atk +3 Melee (1d6+2, 20/x2 Unarmed Strike); Full Atk +3 Melee (1d6+2, 20/x2 Unarmed Strike) or +2/+2 (1d6+2 20/x2 Unarmed Strike – Flurry); SA Flurry of Blows; SQ Evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Jump +4, Move Silently +7, Tumble +7; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Stunning Fist

Possessions: Traveler's Outfit, Crimson sash (worn as belt).

Doxam: Male Human (Suel) Monk 2; CR 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+4; hp 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 14, flat footed 12); Base Atk +1, Grp +7; Atk +3 Melee (1d6+2, 20/x2 Unarmed Strike); Full Atk +3 Melee (1d6+2, 20/x2 Unarmed Strike) or +2/+2 (1d6+2 20/x2 Unarmed Strike – Flurry); SA Flurry of Blows; SQ Evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Jump +4, Move Silently +7, Tumble +7; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Stunning Fist

Possessions: Traveler's Outfit, Crimson sash (worn as belt).

Appendix B. The Power Centers of Oldred

Duke Regurd Korenfluss:

The Duke of Korenfluss is kept under careful watch regard by King Lynwerd. During the reign of Lynwerd's Father, King Archbold, the Duke was openly critical of the crown's failings, and frustrated by the problems these caused him. In one of the more notable instances, the Duke was forced to pay the Royal Navy stationed in Oldred, and subsequently refused to pay taxes to the Crown because of the costs he incurred. This was the start of a number of minor disputes between the Duke and Archbold, and in the end the Duke paid very little to no taxes. The King was furious and threatened military action to collect taxes, while the Duke insinuated similar threats in kind.

On top of all this, the Duke was also a friend and supporter of the younger Prince Sewardt, who later attempted and failed to seize the throne from his father.

With the two leaders posturing and distracted, there was an increase in criminal activities. All sorts of smugglers and criminal elements have gained a foothold throughout the Coastal Region, mostly centered in Oldred where they play a careful game of cat and mouse to avoid the Duke and to increase their own power. The Duke does his best to balance the various power groups, but sometimes fears he has lost complete control of Oldred. Unfounded rumors off the street claim this has caused him to seek other sources to bolster his power.

The Duke is quite politically adept, and upon learning the full situation of Sewardt's coup he immediately set forth to Rel Mord where he presented the new King Lynwerd with a respectable down-payment on back taxes, and his sworn word of fealty. While the new King was critical of the Duke, this act was sufficient to allow him to retain the central portion of his lands. In the end he lost most of the coastline, which was placed into the Eventide County and the northern portions of his land beyond the point of Mithat bay, but was given additional arable land to the north and northwest of his original province.

Since then, the Duke has been striving to regain control where he can. Soon after Lynwerd took the crown, he married the Princess Lehiidi Coriner from the Duchy of Urnst. Unfortunately, in the years since the marriage no heirs have been forthcoming, although there have been a few miscarriages. Much to the dismay of his wife, the Duke has also not stopped his carousing ways. When one of his children by other women is found, the Duke usually has sent outside his lands for fostering.

The Vardushi Family:

The Vardushi Family is one of the most respected families in Oldred, bearing a lesser noble title and a knighthood for Sir Elmain. The family fortune officially comes from shipping and receiving, and they will ship almost anything. Their interests now include ownership of several gaming establishments, an extensive bookmaking operation, management of several 'recreational' houses, and of course, 'street operations'. The Vardushi's are the largest of "The Three Families" and by far the most benign; for the last two generations the family has been moving towards total legitimacy, and toward that end, have cut back street operations, shutdown or sold many of their more extreme gambling and pleasure houses, and have become far more selective of their cargo. Sir Elmain spent time in the Military early in the war, and later was tapped for service in the Royal Intelligence Services, and his son, Margus, has followed suit. Both father and son are absolutely loyal to King Lynwerd. This loyalty has not endeared the family to Duke Korenfluss, but has helped immensely in their move toward legitimacy.

The family is still involved in smuggling and will ship cargos to just about any location with very few questions. However the primary 'illegal' cargos being shipped by the family recently are weapons to the rebels in Onnwal. King Lynwerd is aware of, and even involved in these efforts to arm the rebels, and due to their aid with Onnwal, he and his tax collectors look the other way in relation to their other shipments.

