

PAL2-06



# CLAWS OF EVIL

A One-Round D&D<sup>®</sup> LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup>

Pale Regional Adventure

Version 1

by Robert Wiese

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In 588, the Theocrat was slain by a foul demon, and though he was returned to life he has never been the same. Ogon Tillit lies near death, and no magic that Pholtus provides can cure him. Sages believe that only the claws with which he was slain can produce the cure, and after nearly a year a small diviners group in the Arcanist's Guild has discovered a clue. The church needs you to follow it up, and hopefully recover the demonic weapon. An adventure for characters levels 3-10.

*Part 1 of 2 of the Crisis of Leadership series*

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS<sup>®</sup> 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](http://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 the Pale. 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**

The main hosts of the Theocracy and Iuz clashed outside the city gates of Atherstone in Tenh, the local Flan supporting the Theocracy against Iuz. At first, the battle favored the forces of darkness. They seemed to have unlimited reinforcements of progressively more powerful tanar'ri at their disposal. Had it not been for the skill of Sloan Burgos in managing the troops, and two groups of heroes who succeeded at special missions, all would have been lost.

The first group of heroes learned where the enemy kept the Eye of Dench. With this artifact, the forces of evil could sacrifice a living person and bring forth a demon in exchange. The strike team infiltrated the temple where the artifact was being held and managed to close the Eye, sealing the portal to the abyss. The ability of Iuz's forces to add more demons to their army was extinguished.

The second group of heroes went behind enemy lines in a daring move to rescue a cut-off lord of the Tenh. The heroes were able to get to him largely undetected. Using powerful magic, they whisked him and his knight back to the front lines with magic. Upon seeing their lord safe, the Flan troops rallied and begin routing the less disciplined forces of the enemy. As the Pholtan Knights Valorous regrouped under Avern, they began a charge that would crush the enemy lines and win the "Battle of Atherstone."

Facing inevitable defeat, Iuz enacted a terrible treachery. At the height of victory, Lazurus, the trusted Champion of the Theocrat, spoke two unholy words. A molydeus and a glabrezu appeared next to him as the power of the words smote the Theocrat's bodyguards to the ground. Lazurus then underwent a startling metamorphosis. He was apparently some type of demon in disguise! Grafted to his hands were strange, abyssal-forged claws — an evil sentient artifact which he employed against Ogon in combat. Ogon was no match for Lazurus' sneak attack, and was slain within seconds by the abyssal claws. Gloating, the creature that was Lazurus stole *Tyrael's Chalice* from the body of the Theocrat. In a foul blast of smoke, the Lazurus-demon vanished along with the molydeus and glabrezu.

Ogon was later returned to life, but no magic seems to completely heal the wounds inflicted by the abyssal claws. Graver still, his condition is worsening. Ogon is becoming slowly weaker every day.

*Tyrael's Chalice* was once the property of a demon lord. It was this demon lord that sent the demon to replace Lazurus, though he did so through the machinations of Iuz. When "Lazurus" and the two demons disappeared, they intended to return the *Chalice* to the Abyss. However, things did not go according to plan.

They found themselves on a battlefield in Gehenna instead, where a well-organized force of devils attacked them. The devils attacked primarily "Lazurus," and kept his two allies busy while they killed him. The glabrezu was slain, and the molydeus escaped finally and returned to the Abyss to report what happened.

The devils, led by a cornugon named Isshaelin, gained control of the abyssal claws and *Tyrael's Chalice*. The *Chalice* was taken back to Hell as a gift for a devil prince, but the claws were a different matter. Hateful to the devils, and indestructible as far as the devils were concerned, the claws required special disposition. Isshaelin decided to hide them on Oerth, where it was unlikely that the demons would look for them. He appeared to a sorcerer allied with the devil prince, and struck a deal. The sorcerer, whose name was Cedhalik Malvos, would create a hiding place according to Isshalin's specifications, and in return Malvos would be made a minor devil with his mortal powers intact, and in this form would serve the devil prince directly.

The hiding place that Issahelin designed is a masterpiece of cunning. It is located on the northeastern side of the Bluff Hills, just inside lands "held" by the Rovers of the Barrens but claimed by Iuz. There, no

native would be interested in the claws (at least not enough to penetrate the hiding place) and the claws would be far enough from the Palish and Iuz forces that they would not likely be found. Built primarily to distract, it relies on misdirection rather than straightforward guarding. Isshaelin was aware of several mortal legends, and built the "tomb of the claws" around the idea of proving one's worth before gaining access to the claws. The tomb has three tests, each quite difficult. However, should a group pass all three tests, they would find that there are no claws waiting for them at the end. The chamber in which the claws "should" have been stored looks as if it was looted, with an escape route and everything.

The claws are there, despite the appearance to the contrary. They are hidden under a four-ton throne in the entrance chamber, upon which sits the animated remains of the "demon Lazurus." And there they wait, undiscovered.

The characters are hired by the Church and make their way toward the site. They are given a map to guide them, which shows the general area of the location suspected to hold the claws.

Just inside the borders of Tenh, the characters run into a group of fanatic Pholtus worshippers who want to see the country return to a more harsh outlook, rather than toward the gentler outlook that it is now heading toward. They try to stop the characters.

A few days later they reach the lands near the Bluff Hills, and meet a group of rovers. These rovers are not very helpful, but can tell them about the local area and whether there are forces of Iuz to worry about.

After searching many caves and cracks in the Bluff Hills, the characters find the entrance to the cave complex. There, they encounter the animated remains of "Lazarus" in his previously human form, and the remains explain that the claws are hidden beyond three tests: the Test of Physical Courage, the Test of Intellectual Courage, and the Test of Moral Courage. If the heroes can pass all three tests, they can access the chamber where the claws are stored.

The three tests involve a difficult combat, a run through some nasty traps, and a life-and-death rescue situation that can prove deadly to the characters as well.

In the chamber beyond the tests, the characters find an ornate chest bolted into the stone floor, and some sigils warding against evil and other trappings. The chest is open and the claws apparently gone. On the far wall they see a caved in section of wall, behind which is a passage leading through the earth for several miles before emerging in the Bluff Hills. From there, all trace of the "thieves" is lost.

The characters have to find the claws in their real hiding place, under the throne on which sit the remains of Lazurus.

If the heroes find the claws, they can return and report success. If they don't, they can return and report that the claws were stolen.

## INTRODUCTION

It is the morning following your departure from Wintershiven, and you have reached the Duchy of Tenh. You remember your meeting with Milamber, advisor to the Theocrat. The dark-skinned Flan man called you together for a desperate mission on behalf of the Theocrat himself.

"Our beloved Theocrat, Ogon Tillit, is dying," he said. "It began in 588 when he was slain at the Battle of Atherstone. The Pale was carrying the day against the forces of Iuz when Lazurus, the Theocrat's champion, turned into some kind of demon and slew the Theocrat with evil claws that were grafted to his body. Let me tell the whole story.

"The main hosts of the Theocracy and Iuz clashed outside the city gates of Atherstone in Tenh, the local Flan supporting the Theocracy against Iuz. At first, the battle favored the forces of darkness. They seemed to have unlimited reinforcements of powerful tanar'ri at their disposal. Had it not been for the skill of Sloan Burgos in managing the troops, and two groups of heroes, all would have been lost.

"One of the groups rescued a lord of the Tenh people, and with the rescue the Flan troops rallied and begin routing the less disciplined forces of the enemy. As the Pholtan Knights Valorous regrouped under Avern, they began a charge that would crush the enemy lines and win the Battle of Atherstone.

"Facing inevitable defeat, Iuz enacted a terrible treachery. At the height of victory, Lazurus, the trusted Champion of the Theocrat, spoke two unholy words. A molydeus and a glabrezu appeared next to him as the power of the words smote the Theocrat's bodyguards to the ground. Lazurus then underwent a startling metamorphosis. He was apparently some type of demon in disguise! Grafted to his hands were strange, abyssal-forged claws that he attacked the Theocrat with. Ogon Tillit was slain within seconds by the abyssal claws. Then, in a foul blast of smoke, the Lazurus-demon vanished along with the molydeus and glabrezu.

"Ogon was later returned to life, but no magic seems to completely heal the wounds inflicted by the abyssal claws.

"Ever since, priests of Pholtus and members of the Arcanist's Guild have been seeking some remedy, and they feel that the strange sickness can be healed if we can recover the claws that were used against the Theocrat, purify them somehow, and then create a remedy in which they are steeped.

"The exact details of the remedy are still being worked out, but we do need the claws. Thus, diviners have been seeking them for more than a year. They were not found because the diviners were looking on infernal planes. However, the claws are still on Oerth, and if Pholtus is with us we can recover them. You can recover them, that is. That is why I called you. Will you go?"

