

The Curse of the Tinkerer's Toys

A One-Round D&D[®] Living Kingdoms of Kalamar[®]
Adventure

by Shawn Merwin

The creations of the gnomish toymaker Buzzy Flintwhistle delighted children and adults alike. Although he died many years ago, his estate has not yet been inventoried and examined because of odd stipulations in his will. Strange occurrences at the old estate now terrify his heirs. Could the rumors about the old toymaker's pact with otherworldly forces be true? A Living Kingdoms of Kalamar adventure for ATLS 1-9.

The title, series name if there is one, ImageQuest, the ImageQuest logo, the Kenzer and Company logo, Living Kingdoms of Kalamar, the Living Kingdoms of Kalamar logo and Pecal Gazetteer are trademarks of Kenzer and Company. Kingdoms of Kalamar and the Kingdoms of Kalamar logo are registered trademarks of Kenzer and Company. © Copyright 2005, Kenzer and Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Dungeons & Dragons, Dungeon Master, D&D, RPGA, Living, the d20 system logo and the Wizards of the Coast logo are all trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. and are used by Kenzer & Company under license. © 2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

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. 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.

Calculating Average Table Level (ATL)

Living Kingdoms of Kalamar uses ATL rather than Average Party Level (APL) in an effort to offer challenging adventures without massacring smaller or imbalanced tables. What this means is that, to calculate the ATL for a table, the levels of all the player-characters are added together. That number is divided by six regardless of how many player-characters there actually are. This number constitutes the party's ATL (rounded to the closest integer). If that number is not offered in the adventure, the players may choose if they play up (a higher ATL) or down (a lower ATL). It is against the spirit of the campaign to deny a player an open spot at a table in an effort to maximize the treasure for the other players at the table. Twelve players should play in 2 tables of 6 not 3 tables of 4.

Once you calculate the ATL write it down here as you will need it later for setting the DC of certain skill checks.

ATL _____

ADVENTURE NOTES

This module is an official supplement to the Living Kingdoms of Kalamar campaign. It is designed for 4 to 6 characters ranging from 1st to 9th level. It is advised that PCs go through this adventure with a full party, as the challenges presented may overwhelm a small party of adventurers.

You, the Judge (the authority figure of the table and the administrator of the adventure), need a copy of the Dungeons & Dragons[®] 3rd Edition revised Player's Handbook and Dungeon Master's Guide (v.3.5) for this event. The adventure takes place in the Kingdoms of Kalamar setting in the Principality of Pekal. Therefore, the Judge should also have the Kingdoms of Kalamar[®] Core Sourcebook and the Kingdoms of Kalamar Player's Guide.

Specific statistics for key Non-Player Characters (NPCs) and other materials are included in the appendix at the back of this adventure as well as throughout the adventure text itself. Certificates that may be photocopied are also included. The Judge should read this adventure entirely no less than once before playing in order to ensure a precise flow of events, as there are many aspects relating to the flavor and culture that are important to the Living[™] Kingdoms of Kalamar campaign and to this adventure.

CALENDAR AND CLIMATE

The judge should read or summarize the following to the players.

It is late spring, and the torrential rains of the past two years are quickly becoming a distant memory. Crops have been planted, but many powerful guilds and farmers worry over the lack of water so early in the season. In some taverns, hushed voices relate dire predictions of a poor harvest this autumn.

MODULE NOTES

The action that takes place behind the scenes in this module is considered a campaign secret. The information provided is sufficient to cover the motivations of the NPCs. Judges should not make up plot elements to try to account for why things are happening. Use the character motivations to guide your storytelling, and do not try to explain anything not explicitly covered in the adventure. That does not mean you cannot "step outside" the module if PCs make decisions that leads them there. Simply do not try to explain plot elements beyond the motivations and information provided.

This adventure draws on material presented in the adventures *May the Best Man Win* and *Shining Stones*. In those modules, the PCs were hired to find magic items: the Bracers of Haran and the Eye of Romelo. The main connection between those two adventures and this one is the locking mechanism that guards the items: a circular set of letters that need to be pushed in a particular order. PCs who played either or both of those adventures may remember that unlocking those items led to undead attacks. No such attack occurs in this adventure, but PCs are not penalized if they remember those other encounters and refuse to open the lock.

BACKGROUND

Buzzy Flintwhistle was a young gnome when he entered the College of Magic in Bet Rogala. Immediately he proved to have an uncanny knack for abjuration magic, and within just a small handful of years he was considered one of the most accomplished abjurers there. When a matter of a most delicate nature presented itself, Buzzy was asked to take a huge responsibility onto his small but capable gnomish shoulders. He left the college and moved to Baneta to become the secret guardian of an item of great and fell power: a sealed vial containing a fine dust... the physical remains of the lich Gahida.

Buzzy accepted the mission with energy and grace. He performed his task admirably, also finding time to marry, raise a family, and have a career. Indeed, the extra time his task gave him allowed him to start a new career as a toymaker since he had to cut all ties to the College of Magic in order to keep his mission secret. So ingenious and adorable were his creations that he gained great fame and wealth in this endeavor. Before long, Buzzy Flintwhistle became a household name.

Alas, time waits for no gnome. Buzzy passed away three years ago; however, his guardianship of the vial required that this home remain secure until the time came for a new steward to take possession of the item.

Ever since the College was established, a special position of Administrator Arcane existed within its walls. The holder of this office was charged with the protection of the most powerful magical artifacts, often appointing talented and trusted magicians as guardians for an item of particular value or power. For a variety of reasons, the identities of the Administrator and the guardians were closely guarded secrets, protected by powerful spells and oaths to divine powers. Through the years, the only person who has known with any certainty that the position even exists was the Headmaster of the College.

Two years ago, an aged wizard named Taldok approached Headmaster Zenith claiming to have been the most recent Administrator Arcane. This wizard also revealed that the person he passed the responsibilities to four years prior had not been seen in some time, and he feared the worst.

Frantic searches were launched, and many of the most powerful arcane and divine spellcasters in Pekal aided in the efforts. After

three weeks, the search was ended with no trace of the person, and no leads to follow.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, Taldok revealed many secrets to Zenith in the hope that having such a powerful and influential wizard to assist the efforts of the new Administrator would prove invaluable. Moving quickly, Zenith and Taldok installed a new Administrator and began the process of checking on all the artifacts.

Eight months ago, they discovered that Buzzy was appointed as a guardian by the Administrator preceding Taldok. Even more importantly, Buzzy had been dead for three years, and the item he was protecting had not been seen in decades. The College of Magic descended on his estate, claiming they were investigating "serious charges" leveled against the gnome. They refused access to Buzzy's heirs, and began a thorough examination of the building for some sign of the vial, to no avail. The item resists detection, so the wizards were literally forced to check every crevice, hole, shelf, and cupboard for some trace of the vial. With no success after months of tireless efforts, they relented on their hold of his home and decided to review Buzzy's correspondence with the College through the years for some clue about the vial's location.

Unfortunately, someone has recently received proof that the vial is located somewhere in the Buzzy's home. He has sent secret operatives into the estate to find and retrieve the vial. The first two groups of operatives sent to the estate died at the hands (or claws) of a guardian familiar in the attic. The newest operatives sent in – a gnome illusionist and a halfling rogue – are in the process of searching for the vial. The rogue is to locate and secure the vial while the illusionist uses his powers to make the estate seemed haunted, playing on rumors that Buzzy was only able to create such marvelous toys with the help of infernal forces.

The PCs are recommended to Buzzy's two heirs, who tried to enter the house but were forced out by traps and phantasms set up by previous operatives in the estate. Buzzy's children need someone to enter the estate and investigate these strange happenings.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Introduction:

The PCs are notified, through a contact, that the two children of a famous toymaker are seeking assistance in some troubles at the deceased toymaker's estate.

Encounter 1:

The PCs meet and talk to Buzzy's two children, Greer and Gloriola, learning a bit about their father and his life. The two have tried to enter the estate, and they are convinced it is haunted.

Encounter 2:

The PCs may wish to ask about Buzzy at the College of Magic. While they receive no information about him there, they may get the feeling that something about Buzzy's connection to the College of Magic is being covered up.

Encounter 3:

The PCs travel to Baneta, where the estate of Buzzy Flintwhistle is located. They can collect information about Buzzy, his estate, and his life.

Encounter 4:

The PCs have the opportunity to question the halfling Ciceleta, the only person known to have entered the estate in the time between Buzzy's death and the present. She was the family's maid, and she would go to the estate once each week to clean and make sure the estate was in order. The PCs can get some information about the layout of the estate and a few clues as to what they might find there.

Encounter 5:

The estate is a dynamic encounter, allowing the PCs to investigate the various rooms and workshops of the Flintwhistle Estate. At the same time, the rogue and the illusionist attempt to drive the PCs away using traps and illusions without revealing themselves. The PCs may at first believe the estate is indeed haunted by undead spirits, but slowly they should come to the conclusion that there is a more mundane explanation for the goings-on.

Encounter 6:

Buzzy stored the vial inside a doll stored inside a chest being watched by a guardian familiar. The doll contains a tiny locking mechanism – a magical ward similar to the ones found in the modules *May the Best Man Win* and *Shining Stones*. Opening the lock does not create and attract undead creatures as in previous modules.

Conclusion:

The PCs can turn over the doll or the dust to anyone they deem appropriate: Buzzy's heirs, the College of Magic, Fillburt, one of the temples, keep it for themselves, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Summary: PCs are notified, through a contact, that the two children of a famous toymaker are seeking assistance in some troubles at the deceased toymaker's estate.

Player Handout 1 is a note from one the characters' previous contacts within the LKOK campaign.

After reading the note, the PCs can make a Knowledge (local: Pekal) check DC 10 or a Gather Information DC 10 check to learn the following:

- Buzzy Flintwhistle was a famous gnomish toymaker who worked out of his estate in Baneta.
- His toys were considered ingenious, and many of the middle- and upper-class citizens of Pekal, and nobles as far away as Bet Kalamar, desired his toys for their children as a sign of status.
- He donated some of his toys to the poorer children of Baneta.
- His toys were mostly made of wood, although he sometimes used metal parts. He also worked with cloth toys.
- A majority of his toys were of the mundane variety: dolls, tops, puzzles, stuffed animals, balls, boats, and decorative boxes. He occasionally created some more sophisticated toys like marionettes or toy carriages on commission.

If the Knowledge (local: Pekal) or Gather Information check beats a DC 18, the PCs also know or learn the following:

- Buzzy Flintwhistle passed away three years ago of natural causes, a very wealthy gnome.
- Rumors spread that Buzzy's skill at toymaking was so incredible that he must have made a pact with infernal forces.

If the PCs have a background that brought them into frequent and repeated contact with nobles,

wealthy merchants, or large groups of children, give them an Intelligence check (DC 10). A successful check brings to mind the fact that someone the PC knew had a toy crafted by Buzzy. The PC can recall that the toy was meticulously crafted, highly imaginative, and very durable.

No more can be learned about Buzzy in Bet Rogala without talking to his children.