Margus is 26 years old; he is starting to receive pressure from both his parents and his uncles to end his dalliances with the employees, and to find a wife. Thus he is now looking for a respectable woman who would be an appropriate mistress of a great house.

The Caerizar Family:

The Caerizar family claims to be descended from an ancient Sueloise house; the truth of this claim is unknown at the present.

The Caerizar family is the most malicious of "The Three". Almost completely Sueloise, they claim to be descended from an ancient noble house, but there is little evidence of the truth of such a claim. The Caerizar's have avoided political entanglements, in an effort to avoid making enemies. The Caerizar family controls several land-based shipping companies that have regular commerce with the Duchy and County of Urnst; they prefer to deal with Suel families, but are willing to sell and trade with anyone. Despite the profitable nature of their shipping business, most of their money comes from their activities in and around Oldred. The Caerizar family makes most of their money from the protection rackets run by Ardrin Uhase, a young man who walked away from the Scarlet Brotherhood.

The Caerizar's own several small and discrete 'houses' that specialize in unique requests (no vanilla here). Mistress Rabbit manages these houses and personally takes care of several of the more important customers.

The Caerizar family is most likely to deal with opposition by means of quiet assassination rather than by direct confrontation. Opponents of the family have been known to either have a night-time meeting with A'mic Tael, the family's head of security, or to be invited to a dinner meeting that has been carefully catered by Lady Athary. Don Kolir Caerizar has fallen into public disfavor, and has started to allow his son, Ivor, to assume much control of the family's affairs and public relations. Iana, who is Ivor's twin sister, became disenchanted with the family and left Oldred at an early age to train at a temple to Lydia in the Duchy. She has recently returned to Oldred as the manager of a small theater and a member of the staff at the Temple to Lydia. The youngest child, a daughter, Salia, has taken to the family business and is being trained by their mother, Lady Athary.

The Manilae Shipping Company is a partially owned subsidiary of the Caerizar family, and Obo Toradan, a cousin to the late Lady Amalthea Manilae, the current manager of Manilae Shipping has recently taken over the management of all of the Caerizar's shipping business.

The Bayfield Family:

The Bayfield family is far more like a guild than an actual family. The Bayfield family has held control of the traditional areas that a guild would run for several generations and Natania and her husband Arton took over from her parents several years ago. Arton took the Bayfield name when he married into the family.

