

HIG2-08



A KNIFE IN THE WOUND

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

Version 1

by Chris Tulach

RPGA HQ reviewers: Christopher Lindsay and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

Only the company of good friends and a warm fire can stave off the bitter chill of a Ready'reat evening. Every so often, though, that is not enough, and the cold gets in, regardless of your efforts. What chill wind blows over Highfolk town, and how can it be stopped, before it's too late? An adventure for characters levels 5 – 10.

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. Most sanctioned events delegate a four-hour time block for each round of this scenario, with actual playing time will around three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and reward distribution 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, print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided works 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 running the event 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's 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 described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. 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 both the players and the DM to keep track of who is playing what character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. But, as the DM, you can bar the use of even Core Rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, usually 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.

Text that appears in ***bold italics*** is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in appendixes contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and nonplayer character (NPC) statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end

of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh you memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

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

1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

2-Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the DMs are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.

3-Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

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

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

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. As a LIVING™ adventure it is expected that players 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 (www.wizards.com/rpga), 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 character participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.

2) If characters bring animals that have been trained for combat (usually war horses and riding dogs), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars, a paladin's mounts, and so forth) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single character may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 and 1/6	0	0	1	
1/3 and 1/2	0	1	1	
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.

4) If you are running a table of six characters, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you have determined the modified APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge that the characters 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 an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that

either your 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. Characters who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is usually a free action (see DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide Chapter 2: Characters) 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.

3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Miale, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure set in Highfolk. All characters playing in region pay one Time Unit to participate in the adventure. Adventures' Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp. Characters playing out of region pay double these amounts.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

In the fall of 591 CY, a woman by the name of Nelia Gertrand was taken in by several adventurers, and sentenced to imprisonment in the underground prison complex known as the Roots, for housing dangerous creatures in the town, assault, and grand larceny. She was an aspiring prospect for a Town Council seat that apparently was involved in many illicit dealings in town. The events leading up to her arrest occurred in HIG1-06 *Power of Choice*.

It was rumored that Nelia had some connection with the assassinations of prominent council members, but nothing ever came to light on the matter. Down in the prison, she has been watched closely, for many believe that she may attempt an escape in order to plan her next nefarious scheme.

What is not generally known is that Nelia is a part of a secret organization known as the Blood Owls, a thieves'

guild that extends its influence across the region. The Blood Owls are deeply rooted in most aspects of Highfolk's community, and have one overriding goal: the expulsion of Iuz's influence from the region. To that end, they are willing to take any steps necessary to combat him, including assassination and the endangerment of innocents. Nelia is an important person within the organization, and she has helped spearhead the covert war against the Shadowclaw, sympathizers to the Old One, that work undercover within Highfolk and other regions. Both factions have been waging their own shadow war for years; recently, that war has grown very hot, as both sides hire killers to eliminate each other's operatives.

Unfortunately for Nelia, who has spent one year of her two-year sentence in the Roots, agents working within the Shadowclaw have discovered her affiliation with the Blood Owls, and brought in an agent of Iuz to help capture and interrogate her. A drow elf by the name of Xallinthus, along with suitable retinue, has been dispatched to see that the job gets done right. A powerful, unknown spellcaster is overseeing the whole operation from a remote location.

As the adventure begins, the heroes are relaxing in the evening, either at one of their own residences, or the Vesve's Tankard. A group of assassins arrive, attempting to infiltrate the building the heroes are located in. If captured, it is possible that the heroes learn that they are agents of the Shadowclaw, and have been sent to provide a "distraction". No one seems to know what, exactly, the "distraction" is, however.

The next morning, the heroes find out what really happened during the night. One of the captains of the Home Guard, Captain Eluverin, explains to the heroes that Nelia Gertrand has escaped her imprisonment. However, he has a good idea of where she was last seen, and can give the heroes directions to where the tracks were found. Captain Eluverin asks the heroes for their assistance in this matter; while some of Paxana Eventhil's (the town constable) Fifth District (a special operations outfit of the Home Guard) is occupied with other matters.

Heading out of the town, the heroes follow the trail laid out for them, heading east and south. Along the way, they encounter a present left for them, a gibbering moulder.

In the crumbling remains of an ancient elven shrine, Xallinthus is waiting for his transport "home", and working on his interrogation of Nelia. The adventurers arrive just as he has finished with her. He challenges one of the elven heroes, or another suitable-looking character, to a duel, and an unfair one at that, which he intends to buy enough time to be transported away from the characters.

Once the characters recover Nelia, they head back to Highfolk. Nelia informs specific heroes about the secret war and the role the Blood Owls play in the conflict.

In Highfolk, the heroes hand Nelia back over to Captain Eluverin, who claims he will see to it that she gets what's coming to her. However, Nelia disappears, and Captain Eluverin has gone missing.

TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

In this event, the Shadowclaw agents know of the character members of the Town Council, and are out to eliminate them. During the initial encounter with the assassins, and during the final confrontation with Xallinthus, any active or retired Town Council members are the preferred targets of the Shadowclaw. While the agents are not going to take unnecessary risks to kill them, they do attempt to take advantage of any opportunities that present themselves. As of this writing, the current Town Council members are Lady Fuchsia and Mordianna. If either of these characters, or other new council members, is present, they are the specific targets of the Shadowclaw agents.

Nelia's Ring of Sneaking

Several heroes may have a magic item known as *Nelia's ring of sneaking*. Before the event begins, check the Adventure Certificates of all characters to determine if any of them have that item. It is important toward the end of the adventure.

INTRODUCTION

On a late Ready/reat evening, in the Common Year 592, you are enjoying the company of friends, both old and new. The wind outside is biting, but inside, there is a crackling fire, laughter, and tales of heroism to stave away winter's touch. Even with recent events, the comfort you feel this evening, here in the Town of Highfolk, is so welcome that other concerns seem far off, for another time.

LET'S STAY AT MY HOUSE!