ENCOUNTER 1 **Buzzy's Brood**

Summary: The PCs meet and talk to Buzzy's two children, Greer and Gloriola, learning a bit about their father and his life. The two have tried to enter the estate, and they are convinced it is haunted.

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter The Pride to talk to Buzzy's offspring:

The Pride is a well-appointed establishment in the Artisan's Quarter, where the Silver Dragon Way meets the Royal Way. Above the fireplace hangs a mounted lion's head, its mouth curled in a ferocious growl. Upon your entrance, a young Kalamaran woman approaches and speaks to you in Merchant's Tongue. "What is your pleasure this evening? A place to rest yourselves? A meal perhaps? A taste of our oak-aged brandy?"

The young woman is Lagosa, the daughter of the current owner of The Pride. Her father, Jerimon, is away from the tavern on business right now, and she wants very much to impress her father by managing the evening's crowd as expertly as he would.

A meal at the Pride consists of three courses and costs a victory: bread and cheese, meat and potatoes, and a sweet for dessert. Anyone just wanting a single course can get that for 5 seefarths. Ale is 3 seefarths per mug, wine is 5, and brandy is 8. A private room is 1 victory, while a bed in a common room is 2 seefarths.

If the PCs ask about the two gnome siblings, Lagosa enthusiastically nods and leads the PCs

through the dining area into a sitting room. In the back of the room on a stuffed sofa meant for folks of smaller stature, two gnomes whisper to each other. Read or paraphrase the following:

Sitting on a short sofa are two gnomes dressed in fine clothes. They are both approaching early middle age, although the female is obviously a few years younger than the male. They are talking quietly to each other when you first see them, but they notice your approach and stand up to greet you.

Lagosa asks if anyone needs anything, and then she retreats back to the kitchen to continue her duties, leaving the PCs and the gnomes to talk in private.

After introductions, Greer speaks:

"I'm not sure how much you know of our situation, so I will start at the beginning and be thorough. My father was Buzzy Flintwhistle, the renowned toymaker. With his passing three years ago, my sister and I assumed we would take control of his estate, as our blessed mother Klepavana passed before Father by several years. Much to our surprise, Father's will stated that while we would each be given a yearly stipend from his estate, we could not have access to everything until the College of Magic here in Bet Rogala granted us permission. We were forced to leave our home and take lodging elsewhere. The stipend has been generous enough, but all of our father's work and our family possessions are still locked away at our former home in Baneta."

"For years the College ignored our pleas to do whatever they needed so we could return to our home. The clerks kept insisting they were diligently working to satisfy our Father's demands. It even took them two years before they even sent anyone to look over the estate! They spent eight months going through the house, but then ten days ago, we received word that the inventory and examination had been completed, and we were cleared to move back into our house and take possession of our father's estate. We were so happy we rushed to the house. That was when--" The gnome stops, unable to finish his thought.

His sister puts a hand on her brother's shoulder, and you note that her forearm is bandaged. She speaks, her voice high and soft. "We went home, and everything was just as we left it. We were overcome with a mix of joy at seeing our home, mixed with sadness over the loss of our Father. After a few moments, Greer went up the stairs to check on our old living area while I remained downstairs. He thinks he saw – I mean, he saw the ghost of Mother there. She told him that if he didn't leave she would kill him, and then she disappeared through a wall. At the same time, I was opening the door into the kitchen downstairs, and an arrow or bolt shot from somewhere, hitting me in the arm. The blow knocked me unconscious, and I would not have survived were it not for my brother coming downstairs, finding me, and carrying me to safety."

Both the gnomes sit quietly for a few moments. Greer continues, "We contacted the Baneta authorities, but they refused to come investigate, as our home is outside the city and not within their jurisdiction. They treated us both like a couple of silly children."

Greer continues, "So that is our story. We don't know where to turn, and all we want is to finally have our home back after all these years. Father left a fortune's worth of toys in the workshop, and we want to release them to the world so that his legacy will be remembered."

The gnomes take any questions from the PCs. Below are a list of possible questions, which gnome answers, and the answer given. Feel free to make up or paraphrase answers, as long as they fit the gnomes' personalities and the adventure.

- What can you tell us about your father?
Gloriola: Use the Knowledge/Gather Information check section from the Introduction to give these answers, minus the part about the rumors of infernal pacts. Buzzy died of natural causes, working up until a week before he died.
- What can you tell us about your mother?
Gloriola: "Mother was a saintly woman, totally devoted to her family, her husband, and his work. She would give toys and money to the poorer children of

Baneta. She died during a scarlet fever epidemic in Baneta ten years before Father died, which she undoubtedly contracted bringing toys to the children in the sickhouses there."

- Could you tell us about the ghost you saw?
Greer [speaking quietly and hesitantly, as if truly chilled by what he saw]: "Yes, well, it's hard to describe. The upstairs hallway was dark, as there were no lights, and the day was overcast. All the light was behind me. A small, insubstantial form floated out of Mother and Father's bedroom. When it got into the hallway, it stopped and turned toward me. I could not see a face beneath the cowl it wore, but the whispered voice sounded just like Mother. It chilled my blood, because the whisper sounded so angry. It told me to get out of the house, or it was going to kill me. After that, I ran down the stairs and saw Gloriola bleeding on the dining room floor. I grabbed her and ran to our carriage. We haven't been back since. Mother was so loving to Gloriola and me in life that I can't believe her spirit could say such things." [This was an illusion created by a human illusionist, who has since been slain by the guardian familiar. The part about the illusion sounding like his mother was just Greer's overactive imagination.]
- What happened with the trap?
Gloriola: "As I said, I was opening the swinging door from the dining room to the kitchen. I had opened the door into the kitchen most of the way when I felt a horrible pain in my arm that knocked me down. When I looked and saw the bolt in my arm, I must have fainted. I don't remember seeing anything or hearing anything as I opened the door. Greer was able to remove the bolt and stop the bleeding. [If the PCs ask, the bolt was thrown away and is irretrievable.]
- When was the last time you set foot in the house before this?
Greer: "I left home before Mother died to study shipbuilding. I lived with my teacher in Baneta, only seeing my family every few months. Gloriola studied for a couple years at the Temple of the Holy Mother in Bet Kalamar, but then when Mother died she returned home to keep house for father. Mother and Father are both buried in a small gnome village in

northern Pecal where they grew up. We took Father's body there to be buried with Mother. When we returned, a representative of the College of Magic was waiting on our doorstep. He showed us Father's will, gave us our belongings from the house that had already been packed, and told us not to try entering the house or we would be arrested. We tried to pursue legal routes to regain possession of what was rightfully ours, but to no avail. Although I was forbidden to enter the house, I would occasionally tend the grounds outside it. Ciceleta was allowed to enter the house in order to clean and do repairs, and she reported to me that the house was in fair shape.

- Who is Ciceleta?
Greer: "She is a halfling housekeeper that Mother knew. She helped Gloriola with the chores occasionally after Mother died. The College of Magic contracted her to look after the house a bit while they kept us out of it."
- Who owned the house before you?
Greer: "Father purchased the house from a Kalamaran merchant, I believe. The merchant was closing up his business in Pecal to move back to Bet Kalamar. I have no reason to think any previous owners are involved."
- How or why was the College of Magic involved with your father?
Gloriola: "That is a complete mystery to us. Father was no mage, although he did often work with hedge wizards to enchant some of the toys that were specially ordered: dolls that talked, carriages that moved on their own, and the like. But other than that, I know of no direct connection between Father and the College of Magic. The College of Magic refused to tell us why Father's will gave them stewardship over the estate."
- Could you describe the layout of your home?
Greer: "Certainly. The first floor contains the common living area for the family: kitchen, dining room, family room, and sitting room. The second floor is the private quarters of the family, as well as some guest quarters and a washroom. The third floor contains by father's workshop, which we were forbidden to enter unless invited. There may be an attic, but that is speculation."

- What about the rumors concerning your father's deal with infernal forces?
Gloriola laughs: "Yes, we've heard all those rumors. There were no infernal pacts. Some of his toys were supplemented by magic from contracted mages, but he certainly wasn't one to muck about in evil magic or blood pacts. He was a sweet old gnome who made clever toys for children."
- Could any of those mages your father worked with be involved?
Gloriola: "I doubt it. I don't think he worked with them that often, and rarely did he do business with any individual more than once or twice in all the years he made his toys."
- Was there anyone else in the house?
Gloriola: "We rarely had visitors, and then it was only a visiting relative, passing merchant, or family friend. After Mother passed, it was just Father and me. We did have a maid – a halfling woman named Ciceleta. She came once a week or so to clean, restock the cupboards, and help me with a few of the chores. She was the only one allowed to enter the house after Father died. She went in once a week to dust and make sure the estate wasn't damaged. We talked to her, of course, but she never saw anything strange while she was in the house. We had a cat named Opal, but we never saw her again after returning from burying Father."
- Who at the College of Magic handled your father's estate?
Greer: "He was a Kalamaran man: older fellow, tall, graying hair. His name was Domari Sar'Vilas. We met him at the College, and we were around others there who spoke to him, so we knew this wasn't a scam. Our own legal representative examined Father's will and admitted that it was legal and binding."
- Did you go back to the College of Magic after the strange happenings at your estate?
Gloriola: "Of course. We came right to Bet Rogala as soon as we could. The College claimed that nothing they did caused these problems, and as far as they were concerned their association with our estate had concluded. They wouldn't even let us speak to Domari Sar'Vilas."

- What kind of pay are we looking at?
Greer: "I'm afraid right now we have a fixed income, so we can offer only 10 victories to each of you for investigating the estate and getting to the bottom of the problem. However, if you are successful in removing whatever haunts our home, we will have access to all of our possessions and several of Father's creations, which should bring a tidy sum for Gloriola and me. Then we can give each of you 60 victories each. Additionally, we will provide you with lodging while in Baneta, as well as pay for food and travel."

Treasure: The PCs are given 10gp each for undertaking the mission.

All ATLS – coin – (10gp each).

ENCOUNTER 2

College of Magic Stonewall

Summary: The PCs may wish to ask about Buzzy at the College of Magic. While they receive no information about him there, they may get the feeling that something about Buzzy's connection to the College of Magic is being covered up.

The PCs, especially those who are members of the College of Magic or have favors with members of that college, may attempt to investigate a connection between Buzzy and the College of Magic.

The expansive grounds and colorful towers of the College of Magic loom before you. Even for those familiar with the College, it is an impressive sight. The only obvious entrance onto the College grounds is a stone archway. Beneath the archway stands an older half-elf. He checks the identification of a pair of robed humans entering the grounds beneath the archway. He smiles, nods, and lets them enter.

The Kalamaran/High-Elven half-elf is the Honorable Q'Ranen, retired member of the Warriors of the Emerald Wave and current Gatekeeper of the College of Magic. He is easygoing and even familiar with strangers if they are polite. If they are rude, Q'Ranen quickly turns grumpy and rude. He is a respected and

popular institution at the College of Magic and in Bet Rogala, and he expects to be treated well by strangers.

The only people who may enter the main grounds of the College of Magic without an invitation are employees and students. Everyone else is directed to the Administration Building. Members of the College of Magic are greeted warmly by Q'Ranen and allowed to enter unhindered. (Note that registering with the College of Magic is not the same as being a full member.)