You agreed, and were provided a map to the approximate location where the diviners think the claws rest. The location is just beyond Tenh, in the land where the rovers of the barrens make their homes. Milamber told you that no one knew exactly where the claws were, or what might guard them, or what troubles the seekers would have in obtaining them. Still, in the name of Pholtus you have become the seekers of the claws. The fate of the Pale itself may rest with your success or failure.

Give the players Map 3. The characters should now choose spells if they need to, and they can purchase any equipment they would have bought in Wintershiven

before leaving. When they are ready, present them with *Encounter 1: The Fanatics*.

## ENCOUNTER 1: THE FANATICS

As the heroes reach the border that the Pale shares with Tenh, they meet some fanatical worshippers of Pholtus who try to stop them. This encounter should provide an interesting moral challenge, and serves to show the tension between various factions of the church within the Pale.

*You have crossed into Tenh, and have now been traveling for some hours through these war-torn lands. You have heard, or seen, the destruction caused by the armies of Iuz, but the land seems even more desolate than ever. Rumors of the threat of ethereal creatures has spread across the length of the Flanaess, along with stories told by adventurers of whole villages of people disappearing, or buildings disappearing. You pass by where you know a town should have lain, and see nothing but fields and fences and the remains of some structures, as if the area had been abandoned for centuries and had fallen into ruin.*

*A few miles past that site, you hear the beat of horses' hooves, and you see three riders and a runner approaching you from the right side. They have come out of a copse of trees and approach quickly. You recognize the colors of Pholtus and the robes of a priest on one of the men. Another man is in armor and carrying a bow, and the third man is wearing light armor and holding a loaded crossbow across his lap. The runner is a tall and wild-looking woman. All four are of Suel descent.*

*"Go back," yells the priest at your group. "You must turn back. You cannot succeed at this quest!"*

These four are fanatical Pholtans of a different stripe than most. They believe that the Pale is sliding dangerously close to goodness, and that the Theocrat's leadership is responsible for this. They want to return to the days when heretics were burned regularly in the public squares, and law ruled the day rather than justice. Well, three of them believe that. Gueralla, the woman, believes that she is in love with Kollin and would follow him anywhere and do whatever he asked (no charm effect, she really does love him). They were sent by a rival within the church to stop the characters, so that the Theocrat would die and the course of the church could be changed. They do not reveal who sent them, as they were contacted through an intermediary and do not know who is really responsible.

These four do not let the characters continue on their mission. If necessary, the four fight the characters. They prefer not to kill fellow citizens of the Pale, but have no real love for elves or dwarves and feel not nearly as bad about killing them. They don't even blink at killing those who do not revere Pholtus.

The encounter should begin as a shouting match of ideologies, as the four would like to convince the characters not to proceed, or to lie about going and claim not to have found anything, but if the characters make

motions to leave, or get hostile, or refuse to be convinced, the four attack.

These four have worked together before, so they use spells to assist each other just like a party of real adventurers. If he can strike someone down, and free an ally of his to come to his own assistance, the archer fires on characters other than those fighting him. The priest uses *hold person* spells to immobilize characters so that his allies can incapacitate or kill them. If it comes to a fight, try to give the characters a workout. It should warm them up for the really tough fight ahead.

### APL 4 (EL 5)

➤**Geuralla**: Female human Bbn1; hp 14; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Misolk**: Male human Clr1 (Pholtus); hp 10; see Appendix 1: NPCs

➤**Kollin**: Male human Sor1; hp 4; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Bural**: Male human Ftr1; hp 12; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

### APL 6 (EL 7)

➤**Geuralla**: Female human Bbn3; hp 32; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Misolk**: Male human Clr3 (Pholtus); hp 24; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Kollin**: Male human Sor3; hp 10; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Bural**: Male human Ftr3; hp 28; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

### APL 8 (EL 9)

➤**Geuralla**: Female human Bbn5; hp 50; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Misolk**: Male human Clr5 (Pholtus); hp 38; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Kollin**: Male human Sor5; hp 16; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Bural**: Male human Ftr5; hp 44; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

### APL 10 (EL 11)

➤**Geuralla**: Female human Bbn7; hp 68; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Misolk**: Male human Clr7 (Pholtus); hp 52; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Kollin**: Male human Sor7; hp 22; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤**Bural**: Male human Ftr7; hp 60; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

Once past these four, the characters travel for six days, dodging patrols of Iuz soldiers and weird creatures that phase into and out of existence too quickly to be engaged. On the sixth day they cross out of Tenh, and reach the lands of the Rovers of the Barrens.

## ENCOUNTER 2: ROVERS OF THE BARRENS

Technically, the characters have arrived in the lands of Iuz himself, as the Rovers of the Barrens have been almost decimated. However, a few rovers survive, and the characters meet some here.

*You have crossed into the lands of Iuz, in the area formerly known as home to the Rovers of the Barrens. The grasslands stretch away from you toward the Bluff Hills, which you can see off in the distance.*

The Bluff Hills are the characters' destination. They travel another couple of hours along their way, and then meet some rovers.

*A group of nine riders approaches you as you get close to the foothills of the Bluff Hills. They are all of Flan descent, wearing light armor and furs to protect them from the cold of autumn. They carry bows and swords, and have the look of a band of brigands. They ride toward you at a fast pace.*

The characters might conclude that the riders are dangerous, and try to flee or draw weapons or something. They are free to do so.

When or if the rovers get close enough for speech, they shout a greeting in Flan. If anyone can understand Flan, they know that one of the front riders said, "Hail, strangers from the south. What business finds you in these lands?" If none of the characters seems to understand the speaker, then one of the other rovers translates it into Common. Not all of them know Common.

The original speaker is the leader of this group, a man named Caerlan. The translator is Merwynn. If the characters wish to converse with these Flan tribesmen, they can do so either through the translator or by speaking in Flan with the leader directly.

The group is wary, but willing to give strangers who do not attack immediately the benefit of the doubt. This is especially true if some of them wear emblems of Pholtus (a god known to be worshipped by people who oppose Iuz) or of Flan deities. If the group seems a little shady, then the rovers are more wary, and a couple keep arrows knocked in their bows while the conversation progresses.

The Flan tribesmen here are very civilized, and treat the characters like they might be treated in frontier areas of the Pale. There are barbarians among them, but not in this group.

The rovers can report the following about the area in general, but only answer questions. They don't volunteer information. Further, they trade information, so they want to know what the characters are doing here, how things are in Tenh, or whether the characters have run into any of the Old One's troops recently.

- This area is relatively untouched by the Old One's troops, as almost no one lives here. That is why this

group hunts in the area. That is what they have been doing, hunting.

- If the characters go further west and south, they may certainly run into a patrol or perhaps a company or legion of Iuz's troops.
- The Bluff Hills are inhabited by some humanoid monsters, not allied with Iuz but not friendly either, hobgoblins, lizardfolk, and some elves. Centaurs used to live here, but they seem to have moved away.
- No one in the Bluff Hills is very friendly, as they fear attack from the troops of Iuz in one form or another.

If asked about the map and possible locations for the claws, they can relate this under questioning.

- There are a few caves in the Bluff Hills, but not many. The area was once mined, but that was centuries ago. So there might be some old mines too.
- None of these people have spent time in the Bluff Hills, so they don't know where the sites are.
- A few years ago, maybe three or four, there was a report during the wars of a group of people coming to the Bluff Hills. None of them left, as far as anyone knows. Most rovers think that the armies of Iuz wiped them out as he retreated from the Tenh, but no one knows for sure.
- The group from three years ago brought a lot of tools, as if they planned to mine in the hills.
- Some rovers tracked them into the mountains, but could not find their exact location because of guards. It seemed that the people wanted to be left alone to do whatever they were doing in secret.
- The rovers who did the tracking are not available. Most are dead, and a couple of them are back at one of the towns to the west and north.

The rovers retreat if attacked; they don't want to waste resources on an unnecessary fight.

Once the encounter with the rovers is over, the characters travel into the Bluff Hills. They have to search around, and this takes several days. Assuming the most efficient search pattern, they find two empty caves in the first three days before finding the entrance to the tomb of the claws.

Go through the finding of the first two empty caves if you have time, or go through just one if the time is kind of short, and then move to The Entrance Crack, below. Leave at least two hours for the rest of the encounters in the adventure.

## ENCOUNTER 3: THE ENTRANCE CRACK

*Before you lies yet another narrow opening into the darkness within the Bluff Hills. This is the third that you have found that could contain what you seek. The crack is about two feet wide,*

*just wide enough for a human to squeeze through sideways if dressed in no more than light armor.*

Medium-size characters in medium or heavy armor have to remove it to get into the cave beyond, or enlarge the opening. Small characters have no trouble getting in with whatever they are wearing.

