

BIS5-IS2

A Day at the GAP

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

Version 1.0

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The Guild of the Arcane Path has been the premier school and haven for Arcane Spellcasters in Bissel for as long as anyone can remember. One professor has wishes to continue on in his duties, but needs the help of a few brave souls to accomplish this task. Will you be up for the challenge? An introductory LG adventure set in the March of Bissel.

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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INTRODUCTION

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

PREPARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.

- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either 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. 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 two things that you can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a move

action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURES

Welcome to Living Greyhawk and the March of Bissel. This document is an introductory adventure designed to introduce characters and players to Living Greyhawk in general and the Bissel campaign in particular. As such, it can only be played by 1st level characters. Higher level characters must play standard regional, meta-regional, or core adventures. This adventure is only playable at APL 2.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Guild of the Arcane Path is the largest and most well-respected public association of arcane spell casters in all of Bissel. Although its membership is comprised entirely of sorcerers and wizards, bards are welcome.

Members of the Guild meet at the Arcane Path Guild Tower in the Township of Sareden to share ideas, compare techniques, and to study and practice all forms of arcane magic. The promise of a safe place to cast and share spells has brought many to the Guild, and the ranks of the Arcane Path have grown considerably since its founding.

Professor Sal'lasterious Ugumondil, or Sal as he is known to both his friends and colleagues, has been teaching Illusions at the Guild of the Arcane Path for the past seventy years. Prior to that, he was a traveling adventurer who traveled throughout the Sheldomar Valley.

Sal is just entering his 200th year on the face of Oerth. His fellow professors are urging him to retire from teaching, so that he may enjoy the twilight of his life. After having taught for so long, Sal'lasterious does not know what else to do with his life, and retirement would bring him that much closer to Garl Glittergold that much faster. The other professors have begun to insist, as Sal has become slightly absentminded over the past decade and they worry for him and his students.

The professor has come to realize that life will not be easy after retirement, and he feels that he must prove his talents to his colleagues in order to keep his job. He is willing to allow another to run the department - he is aware of his diminishing memory - and the bureaucratic end of things was never his favorite. However, he knows nothing else to do with his time other than teach, and is not willing to give that up.

In order to try and save his job, Sal has set up a little test of his abilities, and a way to show off his talents to that his superiors. Now that classes have ended for the semester and the students are not around, he has taken the opportunity to set his plan into motion. He has set up, in an empty portion of the basement of the guild tower, a number of illusory challengers. Now he just needs a few guinea pigs to run through it and prove that he is still very capable.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Our heroes are walking through the streets of Sareden, when they stumble across a sad, little gnome named Sal'lasterious. He lays his burdens and a job offer at their feet.

They are led through the streets of Sareden to the Guild Tower. In the basement, Sal has set a few illusory foes for the PCs to fight. If the PCs are unable to recognize his work as illusion, Sal will be confident enough in his abilities to continue his work at the Guild.

Introduction: Welcome to Sareden - The PCs find themselves in Sareden, home of the Guild of the Arcane Path.

Encounter 1: Sal'lasterious - The PCs meet Sal'lasterious. He asks them to help him out.

Encounter 2: Classrooms - The PCs are led through the streets of Sareden to the guild tower, and into Sal'lasterious' office.

Encounter 3: Hallways - Now that the heroes are ready to set off, they are led down to the illusionary basement. Sal gives some last minute instructions, and then leaves them to their work. He returns to his office to begin scrying on them.

Encounter 4: Basement - The heroes take their first steps into the basement of the guild hall.

Encounter 5: Chamber A - In one chamber, they find an illusion of Evard the Necromancer, who commands a group of illusory undead to kill the heroes.

Encounter 6: Chamber B - In the next chamber, Sal has placed a group of illusory kobolds, just for comedic purposes.

Encounter 7: Chamber C - A group of real rats have taken up residence in the final chamber. The PCs can find the item they seek here.

Conclusion A: Overwhelmed by Illusion - The heroes are overcome by Sal's illusions.

Conclusion B: Recognizing the Illusions - The heroes recognize Sal's illusions for what they are, and confront him.

Conclusion C: Success - The heroes overcome Sal's illusions and the rats swarms, and safely leave the chambers.

INTRODUCTION: WELCOME TO SEREDAN

The heroes begin the adventure in the city of Sareden, the home of the Guild of the Arcane Path. This city is, and has historically been, a refuge for Arcane Spell casters in Bissel - with the exception of Necromancers. This has to do with the attitude of all Bisselites where Necromancy is concerned, after the terrible insurrection led by the dread necromancer, Evard.

Begin the adventure with this section:

Sareden is a large and beautiful town, located near the southeastern corner of the March. It has been a safe haven for arcane spell casters for many generations, and is the home of the Guild of the Arcane Path, the premier institution for arcane practitioners.

As you travel through the cobblestone streets, there is activity all around the bustling market square. All manner of goods can be purchased from a number of colorful individuals, representing many of the different races that can be seen in Sareden.

The glow of the magical streetlights is dim now, their violet glow fading in the late morning sunlight.

All around you, the streets seem filled with activity, as soldiers in Great Army uniforms prepare to head for the front lines, to join the war against Evard the Necromancer. The Battlecaster insignia on many of the uniforms is unmistakable, and brings feelings of hope to your hearts.

Since the PCs likely have not played with each other in the past, this would be a good time for them to introduce themselves and their characters.