If asked about Buzzy Flintwhistle, Q'Ranen's answer is simple:

"The toymaker?! I've been at this post for almost 20 years now, and I've never seen him or heard his name associated with the college. Bought my niece a doll of his making once from a traveling merchant. Damnedest thing I ever saw. The doll's hair actually grew. My niece loved it. Just a little bit of prestidigitation, but he used it so well."

Q'Ranen can't help any more than that, as he has never heard the name Domari Sar'Vilas either. He points anyone who asks for further information to the Administration Building.

The Administration Building is a domed building at the center of the grounds. The two main offices here are the Information Office and the Registration Office. The latter is where beings that use magic must register their powers. The former is where the PCs are directed. If they ask about Buzzy or Domari Sar'Vilas, the administrator there, a female Kalamaran named Lireti, just looks at the PCs like they are insane:

"I have no idea if anyone by that name was ever a member here. The name Buzzy Flintwhistle sounds familiar, but that information is not available to the general public. Wait, isn't he that gnome who makes toys? I'm sure he was never a member here."

No other talk or coercing gets any further information, although if they get too persistent or belligerent, they are asked to leave – and escorted out by guards if necessary.

If PCs are members of the College of Magic, or if they have a favor with anyone within the College, they can dig a little deeper. Members of the College are allowed access to the records

archive, which list all of the members of the college since it was founded hundreds of years ago during the reign of the Kalamaran Emperor Kolokar. After 12 hours of searching the records (tomes and scrolls) for the name Buzzy Flintwhistle, the PCs find nothing. However, they do note that records for certain years are missing, and other years' records have been re-copied. There is no pattern to the lost or re-written records. The name Domari Sar'Vilas is also nowhere to be found. [Buzzy's name has been stricken from the records to protect his identity as a guardian of the evil artifacts. Domari Sar'Vilas is an alias and is therefore untraceable.]

PCs who call upon a favor to try to learn about Buzzy's connection to the college find little more success. Role-play such an attempt in the following manner:

- The PCs meet with their contact, who is very friendly and willing to help. He or she tells the PCs to return in 24 hours, and the contact attempts to dig up some information.
- When the PCs return, the contact's demeanor has changed. He or she is now much more formal. The contact says that he/she has searched long and hard for any mention of Buzzy, but it doesn't seem that Buzzy has any connection to the College of Magic. [A superior has told the contact to drop this line of inquiry and tell the PCs Buzzy has no connection.]
- The PCs may try to Sense Motive, utilize magic, be diplomatic, or use other tactics to attempt to coerce their contact into telling more. The truth is the contact doesn't know anything else to tell them, although he or she may be coerced into saying that he/she was told to drop any further lines of inquiry into the matter.

The PCs should leave the College of Magic either convinced that Buzzy has no connection to the College of Magic, or suspicious that his connection is being covered up for some reason.

ENCOUNTER 3 **In Baneta**

Summary: The PCs travel to Baneta, where the estate of Buzzy Flintwhistle is located. They can collect information about Buzzy, his estate, and his life.

After doing whatever needs to be done in Bet Rogala, the PCs need to travel to Baneta if they hope to investigate Buzzy's estate. Greer and Gloriola are willing to pay for the PCs to ride in a carriage from Bet Rogala to Baneta, or the PC are welcome to travel via horseback or walk. The trip, no matter what means of travel used, is uneventful.

In Baneta, Greer and Gloriola are staying at the Wandering Whale Inn, a respectable and classy – if boring – waterside establishment catering to the middle-class inhabitants seeking peace and tranquility. This inn is a place where elderly couples might come for a month to escape the bustle of Bet Rogala and take in the warmer air.

The two Flintwhistles pay for rooms at the inn for the PCs. The patrons of the inn, as well as the owners, look horrified as these “mercenaries” come into the inn and threaten to disturb the completely tranquil atmosphere of the inn. Imagine the scene if a stereotypical group of adventurers walked into a quaint New England bed and breakfast where the most exciting event is a lively game of bridge during afternoon tea.

The owners of the establishment are a Brandobian couple named Lentren. The husband's personal name is Martis, and the wife's Corsi. These two are pure-blooded Brandobians: they call strangers by their full names, they request to be called by their full names (surnames first); they consider Pekal to be a pretty savage and backwards place compared to grand Brandobia, and they consider themselves superior in all ways to even Pekalese nobility. The only reason they are acquiescing to allow the adventurers to stay there is because business has been very slow recently with threats of war so ominous and imminent.

The current occupants are two elderly Kalamaran couples, both middle-class merchants and their wives, who have come to Baneta to enjoy their retirement in the warm breezes of Baneta. Juridis and Mileta Dar'Matar and Fidamen and Hidona B'Ratal are their names. If the players are into role-playing and time is not a factor, this is a great opportunity for some comedy, as the genteel and reserved innkeepers and guests attempt to deal with the intrusion of adventurers into their lives, even if for a day or two.

If the PCs go out into the city to search for information on Buzzy, his family, the estate, or anything else related to the matter at hand, have them make individual Gather Information checks, unless a PC claims specifically that she is assisting another PC. The following can be learned:

DC 5 Gather Information:

- Buzzy Flintwhistle was a famous gnomish toymaker who worked out of his estate in Baneta.
- His toys were considered ingenious, and all of the middle- and upper-class citizens of Pekal, and as far away as Bet Kalamar, wanted to get his toys for their children as a sign of status.
- He set aside some of his toys to give away to the poorer children of Baneta.

DC 13 Gather Information:

- Buzzy Flintwhistle passed away three years ago, a very wealthy gnome.
- Rumors spread that Buzzy's skill at toymaking was so incredible that he must have made a pact with infernal forces.
- Buzzy's wife Klepavana died of the scarlet fever. She was a wonderfully kind gnome who would have given away everything if Buzzy had let her. She died because she caught the scarlet fever while caring for children in the sickhouses.

DC 22 Gather Information:

- Greer Flintwhistle wanted to follow in his father's footsteps, but the older gnome refused to teach his son the trade. Greer never forgave him. [Greer truthfully admits if questioned that he was upset about his father's refusal at first, but he didn't resent his father. His father worked hard to get Greer an apprenticeship making ships, which Greer loves.]
- In fact, Buzzy never took on any apprentices, even though some rich men and even nobles offered him a fortune to teach their offspring his trade.
- Although rumors spread after Buzzy's death that the estate was haunted, no one ever saw anything strange there – at least not until recently. People traveling too close to the estate are now claiming to see strange lights and hear spooky sounds coming from the estate.

ENCOUNTER 4 **The Maid**

Summary: The PCs have the opportunity to question the halfling Ciceleta, the only person known to have entered the estate in the time between Buzzy's death and the present. She was his maid, and after his death she would go to the estate once each week to clean and make sure the estate was in order. The PCs can get some information about the layout of the estate and a few clues as to what they might find there.

Ciceleta lives in a modest dwelling on the outskirts of Baneta. Greer and Gloriola know where she lives and direct the PCs there if asked. The PCs can also ask around Baneta until they find someone who knows where she resides.

Regardless of when the PCs chose to speak with her, she is not home. Read the following description when they approach her home:

On the outskirts on Baneta, where you were told Ciceleta resides, extremely modest houses are packed close together along a muddy dirt road. While the buildings cannot be called shacks, they are not much more than that. None of them have glass windows, though shutters cover the openings in the walls that serve as windows. Children of the laborers who reside in this part of town play games of tag in the street. The house described to you as belonging to Ciceleta is a bit better kept than others. The children stop playing long enough to let you pass, and then they return to their games. Ciceleta's house looks empty, as no lights shine through the cracks in the walls, and no movement is evident through the closed shutters.

Ciceleta is out cleaning the home of a local Honorable, but she arrives home within 5 minutes if the PCs wait. Ciceleta's one-room house is locked (poor lock; Open Locks DC 15). If the PCs want to pick the lock or break in without drawing attention, they must somehow first distract the children. If they do try to break and enter without first distracting the children, the children run to tell their parents, who send for the city guard, who arrive in 5 minutes (just before Ciceleta). Other parents also confront the

PCs – the people living in the neighborhood keep it safe through diligence and looking out for each other. They confront trouble rather than ignore it. If the PCs attack any of the people who confront them, they are arrested and fined 200gp total, as well as 50gp each for breaking into the house. If they cannot pay this, their Activity for this mod is spent in dealing with the authorities and doing community service.

If the PCs are trying to talk their way out of their transgressions with the city guard, Ciceleta comes home during the discussion. She refuses to acknowledge knowing the PCs unless they mention Greer or Gloriola Flintwhistle, at which time she tells the guards that the PCs were expected, and she is just returning late. As long as the PCs took no other illegal actions other than breaking into her house, the guards leave.

It is also possible that Ciceleta returns home soon after the PCs have broken into her home. If this is the case, allow the PCs to try to role-play their way out of the uncomfortable situation. If they harm Ciceleta in any way, a neighbor sees the attack and calls the city guard, and only convincing the halfling that they are there on behalf of the Flintwhistles persuades Ciceleta to not press charges.

Ciceleta: Female halfling Com1, hp 3.

Ciceleta is a young-looking halfling woman with thick, curly brown hair and a weary look. She stares at you, waiting to hear what you have to say.

Ciceleta is a thirty-year-old orphan who was given the chance to earn her keep by Klepavana Flintwhistle, Buzzy's wife. Klepavana saw the young halfling at an orphanage and got her a job working as a scullery maid for a wealthy jeweler. When Klepavana passed, Ciceleta was asked to help out with the chores at the Flintwhistle Estate. Now she makes a decent living hiring herself out to various well-to-do families in Baneta as a cleaner and servant. While not a member of the middle-class by any stretch of the imagination, Ciceleta has earned enough gold to buy this home and make a living, which is a better life than would have been waiting for her without the intervention of Klepavana Flintwhistle.

The halfling treats the PCs with suspicion and a world-weary skepticism if they try to trick or

flatter her. If they mention the Flintwhistles, however, she cheers up and becomes much friendlier.

“Klepa Flintwhistle – she allowed her husband and friends to call her Klepa – was a saint. A true miracle embodied in the form of a gnome. It wasn't just her money she gave – no. She gave her very life in the name of charity. Her husband and children were a nice enough lot, but Klepa was special. Too bad about their inheritance and all.”

She doesn't know much more than the PCs could have already learned, and she only relates the following if the PCs can convince her their investigations are on behalf of the Flintwhistle children. Use the bullet points below as a guide for how the conversation should go, based on the questions the PCs ask.