Once someone goes inside with a way to see, read or paraphrase the following:

*You see before you a corridor about 10 feet wide leading into the hill. It is clearly made by intelligent hands, as you can tell from the flatness of the walls and the arches carved into the stone every 20 feet. It stretches as far as you can see. The floor is paved with some kind of large, whitish stones that are roughly circular. They are set into the floor with mortar.*

The stones in the floor are actually skulls, as anyone who makes a successful Heal check (DC 10) while examining them can tell. These are the skulls of the people brought to build this place. None of them left, except for the wizard who cast the spells, and he ended up on some Infernal plane, and the cleric who assisted.

The corridor goes 70 feet before reaching the throne room of Lazurus. The opening narrows to 5 feet wide, but then widens into the room beyond.

## ENCOUNTER 4: LAZURUS, RETURNED

*You look through the opening into a large room, vaguely circular. The room has ornately carved walls with arches and friezes. Most of the images you can see are demonic, and depict horrible acts. You see three arches carved into the wall opposite you; each seems to mark a door but there is no door or hallway present.*

*Dominating the center of the room is a large throne carved from the same stone as the walls and the floor and ceiling. Its seat is five feet off the ground, and it is the most intricately carved object in the chamber. Sitting atop the throne are the bones of a winged humanoid, or a demon. The skeletal creature sits upright, looking at the door where you are, but does not move or react to your presence yet.*

The characters have to go into the room to learn more.

The room is about 60 feet in diameter, and is more oval than circular. The three arches do mark doorways, but ones that cannot be opened just yet. They are locked with multiple *arcane lock* spells, and no mechanism to open them is visible. They can be bypassed with magic, or broken down (stone door, hardness 20, hit points 100).

The throne is made entirely of one piece of stone, and weighs about four tons. It is impossible to move without a lot of help, and it looks to be one piece with the floor; no crack is visible between the floor and the bottom of the throne. There is a crack, but it is covered with a permanent image. Characters looking closely at the crack area can see that it is an illusion with a successful Search

check (DC 25) and a successful Will saving throw (DC 20).

The whole room is subject of a *nondetection* spell cast at 14<sup>th</sup> level. When a character enters the room, the following happens:

*As you step on the stone floor of the room, a light shines down from the ceiling onto the throne, illuminating the skeleton upon it. Then, an eerie thing happens. Flesh and muscle begin to grow on the skeleton. Blood vessels snake across its body just before muscle or flesh covers them. You see organs grow from nothing to full size, some of them not normal to the races that you know. When the flesh is done crawling across the figure, you see a half-demonic Oeridian man. Its large bat-like wings move slowly back and forth.*

*“Greetings to you who have come to this place,” the creature says in your language. “I was once Lazurus, bodyguard to Ogon Tillit, the Theocrat of the Pale. Why have you come?”*

These are the remains of Lazurus. The bones are, anyway. The rest of what the characters saw are all the results of illusion spells. Lazurus’s remains have been turned into a construct, and he has been programmed with information about this place and about himself. As a construct, he cannot be turned, but he also cannot move from the throne. He is in fact part of the throne; the bones of his legs are sunken into the stone. Thus, he can only interact with people coming into the cavern.

The illusion sequence only activates if someone comes in from the “front” entrance. If characters go through one of the doors behind him and then return, the illusions are not triggered again. Every time they are triggered, the same sequence begins.

Lazurus can answer questions. He is fairly liberal in the specificity of the questions; even really general questions like “What is behind you?” elicits some information about the place. Information is organized by category below.

Information about Lazurus himself:

- I was once the chosen guardian of the Theocrat. However, in early 588 priests of Iuz abducted me, and a set of clawed gloves were put on my hands. I succumbed to their power.
- I was sent back to continue my duties, and await an order from Iuz to kill Ogon Tillit.
- During the Battle of Atherstone the order came, and I slew the Theocrat and disappeared with my allies.
- The next thing I remember, I was here.
- My duty now is to guard the way to the claws that changed me, so that no others are affected. I have been washed of the taint of the claws, though my appearance might lead you to think otherwise. In death I found release from the evil of the claws.
- I do not know who put me here. I just know that I must fulfill this duty to atone for what I have done. Thus, I conclude that this is the will of Pholtus.

About the place:

- This is the Place of the Challenge. The abyssal claws are protected here from any who would seek to use their powers.
- Powerful outsiders, who did not want the claws to be found, created this place. Lazurus believes this to be agents of a good deity who is not Pholtus, as he believes that Pholtus would have sent the claws back to the Pale to cure the Theocrat.
- To reach the Chamber of the Claws, the seeker must pass three tests: the Test of Physical Courage, the Test of Intellectual Courage, and the Test of Moral Courage.
- Lazurus does not have information on the nature of the tests. That way he cannot help anyone succeed. The seeker must succeed alone.
- Each test must be passed before the way to the next test becomes accessible.
- To pass beyond, the seeker must stand at the archway of his or her choice and say, “I am a seeker, and I choose to accept the Three Challenges ahead.”

About the claws:

- The claws are very evil, and warp a person into a fiend from the Abyss. They are passed from one wearer to the next upon death.
- When a wearer dies, demons arrive immediately to take the claws. They usually feast on the body as well, though that did not happen to me.

When the characters do as instructed, the door in the archway they choose opens. The center one leads to the Test of Physical Courage. The other two doors open into narrow winding tunnels that eventually emerge from well-concealed openings into other parts of the Bluff Hills, and the characters have to start again.

Once all characters present pass through the door, it closes behind them. This can result in animals at the back of the party being left behind, as the magic of the place does not recognize animals as seekers. Note the marching order before they start, and then reveal if any animals were left behind.

Once the door closes, it must be bypassed magically or broken as noted above.

## **THE HIDING PLACE OF THE ABYSSAL CLAWS**

Under the throne is a secret compartment that holds the abyssal claws that the characters are seeking. The throne is 5 ft. square, and the compartment is only 1 ft. square (it is 5 ft. deep) in the center of the throne. Thus, the throne has to be moved completely aside to get the claws. Moving the throne does not dispel the illusions or affect Lazurus in any way, nor does he comment as the throne is moved. He goes into a kind of stasis when the throne is not where it is supposed to be.



The compartment with the claws is covered by an additional permanent *nondetection* spell cast at 14<sup>th</sup> level. Thus, *detect magic* spells have little chance of finding the claws. Further, they are covered by an *undetected alignment* spell, so that *detect evil* spells cannot locate them either.

The key to the defense of the claws is that they are in a location that one is not likely to look, covered by an object that cannot be moved without a lot of help, protected by spells to prevent magical searching, and in the midst of a lot of distractions.

Should the characters get to the claws, they can easily remove them from the compartment. However, touching the claws with flesh is a really bad idea. When the characters take out the claws, don't make a big deal of asking how they pull them out. Just take their description and go with it. Assume that unless you know the character is wearing gauntlets or gloves (magical ones) that they used bare skin if they did not specify something else.

They are strongly evil and of artifact power level. Touching them causes an immediate alignment shift one step toward Evil on the Good-Evil axis and one step towards Chaos on the Law-Chaos axis. Further, the character touching them must make a Will save (DC 20) or the claws control the person as if the claws cast a *domination* spell. If so controlled, the person is compelled to put the claws over his or her hands, where they immediately graft onto the person's own limbs. The claws can be removed at this stage by a *remove curse* spell cast at 14<sup>th</sup> level or higher.

If the claws are still on the person 24 hours later, the person suffers one more alignment shift in each axis toward Chaos and Evil.

As soon as the person becomes Chaotic Evil, he or she is transformed into a half-fiend, and is taken out of play. The person immediately grows bat-like wings and fangs, and attempts to escape with the claws.

If brought to the church, the person can receive a *limited wish* spell from the Arcanist's Guild that un-graft the claws long enough to remove them, but the next person touching them runs the same risks. Once the claws are removed, the half-fiend transformation is undone. However, any alignment shift is permanent, and the character must receive an *atonement* spell to have the old alignment restored (this was an involuntary change). Such an *atonement* spell costs the Favor of Pholtus that the church would have given to the person, plus 350 gp and 1 TU spent in praying to Pholtus or whatever deity they revere.

## ENCOUNTER 5: THE TEST OF PHYSICAL COURAGE

The first test is that of Physical Courage, and the test is a very tough combat. The characters are wise to consider running and trying again when they are healed. This won't help them against the trolls (see below) unless they

concentrate fire and kill a troll, and then come back and kill another one, and so forth. This combat is designed to be very difficult, and please run it that way.

Present the following after the characters leave the Lazurus cave. It assumes the characters have some light or darkvision; there are no lights in this passage, as the denizens don't need it.