When the heroes are fully acquainted with each other, continue with Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: SAL'LASTERIOUS

Now that you have come to know those around you, you come to the decision that it is time to find work, and supplement your military income. To make some coin is fine, but you also have ideals of making a name for yourself in the March. The spring sun hangs high in the sky, and this seems as good a time as any to begin your search.

Hunting around, though, it seems that there is little employment to be found here, and it seems that it would be much easier to find a cold drink than a job.

Wandering through the streets, you notice how clean the city appears. There is no litter to be seen anywhere, and it amazes you. That is, until you see a floating broom coming down one of the side streets, sweeping as it goes. The broom pauses for a moment, and an empty sack appears. The broom and the sack work together to pick up some refuse, and it ends up inside of the sack. Once the ground seems satisfactorily clean, the broom continues down another street, moving away from you.

If the PCs make a Spellcraft check (DC21) they can identify the invisible janitor as an *unseen servant* working at its task. The wizards at the guild have created a number of permanent servants that wander around the city, cleaning things up and picking up any garbage left on the streets. This garbage is collected and incinerated every night.

After wandering aimlessly for a while, you finally ask a few of the locals where good food and drink can be found. You are told about a place called "The Familiars' Perch", a tavern not far outside the gates of the guild tower, frequented by the students from the school.

You easily make your way to the tavern, as the directions that you were given were rather simple. As you turn the last corner that will take you to the front entrance of the tap house, you spy a small figure huddled on the stoop, its head in its hands. You hear the obvious sound of crying coming from its direction

It is plain for the PCs to see just how distraught the gnome is by the loud crying and the tears running down his face.

If the PCs investigate further, continue:

The small figure looks up at you, revealing gnomish features. The tears he has been crying are still smeared along his ruddy cheeks, and his bright blue eyes are red and puffy. His hair and beard are both quite long but well kept, and the gray color insists that he is not a youngster. He is dressed in what would be considered an extremely fashionable outfit, except for the mixed and matched colors of all of the various pieces of clothing. Looking up at you, a tiny glimmer of hope sparks in his dreary eyes.

"I, I have been a teacher at the Guild of the Arcane Path for the past six... uh, sixty... uhmmm, seventy years," he says, his voice cracked slightly from all of his crying. "Prior to that, I was an adventurer, but that was a long time ago. For the longest time, all I have known is the Guild and my students."

"Just a few days ago, I was informed that because of my age, my fellow professors think that I should retire from teaching, and spend my twilight years with my family."

His face saddens once more, but he continues. "My family is no longer with me. They have passed on to the next world, and are with Garl Glittergold now. All I have known for the longest time is the guild, magic and my students. While I have seen that my memory is not what it used to be, if I were to stop teaching, what would I have left?"

Once again, the gnome breaks down into tears.

If the PCs can make a Knowledge [religion] check (DC 10), they can identify Garl Glittergold as the chief deity of the gnome pantheon.

If the PCs leave Sal here - alone and distraught, dwelling on his problems - he will find others to help him. The adventure is over for them.

The heroes can try what they like to calm down Sal, but it will take a Diplomacy check (DC 15) to get him calm enough to continue. Once they have done so, he will continue with the following. Remember to role-play this, and award up to a +2 bonus for creative ideas that fit the situation.

Wiping the tears from his face with the sleeve of his elegant looking shirt, the Gnome continues.

"Uhhmm, where was I? Oh, yes... I don't know what to do with the rest of my days if I cannot continue teaching, but they are persistent. I have come up with a way to show them that I am still capable of doing my job, but with so many students off fighting the war, it is difficult to find anyone to help me."

The Gnome looks up at you, a pleading look in his sky-blue eyes, and seriousness suddenly comes over his face.

"You all look like you would be more than capable. Perhaps you would be willing to help out an old gnome?"

Up until this point, Sal'lasterious has not yet introduced himself to the heroes. This is not out of any rudeness. It has simply slipped his mind. This should be played up, as a way of showing the heroes just how absentminded Sal truly is.

The PCs may be brimming with questions, and Sal will do his best to answer them. As a point of reference, anything that does not specifically involve his job or magic, he will appear to be a little confused with, as if he is having trouble remembering. The GAP and Magic are the only things that his memory is clear about, and how Sal answers the heroes should reflect that he is already in the grips of senility.

This is a list of possible questions that the heroes might ask, and a rough idea of some of the answers.

"Who are you?"

To this question, Sal will look extremely confused, as he thought that he has introduced himself already. Being reminded that he has not is a sad reminder of his condition. He will say the following in a very humble voice:

"I am very sorry. I thought that I had already introduced myself. I am Sal'lasterious Udumondil, but please, call me Sal." Looking to the side of the building, he calls out in a strange language. A moment later, an orange tabby comes from around the corner, stretches itself, as if has just awoken, and jumps into the Gnomes' lap. "And this fat cat" he says has he gently scratches it between the ears "is Tabitha."

"What do you need us to do?"

"It is rumored that somewhere, in the basement of the guild tower, is a small magical device, that may have the power to aid my failing memory and

help me keep my job. I need for someone to get this item for me."(This is a lie. He needs someone to wander through his illusions, showing that he is still capable.)

"Why don't you get it yourself?"