- She never saw suspicious happenings at the Flintwhistle Estate. Buzzy and Klepa were very much in love, and he approved of her philanthropy. He was dedicated to his work though, and he spent all of his days, and many of his nights, up in his third-floor workshop.
- She was not allowed to clean or even enter his workshop. No one was, although Buzzy took Greer up there once or twice when the gnome was just a wee lad.
- When Buzzy died, some Kalamaran man from some sort of college or mages guild asked her to go to the estate once a week to clean the first two floors; cut the grass and pull the weeds; make sure no major damage had occurred to the house; and leave everything else alone. [If the PCs mention the name Domari Sar'Vilas, she thinks for a moment before agreeing that it sounds correct.] She has been cleaning the house ever since, once a week for three years. She didn't mind the job since whenever she returned home, her payment was waiting on her kitchen table.
- She was very nervous at first about “working for wizards” but she never had any problems. Nothing was ever out of place in the house, nothing broken or anything like that. Seemed like after the mages came and took control of the property, everyone but her kind of avoided the house.
- She was given strict instructions not to poke around or remove anything. She even had to speak a “magic word” before unlocking the

front door, or some magic that was guarding the house could have seriously hurt her – or so the man told her. She did as instructed for fear of getting injured. [There was a glyph on the doors that protected the house from intruders.]

- The mage was nice enough, but very formal and precise with his instructions. She didn't see any other wizards around the house until a few months ago. Some people from the guild were moving around inside the house, writing down information on small pads. They were nice, but never really talked to her, letting her go about her chores and keeping to themselves. They did that for a while [seven months], then one day, the nice mage who met her the first time came back and said that Greer and Gloriola would be returning.
- She never saw anything scary or different about the estate after Buzzy died and the house was sealed.
- The last time she was in the house was two weeks ago, one week after the mage spoke to her]. She had planned to visit Greer and Gloriola when they returned to see if they wanted some help around the house, but she didn't want to keep cleaning the house and impose on them without their permission.
- The only strange thing about the house that she can really think of is that even though the house has been abandoned for all these years, there is no sign of any rats or bats or other vermin that tend to infest such dwellings when they are no longer inhabited.

ENCOUNTER 5

The Haunted Estate

Summary: The estate is a dynamic encounter, allowing the PCs to investigate the various rooms and workshops of the Flintwhistle Estate. At the same time, the rogue and the illusionist attempt to drive the PCs away using traps and illusions without revealing themselves. The PCs may at first believe the estate is indeed haunted by undead spirits, but slowly they should come to the conclusion that there is a more mundane explanation for the goings-on.

After the PCs have finished their investigation in Baneta, they can get the key to the estate from Greer Flintwhistle. Greer can also supply them

with a rough map of the first two floors of the estate (Appendix III – Player's Handout 2). Appendix II gives the actual map of the estate, including the first-floor common rooms, the second-floor private chambers, the third-floor workshops, and the secret attic.

Greer and Gloriola offer to escort the PCs to the estate, which rests two miles to the northwest of Baneta, very near the shores of the Banader River. Greer gives the PCs a key that unlocks the front and back door. However, the two gnomes refuse to enter the estate with the PCs, and they do not even wait outside. As soon as the pair has pointed out the estate, they effectively flee the area, still terrified at what happened when they entered before.

The Flintwhistle Estate is a large and well-kept three-story manor house made of enormous fieldstones along with smaller bits of masonry. The building is quite grand, surrounded by trimmed shrubberies, fruit trees, and an expansive lawn. The house itself is in need of some minor repairs, but otherwise looks sturdy and expertly built. Shuttered windows can be found on the first and second floors, although the windows that once decorated the third floor have been removed and bricked over.

Unless otherwise stated in the text, the doors inside the house are made of strong wood and are closed by not locked. The shutters on all the windows are latched from the inside and have the same stats as the doors. The front door and the back door are the same, and they are locked (although the PCs have the key to unlock both). [When Greer and Gloriola fled, they did not lock the front door, but it is locked when the PCs check it – which could be a clue that someone or something is inside to PCs paying attention.] There are at least two windows into each room and hallway on both the first and second floors, so PCs might be able to enter the house if they can deal with the shutters. Coming into any of the second floor windows automatically alerts Fillburt to an intrusion unless a *silence* spell or similar magic is used.

Strong Wooden Doors/Shutters: 1 in. thick; hardness 7; hp 15; AC 5; Break DC 21; Open Locks DC 23.

Important Judging Notes: The encounters that take place within the estate are dynamic. Fillburt

the illusionist and Neech the rogue are intelligent foes that can move around and use alternative tactics to achieve their goals. It is important to remember that they believe a very dangerous magic is contained in the vial, and that if the magic fell into the wrong hands, serious consequences could befall Pekal. They consider their mission, although covert, to be a noble and just one that is sanctioned by the Pekalese government. Also keep in mind that Fillburt is a kind gnome who doesn't want to see anyone hurt. Neech, on the other hand, is vicious and willing to kill the PCs without thinking twice. It may come to a point where Fillburt realizes that something strange is amiss and helps or works with the PCs to find the vial and return to the house to the rightful owners. He does not assist them to the point where he joins the group and fights their battles, but he might stabilize a downed PC or tell them about traps Neech created. Neech simply assumes the PCs are enemy forces bent on recovering the vial for evil purposes, and he does not readily cooperate.

Room 1 – Downstairs Hallway

Adjust the boxed text according to whether the PCs enter the front or the back door. Since Fillburt has cast an *alarm* spell (mental ping) just inside both the front and back doors, any PC entering through a door – or even passing within 5 feet of the *alarm* spells – trigger them and make Fillburt aware of their presence. Fillburt then makes Neech aware of the presence of intruders.

The entry hallway is carpeted with fine Brandobian-crafted rugs, showing off bright colors and strange designs. The hallway indicates that while the estate was obviously built for larger folk, the inhabitants have refitted most of the furnishings and fixtures to make living comfortable for smaller folk as well. There are coat hooks near the door positioned at roughly 5 feet off the floor, and beneath those rests a mahogany coat rack easily reachable by gnomes and halflings. Several closed doors lead from the hallway to other rooms, and a highly polished stairway leads up to the second floor. Extra steps have been placed between the original steps to accommodate shorter legs. The entire hallway has obviously been recently cleaned, as no dust has settled on any of the mirrors or picture frames.

If the PCs set off either of the *alarm* spells, or make a great deal of noise entering the house,

all is silent. If they are able to enter the house without triggering the *alarm* spells, and are moving silently (**Move Silently DC 15**), then they hear a happy whistling coming from somewhere on the second floor: this is Fillburt trying to pass the time while Neech searches the third floor.

Room 2 – Dining Room

The door from the hallway (Room 1) opens into the dining room. The door between the kitchen (Room 3) and the dining room is a swinging door that can move either way.

A long but low oak dining table dominates the center of this room, surrounded by sturdy wooden chairs. An antique china cabinet rests against the wall in the northeast corner of the room. A crystal chandelier, elegant but understated, hangs above the table.

Although this is the room where Gloriola was hit with the bolt from a trap set by a previous operative, that trap is no longer present.

Room 3 – Kitchen

A swinging door connects the kitchen to the dining room (Room 2), and the door from the hallway (Room 1) opens into the kitchen.

Even though the house has been unoccupied for eight years, savory smells still cling to the walls of this room. A large wood stove for cooking dominates the room, along with a hand pump for water. Rows of cabinets and cupboards line the walls.

Ciceleta removed all of the food from the house years ago. Searching the room (Search check DC 15) reveals a trap door in the floor in the southwest corner of the room. The trapdoor opens upward, revealing a 3' by 3' hole dug in the ground. Perishable goods – eggs, cheese, milk, etc. – were stored here to keep them cool. In the hole is a pottery dish, as one might use to feed a pet. Painted on the side of the dish in the uncertain scrawl of a child is the word "OPAL."

Room 4 – Formal Sitting Room

This room is where the Flintwhistle family entertained guests and retired to read by the light of the fire.

The furniture in this room is arranged around a fireplace on the east wall. They are a bit

more formal than in the other rooms of the house, and the tea tables positioned about the room are finely crafted.

Nothing of importance can be found in this room, but there is a potential clue nonetheless. Neech has been very careful in his searching, but he neglected to smooth over the carpet in this room after he moved through it. **Search check DC 15** (with Track) reveals slightly depressed areas of the carpet as if small boots had moved through the room. **DC 20** indicates that the prints were made within the past 3-7 days.

Room 5 – Family Room (EL variable by ATL)

The door into the family room from the hallway (Room 1) opens into the hallway. The door from the family room into the sitting room (Room 4) opens into the sitting room. Neech has trapped both doors with a crossbow trap that is triggered when the door is opened. The bolt shoots through the doorway. He trapped this room specifically because he believes there is a clue in here, but he can't seem to figure out what that clue might be.

ATL 1

Basic Crossbow Trap: CR 1; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; Atk +10 ranged (1d8/19-20, x2); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

ATL 3

Advanced Crossbow Trap: CR 3; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d8/19-20, x2); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 20).

ATL 5

Advanced Double Crossbow Trap: CR 5; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; Atk +15/+15 ranged (1d8/19-20, x2); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

ATL 7

Superior Double Crossbow Trap: CR 7; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; Atk +20/+20 ranged (1d8/19-20, x2); Search (DC 33); Disable Device (DC 33).

ATL 9

Superior Triple Heavy Crossbow Trap with Barbed Bolts: CR 9; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; Atk +20/+20/+20 ranged

(1d10+4/19-20, x2); Search (DC 33); Disable Device (DC 33).

Once the PCs have bypassed or set off either of the traps, they can enter the room. Adjust the text based on how the PCs entered the room:

This room contains a fireplace, around which comfortable furnishings have been arranged. The furniture in this room is not particularly fine, but it does look well worn. Attached to two sturdy tables are crossbows pointing toward each of the doorways leading into the room. Bookshelves and paintings are the most notable features of the room, aside from the crossbows!

The paintings depict various seascapes and nature scenes, except for one family portrait. The portrait shows the smiling Flintwhistle family posing for the artist. The whole family is there, including the pet cat, whose collar clearly reads "Opal."

Anyone searching the books on the bookshelf (**Search DC 10**) finds one thing out of place: a sheet of paper sticking out of a book on the basics of abjuration magic. The old and faded sheet has the logo of the College of Magic on the top, and appears to be a letter of rejection addressed to Buzzy Flintwhistle.

Members of the College of Magic recognize this as a letter sent to applicants who did not meet qualifications to become students at the school.

The paper seems to be yellowed and very old, though characters who succeed at a **Forgery check DC 15** realize that the paper is only a few years old at the most. The paper actually appears to have been "aged" artificially.

If the paper is held up to a heat source, writing appears on the page in Merchant's Tongue that says this: "**Call the soldiers to 'Attention!' before marching into battle.**" The existence of the secret writing can be discovered with a *detect magic* spell. The spells *comprehend languages* and *tongues* reveal the actual writing on the paper. (This leads to the next clue: the wooden soldiers in Greer's room.) Anyone who finds other writings of Buzzy can tell that the gnome also wrote the hidden message.

Room 6 – Upstairs Hallway

Fillburt is stationed in the upstairs hallway when the PCs enter the estate. His job is to scare

away anyone who tries to ascend the stairs. If he knows someone is in the house, he hides at the top of the stairs invisibly and casts his illusions. Read or paraphrase the boxed text if the PCs start to ascend the stairs and Fillburt is aware of their presence.