***You walk through seemingly endless passages of natural stone cut through the rock. The passage begins at a bare eight feet high, but within the first 20 feet the height rises to 20 feet, and by the time you have gone 50 feet the ceiling is over 40 feet above you. The cave passage narrows and widens from 5 feet to 10 feet wide. Above you, you see that water or chisel or some magical force has created ledges of varying sizes. Some are a couple of feet wide only, others are large enough for a human to stand on, and still others are even larger. They are all at least 10 feet above the floor of the passage, so you cannot tell for sure how big some of them are.***

The ledges are of varying width, and some have spaces holed out behind them where water did additional damage. These have small cracks that leak water down the side of the cave walls. The occasional dripping sound can be heard, and the whole place is damp (no game effect for dampness). The characters may wish to check some ledges, and that is fine. They don't find anything. If they do check ledges, be sure that one of the ones they check is large enough for a troll to use as a hiding place and firing position. This is their warning of what might be to come.

***About 400 feet or so from the cave where you spoke with Lazurus, you find two bodies face down on the ground. One is an elf, and the other a half-elf.***

Their descriptions depend on the APL:

- APL 4: They have multiple crossbow bolt wounds.
- APL 6: They have crossbow bolt wounds, and the half-elf has huge cuts in his body that were made by a sword larger than a greatsword.
- APL 8: The elf has been rended almost in half by claws (people who have seen trolls in action recognize this as an injury caused by a troll). The other is gutted.
- APL 10: The half-elf is horribly burned across the top of its body, almost beyond recognition. The elf was rended.

This should put them on their guard. The elf and half-elf were part of a past adventuring group that tried to get the claws, and failed. The monsters ahead ate the other three members of the group. They have been here almost two years now.

About 70 feet from where the bodies were found, the ambush takes place. See *Map 1* for the layout. The basic tactics are the same for all APLs. The monsters use ranged weapons to soften up the characters, and wait for the characters to climb up to them. If the characters can damage them from below effectively, they cover each

other as they climb down, or just jump down and take the damage (and possibly land on a character—this would be an overbear attack with 2d6 damage from body weight).

The obvious thing to try, is to run past the monsters, once they know where all of them are, and escape. However, this won't work. There is an invisible portcullis gate just beyond where the last monsters are located, preventing anyone from getting by. It can be raised and lowered by a lever in the last ledge area (see map). The gate has been enchanted as per a *ring of invisibility*, but only so that it remains invisible. If something dispels the invisibility, the gate becomes visible for 10 minutes and then becomes invisible again. The bars of the gate are only six inches apart. Lifting the portcullis requires a successful Strength check (DC 25). It cannot be removed from the area; it is too far into the wall to take out.

### APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Fiendish Bugbears (6):** hp 16, 16, 16, 16, 16, 16; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

### APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Fiendish Ogres (6):** hp 26, 26, 26, 26, 26, 26; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

### APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Trolls (6):** hp 63, 63, 63, 63, 63, 63; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

### APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Half-Dragon Trolls (Red) (2):** hp 75, 75; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

➤ **Half-Fiend Trolls (4):** hp 69, 69, 69, 69; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

Once the characters get past this, they may move toward the next test.

## ENCOUNTER 6: THE TEST OF INTELLECTUAL COURAGE

Once the heroes pass the first test, they travel down the corridor some more. Assuming the characters can see 60 feet (lantern or darkvision), read or paraphrase the following.

*You have been walking for what feels like a mile, but is probably a lot less. The tunnel has been winding back and forth, and going in apparent circles, as it goes deeper into the mountain. Then, the passage seems to reach a dead end. Just at the edge of your vision you see a wall closing off the passageway.*

The wall does indeed close off the passageway. It is part of the final trap in this section, and won't move until all the life forms in the area have come within 10 feet of it.

This section is the second test, comprised of three traps. The locations of the traps are shown on *Map 2*. The characters must pass all three traps to reach the wall. The wall itself has a *deathwatch* spell on it, and a permanent *invisibility purge* has been cast over the whole area of the traps (out to 60 ft. from the wall).

### TRAP ONE

Ten feet from where the characters first see the wall, they find the first trap. It is a proximity trigger whirling blades trap that fills the indicated squares. Anyone in the square is attacked. Characters can attempt to tumble through a trap square by making a successful Tumble check (DC 30).

The blades whirl on poles that come out of the floor. The force of the poles coming upward dislodges anything that tries to block them that weigh less than 50 lbs.

### APL 4 (EL 2)

➤ **Whirling Blades Trap:** CR 2; mechanical, proximity trigger; automatic reset; no bypass; Atk +10 melee (1d4+4/19-20, dagger); multiple targets (can attack anyone in the affected squares); Search DC 20; Disable DC 20.

### APL 6 (EL 4)

➤ **Whirling Blades Trap:** CR 4; mechanical, proximity trigger; automatic reset; no bypass; Atk +15 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword); multiple targets (can attack anyone in the affected squares); Search DC 20; Disable DC 20.

### APL 8 (EL 6)

➤ **Whirling Blades Trap:** CR 6; mechanical, proximity trigger; automatic reset; no bypass; Atk +15 melee (2d6+4/19-20 plus poison, greatsword); poison (carrion crawler brain juice, Fort save DC 13 resists, paralysis 2d6 minutes/0); multiple targets (can attack anyone in the affected squares); Search DC 20; Disable DC 20.

### APL 10 (EL 8)

➤ **Whirling Blades Trap:** CR 8; mechanical, proximity trigger; automatic reset; no bypass; Atk +10 melee (2d6+4/19-20 plus poison, greatsword); poison (deathblade, Fort save DC 20 resists, 1d6 Con/2d6 Con); multiple targets (can attack anyone in the affected squares); Search DC 20; Disable DC 20.

### TRAP TWO

There is a 5-foot square between the whirling blades and the pit trap that follows (this trap). The pit trap covers the squares indicated in the narrow section of the corridor. The pit opens on the side closest to the wall. It is triggered by any weight of 50 pounds or greater resting on it. The weight/person falls through and then the pit trap closes again (automatic reset). The fall is 10 feet to a floor that is counterweighted. When the top floor is open,

the second floor is held in place by poles in the wall below it. Once the top floor closes, the poles retract and the second floor is balanced on a pole that runs through its center. Thus, any movement or weight imbalance causes the floor to pivot up and drop people down to the real bottom of the pit.

When someone triggers the trap from above and looks down, it appears that the pit is empty because the comrades have fallen into the second section and are blocked from view by the second floor. The area in the bottom of the pit is in the area of effect of a permanent *silence* spell, so the people at the bottom cannot hear anyone nor make any noise.

The total drop is listed in the stats for the trap. The first 1d6 are taken in the first fall section, and the rest in the second fall.

#### **APL 4 (EL 4)**

↗**Wide-Mouth Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger, automatic reset; Reflex save DC 20 avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6 fall); multiple targets (anyone in the affected squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 damage each); Search DC 18; Disable DC 25.

#### **APL 6 (EL 6)**

↗**Wide-Mouth Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 6; mechanical; location trigger, automatic reset; Reflex save DC 25 avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6 fall); multiple targets (anyone in the affected squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+4 each); Search DC 20; Disable DC 25.

#### **APL 8 (EL 8)**

↗**Wide-Mouth Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 8; mechanical; location trigger, automatic reset; Reflex save DC 25 avoids; 80 ft. deep (8d6 fall); multiple targets (anyone in the affected squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); Search DC 20; Disable DC 25.

#### **APL 10 (EL 10)**

↗**Wide-Mouth Poisoned Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 11; mechanical; location trigger, automatic reset; Reflex save DC 25 avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6 fall); multiple targets (anyone in the affected squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 plus poison each); poison (deathblade, Fort save DC 20 avoids, 1d6 Con/2d6 Con); Search DC 20; Disable DC 25.

### **TRAP THREE**

The third trap is a fusillade of darts trap. It fires at the area indicated on *Map 2*; anyone stepping into or staying in those squares is fired upon. The darts can fire a total of 50 times (the builder wanted it to last).

The holes where the darts fire can be blocked up, but if all of them are blocked up the pressure builds in the firing mechanism and the darts blow out the blocks. They can be blocked by a piece of material at least 1/2 inch thick (stone or metal), or 1 inch thick (wood) that weighs at least 30 lbs.

#### **APL 4 (EL 2)**

↗**Fusillade of Darts:** CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +10 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (carrion crawler brain juice, Fort save DC 13, paralysis 2d6 minutes/o); multiple targets (fires 1d4 darts at each target in affected squares); Search DC 14; Disable Device DC 20.