At this time, the characters should be asked if any of them own a residence in Highfolk or Ashenglade. If they have purchased one, then the characters are visiting the owner. If more than one hero owns a house, let the characters decide which house they are visiting. If the heroes cannot decide, the DM can determine it randomly.

Once the location has been determined, the DM should have the player produce his/her certificate for their residence. The DM should take time to review it with the owning player, making sure the features and locations are clear. The characters are going to be attacked in the home, so the DM should be particularly observant on any home defenses the character might have purchased, since the attackers wouldn't necessarily know about them.

WE WANT A TAVERN!

If the heroes do not have a residence locally, they are relaxing in the Vesve's Tankard, enjoying the company of others. Ruana, the young elven bar maiden, is attending to the heroes' in-between her studies.

ENCOUNTER 1: KNIVES IN THE NIGHT

At some point during the evening hours, after the characters have had a chance to introduce themselves to one another, and catch up on recent events, secretly roll Scry checks for characters with an Intelligence of 12 or greater, (DC 20) for each hero. Those that succeed feel as though someone is watching them.

For heroes that are in the Vesve's Tankard, they make the Scry checks just as they walk outside to part ways and go home. In either circumstance, whether inside a residence or out on the street, the characters are being scryed upon by the overseer of the Shadowclaw that are lying in wait, ready to attack. One round after the scrying happens, the evil agents attack.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Shadowclaw Agents (3):** Male human Rog3; hp 14; see Appendix I.

➤ **Shadowclaw Cell Leader:** Male elf Rog5/Asn1; hp 26; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Shadowclaw Agents (3):** Male human Rog5; hp 22; see Appendix I.

➤ **Shadowclaw Cell Leader:** Male elf Rog5/Asn3; hp 34; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Shadowclaw Agents (3):** Male human Rog7; hp 30; see Appendix I.

➤ **Shadowclaw Cell Leader:** Male elf Rog5/Asn5; hp 42; see Appendix I.

Tactics: If the agents are attacking the hero's home, they attempt to find the easiest way inside without being too obvious; second-story windows work well. They position themselves inside the home, hiding and waiting for a character to come to them, which may take some time. They do have some knowledge of the layout of the home, as well as the number of adventurers inside via magical means, however, they are not aware of any traps the hero might have put in place. If it is difficult for them to enter, they attempt to light the house aflame with alchemist's fire and the *necklace of fireballs* at APLs 8 and 10. For each minute that the home is burning, it costs the character 50 solars (gp) to repair the damage done. Broken windows and minor damage cost the character 10 solars (gp) per incident.

On the street outside the Vesve's Tankard, the agents attack the heroes with their poisoned crossbow bolts up on the rooftops of nearby buildings. The assassin forgoes such tactics, staying in the shadows on the ground, to observe for his death attack; primary targets are Town Council or Town Militia. From there, the agents attempt

to group together and fight using one another for flanking.

If the combat is going poorly for the Shadowclaw, they attempt to flee.

After the battle, the characters may wish to interrogate the Shadowclaw. Most means of coercion, whether magical or not, do not work. A *dominate* spell or similar magic does reveal the following:

- The agents work for the organization known as the Shadowclaw. They are sympathetic to the Old One's (Iuz's) cause, and seek to undermine the forces of good here and in other regions bordering on the Domain of Iuz.
- All they know is that orders were handed to them to attack the heroes. Apparently, they were to be some sort of distraction.
- The leader's name is Kyrik; the others are Eshim, Nelte, and Oleo.

Nothing else can be done on this night, except to turn them into the Home Guard at one of the nearby District Offices, and report what happened. When the heroes are resigned to returning to their homes and going to sleep, begin Encounter 2.

ENCOUNTER 2: A JAILBIRD TAKES FLIGHT

Last night's run-in with your assailants has you puzzled. Why would they attack you? What threat do you pose for whatever shadowy organization they represent? Just as you are getting ready to get a start on answering your questions, there is a knock at your door.

Opening it reveals a young, well-built man, wearing the garb of the Town Militia. You can see from his blue sash that he is a corporal in the constable's patrol force. He waits for the door to fully open, and says, "Captain Eluverin requests your presence; you and any others that were attacked last night. Please see him as soon as possible at the Temple District Office."

The militiaman knows nothing more. The District Office is easy enough to find, especially for those involved with the government. Characters that make a successful Knowledge (local - Highfolk) check (DC 15, 10 for Town Council and Militia) recognize the name of Captain Eluverin. Those that succeed know that Eluverin is a long-time Home Guardsmen, a human that campaigned in the Greyhawk Wars during his youth. He serves Paxana (the town constable) well, and is considered both trustworthy and fair.

Once the heroes are ready to go, read or paraphrase the following:

The Temple District Office of the Home Guard was easy enough to find; Highfolk, after all, is a relatively small community, and there are only four districts here. After a short wait outside, a tall, graying human male, with a short mustache and a long scar

running up his right arm, walks out of the building and greets you.

"Good morning, adventurers. I am Captain Eluverin. I understand, from my reports, that you had some trouble with some cutthroats last night. From what I've been able to gather, that's not the end of last night's happenings. Nelia Gertrand, whom I believe some of you may know, has escaped her cell in the Roots. If you don't seem to remember, she was implicated last fall on charges of assault, housing dangerous creatures, and grand larceny. Luckily, she was caught before she could do more damage - Nelia was running for a Council seat at the time.

Her sentence was two years in the Roots, the prison beneath our very feet. From what little I know, I heard she was not a very disruptive prisoner, and she was already more than halfway done with her term. So it seems strange to me that she would attempt an escape. Then again, I don't claim to truly understand the mind of a criminal ... that's where you come in." Eluverin seems surprised at his last comment. "Ah, I meant I need your help finding her. Would you be willing to serve Highfolk once again, and find Nelia Gertrand?"