At the top of the stairs, a small hooded apparition floats menacingly in the air. It raises its arm and says in a malevolent whisper, "You are intruding in a place of great pain and death. Leave immediately and I will let you live. Stay and your spirit shall join mine in haunting this place forever."

The "ghost" is Fillburt's silent, extended *major image* spell, and the DC for the Will save is 20. The key to running this encounter is to make the PCs think, both in game and out, that this illusion is an actual threat. Remember that PCs do not get a Will save to disbelieve unless they intently study the image, or interact with the illusion defined as "touching, attacking, or otherwise coming into contact with the spell."

Illusions cannot cause real damage though, so it is your job as the judge to make the PCs believe it is real enough to make them flee. To best do this, enter initiative just as if this were a real ghost. Consult the adventure as if you are trying to decide how to have the ghost attack. Pretend to make attack rolls or call on the PCs to make saving throws. If the PCs do not leave after a few rounds, or if they attack the illusion, Fillburt has the option of ceasing to concentrate on the illusion and cast other spells, and the illusion stays for 6 more rounds, as he has extended it. Therefore he might cease concentration and cast silent *improved invisibility*, followed by a silent, nonlethal *burning hands* spell. This means Fillburt remains quiet and can stay invisible, but he can make the PCs think this "ghost" is casting spells at them.

If the illusions do not scare the characters away, he resorts to *charm person* and *color spray*. Only if he is attacked does he resort to his major nonlethal spells to incapacitate the PCs. Fillburt can also use *disguise self* to try to bluff the PCs into thinking he is someone else, thus making up a story to get the PCs to leave the estate. Note that the spell *summon spirit* (from the *Kalamar Player's Guide*) does not create a figment, but is instead a real incorporeal creature. This means that if players catch on that some of the things they are seeing are illusions, Fillburt can cast that spell to force them to deal with the reality

that not everything they are seeing is illusory. Use all the tools at your (and Fillburt's) disposal to make Fillburt a crafty foe.

Fillburt does not want to hurt anyone, but he knows he has to keep the PCs occupied or get them out of the house until Neech finds and retrieves the vial. However, if the PCs parlay with Fillburt and make a convincing argument that they are there simply to investigate strange disturbances for the rightful owners (**Diplomacy DC 15**), Fillburt listens. He's not entirely trusting of the man who hired them or Neech, and the story he has been told (detailed in Appendix I) was not completely convincing to Fillburt.

It is entirely possible that Fillburt might knock an entire low ATL party unconscious with his nonlethal spells. If that happens, all is not lost. Fillburt binds them all (**Use Rope DC 20**) and guards them while waiting for Neech to find the vial. However, the guardian familiar kills Neech, and Fillburt finally gets nervous and brings the party back to consciousness.

Continue below if the PCs have been captured by Filburt.

You awaken to the sound of a soft and hesitant voice saying, "Wake up, er, wake up please. We need to talk." The voice belongs to a worried-looking gnome dressed in the garb of a wizard. "I'm sorry I had to do that, but I couldn't have you interrupting us. Before I turn you over to the authorities, could you tell me what you are doing here?"

Give the PCs the chance to convince Fillburt that they actually were hired by Buzzy's two children to investigate the haunted house. Fillburt knows this story is most likely true, as he knows previous operatives have been sent to find the vial, and they also planned to use illusions to scare away trespassers. The Diplomacy check to convince the gnome to release them is **DC 10 + ATL**, and you can assign up to a +5 bonus if the PCs tell him the truth the first time. This is also a time that good role-playing can trump dice rolling! Reward characters who make convincing argument by giving circumstance bonuses, or even removing the need for a Diplomacy check.

If the characters can convince him, he releases them and asks them to perform a service to him, if they might. The government of Pecal sent him to retrieve an item from the estate, and he fears

that Neech has probably failed and perished, as the halfling rogue hasn't reported back on his progress in a few hours.

Continue here if the PCs are able to deal with the illusionist and make it safely into the upstairs hallway.

The upstairs hallway is decorated with thick carpeting and tasteful gnomish antiques. A stairway situated in the northeast corner leads down to the first floor, and a similar stairway leading up is located in the center of the hallway to the south.

All ATLS

Fillburt Snickeltuff, male gnome Wiz9, hp 35

Treasure: If the PCs defeat Fillburt and choose to keep his equipment, they can gain the following.

All ATLS – loot-(6 gp), coin-(5gp), scroll of *summon spirit* (CL 3)- (75gp).

Room 7 – Master Bedroom

The door to the master bedroom opens into the hallway. It is not locked.

This large bedroom contains many of the same tasteful gnomish antiques you have seen in the other rooms. A large but low four-post canopy bed, stripped of linens, rests in the southeast corner. All manner of desks, dressers, chairs, chests, and other furnishings are placed around the room. In front of a window in the northeast corner of the room is an expertly crafted and fairly delicate looking telescope.

A thorough search of the room finds private papers of both Buzzy and Klepavana Flintwhistle. While the papers are extremely personal – including love letters between the two gnomes and statements concerning Buzzy's business dealing – nothing in the papers are out of the ordinary or send up a red flag. Although the PCs should learn that Buzzy was very rich and very much in love with "his Klepa," nothing else is striking.

Note: be sure to at least mention Buzzy called his wife Klepa, as that name plays an important role later.

The telescope is an important piece of the puzzle. Buzzy was afraid that he had guarded

the vial of lich dust too well, so he wanted to leave clues that would allow someone from the College of Magic to weaken the guardian familiar and extract the vial as needed. The first word of the three-word incantation is "INCARNATIONS." Buzzy chiseled this word on a cliff face a few miles from his house, and then he set up his telescope so a person could find it by following one of the clues given by the animated wooden soldiers in Greer's bedroom. In order to see the clue, a PC must set up the finely tuned telescope to point to 5 degrees below the horizon and 20 degrees to the left of 0 degrees longitude. Any PC with a Profession/Craft that would use a telescope (Sailor, Astronomy, etc.) or an appropriate Knowledge skill (including Arcana or Nature) can make a **DC 10** check to figure out that the clue is setting up a position for the telescope.

If the PCs look through the telescope after setting the correct coordinates, read the following:

Putting your eye to the telescope, you peer out toward the river. You are staring at a cliff face that seems to be in no way related to your task. But then, as you are about to give up, something catches your eye. You peer harder at the cliff face, and you see it. There is a word chiseled into the cliff face, at the exact point your telescope is aimed. Although weathered, you are able to see the word clearly now: INCARNATIONS.

Room 8 – Guest Room

The door to this room opens into the guest room and is not locked.

All of the furnishings in this room are covered with sheets. From the shapes and sizes of the covered pieces of furniture, this room is probably a bedroom, rarely used. The rugs in this room are less worn than the others you have seen in the house.

There is nothing of value or importance in this room, as it was the guest room, only used when visitors came to stay for an extended period of time. The furnishings include a bed with no sheets, a desk, two chairs with ottomans, and two chests of drawers.

Room 9 – Greer's Room

The door to this room opens into the hallway. It is not locked.

This bedroom is sparsely furnished. Bookshelves are filled with books on history, astronomy, mathematics, and shipbuilding. A row of ten one-foot tall wooden soldiers stands in the corner. Behind them is an open-topped toy chest stuffed full of balls, carved animals, and numerous other toys.

When someone speaks the word “attention” in Merchant’s Tongue in the same room as the wooden soldiers, they snap to attention. Then they step forward in order, each reciting one line as they do so, as follows:

“Listen if you hope to survive!”
“The black gem cannot be defeated.”
“An incantation shows the black gem’s flaws.”
“The first word hides where stars draw close.”
“Five below the middle, and twenty to the left.”
“The middle word hides in the tools that made the first.”
“The last word hides named by the children’s love for the black gem.”
“Recite the three to weaken the black jewel.”
“Know what you do before you do what you know.”
“The powers of the past should remain there.”

They repeat the message as many times as necessary, as long as they hear the word “attention.”

The first word of the incantation, “INCARNATIONS,” is carved into a cliff face near the house, and the PCs can find it by using the telescope in Buzzy’s bedroom. The second word, “GUARD,” is etched, one letter at a time, on Buzzy’s five chisels in his workshop. The final word is “OPAL,” the name Buzzy’s children gave the guardian familiar.

Room 10 – Gloriola’s Room

The door to this room opens into the hallway. It is not locked.

This tidy bedroom contains all the furnishings one might expect for a gnomish female. Pink and purple decorations adorn the walls, and a variety of dolls and stuffed animals rest on the bed, chairs, dressers, and shelves.

Nothing of importance or interest is in the room.

Room 11 – Washroom

This room contains the usual contents of a washroom. There is nothing special or unusual to find here. All the doors here open into the washroom.

This room contains a full-length mirror fit for a person of smaller stature, some plain stools, and several basins. There is also a chest containing two drawers.

The top drawer contains washcloths and towels. The bottom drawer is empty, although it smells heavily of perfume. It was full of soap and other good-smelling hygienic items, but Ciceleta removed them.

Room 12 – Privy

Three chamber pots and three plain chairs are in this room. Nothing else of interest is here.

Room 13 – Workshop (EL variable)

The entrance to Buzzy’s workshop is a trap door in the ceiling at the top of the second-story stairway. Since the stairs go right up to the trapdoor, there is no need to climb up to get into the workshop area. However, it does require a move action to open the door. The trapdoor lifts up and rests flush against the south wall of the workshop. Neech has stacked some heavy boxes atop the door to keep out intruders, so it requires a **Strength DC 15** check to push it open. The resulting crash of the boxes automatically warns Neech of anyone’s approach.

The bulk of the third-story space is taken up by a workshop. Desks, benches, stools, tables, and crates line the outside of the room. The inner area of the workshop is mostly clear, aside from an occasional crate or stool. Wood and metalworking tools hang neatly from hooks on the walls of the room. The room is thick with dust, and several lit lanterns have been placed around the room to supply adequate light. Two wooden pillars hold up the ceiling. On the east wall of the workshop are two doors.

Creature: Neech the halfling rogue waits here. See Appendix I for Neech’s stat block at each ATL. Unless the PCs have somehow surprised Neech, he is aware that intruders are in the house, either by a warning from Fillburt or by hearing combat/discussion coming from the second floor. As soon as he knows someone is

coming, he sets up some cover behind boxes and prepares to attack with a thrown dagger anyone coming into the workshop. Note that you can't ready an action outside of combat, but unless PCs entering the workshop can make a **Spot check** to beat Neech's Hide check (taking 10, varies by ATL), then Neech gets a surprise round to throw a dagger. This should also cause sneak attack damage, as Neech sets up his cover within 30 feet of the trap door.

Some characters may try to discuss the situation with Neech, having befriended Filburt. Neech wants nothing to do with "talking" – he does not have a very high opinion of Filburt, and believes the characters to be Tokite spies.

Developments: Assuming the PCs either kill or capture Neech, they are free to explore the rest of the third floor without danger. Neech offers no help to the PCs even if intimidated, mainly because he has no help to give. He has spent time searching for clues to where the vial might be hidden, but this is as far as he's gotten. He does know that others have been sent before him by the Pekalese government to find the vial, but they have not returned, so he assumes harm has befallen them. If questioned, he insinuates that the PCs are Tokite operatives, and nothing short of magical coercion can convince him otherwise.

