

The Scouring of Gate Pass

WAR OF THE
BURNING SKY
4E™
ADVENTURE ONE



For Character Levels 1–3

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AN ADVENTURE FOR 1ST- TO
3RD-LEVEL CHARACTERS

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first adventure in the *War of the Burning Sky* campaign saga. Throughout the course of the campaign saga, a party of heroes become involved in an escalating war between mighty magical nations, and after many adventures, military battles, and mysterious intrigue, it will be up to them to decide who will emerge victorious and rule in the aftermath.

REQUIREMENTS

This adventure makes use of the rules from the *D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK*, the *D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE*, and the *D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL*. Additionally, the *D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2*, the *D&D 4E ADVENTURER'S VAULT™*, and the *D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL 2* provide useful expansions to provide even richer immersion into the world.

The adventure is designed to be played with a party size of five players and a Dungeon Master. The encounters and experience awards assume a party of first-level characters with little to no previous experience point awards. If the adventure is run with a different party size or higher levels, the encounters will have to be adjusted to provide enough experience to advance the characters to fourth level and slightly beyond.



BACKGROUND

The following information details only the background of this adventure. If you are running it as part of the *War of the Burning Sky* campaign saga, you will find more information in the *War of the Burning Sky Campaign Guide*.

UNHAPPY NEW YEAR

It is a frigid New Year's Eve, and the heroes gather near midnight in a small condemned tavern within the Free City-State of Gate Pass. Located in the mountain pass which separates two hostile nations — Ragesia and Shahalesti — Gate Pass has been neutral since the end of their last war. That neutrality is about to be put to the test, as a scourge comes for the city out of Ragesia.

THE SCOURGE

By now, every magic-user in Gate Pass knows of the Scourge. The Emperor of Ragesia died barely a month ago, and a witch named Leska has moved to cement herself as the next emperor of Ragesia. Leska, leader of the Ragesian Inquisitors, has decreed that all disloyal users of arcane magic are to be tracked down and killed to prevent future threats to the empire. The Inquisitors, clerics specialized in countermagic, travel with military escorts to the borders of Ragesia. Their first target is Gate Pass, its neutrality long viewed as an insult to the nation's honor. Those who resist them will have to face the searing power of the Ragesian Empire.

THE MILITARY THREAT

An entire army marches for Gate Pass, and the people of the city fear that they will not be able to resist the might of the Ragesian military. The city leaders are bowing under pressure and have barred exit from the city, intending to welcome the Inquisitors that come with the army in the foolish hope that the Ragesians will reward their cooperation with mercy.

GATE PASS'S RESPONSE

A local resistance movement devoted to keeping both the Ragesians and the Shahalesti out of the city has gathered vital military intelligence, and they need messengers to

deliver the information to allies at a distant wizard's school. With all their strongest warriors preparing to hold back the Ragesian assault, this vital mission falls to a party of inexperienced heroes — the player characters.

THE IMMINENT THREAT

The Ragesian army is nearly at Gate Pass's doorstep, so time is short. The war is about to begin.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The heroes' main goal is to help a cleric named Torrent leave the besieged city before a group of mage-hunting Inquisitors arrives and captures or kills her. Before they can escape, though, Torrent needs the party to help her retrieve vital military intelligence from a rebellion spy. Unfortunately, Shahalesti spies have already captured the contact and taken the information. The heroes will have to track them to their hideout in an eladrin ghetto, all while avoiding Ragesian attacks on the city.

After retrieving the intelligence, the party will have to find allies to help them escape, most likely going to a sympathetic city council member or receiving aid from a cocky enchanter. To prove their loyalty and worth, they will undertake a few missions at their benefactors' requests. These deeds attract attention, and a group of mercenaries named the Black Horses is hired to capture them. Once the heroes make it out of Gate Pass, they must defeat the remaining Black Horses who have laid a trap along the one safe road.

The heroes head for the edge of the Innenotdar Fire Forest, a dangerous passage where Torrent thinks they can evade pursuit. At its border, however, they come across a hermit and his daughter who are both magic users. The daughter knows that the Ragesians are coming, and asks the heroes to help convince her father to flee. While they ready to depart, a Ragesian Inquisitor arrives and attempts to capture them all.

If they survive, the adventure ends with the heroes preparing to enter the fire forest, the passage through which is detailed in the next adventure, *The Indomitable Fire Forest of Innenotdar*.

CHARACTER MOTIVATIONS

The easiest way for characters to be involved in the adventure is for them to be part of the same resistance group that Torrent works with. People from any neighboring nation would have a reason to want to keep Ragesia and Shahalesti from going to war, so it is easy to justify any sort of character.

- ♦ Characters that are part of the rebellion are given orders simply to help Torrent, whose mission is a secret. Their superiors tell the heroes to trust her.
- ♦ Characters could be natives of Gate Pass who want to protect their city. The *War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide* contains a selection of bonus feats that you can grant characters if they are associated with one of these groups. All of these groups have the welfare of the city in mind and want to help Torrent and her message reach Lyceum safely. A hero associated with one of these groups might be recruited by a resistance member, and told to meet Torrent.
- ♦ Traveling heroes simply looking to get out of the way of a war might have

tracked down the resistance, and been told they can earn safe passage if they join the mission. Or, for a sinister twist, a hero might be a spy for an enemy nation, sent to infiltrate Lyceum. Magic users of any sort would have a great stake in escaping the city. In general, the players and characters should be aware of what the "Scourge" is before the game begins.

THE DUNGEON MASTER'S TOOLKIT

EXPERIENCE TRACKING

Use this Experience Tracker to mark the total amount of experience gained. As encounters and skill challenges are completed, this provides a concise collection for you to track awards. The chart is colored by level. Given a five-member party, the XP gained at the end of "Dead Rising," "Magic Mayhem," and "Inquisitor's Attack" should complete a level for all the heroes.

At the conclusion of the final encounter, they will have achieved fourth level and will be ready to move on to Adventure Two, *The Indomitable Fire Forest of Innenotdar*, with no extra XP required.

✓	Encounter (* Possible Bonus XP)	Min. XP	Total	Parcels	Level
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ambush!	700	700		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aid to the Wounded*	100	800		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Burning Building	250	1,050		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Terror in the Skies	100	1,150		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Animal Crossing	375	1,525	1, 1	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shocking Revelations	675	2,200	1, 1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flaganus Mortus	725	2,925	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mulya	150	3,075		
<input type="checkbox"/>	White Wyrms	1,200	4,275	1, 1, 1, 1, 1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dead Rising	900	5,175	2, 2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Duel* or Shealis's Apartment*	1,000	6,175		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Convincing Shealis*	1,000	7,175		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eladrin Ghetto Hideout	150	7,325		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spy's Headquarters	875	8,200	2, 2, 2	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Major Quest: Obtain the Case	1,000	9,200		
<input type="checkbox"/>	To See Menash	600	9,800		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Street Ambush	1,350	11,150	2, 2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Magic Mayhem	1,100	12,250	2, 2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Major Quest: Escape the City	1,250	13,500		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gauntlet Run	1,475	14,975	3, 3, 3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Chasm Gate	1,250	16,225	3, 3, 3	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Hunt	1,025	17,250	3, 3, 3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Convincing Haddin*	400	17,650		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inquisitor's Attack	1,150	18,800	3, 4	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Optional: Merchant Help	500			

TREASURE PARCELS

Rather than force a particular set of magic and gold on the heroes that may not fit within their character concept, this module uses the Treasure Parcel technique as described in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE. Almost all the rewards in this adventure will be Dungeon Master generated.

Consequently, we recommend you spend a little time with each player and obtain a general "wish list" of magic items the players want for their heroes. As the adventure progresses, you can refer to these "wish lists" to easily slot in some or all the desired items into the various caches that are available, following the guidelines in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE.

A couple of parcels are already pre-defined (for example, the encounters "Animal Crossing" and "Shocking Revelations"). These can easily be changed at your discretion; just update the storyline if applicable.

If you have more or fewer than five players, be sure to adjust the number of treasure parcels upwards or downwards accordingly, as indicated in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE.

ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

If you are running this episode as a standalone adventure, you can have the heroes escort the courier and her message to any organization you want them to become involved with for the rest of your campaign. You may want to change some of the encounters, since several of them hint at events that take place later in the saga. Most of the encounters work fine, however, if they simply provide local color.

If you plan to run this adventure as part of the campaign saga, you will want to refer to the *War of the Burning Sky Campaign Guide*, available free through EN Publishing. The *War of the Burning Sky Campaign Guide* will help you work the events of the campaign into your own setting, provide suggestions for getting the characters involved in the adventures, and give you an idea of what lies further down the road so you can prepare.

ACT ONE: THE SECRET MEETING

PROLOGUE: NEW YEAR'S EVE IN GATE PASS

This act establishes the main mission for the party and is an introduction to the dangers of the city under siege. Once the combat begins in Scene 1, four encounters occur in rapid succession. This will trigger at least one milestone, allowing the heroes to gain an action point. By the fourth encounter, the characters' powers should be seriously depleted, so the last encounter, though tough, is less deadly.

SCENE 1: THE POISON APPLE PUB

THE SITUATION

The heroes are scheduled to meet someone named Torrent at the Poison Apple Pub a little before midnight on New Year's Eve. They are told to enter by the side alley door. The pub has been closed since its owner was arrested, but the owner's wife has allowed use of the building for the evening.

With fears of invasion high, the streets are fairly deserted and normal festivities are muted, letting the heroes travel unmolested.

The pub is about a mile from the western city wall in a poorer district filled with slush-covered cobblestone streets and gloomy, snow-filled alleyways. The night is dark and claustrophobic, and the buildings of the city loom over the shadowy streets. There are no lights in most windows.

OUTSIDE THE POISON APPLE PUB

The pub is a two-story building attached by a rooftop bridge to an abandoned house on the right. A stable is to the building's left. The front door and windows are boarded up, and the curtains are drawn (although a DC 20 perception check reveals faint light behind them). An Official Notice is posted on its door:

"Trehan Finner, owner of the Poison Apple Pub, has been taken into temporary custody under the protection of the city guard, until such time that he can be questioned by representatives of the Ragesian Empire and found innocent of hostile collusion. The Poison Apple Pub is hereby closed until further notice."

The alleys on both sides of the pub are littered with debris and the fetor of drunkenness. An overhead bridge shadows a door on right side and the alley is blocked at the end by refuse and broken furniture. The alley by the stable to the left opens to the back of the building.

- ◆ The doors are good wood doors (Break DC 20)
- ◆ The side door is locked (Thievery DC 25)
- ◆ The windows are as sturdy as a simple wood door (Break DC 16)

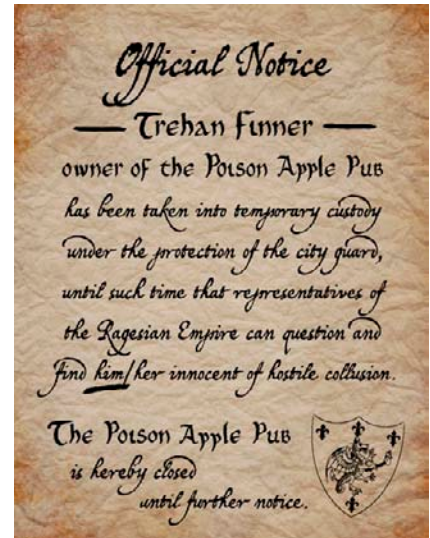
TORRENT

When the heroes knock on the alley door, a moment passes and then it cracks open. A tall, well-tanned woman with short white hair peeks out into the alleyway and looks both ways. She lets the heroes in, gesturing to a single table where she has set up a lamp, map, several mugs, and a small keg of beer. Read the following:

The darkened pub appears empty, its many tables and chairs pushed to one wall and covered with sheets. A single table with enough chairs for all of you sits in the middle of the room. A small oil lamp and a keg sit on top of it, along with several mugs. Unless the shadows beyond hide more, your group and the woman are the only people in the room.

If the heroes examine their surroundings, they notice a staircase leads upstairs, located in a corner of the common room and beside the bar. The windows and door facing the street are closed and boarded up from the outside. On the wall behind the bar hangs a bronze bust of the former emperor of Ragesia, Drakus Coalongue, a regal, aged half-orc with a scar cutting diagonally across his face.

While you are settling down, the woman picks up a mug of beer and speaks. "Good evening, all. My name is Torrent. Thanks for coming." She gestures towards the keg and mugs, and with a wan smile says, "Have a drink. Just because we're about to go to war doesn't mean we can't celebrate the New Year." She then takes a pull of her mug and sits down. For a few minutes, through small talk and friendly banter, the New Year is celebrated.



INSIDE THE PUB

The heroes may be curious about exploring the pub.

- ◆ The door to the kitchen is locked (Thievery DC 20).
- ◆ The door to the storage room is hidden behind stacks of tables and chairs covered with a large sheet.
- ◆ The coat closet and all the bedrooms upstairs are empty.
- ◆ A trap door in the ceiling of the deluxe suite leads to the roof, but it's securely locked (Thievery DC 25).

When the search is done, Torrent jokingly compliments the group's paranoia, then tells them she doesn't want to waste any more time.

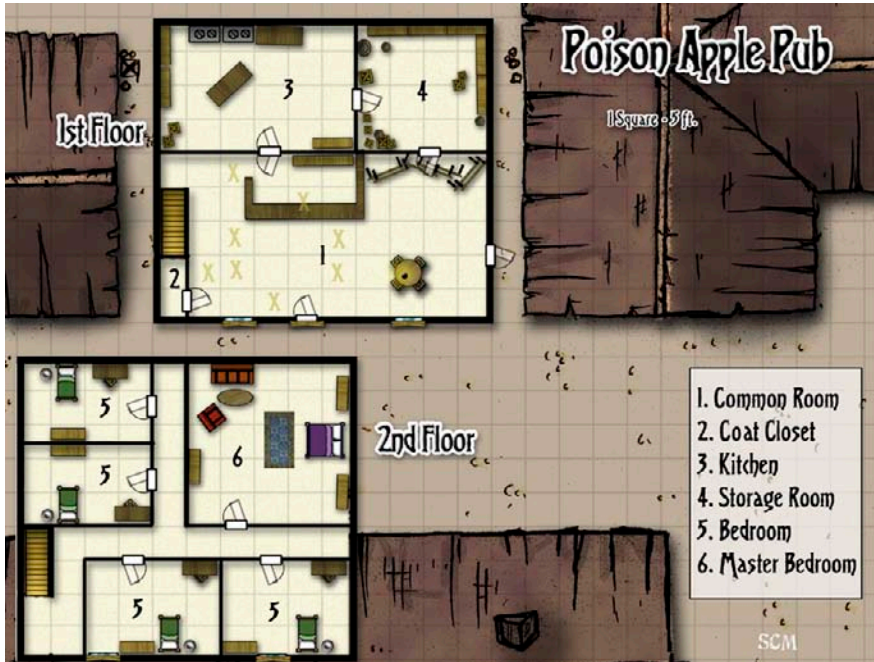
THE MISSION

Whenever the heroes are comfortable, or they bring up why they are here, ask for DC 10 Perception checks. Those succeeding hear a variety of distant bells throughout the city chiming to celebrate the turning of the New Year. Then Torrent begins speaking. Read the following:

Torrent grimaces, straightens in her chair and bitterly sighs, "That's one year gone." She shakes her head a little, then looks over the table towards you and quietly says, "I guess it's time to get down to business.

"The city's in trouble. The Ragesian army is marching on us, and will most likely be here





TORRENT'S KNOWLEDGE

Gate Pass

Torrent knows almost as much about the city as a native, and answers any questions the party has about the city's defenses and laws. Allow heroes to make DC 10 or less Streetwise checks to recall any information you think they are overlooking.

- ♦ Torrent is convinced the city is strong enough to fight off an assault, and can easily survive a siege of several months, long enough for the heroes to get to Lyceum and bring back reinforcements.
- ♦ Only city personnel and diplomats are allowed beyond the well-patrolled city walls. The gates are securely locked.
- ♦ A DC 15 Streetwise or Diplomacy check reveals that city councilman, Erdan Menash, is sympathetic to those who dislike Ragesians. Torrent has never met him, but she knows where he lives — his house is impossible to miss.
- ♦ Torrent recommends finding someone with political power, or convincing the mages at Gabal's school to lend their magic to aid their escape. Whatever the plan, she knows enough about Gate Pass to assess the difficulty (see Act Three: Escaping the City for a discussion of these options). She will not endorse any plan that requires them to kill anyone.

Getting to Lyceum

- ♦ Torrent has in mind a route that avoids impassable roads and well-patrolled paths: a little-traveled road south from the city to the border of the Innenotdar Fire Forest, thirty miles away.
- ♦ Decades ago, the Elf Road ran through the fire forest to Dassen, where Lyceum is, but some catastrophe happened during the last war. The forest was set on fire, and it has not stopped burning since.
- ♦ Torrent has potions that will let the party survive the intense heat, and she doubts pursuers will have similar magic to follow them. There are two potions for each required creature, plus six more. Each potion lasts one day, and she is confident the trip through the fire forest should take less than three days.
- ♦ The road between Gate Pass and the fire forest is the most dangerous part of the journey, but it is relatively unused. With haste, Torrent thinks they can make it to Innenotdar and avoid Ragesian patrols.

tomorrow. Before then, we have a mission.

"I used to study at a magic academy to the south, called Lyceum. They're good people. So when word reached them about Ragesia's 'Scourge,' they sent out messages calling for anyone fleeing Ragesia to come to them. They want to stand against the Ragesians, and the resistance wants their help. We just need to get a message to them.

"Normally we would have sent something by teleporting courier, but something strange is going on with planar magic. The last courier who teleported into Gate Pass, well, rumor is that he showed up burnt to a crisp. Not that I have that sort of magic anyway, but if we're going to talk to Lyceum, we're going to have to go overland. And that's a problem, because the city's walls are sealed.

"Ever since their emperor died, the Ragesians have been trying to show that they're not weak, and they're marching an army in our direction because the mountain pass we're in is apparently 'strategically valuable.' Either way, a few idiots on the city council want to negotiate with the Ragesians, and rumor is they're going to invite a group of Inquisitors into the city to look for 'magic-users who are hostile to the empire.' They've sealed the gates of the city so no one can escape, to make sure they look like they're cooperating, and only military personnel can get in or out.

"We're going to have to get out of the city, and I'm open to suggestions on how. Once we're out, I can get us safely to Lyceum, but

before we get ahead of ourselves, we have a mission tonight.

"The short version is that we've got to meet a contact — a gnome named Rivereye Badgerface — in about an hour at a guarded depository about a half-mile from here. He's carrying a case of vital military intelligence which he stole from the Ragesian palace, and the heads of the resistance think that it needs to reach Lyceum. We've got to get that case, get out of the city, and get far away from here before the idiot city council lets the Ragesian Inquisitors in. Once that happens, the odds of us escaping are —" she finishes off her mug of beer in one long guzzle — slim.

"I know I'd love to stay here and fight against the Ragesians, but I'm no soldier, and this mission might be more important. Worst case, you get away from the Ragesians and we can part ways a few days down the road. Best case, you can come with me to Lyceum, and we come back with an army of our own to drive off the Ragesians. But we've got to act fast either way.

"Are you ready for this?"

DEVELOPMENT

After Torrent's presentation, the conversation turns to planning. Torrent can provide information or suggestions if asked (see the "Torrent's Knowledge" sidebar at right and on the next page), but she does not take an active role. Let the heroes plot their own course.

TORRENT'S KNOWLEDGE (CONTINUED)

Rivereye Badgerface

- ♦ Rivereye, a gnome warlock, was once a spy from Lyceum, acting as a servant in the imperial palace for Kreven, second-in-command of the Inquisitors. Apparently, Rivereye is very ugly and blithely unaware of it.
- ♦ His normal contact, Peppin Tallman, a human wizard from Lyceum, occasionally passed information to the resistance, but was found dead a week ago.
- ♦ A Speak with Dead ritual used on Tallman revealed an upcoming meeting with Rivereye, but not the killer's identity. Tallman's code-phrase and signet ring were also recovered and given to Torrent. Torrent is worried that someone else is after the case, and that Rivereye might spook when he sees Peppin is not there.

The Ragesian Army

- ♦ Torrent suspects Ragesia has scouts scattered all over the mountains and surrounding lands, but she is confident the heroes can avoid most if not all of the Ragesians by taking her route.
- ♦ A DC 15 History check lets a character recall that the army headed to Gate Pass has easily over ten thousand men, and is under the command of General Danava. They do not have many magic-users aside from the Inquisitors, but they do have some wyvern mounts and a few monstrous allies.

Inquisitors

Torrent has never faced an Inquisitor, but she has heard stories. Refer to the information listed in the "Inquisitors" sidebar on this page.

Lyceum

Torrent is an expert in Lyceum knowledge (see "Lyceum" sidebar at right), but she prefers to focus on more immediate matters rather than ramble on about the school. She says she was contacted a week ago by a Sending ritual. The mages there know something is amiss with teleportation magic, but they are not sure exactly what is wrong, or how widespread the problem might be.

Payment

Torrent laughs at this idea, and asks how much the heroes think the Inquisitors will pay them for the honor of cutting open their wrists and letting them bleed out as they are interrogated.

SCENE 2: THE AMBUSH

Level Variable (700–875 XP)

THE SITUATION

After the planning phase is completed and the players have a reasonable idea of how to proceed, an ambush, led by a Black Horse named Kathor, occurs.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Ambush" (page 39)



AFTERMATH

If the party defeats the bounty hunters or successfully escapes, Torrent suggests they hurry and get to the meeting with Rivereye. She is worried that the firebombing might make him flee, and she cannot risk losing him.

If the party is defeated, they will not die,

since Kathor is having second thoughts about the ambush. The bounty hunters pull out manacles and rope, but Kathor calls them off, saying that with the chaos on the streets too many people will see them and they cannot risk dragging prisoners around during an attack. The men balk, but Kathor is stern, and eventually they spit at any helpless heroes, take some valuable gear from them (but not magic items), then mutter something about "hundreds of gold coins" before leaving. Kathor, conflicted, ignores the heroes as he rides off.

A SHORT REST

After the ambush, the characters can take a short rest, providing them a moment to see what has happened to the rest of the city. The streets are filling with panicked people, and though the bombing ended within minutes,

LYCEUM (ARCANA OR HISTORY)

- DC 7** Lyceum is a school devoted to teaching magic of all sorts. It is located in the small town of Seaquen, on the rocky tip of a marshy peninsula in southern Dassen. Its students often travel the world to learn foreign magic.
- DC 12** Lyceum's headmaster, a diviner named Simeon, has visited all the major cities in the region and has friends and contacts among their mages. Founded to encourage solidarity among magic-users, the school finds ways to use magic for the benefit of everyday people. Many governments think of him as a meddler.
- DC 17** Simeon serves as an advisor for nobles and rich merchants. To bolster the school's legitimacy (and avoid Dassen levying taxes) he has recruited a cadre of talented warmages and battle clerics, and has offered Seaquen's harbor as a home port for the Wayfarers, a group of magically-inclined entertainers.
- DC 27** Lyceum stands over the grounds where an archmage was slain many years ago. Rumors say he was entombed underground in caverns filled with fire.

INQUISITORS (ARCANA OR RELIGION)

- DC 7** The Inquisitors hunt for dangerous magic, which in their mind pretty much means any arcane magic used by other people. They have special skills for stopping other mages' spells. Most Inquisitors are humans, orcs, or half-orcs, and they carry metal claws on their hands. Many Inquisitors are skilled interrogators who use their claws to slit the wrists of prisoners, forcing the prisoner to answer quickly.
- DC 12** Inquisitors are almost exclusively divine spellcasters who prefer spells of divine fire and protection. They wear masks to shield their souls, and thus are more resistant to mind-affecting magic. No one has seen Supreme Inquisitor Leska's face for nearly forty years.
- DC 17** Inquisitors cannot turn or control undead unless they were killed by the Inquisitor. Such summoned undead seem mindless, but they respond to simple commands.
- DC 22** Supreme Inquisitor Leska is rumored to be gathering information on how to steal divine power — not to become a god herself, but to make herself strong enough to never be beholden to a deity. Her followers are all heretics, and cannot be raised from the dead except as undead abominations.
- DC 27** Those in the imperial palace whisper that when Leska was just a young servant of the Ragesian Empire, she had an audience with the Emperor and offered him immortality if he agreed to make her one of his advisors. Coaltongue was intrigued, but one of his guards struck down Leska with a spear for her impudence. She pulled the spear from her throat, and a moment later the wound had healed.

a battle has begun at the nearby west wall. Townsfolk rush about trying to put out fires or get to the shelter of temples, and soldiers hurry to their posts, slowed by the throng and chaos. All the while, bells ring urgent warnings up and down the mountain pass

When the rest is completed, Torrent announces that it is time to get to the depository in the next ward.

SCENE 3: THE CITY UNDER ATTACK

Level 3 (775 XP)

THE SITUATION

As the party heads for their rendezvous with Rivereye at the depository, the confusion and the mass of people surging about in near darkness makes travel difficult. While they travel, the following events occur in their path. All the quests together equate to one single encounter of 775 XP (EL 3). Each quest completed will affect the lives of those involved and may provide new springboards for adventure in Gate Pass (see also Adventure Nine, *The Festival of Dreams*).

QUEST 1: AID TO THE WOUNDED (100+ XP)

THE SITUATION

Read the following:

Traveling quickly from the remains of the pub, you see that Gate Pass is in turmoil. Torrent moves ahead about twenty feet, making haste for the depository. As you round a corner, you nearly run over a man carrying a woman out of a doorway. Both are burned severely and he appears nearly spent. Three children, huddled in coats and whimpering, follow behind. "Help me," the man croaks, his pain clearly visible.

WHAT IF TORRENT DIES?

If Torrent dies, it is not too hard to give the party the information they need to succeed. A note on the dead cleric's body or a map in her gear can direct the heroes to the rendezvous with Rivereye and to the safe house, and it is not hard to find out where the road to the fire forest is. You could also have another member of the resistance link up with the party at the safe house — perhaps even Rantle — to act as a guide to the city.



If the heroes move by without helping, the man collapses, forcing one random hero to make a DC 10 Dexterity check or get tripped up in the fall. If they still continue on, Torrent doubles back and offers aid, informing the party that they can spare a little time to do the right thing. No XP is awarded in this case.

If the party helps the family, award the quest XP. If they go out of their way and find shelter at a temple a block away, award an additional story award of 100 XP.

The man's name is Rensar.

QUEST 2: BURNING BUILDING (250 XP)

THE SITUATION

Read the following:

As you pass a number of burning structures, you see people crossing the connecting skybridges to safety. From a building ahead, you hear screaming and see a cluster of bystanders staring and pointing upwards towards the fourth floor, just below the roof.

A woman, named Maibel, is looking out an open window to the people below, screaming for help. Smoke billows from the portal and she looks back into the burning edifice, and then screams even louder as she turns back to face the street. She claws up the frame and places a foot on the sash.

DEVELOPMENT

Maibel will jump if the heroes cannot or will not help. Racing up the stairs to rescue her without some fire protection is impossible.

Any plausible resolution awards the quest XP, even if the outcome results in a failure. Some possible options are:

- ♦ Arrange to catch Maibel with a blanket. Up to eight people can participate. Have the strongest character make a DC 20 Strength check to successfully catch her. Other characters can use an Aid Another action to lend support.
- ♦ Climb up the side of the building to reach Maibel and climb back down with her on the character's back. The wall surface is uneven: climbing up requires a DC 15 Athletics check; climbing down with Maibel, a DC 20 Athletics check.
- ♦ Use a skybridge to access the building's roof and lower a rope to Maibel. A hero doing this must make a DC 10 Endurance check to avoid 5 points of fire damage from the heat and smoke.

QUEST 3: TERROR IN THE SKIES (100 XP)

THE SITUATION

Read the following:

Only a block away looms the gate that leads to the next district, and your destination, the depository. The press of people is considerable as they flee eastward, and the passage is too narrow to allow easy exit from the western ward.

As you push on, screams begin to erupt from the north. At first, they are far away, but slowly, like a wave rolling onto the shore, the panic grows and moves southward. A soldier patrolling the gate wall suddenly jumps with a curdling scream into the crowd and disappears from your view.

You think you still hear his screams go on a moment and then stop, but you can't be sure; his plight is quickly eclipsed when less than a dozen feet from you, men, women and children begin to wail.

DEVELOPMENT

The heroes are susceptible to an irrational panic. Non-dragonborn characters must succeed against a Fear attack; +10 vs. Will or

become dominated (save ends).

Roll initiative. During each round, a dominated character flees irrationally through the crowd. He is subject to a +5 mob attack vs. Reflex; 1d6 damage, as the citizens flail and tear at each other in their terror. When all the characters have succeeded in their saves, the encounter is over and the party can regroup.

While the encounter is in progress, all undominated characters make a passive Perception roll vs. DC 12 to notice a crimson, bat-winged shape the size of a house swooping through the sky about a hundred feet overhead. As it passes out of view over other buildings, a surge of panicked screams rises along its path. It is too dark to make out clearly what the creature causing the fear is.

QUEST 4: ANIMAL CROSSING (375 XP)

THE SITUATION

Read the following:

Finally passing through the gate, the depository is in sight. Eighty feet tall, it flickers with oranges and reds from the fires beneath. Long, garishly colored banners hang from the roof to the topmost balcony. They drift lazily in the thermal currents, displaying the latest merchant advertisements. To your left, you hear a well-dressed man calling out in a plaintive voice, "Kiki, please come out, it's fine now! Please, Kiki!"

The voice sounds forlorn and devastated. If the heroes engage the man, he turns, his eyes brimming, and runs towards them, crying, "Please, will you help me find my baby?"

DEVELOPMENT

If the players accept, Corian, a wealthy merchant, explains that Kiki is his pet dire weasel. His house was struck by a bomb, and though the stone building did not burn, the sound of the thunderstone spooked Kiki,

causing her to flee. He is worried that she's usually friendly, but might injure someone if not recaptured.

Catching Kiki

Level 2 Skill Challenge • XP 375

Complexity 3 (8 successes before 3 failures).

Kiki has weaseled her way out of her master's care.

Setup Corian waves to the north to indicate where Kiki ran. As the heroes attempt to capture Kiki, she will run through the nearby streets, ultimately ending up in a dead-end alley with a locked sewer grate and drain. Kiki will squeeze through the drain. The heroes must open the grate to capture her before she travels into the pipes and disappears forever. Torrent thinks this is a waste of time and refuses to participate in the search.

Primary Skills Nature or Perception

Secondary Skills Acrobatics, Insight, Religion, Stealth, Thievery

Special The heroes can achieve no successes until they find Kiki's initial hiding place (Nature or Perception).

Partial Success After 1 success using Perception or Nature, an empty temple is revealed as Kiki's initial hiding place, and all other skills become usable. After 5 successes, the heroes track Kiki to an alley with a sewer drain. If the heroes get this far, they may retrieve the treasure, regardless of the skill challenge result.

Success If the heroes achieve 8 successes before 3 failures, Kiki is successfully retrieved from a sewer drain. Corian is thrilled at his pet's return and attempts to get back to the shelter. He scoffs at the idea of payment, offended at profiteering during wartime, but a DC 10 Diplomacy check convinces him to pay 10 gp for the party's trouble.

Failure If the heroes get 3 failures before 8 successes, they chase Kiki to an old sewer drain and she disappears into a pipe that travels further than they can reach. Corian is upset and vindictive, using many colorful phrases as he splutters on about the heroes' incompetence.

Acrobatics (DC 9) Kiki went through a narrow hole in the wall. The hero can squeeze through it. If the check fails, it is a failure and Kiki bites the hero: +6 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage and ongoing 3 damage (save ends).

Insight (DC 12) The hero draws upon previous experience and tracks Kiki's movements unless Kiki is already in the drain.

Nature (DC 7) Only usable 3 times. The first use of Nature or Perception locates Kiki's initial hiding place. Each check helps the heroes follow the fleeing Kiki. If Kiki is in the drain, successful use of this skill calms her. If the check fails, Kiki bites the hero: +6 vs. AC; 1d10+3 and ongoing 3 damage (save ends).

Perception (DC 12) Only usable 2 times. The first use of Perception or Nature locates Kiki's initial hiding place. Each check helps the heroes follow the fleeing Kiki. If Kiki is in the drain, successful use of this skill calms her. If the check fails, Kiki bites the hero: +6 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage and ongoing 3 damage (save ends).

Religion (DC 12) Identifies the temple's patron god, and the hero remembers the code-phrase to unlock the door. The door can be broken down (Strength vs. DC 15).