#### **APL 6 (EL 4)**

↗**Fusillade of Darts:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d4+1, dart); multiple targets (fires 1d8 darts at each target in affected squares); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 25.

#### **APL 8 (EL 6)**

↗**Fusillade of Darts:** CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (sassone leaf residue, Fort save 16 to avoid, 2d12 hp/1d6 Con); multiple targets (fires 1d8 darts at each target in affected squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

#### **APL 10 (EL 8)**

↗**Fusillade of Darts:** CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (sassone leaf residue, Fort save 16 to avoid, 2d12 hp/1d6 Con); multiple targets (fires 2d8 darts at each target in affected squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

To get past the wall, the characters have to survive all the traps. The wall has a permanent *deathwatch* spell active that covers the whole area of traps (added by a priest that the designer paid). The wall knows if anyone falls below 4 hit points at any time in the trap area. All characters must have at least 4 hit points to pass; the wall opens automatically if all characters are within 10 feet of it and if all characters never went below 4 hit points. If any characters went below 4 hit points, the wall does not open until those characters are removed from the 60 ft. area in front of the wall. Needless to say, those characters probably have to go back, because the wall closes too quickly for those characters to bypass all the traps again and get through the opening. Their only other option would be to heal up and try all the traps again; the wall is not intelligent and does not know who is standing in front of it.

When the conditions for the wall opening are met, present this:

*You stand before the wall, and you see that it suddenly flashes reddish. A small door opens in the center, sliding back into the wall itself.*

The door stays open for 2 rounds and then closes. If anyone delays, they have to go back outside the trap area and start again.

It is not possible to trigger this door open by any other means, as the mechanisms are inside the wall. Use of the spell *stone shape* or *passwall* would allow passage through the wall without using the door.

Once pass the wall, they may continue to the third test.

## ENCOUNTER 7: THE TEST OF MORAL COURAGE

When the characters pass the Test of Intellectual Courage and get through the doorway at the end of that section, read or paraphrase the following.

*Beyond the doorway you see more corridor stretching before you. Except for the lack of ledges, it is like the corridor you have been traversing so far. Between 5 and 10 feet wide, it meanders deeper into the mountain.*

*After 10 minutes or so (about half a mile) you come to a place where the passage widens into a room. Stalactites and stalagmites festoon this natural-looking cavern, which is further across than you can see.*

The room is 100 ft. across, and 60 ft. wide. At the far side of the room the characters find the test. When they can see 80 feet into the room, present the following:

*At the edge of your vision, you see what might be a bridge arching above something lower than the level of the floor. In the center of the bridge there is a dwarf wearing adventuring gear. He appears to be stuck somehow, as he turns from one side to the other without moving.*

As soon as the characters see this and either move or try to interact with the dwarf, this happens:

*As you (move/cry out/whatever), you hear a loud cracking sound echo through the chamber. The dwarf looks panicked and tries to jump off the bridge, but the central piece of the bridge breaks off under him and they fall together. You hear a splashing sound, some dwarven cursing, and a cry for help.*

The second test is to rescue the dwarf, and to do so without discussion or hesitation. Someone with moral courage would leap to the rescue because someone was in danger, not think about the conditions of the test. If they delay more than two rounds before trying to rescue the dwarf, they fail the test.

The dwarf looks very convincing but is in fact a construct programmed to act out this scene.

The dwarf has fallen on the central bridge section to a lake of acid some 20 feet below the hole over which the bridge passes, and has floated out of immediate range of being hauled up. The lake of acid is reddish-yellow and bubbles, and is about 100 ft. in diameter. The hole, which is only 40 ft. in diameter, is above one end so that the lake stretches back underneath the room itself. No other part of the room collapses.

The dwarf on the block floats at a move of 10 away from the hole, and when the characters get there he is already at the edge of where the hole is above the lake. Thus, by the time the characters can take any action he is 10 ft. beyond the lip of the hole.

The dwarf floats slowly in the far section, under the floor of the room, until rescued. However, the stone block he is on starts to dissolve because of the damage of the acid. The block dissolves enough to dump the dwarf into the acid after one minute, so they have that long to rescue him.

The acid does 1d6 damage if splashed on someone, and does 6d6 damage per round to anyone immersed in it. There is no save against this damage, though acid protection applies normally.

Let the characters be creative in rescuing the dwarf.

When they do get him safe, they are able to tell that he is a construct because he won't react to them once he has been saved. His program has ended. When they are within 5 ft. they can make Spot checks (DC 20 if not under pressure, DC 25 if under pressure) to realize that he is a construct.

If they realize he is a construct and do not rescue him, they have still passed. In this case, they do not pass unless a character vocalizes that the dwarf is a construct, as the magic of the room needs to hear "dwarf is a construct" to grant them success.

Otherwise, the characters have to get the dwarf construct back onto the floor of the room to achieve success.

Once they succeed, a part of the cave wall behind the hole opens and allows them to progress to the Chamber of the Claws.

## ENCOUNTER 8: THE CHAMBER OF THE CLAWS

Once they have passed the Test of Moral Courage, read or paraphrase the following.

*More corridors lead you on a twisting path through the mountain. Finally, you reach a doorway set into a carved arch in the stone passageway, which ends at the door.*

The stone door is locked requiring a successful Open Locks check (DC 20) and can be broken in with a successful Strength check (DC 25). It is of thinner materials than the rest of the stone hereabouts.

When the door has been bypassed, read or paraphrase the following.

You see into a small room, perhaps 20 feet across and wide. The walls are inscribed with images of priests banishing demons and healing the sick. A kind of calm permeates the room, though you cannot tell from what source.

Disarray meets your eyes. In the center of the room is a stone chest with intricate carvings. Its lid is open, and there are lengths of cloth strewn from within to the floor around it. Across from you there is a tunnel dug into the smoothness of the walls, and piles of stone just inside the room. It looks as if someone has found this room another way, and has taken the claws away!

The chest has cloth that looks like it was used to wrap the claws up. The chest has a sturdy lock on the lid that is smashed. The tunnel in the far wall is small and very rough-hewn, with debris around its mouth.

The tunnel averages three feet wide and four feet high, and winds for more than a mile through the rock of the hills before emerging into a shallow valley deep within the Bluff Hills. There are no tracks in the tunnel or in the valley coming from the tunnel. There are animal tracks, but they don't approach the tunnel.

To all appearances, it looks like someone tunneled in and stole the claws, which is exactly how it is supposed to look. The claws were never in this room, and it is all part of the distraction so that seekers never find the claws.

## CONCLUSION

If the characters have the claws, Milamber is very pleased. He is also pleased if they report that the claws are under the throne and tell him where exactly to go, without bringing the claws back. He understands that they might not have the resources to move such an object, and can send people who do. He rewards them with a Favor of Pholtus and offers them access to new divine spells. See the Treasure Summary for the details of unlocking divine spells from *Defenders of the Faith* and *Masters of the Wild*.

If the characters never found them, he is puzzled. The diviners said they were there. He thanks them, and offers them access to new divine spells for their efforts. See the Treasure Summary for the details of unlocking divine spells from *Defenders of the Faith* and *Masters of the Wild*. Characters who do not return with the claws do not receive Favors of Pholtus.

If the claws possess any character, then priests of Pholtus arrange the cure as described in "Lazurus, Returned."

### The End

## EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value to

each character.

### Encounter 1: The Fanatics

Defeat the fanatics.

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

### Encounter 5: Test of Physical Courage

Defeat the bugbears/ogres/trolls.

APL 4	150 xp
APL 6	210 xp
APL 8	270 xp
APL 10	330 xp

### Encounter 6: Test of Intellectual Courage

Defeat the traps.

APL 4	210 xp
APL 6	330 xp
APL 8	450 xp
APL 10	570 xp

### Encounter 7: Test of Moral Courage

Save the dwarf.