Allow the heroes a chance to acquiesce and to ask questions. While this is going on, secretly make Sense Motive checks for all the heroes; anyone with a result of 20 or more feels that something is strange about the conversation with Eluverin. He is, in fact, hiding information from the heroes.

◆ **Eluverin:** Male human Ftr6.

Eluverin knows that Nelia's been captured, probably by Shadowclaw. Eluverin does not want to reveal this, because he secretly sympathizes with the Blood Owls, a thieves' guild that opposes the Shadowclaw, and does not want to alert the characters to his affiliation. He also doesn't want the Fifth District, a special investigative unit of the Home Guard, to know about the matter, as they may find out too much about what is really going on in Highfolk. So, he just wants the heroes to go, rescue Nelia, and bring her back to Highfolk. He knows the following information:

- Nelia's cell was found empty this morning. Apparently, there was no sign of a forced escape or entry.
- A few people early today said they saw a horse galloping out the east gate at an unsafe speed.
- Leads were followed, and the horse was spotted heading down Bramblewood Path to the southeast.
- Nelia has to rest some time or another. If we send out people real soon, we might still catch her at night. The tracks from the horse are still fresh enough; go cross-country for a little ways right outside the gate.
- I can provide you with fresh horses, and I've already drafted up a writ that has been given Paxana's seal. That should provide you with enough authority to take the matter into your hands.

- I would dispatch members of the Fifth District but, with the exception of those affiliated characters present, most are on other assignments right now. I can't wait.
- Nelia is a small Oeridian woman, in her mid-thirties. She has black hair and deep blue eyes.
- Please bring her back alive if at all possible. I'm sure a suitable reward can be made for her safe return.
- When you come back into town, bring her here. My men and I will detain her for questioning.
- If asked what's wrong by a character that succeeded in his/her Sense Motive check: Nothing, really. It's just ... she's very important to me. I care very deeply for her. Please bring her back. She needs to serve her time, and then perhaps, she can once again contribute to our community. (He is lying. Any player that asks for a Sense Motive check against the active Bluff may request it. The DM should roll for the player; the DC is 15).
- If the hero still doesn't buy it: Eluverin is willing to concede that she might have been abducted, but he seriously doesn't know who did it. He didn't want to get others involved, because he's afraid of the negative image the Home Guard might receive after the town knows that there was a security breach in the Roots. (This is partially true. Eluverin cares very much about the Home Guard and its image; however, he also is masking the larger issue of the shadow war going on).

Hopefully, no matter what their reservations, the heroes should take Eluverin up on the offer, and ride out to find Nelia. Go to Encounter 3.

ENCOUNTER 3: A GIBBERING MESS

Dusk is falling, and tendrils of breath betray the chill in the air. You've been riding hard all day now, and for a brief time, the horses have been slowed to a quick trot. The gently rolling hills that stretch to the horizon bear the marks of a coming winter; lifeless, brown leaves and the skeletal vestiges of shrubs and trees are dotted here and there along Bramblewood Path.

Your attention is instantly snapped back into focus when you realize that your horses are behaving skittish. As you take in the situation, you hear a strange noise, a dreadful sound that you cannot place. Gurgling, blathering, yipping, screeching, grunting, babbling sounds that rise and fall like a sickening tide of insanity. The noise alone is painful enough to bear, but the knowledge that some of the emissions resemble dark words drives you to the edge of panic. Your horses are whinnying and bucking now, and you fight hard to control them, as the mind-unraveling crescendo draws nearer and nearer.

At this point, all characters on mounts must make a Handle Animal check (DC 10) to control them. Those that do not possess the skill may make a Charisma check (DC 10). Any one failing the check must then make a Ride check (DC 5) to stay in the saddle; otherwise they

are dumped from their mount, and take 1d6 subdual damage. Characters that possess military saddles do not have to roll to stay in the saddle, and heroes with war-trained mounts are able to control their animals without making a Handle Animal check (or Charisma check). A character may choose to dismount the horse at any time after the initial reaction; however, see below.

Immediately following the first series of checks, go straight to initiative. Read the following before opening up combat:

From just over the ridge ahead, a terror, born of screams sloughs forward. Blinking, watering, crawling eyes retreat and emerge like boiling pustules over the amoebic mass of leathery flesh. Even more disturbing are the mouths - slathering, wandering orifices, some of which resemble the toothy remnants of other openings more so than gaping maws. Collections of these two features erupt from the creature in sinewy amorphous lashes, only to be drawn back in as quickly as they appear.

This is a gibbering mouther, sent here by the mysterious spellcaster to stop the heroes from approaching further. It is 50 feet down the path, and is moving slowly toward the characters.

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Gibbering Mouther, Advanced:** hp 56; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Gibbering Mouther, Advanced:** hp 84; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Fiendish Gibbering Mouther, Advanced:** hp 84; see Appendix I.

Tactics: The gibbering mouther is insane and simple in its desire to consume blood. It uses its spittle attack every other round, and its gibbering takes affect right away, before resolving initiative. Mounts are also subjected to the gibbering attack.

Once the creature is defeated, the heroes can continue onward. Go to Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE SHRINE OF THE SELDARINE

After your harrowing run-in with the nightmare creature, you continue on your way. Night has fallen, and the blue-white light of Luna and Celene shine brightly on the ground, casting a luminescence that makes the terrain look unearthly.

Ahead, you see what remains of a stone archway, crumbling from the crushing hand of time. As you approach, you notice that it appears this was once some sort of shrine. Symbols adorn the shattered stone, and it doesn't take you too long to note that this was once some sort of sacred place devoted to the Seldarine, the elven pantheon.

Several other, smaller broken arches are set equidistant from each other forming a long rectangle in the earth. Even with the centuries that have passed, it is easy to see why this place was chosen as a site of quiet contemplation. Its beauty, perhaps more breathtaking during the green seasons, has subtle power here.