"The item is kept downstairs, in the basement, and there are rats down there. I have a little problem with rats. It is a childhood fear that I have not been able to overcome."(True)

"What is the item? / What does it look like?"

"It is a simple necklace. It is a large, blue stone hanging from a silver chain. The magic of the stone increases the memory and mental capacity of the wearer."(False – the item is a fake pendant with no properties)

If the PCs succeed at a Knowledge [arcana] check (DC 23) they realize that item described might be a periapt of wisdom, but it is unclear.

"What kind of dangers could we expect?"

"We do keep a few trinkets downstairs, and there are a few storage boxes towards the back. You probably would be wise to stay away from those, as you don't want to mess around with the playthings of wizards."

"Otherwise, the only other thing down there is a nest of . . . of rats." The gnome shudders at even the mention of the words.

"What will we be paid for this service?"

"Right now, there is little that I can offer you as compensation. I can put in a good word for you with the guild, and can offer my endearing gratitude. Perhaps I can scrape together a few coins, but I don't know how much."

"If you are able to help me find the item, and help keep my position in the guild, than I will be in a much better position to reward you for your efforts."

Once the PCs are satisfied with the answers that they get from Sal'lasterious, and they agree to the task, continue with Encounter 2.

All APLs

♣ Sal'lasterious Ugumondil: Male Gnome Sor 16 (Bluff +17, Diplomacy +18); hp 49; see Appendix One.

ENCOUNTER 2: CLASSROOMS

“Your offer of help is absolutely more than I could have hoped for,” Sal says, with a little more hope in his voice. “If you are truly serious about it, we should be off now, back to the guild hall.”

Sal'lasterious leads you from deep in the heart of town towards its eastern edges. Far off in the distance, you can see the top of a spire, and it seems that you are walking directly towards it.

It takes roughly twenty minutes to walk the distance to the guild tower. You arrive at a lush, green garden with beautifully sculpted topiary statues, each one of different animals and beasts. Before your very eyes, the beasts move of their own accord, shifting position, and coming to rest a few moments later a few feet away from where they originally were.

These creatures are topiary guardians (see *Monster Manual III*, page 173). They are not described here in more detail as they severely outclass the PCs. If the PCs try and attack the guardians, they will be killed, plain and simple.

You continue along a small, well-worn path towards a pair of ornate double doors. The doors are twenty feet tall, and each one is ten feet wide. Above the doors is an ornate carving of a bestial head.

As you get a few feet away from the statue, the eyes open suddenly, and stare at each of you with a strange amber glow. Upon noticing the gnome walking alongside you the gargoyle opens his mouth and speaks in a high-pitched, almost comical voice.

“Welcome, professor. Fine day, isn’t it?”

“It’s looking better. We’d like to go inside, please.”

The gargoyle nods, and then emits a rough sound, reminiscent of stone shifting and grating. A moment later, the door opens of its own accord.

If any of the PCs understand Terran, they will realize that the gargoyle said “open” in that language.

Sal'lasterious leads you through the doors into a dark foyer. Once inside, the door silently closes behind you and a globe of light flares to life above your heads. You can now make out the details of the antechamber that you’re standing in, but there is little to see.

The door that you have just stepped through seems very different, as it has shrunk down to an

ordinary sized single door, just as intricately carved as the doors you saw before. It sits in the middle of a fifteen-foot wide by fifteen-foot tall wall, and the other three walls of this chamber match it in size. There are three large paintings, each one covering a different wall. Amazingly, the images inside each painting shift, as if you were looking through a window into somewhere else.

One painting depicts a group of humans wandering through a set of hills, looking very similar to the foothills of the Lorridges, just outside of Sareden. The humans meet up with a band of dwarves, and as you watch, the landscape becomes much more familiar until they arrive at the gates of town.

The second shows images of the various schools of magic. Abjuration is depicted as protective barriers coming up to defend against the elemental attacks of Evocation. Creatures from the outer planes spring up from Conjunction spells, and they change form and size as Transmutation takes over, and eventually change color and even disappear as Illusion finishes the creatures off. Small pockets of sight are revealed, indicating that Divination has come to the forefront, and you see the creatures acting strangely as Enchantment washes over them.

If any of the heroes raise the question of a missing school of magic, Sal will tell them that Necromancy was intentionally left out, due to the emotional attachment generated by the Insurrection.

The final painting shifts between images of Sareden, Pellak, Thornward, and many other locations in the March. All of these images have one thing in common; there are always images of soldiers in the Great Army, all of them bearing the symbols of the Battlecasters.

Now that you have had the opportunity to enjoy the spectacle, the professor informs you that he will lead you to his office, “Stick close to me, and please, do not wander off. There are a large number of ways for you to get lost, and it will take a long time for you to find yourself clear again.”

The gnome looks at you, and asks if you are ready. Without waiting for a response, he speaks a few words in his native tongue and the door you stepped through opens once more. He steps through, and you can see that the open door leads down a hallway that bears no resemblance to the topiary garden you originally came from.

If any of the PCs understand Gnomish, they will realize that Sal said “My office, please” in that language.

Following Sal'lasterious, you walk through various corridors. It is easy to see how you could get lost forever in this maze of moving staircases, illusionary floor and walls, and vanishing walls, doors and pretty much, everything else. This place seems to not only house magic, but seems to have been built of and embody magic itself.

If any of the heroes stray from their guide they will become hopelessly lost.