Stealth (DC 12) The hero gets within 10 feet of Kiki, adding a +2 bonus on the next Nature or Perception check.

Thievery (DC 12) If the heroes are at the temple, this check unlocks the door. If they are at the drain, the grate can be unlocked.

AFTERMATH

If the heroes achieved at least five successes during the skill challenge, one of them (choose randomly) notices a small box half-buried in the muck in the drain. If retrieved, it is obvious it has been there for a long time; when opened, it reveals:

- ♦ A finely crafted +1 duelist's dagger.
- ♦ A gold ring with a 100 gp amethyst.
- ♦ A *potion of healing*.
- ♦ 30 gp.

This treasure is worth two 1st-level treasure parcels.

ACT TWO: RETRIEVING THE CASE

PROLOGUE: CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Unless the party has taken an extended rest, they have achieved a milestone. Award the party members one action point.

In this act, the heroes attempt to retrieve the intelligence stolen by the Shahalesti spies. The first encounter takes place immediately after the previous act, but the quest takes two days to complete. As this act is run, intensify the danger the Ragesians represent.

MAJOR QUEST: OBTAINING THE CASE (LEVEL 5; 1,000 XP)

If the characters obtain the case, they are awarded the experience. If they gain an ally in Shealis and leave the case with her, they are also awarded the experience.

SCENE 1: THE DEPOSITORY

Level 2 (675 XP)

THE SITUATION

Soaring skyward inside a constantly guarded, fenced compound, the Depository Tower is a well-protected bank for the city citizenry. Torrent thinks Rivereye Badgerface, holding vital Ragesian military intelligence, waits inside; she hopes Peppin Tallman's signet ring and code-phrase will gain the trust of the suspicious gnome.

Unfortunately, a Shahalesti eladrin spy named Larion has breached the highly secure building and now Rivereye is his captive. Rivereye has convinced Larion that the courier case containing the plans is trapped to explode and only Peppin has the phrase to unlock it. Fearful of failing his mission, the eladrin has sent the case with two of his henchmen back to the Shahalesti hideout while he waits for Peppin in an effort to retrieve the keywords.

When the characters reach the Depository gatehouse, read the following:

You see the dark needle of the Depository Tower long before the guarded gate appears along the roadway. Now as you come to the massive iron gates, four well-armed guards, three orcs and a dwarf snap to greater attention

and prepare for a challenge. In a respectful voice, the dwarf asks for the required owner's key, which Torrent produces. He and the other guards visibly relax.

"The riots have us all on edge, please forgive our harsh diligence," the dwarven guard says as he tests the key on a special lock plate. He hands it back mechanically when the latch opens. Placing his lips against the opening, he whispers something and the large cogs and gears on the sides of the gates rumble and turn. In a moment, the way is open and one of the orc guards clumsily gestures a welcome for all to enter.

As you pass in, the chaos of the city disappears. Untouched by Ragesian bombs, a beautifully tended garden wends its way past splendid fountains. The left basin recalls elemental spirits of local legend — a dragon, a worm, a kraken, and an eagle — while a statue of Emperor Coaltongue, posing with torch held high, dominates the basin on the right. The torch glows as if lit by a neverending flame.

You count four other guards patrolling the grounds, dwarves and orcs again, and continue towards the large double iron doors that are the only entrance to the central structure. Once again, Torrent's key is used and the orc guard speaks a secret phrase to gain entrance.

"There're guards inside," the orc politely says, with a gruff and graveled voice; his smile looks like a grimace. "So be careful and don't accidentally open the wrong locker. There are lanterns here for light." With a chuckle, he adds, "You'll regret them if you meets up with the ugly gnome in there now."

SPY VERSUS SPY

Larion, accompanied by a wisp solon that is loyal to the Shahalesti, waits for Peppin to appear. Earlier, he and a few elven soldiers knocked out the interior guards and put them upstairs with Rivereye. A half-orc guard was killed in the process because the solon sensed that he was evil. The soldiers are taking the case back to their hideout in an eladrin ghetto.

Larion has used a ritual scroll of Disguise Self to appear as Rivereye (hunching down to look more like a gnome). Any attempt to

DEPOSITORY AREA FEATURES

A large contingent of guards, most of them human, protects the depository. All the guards have Perception +10. (See the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL for Human Guard combat stats.)

- + The torch on the statue of Coaltongue is a powerful fireball generator tied to the Elemental Chaos, and which no longer detects intruders. When the planar rift is repaired, the generator will work again.
- + The compound is 120 feet square. The tower is 60 feet in diameter and 80 feet high with 4 stories.
- + The main gates are 20 feet high and are complemented by a 20 foot high iron fence that surrounds the compound.
- + The tower entrance doors are iron (Break DC 25).
- + The gates are reinforced iron (Break DC 35).
- + The tower has three balconies, the topmost one encircled by pillars, where merchant advertising banners are attached that flutter in the breeze. In the daytime, the garish colors detract from the tower's architectural beauty.
- + Each banner is about 15 feet in length and is thick enough to support a person's weight.

Day Shifts

- + 8 human guards (level 3 soldiers)
- + 8 human berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- + 3 human mages (level 4 artillery)

Night Shifts

Night shift guards have low-light or darkvision. Only 4 dwarf hammerers and 4 orc berserkers are on active duty when the heroes enter the depository. The rest are helping with Gate Pass' defense.

- + 8 dwarf hammerers (level 5 soldiers)
- + 8 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)

disbelieve the change requires an Insight vs. Bluff +12 check. The character must be within 2 squares of Larion to make the check. Larion has no idea that Peppin is dead and assumes that Torrent is Peppin, so even if the heroes do not discover the disguise, he will eventually slip as he converses with her.

SOLONS

Solons are beings native to the Elemental Chaos. Varied in form, from humanoid and beast to disembodied wisps of energy, these entities are the discarded experiments of the primordial beings that battled the gods for control of creation. In the early part of that conflict, the primordials sought to marshal an army to rival the creations of the deities. The first inventions, the solons, were powerful, but not enough to rival the angels and exarchs they were designed to face. When the warrior archons were ultimately hammered into shape, the solons were forgotten. Displaced and discarded, solons seek to right wrongs and bring peace wherever the primordials have sown discord and war.

Arcana (DC 15): Solons are elemental beings that seek to right wrongs and bring peace. They are often allied with good wizards and sorcerers.

Arcana (DC 20): A solon invokes a righteous fear that few can stand against. Solons flare up in a righteous light when seriously hurt and release all their life energy in a bright radiant blast when they die.

Read the following:

The first floor of the tower is one huge room, and though the far side is hidden in shadows, it looks to be about sixty feet in diameter. A broad stone ramp circles clockwise upward to the left of the door, while the interior of the room is filled with aisles of metal lockers, each slightly larger than a coffin propped upright. Squat round columns twenty feet high support the ceiling.

When the party arrives:

- ♦ The solon hovers silently on the third floor.
- ♦ Larion is on top of the first floor ramp leading to the second floor.
- ♦ The balcony doors on the upper floors are rigged to open with a simple push, to make escaping through them effortless.

Upon seeing the group, Larion heads down the ramp and feebly nods to them, coughing and complaining that he caught a cold on his trip from the Ragesian capital. Disguised as Rivereye, he appears to be a pug-faced, ugly gnome with blue robes and a runny nose. He looks at the party when he reaches the floor and sneezes. Read the following:

"I hear the war outside," says the gnome between coughs. "Good to be in here. Very safe." He clumsily turns around and begins to ascend the ramp, "Follow me, Peppin, it is time to conduct our business."

DEVELOPMENT

- ♦ If the party ignores Larion's error, he takes the group to the second floor, pausing in front of a random locker to request the password. Torrent knows nothing about a password; if at this point the party says nothing, Torrent explains Peppin is not with them. When Larion realizes he will not get the (nonexistent) password, he flees to the third floor.
- ♦ If Larion is questioned about why he called Torrent Peppin or they begin chase, Larion scrambles up the ramp to flee.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Shocking Revelation" (page 42)



AFTERMATH

- ♦ **Larion escapes:** Larion (and the solon, if able) heads back to Gabal's school and warns Shealis that the heroes may come looking for her. (They will be present at the school if the party goes there.) The depository guards will burst in moments later, demanding everyone surrender.
- ♦ **The heroes are defeated:** They wake up peering into the faces of the guards and Rivereye.
- ♦ **Larion is captured:** He refuses to cooperate unless convinced that the party is friendly to Shahalesti. The tower stays quiet and can be searched for the missing Rivereye, who is found on the fourth floor, along with the other guards, both living and dead. When brought to the party, he is visibly relieved that Larion has been caught.
- ♦ **Solon is captured:** It is willing to talk to non-dragonborn. It is unfriendly, but if made friendly (Diplomacy DC 10) it will tell the party Larion works for Shealis, and offer to take them to her.
- ♦ **Lightning trap is activated:** If Larion and the solon are defeated or gone, and the lightning trap is still active, four guards from the garden burst into the tower. The lightning trap stops and the



party is ordered to surrender.

- ♦ **Depository Guards:** If the guards have not been previously alerted, they come in while the party is resting, and noticing their comrades are not present, order everyone to surrender their weapons.

After the fight, the guards order the party to drop their weapons and sit on the tower floor. A DC 12 Diplomacy check will cause the guards to be somewhat more polite, but they will remain insistent and are willing to back up their request with non-lethal violence.

The heroes are stripped of their belongings, including Peppin's signet ring. A systematic search of the tower locates the unconscious guards and Rivereye. The murdered half-orc is also discovered, and it's obvious he was burned by the solon's radiant eyebeams. Rivereye is awakened and unbound, and brought into the presence of the party.

The guards are unsure what to do, but Rivereye notices Peppin's signet ring on the pile of equipment and scans the party carefully. With some hesitation, he asks for the codephrase, which Torrent freely recites. Rivereye then hails the party as his saviors and explains to the guards what has happened. Satisfied that the party is in the clear, the guards give the heroes their leave and start the grim task of removing their deceased colleague from the tower.

SCENE 2: A PLEA FOR RECOVERY

THE SITUATION

While the party is taking at least one short rest, Rivereye sits down on the floor and begins to tell his story. Read the following:

“So, Peppin is gone,” Rivereye says with a sigh. “The loss is great in my eyes, though I fear few would agree. Life has become so cheap in these dark days. As a servant in the imperial palace, I saw things that put all faith in a good future to the test. Oh! How I wish the Inquisitors had not enslaved my lips and hands to never reveal what I know.”

“But I realized others could see what I know! That is why you are here tonight. That case is valuable because it contains all of what I cannot say. It must be retrieved and sent to Lyceum!”

The gnome continues and tells the party how he convinced the imposter that the case was trapped. He is not positive, because he does not understand the elf language, but he thinks the rogue the party encountered is named Larion.

Rivereye also overheard the solon talking with three eladrin. The thieves have a contact at Gabal’s school, a Shalapesti eladrin named Shealis. At one point in the conversation, the solon, not good at keeping secrets, mentioned:

“The escape tunnel to the Singing Chasm is a week away from completion. Our mission will be done soon and we can return to Shahalesti with all we have gathered. Shealis is more difficult now that she is near the end of all this. I hope this information will make her happy.”

Finally, the gnome describes the case — black metal, about a foot long and wide, and half a foot deep, made of (Rivereye thinks) adamantine, with a lock. As he describes it, the former servant realizes something and points to a cloak of resistance +1 and an *ironskin belt* that had been mistakenly returned to him by the guards earlier. This is worth two 1st-level treasure parcels.

“The imposter left this cloak and belt behind as he prepared for your arrival. He traded them out for mine, I suspect, to make his disguise more convincing. They’re a little large for me and it seems that you might benefit more from them than I!”

He chuckles with a mean grin and starts a coughing fit that suggests the gnome’s strength is flagging. Torrent recommends taking shelter in a nearby temple dedicated to healing, under which is one of the resistance’s many safe houses. Rivereye is grateful:

“Thank you my lady,” splutters the weary gnome. “A good rest will prepare us for the task tomorrow, and help me recover my wits. I hope that all of you are willing to go to Gabal’s school and help me regain the information from the Shahalesti. They have no business interfering with all this. Will you join with me on the morrow?”

If the group does not want to help Rivereye, Torrent strongly encourages them to recover the case anyway. She testily states, “This is the entire reason you are here. Do you still possess your honor, or do you not?”

Torrent helps the gnome to his feet, and the party leaves the depository to find the safe house.

SCENE 3: FALLEN DEVIL

Level 2 (725 XP)

THE SITUATION

This encounter is designed to introduce the enemy early. The characters are probably out of daily powers by now, so this encounter is intentionally simpler than the previous ones. Feel free to award an action point if you desire.

The temple safe house is only a few blocks away, and by this point most people have cleared the streets and have taken shelter, even though the bombing has ended. Now, dramatic aerial battles occur overhead and the party faces their first Ragesian foe as they near the safe house.

Read the following:

The streets are nearly empty, as most of the citizens have found shelter. The night is cold and the sky glows from the many fires still raging throughout the city. But all is not quiet. High above, the screech and roar of battle fills the air as the Gate Pass griffon riders clash with Ragesian wyverns.

Looking up after a particularly loud screech, you see the shape of a bat-winged creature collide with a griffon rider. Both combatants flip from the impact, nearly throwing their riders off as they begin a fast descent towards

THE SAFE HOUSE

While the party waits to escape from Gate Pass, the safe house makes a good home base. Refugee merchants can sell goods at a 20% discount if the party escorts them to their shops. At least one Level 1 encounter should happen for every two excursions (Looters, a rescue mission, salvage or something else).

The party may also use the services of Buron Watcher (Cleric Level 9) for healing and resurrections — he has the Raise Dead and Remove Disease rituals. If resurrections cannot be purchased, the safe house is a perfect place for new characters to start.

Because he is relatively high-ranking in the resistance, Buron can help the party with information and contacts if they feel lost or need suggestions.

If the party brings the cleric the case, he cannot open it; if they have managed to open it, he can tell that the book found inside is written in Barzhad, though he cannot decipher the encryption that hides its contents. He has a scribe make a copy of a few pages so the resistance might work at breaking the code, but he suggests the more prudent course is to take the case to the party’s original destination. He is not aware of their mission when they first meet him, but if he learns of it, he will wish them a blessed journey.

the ground below. You can hear the sound of their collision. Somehow the griffon rider recovers himself and turns west towards the main battle, but the other creature, still screeching, plummets into the roof of a low building directly in front of your path.

Instantly the din of battle is replaced with the clatter of falling timber and tile. For a few seconds an eerie calm surrounds the building. Then a woman’s bloodcurdling scream echoes down the street and is suddenly stopped. The cry of a child starts as well, and continues.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

“Flaganus Mortus” (page 44)



AFTERMATH

Flaganus carries 70 gp and one *potion of healing*. This is worth one 1st-level treasure parcel.

Unfortunately, the child’s wounds are too severe and the child dies in Torrent’s arms.

THE DIRGE PLAYER (150 XP)

This side quest can be done at any time during the party's stay in the safe house. It can be used to provide experience for a newly created character.

Just inside the front door of the temple, a dark-skinned and dark-haired young woman dressed all in black plays a depressing tune on a guitar — a typical new year's festival song, redone in a minor key. This is **Mulysa Bahri** (female half-orc bard), bringing everyone's spirits down because she enjoys sharing her suffering. She gets irritable if anyone talks to her, sarcastically saying she left the sheet music for her "happy songs" in her house, which burned down.

If a character attempts to inspire courage (or a similar effect), or tries to bolster the spirits of the crowd, people calm noticeably, glad someone is still optimistic. The heroes can use Diplomacy, Religion, and/or Bluff (DC 10) to bolster the crowd's spirits; if the check succeeds, Mulysa rolls her eyes dramatically, gives up, and leaves the area, either to sleep or find a new place to sing.

However, if Mulysa is left to play her angsty music, a few minutes later, a pair of human teens begin harrasing her, irrationally blaming the troubador for the Ragesian invasion. A gnome man tries to stop the fight, but succeeds only in attracting more attention. If the party doesn't do something, the insults and yelling continue for awhile until the adolescents grab Mulysa and drag her outside in the street. The youths start beating her, trying to get her to cry out (she won't) while the frightened crowd just looks on, too shocked to interfere.

A DC 10 Diplomacy check can get the boys to leave the woman alone, as can an opposed Intimidate check; the bullies are considered Human Rabble (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL for statistics). Any obvious use of magic or any overt violence just makes things worse, though, angering the crowd.

If the situation is calmed down, either by quieting Mulysa or by preventing the beating, Buron comes out and thanks the party for the deed. Award the quest XP.

If instead the heroes do nothing or manage to cause more trouble, Buron arrives and chastises the crowd angrily (this quiets but does not truly calm the crowd), then goes to treat the injured Mulysa.

SCENE 4: THE SAFE HOUSE

Torrent guides the party to a nearby temple of the Order of the Aquiline Cross, devoted to a god of healing. She says it is a gathering place for resistance members.

The temple is packed with at least a hundred nervous people, all squeezed into a 40-foot circular prayer chamber and adjacent rooms. Many are nervously relating rumors of how the battle at the main gates is going. Children cry, and priests tend to numerous injuries from fire, stampeding crowds, or violent looters. People are scared and demoralized. Priests go between the wounded, tending them as best they can, their healing capability all expended.

Torrent leads the heroes to an ornate door behind the altar area and opens it. Stairs leading down into a crypt are guarded by two large half-orcs. The underground area contains supplies and weapons for the Gate Pass resistance. Rivereye, coughing almost non-stop, is immediately taken to the infirmary.

Resistance members guide the heroes to a small room with a few sleeping pallets, and then show them the common area and kitchen. The living spaces are makeshift, but function well. The heroes are introduced to Buron and some other resistance members and then given an opportunity to take an extended rest.

SCENE 5: THE TERRORISTS

Level 5 (1,200 XP)

THE SITUATION

Fully rested, the party can now face a tougher challenge. One of the dwarves from the Depository tower, a resistance member, has information about a terrorist cell working with the Ragesians that is in the area. Both Torrent and Rivereye have been impressed with the heroes' abilities and recommend the party as best able to handle the situation.

Torrent and Rivereye will not accompany the heroes. Rivereye's cough appears to be pneumonia and he is bed-ridden. Torrent is assigned to gather some information about Gabal's School, and Shealis in particular. Torrent has never heard of the Singing Chasm mentioned by the solon, and wonders about the tunnel that will become an escape route for the Shalahesti. She suspects the two spies who have the case are probably by the tunnel's entrance.

Read the following:

After a morning of rest, you are all fully refreshed and able to face this new challenge. Torrent's worry is evident as she prepares to leave with Rivereye. "The dwarf mentioned that the thugs have some awful beast to unleash that strikes and hides like a cat. I assume that they are waiting for some signal to come from the Ragesians, and it will probably be soon." She then gestures to a nearby table covered with a cloth. "Buron was able to acquire some items and equipment for you this morning. Take them with his blessing – and mine. We'll see you later this evening."

Before the party embarks, Buron provides two 1st-level treasure parcels worth of gear (one is a 4th-level magic item), and while the heroes sort out the treasure, he hands them a map to the terrorists' warehouse lair. When the heroes get underway, read the following.

The streets are slippery from the ice and a chill wind blows from west to east. You are surprised at the devastation the daylight reveals. Along the streets, it appears no building has been spared. Most of the structures have surface damage, but a few have been completely razed and smoke rises lazily from embers and smoldering debris. The odor of burnt wood and stone is cloying. Much of the roadside clutter seems to be decorations for the Festival of Dreams, which was to be celebrated today. A few brave souls wander about, picking up loose junk and chatting with others they meet. The news you overhear is worrisome. A small portion of the Ragesian force made last night's attack. They were driven back, but the invading army has demanded that a group of Inquisitors be allowed into the city, or the next attack will be more persuasive. Still, despite the devastation, a few bemoan the cancellation of the festival parade.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"White Wyrms" (page 45)

**AFTERMATH**

If the party is defeated, the heroes are killed. If the cell is defeated, the heroes discover a chest with treasure worth three 1st-level treasure parcels. There is a cache of notes and messages sealed with a mysterious letter "M."

The notes direct this cell to create a diversion near the house of a city councilman, Erdan Menash. Though not specific, there is an implication that another cell is tasked to either harm or kidnap the councilman in the very near future.

SCENE 6: INVESTIGATIONS AND INTERLUDE

When the party returns to the safe house early in the afternoon, a steady snowfall has begun. Torrent is still gone, and Rivereye is recuperating. While waiting, the party can do some shopping and catch up on rumors. At one point, Buron, who has learned the party's mission, comes to them and says:

"Your actions have been of great service to the resistance. If you desire to ally with our cause, you would be welcome. Your passion has become an inspiration to us all and we would be the richer if you joined our ranks. Many speak so highly of you, that I think they would follow you into the depths of the demons' hells!"

This event is intended to provide help for a skill challenge with Shealis later. If a hero joins the resistance, he receives the Blade of the Resistance feat as a bonus feat (see the *War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide* page 11).

QUEST 1: CRYPT COLLAPSE

Level 4 (900 XP)

THE SITUATION

Late in the afternoon, when most of the safe house is empty, a strange rumble fills the crypt. The sound's source is a room next to the heroes' bunk room. Buron rushes in, carrying a lantern. He peers into the room and backs away quickly, ashen-faced. He turns to the heroes.

"This temple was built atop an ancient crypt, and now it appears the bombing has disturbed even the dead. Quickly; I need your help!"

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Dead Rising" (page 47)



AFTERMATH

The crypt contains two 1st-level and two 2nd-level treasure parcels.

After the battle, the safe house begins to fill with people. Other than the news of the

broken crypt, the main conversation is about the luck of such a major storm. The wyverns cannot fly in it and it seriously hampers the Ragesian siege. Most are fearful that this delay will only make the attacks more brutal, and they expect that another bombing run will be made as soon as the wyverns can fly again.

Torrent returns late in the evening, covered in a thick layer of snow. She sits next to the divinely healed Rivereye and warms herself by the fire while drying off. Her day-long investigation reveals that a promising wizard at the school, Shealis Amlauril, is celebrating her recent elevation to paragon status. She now has her own apartment and is actively researching the teleportation problem.

Shealis is not well liked, though, except by the Headmaster, Gabal. One wizard in particular, Diogenes, has an exceptional disgust, apparently engendered by Shealis's impropriety in using a solon familiar. When they meet, Torrent is quite impressed with his sarcasm, and she can also be observed admiring the fine cut of Diogenes' blue robe.

Rivereye is convinced that Shealis has possession of the case and will escape with it whenever the tunnel is completed.

Retrieving the case is important, and both Torrent and Rivereye decide to seek help immediately from an old sorcerer that Rivereye knew from his days in the imperial palace. The semi-retired gentleman is sympathetic to the resistance and may help to wrest the case from Shealis before she can escape. Everyone is encouraged to get a good night's rest. Torrent and Rivereye leave, hoping to return about mid-morning with the sorcerer.

Treat this as an extended rest.

QUEST 2: STOPPING SHEALIS

Level 5 (1,000–1,125 XP)

THE SITUATION

Well before sunrise, Buron awakens the party. He is agitated and quickly relates some chilling information. Read the following:

"One of my men has discovered that a tunnel into something called the Singing Chasm will be complete within the day. Sounds like an eladrin escape route, which means Shealis will get news of this soon and flee. You need to go to Gabal's now and stall her until Torrent and Rivereye return. I will send them as soon as possible."

OUTSIDE GABAL'S SCHOOL

When appropriate, this information should be conveyed to the party. Regardless of how events are resolved, the party witnesses a change outside the school as morning arrives.

Read the following:

Moving quickly through the slackening snowfall, the shadowy school comes into clearer view. As the light increases, you see the Ragesian bombs have not been kind; one tower is cracked and multiple craters dot the yard and surrounding area. An inch of snow covers the corpse of a griffon and its rider floats in the moat.

As dawn arrives a few people gather at the gate. They talk loudly to each other about the invasion and the evils of magic. Within the hour, over forty angry people, all of them unfriendly to the school, its students and anyone else who practices magic, surround the front gate.

People have heard that Gabal went into hiding, and are futilely protesting outside his nearly abandoned school. Getting in through the arcane locked gates is practically impossible, though if the mob recognizes anyone in the party as a magic user, they get loud and start shouting at the party, surrounding them and pushing them.

Every hour or so, Diogenes strolls out to the front gates and tries to be diplomatic, making it clear that he also thinks Gabal is a coward. He is fast-talking and smooth, and claims that the reason he and the other students are staying in the compound is so that the Inquisitors will have an easier time finding them. Slightly balding and laid back, he is as unhostile as anyone you could imagine, and the mob calms down slightly.

If the party heeds Buron's call, then read the following:

A heavy snow falls as you make haste towards the school. The streets are barren in the darkness, except for the drifts that pile over the debris of the previous night's onslaught. The crunch of boots in the snowpack is the only sound you hear.

When you finally reach the school's gate, you understand why it has nicknamed the Castle. A small bridge crosses a moat. An iron fence surrounds the campus, which consists

of many small buildings and four fifty-foot towers. Even in the dim pre-dawn, the castle-like appearance is unmistakable.

Beyond the gate, a lone man stands watching, smoking a rolled stick of tabac. A smoke cloud surrounds him in the heavy air and the cigarette glows brightly when he inhales, his paunch expanding to take in the earthy fumes. He eyes you carefully as you approach, eyes bright in the glare of the nearby torchlight. He doesn't move closer when he speaks. "And what, my friends," he says with a casual air, sweeping his blue-robed arm lazily outwards from his chest to the side, "brings you here on such a warm summer's day?"

The heroes might suspect that the gatekeeper is Diogenes; if a hero makes a DC 7 Insight check, the suspicion is confirmed. Making this check also confers a +4 bonus to Bluff or Diplomacy checks made to convince Diogenes to detain Shealis.

If the party mentions the need to detain Shealis, Diogenes will ask why, and if they explain, he lets them in. If they do not confide in the wizard, they must try to sway him; this is a DC 17 Diplomacy or Bluff check. If the check fails, Diogenes becomes gruff and simply tells them that the gates will open at ten and Shealis can leave if she wants — and her little solon too. He then resumes smoking and walks away.

The heroes have one other chance to gain entrance, but will have to risk the crowd (see the sidebar "Outside Gabal's School" on page 13) in order to reach him. It takes a DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince Diogenes to let them in. They will gain a +5 bonus if they outline their need; if they fail, Diogenes looks at the throng and sadly informs them that he would love to help, and would, if there were less of a crowd, but the risk to the school is too great.

The party is forced to wait and face Shealis in the open. If this happens, run the tactical encounter.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Duel" (page 48)



AFTERMATH

If Shealis defeats the party, she does not kill the heroes (though a natural death is still fatal) and makes sure they are stabilized before escaping. Diogenes and Torrent awaken them and the story proceeds as a defeat. See the sidebar "Defeated by Shealis" on page 15.

If the party is victorious, then the story continues as a victory. See the sidebar "Victorious over Shealis" on page 16.

INTERLUDE: A FORCE TO CONSIDER

THE SITUATION

The next scene assumes the heroes did not engage in the tactical encounter "Duel," because they managed to convince Diogenes that Shealis is a threat. When Diogenes lets the party in, he performs a strange ritual on the gate and leads the heroes to the kitchen, where he offers whatever they like from the larder while they discuss plans.

Diogenes has a longstanding grudge against Shealis, and will gladly help the party if they explain that they are opposing her, or if they mention the solon, which he thinks is her familiar. In his mind, having a familiar at all is a liability, and having one that glows like a floating target is just bad form — and Gabal's education is all about using proper form.

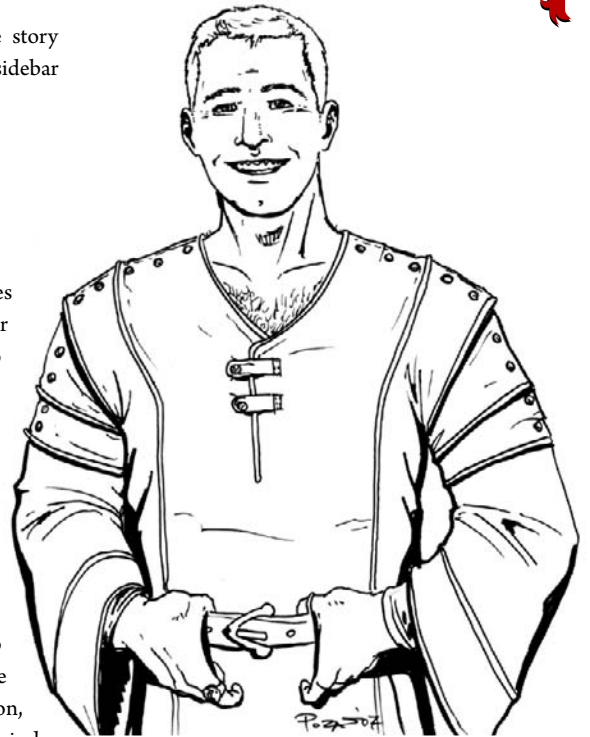
Unfortunately, Gabal likes Diogenes less than he does Shealis, probably because Diogenes prefers the subtlety of illusion and charm spells over other types of spellcraft. Ultimately, Diogenes is more than willing to help the party get the case from Shealis.

If Shealis has had any visitors over the past day (such as Larion or the solon), Diogenes knows about it, so the party should not be surprised to see either or both of them at the school.

The most important issue is to detain Shealis if she refuses to release the case; this is apparent to any hero making a DC 10 Insight check. Diogenes notes the school has a device that creates a globe of force about the size of Shealis's apartment, but it requires a ritual to start and maintain it (it is useful for underwater exploration). With the school emptied of spellcasters, it would fall to him to use it while the party deals with the wizard. He explains that once the field is up, Shealis will be trapped. The party can then attempt to subdue her and obtain the case.

SHEALIS, ELADRIN SPYMASTER

The leader of a ring of Shahalesti spies, Shealis Amlauril pretends to be a driven and scholarly student. Her relationship with the



headmaster, Gabal, furthers her intelligence gathering, and she subtly uses his infatuation to insinuate and infiltrate the upper echelons of society.

Underneath the veneer, she is detached, calculating, and willing to bargain so that all involved in her schemes perceive themselves to be winning. She's also a skilled combatant who is likely beyond the heroes' means to defeat; they will have much greater success in convincing her to help than in attacking her.

Shealis does not have in her possession the case the party seeks, but she knows its whereabouts, having received a note and a map the previous day from the two eladrin that left the Depository. There is a sizeable population of eladrin in Gate Pass, but they tend to stay to themselves in walled districts, and it is in one of these ghettos where the spies' hideout lies. The quarter also contains their means of escape from the besieged city, a tunnel to a vast underground cave network called the Singing Chasm.

If neither Larion nor the solon escaped the depository tower, Shealis assumes that they have been killed or captured. If either of the two escaped, however, Shealis has a description of whom she faces. She will be awake before the party makes it to her apartment. She has been busy gathering her effects and collecting years' worth of observations so she can flee the city when the tunnel is finished.

SCENE 7: THE FORCE IS WITH YOU

Level Variable (450–1,125 XP)

THE SITUATION

Having settled on the attack plan, Diogenes brings the party to Shealis's apartment, a single-story building on the western side of the compound; he then produces a small box from his robe and sits cross-legged on the snow-covered ground. He looks at the party and says:

"You need to be close to the walls when the ritual starts," Diogenes reminds you. "The globe will be impassable for about fifteen minutes. That should be plenty of time. If you have not obtained the case by then, my strength will be spent and the globe will fail. I wish you luck. I'll release the globe if you come out first and give a positive signal that all is fine."

With the globe in place, the party can deal with Shealis without fearing her escape. The eladrin spy is initially unfriendly to the group but may have her attitude changed through a skill challenge.

If the solon escaped the depository, he is waiting in the bedroom. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a soft glow characteristic of the solon's emanations from the opening to the right. Read the following:

The door to the apartment opens, revealing a generous room that serves multiple purposes. A salon spreads to your right, melding into a kitchen along the rightmost wall. The far wall is adorned by a table and desk filled with equipment and boxes. Immediately to your left is a line of bookcases, nearly empty from obvious packing.

The light is dim, but a blond-haired eladrin woman stands near a small lamp in the kitchen. Her blue eyes flicker like shining sapphires and her pale skin glows like snow. She wears concealing red robes, but the metallic gleam of chainmail peeks out from her collar. Her gloves shine like silver.

With an easy grace, she steps toward the stove, seemingly unconcerned, and speaks, "You are here for the case, I know. I do not intend to let it fall back into Ragesian hands and it is safe right now. What can you say that would change my mind?"

Convincing Shealis

Level 3 Skill Challenge • XP 450

Complexity 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Setup The characters have a chance to convince Shealis that the Ragesian case would best be studied in Lyceum.