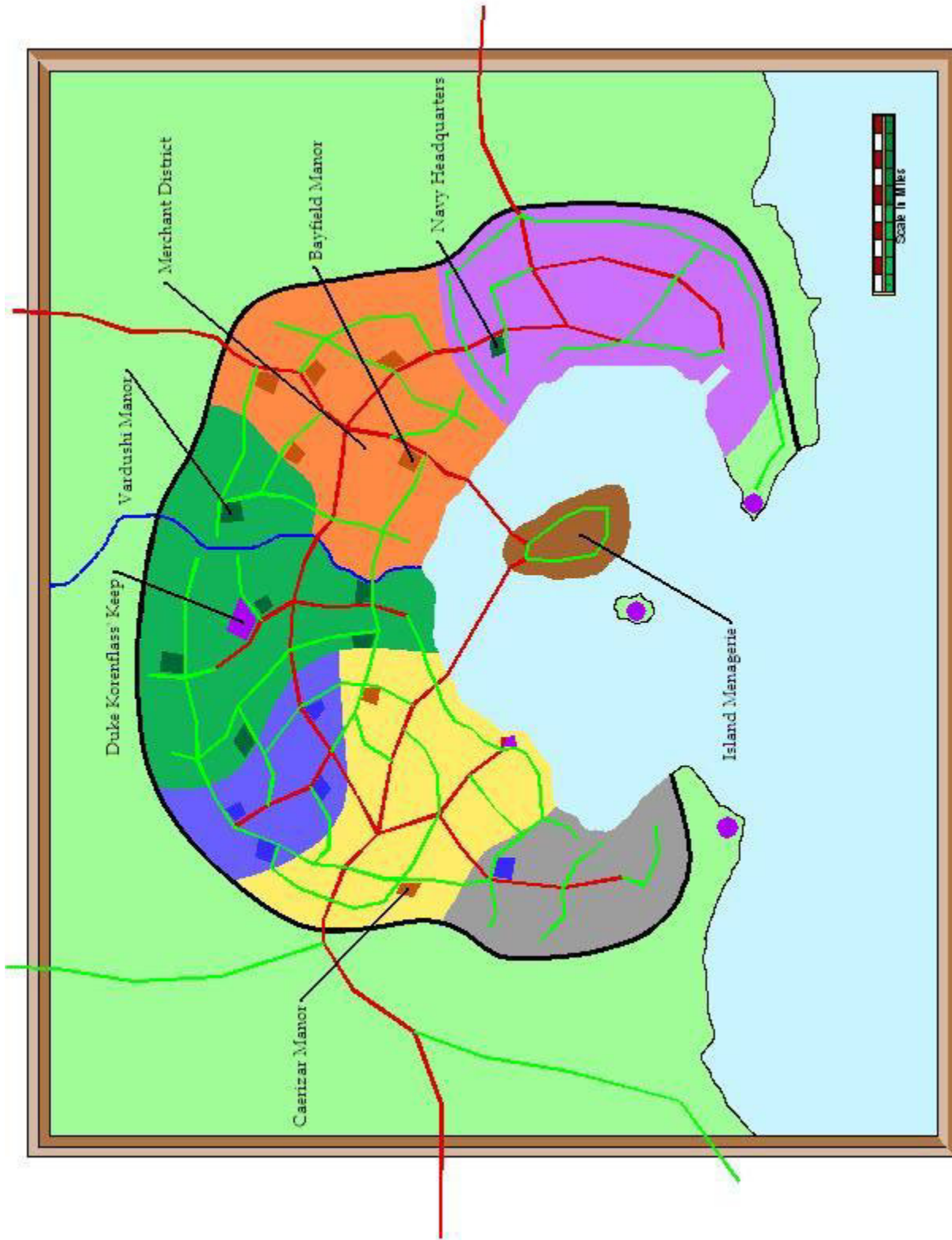
The Bayfield's manage almost all of the street crime in the city. They manage almost all of the vanilla 'entertainment' houses in the city, and market some special gnomish liquors. They are the only source of these brews, which have a good distribution and a very loyal customer base.

Despite the large membership and diverse operations of the family, the Bayfields are by far the most vulnerable of the families. Most of their 'family members' are not much more than children or entry-level thieves. They have relatively few political ties and no real muscle to defend their turf. The Vardushi family has in the past protected them, but that support has been drying up. Because of the quality of their entertainment establishments, the Royal Navy has also protected them from time-to-time. The Bayfield's maintain clean houses and girls, a fact that is appreciated by senior navy officers. Additionally, the family has numerous important and influential contacts that frequently can be relied upon to provide notice of impending danger, this network of contacts and informants has helped them to

avoid direct confrontation with any of the major power factions and has allowed them to survive and even flourish.

The Bayfield's have a better knowledge of the City of Oldred than anyone else around. They continue to be on the move, with only the Bayfield Manor as a permanent base of operations (which they keep absolutely free of incriminating evidence.) Their offices and safe houses move frequently. Frequently, when official raids occur, the materials are moved hours and minutes before authorities arrive, with no evidence how or where they moved to or how the family received warning of the raid.

Appendix C: Map of Oldred



Player Handout #1

The Ransom Note

This note is written in a fine script on an obviously expensive blue-tinted paper, watermarked with an anchor; the document has an official looking seal (in red wax) at the bottom of the page (in the place of a signature).

House Vardushi,

You need to seriously consider your position in Oldred. Your loyalties are misplaced.

Consider carefully your future, if you wish Josen to be returned, it will cost you.

Think carefully on your priorities, Josen may be just the beginning.

I will be in touch.

Here there is a wax impression of some kind of seal.

Player Handout #2

The Second Ransom Note

This note is written in the same flowing script on the same blue paper as the first note (the one tacked to the door of the Vardushi Manor).

Rocco and Margus Vardushi,

If you want to see Josen again you will send those hirelings of yours to the menagerie at the island gardens three hours after sunset.

They are to come without guards or the watch, with 150 sterlings in a leather sack.

I will make the exchange in the primate section, near the baboon cage.

Failure to comply with any of these demands will have serious consequences — you will never see Josen again.