After a few minutes of walking, which seems like hours, you are finally led to a smaller hallway. Both sides are lined with doors, which appear to lead to small offices. He heads off to one of the doors, and begins fumbling in his pocket. His search becomes a little frantic, and he begins emptying the contents of his pockets onto the floor.

List off a bunch of useless items - things like bits of string, small animal bones, and other inconsequential items. These are just reminders that he is becoming senile, and his sense of value is being lost.

Finally, realizing that he has no key, and looking a little embarrassed, he turns to you. “It’s arcane locked. I need no key – ha, silly me.” With that, he turns the handle, and walks into the room, inviting you to join him.

Pointing to a few chairs in the far corner, he beckons you to take a seat. He goes to the far end, and retrieves a decanter of what appears to be wine, and a handful of goblets. He pours each of you a glass, as well as one for himself. Taking a sip from his goblet, he walks around to the other side of his desk, and sits himself down.

Looking around the chamber, you can tell that it has been occupied for a long time, for not only are there a large quantity of scrolls and tomes lining the bookshelves around the room, but there are bottles, beakers and all manner of alchemical equipment as well.

Sal'lasterious begins searching frantically through the drawers of his desk. Every few moments, he mutters something like “Where did I put it?” or “What did I do with the thing?” Finally, his head straightens back up. In his hand is a weathered piece of parchment. He unrolls it, and hands it to you.

Give the PCs Player Handout 1 - Sal'lasterious' Map.

“This map is a rough layout of the basement, and in particular, this where the item is supposed to be kept.” With a feathered quill, Sal makes two ‘X’s on the map.

“The journey to the basement is rather a short one. If there is anything that you carry with you now you feel you may not need, I can offer you a corner of my office, and I can guarantee its safety.”

“I apologize if this sounds rude, and I don’t mean to rush you, but I am rather anxious to get a hold of this item. There is little else that I can offer you, in terms of information. Would you be able to start, immediately?”

Wait for the PCs to agree, before continuing:

“Before you go, there is one more thing that I must tell you. There are many old items kept down in the basement, many of them of a magical nature. All of these may be difficult to deal with, so it is recommended that you do not stray too far from the path outlined on the map, nor should you play around with the things down there.”

“Also - and I do hesitate to mention this, but it must be said, and I do apologize for having to say this. We have collected a fair number of trinkets over the years, and some of them are indeed stored down in the basement. If anyone has any ideas of removing these items without permission . . . then the Guild will not be pleased. Punishment can be severe, so it would be better to leave things as they are.”

Continue on with Encounter 3.

ENCOUNTER 3: HALLWAYS

Sal'lasterious leads you out of his office, and down the hall towards the door he insists will lead you to the basement. As you move down the hall, you notice that he seems a little more anxious, and it seems like he keeps looking back every now and again, as if he expects something to just leap out.

“We’re not far now,” he says. Looking around the corner, towards the next passageway, he continues, his voice rimmed with a touch of anxiety. “I can not wait for this to be finished. I won’t have to think about those vile creatures down in the basement. Now, very important, when you are finished downstairs, just make your way back to my office. I’ll leave Tabitha at the top of the stairs, and she’ll guide you back to me. Oh, and if possible, would you be willing to get rid of those rats as well for me?”

“Take these... some of those rats can get mighty big. Mighty big, I tell ya.” He hands you a bundle of bottles, each filled with a clear liquid. “Run into trouble, and these will patch you right up.”

Sal'lasterious gives the PCs six potions of cure light wounds.

“The door to the basement stairs is just at the end of the hall.” As he finishes his comment, he seems to leap in the air, his face white, as all of the color seems to drain out of it. “There... is that a... a... aaah, a rat.?” The next thing you know, he emits a high pitched scream, and turns and runs back in the direction of his office.

This is the distraction that Sal has been waiting to use to return to his office and begin scrying on them.

When the PCs head for the basement, continue with this:

You make it down the remaining fifty feet to the door. As you are about to reach out for the handle, you notice that Tabitha is winding herself around each of your legs, in turn, almost as if she's waiting for something. She lets out a playful purr.

Knowing her masters' plan, and trying to help him gain a few more moments to start up his spell, Tabitha is trying to get a little snack out of the heroes, and waste a little more of their time. This is a minor ploy, and not something to spend too much time on.

When the PCs have satisfied the cat, continue:

Once you have satisfied the cat, she curls in the corner, and her content purring is enough to let you know that she has already started her nap. It seems a good time to start your job, and make your way into the basement.

Continue with Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 4: BASEMENT

Once the PCs pass the door, they will be trapped within a number of illusions that are meant to confuse the heroes. The illusions are harmless, and will not cause too much stress to the heroes, but they are meant to show that Sal still has what it takes to stay on in the guild.

If the PCs interact with anything within the basement, they may be allowed a Will save (DC 24) to notice that there is something wrong with the walls, floor and ceiling, and a Will save (DC 26) to realize that the rest of the items down in the basement are completely

illusory. Walking on the floor does not count as enough interaction to allow a saving throw.

Most of the rooms have been left empty, to allow for the illusion of this being an empty basement, but there are three rooms of particular note. These rooms have been outlined on DM Aid – Map #1 – The Challenges. All of the other rooms have little more than a few storage crates.