Primary Skills Arcana, Diplomacy, History

Secondary Skills Bluff, Insight, Streetwise

Partial Success If the heroes achieve 3 successes before 3 failures, Shealis reveals that she doesn't have the case and that talk is useless. Whoever is closest to her desk notices a crudely written note with what appears to be a map. Shealis will turn away as she talks, distracted long enough for the hero to steal it with a DC 7 Thievery check. If the Thievery check fails, Shealis notices and attacks in anger. If the check is successful, she becomes surly and strongly suggests the party leave.

Success If the heroes gain sufficient successes, they convince Shealis to ally with them. This is treated as a victory (see the sidebar "Victorious over Shealis" on the next page).

Failure Shealis becomes agitated, tells the party they are fools, and attacks. Run the tactical encounter "Shealis's Apartment" (page 49).

Arcana (DC 7) A character reasons that papers inside the case may explain the issues of the Teleportation Breakdown. Lyceum is a perfect place to study it.

Bluff (DC 12) A party member can attempt to flatter or make a vain promise. Any mention that the party can bypass the case's traps is worth 2 successes and provides a +2 bonus on the next Bluff check.

Diplomacy (DC 7) Only two Diplomacy rolls can be made. A hero with a diplomacy success results in a dialogue about the benefits of working with the Resistance.

History (DC 10) The player has insight about how the Shahalesti and the Ragesians made Gate Pass a neutral border (see the *War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide* pages 3–4). If the player actually has read the *War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide*, then treat this as two successes. The heroes may also appeal to the fact that the contents of the case may have a direct bearing on the future of Gate Pass and how to defeat the Ragesians.

Insight (DC 7) An argument can be made that regaining the case will help protect Shahalesti because Gate Pass will be able to stand against the Ragesians. The first successful Insight check will also reveal that an Intimidate check will always fail.

Intimidate (DC –) Shealis cannot be intimidated. This always fails.

Streetwise (DC 12) The hero may offer to provide safe passage, intelligence sharing from the resistance, or some other idea.

AFTERMATH

If Shealis defeats the heroes, she does not kill them (though a natural death is still fatal); she makes sure they are stabilized before escaping. Diogenes and Torrent awaken the heroes and the story proceeds as a defeat. See the sidebar "Defeated by Shealis" below.

If the party is victorious, then the story continues as a victory. See the sidebar "Victorious over Shealis" on the next page.

DEFEATED BY SHEALIS

If Shealis defeats the party, Torrent and Diogenes arrive in time to render aid to the injured and dying.

Luckily, the heroes find a map that must have fallen from Shealis during the fight (see "The Map" below). Both Torrent and Diogenes realize that time is short and there is only one more chance to obtain the case before it is lost to them. The map will help them find the hideout.

Diogenes is too weak to accompany the party, but Torrent will join with them. If a hero has died, offer to let Torrent be run by the hero's player for the next encounters. If someone asks about Rivereye, explain that he is on another mission.

Unfortunately for Shealis, she is on the run from the sorcerer that Torrent recruited and will be busy long enough for the party to find the hideout and (hopefully) leave with the case. If she ever encounters the heroes again, she will have great difficulty restraining her anger at being outwitted.

The Map

If the heroes gain control of the map, whether because they stole it from Shealis or she accidentally dropped it in combat, they can examine it at their leisure. The map is crudely drawn, but it shows the eladrin ghetto area and a general location of the hideout (the map has a smeared area that corresponds to the hideout's location).

A note in the Rellanic script reads, "Arborenea before Elysiun before Kelesta." A DC 10 Arcana or Religion check identifies these as three planes of the cosmos. Torrent can read this if none of the heroes can.

VICTORIOUS OVER SHEALIS

This outcome results in a 1,000 XP quest award in addition to any combat or skill challenge award.

Shealis will concede defeat and offer to take the party to examine the case on the condition that it stays in Shahalesti control and that all its secrets are shared. Lyceum will receive updates regarding its contents through Sending rituals. Their contact will be Clathan, an eladrin wizard of some renown. Any wizard or warlock can confirm Clathan's prestige with a DC 10 Arcana check. A DC 10 Insight check by anyone else indicates Shealis is being honest.

If the party is gracious, Shealis applauds them for their wisdom and apologizes for any misunderstandings. She indicates her willingness to help them in any way in the future should they meet again. The party has gained a new ally.

If the party does not like her conditions, then Shealis becomes indignant and refuses to reveal anything about the case. A casual search of her apartment will reveal the map; Shealis will become even more furious at its discovery, but there is little she can do.

Torrent will appear shortly with a halfling dressed in cold weather gear and a cloak and carrying a staff. As soon as the halfling sees things are in hand, he leaves without mentioning his name or offering a greeting. Torrent explains that Rivereye is on a mission.

The Sorcerer

The sorcerer, a halfling named Feris, sympathizes with the resistance but looks out for himself. Rivereye knew him from Coaltongue's court, where Feris helped him.

Feris has started his own school of sorcery and has a few adepts, but the school is not yet successful. To make up for the shortfall, Feris supplements the school's income by providing "protection" for local merchants in his ward. Every few weeks, he recruits a few ruffians to deal mischief to those who refused his "help." The crimes are small — petty theft, minor assaults, vandalism — but they are a nuisance. His fees are reasonable (so as not to alert the thieves' guild), and he has convinced himself that once the school is profitable, he will stop the swindle. Torrent and Rivereye do not know about Feris' criminal activities, and think his school is his only concern. For now, Torrent will not reveal Feris's name or any other information about him, at his request.

SCENE 8: ELADRIN GHETTO HIDEOUT

Level 3 (150 XP)

THE SITUATION

A pair of Shahalesti soldiers who escaped with the case from the Depository the other night waits in their doormaker shop hideout, in a walled community of eladrin where they feel safe. The eladrin plan to give the case to Shealis when they see her next so she can take it to Shahalesti. Before they get a chance, however, an imp sent by the Ragesians to retrieve the case plans his attack.

DEVELOPMENT

As the party nears the ghetto where the eladrin are hiding, any hero making a DC 20 Perception check notices a raven (the imp in an alternate form) quietly shadows them. If a hero then makes a DC 12 Nature check, this reveals that its presence and manner of flying are inconsistent with natural raven behavior.

If Shealis is with the party, they gain easy entry into the ghetto; otherwise, their way is a little more difficult.

Read the following:

(without Shealis) The ghetto exists behind a walled area that appears to have no entrance. The snow reveals a well-trod path to a cleverly hidden doorway. After about a minute of searching, the secret trigger is discovered and you gain entrance into the enclave.

(with or without Shealis) You enter a quiet square lit by magical flames that flicker and move like summer fireflies. Trellises and arbors cover fire-damaged buildings and some eladrin are intent on repairs. A few children play in the street. The map is smeared around the area of the hideout's location, and you are unsure which building it might be.

No one accosts the party, but the eladrin are unfriendly to non-eladrin (–4 to all social interaction skill checks). They are friendly to eladrin, but the heroes must still make a DC 10 Streetwise or Diplomacy check to get them to admit that a group of eladrin from Shahalesti live in the upstairs rooms of a doormaker's shop in the corner of the ghetto.

THE DOORMAKER'S SHOP

This two-story brick building has a fake front door, and the windows are just wooden

frames painted to look like curtains have been pulled. The chimney is exhaling smoke, a sign that someone is there, but there seems to be no entrance to the building. The only creature present is a simple rat rooting around for food, which scurries away if accosted (again, this is the Ragesian imp in an alternate form). A hero who makes a DC 12 Perception or a DC 7 Nature check senses that the rat is behaving strangely.

Kurychek, Imp

Statistics See the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL

Tactics Sent by the Inquisitor Guthwulf,

Kurychek's mission is to retrieve the case that Rivereye brought from the Imperial Palace.

He prefers to avoid combat, instead trying to manipulate enemies into helping him.

THE SECRET ENTRANCE

The real entrance is in an alley behind the building, with only a narrow space between it and the outer wall of the ghetto. A DC 12 Perception check detects this secret door made of wood, painted to look like a brick, and it reveals three switches that can turn, hidden in a carving of various celestial figures. The carving also contains a trap that alerts the Eladrin inside and immobilizes the character entering through the secret door.

Dangerous Carving

Level 3 Blaster • XP 150

Trap

Before you is a carving, done in a Shahalesti high style. Demons fight from the walls of a citadel as three figures, a winged woman with a trumpet (a solon), a noble and muscular man with a lion's head (a leonal), and an armored eladrin woman with a gleaming greatsword, battle. An inset ray of light bathes the three heroes in a golden glow. The figures are raised from the rest of the work and appear to be switches that may unlock the door.

Trap A poison needle containing an immobilizing drug (blue whinnis) punctures the skin.

► Perception

DC 17 A character searching the door notices a small hole on one of the carved sunbeams.

► Trigger

If the switches are not turned in the proper order, the poison needle pricks the finger of the target. An alarm bell also rings, alerting the eladrin to an incursion.

► Attack

Immediate Interrupt; Melee

Target The character opening the door

Attack +8 vs. Fortitude

Hit 2d6 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). On the first failed save, the target is immobilized. On the second failed save, the target is unconscious for 1d4 hours.

► Countermeasures

- ♦ **Thievery (DC 17)** A rogue can defeat the needle trigger, but not the alarm bell.
- ♦ **Insight (DC 15)** Identifies the roles of the three figures, and with the aid of the note on the map, the party can figure out the clue. Turn the switches in order — eladrin, leonal, then solon — and the door will open when the sunbeam carving is pushed. Otherwise, the poison needle trap is triggered.
- ♦ **Arcana (DC 10)** You recall that the three images are representative of the planes. In fact, the three planes are listed on the map sheet held by Shealis.
- ♦ **History (DC 12)** The three figures are related to a legend in which an eladrin hero tore down the gates of a demonic citadel, a leonal defeated the fiends inside, and a solon destroyed the fortress's walls with a trumpet blast.
- ♦ **Religion (DC 12)** The characters are well known, and represent the forces of good triumphing over evil. They now reside in the hierarchy of epic deeds, the eladrin being the highest in honor with the leonal next and the solon last.

A HELPING HAND

If the party has trouble figuring out how to get inside, they hear a quiet “psst,” from a nearby invisible source. The imp, invisible, addresses the party, offering an alliance. The imp was sent to retrieve the case, and it cannot let its bargain go unfulfilled. However, it does not want to risk being killed by the eladrin, so it wants to work with the party.

The imp need only fulfill the letter of its agreement, so it will permit the party to take whatever is inside the case; it cannot be blamed when it brings back an empty case. With its knowledge of the planes, it can easily solve the riddle if the party is stumped, but it also knows the door is trapped. If the party needs help with that too, the imp says to give it a moment and stay out of sight, and it skulks away.

About a minute later, a young eladrin girl,

the equivalent of a 7-year-old human girl, walks into the alley, talking to her “guardian angel.” If the heroes do nothing, the imp pretends to be an angel who needs the girl’s help, and convinces her to open the door, springing the trap and impaling her with the poison needle. The girl cries out and whimpers for the angel to help her, and the imp makes her keep quiet until, a minute later, the poison causes her to pass out. A cleric can use a healing surge to slow the poison’s spread until help can be found.

If the party figures out the trap themselves, the imp still makes its offer for an alliance. It only fights the party if they attack it first, or if they completely reject its offer, which would force it to violate its pact with its summoner.

SCENE 9: SPY HEADQUARTERS

Level 4 (875 XP)

THE SITUATION

When the party enters the building, they meet with up with three celestial badgers, two Shahalesti warriors, and a Shahalesti lieutenant. The lieutenant is briefing the eladrin regarding the tunnel. If Shealis is present, she speaks a phrase and the badgers calm down and the tactical encounter is avoided. Otherwise, the badgers start attacking.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

“Spies’ Headquarters” (page 50)

**THE CASE**

An unlocked coffer holds mundane treasures and a key to a cabinet downstairs containing any magical items. The magic items should be helpful for rogues or arcane spell users. They were used in the original theft of the book. The total is worth three 2nd-level treasure parcels. The case the party seeks, a thick steel box etched with swirling patterns and warded with an Arcane Lock ritual (Strength or Thievery DC 28), lies beside one of the mats.

DEVELOPMENT

Should the party manage to get a look inside the case (perhaps they repeatedly throw it off a rooftop), the case contains a book written in the Infernal language and using a secret code (Insight or Arcana DC 35 to crack the code), though there are copious maps and architectural drawings for some

sort of underground complex. The value of this book will likely remain unknown until Adventure Three, *Shelter from the Storm*, when it is revealed that the book is a horrifyingly detailed treatise on ways to empower magic through mass ritual torture, and the coded text outlines a vast excavation project going on in the frozen wastes of northern Ragesia.

IF SHEALIS IS NOT PRESENT

The negotiation uses the “Skill Challenges to Change Attitudes” rules in the *War of the Burning Sky Campaign Guide*.

If the party attempts to negotiate with the eladrin, they are willing to listen, though they start as Hostile. If the imp accompanies the party, any check takes a –4 penalty. This penalty is made clear on the first Insight or Diplomacy check that is made.

Only if the eladrin are made Friendly will they let the party take the case, and even then, only if the party makes it clear that they are working to oppose the Ragesians. This is a complexity 3 skill challenge with moderate DCs. Use similar rolls as those used with Shealis in “Convincing Shealis” page 15. The eladrin ask many questions, wanting to have something to report if they have to leave the city empty handed.

IF SHEALIS IS PRESENT

If Shealis has not been convinced to share the case with Lyceum, she is adamant in refusing to turn the case over, and the eladrin soldiers obey her.

If she has been convinced, the eladrin are ordered to hand the case over to her, which she then gives to the party. This may surprise the heroes, but she reasons that there is a more eclectic blend of magicians at Lyceum and they may know secrets that are not studied by the Shahalesti. She realizes she is taking a risk with her kin, but this is a war where pride will guarantee defeat. The heroes now have the opportunity to take the case or leave it with her. Either way, the wizards at Lyceum will eventually know of its contents.

AFTERMATH

Once the party has their hands on the case, or are satisfied the case will be investigated, they can finally prepare to leave Gate Pass. If they have not already, Torrent recommends they go back to the safe house to rest and heal.

ACT THREE: ESCAPING THE CITY

By now, the characters should be midway through second level. Make sure that all their leveling activities are completed and they have had an opportunity to purchase new gear.

Escaping the city is now a primary concern. Torrent needs to get to Lyceum, either with the case or with news of the case.

The most likely course is that the party goes to Councilman Menash to get his help. Menash arranges from a city cavalry officer, Captain Herreman, to take them out of the city disguised as his soldiers, but before the party reaches Herreman they get ambushed by more Black Horse bounty hunters. During the ambush, a local hero named Rantle comes to their aid, giving them another message to take to Lyceum. Then, with Captain Herreman's aid, they ride out of the city. However, be ready to rearrange events in response to the party's actions, and do not feel you need to force the encounters described here if the party comes up with another option.

MAJOR QUEST: ESCAPING THE CITY (LEVEL 6; 1,250 XP)

Once the characters have successfully escaped the city, they are awarded the experience.

WHAT IF THEY FAILED?

If the party did not get the case in Act Two, it barely affects the plot of the campaign saga. However, *Adventure Eight, O Wintry Song of Agony*, holds the pay-off of this plot thread, in which the party gets a chance to thwart the plot alluded to by the documents in the case and thus turn the tide of the war. You should give the party another opportunity to find the information that was the case, perhaps by adding it to the plot of another adventure or creating a side quest to retrieve it. Without the party's intervention, Kurychek the imp eventually manages to retrieve the case and deliver it to the Ragesians. However, if the party ends up allying with the Shahalesti down the road, the eladrin might have gained the case and the information it contained, and they might be willing to organize a joint mission that follows the plot in *Adventure Eight*.

SCENE 1: BAD NEWS

THE SITUATION

It is the third day after the attack and the skies in the afternoon are clearer. Unlike the previous night, no snowfall hampers the Ragesian siege. As the party rests, the refugees within learn of the events occurring outside the safe house. Read the following:

At sunset today, an Inquisitor delivered a message to the soldiers at the western gate: Allow a group of Inquisitors into the city or the attacks will be renewed. The council has one day to consider the demand. Buron, Torrent and Rivereye are visibly worried. As the three begin their counsel, you overhear Torrent mention the need to leave for Lyceum before the Inquisitors are admitted. Many names are mentioned thereafter, with Diogenes and Erdan Menash at the top. Other options are discussed and it sounds like no easy solution is forthcoming. Then all talk stops for a moment. Torrent suddenly turns around to face you. "I'm sorry," she says with a sheepish smile, "I have been a lone horse for so long, I forgot that you have a stake in this as well. Forgive me." She turns to you and motions you into the room. "It is time to plan our escape. All of us..."

DEVELOPMENT

As plans are made, the following options may come up. When the meeting is finished, ask the players whether they will sleep through the night or act immediately. Mark down the passage of time accordingly.

- ◆ **Griffon Ride:** The griffons are well guarded and will most likely be on patrol this evening anyway.
- ◆ **Hide in Wagons:** The city is on a war footing and locked down. Military activities are given light scrutiny. Anyone making a DC 7 Streetwise check will remember that the guards have recently been using pitchforks to search wagons.
- ◆ **Sewer Exit:** The party may consider trying to sneak through the sewers. A DC 10 Dungeoneering check reveals that from all appearances, there are no sewer

exits outside the city, so that way would lead down and not out.

- ◆ **Climb over the Walls:** The chance of climbing over the walls is remote. They are too heavily guarded (see "Exit Gates," below).
- ◆ **Forge Documents:** This can be accomplished with a Thievery check. A +5 bonus is available if the heroes can use another military order or council decree as a base sample. Record the final roll; that is the DC to use when the papers are checked at the final gate by two guards and the captain of the watch (roll three times at +7 vs. the hero's Thievery check).
- ◆ **Diogenes:** Diogenes may be able to help the party with a risky plan (see "Use Your Charm," below).
- ◆ **Councilman Menash:** Erdan Menash is one of the more colorful characters on the city council. He is a former merchant and tailor who used to sell well-crafted but horribly unfashionable gear to adventurers, with the goal of making sure everyone knew he was the one sponsoring their heroism. If the party does not remember the note from the White Wyrms encounter, Buron reminds them that Menash is a marked man. They could meet with him regarding the note and possibly secure his aid.

EXIT GATES

The party may decide to make a break through the city gate.

You see before you a wall of stone forty feet high and at least ten feet thick. The gate itself is of traditional design; twenty feet high with an upper floor over it where at least two guards are seen pacing back and forth. You remember going through a similar gate previously and seeing the murder holes in the ceiling. The main wall is crenellated on top with a metal awning that protrudes out just below the top.

Overall you see about 40 men on watch, carrying crossbows, pacing the length of the wall and crossing a particular patch of it about once a minute.

The guards' and officers' details can be found in Appendix A. Scaling the wall requires a DC 20 Athletics check; navigating the awning requires a DC 25 Athletics check. Each round a hero spends on the wall grants a +4 bonus to Perception rolls made by the guards.

The first guards who notice the escape raise an alarm and draw crossbows on the party, telling them to surrender. Every two rounds thereafter, two more guards and an officer arrive. This continues until four sets of reinforcements arrive. The guards shoot to kill.

USE YOUR CHARM

The party may go back to Gabal's school looking for help getting out of the city, and if Diogenes (see pages 14–15) is friendly towards them, there is a chance he will help them.

Diogenes can be convinced to help with a DC 17 Diplomacy check and at least a 375 gp "offer" to cover expenses. Aid Another checks are allowed on the Diplomacy check. Remember that there will likely be an angry crowd outside the school's fence.

If the party gets his help, he explains he has a Ritual of Suggestion scroll (see page 32) that can be used on the gate captain to let them go out. Diogenes will not use the scroll himself; he sheepishly mentions he's tried this before and been caught, but he will accompany the party and render aid if needed.

Diogenes leads the party through a secret passage under the school's towers and exits in a stable nearby (secretly owned by the school). In minutes, a wagon is hitched and some hay and boxes are arranged in the back to leave a hiding space. While riding out to the southern gate, Diogenes recommends the best fast-talker lure the gate captain towards the wagon with a distraction. The scroll-reader can then unleash the ritual on his partner to help sway the guard.

If the bluff is successful, the party may exit the city. If unsuccessful, the party is challenged and rebuffed. All further contact with the city guard will be at a –4 penalty to social interaction rolls.

SCENE 2: TO SEE COUNCILMAN MENASH

Level 5 (600 XP)

THE SITUATION

The Black Horse bounty hunters are keeping an eye on Erdan Menash's home. After this encounter, they will attack the party.

Read the following:

In the nobles' district, in the shadow of the 90-foot statue of the now deceased Emperor Coaltongue, a manor painted vivid green, yellow, and purple stands at the edge of the grand square. Three stories tall, its garish appearance is matched only by the equally garish tabards the councilman's guards wear. Despite their appearance, the guards are polite and professional and usher you into the grand salon.

If the building's outside seemed odd, the interior of the manse is simply bizarre. Exotic weapons from all corners of the world adorn the walls. You recognize whips, strange orc weapons called *urgroshes*, double axes, double swords, monk weapons, and even a heavy repeating crossbow designed to look like a porcupine; everything — even the now-trite spiked chain — is made more exotic by unorthodox decorations like red and yellow frogs on pommels, or axeheads in the shape of bunnies. The only room that is not strange or unusual is the small chapel to the god of knowledge that is at your right.

Your escort mentions that the councilman is not in; he is in a council meeting, but he will return soon. You are invited to wait until he arrives.

The first floor consists of a the grand salon, a dining room, a small chapel dedicated to the god of knowledge, a kitchen and store room, a waiting room, and three galleries.

The entire second floor is a workshop devoted to elaborate and garish decorations that Erdan had hoped to use in the Festival of Dreams, such as a bear mask for the giant statue of Coaltongue in the center of the city, swords made of woven flowers, and dresses made of candy.

Erdan lives on the third floor, in a bedroom with a wonderful view of the grand square.

DEVELOPMENT

When Erdan arrives he is frustrated, complaining in a high-pitched, wheezing voice about the nincompoops in charge of the city. He does a double take when he sees the party, surprised to have guests.

Erdan asks their names and their business, and is especially interested in details of what happened to them during the attack two nights ago. He is easily distracted and will start giving

a tour of his house's many oddities if the party doesn't keep him on track.

Erdan is willing to talk about what has happened to the city, providing some interesting and exciting stories to help put the party's actions in perspective:

- ◆ The griffon riders, aided by a druid who took the form of a giant eagle, were able to drive off a massive red dragon that was setting fire to the city, and they captured two of its riders.
- ◆ Armed townsfolk, who lasted long enough for actual soldiers to arrive and slay the Ragesians, held up an incursion through one of the northern walls.
- ◆ The western-most district caught fire and has been nearly gutted, but the troops have kept fighting — even some who suffered terrible burns.
- ◆ A huge earth elemental rose up from the sewers near the houses of several city council members and managed to kill them while the bulk of the city's defenders were at the walls.
- ◆ A wyvern-rider crashed into a house and killed a family, but a group of unknown heroes tracked him down and slew him.

Convincing Counsel

Level 5 Skill Challenge • XP 600

Complexity 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Erdan has the influence and means to allow you to escape Gate Pass. His support will guarantee your success.

Setup Erdan will help the party if it successfully presents its case to leave the city.

Primary Skills Bluff, Diplomacy

Secondary Skills History, Insight, Religion, Streetwise

Special (1) If anyone displays enthusiasm regarding Erdan's odd creations, apply a +2 bonus to all rolls. (2) If anyone mentions that they were the ones who killed the wyvern-rider (Flaganus Mortus), award the heroes 2 successes and a +2 bonus to all further rolls. (3) If the White Wyrms' documents are produced, award the heroes another success.

Partial Success If the party achieves 6 successes before 3 failures, Erdan will give them a note for a trusted friend of his, Captain Herreman, a half-orc fighter, who runs a small cavalry detachment that regularly patrols the southern border. The message includes a note asking Herreman to take the party along. Also enclosed are two official orders to quickly

patrol the roads to the south. One order lists Herreman's normal patrol size; the other is increased by the number in the heroes' party. Herreman and the party will depart through one gate, then Herreman will let the party go their own way, and return to the city through a different gate, using the other orders. Erdan will even have Herreman give the heroes each a light horse for the trip, which they should not feel obligated to bring back.

Success If the party fully succeeds, he will do everything as stated in the partial success, plus offer to give each party member a single weapon, suit of armor, or special item from his collection, with a value of up to 400 gp, up to and including his precious repeating crossbow. Of course, all the gear is atrocious looking, but it is a valuable gift. Selling these items should be difficult to say the least. If Torrent is still with the party, she'll take a falchion that looks like a dolphin, later admitting she intends to give it away as a gag gift to a friend in Lyceum.

Failure Erdan dolefully refuses to help them, saying he cannot risk his position for their incompetent group. He asks them to leave before anyone finds out they were here.

Bluff (DC 12) The heroes can try to persuade Erdan under false pretenses or flattery (making up a story about Earth Elementals or other things).

Diplomacy (DC 12) The hero asks for Erdan's help. The first success with this skill opens up the use of the history skill, as Erdan mentions that he feels he is being stalked and he wishes his good friend, Herreman, was still in his employ (this also allows the White Wyrms' documents to come into play).

History (DC 7) The hero recognizes Herreman's name as one who successfully defeated an Ettin clan that attempted to raze a number of farms to the south last year.

Insight (DC 12) An argument can be made that regaining the case will help protect Shahalesti because Gate Pass will be able to stand against the Ragesians. The first successful Insight check will also reveal that an Intimidate check will always fail.

Intimidate (DC —) Automatic failure.

Religion (DC 12) The hero can use Erdan's faith in the knowledge god, explaining that helping them furthers everyone's knowledge of the Ragesian plans.

Streetwise (DC 17) Offers to provide safe passage, intelligence sharing from the resistance, or other ideas can be tried.



AFTERMATH

When the party is ready to leave, Erdan gives them the note for Captain Herreman and directions to his post (located one district to the east, less than a mile away, near a large stable and barracks), begs them to send aid as soon as they can, and bids them good luck.

Just before the party exits, he excitedly calls them back. "Just one more thing!" he says as he motions the party towards the chapel. Underneath the small table of worship items, Erdan pulls out a package about the size of a fist and hands it to the heroes. The councilman explains that this odd item was discovered in the old dwarven galleries under Gate Pass in a recent excavation, and he can find no explanation of what it is, but the Lyceum might know. He asks to deliver it to **Dougan Rambausen**, a dwarf instructor at the academy. He hopes that an answer to its origin can be found.

Erdan is also always willing to buy gear the party has picked up from looting their enemies, glad to have a chance to get a few more swords or suits of armor for the defense of the city. He pays a fair price, half the market value of the items, and if they were fully successful in

THE DIANOEM

This strange blue device is a marvel of dwarven technology. Despite its age, it appears new and shiny. A small door appears on the front with a glass window just above it. Four strangely marked buttons are found on the top and a small plate containing Dwarven runes appears to be instructions, but the dialect is not translatable. A number of holes cover the back and the sides have a fine-mesh grill covering a shallow depression. The technical skill that made this object appears lost in today's society. It is lightweight and warm to the touch. There are no visible screws to allow one to open the box. A translatable formal text does show what appears to be its name, "Dianoem – Mk IV."

This item was lost to history, but its secrets will be plumbed in Adventures Three and Four of the campaign saga.

the skill challenge, he will offer them a 10% discount on any items they buy from him. Erdan can sell the heroes most nonmagical items, of up to 400 gp value.

SCENE 3: STREET AMBUSH

Level 6 (1,350 XP)

THE SITUATION

At some point after the party leaves Erdan's manor, a group of nine Black Horse thugs secretly tasked to watch Councilman Menash as a magic-user sympathizer begin to shadow the heroes, hanging about thirty feet back and following on side streets or through alleys. A DC 10 Perception check detects the shadowy pursuit after a few minutes of travel. The thugs are disguised as city guardsmen, but a DC 15 Perception check reveals that their uniforms are shabby and worn.

DEVELOPMENT

The thugs approach the party at some point when they are out of sight of any authentic guards or soldiers. Three thugs use alleys and side streets to get ahead of the party and approach them from the front, while the other six come from behind to block escape.

Read the following:

As you come to a turn in the street, three guards, wearing the colors of Gate Pass, come out of the alleyway ahead of you and block your way. Behind, you see six more bar a retreat.

One of the guards in front of you apologetically states, "I am sorry, but we have orders to bring a few of you in under suspicion of being magic users. We would like to do this as calmly as possible. Please surrender your weapons and follow us."

Have the party make an Insight check vs. the guards' Bluff +6 check. If the party spotted the disguises earlier, they gain a +5 bonus on their roll.

If the party fails the Bluff check, the bounty hunters request Torrent and any other magic users follow them. Torrent assures the party that compliance is the best policy. Those following the thugs are led to an alley area where they are attacked.

If the party does not fall for the bluff, the thugs threaten to call for other guards, but they will not start a fight in the middle of the day. They will just follow from a distance for a while, looking for an opening, but once the heroes get to Captain Herreman's barracks they leave for good and report to Kathor.

If it is night, the thugs will attack.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Street Ambush" (page 51)



AFTERMATH

If successful, the thugs carry two 2nd-level treasure parcels worth of gear and coin. Within the belongings is a note from the captain of the Black Horse bounty hunters, Renard, emphasizing the need to stop the heroes from leaving the city. He does not want to extend this chase beyond the walls.

Depending on the outcome of the ambush, a new ally, Rantle, will have either saved the party or announce himself as they are resting. Read the following:

As you rest, a tall, dark-haired, and roguishly handsome man appears from around the corner. By his goatee and massive greatsword you recognize this man as the local folk hero, Rantle, a scoundrel and defender of the common man. Despite his light chain armor, his smirk says clearly that he thinks he is invincible.

(if Rantle saved the party) With a wry smile, the rascal says, "I thought it was terribly unfair of those villains to gang up on you. I hope you don't mind my interference, but I am on a schedule and I need to talk with you."

(if the party was victorious) With a low whistle, Rantle surveys the bodies. He chuckles. Then, with some admiration in his voice, he says, "I didn't even get to swoop down and save the day! I am sorry to bother you, but my name is Rantle." He states this with the expectation that the mere mention of his name should stop time itself. "I have been meaning to speak with you. Will you lend me your ear?"

Rantle heard about the fight at the Poison Apple, and decided to ask a favor before the Ragesian assault distracted him. For once in his life, the rogue is seeking someone else's help.

He has a sister, Katrina, who, in his words, "has a tendency to get into such trouble that I have no choice but to save her yet again!" She disappeared a little over a week ago, just before news of the approaching Ragesian army arrived. His sister is a competent sorceress, he says, though she did manage to burn a few of their homes down over the years. Rantle worries, justifiably, that she might be in trouble. The last he heard of her, she was planning to head to Lyceum to get to safety. Rantle knows enough about Torrent's activities to guess that is where she and the party are heading.



With almost true humility, Rantle asks the party to deliver a scroll tube to his sister if they see her. He describes her as, "...about five and a half feet tall, with long red hair, and she looks too good for her own good. In short, she's pretty much the stereotype of a fire mage. It's kinda embarrassing." (See the sidebar "What's in the Scroll Case?" on the next page.)

The varlet does not have much else to offer, except a promise that he will inform the locals (a rogue in the party understands this to be the thieves' guild) to leave them alone. Unfortunately, the bounty hunters the party has encountered are independents and he cannot influence their behavior.

If the party has completely ruined their options for escape, Rantle can arrange for some thief friends of his to cause a distraction at one of the south gates, luring guards off the walls while the party crosses over (see "Exit Gates", pages 18–19). Rantle is much more willing to help the party if there are any women he can try to charm.

INTERLUDE: CAPTAIN HERREMAN'S BARRACKS

Herreman's barracks are less than a mile from Councilman Menash's home. Consisting of several three-story buildings with attached stables, the barracks house a hundred soldiers. Each district has a similar set of barracks and number of soldiers. Read the following:

WHAT'S IN THE SCROLL CASE?

The scroll case Rantle asks the party to deliver is sealed with red wax, and contains a letter from the rogue to Katrina, warning her that some orcs came looking for her but that he took care of them. There is a short traveler's song, written with music and lyrics, that wishes her a safe journey and quick return. He concludes the letter with sarcastic thanks for the scroll she left for him.