A player with the Track feat can make a **Search DC 15** check to determine that more than just Neech and the PCs have disturbed the dust in the room. At least three or four others have moved through this dusty room recently. Anyone succeeding at **DC 20** realizes that the footprints mostly congregate in the northeast corner of this room. There is also a trap door in the ceiling above some empty shelves leading to the attic. The shelving is very sturdy, and actually acts as a ladder up to the trap door ten feet above the floor.

If the PCs are following the clues given by the wooden soldiers, they are hopefully looking for tools used to chisel the first word of the incantation into the cliff side. Sure enough, there are chisels in Buzzy's workshop – five to be exact. They are easily found hanging on the wall with his other tools, and each chisel is a different size. Etched into each chisel is a letter. If arranged on the wall from smallest to largest, the chisel letters would spell the next word in the incantation: "GUARD." However, Buzzy got lazy

right before he died and placed them on the wall in haphazard fashion, so that right now they spell "UDRAG."

ATL 1

Neech, male halfling Rog3, hp 14

ATL 3

Neech, male halfling Rogue 5, hp 22

ATL 5

Neech, male halfling Rogue 6/Master Thrower 1, hp 31

ATL 7

Neech, male halfling Rogue 8/Master Thrower 1, hp 39

ATL 9

Neech, male halfling Rogue 10/Master Thrower 1, hp 47

Treasure: If the PCs defeat Neech, they can strip his body and sell the equipment later.

ATL 1 – loot-(67 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1-(500gp).

ATL 3 – loot-(67 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1-(500gp).

ATL 5 – loot-(67 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1-(500gp).

ATL 7 – loot-(667 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1-(500gp).

ATL 9 – loot-(1267 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1-(500gp).

Room 14 – Storeroom

The door opens into the storeroom and is not locked.

Crates, boxes, blocks of wood, hunks of metal, nails, balls of string, bolts of cloth, and other raw materials for toymaking are arranged neatly in the room.

Nothing of interest is located here.

Room 15 – Toy Room

The door opens into the toy room and is not locked.

Stacked around the room is a veritable treasure trove of toys: dolls, carriages, balls, stuffed animals, marionettes, puzzles, blocks, miniature tea sets, toy tool sets, and anything else that might capture a youngster's fancy.

There is nothing of importance to the plot of this adventure. Casting *detect magic* and viewing the toys reveals some of the toys have minor magic enhancements, but nothing of use to an adventurer.

ENCOUNTER 6

The Black Cat in the Attic

Summary: The item Buzzy was guarding is in the attic: a sealed vial filled with dust from the body of the lich Gahida. He stored the vial inside a doll, which is inside a chest being watched by a guardian familiar. The doll contains a tiny locking mechanism – a magical ward similar to the ones found in the modules *May the Best Man Win* and *Shining Stones*. Opening the lock does not create and attract undead creatures as in previous modules.

As the first PC climbs through the trap door in the attic floor, read or paraphrase the following:

The attic is extremely dusty. Surprisingly, it is mostly empty except for a locked chest pushed up against the wall at the far end of the room. On top of the chest rests a largish black cat with a cracked brown leather collar. A small gold tag hangs from the collar, but it is too small to be read from this distance. Pushed up in the southwest corner are four human corpses. The smell tells you they haven't been dead for more than a couple weeks. As you climb up through the trapdoor in the floor, the cat opens one yellow eye and glances at you, yawning and stretching, then settling back down on the chest.

The cat is a guardian familiar that Buzzy summoned to protect the vial. Being an outsider, the creature doesn't need to eat, although it catches an occasional mouse for fun. Buzzy told his family the cat was a pet, and every once in a while he would pretend that the cat had died and that he had replaced it with a similar-looking black cat. The family thinks this is Opal the Fifth.

Opal the Fifth has killed four previous operatives sent to retrieve the vial in the last couple of weeks. If the PCs examine the bodies, a **Heal check DC 10** reveals the humans (2 Fhokki, a Kalamaran, and a Brandobian) were killed by a clawed creature much larger than a normal housecat. The humans are obviously adventurers of the arcane or stealthy variety.

Opal rests languidly on the chest, occasionally opening one yellow eye and peering at the PCs. She does not move unless the PCs get within 10 feet of her and the chest, at which time stands up. If the characters do not retreat, she springs to attack.

The characters may speak the incantation at any time once they enter the attic. If the incantation has been read, describe to the PCs that the black cat's sheen and brilliant, sparkling eyes lose a bit of luster after the incantation "INCARNATIONS GUARD OPAL" is complete.

Creature: As a guardian familiar, Opal has nine lives. After she is killed once (dropped to less than 0 hit points), she gets a little bigger and a little stronger and renews her attacks. (The "rebirth" is a free action.) This means that lower-level PCs don't stand much of a chance to defeat her unless they find Buzzy's clues about her and recite the incantation within earshot, and even then it is still quite a fight. **See Appendix I for Opal the Fifth's stats at each of her lives.** At ATL 9, a pair of avoral guardians (Monster Manual pg. 141) is summoned upon the death of the guardian familiar unless the incantation has been read.

Developments: If the PCs find and decipher Buzzy's clues and recite the incantation, Opal loses some of her lives. At ATL 1, she only has two lives. At ATL 3, she gets four lives. At ATL 5, she gets six lives. At ATL 7, she gets eight lives. At ATL 9 she has all of her lives, but no other creatures are summoned at her final death. If they do not read the incantation, the guardian familiar has all its lives at all ATLs, and at ATL 9 the summoned avoral guardians also attack. Note that if the incantation is not read, it is going to be nearly impossible for the PCs – especially lower ATL parties – to succeed. Give the PCs a chance to escape when it becomes obvious they are in over their heads. The guardian familiar disappears after being defeated.

Also, if the incantation is spoken after Opal loses some of her lives, reduce her remaining lives so the total equals the number above. It is entirely possible that reciting the incantation during the battle will cause Opal to “die” if she has already used several lives.

After the PCs have dealt with the guardian familiar (and the avoral guardinals at ATL 9), they have access to the chest. The chest is locked and has the following stats:

Strong Wooden Chest: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 30; AC 5; Break DC 19; Open Locks DC 21.
--

Once the chest is opened, the PCs find a doll wrapped in a black velvet cloth.

Inside the chest is a black velvet cloth wrapped around some small object. Unwrapping the cloth reveals a doll made to look like a gnome, roughly 18 inches long and made of wood, cloth, and string. The doll has an angelic smile and curly white hair. Sewed into the cloth dress are the words “My Love” in Gnomish.

Anyone searching the doll finds that there are two platinum hinges on the back. Also, etched delicately into the doll’s back are five letters. The letters look like they could be depressed using a needle, nail, or similar small pointed object. The letters are in a circular pattern. The letters, starting at the top and going clockwise, are A, P, K, L, and E.

In order to open the doll, the PCs must press the letters in the correct order to spell the name of Buzzy’s lifelong love and wife: Klepa. PCs looking for a simple answer might think the answer is Pekal. PCs who have played *May the Best Man Win* and/or *Shining Stones* may remember what happened when messing with similar puzzles. In this case, they may not open the doll at all and simply give the doll to the College of Magic, a temple, or some other authority.

If the PCs press the incorrect order, the doll speaks, saying “You are meddling in affairs you do not understand! Leave now!” in a male gnomish voice. If the PCs press the correct order, the back of the doll opens to reveal a small vial of black dust or powder. If the PCs smash the doll or opens the vial, this breaks the

seal. The dust blows about the room in a magical whirlwind and then disappears.

If the PCs examine the vial, it is a six-inch long glass tube sealed with wax. Etched into the wax are tiny runes. A **Knowledge (arcana) DC 15** check reveals these runes are part of a powerful abjuration.

CONCLUSION

Summary: The PCs can turn over the doll or the dust to anyone they deem appropriate: Buzzy’s heirs, the College of Magic, Fillburt, one of the temples, keep it for themselves, etc.

How the conclusion plays out depends a great deal on how the PCs dealt with Fillburt and Neech, as well as what the PCs want to do with the doll and/or the vial.

Since the PCs were hired to clean out the Flintwhistle Estate and remove the threats, they have performed their task after dealing with Fillburt, Neech, and the guardian familiar. However, unless the vial is removed from the premises, forces continue to be sent to try to retrieve it. After two weeks, the Administrator catches up with the status of the situation and arrives to take the vial, assuming it is still there.

If the PCs trust Fillburt, he takes the doll/vial to the person who tasked him to retrieve it. This person’s identity is secret, although he is a member of the Pekalese intelligence community. Fillburt takes the doll/vial to The Journeyman Inn, which is a known center of operation for the Gray Legion, and the PCs who played “Into Mist and Shadow” may remember meeting their Gray Legion contact there. (PCs may want to try and “stake out” the inn hoping to see the contact. Though they may be welcome at The Journeyman Inn, business is not always conducted in public. There are several back rooms for such affairs, and the characters are not permitted to wander about.)

If the PCs keep the doll/vial or give it to Greer and Gloriola, it mysteriously disappears one day. Allow the PCs to take other actions as they desire, but they cannot retain possession of the vial.

If the PCs cannot defeat Opal the Fifth, two weeks pass and then the College of Magic arrives to take possession of the vial. The

Flintwhistles are thereby safe to return to their home, and even though the PCs weren't the ones to ensure their safety, Greer and Gloriola still pay the PCs as if they were.

Assuming the PCs take care of the problem, thus allowing Greer and Gloriola to move back into their home, read or paraphrase the following:

The two Flintwhistles enter their home safely for the first time in eight years. Gloriola sobs as she moves through the house, Greer putting an arm around his sister's shoulders in comfort. As you escort them through their home, they take stock of what is here. Their eyes widen when they look at their father's storage areas. His toys will fetch an even greater price on the market now that he has passed away. A legacy that was about to be lost has been restored. Future generations of children may now know the joy of playing with one of Buzzy's astonishing creations.

In addition to the 60gp they promised, the Flintwhistle children add an additional 40gp per PC. Additionally, they offer the party a selection of their father's nicer toys.

Note: It may enter the mind of a felonious PC to try to steal goods from the Flintwhistle Estate. Allow them to do so if they so choose. Unfortunately for them, the College of Magic took a meticulous inventory of the estate after Buzzy's death. When they return to the estate to confer with Greer and Gloriola, anything missing is noted. The PCs are then confronted and interrogated about the missing objects. Magic is used to discern the truth, and PCs must pay back the value of anything they stole, plus an extra 10gp fine per 100gp worth of goods stolen. Treasure: When the house is completely safe for the Flintwhistles, the PCs are rewarded with the 60gp each they were promised, plus a 40gp each bonus, and a gift: one of Buzzy's magically enhanced toys called Buzzy's Barking Beagle (see description on Awards page).

All ATLS – coin-(100gp per PC), barking beagle-(500gp); gained when the Flintwhistle Estate is clear.