If the PCs cast any sort of divination spells, here is a list of possible outcomes:

- **Detect Poison:** There are no traces of poison in any of the illusionary crates in the unmarked rooms.
- **Detect Magic:** The entire room is composed of magic, and the caster must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be stunned for one round, due to the immense amount of magic being viewed. If the caster wishes to continue with the scan, here is what they find round by round:

1st Round – Yes, there is the presence of magic

2nd Round – There are over fifty magical auras, with the strongest one being a “strong” aura.

3rd Round – If the caster wishes to start making Spellcraft checks (DC 15), Sal has left the auras of possible items, so list off a bunch of different schools, except he has not placed either Illusory or Necromantic auras.

- **Detect Secret Doors:** There are no secret doors to be found in this part of the basement, and the spell cannot penetrate the stone walls to find any that may be behind. There are none that concern this adventure.
- **Detect Undead:** Since the only “undead” creatures in the basement are illusory, the spell will not detect anything.
- **Detect Chaos/Good/Evil/Law:** The entire place is one giant illusion, and it has been set up to confuse everyone. These spells will simply give random results that have no meaning. Randomly determine whether there is anything that will confuse the caster, otherwise, there is nothing to detect in the basement with this spell.

From here, where the adventure progresses depends on where the PCs go. Please refer to DM Aid – Map #1 – The Challenges.

If the PCs enter chamber A, continue with Encounter 5.

If the PCs enter chamber B, continue with Encounter 6.

If the PCs enter chamber C, continue with Encounter 7.

ENCOUNTER 5: CHAMBER A

If the PCs want to try and listen through the wooden door to this chamber, it may be possible, but it will take a DC 23 Listen check to hear through the wood. The words will not be clear, so no language can be determined, but it will be enough to let them know that there is someone inside speaking.

As the door opens to this chamber, the unmistakable sound of voices is clear to all of you. You can see a tall figure, concealed within dark black robes, talking to a group of four nearly naked humanoid shapes in a decidedly male voice.

“ . . . at all costs, slay whoever enters this chamber, and find me that necklace. It is imperative to the mission. Without it we cannot . . . ”

Upon seeing the door open, and you standing in the light from the room behind, the figure stops in mid-sentence. A wicked gleam in his eye, he turns to the four creatures surrounding him, and speaks, the evil in his voice unmistakable.

“These are your first test, my minions. Tear the flesh from their bones before adding them to the ranks of my forces.”

As he finishes, the man mutters a few cryptic words, and in a flash, he vanishes from sight. The four creatures turn to face you, and for the first time, you notice that there is nothing human about them. They are foul-looking - their skin has a definite violet tinge to it, and their glowing red eyes are filled with malice. Opening their mouths, you can see long, sickly looking tongues writhe hungrily in your direction, as it plays over long, wicked looking fangs. Raising their clawed hands, they attack.

The dark figure is an illusion intended to resemble the Necromancer Evard. Sal has completely forgotten that he has made this illusion, and will be shocked to hear about Evard in the basement of the GAP.

If the PCs succeed on a Spellcraft check (DC 20) they can identify the spell cast by the illusory Evard as *teleport*.

APL2 (EL 4)

👁 **Ghouls** (4): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 119.

Tactics: The illusory ghouls have a simple tactic: They will try and paralyze everyone in the party, before they feast.

Note: Since the undead creatures are all illusionary, Sal had originally set them up so that they will react to turning attempts, and they will react to positive energy as well (such as from a cure spell). There is no chance of being affected with the ghouls' bite must still make the save against it.

All of the damage dealt by the Ghouls is considered non-lethal. If the Ghouls 'kill' the entire party, proceed to Conclusion A.

During the combat, the PCs will interact directly with the illusions. They should be allowed a Will save (DC 26) to notice that something is not right. If they succeed, continue with Conclusion C.

A thorough search of this room will not reveal anything special.

ENCOUNTER 6: CHAMBER B

As you enter into this large chamber the scent of something awful assaults your senses immediately. You can also make out the sounds of a battle heading your way.

As you turn your heads to see what it is that is heading towards you, you cannot help but laugh for a moment. There are nine small reptilian humanoids coming towards you. The fear in their eyes is evident as they charge.

The gang is comprised of a sorceress (in a way of showing off his own abilities), and her eight guards. Sal is not expecting this to be much of a challenge, and he has set up his illusion with a lot of cowardice.

Knowing that the heroes will need to come here before looking at either of the two chambers he's marked as containing the item, he finds it funny that it should be kobolds to stand up to this challenge.

APL2 (EL 4)

🐾 **Kobolds** (8): hp 4 each; see *Monster Manual* page 161.

🐾 **Knobby**: Female kobold Sor2; hp 9; see *Appendix One*.

Tactics: Having absolutely not love for kobolds, Sal has made these guys absolute cowards. The sorceress will fight to the “death”, but if she falls, the others will run.

The kobold warriors will do their best to keep the sorceress safe, but they will run if they feel that they are completely outmatched.

Knobby will use *charm person* on everyone she can, but she'll start with those in the heaviest armors first. If anyone gets close to her, she'll use *burning hands* and try to get as many foes as possible.

All of the damage dealt by the kobolds is non-lethal. If the entire party is ‘killed’ by the kobolds, proceed to Conclusion A.

During the combat, the PCs will interact directly with the illusions. They should be allowed a Will save (DC 26) to notice that something is not right. If they succeed, continue with Conclusion C.

A thorough search of this room will not reveal anything special.