The scroll in question is a Wall of Flame ritual scroll that he is returning since he does not understand why Katrina sent in the first place. Unknown to him, the scroll contains a secret message written in disappearing ink. If held near an open flame, a message written by Katrina appears around the edges of the vellum, imploring her brother to follow her to Lyceum for a chance to "make something of ourselves." She mentions that she has been recruited by Ragesia to cause confusion and disarray among the mages of Lyceum. The disappearing ink trick is an old one between the two siblings, but Rantle missed it because he was too confused by the scroll.

You stand now in the office of Captain Herreman. The hulking officer holds the letter from Councilman Menash in one swarthy hand and idly brushes his beard with the other in a vain attempt to cover the slight protrusion of tusks from beneath. The half-orc grunts as he reads, and when he is finished he looks at you with a gleaming eye.

A hint of a smile appears as he addresses you, "This is quite a risk," Herreman's voice is strong and decisive. "At war. Under siege — it's crazy!" He crumples the note in his hand, "But that is Menash, crazy as ever. Look: if you ever come back and see him again, tell him he owes me. Maybe another dagger like this one." He produces a dagger that has a pommel in the shape of a peeled banana. "You'll do that for me, right? That old coot is insane!" Herreman starts laughing, a raucous, full-of-vigor outburst that seems loud enough to carry beyond the gates.

As if on cue, a lieutenant appears, the Captain issues instructions, and you are escorted out. As you depart, you hear one more time, "You be sure to tell Menash he owes me!" and then another hearty laugh begins echoing as you walk deeper into the barracks.

The party is given gear that lets them pass as members of Herreman's unit (studded

leather, longswords, and light crossbows). They acquire warhorses (with military saddles and winter blankets, but no barding), and then Herreman's lieutenant gathers eight men that can be trusted for the fake mission. The party then waits till sunset (when Herreman's regular patrol is scheduled). If the heroes want to see the orders, they're supposed to be looking for a Ragesian necromancer who is desecrating graveyards by raising the dead, a dramatic tale that Councilman Menash thinks would give the mission enough urgency that the guards will not be suspicious.

If the party wants to leave earlier than sunset, they can convince Herreman to move his patrol up with a DC 12 Diplomacy check. Doing so places them ahead of the timetable the Black Horse bounty hunters are working on, so instead of the ambush in Act Four the party manages to come upon the bounty hunters when they are just standing in the road, clustered together, looking for a good place to set an ambush.

Should the heroes engage in combat while Herreman's soldiers are with them, remember the soldiers are loyal to Gate Pass first, the heroes second: they will not help the heroes fight gate guards under any circumstances.

SCENE 4: MAGIC MAYHEM

Level 5 (1,100 XP)

THE SITUATION

As the party leaves the barracks and travels along the Emelk Way toward the gate, a commotion forces them to halt. Two groups of anarchists split north and south along the way and cause some mischief. Merchants' windows are broken and people are shoved and pushed to the ground. Guards move to handle the disturbance and the heroes are ordered to stay put.

The chaos is a ploy. The real situation is a robbery the heroes will discover; the halfling sorcerer known to Torrent leads the gang.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Magic Mayhem" (page 52)

**AFTERMATH**

If Feris is defeated, he defiantly defends his actions. He is convinced that the Ragesian Inquisitors' arrival is imminent, and he intends to arm himself and his adepts for a final stand, refusing to die without a fight. This encounter presents a moral choice for the heroes. Should

he be turned over to the authorities or be let free to defend himself and the city? He will plead for the latter, citing the party's own intention to leave. He will even go so far as to call them cowards for running rather than fighting. If he is let go, he will be available as an ally in Adventure Nine, *The Festival of Dreams*. If he is turned over to the authorities, the Inquisitors will kill him. Rivereye will find out and be devastated and, if the heroes ever meet him again, he will accuse them of murder and do everything in his power to destroy them.

If Feris is turned over to the authorities, the owner of the shop gratefully offers a reward worth two 2nd-level treasure parcels.

If Feris and his men win, the party will be left behind, and he will be gone before the other guards return from their chase. If the heroes have the Ragesian case with them, Feris will take it with him. He knows its worth (from his conversations with Torrent and Rivereye), and sees it as a means to fully funding his school.

EPILOGUE: MOVING ON

Because the fight has created a stir, some of the townfolk are agitated (since they are unfriendly to magic users normally), and want the owner turned over as well. This should remind the heroes of the general feeling of Gate Pass citizens, not be a skill challenge. Have the heroes try to quell the gathering mob (DC 7 Diplomacy check or Bard power use). If they are successful, award a 50 XP story award; if not, Herreman's lieutenant and his men break up the crowd.

The lieutenant quietly reminds the heroes of their mission, and as the heroes proceed toward the gate with Herreman's troops, a single bell in the western part of the city rings out ominously and mournfully. The lieutenant guesses that this means the Inquisitors have finally been let in to the city.

At the gate, Herreman's lieutenant hands over his orders to the gatekeepers, and the gatekeepers usher the unit and the heroes through, wishing them good hunting.

Once everyone is outside the gates, the lieutenant suggests that going further at night is dangerous, and he directs the party to a safe camping spot about two miles down the road: an abandoned tower that once was a watch post.

Finally, Herreman's lieutenant provides one 2nd-level treasure parcel, a gift from Councilman Menash via Captain Herreman. The items are garish and silly looking, but fully functional.

ACT FOUR: THE ROAD AHEAD

PROLOGUE: GATE PASS AT THEIR BACKS

By now, the heroes should be 3rd level. Make sure that their sheets and skills have been updated to reflect their new status.

The road from Gate Pass to the fire forest is thirty miles long, and depending on how the party got out of the city they might have light horses, or a wagon, or be on foot. As it is a mountain road, movement is about 4½ miles per hour on an unencumbered light warhorse; or about 1 mile per hour for a Small, encumbered character on foot. The heroes should spend somewhere between one and four days making this trip. If the heroes push their horses, they can hustle as fast as 9 miles an hour, though the horses quickly become fatigued. Random encounters, if any, should be minor.

When the party is 10 miles from the city, they reach the Gauntlet. The Black Horse bounty hunters have laid an ambush, their leader having been alerted via a Sending ritual to stop the party at all costs and recover the case in their possession — he was offered a reward of 10,000 gp for this task. The Ragesians have many spies in the city, and they are aware of how important the stolen information in the case is.

If the party convinced Herreman to move his patrol to an earlier time, they get on the road before the Black Horse can lay their ambush:

when discovered, the bounty hunters are walking or riding and considering the terrain for possible advantages. The party might even manage to surprise them.

The leader of the Black Horses, **Renard Woodsman**, has planned a 600-foot stretch of the road as a gauntlet. Renard loves making complex plans, even when a simpler one might be more successful. Renard's map details how he is dividing his forces: himself, Kathor, six thugs, two scouts, and two horsemen.

SCENE 1: GAUNTLET RUN

Level 6 (1,475 XP)

THE SITUATION

As the heroes approach the gorge called the Gauntlet, they have an opportunity to consider their tactical options.

Insight (DC 15): Martial characters get a +2 bonus to their roll. As the road narrows into the gorge, the character gets the sense that this would be a perfect place for an ambush.

History (DC 15): The character remembers a story about an ambush in the Gauntlet.

If they consider a possible ambush, the party may choose to make a run through it. If they do, perform the skill challenge for each character in each zone. In addition, opponents with ranged weapons readied may make one shot at a –4 penalty as the mount runs by.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Gauntlet Run" (page 54)



AFTERMATH

If the heroes are defeated, the remaining bounty hunters tie the party up and bring them back to their camp, about a mile away along a rough game trail. The heroes are guarded for the evening and then brought back to Gate Pass to stand before the Inquistors. Their fate is beyond the scope of this adventure, but some general guidelines should help create an escape plan. As soon as the heroes are brought to the gate, Rantle is informed. He passes word on to Buron. Through Buron's network, Diogenes, Menash and Rivereye find out what has happened. On the evening of the heroes' incarceration, Councilman Menash

MOUNTS AND COMBAT IN THE GAUNTLET

In this situation, characters are on warhorses (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL) will act during their turns according to the information below.

- ✦ With the Mounted Combat feat, a rider makes Athletics, Acrobatics, Endurance, or Stealth checks at the rider's base skill bonus rather than the horse's bonus.
- ✦ Without the Mounted Combat feat, a rider must rely on the horse's skill bonus values for skill checks [Athletics (+6), Acrobatics (+3), Endurance (+5), or Stealth (+3)]. The horse also suffers a –2 penalty on any of its attacks.
- ✦ The rider and the mount can perform only one set of actions (standard, move and minor) during a round.
- ✦ A spooked horse runs and will only move forward through the gauntlet, from one zone to the next. The rider of a spooked horse cannot make attacks.
- ✦ A successful saving throw returns a spooked horse to normal.
- ✦ If a rider performs a move action, the rider may resolve the Skill Test for the zone as an immediate reaction. Running increases the DC by +5.
- ✦ If a rider runs and does not attack an enemy in a zone, the rider and horse may move to the next zone.
- ✦ A walking horse moves to a new zone in 2 combat rounds.
- ✦ If a rider stops in a zone, place the horse from 4 to 16 squares from an enemy target. The rider may take a standard action against the opponent.
- ✦ If a rider attacks an enemy while mounted, the rider remains in the zone for that round. The attack is subject to standard opportunity attack rules.
- ✦ If a rider dismounts, place the character from 4 to 16 squares from the enemy target. A dismounted rider's mount will not assist in combat fight unless the rider has the Mounted Combat feat.
- ✦ Only threats in the same zone can engage in the first combat round that a rider dismounts.



enters their jail cell and distracts the guards with complaints about seeing the prisoners. Diogenes uses his force field globe device to keep everyone away while Rivereye picks the lock and frees the heroes. Rantle is there to run interference. The escape proceeds as planned and the whole process of escaping Gate Pass begins again underneath the temple.

If the heroes are victorious, they can follow retreating bounty hunters or follow the bounty hunters' tracks (DC 6 Nature check) to the bounty hunters' camp, about a mile away along a rough game trail.

THE BOUNTY HUNTERS' CAMP

Renard's sword is a +2 *longsword*.

The bounty hunters' camp lies in a grotto with several small tunnels carved into the walls, sealed off with locked iron gates.

Any local of Gate Pass recognizes these tunnels as where people place unopened clay jars after the New Year's Festival of Dreams (*War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide*, page 6). Normally, there is nothing of value inside the caves, but one tunnel contains what appears to be a person sleeping, wrapped in a ragged sheet. The gate is held shut with a new lock. The bounty hunters have three 3rd-level treasure parcels worth of gear and coins amongst them.

If someone opens the gate (DC 20 Strength check or DC 20 Thievery check), they find a man, several days dead from exposure. He lies clutching a tiny clay jar, in which he placed a thin strip of paper that reads, "Please don't let my death be in vain."

NEW ITEM

Dream Shroud Level 8

This silk sheet displays faded images of old myths of the city of Gate Pass.

Wondrous Item 3,400 gp

Power (Daily) Standard Action. You gain the insight ability to detect falsehood, as if you had just cast the Discern Lies ritual (consult the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK ritual chapter).

Power (Daily) Standard Action. When you whisper "Please don't let my death be in vain", the shroud's appearance becomes vivid and beautiful and your weapon becomes a +1 *flaming weapon* for the duration of the encounter (consult the magic items section of the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK equipment chapter).

The bounty hunters had captured a mage and tossed him in one of these tunnels for safekeeping. He died, and Renard Woodsman lost the key to the lock, so he decided to leave the body there, since the cold weather was keeping it from stinking.

The man had tried desperately to stay warm, wrapping himself in a silk shroud that originally covered the clay jars. The shroud, printed with faded images of ancient myths, detects as possessing faint magic. If the party treats the body respectfully, such as by burying it or saying a prayer over it, the shroud glows briefly, the images on the fabric momentarily regaining their original vivid glory before fading again. The shroud is transfigured into a *dream shroud* (see sidebar); anyone witnessing the transfiguration becomes aware of the powers of the shroud.

As for the camp itself, there are eight light horses, huddled together under blankets, and a half dozen tents with cold cook fires near them. The camp has a chest that contains 750 gp in coins, a pouch with 100 gp in rubies, 2 *potions of healing*, and four notarized sheets proclaiming they can be redeemed at any Ragesian fort for 100 gp each: rewards for the capture of mages. Amid the bounty hunters' surviving gear are several mundane daggers and short swords, plus an *everburning torch*. A small cache of the dead wizard's effects is nearby. It contains a +1 *staff of winter*. In addition, the cache contains a +1 *symbol of hope*. In a spare pair of pants in Renard's tent, they can find the key to the locked tunnel.

SCENE 2: THE CHASM GATE

Level 6 (1,250 XP)

THE SITUATION

Before the fire forest can be reached, the road crosses a large stone bridge over a deep chasm that is guarded by dwarves of a fledgling kingdom. The bridge is blocked by gates. As a skill challenge, the heroes must convince the dwarf king that their mission is vital. If they succeed in convincing him, they leave easily. If they fail, they must escape and traverse the length of the chasm to where the latest construction is happening, losing valuable time to reach the forest.

As they round the cliffside of a low hill, the heroes see a dwarven work gang building some form of a building to the side of the pathway.

"KING" MARBEN DIAMONDHEART

In recent years, the dwarf Marben Diamondheart has developed quite a following. Deep in the heart of the Singing Chasm, the old dwarf clans continue to isolate themselves. Marben, the third son of King Stalwarden, contended with his father to recapture the glory of the empire he heard in the histories. Stalwarden would not hear of it, and gave Marben the option to live according to the dictates of the clan or start a new one. Marben chose the latter and over the course of the past five years has recruited nearly fifty like-minded dwarves from the old clan. To avoid reprisal, Marben has built his kingdom in the mountains and partially above ground. The years have been hard, but his first town, Fermat's Pass, is beginning to thrive.

Marben is suspicious of any intruders into his self-proclaimed kingdom. The road to the fire forest is almost never traveled, and he is about a year away from having a defensible town. An encounter with a band of Ragesian orcs about two months ago has put his men on the lookout for any intruders. Marben's safety depends on his knowledge of outside events and the news he has heard from his spies in Gate Pass has been disturbing. He has ordered anyone that enters his kingdom be brought to him immediately.

Besides the troubling news, Marben is struggling with a few engineering problems that are not common to the underworld. The weather has added new complexities to a pump system that powers the lifts that ride up and down the chasm and drives the gears for the large gate door at the end of the bridge that spans the rift. Additionally, a small band of wily kobolds has been causing mischief, but the dwarves do not realize they are around.

Another group appears to be laying gravel over the track as it wends its way southward. Another hill beyond has buildings and facades cut into its eastern face. One of the dwarves on the roadway notices the party and shouts something. Within moments, two armed dwarves appear from the building and quickly approach.

The dwarf guards, Krataz and Amberhear, approach to within 4 squares of the front of the party and politely, but forcefully declare the following:

“Hear ye well. To enter the lands of King Marben Diamondheart, ye must surrender thyself to his care. Dost thou willingly consent?”

If the party agrees, a small contingent of armed dwarves lead them to Marben’s throne. If not, twenty dwarves appear with heavy crossbows trained on the heroes. It is clear that attacking is a losing proposition; the heroes may freely retreat, or choose to enter the kingdom. A DC 12 History or Streetwise check reveals that King Marben is a new dwarven ruler with an honorable reputation.

If they surrender, they are not bound, but are sent directly to the king. Read the following:

A large room opens out to a simple but elegant balcony that overlooks the chasm and the road below. The king is poring over plans and other papers that are strewn all over the dais and throne. Three dwarves stand near a large model of the surrounding land and are in an animated discussion regarding water and gears, while two others are examining a piece of broken wood that has a latch on it. Dangling from the latch is a lock that is still connected to a hook and plate. The plate appears to have once been secured into a wall. As you enter, the king turns to look at you. In a gruff and agitated voice, he says, “Why are you trespassing on my lands? Our borders are closed. Diamond Wall will not tolerate Ragesians or any other foreigners!”

DEVELOPMENT

If the heroes treat Marben with respect and explain their plight, he will gradually lose his stern demeanor. He asks about the Ragesians and Gate Pass’ defenses. If the heroes are truthful, then his worry will show. He still does not trust the party completely, but is willing to test them.

Seeing his fellow dwarves in the room, he will carefully outline two problems that need solutions. If the heroes help, he will let them continue on their journey. If they refuse, they will be detained and await a trial as suspected spies. Marben would realize that this is not entirely reasonable if he weren’t worried about the rumors of war he’s heard coming out of Ragesia.

The first task is to help fix some engineering problems with the lift system. This complex machine work uses water from the river below to drive a dizzying array of lifts. It also drives

the gearing for the large gate at the southern end of the bridge that spans the gorge.

The second task is to solve the mystery of a rash of thefts on the winter stores. Multiple times over the winter, the larders and cellars used to store provisions have been robbed. There is never enough taken to hurt the community, but the thieves are quite adept at slipping past any guards and getting in anyway.

Marben realizes his people — especially his counselors — are anxious to solve both problems simultaneously, so he declares that the party members must divide themselves between the two tasks. It is their choice on how to divide the group, but each problem must be tackled at the same time.

If at any time the artifact is mentioned, the dwarves become increasingly interested. Revealing the artifact will instantly change Marben’s mind about the heroes’ intentions. His sages will take some time to study it, scratch their heads, and talk amongst themselves. When done, they will approach Marben and talk some more, and then Marben will turn to the party, saying that he believes their story. He goes on to explain that he hopes the school at Lyceum has a better library and requests the information learned be sent back to him if possible. This will count as an automatic victory for both skill challenges.

Fix the Lift System

Level 6 Skill Challenge • XP 750

Complexity 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

You see a detailed model of the gorge and its surroundings. A fantastic complex of gears, pulleys and pumps crisscross the cliffside. You realize, the engineering problems that the dwarves face are largely related to weather problems, not the basic designs. As you see some problem areas, you think your skills will be useful.

Setup The heroes attempt to fix the lift system, both in design and any repairs.

Primary Skills Acrobatics, Athletics, Dungeoneering, Thievery

Success The dwarves are impressed with the heroes’ skill in improving the design and fixing the flaws. Marben is told of their success and are convinced the heroes are telling the truth.

Failure Though some changes have been made, the contribution of the heroes is clearly subpar and appears to be a stalling tactic. If they are not Ragesian spies, then the heroes are clearly not up to tasks before them and should not be allowed to continue.

Acrobatics (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero notices a gear shaft out of place or warped causing the gears to bind. Climbing up to the problem area and balancing, he is able to correct the problem. If the hero fails, he loses a healing surge. Only two of these successes can be applied to this skill challenge.

Athletics (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. A chain or rope has become tangled in the superstructure. The hero climbs to untangle the mess. If he fails, he loses a healing surge. Only two of these successes can be applied to this skill challenge.

Dungeoneering (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero sees areas where moisture warps the framing and suggests replacing those sections with metal, or he finds a few areas that need waterproofing in order to prevent rusting.

Insight (DC 12) The hero sees an discrepancy between the design sheets and the actual implementation. A successful check adds a +2 bonus to the next skill check.

Perception (DC 17) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero notices a flaw in the support system that becomes susceptible to erosion or a design application works well underground, but not above ground. A success adds a +2 bonus to the next Dungeoneering or Thievery roll.

Thievery (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero’s understanding of mechanical locks and traps uncovers shortcuts or design changes that make the framework more fault tolerant.

Find the Thieves

Level 6 Skill Challenge • XP 500

Complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

After looking at the broken door, it becomes apparent that brute force was not used to break it. A more subtle skill, maybe even magical, was used to weaken the wood. You believe that your skills will be useful in solving the mystery.

Setup The heroes try to solve the mystery of the robberies.

Primary Skills Bluff, Diplomacy, Dungeoneering, Intimidate, Nature, Thievery

Success The heroes discover a latch within a crevice above the dwarves heads. By moving the latch, a part of the wall in the storeroom swings back, revealing a tunnel that winds into the darkness beyond. A quick inspection of the

floor reveals the tell-tale signs of kobolds. The dwarves are impressed with the heroes' finding the secret entrance; Marben is thankful that the mystery has been solved.

Failure The failure hints at greater deception.

The king already suspects kobolds and the heroes do not seem to indicate any intelligence. Whatever the issue, Marben is inclined to question them further and decides to detain them.

Athletics (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. Above the dwarves heads, there appears to be a ledge in the room. Climbing the wall reveals a crevice.

Bluff (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. Acting as 'one of the boys', through bluff and bravado, the hero discovers the guards often leave one of the dwarf guard alone – to teach him not to be afraid of the dark. One time, they returned to find him shivering with fear.

Diplomacy (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero discovers up to three pieces of information. A single piece of information is tied to a single success. (1) The guards do not always guard the storeroom. Sometimes they play cards behind some barrels not too far away. (2) One guard saw a light within the storeroom one night. He swears no one came in or out and the light disappeared before he could peer in through the window. (3) A dwarf who no longer does guard duty fell asleep against the door. He was awakened by a claw that reached from underneath and grabbed at him. He ran away in fright and never did duty again.

Dungeoneering (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero detects clues, such as a slight breeze or a strangely cleared area around a wall section that suggests a chamber extending deeper into the hillside exists.

Insight (DC 12) The hero considers that the thievery is probably from a creature, not a dwarf. A successful check adds a +2 bonus to the next skill check.

Intimidate (DC 17) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. With threats, insults, and a hint of bodily harm, the hero learns of lax guard duty, frightening lights or strange occurrences that originate inside the storeroom. Each successive intimidate check increases the DC by 4.

Nature (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. Looking through the storeroom, the hero detects signs of a small creature or creatures, a partially obscured footprint, a strange scratch on a barrel or crate, or even a discarded bit of food with bite marks that are unusual.

Thievery (DC 12) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero's understanding of concealment and canvassing reveals clues that a small creature has done so from a corner of the back wall that has a slight ledge.

AFTERMATH

If both skill challenges are victorious, then the dwarves trust the heroes and have a grand celebration with their new friends. A small contingent of dwarves is sent to determine the threat the kobolds pose, only to find the lair empty. Within the lair, though, is found three 3rd-level treasure parcels. It appears the items come from deeper underground and were stored and used by the kobolds, and there may be more treasures below.

Marben's eyes gleam at the news, but he orders the cavern sealed until after the defenses of Diamond Wall are complete. As a thank you for the party's help, he gives the treasures to them (saying under his breath that if they take them, the other dwarves will forget about them).

If the kobolds' secret entrance has been found, and the heroes are in need of experience because of some earlier failures, this can be a place to add an encounter. If this is needed, count both skill challenges as successes and create an appropriate level encounter to make up the experience shortfall.

If one of the skill challenges succeeds and the other does not, then the heroes are detained for an evening of more questioning and they do not gain the benefit of an extended rest. They are allowed to continue on the next morning after Marben decides to let them continue.

If both skill challenges fail, Marben is convinced the heroes are either lying or incompetent. Either way, he orders them locked up for a trial. Just before they are placed into a building, the town explodes with fighting as a kobold assault begins. The distraction allows the heroes to escape down the gorge. The escape adds an extra half-day to the trip and each hero loses a healing surge and does not gain the benefit of an extended rest. This changes the fight with the Inquisitor, as the heroes will not have the help of either Haddin or Crystin in the fight.

SCENE 3: GNOLL HUNT

Level 5 (1,025 XP)

THE SITUATION

The heroes continue along the road and cross into a small forested area. The ambient temperature is noticeably warmer near the fire forest, and this glade looks almost like summer compared to the rest of the surroundings. Within, a gnoll huntmaster and six hyenas scavenge out an existence from the occasional leavings of the ettins in the hills or the fauna that wanders nearby. The cold winter has made the life difficult for them, and the party is just what is needed to fill their empty stomachs.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Gnoll Hunt" (page 56)



AFTERMATH

If the heroes examine the ruins, they find two 3rd-level treasure parcels worth of treasure hidden in a crevice recently opened by the winter ice. The gnoll has one 3rd-level treasure parcel worth of loot, although none of it is magical.

ACT FIVE: THE INQUISITOR

PROLOGUE: APPROACHING THE FIRE FOREST

About five miles from the edge of the fire forest, the sky ahead begins to glow faint red and orange, and the air smells of ash. The frigid winter temperatures warm noticeably, and red flowers dot the roadside amid yellowed grass.

Cinders drift in the sky. Soon the cliffs alongside the road turn into craggy hills, and the forest fire itself comes into view, tall pine trees stretching down into a valley that burns to the horizon. A steaming river marks the border of the fire forest, and a vast field of ash coats the ground for the last quarter mile leading to the forest. A DC 7 Arcana check detects that this area has weakly enhanced fire magic.

Just before the ash field, about a half mile from the forest fire, the heroes spot a small farm: a two-story stone house and adjacent barn, and what looks like a pair of simple stone cairns. The farm is on a slight rise to the left of the road, and a young woman stands in clear view, dark-haired, eyes wide and blue, holding a slender black staff. Read the following:

Before you stands a young woman, still as stone and staring far beyond into the distance. She neither blinks nor twitches at your approach and even though she appears to be in a trance, she speaks with a clear voice, "The Scourge comes, and the skulls of the dragon pursue you. I saw it in a dream." Then she shakes her head as if coming to her senses, notices you standing nearby, and meekly apologizes. "I'm sorry; I was daydreaming again. The forest does that to you. I think your arrival means the end is near."

The last statement may surprise the heroes, and if questioned, Crystin laughs and explains that she just meant that the end of her time at the farm is near. She introduces herself as Crystin, and says that she needs their help. She and her father, Haddin, are magic-users, and they know the Ragesians are coming. Crystin says that she has visions, and she believes that wherever the party is going, they can protect her and her father. She wants to go with them. At the very least, she says, she can offer them a place to rest before they head into the forest fire.

SCENE 1: HADDIN

Level 5 (400 XP)

THE SITUATION

Crystin Ja-Nafeel is a seer. A trillith (a type of dreamborn creature that plays a greater role later in the campaign) endowed its power upon Crystin's mother, and then passed it along to Crystin when her mother died. Crystin received visions that the Ragesians are coming for her father, and she has prepared to leave, though she did not know how until she saw the party approaching the farm.

Her father, **Haddin Ja-Laffa**, does not want to leave; despite his age and frailty, he is prepared to fight the Ragesians who come for him. Haddin is a surly, manipulative, domineering, self-centered old man, and since the death of his wife and brother, he has viewed Crystin not as a child, but as a tool. Despite this treatment, Crystin still loves him, and refuses to leave his side. Crystin asks the party to stay the evening at the house, and to try to convince her father to come along. She can provide food and warm beds, since the house has several unused rooms. Haddin is indifferent to the party, and will not go with them unless his dormant, good-natured side is touched, he is intimidated, or he is simply knocked out and carried.

Haddin, is very sick and coughs constantly, his lungs ruined by decades of breathing ash, but he refuses help and is very hard to befriend. He only really likes people who share his negative opinion of life in general, but especially the worship of deities. He will not mention religion, but he takes every opportunity to complain bitterly about how others fail to realize his value or respect him.

If the party asks questions about his past, he laughs them off, and when Crystin starts to answer, Haddin glares at her, and she suddenly turns meek. Crystin is under the effect of an enchantment spell, a custom effect that Haddin developed that permanently compels his daughter to obey him. Crystin is slowly coming to resist the effect, which scares Haddin somewhat. Though it's beyond the heroes' ability at this time, Crystin's domination can be removed with the Remove Affliction ritual (treat the domination effect as a level 11 spell).

Convincing Haddin

Level 5 Skill Challenge • XP 400 or 900

Complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

The sour old man has no interest in leaving.

Setup The heroes attempt to convince Haddin to abandon the farmhouse and escape the Inquisitors.

Primary Skills Arcana, Bluff, History, Insight, Intimidate

Special (1) Each failed check increases Haddin's anger. Subsequent rolls are made at a –2 penalty for one failed check and a –4 penalty for two failed checks. (2) If Crystin's domination is discovered (Insight DC 25), award an extra 500 XP for this encounter. Additionally, all future rolls in this skill challenge are at a +2 and any failure penalties are eliminated.

Success Haddin grudgingly accepts the heroes' arguments and tells Crystin to start packing.

Failure Haddin flies into a rage, which then turns into a coughing fit. He refuses to leave and demands the party go or he will kill them all. In his anger, he loses his grip on his daughter and she musters enough strength of will to land a frying pan on the back of his head. In that moment, Crystin explains Haddin's domination over her and asks the heroes to take them both away. This revelation does not earn the party any experience.

Arcana (DC 10) The hero appeals to Haddin's arcane knowledge and tempts him with the mysteries of the fire forest.

If any Arcana check succeeds against DC 25, Haddin's control over Crystin is discovered. See the Special section above.

Bluff (DC 12) By flattery, the hero tells Haddin his knowledge of magic can give him great honor if he helps them travel to Lyceum.

History (DC 12) Learning Haddin's history grants a +2 bonus to the skill check. The

WEAKLY ENHANCED FIRE MAGIC

Spells with the fire descriptor cast within a mile of the fire forest add one extra die of the die type specified in the spell when determining damage.

Fire-based breath powers increase in blast size by one square.

hero senses Haddin's reluctance and hatred is related to some moment in history and draws the details from him. The hero then explains that helping them can restore his name.

Insight (DC 12) Empathizing with an aspect of Haddin and Crystin's situation, the hero appeals to a father's love for his children and the heavy burden to care for them. A success on this check also reveals Haddin's hatred for religion and its probable failure if such an argument is used. If an Insight check succeeds against DC 25, Haddin's control over Crystin is discovered. See the Special section above.

Intimidate (DC 7) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero attempts to intimidate Haddin. If successful, the old man is taken aback at the threats and reconsiders his appraisal of the party. Each success makes the next success more difficult, as he tests the heroes' cruelty. The second check is against DC 12, and the third is at DC 17, and increases by +5 each time thereafter. The heroes should be told that Haddin is becoming increasingly resistant to the intimidation.

Perception (DC 17) A successful check counts as a success for this skill challenge. The hero perceives a weak spot in Haddin's reluctance

and exploits the issue. It may be a faulty argument or an emotional response.

Religion (DC –) Using a religious argument results in an automatic failure unless it supports the ultimate defeat of religion. If the heroes advocate the end of religion, the check is automatically successful and confers a +2 bonus on the next check. This success can only be applied once.

THE FARMHOUSE

The stone cairns are the final resting places of Haddin's wife and half-brother.

Aside from a few old cloth decorations, all the furniture inside the farmhouse is made of stone that looks magically shaped. A small hearth crackles with too-bright fire, and beside it an old man sits on a stone bench, perusing a spell book and coughing incessantly. A masterwork warhammer hangs on the wall, surrounded by countless beautiful paintings.

The warhammer belonged to Haddin's half-brother Mandragore, and Haddin will not allow anyone to touch it. The paintings — created by Haddin years ago when there was still some decency in him — are worth 1000 gp to an art collector, but would prove nearly impossible to carry through the fire forest undamaged. In any case, Haddin refuses to let anyone take them. Crystin takes just one: a portrait of her mother and her when she was a child.

SCENE 2: INQUISITOR

Level 7 (1,350 XP)

THE SITUATION

Given Haddin's reputation, an Inquisitor has been dispatched with the specific mission to kill him. The Inquisitor and several bodyguards have marched through the mountains, avoiding Gate Pass's patrols, and arrive at roughly the same time the party is leaving the farmhouse. If the party was delayed at Diamond Wall, the Inquisitor is just beginning his attack as the heroes come into sight. By the time they are close enough, both Haddin and Crystin are downed along with several of the enemies.

If the party simply ignored or refused Crystin's request to go with them, then, as they are preparing to enter the fire forest they hear the sounds of horses coming towards the farm. The Inquisitor's group attacks; Haddin and Crystin hide in their house, and the Ragesians prepare to storm the house.

If the party stayed the night, or at least went inside the farmhouse for a few minutes, the Ragesians attack as the party leaves, coming in on foot so as not to draw attention.

Boreus is the youngest of the Inquisitors sent to Gate Pass, but he is patient and cautious, not wanting to risk being dominated by Haddin. Guthwulf has given a blessing to Boreus to allow him to summon several skeletons.

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER

"Inquisitor's Attack" (page 57)



AFTERMATH

On Boreus's body is a scroll that contains his orders to kill Haddin so the old wizard cannot reinforce the city. The message says explicitly, "He is not needed. Do not take him alive."

Should the party attempt to interrogate any prisoners, no one but Boreus knows anything of value. Boreus is scornful, saying that his masters know they are headed for Lyceum and that though they might have avoided the army, they will not be safe, for nowhere is beyond the searing reach of the Ragesian Empire. Boreus will betray the party if given a chance, but if the party asks, he will offer up the names of his fellow Inquisitors who are in the city — Kreven (the second in command of the Inquisitors), Ursus, and Guthwulf.