Have the heroes make Listen checks (DC 13). Those that are successful hear a moan, and the sound of a body falling on dry leaves. When the characters continue forward to investigate, read or paraphrase the following:

Near one of the smaller arches, a lithe male form steps out from the stones that obstructed your view of him. In the ghostly glow of the moons, he walks closer toward your group, his hair white as untouched snow, and his breath trails playfully curl in the air above him. He wears a glistening mithril shirt, and by his side is a longsword scabbard with ornamentation that seems of elven design, although not from these lands.

You can hear the creaking of his fine leather gloves as he adjusts them before speaking. His voice is soft and deliberate, a whisper of power. "I am Xallinthus. Why have you come here?"

Xallinthus, who appears as a gray elf, using his *hat of disguise*, which is currently a hair clasp, is more than willing to parlay with the heroes. At APL 6 and 8 he casts *change self* in order to appear as a gray elf. He knows that in a short while, a *teleportation circle* will be activated inside the shrine, and he plans on returning home with Nelia. In fact, once he introduces himself, the DM should take a look at the time. The heroes have 20 minutes of real time to talk to Xallinthus before he retrieves Nelia and stands in the *teleportation circle*. If combat is initiated, time should be calculated in rounds, and "real time" should be suspended. Xallinthus is very interested in the heroes, and doesn't mind talking, although he takes insults to his person very seriously. Anyone who continually insults him is challenged to a duel. The heroes can learn the following from Xallinthus:

- I have the woman you call Nelia Gertrand. She is unconscious right now. She has not been permanently harmed.
- She is nothing more than a thief and a murderer. Do you know how many assassinations she helped plan? She has taken too many lives; she must pay for her crimes.
- I am in the employ of another that wishes me to take her to him for punishment. I am leaving soon, by way of magic.
- I cannot say where I am taking her, but rest easy, for she will pay for the blood she spilled.
- If the characters threaten to take her by force: I cannot let you take her from me. She is my charge, and my promise. However, I am an elf of culture and tradition. If you wish her, we can duel for this wretch you call a woman.

Xallinthus calls out a Town Council representative, if one is present; he is familiar enough with their faces. Otherwise, he prefers to fight elves, if at all possible. He

asks to fight honorably, in melee combat, although he has no intention of doing the same, as his blade has drow sleep poison on it. Nothing prevents the party from fighting him all together, if they wish.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Xallinthus:** Male drow Ftr4/Wiz2/Bladesinger*2; hp 52; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Xallinthus:** Male drow Ftr4/Wiz2/Bladesinger*4; hp 64; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Xallinthus:** Male drow Ftr4/Wiz2/Bladesinger*6; hp 76; see Appendix I.

Tactics: Xallinthus fights mercilessly; if he successfully poisons someone with his sword, he attempts a coups de grace attack on the unconscious hero the next round. At all APLs, he suffers from 10% arcane spell failure. At APL 10, he has the *song of celerity* ability.

Xallinthus asks for no quarter, even if fighting the whole party at once. However, if he is in bad shape, he attempts to use his *scroll of improved invisibility* to escape.

If Xallinthus is able to delay the heroes long enough, he warns the characters that he is about to *teleport* away, and that they shouldn't follow him, as he is going somewhere very unfriendly to the heroes. If they inquire further, he tells them he is headed to Izlen; he reveals this just before the *teleport*. Any characters that are standing in the shrine clearing between the stones are subject to the *teleport* effect. If a character gets teleported away with Xallinthus, the DM should write such information on the Adventure Certificate for this event, and inform the player to contact the Highfolk Triad to determine their fate.

If Xallinthus is defeated and captured, he reveals nothing unless *dominate* spell or similar magic is used on him. Then, he reveals that he works for someone known as Keak, a Boneshadow of Iuz. He is based out of Izlen. Nelia was to be removed because she is an influential part of a thieves' guild known as the Blood Owls, a very powerful force in Highfolk that has been countering the Shadowclaw for years.

If Xallinthus is brought to unconsciousness or killed, he reverts to his true form, that of a drow elf. However, the only noticeable change is his skin color, and his eyes; once silver, now purple. The Blood Owls or the Highfolk Town Militia would be very interested in getting their hands on this oddity.

WHAT ABOUT NELIA?

Nelia is unconscious, near the perimeter of the shrine's stones. She is badly bruised, but her injuries are not life threatening. Once the characters are ready to depart, go to Encounter 5.

ENCOUNTER 5: WHO HAS MY RING?

Nelia Gertrand eventually wakes up along the journey back to Highfolk, or if the heroes decide to camp along the way. Initially, she is very apprehensive to the heroes, but warms up and is quite talkative after a time. She discusses small things, such as Highfolk town, her house, and what life is like for her in prison. She also discusses her capture; apparently, this man posed as a guard using some sort of magic, and knocked her unconscious in her cell. When next she woke, she was here, and he was attempting to get information about her larcenous past from her. Apparently, he was rather unsuccessful, and in a fit of rage, knocked her unconscious again.

◆ **Nelia Gertrand:** Female human Rog10.

She is intentionally evasive with the heroes, unless she notices that someone is wearing *Nelia's ring of sneaking*, or the character brings it to her attention. If multiple characters are wearing her ring, she chooses the one that looks the most "roguish" to chat privately with. Once that happens, she attempts to talk in private with the hero, and has the following to share:

"I see you have something of mine", Nelia says to you as you walk along. "I would be most appreciative if you returned it."

If the hero gives back the ring, and does not question her on her activities, Nelia says nothing about the Blood Owls. However, if a hero resists returning the ring, or returns it in exchange for information, then read the following:

"Perhaps there is hope for you." Nelia smiles widely at you; it seems as if she is contemplating something or other. "I cannot tell you much at this time. However, I will tell you that the forces of the Old One are buried deep within Highfolk town, like a bad seed that has sickeningly blossomed into evil. What is happening here is as obvious as a knife in the wound, if you will just open your eyes. Suffice to say, the Blood Owls are determined to not only cut the plant down, but also dig out the roots, and burn the whole mess. We will not rest until he is gone, once and for all, from our town and our lands."