ENCOUNTER 7: CHAMBER C

Opening the door to this room, you hear the sound of many tiny feet walking around. Looking down at the floor, you can see hundreds, even thousands of rats swarming around the room. All of those tiny faces turn in your direction, and en masse, they rush towards you.

This is the room where the “necklace” that Sal'lasterious is searching for is located in. The necklace is located on the DM maps, and “X” does indeed mark the spot.

Unfortunately, over the course of time, this is the one room in the basement that has any kind of inhabitant that does not belong to the Guild. There are hundreds of rats living in the one room, and they have swarmed together for better hunting.

There are two rat swarms in here that have made this place their home, and they will not give it up without a fight. Since the creatures are of such low intelligence, they will continue to fight until either they are dead, of the intruders are dinner.

APL2 (EL 4)

🐾 **Rat Swarm** (2): hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual* page 239.

Tactics: The Rat Swarms are just hungry, and they will fight to the bitter end. They will target the hero in the front, and try to eat him before moving on to the next.

Once the heroes have dealt with the rat swarms, they will most likely start searching through the crates to find the necklace that Sal is looking for. This will take a Search check (DC 23) to find. Once they find it, continue with this:

Looking through all of the crates, you finally come across the object that you have been searching for. Hidden behind one of the crates you find a beautiful heart shaped blue gem at the end of an intricate silver chain.

The necklace, like everything else in the dungeon, is an illusion. A plain steel chain has been made to look like a *periapt of wisdom*. If the PCs suspect that the necklace is a fake, they can attempt a Will save (DC 27) to see past the illusion.

If the PCs have completed all three chambers without dying, and have found the necklace, continue with Conclusion B.

CONCLUSION A: OVERWHELMED BY ILLUSION

The PCs have fallen to the power of Sal's illusions, and he thinks that he will be able to keep his job. He thanks the PCs for all of their help and apologizes for the ruse.

You wake in the office of Sal'lasterious, surprised to find that you are not dead. It is curious, but the wounds that you sustained are all gone, and there are not ill effects that you can tell.

If the PCs want to perform a Heal check (DC 15), it will reveal that they are indeed fine, and all of the damage that they took was non-lethal.

Surprised by this strange turn of events, you look upon the smiling face of the gnome professor. Your minds fill with millions of questions, but most importantly, what happened is foremost in your thoughts.

"I am sorry for the ruse my friends, and I meant you no harm. The entire trip down into the basement was an illusion. I needed to prove to my colleagues and superiors that I was still capable of teaching, and that my talents are still there."

"Please, do not be angry. I was watching you the entire time, through my scrying mirror." He points to a large, ornate mirror sitting in the corner.

"I must say, my illusions faired pretty well against you. Quite the victory, if you don't mind my saying so. With this, I think that I will be able to retain my position here, and it is all thanks to you. Please do not be angry, you have done me a great service. Had I told you earlier of my plans, it would have tainted the result, as you would have continually tried to break through my illusions."

If the heroes say anything about the illusory Evard that they met down in the basement, add the following:

Upon hearing of the strange man that you met down in the basement, Sal's face once again drains of color. His voice is a little shaky as he continues with the next few words.

"Are you sure that you saw such a man downstairs? This is indeed serious. I will need to speak to the higher ranks of the Battlecasters, and let them know that he has been seen here. This is indeed serious."

Sal will not go into any further details on what he is so worried about, other than to say that he fears for the entire March.

Once the PCs have gone through all of their stories for Sal, continue with this:

"My friends, you have done more for me that I can ever repay you for. To start, I will speak to my superiors and colleagues tomorrow morning, and try and get my job secured. For this, you will always have a friend here in the guild. And if any of you wish to become members, I would be more than honored to sponsor your membership."

For reaching this point, the PCs earn the Favor of Professor Sal'Lasterious on the Adventure Record.

A few weeks later, you receive a letter and a small leather sack. Inside the pouch you find a handful of gold coins. The letter is from Sal. He has indeed retained his job at the Guild, and has sent you all a thank you gift for helping him out.

The sack contains 125 gp per defeated combat encounter, plus a 50 gp bonus if all three encounters were completed.

The End

CONCLUSION B: RECOGNIZING THE ILLUSIONS

If the PCs have all been able to penetrate Sal's illusions at one time or another while in the basement, he will resign to the fact that he has stayed on beyond his years.

Once all of the PCs have saved, Sal will immediately dismiss the illusions, and make his way down to the basement to confront his destiny.

Before your eyes, the walls, floor, ceiling and all of the contents of the chamber suddenly shift. There are no crates and the walls, floor and ceiling all look the same, but different, as if an illusion had just been lifted.

A few minutes later, the door behind you opens, and in steps Sal, his eyes looking at his shoes, and his eyes filled with an immense sadness.

"I am sorry for the ruse my friends, and I meant you no harm. The entire trip down into the basement was an illusion. I needed to prove to my colleagues and superiors that I was still capable of teaching, and that my talents are still there. Please, do not be angry. I was watching you the entire time, through my scrying mirror."

"It seems that my talents are not what they used to be, and it seems that I have outstayed my usefulness. I will speak to my superiors in the morning, and I will resign my position. It saddens me to admit this, but I would like to thank you for showing me that I am just a silly old man holding on to the memories of my youth."