The Ragesians have one 4th-level and one 3rd-level treasure parcel worth of gear and coin amongst themselves.

EPILOGUE: INTO THE FIRE FOREST

If the party is willing to let Crystin and Haddin come along, they will, with Crystin trying to help and Haddin being a constant irritant, even going so far as to try to dominate any hero who he dislikes. If the party is not willing to bring them along, Crystin still thanks them for protecting her father and says she will see them again. If Haddin died or if Crystin was freed from his control, Crystin begs to come along, saying she has nothing else here. She promises to protect those who helped her.

Confident that the immediate threat is gone, Torrent recommends they rest again before heading on. When the party is finally ready, they should send the horses back to Diamond Wall, and then cross a charred bridge over the river into the fire forest.

The campaign continues in Adventure Two, *The Indomitable Fire Forest of Imnenotdar*. ↪

HADDIN JA-LAFFA

A DC 10 History or Arcana check reveals the following information once the party hears Haddin's name.

Twenty years ago, Haddin was a skilled artist and respected citizen of Gate Pass, but his half-brother Mandragore was a notorious criminal. One day, suddenly, Mandragore turned over a new leaf and began working to redeem his name. Rumors arose that Haddin was mentally dominating his brother, and an investigation revealed it was true.

Within weeks, the protests of countless people who believed (rightly or wrongly) that Haddin had likewise dominated them utterly ruined Haddin's reputation. Mandragore tried valiantly to defend him but was killed by rioters, and Haddin fled the city in disgust, taking his wife and newborn daughter.

Occasionally, Gate Pass residents see a young woman who closely resembles Haddin's wife purchasing supplies, her expression distant. The stories — true for once — say that this is Haddin's daughter, dominated by the bitter old mage.



APPENDIX A: GATE PASS

CITY LAYOUT

Gate Pass lies in a mountain pass stretching many miles west to east, though it is seldom more than a mile wide north to south. Over the years, it has been controlled by both nations that border it — Ragesia and Shahalesti — until a few decades ago the natives drove out the Ragesians and negotiated their city as neutral ground. Because of this repeated history of occupation, the city is a fortress built in patchwork over many decades. High walls surround Gate Pass on all sides, and the city is divided into twenty-seven districts, each separated by a wall with a well-defended gate. A single main road stretches through the city — the Emelk Way — passing through each district and gate.

Because of cramped space, nearly every building in the city is at least two stories, and in wealthier districts, skybridges connect clusters of buildings owned by rich merchants. Walking under a gate is generally seen as good luck in the city, and people view the arches created by skybridges as gateways.

At the highest point of the city's center is the Grand Square, where forty years ago the emperor of Ragesia erected a ninety-foot high statue of himself. When the city drove out the Ragesians they kept the statue as a trophy, and it is the victim of regular defacement.

REACTION TO MAGIC

The city is torn by the current events. Many arcane casters of magic provide useful services to the community, helping defense and construction, and even presiding over religious services. However, when given the choice between being conquered and handing over their neighbors, most of Gate Pass is more interested in protecting the greater good, which as they see it means protecting themselves. Indeed, many in the city have grown to resent the city's magic-users for being the cause of their problems, to the point that the city council has decreed that magic-users should turn themselves over to the city guard, and no one is being allowed to leave the city unless on official business.

Most citizens of Gate Pass are Unfriendly to arcane magic-users. Under orders from the

city council, the city guard is to take any magic-user they find into custody, and deliver them to a temporary holding facility in a repurposed mansion in the city center.

The city guard will generally attempt to subdue, only dealing lethal damage to those who do so first. The major opponents of this are Gabal and his wizard's school. Gabal and his red-robed students have publicly and angrily criticized the city for their cowardice, and have vowed to resist any attempt to remove them, be it by Ragesia or Gate Pass. Gabal was a hero in the original resistance against Ragesia forty years ago, and he insists that Ragesia intends to conquer Gate Pass for good. He has proclaimed Leska's Inquisitors to be a 'Scourge' against all magic users, and such is his sway that the term has caught on among the common citizens.

Most of the city believes (or at least claims to believe) that the Scourge is only intended to capture those responsible for killing the emperor, and that those who pose no threat to Ragesia will be left unharmed. Thus, many think Gabal is simply a troublemaker who wants a fight so he can relive the glory days of his youth. However, the city guard has so far chosen to let Gabal and his students do as they will, afraid of their power.

WEATHER

Since the city is in the middle of winter, if you intend to use the rules for cold weather dangers, consider giving every character a free cold weather outfit, which grants a +10 bonus on Endurance checks against cold weather. Otherwise, it is safe to assume that there are enough buildings with fires keeping them warm that will welcome someone out of the cold for a few minutes, so that 1st-level heroes do not simply die from exposure while traveling through the city.

COMBAT IN THE STREETS

Snow melts under the constant traffic throughout the city, making the roads icy. Movement in icy streets often costs double and the DC of Acrobatics checks increases by +5. Attempting to run or charge down a street may require a DC 10 Acrobatics check. Failure by 4 or less means the character cannot

run or charge, but can act normally. Failure by 5 or more means the character falls. Alleys and rooftops receive less traffic, so the snow is fresher, not requiring Acrobatics checks except on uneven surfaces, but incurring a –5 penalty to Stealth checks.

As the DM, use your best judgment as to when to apply these penalties. Difficult terrain is more fun when applied sparingly to make a battlefield more tactically interesting. Use icy terrain to add the potential for combatants to slide their foes or knock them prone.

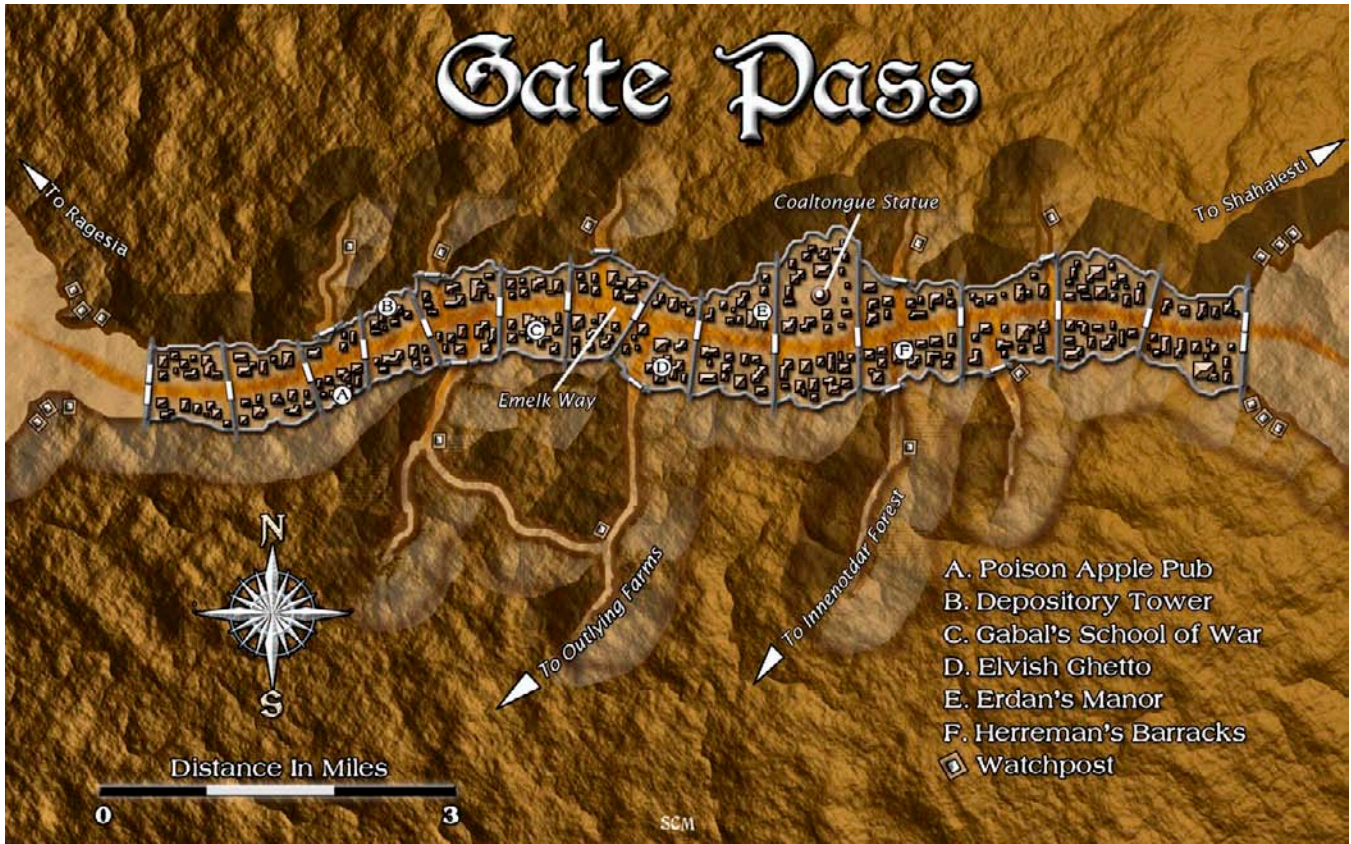
INTERDISTRICT GATES

A typical gate between districts is guarded by 20 soldiers (Human Guards), two officers (Human Officer), and a gatekeeper (Normal NPC: Diplomacy +6, Insight +10, Perception +8) during the day, or 16 soldiers and one officer after sunset. At any given time, eight of these soldiers walk the walls, making a full circuit every half hour to an hour, depending on the length of the wall, after which they swap out with one of the guards in the gate house. The rest of the guards stay in the gate house, a three-story structure built above and around the gate itself. Guards come from many races, though humans and half-orc are most common.

Generally, people can pass between districts without being accosted. Most of the gate guards are not eager to deal with spellcasters, and prefer to ignore anything not blatant. However, if the party seems too cavalier about the danger they are in, it would be fair for a suspicious gatekeeper to demand to inspect their belongings, looking for magical implements. The guards might try to extort a bribe, but they will not pursue wizards who flee.

THE MAIN GATES

The easternmost and westernmost districts are much more carefully protected. Dozens of soldiers, officers, and legitimate fighters and rogues watch these crenellated walls, armed with crossbows and a variety of melee weapons. The main gates have two sets of doors that must be passed through to enter or exit the city. The kill zone between the gates is enchanted with multiple Eyes of Alarm (having darkvision and tremorsense) with focuses maintaining them,



while a walled courtyard just inside the gates has a Hallowed Ground ritual (active for a year and a day) that is coupled with a Magicsense ritual effect (see sidebar). Sneaking out of the city through these gates is all but impossible, and these guards will apprehend any magickers trying to leave the city.

THE NORTH AND SOUTH GATES

For details on these exits from the city, see their description in Act Three (pages 18–19).



Orcish Ragesian Soldier — Art by Ryan Nock

Gate Pass Officer

Level 6 Controller • XP 250

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; Senses Perception +8

Inspiring Courage aura 5; allies within the zone gain a +1 power bonus to attack and damage rolls.

HP 71; Bloodied 35

AC 20; Fortitude 19, Reflex 18, Will 17

Speed 5

☑ **Longsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

☑ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✓ **Maneuvering Strike** (std; rchg ☑☑) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; Hit: 1d8+4 damage, and the gate pass officer can shift 1 square and make a secondary attack: +10 vs. Reflex; 1d8+1 damage.

✓ **Call to Arms** (minor; rchg ☑☑)

Ranged 6; one bloodied ally makes a melee attack against one enemy within its reach.

Alignment Unaligned; Languages Common

Str 16 (+6) Dex 14 (+5) Wis 11 (+3)

Con 15 (+5) Int 10 (+3) Cha 12 (+4)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, longsword

Gate Pass Guard

Level 3 Soldier • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; Senses Perception +6

HP 47; Bloodied 23

AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 5

☑ **Halberd** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Reach 2; +7 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is marked until the start of the gate pass guard's next turn.

☑ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

☑ **Polearm Sweep** (std; rchg ☑☑) ◆ Weapon

Close Blast 2; targets all creatures in blast; +5 vs. Reflex; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Unaligned; Languages Common

Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, halberd

NEW RITUALS

Hallowed Ground

This ritual is identical in mechanics to the Forbiddance ritual (see D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK), except the effects are as follows:

- + Attackers gain a +2 bonus to all defenses.
- + Evil creatures cannot teleport into the burst area.
- + Charm attacks by Evil or Chaotic Evil creatures automatically fail.
- + Divine casters within the burst gain a +4 Wisdom bonus to their *channel divinity: turn undead* roll.
- + Creatures inside the burst cannot become or be turned into undead.

Magicsense

The area shimmers and ripples as a magical item enters its covering area.

Level 5

Category Divination

Time 1 hour

Duration 24 hours (special)

Component Cost 100 gp

Market Price 250 gp

Key Skill Arcana

Any magical item entering the area begins to glow and sparkle.

Your Arcana check determines the size of the warded area, which is a burst. Use the same procedures as the Forbiddance ritual in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK.

If the ritual's effect is sustained without interruption for a year and a day, the effect becomes permanent.

Ritual of Suggestion

With a few words and a soothing voice, you convince your target that your way is the best course of action.

Level 6

Category Deception

Time 10 minutes

Duration 5 minutes

Component Cost 280 gp

Market Price 720 gp

Key Skill Arcana

At the completion of the ritual, select a target and make an Arcana check. Subtract 10 and apply the result as a power bonus to the target's Bluff checks for the next 5 minutes.

Gate Pass Crossbowman

Level 5 Artillery • XP 200

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +7

HP 47; **Bloodied** 23

AC 17; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 15

Speed 5

☞ **Short sword (std; at-will) * Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage.

☞ **Crossbow (std; at-will) * Weapon**

Ranged 15/30; +12 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

► **Superior Strike**

The Gate Pass crossbowman deals an extra 5 damage on melee and ranged attacks against a target that is threatened by 2 or more of the gate pass crossbowman's allies.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Str 12 (+3) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+2)

Con 11 (+2) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 12 (+3)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, short sword



APPENDIX B: BLACK HORSE BOUNTY HUNTERS

THE BLACK HORSE

This disreputable band consists of about twenty-five men commanded by **Renard Woodsmán**, a leader who stays at his camp in the mountains south of Gate Pass. The bounty hunters have been hired to capture magic-users in the city as part of Ragesia's pre-invasion activities. Renard's second-in-command, **Kathor Danava**, has been given men and supplies to carry out the abductions within the walls.

Most citizens look upon the bounty hunters in the city as a benevolent defense force helping a beleaguered city guard in recent months. The city has experienced some level of unrest ever since the death of Emperor Coal tongue, and the bounty hunters' presence has been helpful in many disturbances. This has largely been fostered by Kathor's honorable approach to handling strife, and even the city guard, normally suspicious of bounty hunters, has a favorable opinion of them.

Despite the favorable impressions, the Ragesians have full control of Renard, who is contacted anonymously every few days by a ritual *sending* spell with updates and intelligence on where likely magic-using targets are. The messages are then passed on to Kathor through a raven courier that is bonded to the second-in-command in some mysterious way.

Because capturing magic-users is so lucrative, Renard has sent most of his band into the city, under the leadership of Kathor, leaving a smaller force at their main lair. The Black Horse activities in recent months have netted many of the lesser spell casters in the city.

All Black Horse members wear an armband — red, with a black horse head, and letters that read “murderers” in Infernal (a joke by the tailor who made the armbands; it's supposed to say “Black Horse”). Only a few citizens can read the inscription, and because

their reputation is marginally favorable, most of them think it states whom the Black Horse Bounty Hunters seek to apprehend.

TRACKING DOWN THE BOUNTY HUNTERS

STREETWISE (DC 7)

A Black Horse wears a distinctive armband. The city guard does not harass them, so the Gate Pass council must sanction them.

STREETWISE (DC 12)

The Black Horse bounty hunters in the city have paid for rooms in the Mannish Inn, about a mile from the Poison Apple Pub. Their leader seems to be a man named Kathor. He is usually seen riding a horse.

STREETWISE (DC 17) OR ARCANA OR RELIGION (DC 12)

A number of service mages have left the city. Some think that the Black Horse is responsible for their leaving and many magic users fear their presence as a result.

HISTORY (DC 15)

Kathor Danava is well liked by most of the citizenry. His father repelled an ettin incursion about twenty-five years ago and Kathor was the one who put the city medal around his father's neck at the award ceremony.

DIPLOMACY (DC 17)

Kathor's father is leading the Ragesian invasion force.

KATHOR DANAVA

Kathor was formerly in the Ragesian military — his father is the general leading the army coming to Gate Pass — but he left after discovering he had magical powers, afraid the

Inquisitors would take him in. He joined up with the Black Horse because it respected his horsemanship skills, and in the two months since he has slowly come to regret it, seeing the true nature of the bounty hunters' mission.

Kathor's father was once a friend of the city; consequently, Kathor possesses a diplomatic passport that allows him (but only him) to enter or leave the city freely.

APPEALING TO KATHOR

Kathor's honor compels obedience to Renard's orders, even though he has become disillusioned. He will not fight alongside the other bounty hunters unless forced, and even then, he will offer quarter and try to end fights without everyone dying. If the heroes come to him privately, Kathor could be convinced to help. He can be found at the Mannish Inn during the morning and mid-afternoon hours. He begins his rounds on most days in the afternoon.

Kathor doesn't trust anyone (having a **Wary** attitude) and wants to be left alone to brood, but if the heroes can make him **Friendly** (complexity 2 skill challenge: 6 successes before 3 failures, 250 XP), he'll decide it's time to leave the bounty hunters, and won't be present at the ambush in Act Four. He also warns the heroes that Renard receives messages via Sending rituals, and that this means someone might be watching them.

If made **Indifferent** (3 successes before 3 failures), Kathor merely warns the heroes that the rest of the company he works for is watching the city's exits, and that if they cross paths, his duty will force him to fight them. He suggests if that happens, they ask for quarter; he does not want to have to kill them.

The skill challenges should be of moderate difficulty and make use of Insight, Arcana (the raven is a clue), Diplomacy, Streetwise, and History.

MAJOR PERSONALITIES



Renard Woodsman

Level 7 Skirmisher • XP 300

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +4

HP 78; **Bloodied** 39

AC 21; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 20

Speed 6

☉ **Longsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+13 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.

☉ **Longbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage.

✓ **Fast Strike** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Renard can shift 1 square before or after the attack; +12 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

✓ **Hawk's Claw Longsword** (std; enc) ◆

Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 2d8+3 damage; Ignore any penalties from cover or concealment (but not superior cover or total concealment).

✓ **Hawk's Claw Longbow** (std; enc) ◆

Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 2d10+2 damage. Ignore any penalties from cover or concealment (but not superior cover or total concealment).

✓ **Double Shot** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; targets 2 enemies with 3 squares of each other. Roll 2 attack rolls, take the higher roll, and apply to both targets. 1d10+2 damage.

▶ **Quarry** (minor; at-will)

Renard designates a target as a quarry. Once per round Renard's successful attack against the quarry deals an extra 1d6 damage.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +7, Streetwise +6, Thievery +7

Str 16 (+6) **Dex** 14 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+4)

Con 14 (+5) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 11 (+3)

Equipment longbow and quiver with 20 arrows, +2 longsword

Kathor Danava

Level 4 Soldier • XP 175

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +2

HP 53; **Bloodied** 26; Kathor gains a +4 bonus to all defenses while bloodied.

AC 20; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17

Speed 5; mounted 8

☉ **Greatsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage.

☉ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +11 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✓ **True Strike** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage. *Miss*: 6 damage.

✓ **Dazzling Steel** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 2d10+3 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Kathor's next turn.

▶ **Trillith True Strike** (imm reac, after being attacked by an enemy; rchg ☹☹)

Kathor gains a +20 combat bonus on any single attack performed until the end of Kathor's next turn.

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +8, Endurance +6, Intimidate +8

Str 17 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 10 (+2)

Con 13 (+3) **Int** 12 (+3) **Cha** 13 (+3)

Equipment 350 gp, crossbow with 20 bolts, greatsword

Special If Kathor dies, a special event occurs.

For a moment the air grows heavy, and then something barely visible drifts out of the soldier's body and vanishes, flying away into the sky. This is a trillith spirit that has occupied Kathor, granting him his defense bonuses and True Strike capabilities, but its identity remains a mystery for now.

Description Before you is a tightly muscled man, his grey plate armor worn from many battles and marked with symbols of sacred honor. His eyes have a darkness like a judge laying sentence. A broken helmet, cloven in the face, hangs from his belt. A raven stands motionless on his right shoulder, staring at you with black eyes.



STANDARD PERSONNEL

Black Horse Recruit

Level 1 Minion Soldier • XP 25

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +0; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13

Speed 6

☞ **Sap** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 4 damage.

► Group Training

The Black Horse recruit gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls for each ally that threatens the target.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +5, Streetwise +5, Thievery +5

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 10 (+0) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Equipment sap

Black Horse Scout

Level 1 Skirmisher • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 28; **Bloodied** 14

AC 16; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 12

Speed 6

☞ **Morningstar** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+5 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +4 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage.

✦ **Thunderstones** (std; 3/enc) ◆ Thunder

Area burst 2 within 10; +4 vs. Fortitude, and the target is dazed and deafened (save ends both)

► **Scout's Agility** (minor, usable immediately after hitting with a melee attack; at-will)

The Black Horse scout shifts 1 square.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +5, Streetwise +5

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, morningstar, 3 thunderstones

Black Horse Veteran

Level 3 Soldier • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; **Senses** Perception +6

HP 47; **Bloodied** 23

AC 19; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16

Speed 5

☞ **Halberd** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is marked until the Black Horse veteran's next turn.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✦ **Power Strike** (std; rchg ☞☞) ◆ Weapon

Requires halberd; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Streetwise +7

Str 16 (+4) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, halberd

Black Horse Thug

Level 1 Brute • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18

AC 13; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☞ **Sap** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 1d4+3 damage.

☞ **Handaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

► Group Training

The Black Horse thug gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls for each ally that threatens the target.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Endurance +7

Str 17 (+3) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Wis** 11 (+0)

Con 16 (+3) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+1)

Equipment handaxe, sap

Black Horse Bandit

Level 2 Skirmisher • XP 125

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +1

HP 37; **Bloodied** 18

AC 16; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 15

Speed 6

☞ **Mace** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+7 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.

☞ **Dagger** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +7 vs. AC; 1d4+3 damage.

✦ **Dazing Smash** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

Requires mace; +7 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the Black Horse bandit's next turn. The Black Horse bandit shifts 1 square.

► Combat Advantage

The Black Horse bandit deals +1d6 damage with melee and ranged attacks when it has combat advantage against a target.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9

Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment 2 daggers, mace

Black Horse Lieutenant

Level 3 Soldier (Leader) • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; **Senses** Perception +6

HP 47; **Bloodied** 23

AC 19; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 5

☞ **Longsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✦ **Furious Blows** (std; rchg ☞☞☞) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage, and the target is dazed through the Lieutenant's next turn.

► **Superior Tactics** (imm reac, when the Lieutenant is missed by an attack; at-will) ◆ Weapon

The Lieutenant and up to two allies within his line of sight shift 1 square.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Streetwise +7

Str 16 (+4) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, crossbow with 20 bolts, longsword

APPENDIX C: TORRENT

Torrent plays an important role in the War of the Burning Sky. As noted in the *War of the Burning Sky Campaign Guide*, it is through Torrent that the heroes start their epic journey and learn of the threats the Lands face.

As tall and strong as the typical warrior, Torrent is a distinctive looking woman with tanned skin and short white hair. Under a dark winter coat she wears a breastplate decorated with blue wave-like etchings, and a holy symbol to a sea god is tied to her wrist with a leather cord. Her demeanor is smooth but forceful, like an ocean wave.

When first met, Torrent is attempting to prove herself within her faith by delivering vital intelligence stolen from the Ragesians to the growing resistance movement centered in Seaquen. Her previous missions have been successful and she is confident that she has planned for every contingency. As the DM,

you should play her as cool and resolute. When things go wrong, her veneer of self-assurance cracks and she will view any concerns or questions as criticism. If her leadership is openly attacked, she will become defensive and possibly play the role of a martyr, attempting to prove her worth all the more through reckless decisions and foolhardy fighting.

When in control, Torrent takes on the air of a delegating leader. At heart she feels she is a battle cleric, but her latest training has placed her in the more servile role of learning the gentler aspects of her god. Her latest mentor is Lee Sidoneth, a caretaker of water based in Seaquen, whose many observations revolve around the sea and the shore. Torrent tends to quote his sayings often. At his urging, Torrent will tend to the wounded or dying before engaging in battle. She does not share in the XP awards as a result unless she becomes bloodied during a

battle. Torrent is not afraid to shout out orders to help the heroes notice a tactical error or take advantage of an opening. As the DM, she is your conduit to help the players fulfill their class roles and make an effective party.

If a hero is knocked out or killed during an encounter, you may opt to give the player temporary control of Torrent. This keeps the battle running, and streamlines play until the character revives or a suitable replacement can be fit into the story.

Overall, Torrent provides you an opportunity to help the players immerse themselves in the Lands. She provides plot help, healing and even character replacement at critical moments. Torrent will gradually take a less prominent role as the heroes grow in stature and fame, appearing again towards the end of the saga. May you enjoy playing her occasionally as much as the players enjoy their own characters.

Torrent

Level 2 Controller (Leader) • XP 125

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +4

HP 30; **Bloodied** 15

AC 18; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 15

Speed 5

☞ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ♦ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage.

✂ **Watermark** (std; at-will) ♦ Divine, Weapon

+8 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and one ally within 5 squares of Torrent gains a one-time +2 power bonus on an attack roll against the target until the end of Torrent's next turn.

✂ **Crashing Wave** (std; enc) ♦ Divine, Weapon

+8 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Torrent's next turn.

✓ **Tidal Force** (std; at-will) ♦ Divine, Force, Implement

Ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d8+4 force damage (crit 12), and one ally Torrent can see may shift one square as a free action.

✓ **Healing Word** (minor; 2/enc [1/rd]) ♦ Divine, Healing

Ranged 5; targets Torrent or one ally; the target spends a healing surge and adds another 1d6 hp.

✓ **Melora's Tide** (minor; enc) ♦ Divine, Healing

Ranged 5; targets a bloodied ally or a bloodied Torrent. The target gains regeneration 2 until no longer bloodied or the end of the encounter.

☞ **Ocean Shield** (std; daily) ♦ Divine

Close Burst 5; all allies in burst gain a +2 power bonus to AC until the end of the encounter.

☞ **Refreshing Wave** (std; daily) ♦ Divine, Healing, Implement

Close Burst 3; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; 1d6+4 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn; all allies in the burst regain 5 hp, and Torrent adds +5 hp to all her healing powers until the end of the encounter.

▶ **Healing Surge Reserve** (8/day) ♦ Divine

Torrent may expend 8 healing surges, each healing 7 hp.

▶ **Power Melee**

On any melee weapon attack, Torrent may take a –2 attack penalty and add +2 damage (+3 damage if using a two-handed weapon).

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Diplomacy +7, Heal +9,

Religion +6

Str 15 (+3) **Dex** 10 (+1) **Wis** 16 (+4)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 13 (+2)

Equipment battleaxe, chainmail armor, +2 holy symbol

Torrent

Level 3 Controller (Leader) • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +4

HP 35; **Bloodied** 17

AC 18; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 15

Speed 5

⊗ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+6 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage.

✘ **Watermark** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Weapon
+9 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and one ally within 5 squares of Torrent gains a one-time +2 power bonus on an attack roll against the target until the end of Torrent's next turn.

✘ **Crashing Wave** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Weapon
+9 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Torrent's next turn.

✓ **Tidal Force** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Force, Implement
Ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d8+4 force damage, and one ally Torrent can see may shift one square as a free action.

✓ **Healing Word** (minor; 2/enc [1/rd]) ◆ Divine, Healing
Ranged 5; targets Torrent or one ally; the target spends a healing surge and adds another 1d6 hp.

✓ **Melora's Tide** (minor; enc) ◆ Divine, Healing
Ranged 5; targets a bloodied ally or a bloodied Torrent. The target gains regeneration 2 until no longer bloodied or the end of the encounter.

↩ **Ocean Shield** (std; daily) ◆ Divine
Close Burst 5; all allies in burst gain a +2 power bonus to AC until the end of the encounter.

↩ **Refreshing Wave** (std; daily) ◆ Divine, Healing, Implement
Close Burst 3; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; 1d6+4 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn. All allies in the burst regain 5 hp, and Torrent adds +5 hp to all her healing powers until the end of the encounter.

↩ **Sand Sylph** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Force, Implement

Close Blast 5; targets each enemy in blast; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+4 force damage, and the target is blinded until the end of Torrent's next turn.

▶ **Healing Surge Reserve** (8/day) ◆ Divine
Torrent may expend 8 healing surges, each healing 8 hp.

▶ **Power Melee**
On any melee weapon attack, Torrent may take a –2 attack penalty and add +2 damage (+3 damage if using a two-handed weapon).

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Diplomacy +7, Heal +9, Religion +6

Str 15 (+3) **Dex** 10 (+1) **Wis** 16 (+4)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 13 (+2)

Equipment battleaxe, chainmail armor, +2 *holy symbol*

Torrent

Level 4 Controller (Leader) • XP 175

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +6; **Senses** Perception +5

HP 40; **Bloodied** 20

AC 19; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 16

Speed 5

⊗ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+8 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage.

✘ **Watermark** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Weapon
+10 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, and one ally within 5 squares of Torrent gains a one-time +3 power bonus on an attack roll against the target until the end of Torrent's next turn.

✘ **Crashing Wave** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Weapon
+10 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Torrent's next turn.

✓ **Tidal Force** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Force, Implement
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d8+4 force damage, and one ally Torrent can see may shift one square as a free action.

✓ **Healing Word** (minor; 2/enc [1/rd]) ◆ Divine, Healing
Ranged 5; targets Torrent or one ally; the target spends a healing surge and adds another 1d6 hp.

✓ **Melora's Tide** (minor; enc) ◆ Divine, Healing
Ranged 5; targets a bloodied ally or a bloodied Torrent. The target gains regeneration 2 until no longer bloodied or the end of the encounter.

↩ **Ocean Shield** (std; daily) ◆ Divine
Close Burst 5; all allies in burst gain a +2 power bonus to AC until the end of the encounter.

↩ **Refreshing Wave** (std; daily) ◆ Divine, Healing, Implement
Close Burst 3; targets enemies; +8 vs. Will; Hit: 1d6+5 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn. All allies in the burst regain 5 hp, and Torrent adds +5 hp to all her healing powers until the end of the encounter.

↩ **Sand Sylph** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Force, Implement

Close Blast 5; targets each enemy in blast; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+4 force damage, and the target is blinded until the end of Torrent's next turn.

▶ **Healing Surge Reserve** (8/day) ◆ Divine
Torrent may expend 8 healing surges, each healing 10 hp.

▶ **Power Melee**
On any melee weapon attack, Torrent may take a –2 attack penalty and add +2 damage (+3 damage if using a two-handed weapon).

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +9, Diplomacy +9, Heal +10, Religion +7

Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 10 (+2) **Wis** 16 (+5)

Con 13 (+3) **Int** 11 (+2) **Cha** 14 (+4)

Equipment battleaxe, chainmail armor, +2 *holy symbol*

Torrent

Level 5 Controller (Leader) • XP 200
Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +6; **Senses** Perception +5

HP 45; **Bloodied** 22

AC 19; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 16

Speed 5

☒ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+8 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage.

☒ **Watermark** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Weapon
+11 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, and one ally within 5 squares of Torrent gains a one-time +3 power bonus on an attack roll against the target until the end of Torrent's next turn.

☒ **Crashing Wave** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Weapon
+11 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Torrent's next turn.

☒ **Tidal Force** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Force, Implement
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d8+4 force damage, and one ally Torrent can see may shift one square as a free action.

☒ **Healing Word** (minor; 2/enc [1/rd]) ◆ Divine, Healing
Ranged 5; targets Torrent or one ally; the target spends a healing surge and adds another 1d6 hp.

☒ **Melora's Tide** (minor; enc) ◆ Divine, Healing
Ranged 5; targets a bloodied ally or a bloodied Torrent. The target gains regeneration 2 until no longer bloodied or the end of the encounter.

☒ **Ocean Shield** (std; daily) ◆ Divine

Close Burst 5; all allies in burst gain a +2 power bonus to AC until the end of the encounter.

☒ **Refreshing Wave** (std; daily) ◆ Divine, Healing, Implement

Close Burst 3; targets enemies; +8 vs. Will; Hit: 1d6+5 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn. All allies in the burst regain 5 hp, and Torrent adds +5 hp to all her healing powers until the end of the encounter.