Epilogue

If the PCs come into contact with the doll or the vial, a messenger from the College of Magic approaches them a few days after the PCs complete the action of the module. This message is from the new Administrator of the guardians of the Relics of Gahida. The message is included as Player Handout 3 in Appendix III.

Awards

TREASURE

This is where treasure is listed. Items that have been stripped off bodies will be listed at prices for which they may be sold. Treasure is broken down by Encounter to aid the judge in determining if characters are awarded specific items. The amount may be more or less than what is listed in the PHB as the economy may fluctuate.

Encounter 1: All ATLs – coin (10gp per PC); gained for accepting the mission.

Encounter 5 (Room 6): All ATLs – loot (6 gp), coin (5gp), scroll of *summon spirit* (CL 3, market value 75gp); gained by stripping Fillburt's body.

Encounter 5 (Room 13): gained by stripping Neech's body.

ATL 1, 3, 5 – loot (67 gp), *cloak of resistance +1*, market value 1000gp.

ATL 7 – loot (667 gp), *cloak of resistance +1*, market value 1000gp.

ATL 9 – loot (1267 gp), *cloak of resistance +1*, market value 1000gp.

Encounter 6: All ATLs – loot (80gp); gained by stripping the bodies of the dead operatives.

Conclusion: All ATLs – coin (100gp per PC), *Buzzy's Toy* (market value varies); gained when the Flintwhistle Estate is clear.

OTHER AWARDS

Buzzy's Barking Beagle

This carved mahogany beagle, painted brown and gold, acts exactly like a *stone of alarm*. However, instead of a high-pitched wail, the beagle emits a loud, ferocious barking. The beagle is limited to 5 uses; in other words, after it barks five times when functioning as a stone of alarm, the beagle's *alarm* ability no longer works. The beagle is still magical, however, and barks when the user says the word "speak" when holding it.

Buzzy's Jumping Jack-in-the-Box

This small metal jack-in-the-box is painted on all sides with clown faces. A cheerful tune plays when someone turns the crank. If the user takes a full-round action to turn the crank and pop the jack-in-the box while reciting the command phrase, they are considered under the effect of a *jump* spell. The jack-in-the-box is limited to 5 uses before the magic runs out.

Buzzy's Talking Frog

This small green frog is carved from some sort of semi-precious green stone. When stroked, the frog lets out a loud croak. When activated using a command word, the frog will act as the source of the voice of the user for 3 minutes, as per the *ventriloquism* spell. The frog is limited to 5 uses before the magic runs out.

Buzzy's Magic Mirror

This 1-foot by 1-foot piece of clear glass distorts images coming through it, warping the features of a viewed object in comical ways. When activated using a command word, the mirror will allow the user to understand strange writing viewed through it, or talk to a being viewed through it, as per the *comprehend languages* spell. The mirror is limited to 5 uses before the magic runs out.

Buzzy's Serpent Scarf

This five-foot-long green and yellow silk scarf is made to look like a snake. When the snake's tongue is pulled, it automatically loops around the neck of the wearer snugly. When activated with a command word, the scarf provides the wearer protection as per the *endure elements* spell. The scarf is limited to 5 uses before the magic runs out.

Buzzy's Beautiful Doll

This doll of a female elf has long blonde hair and wears a cute pink dress. One odd thing about this doll is that her hair can grow back if cut. When activated with the command word, the doll's hair begins growing, and she emanates an aura similar to *mending*. Any broken object that comes into contact with the doll when the command word is spoken is affected as if by that spe.. The doll is limited to 5 uses before the magic runs out.

Experience Points

EXPERIENCE	CHARACTER LEVEL	
	1-4	5-9
Encounter 1: PCs get additional information from Greer and Gloriola	10 xp	20 xp
Encounter 2: PCs attempt to get information at College of Magic	10 xp	20 xp
Encounter 3: PCs gather information about Flintwhistles in Baneta	10 xp	20 xp
Encounter 4: PCs question Ciceleta without bring guards	10 xp	20 xp
Encounter 5: PCs encounter crossbow trap(s)	75 xp	150 xp
Encounter 5: PCs defeat the rogue Neech	75 xp	150 xp
Encounter 6: PCs defeat guardian familiar	100 xp	200 xp
Encounter 6: PCs use incantation to weaken guardian familiar	60 xp	120 xp
Encounter 6: PCs open lock on doll	100 xp	200 xp
or		
Encounter 6: PCs refuse to open lock on doll	100 xp	200 xp
Discretionary Experience for Role Playing	50 xp	100 xp
Maximum Possible Experience	500 xp	1000 xp

Appendix I: NPCs and Monsters

Fillburt Snickeltuff is a gnome illusionist who has been hired to infiltrate the Flintwhistle estate and assist an rogue in finding a small vial containing a highly magical substance. His secondary objective is to use his illusionary magic to scare away anyone trying to enter the home. He has been duped into thinking this mission is of vital importance to the safety of Pecal. He is a very good and noble gnome, and he does anything in his power to keep innocents from getting hurt. He is beginning to think that his partner Neech might not be the most trustworthy and upstanding citizen.

All ATLS – **Fillburt Snickeltuff**: CR 9; Small Male Gnome Wiz9 (Illusionist); HD 9d4+9 (35 hp); Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 20; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 11; BAB/Grp +4/+0; Atk dagger +5 melee (1d3); Full Atk dagger +5 melee (1d3); SA spells; SQ gnome traits; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills, Feats, Languages: Concentration +13, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Move Silently +9, Spellcraft +15; Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (Illusion), Nonlethal Substitution, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Illusion); Gnome, Halfling, Low Kalamaran, Merchant's Tongue.

[*Spells Prepared* (4+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1; base DC = 13 + spell level, DC = 15 + spell level for illusions; opposition schools – necromancy and transmutation): 0 – [*detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, open/close, open/close*]; 1st – [~~*alarm, alarm*~~, *color spray, disguise self, silent image, silent ghost sound*] 2nd – [*glitterdust, magic mouth, nonlethal burning hands, see invisibility, silent charm person, summon spirit*] 3rd – [*extended summon spirit, nonlethal scorching ray, silent nonlethal burning hands, silent invisibility, silent summon spirit*] 4th – [*greater invisibility, nonlethal fireball, silent major image*] 5th – [*extended silent major image, nonlethal wall of fire*]

Possessions: 5gp, spell component pouch, 2 daggers, sunrod, scroll of *summon spirit* (CL 3).

Background: A person within the political power structure of Pecal (not named in this module for spoiler reasons) recruited Fillburt and Neech to find the vial, telling them that it contained a very dangerous substance. He shielded his identity from them, so that not even they know who he is. This person lied to them, telling them that Buzzy was really a Tokite spy, and it was possible that Tokite agents were currently moving toward Baneta to retrieve this substance from Buzzy's estate. Buzzy's mission was to assist Neech in retrieving the vial, leaving it at The Journeyman's Inn in the Scholar's District of Bet Rogala.

Neech is a halfling rogue who has made a living performing morally and ethically questionable tasks for some of the less reputable members of the Gray Legion. He is ruthless and cold in the completion of his missions. He truly believes that the welfare of Pekal rests on his finding the vial and destroying anyone who gets in his way. He does not surrender or take any prisoners unless it is absolutely necessary. He thinks Fillburt is a soft fool who has no place on missions of such importance to the safety of Pekal.

ATL 1 (EL3)

Neech: CR 3; Small Male Halfling Rogue3; HD 3d6 (14 hp); Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 20; AC 18 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +2/-2; Atk dagger +5 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +9 ranged (1d3+1); Full Atk dagger +5 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +9 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, halfling traits, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills, Feats, Languages: Bluff +6, Craft (Traps) +8, Disable Device +10, Escape Artist +10, Hide +10, Move Silently +12, Open Locks +10, Search +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Tumble +10; Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (Dagger); Gnome, Halfling, Merchant's Tongue.

Possessions: Leather armor, 8 masterwork daggers, 4 daggers, masterwork thieves' tools, *cloak of resistance* +1

ATL 3 (EL5)

Neech: CR 5; Small Male Halfling Rogue5; HD 5d6 (22 hp); Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 20; AC 19 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +3/-1; Atk dagger +6 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +11 ranged (1d3+1); Full Atk dagger +6 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +11 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, halfling traits, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +11, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills, Feats, Languages: Bluff +8, Craft (Traps) +10, Disable Device +12, Escape Artist +13, Hide +13, Move Silently +15, Open Locks +13, Search +10, Sleight of Hand +13, Tumble +13; Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (Dagger); Gnome, Halfling, Merchant's Tongue.

Possessions: Leather armor, 12 daggers, masterwork thieves' tools, *cloak of resistance* +1

ATL 5 (EL7)

Neech: CR 7; Small Male Halfling Rogue6/Master Thrower1; HD 6d6+1d8 (31 hp); Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 20; AC 19 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +5/+1; Atk dagger +8 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +13 ranged (1d3+1); Full Atk dagger +8 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +13 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2); SA sneak attack +3d6, thrown weapon trick (sneaky shot); SQ evasion, halfling traits, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +14, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills, Feats, Languages: Bluff +10, Craft (Traps) +11, Disable Device +13, Escape Artist +15, Hide +14, Move Silently +16, Open Locks +15, Search +12, Sleight of Hand +15, Tumble +15; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw^B, Weapon Focus (Dagger); Gnome, Halfling, Merchant's Tongue.

Possessions: Leather armor, 12 daggers, masterwork thieves' tools, *cloak of resistance* +1

ATL 7 (EL9)

Neech: CR 9; Small Male Halfling Rogue8/Master Thrower1; HD 8d6+1d8 (39 hp); Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 20; AC 19 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +7/+3; Atk dagger +11 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +16 ranged (1d3+1); Full Atk dagger +11/+6 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +16/+11 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or +14/+14/+9 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2); SA sneak attack +4d6, thrown weapon trick (sneaky shot); SQ evasion, halfling traits, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +2; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +15, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills, Feats, Languages: Bluff +12, Craft (Traps) +13, Disable Device +15, Escape Artist +17, Hide +16, Move Silently +18, Open Locks +17, Search +14, Sleight of Hand +17, Tumble +17; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw^B, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Dagger); Gnome, Halfling, Merchant's Tongue.

Possessions: Leather armor, 4 masterwork daggers, 8 daggers, masterwork thieves' tools, *cloak of resistance* +1

ATL 9 (EL11)

Neech: CR 11; Small Male Halfling Rogue10/Master Thrower1; HD 10d6+1d8 (47 hp); Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 20; AC 19 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +8/+4; Atk dagger +12 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +17 ranged (1d3+1); Full Atk dagger +12/+7 melee (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or dagger +17/+12 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2) or +15/+15/+10 ranged (1d3+1, 19-20/x2); SA sneak attack +5d6, thrown weapon trick (sneaky shot); SQ evasion, halfling traits, improved uncanny dodge, slippery mind, trapfinding, trap sense +3; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +16, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills, Feats, Languages: Bluff +14, Craft (Traps) +15, Disable Device +17, Escape Artist +19, Hide +18, Move Silently +20, Open Locks +19, Search +16, Sleight of Hand +19, Tumble +19; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw^B, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Dagger); Gnome, Halfling, Merchant's Tongue.