For this outcome, the PCs do not earn the Favor of Professor Sal'Lasterious on the Adventure Record.

A few weeks later, you receive a letter and a small leather sack. Inside the pouch you find a handful of gold coins. The letter is from Sal. He has retired, and sent you all a few coins to thank you for

your help. He has little left, but he wanted to thank you anyways.

The sack contains 125 gp per defeated combat encounter, plus a 50 gp bonus if all three encounters were completed.

The End

CONCLUSION C: SUCCESS

The heroes have been successful in their search of the basement, and have returned to Sal with the necklace, he will be pleased beyond belief. His illusions have held up, and he thinks that he will be able to keep his job.

You make your way back up to the top of the stairs, and once again, are greeted with a familiar purring sound as your footsteps have just awoken Tabitha from a peaceful dream. Seeing you, she leads you back down the winding halls, and back to Sal's office.

As you step through the door, you are greeted with a loud and gleeful 'hello'. Sitting before a very large mirror is Sal, his face brighter than you've ever seen it, completely the opposite of how you left him.

"Please, my friends, tell me everything that happened. Did you find the necklace? Did you get rid of those accursed rats? Did you encounter anything strange down there? Why aren't you telling me anything?"

The stream of questions is difficult to separate, as the gnome speaks very rapidly. Eventually, you are able to calm him enough to tell him of your adventures.

Allow the heroes this opportunity to role-play their retelling of the events to Sal.

If they return the necklace to him, add the following:

"Thank you very much my friends. I will take a few days to study this, and make certain that it is indeed the item that I was looking for."

If the heroes say anything about the illusory Evard that they met down in the basement, add the following:

Upon hearing of the strange man that you met down in the basement, Sal's face once again drains of color. His voice is a little shaky as he continues with the next few words.

"Are you sure that you saw that man downstairs? This is indeed serious. I will need to speak to the higher ranks of the Battlecasters, and let them know that he has been seen here. This is indeed serious."

Sal will not go into any further details on what he is so worried about, other than to say that he fears for the entire March.

Once the heroes have gone through all of their stories for Sal, continue with this:

"My friends, you have done more for me that I can ever repay you for. To start, I will speak to my superiors and colleagues tomorrow morning, and try and get my job secured. For this, you will always have a friend here in the guild. And if any of you wish to become members, I would be more than honored to sponsor your membership."

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A few weeks later, you receive a letter and a small leather sack. Inside the pouch you find a handful of gold coins. The letter is from Sal. He has indeed retained his job at the guild, and has sent you all a thank you gift for helping him out.

The sack contains 125 gp per defeated combat encounter, plus a 50 gp bonus if all three encounters were completed.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 5

Defeat the ghouls

APL 2: 120 xp.

Encounter 6

Defeat the kobolds

APL 2: 120 xp.

Encounter 7

Defeat the rat swarms

APL 2: 120 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

APL2: 90 xp.

Total possible experience

APL2: 450 xp.

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the 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 (i.e., 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. In the case of potions, they may use Spellcraft to identify them. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value

increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter 3:

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure light wounds* x6 (4 gp each).

Conclusion:

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 425 gp; M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed):

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 425 gp; M: 25 gp – Total: 450 gp.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

☛ **Favor of Professor Sal'Lasterious:** You have done a good turn for Professor Sal'Lasterious, the instructor of Illusions at the Guild of the Arcane Path. This favor counts as an Influence Point with the Guild of the Arcane Path. Please contact the Bissel Triad for further details.

You may also expend this favor to have Professor Sal'Lasterious speak on your behalf to the Guild Council. This fulfills the sponsorship requirement of joining the Guild of the Arcane Path. You must immediately mark this favor as USED if you expend it this way.

APPENDIX ONE – MONSTER AND NPC STATISTICS

APL 2

ENCOUNTER 1

Sal'lasterious Ugumondil: Male Gnome Sor 16; CR 16; Small humanoid (Gnome); HD 16d4; hp 49; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8/+3; Grp +2/-3; Atk +9 melee (1d3-3/19-20/x2, masterwork silver dagger); Full Attack +9/+4 melee (1d3-3/19-20/x2, masterwork silver dagger); SA +1 attack vs. kobolds and goblinoids, spell-like abilities; SQ +4 dodge bonus to AC vs. giants, low-light vision, weapon familiarity; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +8 (+10 vs. illusions); Str 6, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 6, Cha 26.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +17, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +18, Spellcraft +20; Alertness, Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus [Illusion], Greater Spell Penetration, Non-Lethal Substitution, Spell Focus [Illusion], Spell Penetration.

Spell-like Abilities (Save DC 18 + spell level, caster level 1st): 1/Day: *Speak with Animals* (burrowing mammals only), *Dancing Lights*, *Ghost Sound*, *Prestidigitation*.