☒ **Sand Sylph** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Force, Implement

Close Blast 5; targets each enemy in blast; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+4 force damage, and the target is blinded until the end of Torrent's next turn.

▶ **Healing Surge Reserve (8/day)** ◆ Divine

Torrent may expend 8 healing surges, each healing 11 hp.

▶ **Power Melee**

On any melee weapon attack, Torrent may take a –2 attack penalty and add +2 damage (+3 damage if using a two-handed weapon).

▶ **Pummeling Surf** (minor; daily) ◆ Divine, Radiant, Weapon

Targets one held weapon. The weapon deals +1d6 radiant damage until the end of the encounter. Additionally, on a successful hit, the target suffers a –2 penalty to AC until the end of Torrent's next turn.

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +9, Diplomacy +9, Heal +10, Religion +7

Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 10 (+2) **Wis** 16 (+5)

Con 13 (+3) **Int** 11 (+2) **Cha** 14 (+4)

Equipment battleaxe, chainmail armor, +2 *holy symbol*



APPENDIX D: TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS

AMBUSH!

Encounter Level 2 (700 XP)

Encounter Level 3 if Kathor fights (875 XP)

SETUP

Black Horse bandits, eager to turn over spellcasters to the Ragesians for 100 gp a head, have followed Torrent to the Poison Apple. While the heroes planned, the bounty hunters entered the second floor of the building by opening the trapdoor in the roof with acid.

A two-pronged assault from the front door and the stairway should force the party into a gauntlet in the outside alleyway. The plan seems sound, but the pub is bombed by the Ragesians just as the trap is to be sprung. Additionally, the raid's leader, the disillusioned Kathor, is waiting outside and reconsiders his superior's orders as the battle unfolds.

Additional information about the Black Horse bounty hunters can be found in Appendix B.

- ◆ 2 Black Horse scouts (S)
- ◆ 2 Black Horse thugs (T)
- ◆ 4 Black Horse recruits (R)
- ◆ 3 attack dogs (D)
- ◆ 3 collapsing ceiling hazards (C1, C2, C3)
- ◆ Kathor (K)

Black Horse Scout (S)

Level 1 Skirmisher • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 28; **Bloodied** 14

AC 16; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 12

Speed 6

☞ **Morningstar** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+5 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +4 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage.

✦ **Thunderstones** (std; 3/enc) ◆ Thunder

Area Burst 2 within 10; +4 vs. Fortitude, and the target is dazed and deafened (save ends both).

▶ **Scout's Agility** (minor, usable immediately after hitting with a melee attack; at-will)

The Black Horse scout shifts 1 square.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +5, Streetwise +5

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, morningstar, 3 thunderstones

Black Horse Thug (T)

Level 1 Brute • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18

AC 13; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☞ **Sap** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 1d4+3 damage.

☞ **Handaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

▶ **Group Training**

The Black Horse thug gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls for each ally that threatens the target.

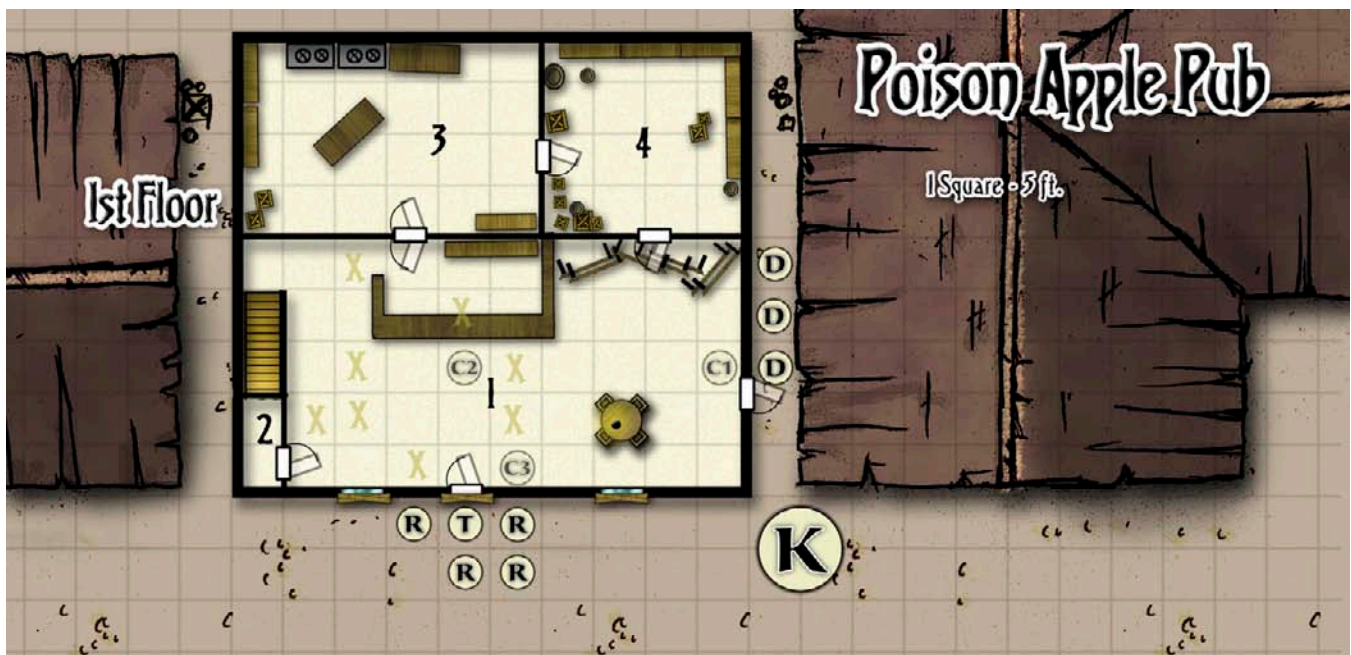
Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Endurance +7

Str 17 (+3) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Wis** 11 (+0)

Con 16 (+3) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+1)

Equipment handaxe, sap



Black Horse Recruit (R)

Level 1 Minion Soldier • XP 25

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +0; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13

Speed 6

☞ **Sap** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 4 damage.

► **Group Training**

The Black Horse recruit gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls for each ally that threatens the target.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +5, Streetwise +5, Thievery +5

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 10 (+0) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Equipment sap

Attack Dog (D)

Level 1 Minion Soldier • XP 25

Small natural beast

Initiative +3; **Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 13

Speed 8

☞ **Bite** (std; at-will)

+6 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Str 12 (+1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 5 (-3) **Cha** 10 (+0)

Note The bandits call these nondescript mutts

Sauce, Bacon, and Liver.

Collapsing Ceiling (C1–C3)

Level 1 Lurker • XP 100

Hazard

Timbers break and chunks of the ceiling fall to the floor.

Hazard The ceiling gives way, crashing down in a 5 × 5 square area.

► **Perception**

DC 10 Characters in melee combat cannot use Perception to detect this hazard.

► **Nature or Dungeoneering**

DC 15 The character notices the ceiling is unstable.

Initiative +3

► **Trigger**

Roll 1d6: on 4–6, an area collapses. The collapsing ceiling rolls initiative. Between the trigger and the initiative step of the ceiling's attack, characters in the burst or within 1 square of the burst know that the ceiling is collapsing and which squares it will affect.

► **Attack**

Standard Action; Close Burst 2

Targets All creatures in burst

Attack +4 vs. Reflex

Damage 1d10+3

Miss Half damage

Sustain Standard The collapse continues for 1d3 rounds. The burst area is difficult terrain during and after the collapse.

► **Countermeasures**

A character in the area can take advantage of natural openings in the collapse to avoid damage by making a DC 20 Nature or Dungeoneering check. With a successful check, a character takes half damage (no damage if it misses).

Kathor (K)

Level 4 Soldier • XP 175

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +2

HP 53; **Bloodied** 26; Kathor gains a +4 bonus to all defenses while bloodied.

AC 20; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17

Speed 5; mounted 8

☞ **Greatsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +11 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✓ **True Strike** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage. *Miss*: 6 damage.

✓ **Dazzling Steel** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 2d10+3 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Kathor's next turn.

► **Trillith True Strike** (imm reac, after being attacked by an enemy; rchg ☞☞☞)

Kathor gains a +20 combat bonus on any single attack performed until the end of Kathor's next turn.

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +8, Endurance +6, Intimidate +8

Str 17 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 10 (+2)

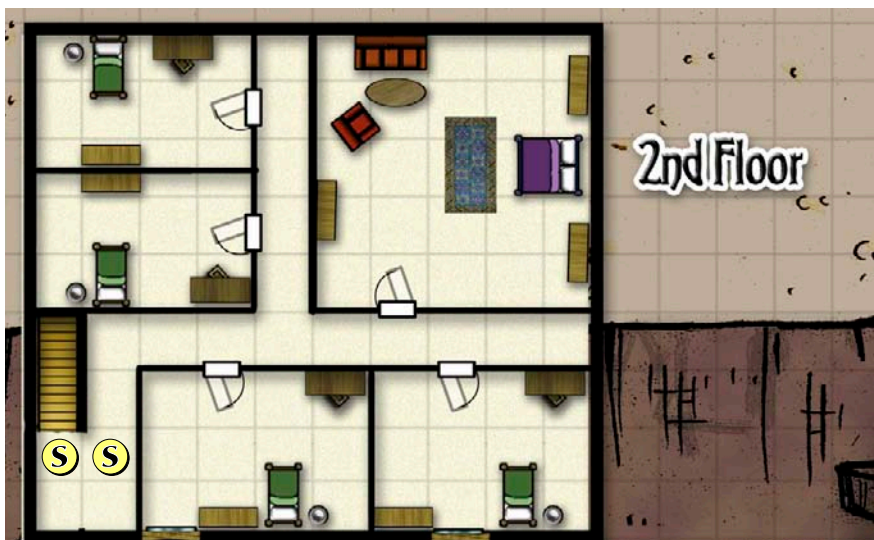
Con 13 (+3) **Int** 12 (+3) **Cha** 13 (+3)

Equipment 350 gp, crossbow with 20 bolts, greatsword

Special If Kathor is killed, a special event occurs.

For a moment the air grows heavy, and then something barely visible drifts out of the soldier's body and vanishes, flying away into the sky. This is a trillith spirit that has occupied Kathor, granting him his defense bonuses and True Strike capabilities, but its identity remains a mystery for now.

Description Hidden under grey plate armor is a tightly muscled man, his armor worn from many battles and marked with symbols of sacred honor. His eyes have a darkness like a judge laying sentence. A broken helmet, cloven in the face, hangs from his belt. A raven stands on his right shoulder, staring at you with black eyes.



TACTICS — THE TRAP

Round Zero: As the heroes' planning stage is winding down, the bells of the city's celebration go silent in the span of a few seconds. At the sudden silence, make passive Perception checks (DC 15) to hear creaking floorboards overhead from the bounty hunter scouts' movement. The party has two rounds before the bounty hunters make their move.

Round One: At the end of the first round, distant muted thumps fill the air, like the sound of ripe fruit landing on the roof of a house. These are Ragesian "bombs" being dropped by wyverns overflying the city.

Round Two: At the end of the second round, the heroes hear Kathor shouting, "Front door: go!" and then the front door shudders as a battering ram slams into it. Make a Strength check for the Thug and the 4 Recruits at the door (+10 vs. DC 18). They retry each round until they are successful, or until the party exits some other way. The Thug enters first and shouts, "Drop your weapons and come quietly. We don't want to break your valuable little heads." If Torrent gets a chance to reply, she laughs and says, "Just try it, buddy."

Round Three: At the end of the third round, the scouts on the second floor move down the stairs, hoping to pincer the group, but only two of them make it down: just after they do, the building shakes and a deafening boom sounds overhead. The tavern has been struck by a Ragesian bomb. Ceiling boards crack and buckle, and the flaming oil spraying around upstairs leaks down into the room like a fiery rain. Overhead, a handful of screams sound out as the remaining scouts are caught in the flaming burst and slain. A dying scout stumbles down the stairs, on fire. The bronze bust of Emperor Coaltongue falls off the wall and lands with a thud.

The spraying oil's attack is +2 vs. Reflex, it attacks everyone on the first floor, and it deals 3 points of fire damage if it hits.

Subsequent Rounds: The bounty hunters attempt to force the heroes into the side alley where Kathor and the dogs await. The bounty hunters fight to knock the characters unconscious. They will not be watching for ceiling collapses (they do not make Perception rolls for this purpose). The bounty hunters try to rely on numbers, but when the Thug is defeated, the rest will surrender and beg to tend to the injured.

Each round has a chance to trigger one collapsing ceiling (see Features).

Outside: If the players make it outside, Kathor will call either the party or his men to surrender, depending on the tactical advantage. If the party flees, the dogs will give chase for 1 round, and then Kathor calls them back. If Kathor is attacked, he will defend himself and attempt to knock the characters unconscious. The dogs will help, as well as any other bounty hunters. If Kathor is bloodied, he will flee (award only half of Kathor's XP for this).

TORRENT AND KATHOR

Kathor: Mounted on a riding horse (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL), Kathor will shy away from fighting so as not to spook the animal. If forced to fight, he will dismount (a move action) and resort to standard melee.

Torrent: Torrent relies on her family's heirloom battleaxe. Used to fighting alongside wizards, she prefers to protect allied spellcasters in case enemies get past front-line defenders. She will not use her healing magic unless the party cleric or paladin is downed. If the ceiling collapses across the door, she will move towards it to remove the debris.

Refer to Appendix C for Torrent's statistics block.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light. At the beginning of Round 3, the room is lit sporadically by the fires from the burning debris.

Burning Debris: Squares on the map marked with an "X" are filled with burning debris that counts as difficult terrain; moving through burning debris requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check to avoid taking 3 points of fire damage. The burning debris illuminates a 3-square burst.

Collapsing Ceiling: Squares on the map marked "C" are collapsing ceilings. These squares collapse in order from C1 to C3 on a 4–6 from a 1d6 roll. See the description for details. If C1 collapses, the alley door is blocked. It will take one standard action to remove the debris to escape.

Rooftop Escape Route: The bridge to the abandoned building could be accessed. The bounty hunters will not follow the party preferring to escape outdoors. This requires a complexity 1 skill challenge (4 successes before 3 failures) to navigate the following hazards:

- ♦ A support beam has fallen across the stairs: DC 10 Strength, Athletics, or Dungeoneering. *Fail:* Cannot cross.
- ♦ A large hole in the floor must be crossed: DC 10 Acrobatics or Dexterity. *Fail:* Fall 10 feet to the first floor and take falling damage (1d10).
- ♦ A burning wall fans flames into the corridor: DC 10 Athletics, Acrobatics, or Endurance. *Fail:* 1d6+3 fire damage.
- ♦ An unexploded bomb rests on the bodies of two scouts. The bodies block the way: DC 15 Acrobatics, Arcana, Dungeoneering, or Thievery. *Fail:* Bomb explodes doing 2d6 fire damage to all in a Close Burst 3 and lose a healing surge.

Failed progress forces the characters to return to the first floor.

On success, the bridge is used, but Kathor sees the party crossing and will be waiting for them along with the surviving hunters at the first floor of the abandoned building.

Pub Walls: Break DC 18 – The dogs will be alerted to the breakout, with Kathor following behind.

SHOCKING REVELATION

Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

SETUP

This encounter area includes the four floors of the Depository. Each floor is trapped against magic use by a series of lightning generators, one per floor. The trap normally stuns everyone on a floor at once, but magical disruptions have affected the trap and it randomly fires off one generator at a time rather than all at once.

- ◆ 1 wisp solon (W)
- ◆ Larion (L)
- ◆ 1 lightning blast trap

Wisp Solon (W)

Level 4 Controller • XP 175

Small elemental beast (fire)

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision
Righteous Glory (Radiant) aura 3; enemies in the aura take a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a –2 to all defenses.

HP 54; **Bloodied** 27

AC 18; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17

Immune disease, poison, fire; **Resist** 10 necrotic

Speed fly 8 (hover), teleport 10

☉ **Flame Whip** (std; at-will)

+9 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage.

☉ **Lustrous Gaze** (std; at-will) ◆ Radiant

Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d6+4 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

↶ **Healing Flame** (minor; enc) ◆ Healing

Close Burst 5; the wisp solon or one ally in burst can spend a healing surge and regain an additional 1d6 hp.

↶ **Blinding Flare** (imm int, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hp) ◆ Radiant

Close Burst 5; targets enemies; blind creatures are immune; +6 vs. Fortitude; 3d6+4 radiant damage and the target is blinded (save ends)

▶ **Tongues**

The wisp solon can speak with any creature that has a language.

Alignment Lawful Good; **Languages** Draconic, Primordial, Supernal

Skills Arcana +10, Religion +10

Str 10 (+2) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 13 (+3)

Con 14 (+4) **Int** 16 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+6)

Larion (L)

Level 4 Elite Skirmisher • XP 350

Medium natural humanoid (elf)

Initiative +8; **Senses** Perception +3; low-light vision

HP 102; **Bloodied** 51

AC 16; **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6, climb 6 (see *boots of spider climbing*)

Action Points 1

☉ **Rapier** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.

☉ **Throwing Dagger** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Thrown 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4+4 damage or melee +10 vs. AC; 1d4+2 damage.

✓ **Boots of Spider Climbing** (std; at-will)

When Larion makes an Athletics check to climb, he can climb at his normal speed instead of the normal one-half speed.

✓ **Roguish Riposte** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+8 vs. Reflex; 1d8+2 damage; if the target attacks Larion before until the start of Larion's next turn, Larion makes a rapier or dagger melee basic attack as an immediate interrupt.

✓ **Split Strike** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Larion makes two rapier attacks but cannot make them against the same target.

✓ **Guarding Blade** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+7 vs. AC; 2d8+2 damage, and add a +1 power bonus to Larion's AC until the start of Larion's next turn.

▶ **Sneak Attack** (free; 1/rnd)

Once per round, Larion can add +2d6 damage to a damage roll if he has combat advantage against the target.

Alignment Lawful Good; **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +8, Thievery +10

Str 13 (+3) **Dex** 17 (+5) **Wis** 13 (+3)

Con 11 (+2) **Int** 12 (+3) **Cha** 11 (+2)

Equipment 10 pp in Shahalesti coinage, 50 ft.

silk rope, 8 throwing daggers, *boots of spider climbing*, leather armor, rapier, thieves' tools, two sunrods

Lightning Blast

Level 3 Blaster • XP 150

Trap

Arcs of lightning traverse from one wall of the room in a straight line to the opposite wall or end of a row of lockers in a seemingly random pattern.

Trap Each row of squares in the room has a lightning generator. On its turn, a lightning arc shoots through one row of squares at random, attacking all creatures on the row.

▶ **Perception**

DC 12 The character notices small, round metal balls placed along the walls.

DC 17 The character hears a low hum emanating from the metal balls as he passes by one. A character that makes a DC 15 Dungeoneering check recognizes this as a possible lightning generator.

DC 22 The character realizes he passed a partially hidden control panel against the wall of the ramp.

Initiative +3

▶ **Trigger**

The trap rolls initiative when the first Arcane or Divine ranged attack is used.

▶ **Attack**

Standard Action; Range special, Area Wall 12 (until it hits a barrier)

Targets Creatures in wall. Roll randomly each round to determine the row the trap attacks.

Attack +6 vs. Reflex

Damage 1d6 + 3

Miss No damage

▶ **Countermeasures**

- ◆ A hero who makes a DC 17 Dungeoneering check as a minor action determines the row of squares the trap will attack next turn.
- ◆ A character with a metal shield or armor can place it next to one of the generators, making that row of squares safe from attack.
- ◆ A character can engage in a skill challenge to deactivate the control panel. Thievery DC 15, Complexity 1 (4 successes before 3 failures). Success disables the trap; failure causes 1d3 rows to attack each round.

TACTICS

Larion's goal is to escape. The wisp solon will seek to help him.

If the party does not stop him, Larion runs to a balcony door and climbs to the roof using his *boots of spider climb*. The heroes can chase him by running up the ramps, but the time it takes for Larion to climb is much faster than the heroes can run. If they watch his escape from a balcony, they witness him make an impossible jump of over 30 feet, clearing the 20 foot high fence and landing lightly on the sloped, snow-covered rooftop of a building. He then quaffs a potion, falls off the roof, and floats down to the crowd on the city street below. Larion's escape alerts the guards.

If the party impedes Larion's escape, he'll

try to tumble away and just run, but if forced to fight he'll call for help, then run through the aisles of lockers trying to find cover so he can hide. He'll attempt to make it to a wall or pillar so he can crawl along the ceiling and stay out of sight long enough to get to the balcony. Once he calls for help, the wisp solon teleports, and should arrive one round later. The solon tries to keep the party's attention focused on it so Larion can get away. (The solon is fire-based, so it is not hurt by the Burning Sky phenomenon when teleporting).

Larion and the wisp solon prefer to attack dragonborn, and are hesitant to attack eladrin, elves, or half-elves.

The trap is triggered by the first use of an Arcane or Divine ranged attack in the tower.

FEATURES OF THE TOWER

Illumination: Dark

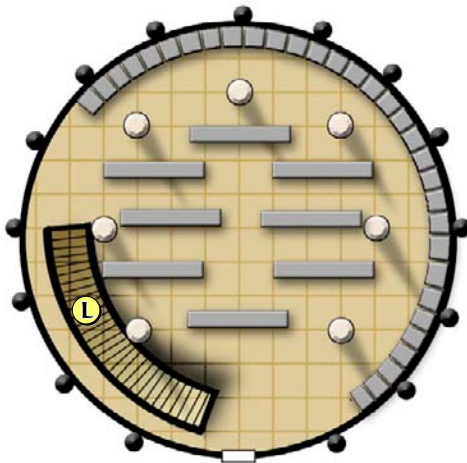
Lockers: Each floor contains dozens of metal lockers, used by merchants and noblemen to store valuables, or to leave for others to pick up. Jumping or climbing to the top of one is a DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check. They are made of reinforced iron (Break DC 30; Open Lock DC 30) and are magically trapped with a single Level 10 Shocking Blast trap (+13 vs. Reflex; Close Burst 2; 3d8+5 damage; Miss ½ damage; Thievery DC 30 to disarm). Owners of the locker can bypass the trap with a password. If one manages to get into a locker, the treasure is equivalent to a 4th-level treasure parcel.

Walls and Ceiling: The walls are masonry (Climb DC 20) and the ceilings are 20 feet high with the stone ramps circling around the interior wall.

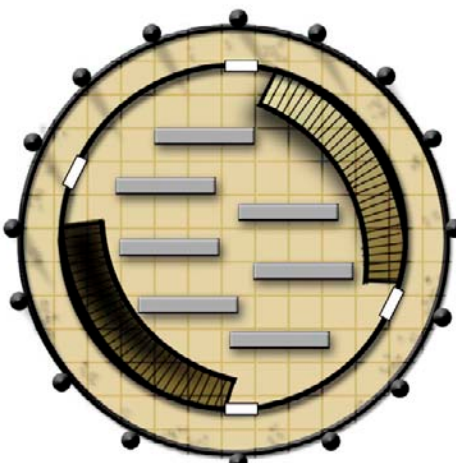
Balcony Doors: All the doors are strong wood (Break DC 20) and partially open. There are four on each floor except the first and they are all currently unlocked. Each one leads to a circular balcony. Any person exiting to a balcony without an internal guard present will trigger an alarm.

Anyone standing on the balcony is treated to an awesome and stunning view of the battle at the city's western gate, about a mile and a half away. Fire lights up the western sky, the result of wyvern-bombing and of trebuchets hurling flaming balls of pitch into the city. A squadron of Gate Pass griffon riders swoops over the nearby city rooftops, heading to join the struggle, battle horns blaring.

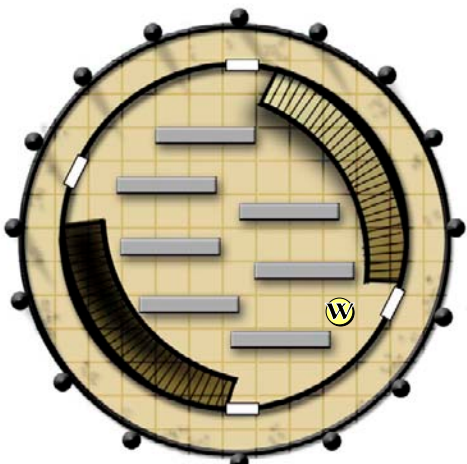
Lightning Generator: Any ranged Arcane or Divine attack will trigger the lightning blast trap.



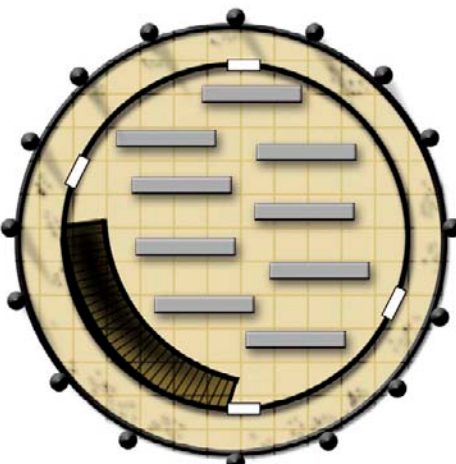
FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



FOURTH FLOOR

FLAGANUS MORTUS

Encounter Level 2 (725 XP)

SETUP

This encounter area includes three rooms of a house that is partially destroyed by a wyvern that crashed into it. With the wyvern dead, the rider has killed a woman and taken an infant boy hostage. He is rummaging through the rooms looking for clothing to use as a disguise.

- ◆ Flaganus Mortus (F)

Flaganus Mortus (F)

Level 3 Solo Soldier • XP 750

Medium natural humanoid (half-orc)

Initiative +2; Senses Perception +3

HP 188; Bloodied 94

AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 15, Will 15

Resist 5 fire, 5 necrotic (from +1 black iron plate armor)

Saving Throws +5

Speed 5

Action Points 2

☞ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage. +1 damage if used 2H.

☞ **Silvered Short Sword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

☑ **Double Attack** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Flaganus makes two battleaxe attacks.

☑ **Concentrated Force** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 3d10+3 damage (battleaxe, +1 damage if used 2H) or 3d6+3 damage (short sword), and the target is stunned until the end of Flaganus' next turn.

☑ **Ragesian Resolve** (imm reac, when Flaganus suffers an effect that a save can end; enc)

Flaganus rolls a saving throw against the triggering effect.

☑ **Unbeatable** (minor; daily) ◆ Healing

Flaganus gains 2d6+2 temporary hp.

☞ **Ragesian Scythe** (std; rchg ☐☐☐) ◆ Weapon

Requires battleaxe; targets enemies in burst; close burst 1; +8 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. +1 damage if used 2H.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidate +7

Str 17 (+4) **Dex** 13 (+2) **Wis** 14 (+3)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 14 (+3) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment battleaxe, +1 black iron plate armor, silvered short sword

TACTICS

When confronted, Flaganus thrusts the child in front of him and clumsily places his axe blade across the youth's throat. With a choking, slightly gurgling voice, he demands they let him leave.

- ◆ If the party lets him go, he leaves with the child and flees. When he is 50 feet away from the building, he will slash the boy with his axe and dump him on the ground, bleeding and dying. Torrent will instantly run to his aid and tell the party to go after the villain.
- ◆ If the party refuses to let Flaganus leave, then he will cut the boy's throat and toss him towards the party. "Right, then." he proclaims raising his battleaxe in defiance, "at least my mates won't have to worry about you anymore." Torrent hastens to help the boy, leaving the party to go after the veteran.

Flaganus starts the fight bloodied at 94 hp. In most cases, Flaganus will use his *Ragesian scythe* exploit and will attempt to limit his exposure to flanking by using debris as obstacles. If running close to death, he will invoke his *unbeatable* exploit and attack using *concentrated force* as a potential last stand maneuver.

FEATURES OF THE HOUSE

Illumination: Dark

Debris: The floor is littered with debris. Those squares are marked as difficult terrain.

Walls and Ceiling: The walls are masonry (Climb DC 20) and the ceilings are 10 feet high.

Furniture: The table can be jumped on to obtain higher ground. It is rickety though, and requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check to keep from falling.

Wood Stoves: The stoves are intact and hot. The main stove has a pot of boiling water on it.



WHITE WYRMS

Encounter Level 5 (1,200 XP)

SETUP

The White Wyrms are waiting for a signal from the Ragesians to perform some more terrorism. They are currently resting within the warehouse and do not anticipate anyone coming. The outside doors are securely locked (Thievery DC 25). Some holes in the leftmost outside wall may help the heroes spot the two guards (G) standing by the inside doorway (Perception DC 10).

- ◆ 1 mountain pseudodragon (P)
- ◆ 1 human storm mage (M)
- ◆ 2 White Wym guards (G)
- ◆ 3 White Wym bandits (B)
- ◆ 2 false-floor pit traps (T)

Mountain Pseudodragon (P)

Level 3 Lurker • XP 150

Small natural beast (reptile)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +3; low-light vision

HP 38; **Bloodied** 19

AC 16; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 4; fly 8 (hover); see also *swooping strike*

☉ **Bite** (std; at-will)

+8 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage.

☉ **Sting** (std; rchg ☹☹☹) ◆ Poison

+8 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

✓ **Swooping Strike** (std; at-will)

The mountain pseudodragon flies up to 8 squares, making a melee basic attack at one point within the movement. The target is not granted an opportunity attack when the mountain pseudodragon moves away.

☹ **Poison Cloud** (imm reac; when the pseudodragon is reduced to 0 hp) ◆ Poison

The mountain pseudodragon's body emits a poisonous cloud. Close Burst 1; +4 vs. Reflex; 5 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

▶ **Invisibility** (std; rchg when the mountain pseudodragon takes damage) ◆ Illusion

The mountain pseudodragon becomes invisible and remains so until it moves.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Skills Insight +8, Stealth +10

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 15 (+3)

Con 16 (+4) **Int** 6 (–1) **Cha** 17 (+4)

Human Storm Mage (M)

Level 4 Artillery • XP 175

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +5

HP 44; **Bloodied** 22

AC 16; **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☉ **Quarterstaff** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+5 vs. AC; 1d8+1 damage.

☉ **Magic Missile** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Force, Implement

Ranged 20; +7 vs. Reflex; 2d4+5 force damage.

✓ **Bouncing Bolt** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Implement, Lightning

Make 3 attacks, each one against a unique target: ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d6+5 lightning damage.

✦ **Thunderclap** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Implement, Thunder

Area Burst 1 within 10; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d10+5 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Arcana +11

Str 10 (+2) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 17 (+5)

Con 12 (+3) **Int** 18 (+6) **Cha** 12 (+3)

Equipment Quarterstaff, robes, wand

White Wym Guard (G)

Level 3 Soldier • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; **Senses** Perception +6

HP 46; **Bloodied** 23

AC 19; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 5

☉ **Longspear** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, and the target is marked until the White Wym guard's next turn.

✓ **Powerful Strike** (std; rchg ☹☹☹) ◆ Weapon

Requires longspear; reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d6+4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

✓ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +8 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Streetwise +7

Str 16 (+4) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment chainmail armor, crossbow with 20 bolts, longspear

White Wym Bandit (B)

Level 2 Skirmisher • XP 125

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +1

HP 37; **Bloodied** 18

AC 17; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 13

Speed 6

☉ **Mace** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+5 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.

☉ **Throwing Dagger** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Thrown 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4+4 damage.

✓ **Dazing Strike** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

Only with mace; +5 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage, the target is dazed until the end of the White Wym bandit's next turn, and the White Wym bandit shifts 1 square.

▶ **Combat Advantage**

The White Wym bandit deals an extra 1d6 damage with melee and ranged attacks when it has combat advantage against a target.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Diplomacy +7, Heal +6,

Religion +6

Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment 6 throwing daggers, leather armor, mace

False-Floor Pit

Level 1 Lurker • XP 100

Trap

Wooden planks give way, dropping the creature into a pit.

Trap A 2-by-2 floor section hides a 10-foot-deep pit.

▶ **Perception**

DC 20: The character notices the floor's unevenness.

▶ **Trigger**

The trap attacks when a creature enters one of the trap's four squares.

▶ **Attack**

Immediate Reaction; Melee

Target The creature that triggered the trap.

Attack +4 vs. Reflex

Damage 1d10 damage

Hit The target lands at the bottom of the pit and falls prone.

Miss Target returns to last square it occupied and its move action ends immediately.

Effect The floor opens, revealing the pit for the rest of the encounter.