Possessions: Leather armor, 12 masterwork daggers, masterwork thieves' tools, *cloak of resistance* +1

At APLs 5, 7, and 9, Neech has the following abilities from the Master Thrower Prestige Class (Complete Warrior, page 58).

Quick Draw: At 1st level, a master thrower gains the Quick Draw feat.

Sneaky Shot (Ex): Just before making a ranged attack, a master thrower with this ability can use a move action to make a Sleight of Hand check opposed by his target's Spot check. If the master thrower wins the opposed check, her opponent is denied his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class for the attack.

Opal the Fifth is a guardian familiar that was summoned by Buzzy when the gnome was first tasked to guard the vial containing the dust of the body of the lich Gahida. For years and years Opal was treated as a family pet, never having to actually guard the vial. Within the last few weeks, however, the outsider has had to protect the vial on several occasions, and her reflexes are keen again.

Life 1 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 1d8 (5 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30; AC 12 (+1 Dex, +1 size), touch 12, flat-footed 11; BAB/Grp +1/-3; Atk claw +2 melee (1d4); Full Atk 2 claws +2 melee (1d4) and bite +0 melee (1d6); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 10; AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills, Feats: Hide +9, Listen +4. Move Silently +5, Spot +4; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B.

Life 2 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 2d8 (10 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 35; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +1 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 12; BAB/Grp +2/-2; Atk claw +3 melee (1d4+1); Full Atk 2 claws +3 melee (1d4+1) and bite +1 melee (1d6+1); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 11; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills, Feats: Hide +10, Listen +5. Move Silently +6, Spot +5; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B.

Life 3 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 3d8 (15 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 40; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +2 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp +3/-1; Atk claw +5 melee (1d4+2); Full Atk 2 claws +5 melee (1d4+2) and bite +2 melee (1d6+2); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 12; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills, Feats: Hide +11, Listen +6. Move Silently +7, Spot +6; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Claw).

Life 4 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 4d8 (20 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 45; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +3 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +4/+0; Atk claw +6 melee (1d4+3); Full Atk 2 claws +6 melee (1d4+3) and bite +3 melee (1d6+3); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 13; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills, Feats: Hide +12, Listen +7. Move Silently +8, Spot +7; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Claw).

Life 5 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 5d8 (25 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 50; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +4 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp +5/+1; Atk claw +7 melee (1d4+4); Full Atk 2 claws +7 melee (1d4+4) and bite +4 melee (1d6+4); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 14; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills, Feats: Hide +13, Listen +8. Move Silently +9, Spot +8; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Claw).

Life 6 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 6d8 (30 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 55; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +5 deflection), touch 17, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grp +6/+2; Atk claw +8 melee (1d4+5); Full Atk 2 claws +8 melee (1d4+5) and bite +6 melee (1d6+5); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 15; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills, Feats: Hide +14, Listen +9. Move Silently +10, Spot +9; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Bite), Weapon Focus (Claw).

Life 7 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 7d8 (35 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 60; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +6 deflection), touch 18, flat-footed 17; BAB/Grp +7/+3; Atk claw +9 melee (1d4+6); Full Atk 2 claws +9 melee (1d4+6) and bite +7 melee (1d6+6); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 16; AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills, Feats: Hide +15, Listen +10. Move Silently +11, Spot +10; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Bite), Weapon Focus (Claw).

Life 8 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 8d8 (40 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 65; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +7 deflection), touch 19, flat-footed 18; BAB/Grp +8/+4; Atk claw +10 melee (1d4+7); Full Atk 2 claws +10 melee (1d4+7) and bite +8 melee (1d6+7); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 17; AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills, Feats: Hide +16, Listen +11. Move Silently +12, Spot +11; Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Bite), Weapon Focus (Claw).

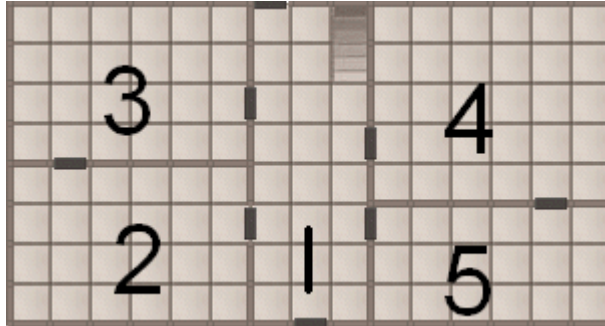
Life 9 - **Guardian Familiar:** Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 9d8 (45 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 70; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +8 deflection), touch 20, flat-footed 19; BAB/Grp +9/+5; Atk claw +11 melee (1d4+8); Full Atk 2 claws +11 melee (1d4+8) and bite +11 melee (1d6+8); SA Nine lives; SQ Darkvision 60', SR 18; AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills, Feats: Hide +17, Listen +12. Move Silently +13, Spot +12; Improved Multiattack, Improved Initiative^B, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (Bite), Weapon Focus (Claw).

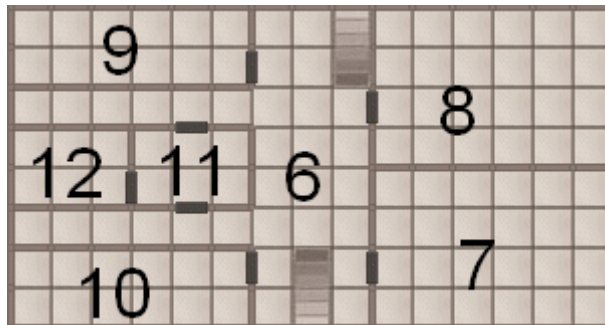
Appendix II: Additional Rules

On all maps, north is the top of the map. Each square represents five feet.

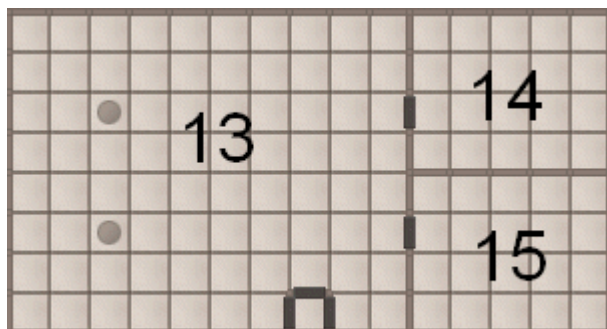
Map 1 – Flintwhistle Estate First Floor



Map 2 – Flintwhistle Estate Second Floor



Map 3 – Flintwhistle Estate Third Floor



Map 4 – Flintwhistle Estate Attic



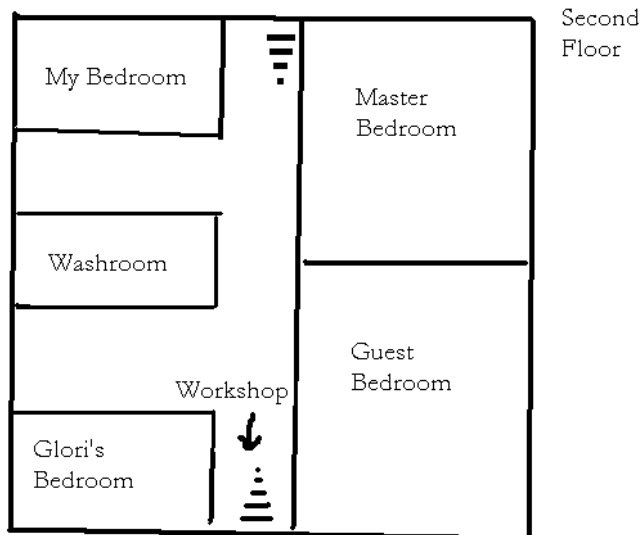
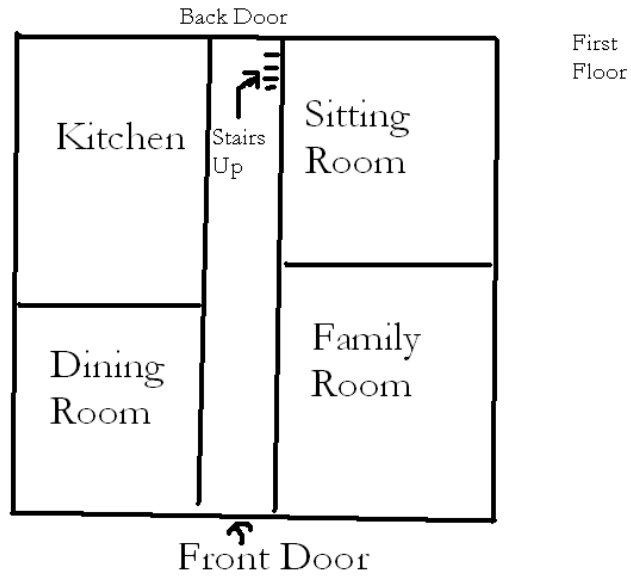
APPENDIX III: Player Handout 1

This is a hand-delivered note received by one of the PCs via courier. The handwriting is legible but obviously hurried. No salutation or closing adorns the note, although the courier reveals whom the letter came from.

It has come to my attention that some acquaintances of a friend of mine are having difficulty regarding their deceased father's estate in Baneta. I mentioned that you might be able to offer them some assistance in their dilemma, as it is a problem of unusual dimensions. I told them of your particular talents in dealing with unusual problems, and they are keen to meet you. They are staying at The Pride in the Artisan's Quarter. Present yourself to them in the evening, and bring along any other hearty adventurers you can muster. They are sibling gnomes named Greer and Gloriola Flintwhistle. Their father was the toymaker Buzzy Flintwhistle.

Player Handout 2

If the PCs ask for a map of the estate, Greer draws them the following maps. You can add a couple other details as needed, such as doors or large pieces of furniture. Greer was not allowed into the workshop enough to really have a good idea of what the third-floor looks like, and he has no idea that the attic is even there.



Player Handout 3

[A messenger wearing the insignia of the College of Magic delivers the following note to you. He does not wait for a reply, disappearing into the crowd.]

In your travels you seem to have stumbled across one, or possibly more, items of inconceivable importance to Pekal. Circular puzzle locks consisting of five-letter combinations guard these items. It is imperative to the future safety of our principality that these items be left alone and not disturbed. Already some of these items have been unearthed by the greedy and the foolish, and if more of them fall into the wrong hands, a terrible force - one that has been trapped away for many years - may again wreak indescribable evil upon our lands. The Fate Scribe may have seen fit to embroil your destiny's with that of this fell power. Beware and be vigilant, or you may be the tools of destruction - your own and Pekal's.

A Friend

[As your eyes read the last word, the message bursts into flames and the ashes blow away.]

Player Handout 4

The wooden soldiers' riddle.

"Listen if you hope to survive!"

"The black gem cannot be defeated."

"An incantation shows the black gem's flaws."

"The first word hides where stars draw close."

"Five below the middle, and twenty to the left."

"The middle word hides in the tools that made the first."

"The last word hides named by the children's love for the black gem."

"Recite the three to weaken the black jewel."

"Know what you do before you do what you know."

"The powers of the past should remain there."