Sorcerer/Bard Spells Known (6/8/8/8/8/7/7/6/4; save DC 18 + spell level/ save DC 21 + spell level for Illusion spells): 0 – *Acid Splash*, *Detect Magic*, *Detect Poison*, *Disrupt Undead*, *Light*, *Mage Hand*, *Open/Close*, *Read Magic*, *Resistance*; 1st – *Color Spray*, *Disguise Self*, *Grease*, *Mage Armor*, *Ventriloquism*; 2nd – *Alter Self*, *Blur*, *Invisibility*, *Knock*, *Web*; 3rd – *Dispel Magic*, *Haste*, *Mirror Image*, *Tongues*; 4th – *Hallucinatory Terrain*, *Illusory Wall*, *Screaming*, *Stone Shape*; 5th – *Overland Flight*, *Persistent Image*, *Teleport*, *Wall of Force*; 6th – *Permanent Image*, *Programmed Illusion*, *True Seeing*; 7th – *Ethereal Jaunt*, *Spell Turning*; 8th – *Screen*

Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +4, masterwork courtiers outfit (multicolored, with the 100gp worth of jewels to complete the outfit), masterwork silver dagger, scrying mirror

Languages: Common, Gnome, Draconic

Tabitha: Female Cat Familiar; CR 8; Tiny Magical Beast; HD 8d4; hp 24; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8/+3; Grp -3/-8; Atk +13 melee (1d2-3, claw); Full Attack +13 melee (1d2-3, 2 claws) and +11 melee (1d3-3, bite); Space/Reach 2 1/2

ft./0 ft.; SQ Empathic link, deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, scry on familiar, speak with animals, speak with master, SR 21; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +11; Str 4, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +9, Hide +17, Jump +11, Listen +12, Move Silently +11, Spot +12; Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse.

ENCOUNTER 6

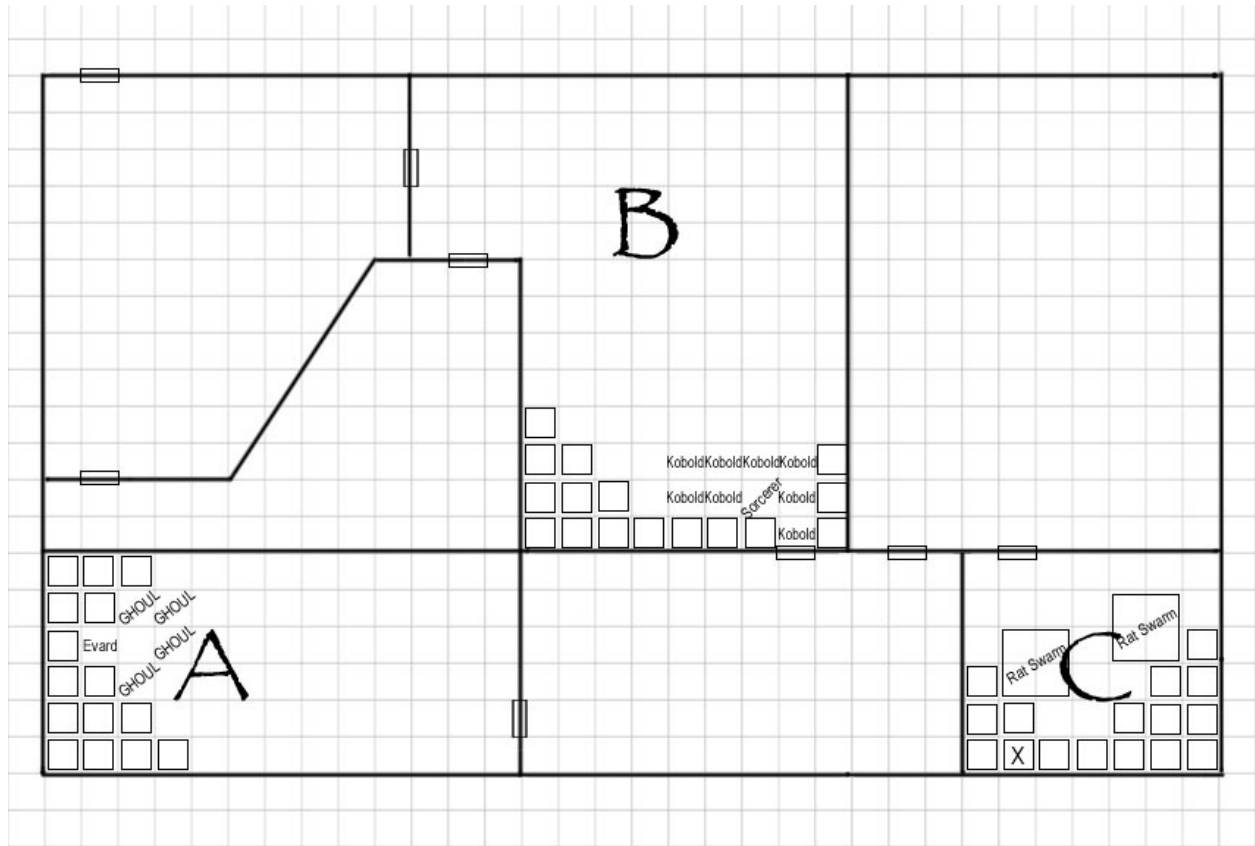
Knobby: Female Kobold, Sor 2; CR 2; Small humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d4+2; hp 9; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+1 Size, +2 Dex); Base Atk +1; Grp -5; Atk +1 melee (1d3-2/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +1 melee (1d3-2/19-20, dagger); SA Spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 6, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Spellcraft +5; Combat Casting.

Sorcerer/Bard Spells Known (6/5; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 – *Acid Splash*, *Detect Magic*, *Detect Poison*, *Mage Hand*, *Resistance*; 1st – *Burning Hands*, *Charm Person*

Possessions: dagger

DM AID – MAP #1 – THE CHALLENGES



[illegible]