APL 4	60 xp
APL 6	90 xp
APL 8	120 xp
APL 10	150 xp

### Bonus Experience Points

The following can be given to characters for good roleplaying, or acts of courage. The first value is the standard for your average good roleplaying (consistent character portrayal, not just social interaction), the following value is the upper limit of the bonus, which is reserved for characters who contribute exceptionally with a feat of daring or cunning during the adventure. (non-EL award equivalent to EL 2/3/4/5)

APL 4:	40 xp / 60 xp
APL 6:	60 xp / 90 xp
APL 8:	80 xp / 120 xp
APL 10:	100 xp / 150 xp

### Total possible experience

APL 4	600 xp
APL 6	900 xp
APL 8	1200 xp
APL 10	1500 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 minute 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 piece 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: The Fanatics

Defeat the fanatics and take their stuff

APL 4: L: 274.7 gp; C: 18 gp; M: 50 gp; four *potions of cure light wounds* (5 gp each), *potion of endurance* (30 gp)

APL 6: L: 321.3 gp; C: 26 gp; M: 135 gp; six *potions of cure light wounds* (5 gp each), *potion of blur* (30 gp), *wand of charm person* (75 gp)

APL 8: L: 357.7 gp; C: 36 gp; M: 782.5 gp; +1 *chain shirt* (125 gp); +1 *studded leather armor* (117.5 gp), three *potions of cure light wounds* (50 gp each), *potion of blur* (30 gp), *wand of cure light wounds* (75 gp), *wand of summon monster I* (75 gp), *wand of charm person* (75 gp), +1 *mighty composite longbow* [+2] (280 gp)

APL 10: L: 338.6 gp; C: 36 gp; M: 1,635 gp; +2 *chain shirt* (425 gp), five *potions of cure light wounds* (5 gp each), *amulet of natural armor* +1 (20 gp), *potion of wisdom* (30 gp), *wand of cure light wounds* (75 gp), +1 *studded leather armor* (117.5 gp), *wand of magic missile* (5<sup>th</sup> level caster) (375 gp), +1 *chain shirt* (125 gp), +1 *mighty composite longbow* [+2] (280 gp)

### Encounter 5: Test of Physical Courage

Defeat the ambushers

APL 4: L: 435.6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 597 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 204 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,680 gp; six +1 *flaming mighty composite longbow* [+4] (280 gp each)

APL 10: L: 204 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,680 gp; six +1 *flaming mighty composite longbow* [+4] (280 gp each)

## Conclusion

Success:

- Favor of Pholtus for each character
- Clerics of Pholtus will cast *raise dead* or *resurrection* spells at half price on anyone who died.
- The Church unlocks one 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level cleric or paladin spell from *Defenders of the Faith* for each character that wants one. The spell must be chosen immediately. The church can arrange for druids and rangers to unlock one 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level spell from *Masters of the Wild* or *Defenders of the Faith*. The spell must be chosen immediately. Persons receiving this benefit must be able to cast the spell they are unlocking.

## Total Possible Treasure

- **APL 4:** Total Value 777.7 gp. Loot Value 709.7 gp, Coin Value 18 gp. Magic Value 50 gp
- **APL 6:** Total Value 1,079.3 gp. Loot Value 918.3 gp, Coin Value 26 gp. Magic Value 135 gp
- **APL 8:** Total Value 3,060.2 gp. Loot Value 561.7 gp, Coin Value 36 gp. Magic Value 2462.5 gp
- **APL 10:** Total Value 3,893.6 gp. Loot Value 542.6 gp, Coin Value 36 gp. Magic Value 3,315 gp

Note that the characters are not likely to get all the treasure, since some is used. Plus, the Theocrat claims all treasure above the APL cap as a tithe, so the maximums that a character can take out of this adventure are:

- **APL 4:** 600 gp
- **APL 6:** 900 gp
- **APL 8:** 1,200 gp
- **APL 10:** 1,500 gp

## Adventure Certificate Items

**Divine Spell Unlocking:** For service to the Theocrat in his time of need, the church has unlocked for you, or arranged to have unlocked, one 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level divine spell. Unlocking means that you may prepare and cast this spell. Clerics and paladins have their spells unlocked by the church; druids and rangers have their spell unlocked by an elf of the Phostwood working for the church. You must choose the spell immediately, and you must be able to cast the spell you choose.

Spell: \_\_\_\_\_

Level (circle): 1 2

Source:

— *Defenders of the Faith*

— *Masters of the Wild*

You must bring the sourcebook with you to games to use the spell.

## APPENDIX I: NPCS

### ENCOUNTER 1: THE FANATICS

#### APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Geuralla:** Female human Bbn1; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d12+2; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +5 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword) or +3 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SA Rage (1/day); SQ Fast movement; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +7, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +7, Listen +5, Wilderness Lore +5; Cleave, Power Attack.

*Possessions:* masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork greatsword, clothing, longbow, 20 arrows, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, 8 days' rations, 15 gp

➤ **Misolk:** Male human Clr1 (Pholtus); CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 9, flat-footed 16); Atk +0 melee (1d8, heavy mace) or -1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells, turn undead; SQ Spontaneous casting (cure); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative.

*Possessions:* half-plate armor, heavy mace, light crossbow, 20 bolts, clothing, holy symbol of Pholtus, light riding horse with saddle and bridle, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, 8 days' rations, 31 gp

*Spells Prepared* (3/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 - *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds*, *resistance*; 1<sup>st</sup> - *command*, *doom*, *protection from chaos*\*

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* Law (You cast law spells at +1 caster level); Sun (Once per day, you can perform a greater turning against undead in place of a regular turning (or rebuking) attempt. The greater turning is like a normal turning (or rebuking) attempt except that the undead creatures that would be turned (or rebuked or commanded) are destroyed instead).

➤ **Kollin:** Male human Sor1; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d4; hp 4; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; AL LN; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +4, Hide +4, Listen +3, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Combat Casting, Spell Focus (Evocation).

*Possessions:* masterwork studded leather armor (10% arcane spell failure chance), masterwork quarterstaff, *potion of endurance*, clothing, light riding horse with saddle and bit, 8 days' rations, 24 gp

*Spells Known* (5/4; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 - *daze*, *light*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*; 1<sup>st</sup> - *magic missile*, *shield*.

➤ **Bural:** Male human Ftr1; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +5 ranged (1d8+2/x3, composite longbow); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +4, Jump +4, Listen +3; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot.

*Possessions:* chain shirt, masterwork mighty composite longbow (+2), 20 arrows, longsword, clothing, 8 days' rations, 20 gp

#### APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Geuralla:** Female human Bbn3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d12+6; hp 32; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +7 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword) or +5 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SA Rage (1/day); SQ Fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +8, Intuit Direction +7, Jump +8, Listen +7, Wilderness Lore +7; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

*Possessions:* masterwork chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, clothing, longbow, 20 arrows, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of blur*, ~~*potion of bull's strength*~~, 8 days' rations, 15 gp

*Note:* She drinks the *potion of bull's strength* (lasts three hours) just before confronting the characters. This increases her Strength to 20 adding +2 to her to hit and +3 to her damage with her greatsword, as well as +2 to both Climb and Jump skills.

➤ **Misolk:** Male human Clr3 (Pholtus); CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6; hp 24; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 9, flat-footed 16); Atk +2 melee (1d8, heavy mace) or +1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells, turn undead; SQ Spontaneous casting (cure); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +8, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +8; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

*Possessions:* half-plate armor, masterwork heavy mace, light crossbow, 20 bolts, clothing, holy symbol of Pholtus, light riding horse with saddle and bridle, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, ~~*potion of wisdom*~~, 8 days' rations, 31 gp

*Spells Prepared* (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 - *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds*, *resistance* (2); 1<sup>st</sup> - *command*, *doom*, *protection from chaos*\*, *summon monster* 1; 2<sup>nd</sup> - *calm emotions*\*, *hold person*, *sound burst*.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* Law (You cast law spells at +1 caster level); Sun (Once per day, you can perform a greater turning against undead in place of a regular



turning (or rebuking) attempt. The greater turning is like a normal turning (or rebuking) attempt except that the undead creatures that would be turned (or rebuked or commanded) are destroyed instead).

*Note:* He drinks his *potion of wisdom* (lasts three hours) before this encounter starts. This increases his Wisdom to 20 adding +2 to the DC for all spells cast, and to Wisdom based skills as well.

If a fight starts, he tries to cast *calm emotions* on the characters before his friends engage them.

➤ **Kollin:** Male human Sor3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d4; hp 10; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +1 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Hide +5, Listen +4, Spellcraft +8, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Evocation).

*Possessions:* masterwork studded leather armor (10% arcane spell failure chance), masterwork quarterstaff, *potion of endurance*, clothing, light riding horse with saddle and bit, 8 days' rations, *wand of charm person* (50 charges), 24 gp

*Spells Known* (6/6; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 – *daze*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *shield*.

➤ **Bural:** Male human Ftr3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 28; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +5 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +8 ranged (1d8+2/x3, composite longbow); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +6, Jump +6, Listen +4; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

*Possessions:* chain shirt, masterwork mighty composite longbow (+2), 20 arrows, longsword, clothing, *potion of cat's grace*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, 8 days' rations, 20 gp

*Note:* He drinks the *potion of cat's grace* (lasts three hours) just before encountering the characters. This increases his Dexterity to 21, adding +2 to his to hit rolls with his composite longbow and Reflex saving throws. It also adds +1 to his AC.

## APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Geuralla:** Female human Bbn5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d12+10; hp 50; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 15); Atk +9 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword) or +9 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SA Rage (2/day); SQ Fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +10, Intuit Direction +9, Jump +10, Listen +9, Wilderness Lore +9; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

*Possessions:* +1 *chain shirt*, masterwork greatsword, clothing, masterwork longbow, 20 masterwork arrows, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of blur*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cat's grace*, 8 days' rations, 35 gp

*Note:* She drinks the *potion of bull's strength* and a *potion of cat's grace* (both last three hours) just before confronting the characters. This increases her Strength to 21 adding +2 to her to hit and +3 to her damage with her greatsword, as well as +2 to both Climb and Jump skills. It also increases her Dexterity to 17, adding +1 to her AC, Initiative, Reflex saving throws, and to hit rolls with her longbow.

➤ **Misolk:** Male human Clr5 (Pholtus); CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d8+10; hp 38; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 9, flat-footed 17); Atk +3 melee (1d8, heavy mace) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells, turn undead; SQ Spontaneous casting (cure); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +10, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +10; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

*Possessions:* masterwork full plate armor, masterwork heavy mace, light crossbow, 20 bolts, clothing, holy symbol of Pholtus, light riding horse with saddle and bridle, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of wisdom*, *wand of cure light wounds* (50 charges), 8 days' rations, 31 gp

*Spells Prepared* (5/4+1/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (2), *resistance* (2); 1<sup>st</sup> – *command* (2), *doom*, *protection from chaos*\*, *summon monster* I; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *calm emotions*\*, *hold person* (2), *sound burst*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *searing light*\*.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* Law (You cast law spells at +1 caster level); Sun (Once per day, you can perform a greater turning against undead in place of a regular turning (or rebuking) attempt. The greater turning is like a normal turning (or rebuking) attempt except that the undead creatures that would be turned (or rebuked or commanded) are destroyed instead).

*Note:* He drinks his *potion of wisdom* (lasts three hours) before this encounter starts. This increases his Wisdom to 21 adding +2 to the DC for all spells cast, and to Wisdom based skills as well. He has also precast magic vestment, adding a +1 enhancement bonus to his AC.

If a fight starts, he tries to cast *calm emotions* on the characters before his friends engage them.

➤ **Kollin:** Male human Sor5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d4; hp 16; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +2 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +8, Hide +6, Listen +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +5; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Evocation).

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather armor (10% arcane spell failure chance), masterwork quarterstaff, *potion of endurance*, clothing, light riding horse with saddle and bit, 8 days' rations, *wand of charm person* (50 charges), *wand of summon monster I* (50 charges), 54 gp

*Spells Known* (6/7/5; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 – *daze*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *spectral hand*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*.

➤ **Bural:** Male human Ftr5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d10+10; hp 44; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +10 ranged (1d8+4/x3, composite longbow); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +7, Jump +7, Listen +4, Ride +7; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

*Possessions:* chain shirt, masterwork mighty composite longbow (+2), 20 arrows, longsword, clothing, ~~*potion of cat's grace*~~, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, light riding horse with bit and saddle, 8 days' rations, 61 gp

*Note:* He drinks the *potion of cat's grace* (lasts three hours) just before encountering the characters. This increases his Dexterity to 22, adding +3 to his to hit rolls with his composite longbow and Reflex saving throws. It also adds +1 to his AC.

## APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Geuralla:** Female human Bbn7; CR 7; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 7d12+14; hp 68; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 15); Atk +11/+6 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SA Rage (2/day); SQ Fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +12, Intuit Direction +11, Jump +12, Listen +11, Wilderness Lore +11; Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

*Possessions:* +1 chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, clothing, masterwork longbow, 20 masterwork arrows, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of blur*, ~~*potion of bull's strength*~~, *potion of cat's grace*, 8 days' rations, 35 gp

*Note:* She drinks the *potion of bull's strength* and a *potion of cat's grace* (both last three hours) just before confronting the characters. This increases her Strength to 21 adding +2 to her to hit and +3 to her damage with her greatsword, as well as +2 to both Climb and Jump skills. It also increases her Dexterity to 17, adding +1 to her AC, Initiative, Reflex saving throws, and to hit rolls with her longbow.

➤ **Misolk:** Male human Clr7 (Pholtus); CR 7; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 7d8+14; hp 52; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (touch 9, flat-footed 18); Atk +5 melee (1d8, heavy mace) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells, turn undead; SQ Spontaneous casting (cure); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +14, Diplomacy +11, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Spellcraft +12; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Concentration).

*Possessions:* masterwork full plate armor, masterwork heavy mace, light crossbow, 20 bolts, clothing, holy symbol of Pholtus, light riding horse with saddle and bridle, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, ~~*potion of wisdom*~~, *potion of wisdom*, *wand of cure light wounds* (50 charges), *amulet of natural armor* +1, 8 days' rations, 31 gp

*Spells Prepared* (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds* (2), *light*, *resistance* (2); 1<sup>st</sup> – *bless*, *command* (2), *doom*, *protection from chaos*\*, *summon monster I*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *calm emotions*\*, *hold person* (2), *sound burst* (2); 3<sup>rd</sup> – *dispel magic*, ~~*magic vestment*~~, *searing light* (2)\*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *divine power*, *fire shield*\*.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* Law (You cast law spells at +1 caster level); Sun (Once per day, you can perform a greater turning against undead in place of a regular turning (or rebuking) attempt. The greater turning is like a normal turning (or rebuking) attempt except that the undead creatures that would be turned (or rebuked or commanded) are destroyed instead).

*Note:* He drinks his *potion of wisdom* (lasts three hours) before this encounter starts. This increases his Wisdom to 21 adding +2 to the DC for all spells cast, and to Wisdom based skills as well. He has also precast magic vestment, adding a +1 enhancement bonus to his AC.

If a fight starts, he tries to cast *calm emotions* on the characters before his friends engage them.

➤ **Kollin:** Male human Sor7; CR 7; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 7d4; hp 22; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells; AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +4, Concentration +10, Hide +7, Listen +6, Spellcraft +12, Spot +5; Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Evocation).

*Possessions:* +1 studded leather armor (10% arcane spell failure chance), masterwork quarterstaff, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, clothing, light riding horse with saddle and bit, 8 days' rations, *wand of magic missiles* (5<sup>th</sup>) (50 charges), 54 gp

*Spells Known* (6/7/7/5; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 – *daze*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *flaming sphere*,

spectral hand, Tasha's hideous laughter; 3<sup>rd</sup> – fly, lightning bolt.

➤ **Bural:** Male human Ftr7; CR 7; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14; hp 60; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); Atk +9/+4 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+5/x3, composite longbow); AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +9, Jump +9, Listen +6, Ride +9; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

*Possessions:* +1 chain shirt, +1 mighty composite longbow (+2), 30 masterwork arrows, longsword, clothing, ~~potion of cat's grace~~, ~~potion of heroism~~, 2 potions of cure light wounds, light riding horse with bit and saddle, 8 days' rations, 61 gp

*Note:* He drinks the *potion of cat's grace* (lasts three hours) and *potion of heroism* (lasts 1 hour) just before encountering the characters. The *potion of cat's grace* increases his Dexterity to 22. With the added bonus of the *potion of heroism*, this adds +5 to his to hit rolls with his composite longbow and Reflex saving throws. It also adds +2 to his to hit rolls with his longsword and his Fortitude and Will saving throws, as well as +1 to his AC.

## ENCOUNTER 5: THE TEST OF PHYSICAL COURAGE

When firing crossbows or bows from above, the foes have 75% cover (+7 AC bonus, +3 Ref save bonus).

### APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Fiendish Bugbears (6):** CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, morningstar) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., cold and fire resistance 5; SR 6; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +2, Hide +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Spot +3; Alertness.

*Possessions:* morningstar, masterwork crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts, leather armor, small wooden shield.

### APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Fiendish Ogres (6):** CR 3; Large giant; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 9, flat-footed 19); Atk +7 melee (2d8+7, huge greatsword) or +2 ranged (1d10/19-20, heavy crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., cold and fire resistance 10, DR 5/+1; SR 8; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 7.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +3, Listen +2, Spot +2; Rapid Reload\*

*Possessions:* masterwork heavy crossbow, masterwork huge greatsword, 10 masterwork bolts, breastplate armor

\*See Appendix 2: New Rules for additional information

### APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Trolls (6):** CR 5; Large giant; HD 6d8+36; hp 63; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (touch 11, flat-footed 20); Atk +9 melee (1d6+6, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d6+3, bite) or +7 ranged (1d8+5 plus 1d6 fire/x3, mighty composite longbow); SA Rend 2d6+9; SQ Regeneration 5, scent, darkvision 90 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 23, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +3, Listen +5, Spot +5; Alertness, Iron Will.