That is all the information the hero is able to retrieve from Nelia. The rest of the journey back to Highfolk is uneventful.

DOMINATING NELIA

If a hero attempts to cast *dominate* on Nelia, she has a powerful magical effect akin to a *geas* that prevents her from disclosing any more information to those not involved in her organization.

ENCOUNTER 6: BACK TO HIGHFOLK

When the heroes arrive at the Temple District Office, Captain Eluverin is summoned. After a short wait, he arrives at the office, and he and three other Home Guardsmen take Nelia into "custody;" rather, they are all sympathizers, and are only going to ensure that Nelia goes free. He then tells the heroes the following:

"You have done a great service by returning Nelia to us. I appreciate your work, and I'm certain that you will have discretion in the disclosure of this matter. It is, after all, very embarrassing to have a security problem with the Roots. Again, thank you for your help."

If there are any members of the Fifth District of the Highfolk Town Militia present, he has the following to say to them:

"Since you know the value of secrecy, I entrust you not to divulge what happened here to your other comrades. Swear it, and I will make it worth your while."

Those of the Fifth District promise not to tell of these events find a promotion waiting for them when they next check in with their superiors. Inform the player, and have him or her write the promotion in the notes area of the Adventure Certificate. Also, let them know to contact the Highfolk Town Militia Meta-Organization Coordinator to obtain a new certificate.

If the characters brought the drow back into Highfolk town, Captain Eluverin is shocked to learn the truth of the matter. He assures the heroes that Paxana and the Mayor will be informed, and that a full investigation is a certainty.

WE DON'T BELIEVE YOU!

If the heroes question Eluverin's motivations, he simply states that he is acting in the best interests of the Town of Highfolk. If the heroes wish, they may escort Nelia to another watch office, and have another officer detain her. To Eluverin, it doesn't matter much, since he'll just find a way to break her out in any case.

CONCLUSION

With your strange task complete, you take time to reflect upon the past year in the Fairdells. Troop movements, scrying, undead all about in the Vesve, strange little shadow wars in Highfolk town, Azrin, and the Night Walker. It seems like the fragile peace left in the wake of the Greyhawk Wars is ending, and in the dark of the coming night, a new moon, a blood moon is rising over the forests and farms, perhaps to once again test the resolve of the people that call Highfolk home.

In the coming days, it is revealed that Nelia Gertrand, Captain Eluverin, and a small contingent of Home

Guardsmen have gone missing. Several searches are conducted, but after the days pass into weeks, no one is found.

The End

PASSWORD

At the conclusion of this event, you should give all the players the password to this adventure. Tell them to write it on their adventure certificates, and inform them that it will be used to unlock the adventure summary document that will be found on the Highfolk website (www.highfolk.oerth.com), approximately two months from the conclusion of the premiere of this adventure. The password for this adventure is **xallinthus** (all lower case).

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 to each character.

Encounter 1: Knives in the Night

Defeat the Shadowclaw agents.

APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP

Encounter 3: A Gibbering Mess

Defeat the gibbering moulder.

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

Encounter 4: The Shrine of the Seldarine

Defeat Xallinthus.

APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP

Story Award

Rescue Nelia Gertrand.

APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	120 XP
APL 10	150 XP

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Good roleplaying and investigation.

APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	120 XP
APL 10	150 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 6	870 XP
APL 8	1110 XP
APL 10	1350 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasurer.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (that is, not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer*, or similar spell to determine what the item does, and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasures from each encounter add it up and that is number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the Gp Gained field of the adventure certificate.

TREASURE KEY:

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

Encounter 1: Knives in the Dark

Defeat the Shadowclaw agents and strip their gear.

APL 6: L: 154 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 4 *potions of cure light wounds* (Value 8 gp per potion per character).

APL 8: L: 154 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 4 *potions of cure light wounds* (Value 8 gp per potion per character), *necklace of fireballs* (Type I) (Value 248 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 154 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 3 *potions of cure light wounds* (Value 8 gp per potion per character), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (Value 45 gp per character), *necklace of*

fireballs (Type I) (Value 248 gp per character), *bead of force* (300 gp per character).

Encounter 4: The Shrine of the Seldarine

Defeat Xallinthus and strip his gear.

APL 6: L: 192 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character), *scroll of improved invisibility* (Value 105 gp per character), *scroll of bladesong* (Value 23 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 50 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character), *scroll of improved invisibility* (Value 105 gp per character), *scroll of bladesong* (Value 23 gp per character), *+1 longsword* (Value 347 gp per character), *+1 mithral shirt* (Value 338 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 50 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character), *scroll of improved invisibility* (Value 105 gp per character), *scroll of bladesong* (Value 23 gp per character), *+1 longsword* (Value 347 gp per character), *+1 mithral shirt* (Value 338 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (Value 300 gp per character), *ring of protection +1* (Value 300 gp per character) *amulet of natural armor +1* (Value 300 gp per character).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 6: 656 gp

APL 8: 1447 gp

APL 10: 2684 gp

ITEMS ON ADVENTURE CERTIFICATE

Vial of Large Scorpion Venom

This is an injury poison that deals 1d6/1d6 (initial/secondary) Str damage. The Fortitude save to resist is DC 18.

Caster Level: N/A; Prerequisites: N/A; Market Price: 200 gp; Weight: -. (Frequency: Region; Requirements: as prerequisites.)

Vial of Drow Poison

This is an injury poison that deals unconsciousness for 1 minute. Secondary effect is unconsciousness for 2d4 hours. The Fortitude save to resist is DC 17.

Caster Level: N/A; Prerequisites: N/A; Market Price: 500 gp; Weight: -. (Frequency: Adventure [maximum of one vial]; Requirements: as prerequisites.)