▶ Countermeasures

- ◆ An adjacent character can trigger the trap (DC 10 Thievery check; standard action). The floor falls into the pit.
- ◆ An adjacent character can disable the trap (DC 25 Thievery check; standard action). The floor becomes safe.
- ◆ A character can jump over the pit (DC 21 Athletics check; DC 11 with a running start).
- ◆ A character can climb out (DC 15 Athletics check).

TACTICS

The best way to enter is through the eastern doors (next to the loading dock). They are the least guarded by the humans — largely because they fear the pseudodragon, which regularly flies in that area. The drake and the storm mage will initiate combat and the mage will call for the guards to help.

If the front area doors are used, the guards and bandits will rush to engage, and then fall back in an effort to lure the heroes over the main pit. The storm mage and mountain pseudodragon stay back to assess the strength of the party before committing to combat.

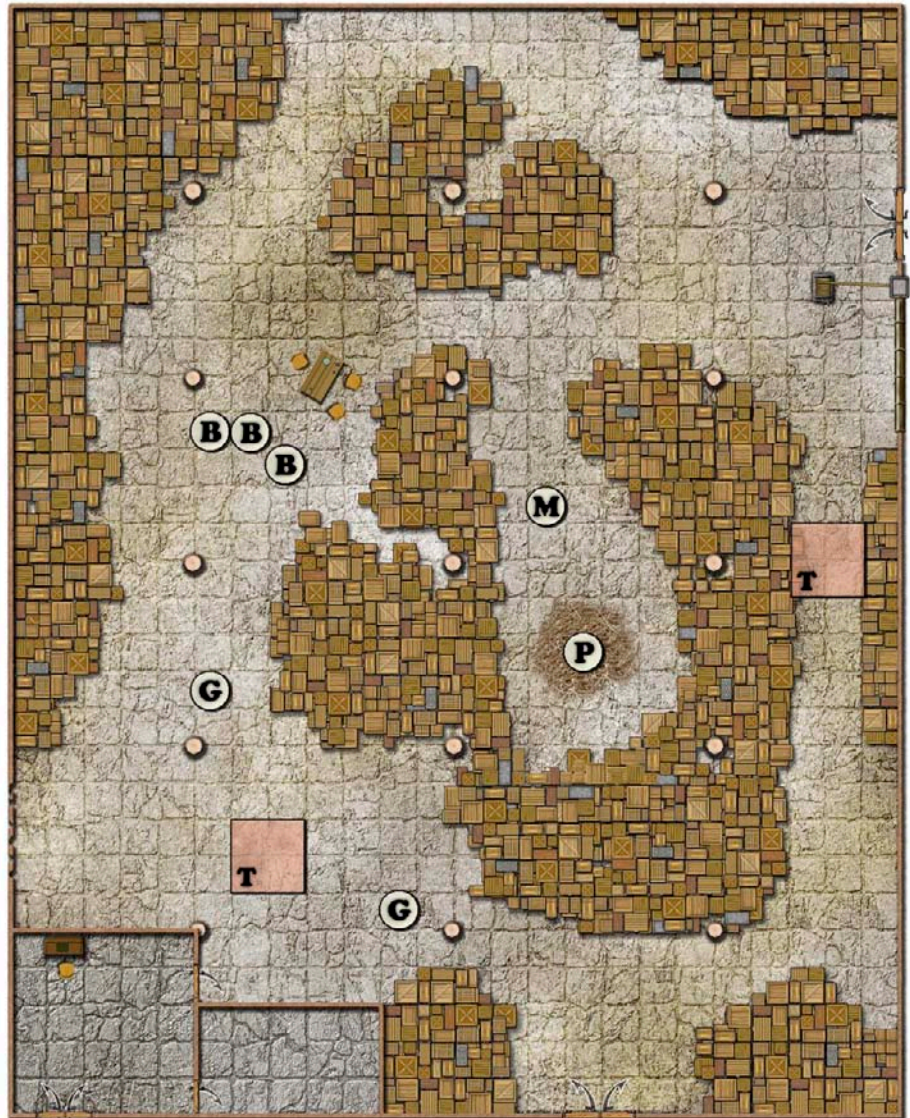
If able, the mountain pseudodragon will lure targets into a chase along the eastern corridor and over the pit trap. He will then use his flyby sting attack as the target attempts to climb out.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Normal

Boxes and Crates: The marked areas contain boxes and crates stacked up like a small mountain. They can be climbed, but require an DC 15 Acrobatics check to successfully climb them without toppling them over. A DC 10 Acrobatics check must be made each round to keep from falling. Standing on the boxes grants combat advantage.

Walls and Ceiling: The walls are rough wood planking (Climb DC 15) and the ceilings are 30 feet high.



DEAD RISING

Encounter Level 4 (900 XP)

SETUP

An ancient crypt has opened below the safe house. Inside, a dwarven wight and some skeletons, trapped for untold years, seek to exact revenge on the living.

- ◆ 1 dwarven wight (W)
- ◆ 3 dwarven boneshard skeletons (B)
- ◆ 4 dwarven decrepit skeletons (D)

Dwarven Wight (W)
Level 5 Soldier • XP 200
 Medium natural humanoid (undead)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +0; darkvision
HP 62; **Bloodied** 31
AC 21; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic;
Vulnerable 5 radiant
Speed 6

☑ **Soul-Draining Greathammer** (std; at-will) * Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 2d6+4 necrotic damage. Reroll any damage dice that show a 1 until they show a 2 or more, the target loses 1 healing surge, and the dwarven wight shifts 3 squares.

▶ **Steadfast Position**

Effects causing the dwarven wight to move (a push, pull or slide) are reduced by 1 square. The dwarven wight is allowed a saving throw against any effect that knocks it prone.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Dwarven
Skills Athletics +10

Str 18 (+6)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 6 (+0)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 10 (+2)	Cha 15 (+4)

Equipment greathammer

Dwarven Boneshard Skeleton (B)
Level 5 Brute • XP 200
 Medium natural animate (undead)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +4; darkvision
HP 77; **Bloodied** 38; see also *dwarven boneshard burst*
AC 18; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic;
Vulnerable 5 radiant
Speed 6

☑ **Dwarven Boneshard** (std; at-will) ◆ Necrotic

+8 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).

☑ **Graveborn Greataxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Necrotic, Weapon

+8 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage (crit 1d10+14), plus 5 necrotic damage.

◀ **Dwarven Boneshard Burst** (imm reac; when first bloodied and when reduced to 0 hp) ◆ Necrotic

Close Burst 3; +6 vs. Reflex; 3d6+4 necrotic damage.

▶ **Steadfast Position**

Effects causing the dwarven boneshard skeleton to move (a push, pull or slide) are reduced by 1 square. The dwarven boneshard skeleton is allowed a saving throw against any effect that knocks it prone.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Str 16 (+5)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 3 (–2)	Cha 3 (–2)

Equipment greataxe

Dwarven Decrepit Skeleton (D)
Level 1 Minion Soldier • XP 25
 Medium natural animate (undead)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +2; darkvision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 16; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 13
Immune disease, poison
Speed 6

☑ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 6 damage.

☑ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +6 vs. AC; 3 damage.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Str 15 (+2)	Dex 17 (+3)	Wis 14 (+2)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 3 (–4)	Cha 3 (–4)

Equipment battleaxe, crossbow with 20 bolts

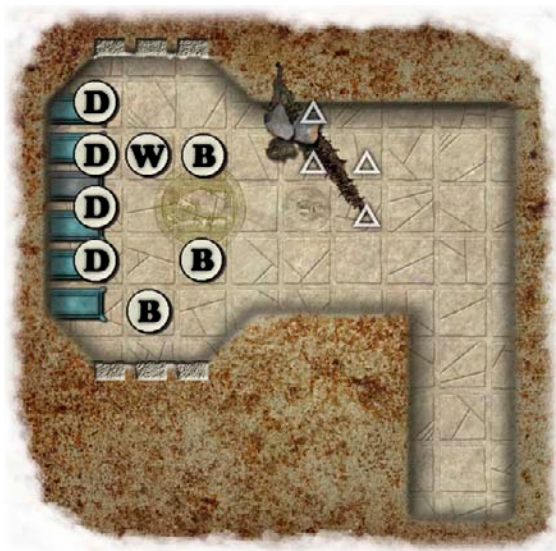
TACTICS

Round 1: The dwarven decrepit skeletons stay behind and fire their crossbows. The dwarven boneshard skeletons advance and use their *dwarven boneshard* attacks to deal ongoing damage. If successful, they switch to their *graveborn greataxes*. The dwarven wight, hungry for a soul, will move into an advantageous position and use its *soul-draining greathammer* attack to deny the heroes their healing surges.

Subsequent Rounds: The dwarven decrepit skeletons keep firing their arrows until engaged in melee or they run out. They then switch to their scimitars. If all the dwarven boneshard skeletons are defeated, the decrepit skeletons will switch to melee combat even if they still have missiles remaining.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

- Illumination:** Darkness.
- Burial Niches:** The niches have square openings and tilt downward at an angle. A Medium-sized person can squeeze into one. See the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK for the effects of squeezing in combat. A character in the niche gains cover against any attacks that are not from directly in front of the hole.
- Rubble:** Ragesian bombs have caved in part of the wall and opened a crevice in the floor. The affected squares are difficult terrain and require a DC 7 Acrobatics check to avoid falling prone.
- Sarcophagi:** Six stone coffins of average size are arrayed on low biers against the walls of the chamber. One has its cover broken and a skeleton lies against it, holding a greataxe. Each coffin is three feet tall and provides cover. They can be jumped or climbed upon at the cost of an extra square of movement.
- Walls and Ceiling:** The walls are worked stone (Climb DC 15) and the ceiling is 10 feet high.
- Treasure:** The unopened sarcophagi and niches can be searched, revealing treasure parcels as described on page 13.



DUEL

Encounter Level 5 (1,000–1,175 XP)

SETUP

If Shealis is not confronted in her apartment (see “Shealis’s Apartment” on the next page), she travels towards the ghetto. If she makes a Perception + 7 check vs. the party’s Stealth, she will walk to a nearby alley and wait for the party to come in. Then she will attack.

Be aware that although Shealis will not kill the heroes, she is an exceptionally difficult foe to defeat due to her high defenses. The heroes will have much greater success bargaining with her than attacking her.

- ◆ Shealis Amlauril (S)
- ◆ 1 wisp solon (W)

Shealis Amlauril (S)

Level 10 Elite Controller • XP 1,000

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +8; **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision

HP 204; **Bloodied** 102

AC 26; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 23

Resist 10 radiant

Saving Throws +2, +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *fey step*

Action Points 1

⊗ **Dagger** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 1d4+4 damage. Thrown 5/10; +14 vs. AC; 1d4+6 damage.

✓ **Phantasmal Ram** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Force, Implement

Ranged 10; +17 vs. Fortitude; 2d10+8 force damage (crit 28), and the target is pushed 3 squares and knocked prone.

✦ **Blackening Burst** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Fire, Implement

Area Burst 1 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6+8 fire damage (crit 14).

✦ **Bulwark of Fire** (std; daily) ◆ Arcane, Conjuration, Fire, Implement

Area Wall 8 (up to 4 high) within 10; lasts until the end of Shealis’s next turn. Creatures starting their turn adjacent to the wall take 1d6+5 fire damage; those moving through or starting in the wall take 3d6+5 fire damage. *Sustain Minor*: The wall persists until the end of Shealis’s next turn. *Special*: Entering a wall square costs 3 extra squares of movement. The wall blocks line of sight.

▶ **Continuance** (minor; enc) ◆ Implement

Orb power; Extend one active power’s duration until the end of Shealis’s next turn.

▶ **Fey Step** (move; enc)

Shealis can teleport up to 5 squares.

▶ **Triplicate Image** (minor; daily) ◆ Arcane, Illusion

Personal; Three duplicate images appear in Shealis’s space. She gains a +6 AC bonus. Each time an attack against her misses, one image disappears and the AC bonus decreases by 2.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Supernal

Skills Arcana +15, History +15

Str 13 (+6) **Dex** 16 (+8) **Wis** 15 (+7)

Con 14 (+7) **Int** 21 (+10) **Cha** 16 (+8)

Equipment 10 pp, chainmail, 3 daggers, silvered dagger, mithral gloves (200 gp), +2 orb of inevitable continuance

Wisp Solon (W)

Level 4 Controller • XP 175

Small elemental beast (fire)

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision

Righteous Glory (Radiant) aura 3; enemies in the aura take a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a –2 to all defenses.

HP 54; **Bloodied** 27

AC 18; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17

Immune disease, poison, fire; **Resist** 10 necrotic

Speed fly 8 (hover), teleport 10

⊗ **Flame Whip** (std; at-will)

+9 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage.

⊗ **Lustrous Gaze** (std; at-will) ◆ Radiant

Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d6+4 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

↶ **Healing Flame** (minor; enc) ◆ Healing

Close Burst 5; the wisp solon or one ally in burst can spend a healing surge and regain an additional 1d6 hp.

↶ **Blinding Flare** (imm int, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hp) ◆ Radiant

Close Burst 5; targets enemies; blind creatures are immune; +6 vs. Fortitude; 3d6+4 radiant damage and the target is blinded (save ends)

▶ **Tongues**

The wisp solon can speak with any creature that has a language.

Alignment Lawful Good; **Languages** Draconic, Primordial, Supernal

Skills Arcana +10, Religion +10

Str 10 (+2) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 13 (+3)

Con 14 (+4) **Int** 16 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+6)

TACTICS

Heedless of rising anti-magic sentiment, Shealis starts by casting *triplicate image*. At her best opportunity, she will use *bulwark of fire* to hit as many as she can. If it is advantageous, she will continue it for an extra round using her +2 orb of inevitable continuance. She will then *spectral ram* the healthiest party member and follow up with *blackening bursts*. When bloodied, Shealis will attempt to maneuver to the alley entrance and *fey step* out as part of her escape.

If the solon escaped the depository tower, he participates in the fight as well, helping Shealis in any way possible.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Normal

Icy Street: The marked squares count as double movement. To run on the street requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check. Failure by 5 or more means the target falls.

Debris: Squares with debris are difficult terrain. They can be climbed onto with a DC 10 Athletics check and take 2 squares of movement. They are considered higher ground.

Walls and Ceiling: The walls are rock and masonry (Climb DC 20).



SHEALIS'S APARTMENT

Encounter Level 5 (1,000–1,175 XP)

SETUP

The eladrin spy Shealis is readying her escape from the city, accompanied by a wisp solon. Although Shealis will not kill the heroes, she is an exceptionally difficult foe to defeat due to her high defenses. The heroes will have much greater success bargaining with her than attacking her.

- ◆ 1 wisp solon (W)
- ◆ Shealis Amlauril (S)

Shealis Amlauril (S)

Level 10 Elite Controller • XP 1,000

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +8; **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision

HP 204; **Bloodied** 102

AC 26; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 23

Resist 10 radiant

Saving Throws +2, +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *fey step*

Action Points 1

☞ **Dagger** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 1d4+4 damage. Thrown 5/10; +14 vs. AC; 1d4+6 damage.

✓ **Phantasmal Ram** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Force, Implement

Ranged 10; +17 vs. Fortitude; 2d10+8 force damage (crit 28), and the target is pushed 3 squares and knocked prone.

✦ **Blackening Burst** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Fire, Implement

Area Burst 1 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6+8 fire damage (crit 14).

✦ **Bulwark of Fire** (std; daily) ◆ Arcane, Conjunction, Fire, Implement

Area Wall 8 (up to 4 high) within 10; lasts until the end of Shealis's next turn. Creatures starting their turn adjacent to the wall take 1d6+5 fire damage; those moving through or starting in the wall take 3d6+5 fire damage. *Sustain Minor*: The wall persists until the end of Shealis's next turn. *Special*: Entering a wall square costs 3 extra squares of movement. The wall blocks line of sight.

▶ **Continuance** (minor; enc) ◆ Implement

Orb power; Extend one active power's duration until the end of Shealis's next turn.

▶ **Fey Step** (move; enc)

Shealis can teleport up to 5 squares.

▶ **Triplicate Image** (minor; daily) ◆ Arcane, Illusion

Personal; Three duplicate images appear in Shealis's space. She gains a +6 AC bonus. Each time an attack against her misses, one image disappears and the AC bonus decreases by 2.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Supernal

Skills Arcana +15, History +15

Str 13 (+6) **Dex** 16 (+8) **Wis** 15 (+7)

Con 14 (+7) **Int** 21 (+10) **Cha** 16 (+8)

Equipment 10 pp, chainmail, 3 daggers, silvered dagger, mithral gloves (200 gp), +2 orb of inevitable continuance

Wisp Solon (W)

Level 4 Controller • XP 175

Small elemental beast (fire)

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision

Righteous Glory (Radiant) aura 3; enemies in the aura take a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a –2 to all defenses.

HP 54; **Bloodied** 27

AC 18; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17

Immune disease, poison, fire; **Resist** 10 necrotic

Speed fly 8 (hover), teleport 10

☞ **Flame Whip** (std; at-will)

+9 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage.

☞ **Lustrous Gaze** (std; at-will) ◆ Radiant

Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d6+4 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

☞ **Healing Flame** (minor; enc) ◆ Healing

Close Burst 5; the wisp solon or one ally in burst can spend a healing surge and regain an additional 1d6 hp.

☞ **Blinding Flare** (imm int, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hp) ◆ Radiant

Close Burst 5; targets enemies; blind creatures are immune; +6 vs. Fortitude; 3d6+4 radiant damage and the target is blinded (save ends)

▶ **Tongues**

The wisp solon can speak with any creature that has a language.

Alignment Lawful Good; **Languages** Draconic, Primordial, Supernal

Skills Arcana +10, Religion +10

Str 10 (+2) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 13 (+3)

Con 14 (+4) **Int** 16 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+6)

TACTICS

If Shealis knows there might be a visit, all the boxes and vital papers for her spying activities are placed against a wall so she can use her *blackening burst* efficiently. If she is unaware of the party's arrival, she will not risk damaging her work and will use a dagger instead. She will not use her *bulwark of fire* in any case.

Shealis will cast her *triplicate image* and then try to knock out a fighter first with *phantasmal ram*. She will use her *fey step* ability when she is down to 25 hp or less (suffering up to 5 fire damage as a result), using the windows to help her teleport out of the apartment quickly. If unable to obtain line of sight, she attempts to get to the door and escape. She does not know about the force globe around the apartment.

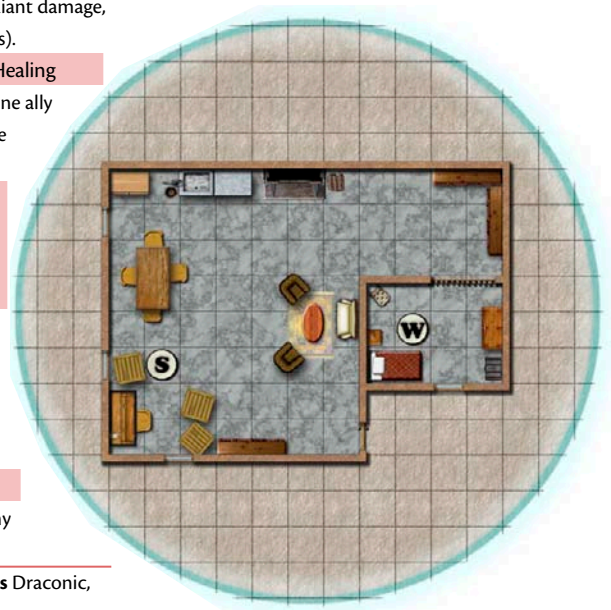
If the solon escaped the depository tower, he participates in the fight as well.

FEATURES OF THE APARTMENT

Illumination: Normal

Boxes: Squares containing boxes are difficult terrain. The boxes can be climbed onto with a DC 10 Athletics check (2 squares of movement). The boxes are considered higher ground.

Walls and Ceiling: The walls are masonry (Climb DC 20) and the ceilings are 10 feet high.



SPIES' HEADQUARTERS

Encounter Level 4 (875 XP)

SETUP

- ◆ 3 Feywild badgers (B)
- ◆ 2 Shahalesti warriors (W)
- ◆ 1 Shahalesti lieutenant (L)

Initially the eladrin are upstairs. The badgers are by the bench (they lair underneath), but move randomly to within 6 squares of the party unless attacked. They are not initially aggressive, but will snarl when within 5 squares of a person. Within three rounds, they will make enough noise to alert the three eladrin upstairs.

Feywild Badger (B)

Level 2 Brute • XP 125

Small fey beast

Initiative +7; **Senses** Perception +6

HP 48; **Bloodied** 24

AC 16; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 14

Immune fear (when within 2 squares of an ally)

Speed 8

☉ Bite (std; at-will)

+5 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

✓ Badger Onslaught (std; enc) ◆ Fear

+5 vs. AC; 2d10+3 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares and can't move closer to the feywild badger on its next turn.

▶ Blood Rage (while bloodied)

The feywild badger gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 5 damage per attack.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 10 (+1)

Con 18 (+5) **Int** 3 (–3) **Cha** 10 (+1)

Shahalesti Warrior (W)

Level 3 Soldier • XP 150

Medium fey humanoid

Initiative +6; **Senses** Perception +2; low-light vision

HP 48; **Bloodied** 24

AC 19; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *fey step*

☉ Longsword (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

☉ Shortbow (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.

✓ Mark of the Fey (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage. The target is marked until the end of the Shahalesti warrior's next turn.

✓ Swift Stab (std; rchg ☉☉) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage. The target is slowed until the end of the Shahalesti warrior's next turn.

✓ Warrior's Taunt (std; enc)

Ranged 10; the target is marked until the end of the encounter or the Shahalesti warrior's death, taking 3 damage each round it does not attack the Shahalesti warrior.

▶ Fey Step (move; enc) ◆ Teleportation

The Shahalesti warrior can teleport up to 5 squares.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Arcana +7, Athletics +8, History +7

Str 17 (+4) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+2)

Con 16 (+4) **Int** 13 (+2) **Cha** 13 (+2)

Equipment light shield, longsword, shortbow with 20 arrows

Shahalesti Lieutenant (L)

Level 5 Soldier (Leader) • XP 200

Medium fey humanoid

Initiative +8; **Senses** Perception +3; low-light vision

HP 64; **Bloodied** 32

AC 21; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 18

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *fey step*

☉ Longsword (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

✓ Mark of the Fey (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the Shahalesti lieutenant's next turn.

✓ Teleporting Tap (std; rchg ☉☉) ◆

Teleportation, Weapon

Requires longsword; +12 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage, and the target is teleported 3 squares (but not into an unsafe space).

☞ Assuring Utterance (minor; at-will)

Close Burst 10; target one ally; target makes an immediate saving throw against one effect.

▶ Fey Step (move; enc)

The Shahalesti lieutenant can teleport up to 5 squares.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Arcana +8, Athletics +9, History +8

Str 17 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 13 (+3)

Con 16 (+5) **Int** 13 (+3) **Cha** 13 (+3)

Equipment longsword

TACTICS

The badgers will attempt to flank the weakest characters first, shying away from martial heroes and anyone wearing heavy armor.

It takes two rounds for the eladrin to reach the bottom of the stairs, but they can fire into the room from any of the stair squares. They have cover when on the stairs. They will rely on the badgers to soften the party before involving themselves in melee combat. The lieutenant leads the charge when melee combat becomes necessary, using *teleporting tap* to damage the heroes even more when hit. If both soldiers become bloodied or the lieutenant is brought to 0 hp, the eladrin surrender.

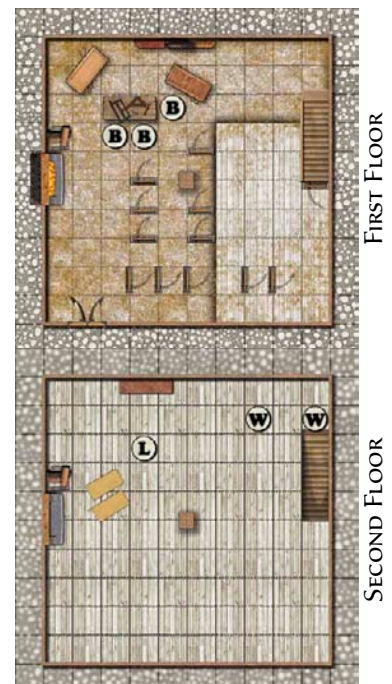
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Normal (windows).

Stand-Up Doors: The stand-up doors in the room are fully functional and can provide an easy way to avoid the badgers. It takes one move action to open the door and another to go through it and close the door again. The badgers do not get an opportunity attack.

The door at the base of the stairs is designed to allow the eladrin time to fire multiple arrow shots at the heroes while they charge.

Platform: The platform for the stairs is high enough to grant combat advantage if an enemy is on the sawdust floor.



STREET AMBUSH

Encounter Level 6 (1,350 XP)

SETUP

All the combatants are Black Horse Bounty Hunters (also detailed in Appendix B: Black Horse Bounty Hunters).

- ◆ 4 Black Horse bandits (B)
- ◆ 4 Black Horse veterans (V)
- ◆ 1 Black Horse lieutenant (L)

Black Horse Bandit (B)

Level 2 Skirmisher • XP 125

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +4; Senses Perception +1

HP 37; Bloodied 18

AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15

Speed 6

☞ Mace (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+7 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.

☞ Dagger (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +7 vs. AC; 1d4+3 damage.

✓ Dazing Smash (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

Requires mace; +7 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the Black Horse bandit's next turn. The Black Horse bandit shifts 1 square.

► Combat Advantage

The Black Horse bandit deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks when it has combat advantage against a target.

Alignment Unaligned; Languages Common

Skills Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9

Str 12 (+2) Dex 17 (+4) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 13 (+2) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment 2 daggers, mace

Black Horse Veteran (V)

Level 3 Soldier • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; Senses Perception +6

HP 47; Bloodied 23

AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 16

Speed 5

☞ Halberd (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is marked until the Black Horse veteran's next turn.

☞ Crossbow (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✓ Power Strike (std; rchg ☞) ◆ Weapon

Requires halberd; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Unaligned; Languages Common

Skills Streetwise +7

Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, halberd

Black Horse Lieutenant (L)

Level 3 Soldier (Leader) • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; Senses Perception +6

HP 47; Bloodied 23

AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14

Speed 5

☞ Longsword (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

☞ Crossbow (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✓ Furious Blows (std; rchg ☞☞☞) ◆ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage, and the target is dazed through the Lieutenant's next turn.

► Superior Tactics (imm reaction, when the lieutenant is missed by an attack; at-will) ◆ Weapon

The Lieutenant and up to two allies within his line of sight shift 1 square.

Alignment Unaligned; Languages Common

Skills Streetwise +7

Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, crossbow with 20 bolts, longsword

TACTICS

The thugs will attempt to flank at every opportunity. The Lieutenant will direct his attacks against spell casters first, then work on the fighters.

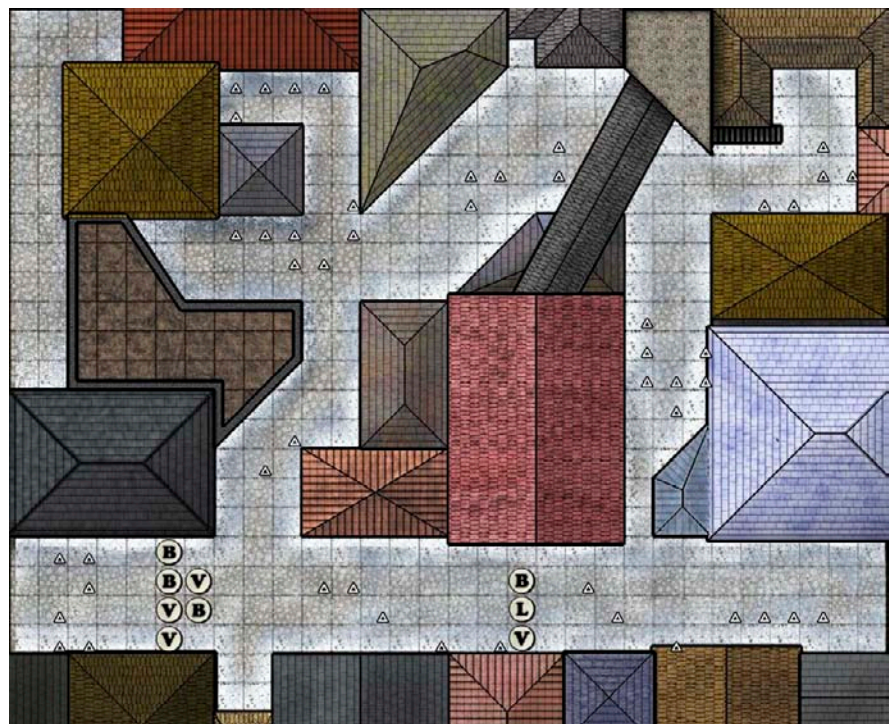
All the thugs will choose to render their targets unconscious.

If over half the heroes are downed, Rantle comes into the fight (see Rantle, page 21) and downs a thug (preferably the lieutenant) with one swift blow from his greatsword. The other thugs then flee. Rantle then shouts "Follow me! I'll get us out of this!"

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Icy Street: The marked squares count as double movement. To run on the street requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check. Failure by 5 or more means the target falls.

Debris: Squares with debris are difficult terrain. They can be climbed onto with a DC 10 Athletics check and take 2 squares of movement. They are considered higher ground.



MAGIC MAYHEM

Encounter Level 5 (1,100 XP)

SETUP

Read the following:

Not long after the guards take chase and the people have scattered, you hear a crash inside a shop nearby. Moments later, you hear voices arguing, and then a strange many-colored light reflects off the walls, followed by a man's scream.

- ◆ 2 human highwaymen (H)
- ◆ Feris the sorcerer (F)
- ◆ 2 human storm mages (M)
- ◆ 1 scintillating snake (S)

Human Highwayman (H)

Level 3 Skirmisher • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +3; **Senses** Perception +1

HP 47; **Bloodied** 23

AC 17; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16

Speed 6

☑ **Short Sword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+8 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✂ **Swirling Slash** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+8 vs. AC; 2d6+2 damage, and each enemy adjacent to the human highwayman takes 3 damage. The human highwayman shifts up to 2 squares.

✂ **Blademark** (std; rchg ☑☑☑) ◆ Weapon

+8 vs. AC; 2d6+2 damage, and the target is marked. *Miss*: 1d6+2 damage.

► **Combat Advantage**

The human highwayman deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks when it has combat advantage against a target.

► **Power Attack**

The human highwayman may take a –2 attack penalty and add +2 points of damage.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +8, Intimidate +7

Str 15 (+3) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment short sword

Feris (F)

Level 6 Artillery • XP 250

Small natural humanoid (halfling)

Initiative +8; **Senses** Perception +8

HP 55; **Bloodied** 27

AC 18; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 23

Saving Throws +5 against fear attacks

Speed 6

☒ **Dagger** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+13 vs. AC; 1d4 damage or

Thrown 5/10; +13 vs. AC; 1d4+5 damage.

✂ **Chaos Bolt** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Implement, Psychic

+11 vs. Will; Hit: 1d10+5 psychic damage.

If the attack roll is even, Feris may make a secondary attack. *Secondary Attack*: +11 vs. Will; 1d6 psychic damage; if the attack roll is even, Feris may make another secondary attack. Each creature can only be attacked once in a round by this power.

✓ **Dancing Lightning** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Implement, Lightning, Thunder

Ranged 10; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6+4 lightning and thunder damage, and each creature adjacent to the target takes 5 thunder damage.

✓ **Reeling Torment** (std; daily) ◆ Arcane, Charm, Implement, Psychic

Ranged 10; +11 vs. Will; 3d8+4 psychic damage, and at the start of the target's turn, Feris can freely slide the target 3 squares (save ends).

► **Second Chance** (imm int, when hit by an attack; enc)

Feris' attacker is forced the reroll the attack attempt, taking the second roll's result even if it is lower.

► **Wild Magic Surge** (imm reac, on Feris' first Arcane attack roll each rd)

Any attack roll that is even grants a +1 bonus to Feris' AC until the start of Feris' next turn. Otherwise, Feris makes an immediate saving throw.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Stealth +13

Str 10 (+3) **Dex** 20 (+8) **Wis** 11 (+3)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 17 (+6) **Cha** 21 (+8)

Equipment dagger

Human Storm Mage (M)

Level 4 Artillery • XP 175

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +5

HP 42; **Bloodied** 21

AC 16; **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☑ **Quarterstaff** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+5 vs. AC; 1d8+1 damage.

☑ **Magic Missile** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Force, Implement

Ranged 20; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d4+5 force damage.

✓ **Trinary Bolt** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Implement, Lightning

Make 3 attacks, each one against a unique target: ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d6+5 lightning damage.