*Possessions:* masterwork scale mail, +1 flaming mighty composite longbow (+4), 20 masterwork arrows.

### APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Half-Dragon Trolls (Red) (2):** CR 7; Large dragon; HD 6d10+42; hp 75; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 26 (touch 11, flat-footed 24); Atk +13 melee (1d6+10, 2 claws) and +8 melee (1d6+5, bite) or +7 ranged (1d8+5 plus 1d6 fire/x3, mighty composite longbow); SA Rend 2d6+15, breath weapon; SQ Regeneration 5, scent, darkvision 90 ft., low-light vision, immune to sleep and paralysis effects, immune to fire; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 31, Dex 14, Con 25, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +10, Hide +4, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Spot +10; Alertness, Iron Will.

*Possessions:* masterwork scale mail, +1 flaming mighty composite longbow (+4), 30 masterwork arrows.

*Breath Weapon (Su)*—cone of fire 30 ft. long, damage 6d10, Ref save (DC 19) for half damage.

➤ **Half-Fiend Trolls (4):** CR 7; Large outsider; HD 6d8+42; hp 69; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25 (touch 13, flat-footed 21); Atk +11 melee (1d6+8, 2 claws) and +6 melee (1d8+4, bite), or +9 ranged (1d8+5 plus 1d6 fire/x3, mighty composite longbow); SA Rend 2d6+12, spell-like abilities; SQ Regeneration 5, scent, darkvision 90 ft., immune to poison, acid, cold, fire, and electrical resistance 20; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 18, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +5, Climb +8, Hide +1, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Spot +10, Tumble +5, Wilderness Lore +0; Alertness, Iron Will.

*Spell-like Abilities (Sp)*—darkness 3/day, desecrate 1/day, unholy blight 1/day, all at 6<sup>th</sup> caster level.

*Possessions:* masterwork scale mail, +1 flaming mighty composite longbow (+4), 30 masterwork arrows.

## APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES

### **RAPID RELOAD [GENERAL] AS PRESENTED IN *SWORD AND FIST***

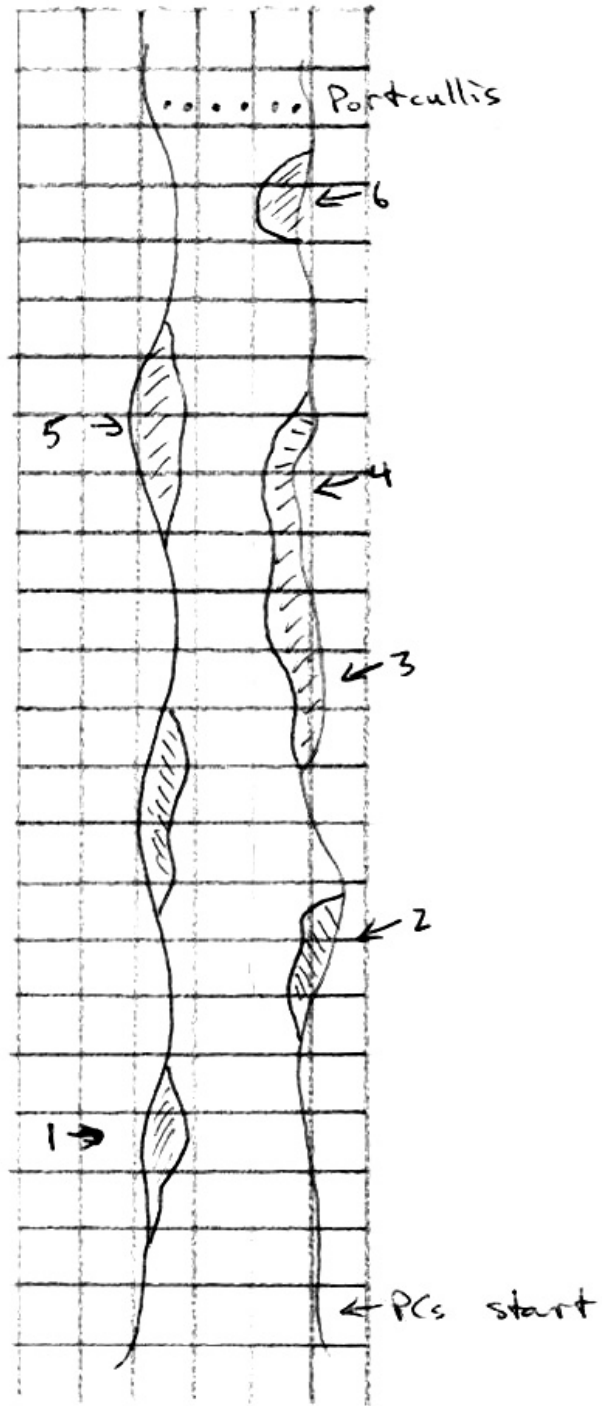
You reload a crossbow more quickly than normal.

**Prerequisites:** Base attack bonus +2, proficiency with the crossbow used.

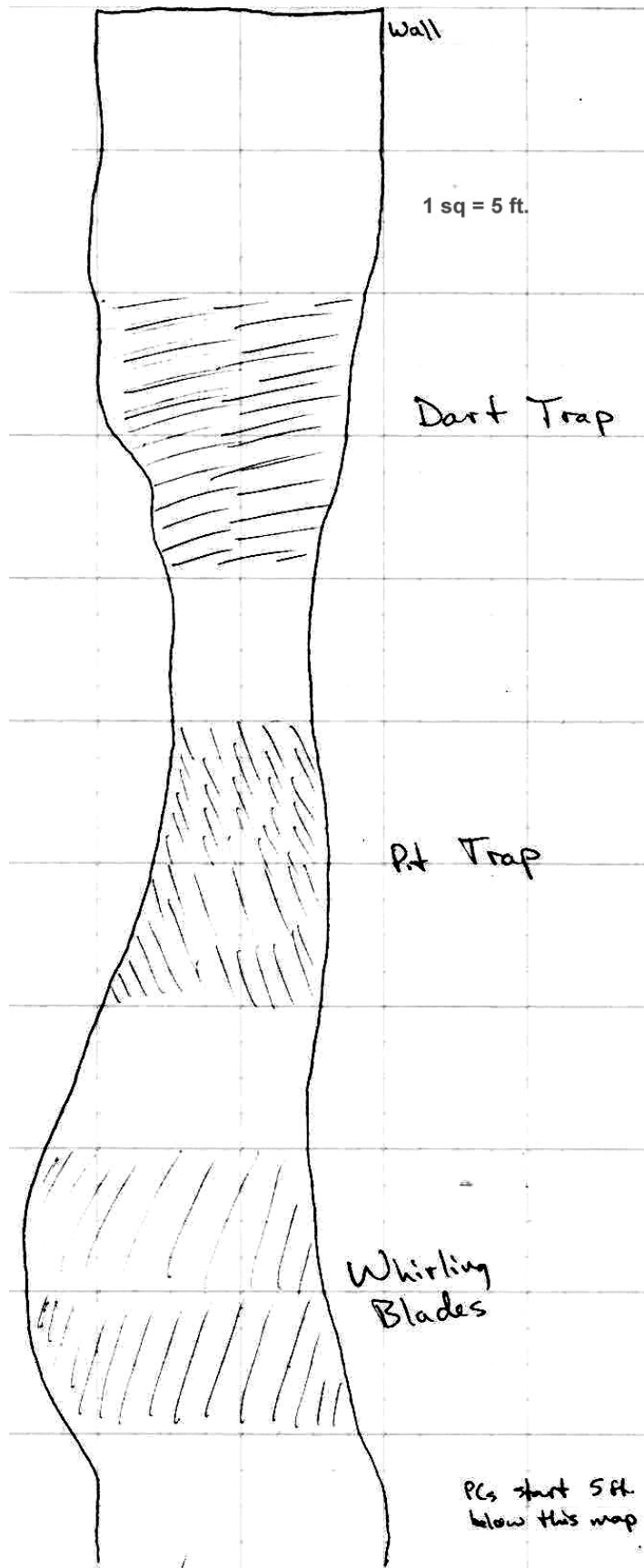
**Benefit:** You can reload a hand crossbow or light crossbow as a free action that provokes an attack of opportunity. You may reload a heavy crossbow as a move-equivalent action that provokes an attack of opportunity. You can use this feat once per round.

**Normal:** Loading a hand or light crossbow is a move-equivalent action, and loading a heavy crossbow is a full-round action.

MAP 1: TEST OF PHYSICAL COURAGE



MAP 2: TEST OF  
INTELLECTUAL  
COURAGE



MAP 3: POSSIBLE LOCATION OF THE CLAWS