Masterwork Elven Thinblade

The elven thinblade is a rapierlike weapon, both very sharp and very strong. To use it properly, the character must possess the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (elven thinblade) feat. In addition, the Weapon Finesse feat may be applied to this blade, allowing you to use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attack rolls with the weapon. This particular elven thinblade is considered a masterwork weapon, and grants a +1 non-magical bonus to hit.

Damage: 1d8

Critical: 18-20/x2

Weight: 3 lbs.

Type: Piercing

Caster Level: N/A; *Prerequisites:* N/A; *Market Price:* 400 gp; *Weight:* -. (*Frequency:* Region; *Requirements:* as prerequisites.)

Scroll of Bladesong

Bladesong

Transmutation

Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Weapon touched

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless, object)

Bladesong makes a bladed weapon emit magical music in combat. Any round that the weapon is used in melee combat, this spell allows the wielder to make a single, additional touch attack with the sword as a free action. The attack uses the wielder's normal attack bonus with that weapon but inflicts no damage. Instead, anyone successfully touched by the weapon in this way is dazed for one round. Dazed characters cannot take actions but can defend themselves normally.

Focus: The weapon.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Scribe Scroll, *bladesong*; *Market Price:* 150 gp; *Weight:* -. (*Frequency:* Region; *Requirements:* as prerequisites.)

Recognition of Nelia Gertrand

Nelia Gertrand has noted the character as being an interesting individual, perhaps worthy of further contact.

APPENDIX 1: NPCS

ENCOUNTER 1: KNIVES IN THE NIGHT

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Shadowclaw Agents (3):** Male human Rog3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d6; hp 14; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +3 melee (1d6+1 plus poison/19-20, short sword) or +6 ranged (1d8 plus poison/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+2d6); SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +6, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Search +7, Spot +6, Tumble +8; Combat Reflexes, Expert Tactician*, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: short sword (poisoned), light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts (2 are poisoned), studded leather armor, 3 vials of alchemist's fire, *potion of cure light wounds*.

Poison (large scorpion venom): Injury (DC 18); Initial/Secondary damage (1d6 Str/1d6 Str).

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

➤ **Shadowclaw Cell Leader:** Male elf Rog5/Asn1; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 6d6; hp 26; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +8 melee (1d8+1 plus poison/18-20, elven thinblade) or +8 ranged (1d8 plus poison/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+4d6), death attack, poison use; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, low-light vision, evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +10, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Bluff +6, Climb +10, Disable Device +11, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +13, Hide +12, Listen +6, Move Silently +12, Search +11, Spot +5, Tumble +13; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (elven thinblade), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (elven thinblade).

Possessions: masterwork elven thinblade* (poisoned), light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts (2 are poisoned), masterwork studded leather armor, 3 vials of alchemist's fire, vial of large scorpion venom, *potion of cure light wounds*.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st – spider climb.

Poison (large scorpion venom): Injury (DC 18); Initial/Secondary damage (1d6 Str/1d6 Str).

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Shadowclaw Agents (3):** Male human Rog5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d6; hp 22; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +4 melee (1d6+1 plus poison/19-20, short sword) or +7

ranged (1d8 plus poison/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+3d6); SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +8, Escape Artist +10, Hide +10, Intimidate +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +9, Spot +8, Tumble +10; Combat Reflexes, Expert Tactician*, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: short sword (poisoned), light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts (2 are poisoned), studded leather armor, 3 vials of alchemist's fire, *potion of cure light wounds*.

Poison (large scorpion venom): Injury (DC 18); Initial/Secondary damage (1d6 Str/1d6 Str).

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

➤ **Shadowclaw Cell Leader:** Male elf Rog5/Asn3; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 8d6; hp 34; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +10 melee (1d8+1 plus poison/18-20, elven thinblade) or +10 ranged (1d8 plus poison/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+5d6), death attack, poison use; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, low-light vision, evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC), +1 save vs. poison; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +11, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +16, Bluff +7, Climb +11, Disable Device +12, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +14, Hide +13, Listen +7, Move Silently +13, Search +12, Spot +6, Tumble +14; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (elven thinblade), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (elven thinblade).

Possessions: masterwork elven thinblade* (poisoned), light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts (2 are poisoned), masterwork studded leather armor, 3 vials of alchemist's fire, vial of large scorpion venom, *potion of cure light wounds*, *necklace of fireballs* (Type 1).

Spells Prepared (2/1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st – obscuring mist, spider climb; 2nd – darkness.

Poison (large scorpion venom): Injury (DC 18); Initial/Secondary damage (1d6 Str/1d6 Str).

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Shadowclaw Agents (3):** Male human Rog7; CR 7; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 7d6; hp 30; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +6 melee (1d6+1 plus poison/19-20, short sword) or +9 ranged (1d8 plus poison/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+4d6); SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +14, Climb +10, Escape Artist +12, Hide +12, Intimidate +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Search +11, Spot +10, Tumble +12; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expert Tactician*, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: short sword (poisoned), light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts (2 are poisoned), studded leather armor, 3 vials of alchemist's fire, *potion of cure light wounds*.

Poison (large scorpion venom): Injury (DC 18); Initial/Secondary damage (1d6 Str/1d6 Str).

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

➤ **Shadowclaw Cell Leader:** Male elf Rog5/Asn5; CR 10; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 10d6; hp 42; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+1 plus poison/18-20, elven thinblade) or +11 ranged (1d8 plus poison/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+6d6), death attack, poison use; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, low-light vision, evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), +2 save vs. poison; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +11, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +17, Bluff +8, Climb +12, Disable Device +13, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +15, Hide +14, Listen +8, Move Silently +14, Search +13, Spot +7, Tumble +15; Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (elven thinblade), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (elven thinblade).

Possessions: masterwork elven thinblade* (poisoned), light crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts (2 are poisoned), masterwork studded leather armor, 3 vials of alchemist's fire, vial of large scorpion venom, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *necklace of fireballs* (Type 1), *bead of force*.