✂ **Thunderclap** (std; enc) * Arcane, Implement, Thunder

Area burst 1 within 10; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d10+5 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Arcana +11

Str 10 (+2) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 17 (+5)

Con 12 (+3) **Int** 18 (+6) **Cha** 12 (+3)

Equipment quarterstaff, robes, wand

Scintillating Snake (S)

Level 5 Controller • XP 200

Medium natural beast (reptile)

Initiative +7; **Senses** Perception +2; low-light vision

HP 63; **Bloodied** 31

AC 19; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 17

Speed 6, climb 6

☑ **Bite** (std; at-will)

+10 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage.

☑ **Scintillating Strike** (std; rchg ☑☑☑) ◆ Radiant

Close Blast 5; targets each creature in blast; +7 vs. Will; 1d6+4 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Skills Stealth +12

Str 15 (+4) **Dex** 20 (+7) **Wis** 11 (+2)

Con 15 (+4) **Int** 2 (–2) **Cha** 8 (+1)

TACTICS

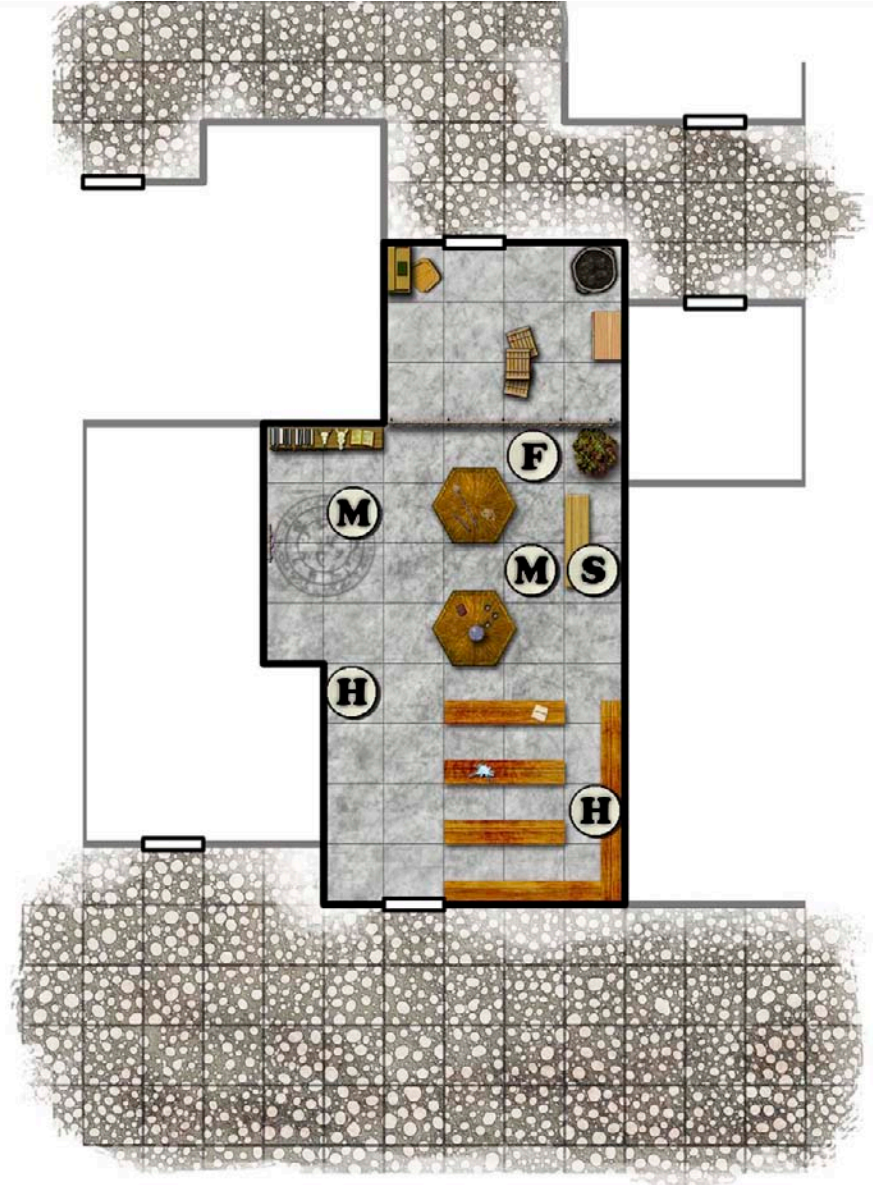
Feris lets the highwaymen and the scintillating snake engage the heroes. The snake will use *scintillating strike* then bite any foes it dazed. The highwaymen use their *blademark* and get everyone into range for an *swirling slash* attack. They will jump on the shelves to gain combat advantage. The human storm mages stand back and fire off *magic missiles* while looking for a way to use their *bouncing bolts*. Feris attempts to stay out of the fray and attacks from a distance.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

General: If a character using an attack with the Weapon keyword rolls a natural 1, that character suffers 5 points of damage from a random magical supply cutting, exploding, or burning the combatant who fumbled the attack.

Shelves: The shelves are about 3 feet tall. They provide cover and can be climbed upon by spending an extra movement point. Jumping from one shelf to another can be accomplished, but on a natural 1, the shelf just jumped from falls over backwards, starting a domino effect. Creatures on a falling shelf or within its path must make an Acrobatics DC 15 check, or be crushed, doing 1d6 damage and immobilizing them (save ends).

Curtain Wall: The curtain wall can be torn down and used as a net to cover. Treat the attack as an improvised weapon with reach 2. If successful, the curtain covers 2 squares, immobilizing those caught underneath it.



GAUNTLET RUN

Encounter Level 6 (1,475 XP)

SETUP

All the combatants are Black Horse Bounty Hunters (see Appendix B: Black Horse Bounty Hunters for details).

- ◆ Renard (R)
- ◆ Kathor (K)
- ◆ 2 Black Horse scouts (S)
- ◆ 8 Black Horse thugs (T)

This encounter uses the “Mounts and Combat in the Gauntlet” rules on page 23.

If the party escaped with Diogenes’ help, they are on foot when they encounter the Gauntlet. In this case, all the activity occurs in Zone 1 of the gorge and the enemies must come to the party. The scouts have a different horn signal to alert those further in the gorge. Any enemies in Zones 3–5 cross a zone in 2 combat rounds. Thus, the two thugs in Zone 3 don’t appear until round 5, the same time as Kathor, since he is on a horse. This is also the situation if the party suspects a trap and dismounts before the encounter.

Renard (R)

Level 7 Skirmisher • XP 300

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +4

HP 78; **Bloodied** 39

AC 21; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 20

Speed 6

☞ **Longsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+13 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.

☞ **Longbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage.

✓ **Fast Strike** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Renard can shift 1 square before or after the attack; +12 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.

✓ **Hawk’s Claw Longsword** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 2d8+3 damage; Ignore any penalties from cover or concealment (but not superior cover or total concealment).

✓ **Hawk’s Claw Longbow** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 2d10+2 damage; Ignore any penalties from cover or concealment (but not superior cover or total concealment).

✓ **Double Shot** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; locate 2 targets with 3 squares of each other; Roll 2 attack rolls. Take the higher roll and apply to both targets. 1d10+2 damage.

► Quarry (minor; at-will)

Renard designates a target as a quarry. Once per round Renard’s successful attack against the quarry deals an extra 1d6 damage.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +7, Streetwise +6, Thievery +7

Str 16 (+6) **Dex** 14 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+4)

Con 14 (+5) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 11 (+3)

Equipment longbow and quiver with 20 arrows, +2 *longsword*

Kathor (K)

Level 4 Soldier • XP 175

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +2

HP 53; **Bloodied** 26; Kathor gains a +4 to bonus to defense while bloodied.

AC 20; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17

Speed 5; mounted 8

☞ **Greatsword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +11 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

✓ **True Strike** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 1d10+3 damage. *Miss*: 6 damage.

✓ **Dazzling Steel** (std; enc) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC; 2d10+3 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Kathor’s next turn.

► **Trillith True Strike** (imm reac, after being attacked by an enemy; rchg ☞☞☞)

Kathor gains a +20 combat bonus on any single attack performed until the end of Kathor’s next turn.

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +8, Endurance +6, Intimidate +8

Str 17 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 10 (+2)

Con 13 (+3) **Int** 12 (+3) **Cha** 13 (+3)

Equipment 350 gp, crossbow with 20 bolts, greatsword

Special If Kathor is killed, a special event occurs.

For a moment the air grows heavy, and then something barely visible drifts out of the soldier’s body and vanishes, flying away into the sky. This is a trillith spirit that has occupied Kathor, granting him his defense bonuses and True Strike capabilities, but its identity remains a mystery for now.

Black Horse Scout (S)

Level 1 Skirmisher • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 28; **Bloodied** 14

AC 16; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 12

Speed 6

☞ **Morningstar** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+5 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage.

☞ **Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +4 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage.

✦ **Thunderstones** (std; 3/enc) ◆ Thunder

Area Burst 2 within 10; +4 vs. Fortitude, and the target is Dazed and Deafened (save ends both)

► **Scout’s Agility** (minor, usable immediately after hitting with a melee attack; at-will)

The Black Horse scout shifts 1 square.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +5, Streetwise +5

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (–1) **Cha** 11 (+0)

Equipment crossbow with 20 bolts, morningstar, 3 thunderstones

Black Horse Thug (T)

Level 1 Brute • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +1; **Senses** Perception +0

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18

AC 13; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☞ **Sap** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs. AC; 1d4+3 damage.

☞ **Handaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

► **Group Training**

The Black Horse thug gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls for each ally that threatens the target.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Endurance +7

Str 17 (+3) **Dex** 12 (+1) **Wis** 11 (+0)

Con 16 (+3) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+1)

Equipment handaxe, sap

ZONE 1

Skill Test: Acrobatics (DC 10). Loose rocks underneath the overhang require skillful maneuvering through them. *Fail:* The horse suffers 5 damage.

Detail: Two **Black Horse Scouts** wait at the top of an overhanging cliff. (DC 21 Perception check to notice them from 50 feet away). If the horses are walking, the scouts throw thunderstones towards them in an effort to spook them (2 stones at +2 vs. Will, affects all targets in zone). If a horse spooks, randomly determine if he will start running into the gauntlet or away from it, then use the Mounted Activities rules to finish the round.

After they throw their stones, the scouts will sound their horn as an alarm and scramble down to help their comrades (3 rounds). If the characters are walking or turn around to escape, the scouts sound the horn differently to draw the other bounty hunters to the first zone.

ZONE 2

Skill Test: Athletics (DC 10). A small gully forces your mount to jump over it. *Fail:* The horse balks. Do not advance to the next zone.

Detail: **Renard** and two **Black Horse Thugs** will charge on their horses and chase the characters. If any character remains in the zone, he is attacked first. Renard will attack the horse with his longbow (+5 vs. AC17; 1d8+3 damage),

while the thugs attack the character with their saps (+5 vs. AC; 1d4+3 damage).

ZONE 3

Skill Test: Acrobatics (DC 10). A tight curve forces you to slow down in order to navigate it. *Fail:* You do not advance to the next zone and the horse stops running. You may advance on the next round without rolling the skill check.

Detail: Two **Black Horse Thugs** lie in wait on the sides of the gorge. They fire their crossbows at the horse. If the horse is running, apply a -4 penalty to the attack roll (+3 vs. AC 17; 1d8+1 damage).

ZONE 4

Skill Test: Acrobatics (DC 10). A patch of ice forces you to dodge. *Fail:* The horse slips and must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check or he falls and you are thrown. Your horse suffers 1d10 damage. You take 1d6+3 damage and you are prone.

Detail: Two **Black Horse Thugs** lie in wait on the sides of the gorge. They fire their crossbows at the horse. If the horse is running, apply a -4 penalty to the attack roll (+3 vs. AC 17; 1d8+1 damage).

ZONE 5

Skill Test: Endurance (DC 10): The ground rises and falls, testing your mount's ability to run fast. *Fail:* The horse takes 5 damage.

Detail: Two **Black Horse Thugs** lie in wait on the sides of the gorge. They fire their crossbows at the horse. If the horse is running, apply a -4 penalty to the attack roll (+3 vs. AC 17; 1d8+1 damage).

ZONE 6

Skill Test: Int vs Kathor's Reflex (15). The bounty hunter you saw at the Poison Apple Pub blocks your way. You attempt to skirt around him. *Fail:* Your horse balks and you stay in the zone.

Detail: **Kathor** will charge, drawing an opportunity attack and then using *trillith true strike* and attacking with his greatsword.

GENERAL TACTICS

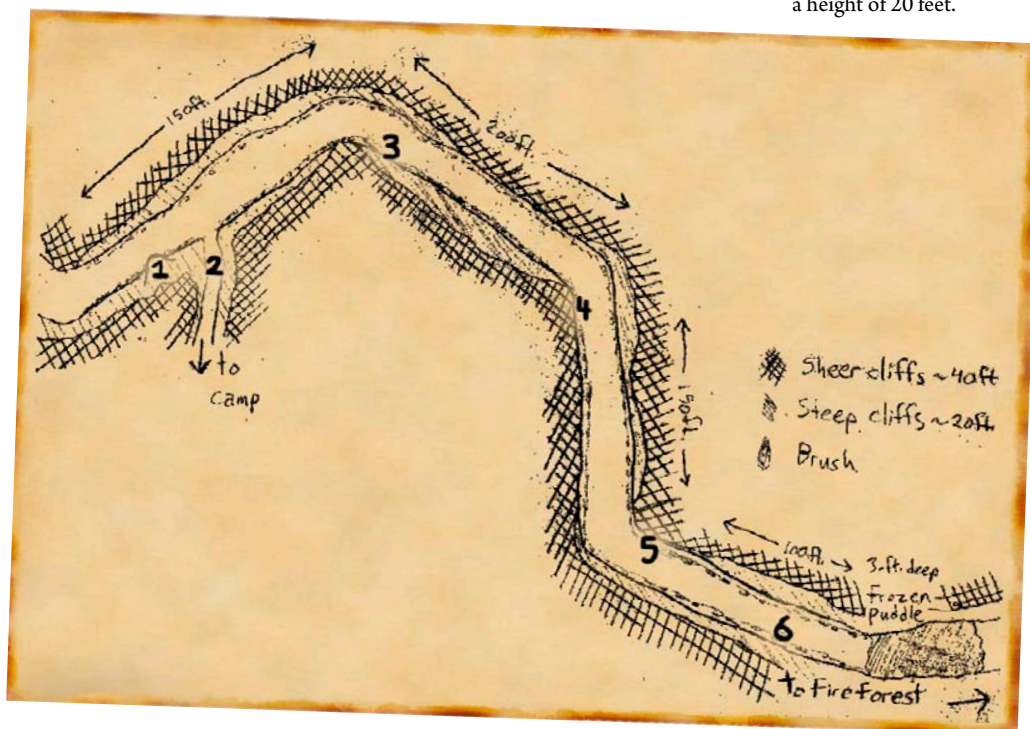
If the party is mounted, the primary focus is killing the horses.

In all cases, the bounty hunters seek to knock the heroes out, not kill them.

If Renard is defeated, Kathor calls for the rest of the bounty hunters to stand down, which they will as long as the party does not press the attack. If both Kathor and Renard fall, the surviving bounty hunters try to flee.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The road through the gauntlet is 20 feet wide, with 5 feet of foliage on either side (difficult terrain, concealment) backed by cliffs that ascend at a 60 degree angle (Climb DC 10) to a height of 20 feet.



GNOLL HUNT

Encounter Level 5 (1,025 XP)

SETUP

- ◆ 1 mountain gnoll (G)
- ◆ 7 mountain hyenas (H)

Mountain Gnoll (G)

Level 5 Artillery • XP 200

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +6; **Senses** Perception +12; low-light vision

HP 51; **Bloodied** 25

AC 16; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 17

Speed 7

☑ **Handaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+12 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage, or 1d6+5 damage while bloodied.

☑ **Longbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, or 1d10+6 damage while bloodied.

► Pack Attack

The mountain gnoll's melee and ranged attacks add 5 damage against an enemy adjacent to two or more of the mountain gnoll's allies.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 19 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+4)

Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 7 (+0)

Equipment handaxe, leather armor, longbow, longbow with quiver of 30 arrows

Mountain Hyena (H)

Level 2 Skirmisher • XP 125

Medium natural beast

Initiative +4; **Senses** Perception +6; low-light vision

HP 37; **Bloodied** 18

AC 16; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11

Speed 8

☑ **Bite** (std; at-will)

+7 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

► Harrier

A mountain hyena adjacent to an enemy grants combat advantage to all melee attacks by other creatures that target that enemy.

► Pack Attack

The mountain hyena's melee and ranged attacks add 5 damage against enemies adjacent to two or more of the mountain hyena's allies.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Str 16 (+4) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 10 (+1)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 2 (−3) **Cha** 5 (−2)

TACTICS

The gnoll starts on the walls of the ruins, using the debris as cover. The hyenas split into two groups with the intent to flank the weakest party members and attack.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Trees: Each tree provides cover. Shooting from behind a tree imposes a −2 penalty to the attack roll. An attacker is considered behind a

tree if he takes advantage of the cover while shooting.

Climbing a tree requires a DC 10 Athletics check. If the creature climbing is wearing scale or plate armor or is attempting the climb 1-handed, it takes a −4 penalty to the check.

Ruins: The ruined walls are crumbled and easy to scale. Climbing a wall costs double movement; and a DC 10 Acrobatics check must be rolled or the climber is unbalanced.



INQUISITOR'S ATTACK

Encounter Level 7 (1,150 XP)

SETUP

- ◆ Inquisitor Boreus (B)
- ◆ Smarg "Smiley" Hobbler (H)
- ◆ 3 goblin snipers (S)
- ◆ 2 Ragesian regulars (R)
- ◆ 3 decrepit orc skeletons (D)
- ◆ Haddin Ja-Laffa (J) (ally)
- ◆ Crystin Ja-Nafeel (C) (ally)

Inquisitor Boreus (B)

Level 7 Controller • XP 300

Medium natural humanoid (orc)

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +6; darkvision

HP 77; **Bloodied** 38

AC 21; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 22

Speed 6

☑ **Inquisitor's Claw** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+12 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage (critical 1d6+7).

✦ **Vengeance Barrier** (std; enc) ◆ Divine, Teleportation, Weapon
+12 vs. AC; 1d6+1 damage, and the Inquisitor teleports each enemy within 2 squares of the target up to 2 squares.

✦ **Leska's Vengeance** (std; at-will) ◆ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d8+4 radiant damage (crit 12+1d6 radiant), and the Inquisitor gains 3 temporary hp.

✦ **Leska's Exhortation** (std; enc) ◆ Implement
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Will; 2d6+6 psychic damage (crit 18+1d6 radiant), and target is immobilized (save ends).

✦ **Rebuke Lesser Arcane Magic** (std; rchg ☞)
Ranged 10, targets a conjuration or zone made by an arcane power; +11 vs. Will of originating caster; the conjuration or zone is destroyed, including any of its ongoing effects, even those normally lasting until a target saves.

↩ **Oath-Mark** (minor; rchg special)
Close Burst 10; targets one enemy the Inquisitor can see. If the target is the only enemy adjacent to the Inquisitor, the Inquisitor makes two attack rolls and takes either result. The effect lasts until the target drops to 0 hp or the encounter ends. The power then recharges automatically.

✦ **Summon Skeletons** (std; enc) ◆ Conjuration, Divine
Area Blast 2 within 5; The Inquisitor summons 3 Decrepit Orc Skeletons within the blast.

The skeletons have an initiative equal to the Inquisitor, and are dazed on the round they were summoned.

▶ Dogged Pursuit

If the Inquisitor's oath-marked target moves away willingly from the Inquisitor, the Inquisitor gains +3 to damage rolls against that target until the end of the Inquisitor's next turn.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +10, Intimidate +7, Religion +10

Str 12 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+4) **Wis** 16 (+6)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 15 (+5) **Cha** 9 (+2)

Equipment Inquisitor's claw

Smarg "Smiley" Hobbler (H)

Level 3 Skirmisher • XP 150

Medium natural humanoid

Initiative +2; **Senses** Perception +1; low-light vision

HP 46; **Bloodied** 23

AC 17; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 14

Speed 6; see also *warrior's rampage*

☑ **Greataxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+8 vs. AC; 1d12+3 damage (crit 1d12+15).

☒ **Throwing Handaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage or Melee +8 vs. AC; 1d6+3 damage.

✦ **Warrior's Rampage** (std; rchg ☞) ◆ Weapon
Smarg moves up to 8 squares and can move through enemies' spaces, provoking opportunity attacks as normal. Smarg makes a greataxe attack against each creature he passes through. The creature remains in its space, and Smarg must leave the space after the attack. Smarg must end the rampage in an unoccupied space.

▶ Assassin's Eye

When making a ranged attack, Smarg ignores cover and concealment (but not total concealment) if the target is within 5 squares of Smarg.

Alignment Chaotic Evil; **Languages** Common

Skills Endurance +8, Intimidate +5

Str 17 (+4) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 10 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) **Int** 8 (+0) **Cha** 9 (+0)

Equipment 6 throwing handaxes, greataxe

Goblin Sniper (G)

Level 2 Artillery • XP 25

Small natural humanoid

Initiative +5; **Senses** Perception +2; low-light vision

HP 31; **Bloodied** 15

AC 16; **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 11

Speed 6; see also *goblin tactics*

☑ **Short Sword** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+9 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage.

☑ **Hand Crossbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
Ranged 10/20; +9 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage.

✦ **Bane Bolt** (std; rchg ☞) ◆ Weapon
Ranged ; +9 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage, and the target takes a –1 penalty to all attack rolls and a –1 penalty to Will defense (save ends both).

▶ **Goblin Tactics** (imm reac, when missed by a melee attack; at-will)

The goblin sniper shifts 1 square.

▶ Sniper

When making a ranged attack while concealed or covered, the goblin sniper is still concealed or covered if the attack misses.

▶ Sniper's Advantage

The goblin sniper gains a +1d6 damage bonus if it has combat advantage against the target.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common, Goblin

Skills Stealth +10, Thievery +10

Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 13 (+2)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 8 (+0) **Cha** 8 (+0)

Equipment hand crossbow with 20 bolts, short sword, leather armor

Decrepit Orc Skeleton (D)

Level 1 Minion • XP 25

Medium natural animate (undead)

Initiative +3; **Senses** Perception +7; darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 16; **Fortitude** 11, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 10

Immune disease, poison

Speed 6

☑ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
+6 vs. AC; 6 damage

☑ **Shortbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon
Ranged 15/30; +6 vs. AC; 3 damage.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** —

Str 16 (+3) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 14 (+2)

Con 13 (+1) **Int** 3 (–4) **Cha** 5 (–3)

Equipment battleaxe, heavy shield, shortbow with quiver of 30 arrows

Ragesian Regular (R)

Level 2 Soldier • XP 125

Medium natural humanoid (half-orc)

Initiative +2; **Senses** Perception +1; low-light

HP 34; **Bloodied** 17

AC 18; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☞ **Battleaxe** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

+9 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage.

☞ **Shortbow** (std; at-will) ◆ Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8+1 damage.

✓ **Warrior's Refresh** (std, usable only when bloodied; enc) ◆ Healing, Weapon

Requires battleaxe; +9 vs. AC; 1d10+2 damage, and Ragesian regular regains 8 hp.

► **Combat Advantage**

The Ragesian regular deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks when it has combat advantage against a target.

► **Furious Assault** (free, when the Ragesian Regular hits an enemy; enc)

The Ragesian regular adds 1[W] damage on a successful weapon attack or an extra 1d8 damage on any other attack.

► **Swift Charge**

The Ragesian regular gains a +2 bonus to speed when charging.

Alignment Unaligned; **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Stealth +7, Streetwise +6, Thievery +7

Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 12 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+1)

Con 10 (+1) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+1)

Equipment battleaxe, shortbow with quiver of 30 arrows



Haddin Ja-Laffa (J)

Level 11 Wizard (Controller) • XP 300

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Once strong and handsome, this man is now old and feeble, his brown hair stringy, his voice ragged from constant coughing. He dresses like a common merchant, but he clutches an aged book to his chest.

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception –3

HP 103 (currently 51); **Bloodied** 51

AC 25; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 23

Speed 5

☞ **Dagger** (std, at-will) ◆ Weapon

+16 vs AC; 1d4+4 damage.

✓ **Mystic Hold** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Charm, Implement, Psychic

Ranged 10; +15 vs. Will; 1d4+4 psychic damage and the target is immobilized until the end of Haddin's next turn.

✓ **Enslave** (std; rchg ☞) ◆ Charm

Ranged 10; +15 vs. Will; the target is dominated (save ends). Haddin can use *enslave* only on one creature at a time.

► **Dominating Seal** (std, enc) ◆ Charm

+15 vs. Will; an *enslaved* target is dominated for 15 minutes, no saving throw allowed.

Alignment Evil; **Languages** Common, Giant, Dwarven, Elven, Goblin, Deep Speech

Skills Arcana +15, Intimidate+10, Religion +11

Str 10 (+5) **Dex** 9 (+4) **Wis** 17 (+8)

Con 7 (+3) **Int** 20 (+10) **Cha** 11 (+5)

Equipment aged book (not his spellbook, which he destroyed in anger, but rather a sketchbook from when he was still a good man, in love with his wife and daughter), basic clothes, cold weather outfit, dagger, 30 gp

Special Haddin's XP award is lower than standard because of his general combat ineffectiveness.

Tactics Haddin is physically weak, and tries to stay back and control enemies' minds.

Crystin Ja-Nafeel (C)

Level 1 Wizard (Artillery) • XP 100

Medium natural humanoid (human)

Slender and docile, wavy dark hair frames this young woman's haunted face, dominated by wide blue eyes that seem to see beyond the material world. She cradles a thin black staff close to her, like it is precious to her.

Initiative +2 **Senses** Perception +6 (trillith enhanced)

HP 19; **Bloodied** 9; Crystin gains a +4 to bonus to all defenses while bloodied

AC 14; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 14

Speed 6

☞ **Quarterstaff** (std, at-will) ◆ Weapon

+6 vs AC; 1d4–1 damage.

✓ **Magic Missile** (std; at-will) ◆ Arcane, Force, Implement

Ranged 20; +4 vs. Reflex; 2d4+2 force damage.

✓ **Force Orb** (std; enc) ◆ Arcane, Force, Implement

Ranged 20; +4 vs. Reflex; 2d8+2 force damage. *Secondary Attack:* targets each enemy adjacent to primary target; +4 vs. Reflex; 1d10+2 force damage.

✧ **Slumber** (std; daily) ◆ Arcane, Implement, Sleep

Area Burst 2 within 20 squares; +4 vs. Reflex; Hit: the target is slowed (save ends). A failed saving throw against this power renders the target unconscious (save ends). *Miss:* Target is slowed (save ends).

Alignment Good; **Languages** Common, Giant,

Skills Arcana +7, Insight+7

Str 8 (–1) **Dex** 10 (+0) **Wis** 15 (+2)

Con 13 (+1) **Int** 14 (+2) **Cha** 14 (+2)

Equipment quarterstaff, basic clothes, cold weather outfit

Special If Crystin dies, for a moment everyone experiences déjà vu, and then something barely visible drifts out of Crystin's body and vanishes, flying away into the sky. This is the trillith spirit that has occupied Crystin, granting her sorcerer abilities and defense and perception bonuses, but its identity remains a mystery for now.

Tactics Crystin is frightened in combat, because things happen too fast for her visions to guide her. She tries to stay out of danger, but will go into harm's way if someone appears to be in danger.

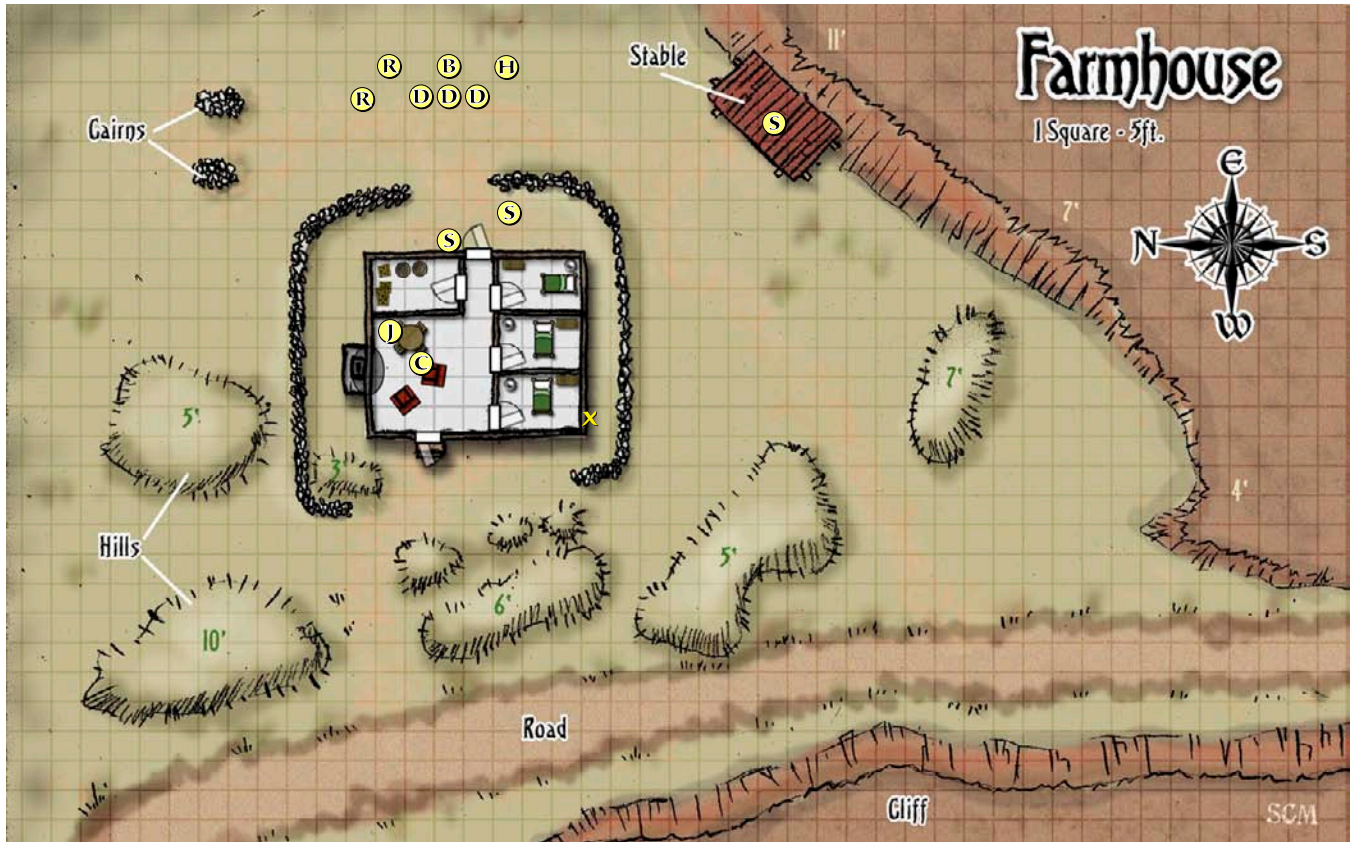
TACTICS

Boreus employs the following strategy. First, he has one goblin sniper sneak atop the stable, where he has a view of the front and back of the farmhouse. Boreus then summons his three decrepit orc skeletons and sends the other goblins to the door to pick the lock. Boreus calls out, his voice feral and

commanding, demanding Haddin come out and turn himself over, and threatening to kill the old mage if he doesn't surrender. Boreus, his bodyguard Smiley, and the two Ragesian soldiers slowly saunter up to the door, being careful and moving only 4 squares per round unless under direct fire.

If the party rushes out: The goblin snipers will attack the heroes with *bane bolts*, and then the skeletons will rush the door.

If the party entrenches: Boreus will use the skeletons to break through a wall (at the point marked "X") and cause a distraction while the goblins pick the lock on the door.



Official Notice

— Trehan Finner —

owner of the Poison Apple Pub
has been taken into temporary custody
under the protection of the city guard,
until such time that representatives of
the Ragesian Empire can question and
find him/her innocent of hostile collusion.

The Poison Apple Pub
is hereby closed
until further notice.



The Scouring of Gate Pass

As the Ragesian army marches upon the neutral border city of Gate Pass, a small band of heroes is tasked with retrieving vital war intelligence from a spy and delivering it to the distant wizards' school of Lyceum.

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How can a small group of inexperienced heroes escape the Scouring of Gate Pass?

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Updated and Edited by **STEVE MUCHOW AND KEVIN KULP**