Spells Prepared (2/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st – *obscuring mist*, *spider climb*; 2nd – *darkness*, *pass without trace*.

Poison (large scorpion venom): Injury (DC 18); Initial/Secondary damage (1d6 Str/1d6 Str).

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

ENCOUNTER 3: A GIBBERING MESS

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Gibbering Moulder, Advanced:** CR 7; Large aberration; HD 8d8+24; hp 56; Init +0; Spd 10 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19 (touch 9, flat-footed 19); Atk +9 melee (1d2+4, 6 bites); SA Gibbering, spittle, improved grab, blood drain, engulf, ground manipulation; SQ Amorphous; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Listen +12, Spot +16; Great Fortitude, Power Attack.

APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Gibbering Moulder, Advanced:** CR 9; Large aberration; HD 12d8+36; hp 84; Init +0; Spd 10 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19 (touch 9, flat-footed 19); Atk +12 melee (1d2+4, 6 bites); SA Gibbering, spittle, improved grab, blood drain, engulf, ground manipulation; SQ Amorphous; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Listen +16, Spot +20; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Power Attack.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Fiendish Gibbering Moulder, Advanced:** CR 11; Large aberration; HD 12d8+36; hp 84; Init +0; Spd 10 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19 (touch 9, flat-footed 19); Atk +12 melee (1d2+4, 6 bites); SA Gibbering, spittle, improved grab, blood drain, engulf, ground manipulation, smite good; SQ Amorphous, darkvision 60 ft., cold and fire resistance 20, DR 10/+3; SR 24; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Listen +16, Spot +20; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Power Attack.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE SHRINE OF THE SELDARINE

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Xallinthus:** Male drow Ftr4/Wiz2/Bladesinger*2; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 4d10+2d4+2d8+8; hp 52; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 14); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+4 plus poison/19-20, longsword); SA Spells, bladesong; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, +2 racial bonus to Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities, spell-like abilities, darkvision 120 ft. light blindness; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +8, Concentration +9, Perform +5, Jump +15, Spellcraft +9, Tumble +10; Combat Casting, Dodge, Expertise, Mobility, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: masterwork longsword, mithril shirt, *cloak of resistance +1*, *scroll of improved invisibility*, *scroll of bladesong**, vial of drow poison.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*daze* (2), *detect magic*, *read magic*; 1st – *change self*, *color spray*, *spider climb*.

Bladesinger Spells Prepared (3/1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 1st – *expeditious retreat*, *shield*, *true strike*; 2nd – *bull's strength*.

Poison (longsword): Injury (DC 17); Initial/Secondary damage (unconscious 1 minute/unconscious 2d4 hours).

Spell-like Abilities: 1/day – *dancing lights*, *darkness*, and *faerie fire*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the drow's character level.

Personality Traits: Calm, confident, inquisitive.

* See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Xallinthus**: Male drow Ftr4/Wiz2/Bladesinger*4; CR 10; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 4d10+2d4+4d8+10; hp 64; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 14, flat-footed 15); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5 plus poison/17-20, longsword); SA Spells, bladesong, lesser spellsong; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, +2 racial bonus to Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities, spell-like abilities, darkvision 120 ft. light blindness; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Concentration +11, Perform +5, Jump +17, Spellcraft +11, Tumble +12; Combat Casting, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Critical (longsword), Mobility, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 mithril shirt, cloak of resistance +1, scroll of improved invisibility, scroll of bladesong*, vial of drow poison.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—daze (2), detect magic, read magic; 1st – change self, color spray, spider climb.

Bladesinger Spells Prepared (4/3/1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 1st – expeditious retreat, shield, true strike (2); 2nd – bull's strength, cat's grace, mirror image; 3rd – haste.

Poison (longsword): Injury (DC 17); Initial/Secondary damage (unconscious 1 minute/unconscious 2d4 hours).

Spell-like Abilities: 1/day – dancing lights, darkness, and faerie fire. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the drow's character level.

Personality Traits: Calm, confident, inquisitive.

* See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Xallinthus**: Male drow Ftr4/Wiz2/Bladesinger*6; CR 12; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 4d10+2d4+6d8+12; hp 76; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (touch 15, flat-footed 17); Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d8+5 plus poison/17-20, longsword); SA Spells, bladesong, lesser spellsong, song of celerity; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, +2 racial bonus to Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities, spell-like abilities, darkvision 120 ft. light blindness; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Concentration +13, Perform +5, Jump +19, Spellcraft +13, Tumble +14; Combat Casting, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Iron Will, Mobility, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 mithril shirt, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, hat of disguise, scroll of improved invisibility, scroll of bladesong*, vial of drow poison.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—daze (2), detect magic, read magic; 1st – charm person, color spray, spider climb.

Bladesinger Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 1st – expeditious retreat, shield, true strike (2); 2nd – bull's strength, cat's grace, mirror image; 3rd – displacement, greater magic weapon, haste.

Poison (longsword): Injury (DC 17); Initial/Secondary damage (unconscious 1 minute/unconscious 2d4 hours).

Spell-like Abilities: 1/day – dancing lights, darkness, and faerie fire. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the drow's character level.

Personality Traits: Calm, confident, inquisitive.

* See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APPENDIX II: NEW RULES

EXPERT TACTICIAN [GENERAL] AS PRESENTED IN *SONG AND SILENCE*

Your tactical skills work to your advantage.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, base attack bonus +2, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: You can make one extra melee attack (or do anything that can be done as a melee attack or a melee touch attack, including attempts to disarm, trip, or make a grab to start a grapple) against one foe who is within melee reach and denied a Dexterity bonus against your melee attacks for any reason. You take your extra attack when it's your turn, either before or after your regular action. If several foes are within melee reach and denied Dexterity bonuses against your attacks, you can use this feat against only one of them.

MASTERWORK ELVEN THINBLADE AS PRESENTED IN *DRAGON MAGAZINE #275*

The elven thinblade is a rapierlike weapon, both very sharp and very strong. To use it properly, the character must possess the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (elven thinblade) feat. In addition, the Weapon Finesse feat may be applied to this blade, allowing you to use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attack rolls with the weapon. This particular elven thinblade is considered a masterwork weapon, and grants a +1 non-magical bonus to hit.

Damage: 1d8

Critical: 18-20/x2

Weight: 3 lbs.

Type: Piercing

BLADESONG AS PRESENTED IN *SPELLBOOK ON THE WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC.*

WEBSITE

Transmutation

Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Weapon touched

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless, object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless, object)

Bladesong makes a bladed weapon emit magical music in combat. Any round that the weapon is used in melee combat, this spell allows the wielder to make a single, additional touch attack with the sword as a free action. The attack uses the wielder's normal attack bonus with that weapon but inflicts no damage. Instead, anyone successfully touched by the weapon in this way is dazed for one round. Dazed characters cannot take actions but can defend themselves normally.

Focus: The weapon.

BLADESINGER AS PRESENTED IN *HIDDEN LORE (A TOME AND BLOODWEB ENHANCEMENT)*

Bladesingers are elves who have blended art, swordplay, and arcane magic into a harmonious whole. In battle, a bladesinger's lithe movements and subtle tactics are beautiful, and belie their deadly martial efficiency.

Multiclass fighter/wizards can become bladesingers most easily, though any elf who can wield a martial weapon and can cast arcane spells can become a bladesinger. Bladesinger ranger/wizards, rogue/wizards, and bladesinger bards are not unknown.

Bladesingers command great respect in most elf communities, and NPC bladesingers usually serve as itinerant guardians and champions of the elf community at large.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

To qualify to become a bladesinger, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Elf or half-elf

Base Attack: +5

Feats: Combat Casting, Dodge, Expertise, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills: Concentration 4+ ranks, Perform 3+ ranks (dance, sing, +1 other), Tumble 3+ ranks

Special: Proficient with longsword, ability to cast 1st-level arcane spells

Class Skills

The bladesinger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Perform (Cha), Spellcraft (Int), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	1 st	Spells 2 nd	Per 3 rd	Day 4 th
1 st	+1	+0	+2	+2	Bladesong	1	-	-	-
2 nd	+2	+0	+3	+3	Bonus feat	2	0	-	-
3 rd	+3	+1	+3	+3	Lesser spellsong	2	1	-	-
4 th	+4	+1	+4	+4		3	2	0	-
5 th	+5	+1	+4	+4	Bonus feat	3	2	1	-
6 th	+6	+2	+5	+5	Song of Celerity	3	3	2	0
7 th	+7	+2	+5	+5	Greater Spellsong	4	3	2	1
8 th	+8	+2	+6	+6	Bonus feat	4	3	3	2
9 th	+9	+3	+6	+6		4	4	3	2
10 th	+10	+3	+7	+7	Song of Fury	4	4	3	3

Class Features

All the following are class features of the bladesinger prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The bladesinger gains proficiency in the use of no weapons and with light armor.

If the bladesinger wears medium or heavy armor, he loses all benefits of any of his song abilities (bladesong, lesser, spellsong, song of celerity, greater spellsong, song of fury).

A bladesinger suffers the normal arcane spell failure chance when casting spells while armored (except as noted below).

Bladesong: When wielding a longsword in one hand (and nothing in the other), the bladesinger gains a dodge bonus to AC equal to his Intelligence bonus.

Lesser Spellsong: When wielding a longsword in one hand (and nothing in the other), the bladesinger can “take 10” when making a Concentration check to cast defensively.

Song of Celerity: When wielding a longsword in one hand (and nothing in the other) and using the full attack action, the bladesinger can cast one bladesinger spell each round as a free action.

Greater Spellsong: The bladesinger ignores arcane spell failure when wearing light armor.

Song of Fury: When wielding a longsword in one hand (and nothing in the other) and using the full attack action, the bladesinger can make one extra attack in a round at his highest base attack, but this attack and each other attack made that round suffer a –2 penalty. This penalty applies for 1 round, so it affects attacks of opportunity the bladesinger might make before his next action.

Bonus Feats: The bladesinger gets a bonus feat. These feats must be drawn from the following list: Any Metamagic feat, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, and Whirlwind Attack.

Spells per Day: Every level a bladesinger gains, the character gains new spells per day as shown. When casting bladesinger spells, the bladesinger's caster level is equal to his bladesinger level. A bladesinger's bonus spells are based on Intelligence. The Difficulty Class for saving throws against bladesinger spells is 10 + the spell's level + the bladesinger's Intelligence modifier.

A bladesinger keeps a spellbook and must prepare spells each day as a wizard does. He can have any number of bladesinger spells in his spellbook (see Writing a New Spell into a Spellbook, *Player's Handbook*). At levels 1 through 9, a bladesinger gains two spells he can add to his spellbook free. These spells must be bladesinger spells the character can cast.

Bladesinger Spell List

1ST LEVEL – *EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT, MAGE ARMOR, MAGIC WEAPON, SHIELD, TRUE STRIKE.*

2ND LEVEL – *BLUR, BULL'S STRENGTH, CAT'S GRACE, MIRROR IMAGE, PROTECTION FROM ARROWS.*

3RD LEVEL – *DISPLACEMENT, GREATER MAGIC WEAPON, HASTE, KEEN EDGE.*

4TH LEVEL – *DIMENSION DOOR, FIRE SHIELD, IMPROVED INVISIBILITY, STONESKIN.*

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☞ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☞ **Mialee, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or -6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and -10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, sleep*.

Spellbook: 0—all of them; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I*.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☞ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☞ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or -1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref -1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level); 0—*detect poison, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*bles, protection from evil**, *shield of faith*.

* Domain spell; *Deity:* Pelor; *Domains:* Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.