

COR5-07



RINGS WITHIN RINGS

A One-round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[™] Core Adventure set in The North Kingdom

Version 1.0

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Based on a story idea by Alexandra Velten

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With special thanks to Ingo Teutsch

You are *en route* in the North Kingdom, near the city of Nonsburgh in the Blemu Hills. While investigating some unusual phenomena of nature, the PCs stumble upon... a giant-size dead frog with some weird skin coloring? But that's not all... There is also a human corpse, literally torn apart, and a very weird trail leading to Nonsburgh... reminding some of you of an incident a year and a half ago...

A loose sequel to *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue*.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK™ campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

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PLAYERS READ NO FURTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in *bold italics* provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this

sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

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

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player

character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Core adventure. All characters pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this scenario.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Once every 289 years, the Great Modron March (see *Appendix 7: On Modrons*) passes through the Multiverse. It last touched Greyhawk in the Blemu Hills, in the North Kingdom of Aerdy, in the autumn of 593 CY. As usual, a few modrons got left behind. One of them was a pentadrone turned rogue after developing levels as a bard. The other modrons did not like this, and so they sent a punitive force after the rogue. A group of adventurers got caught up in this, too....

All of this happened in *COR3-14 The Hunt for the Rogue*. It is assumed here for official campaign purposes

that the PCs helped the rogue escape from its pursuers (saving the village of Hilldon in the process, and maybe even gaining a henchmodron in the form of a monodrone separated from the modron collective). In addition, the pentadrone bard (calling itself Diambeth after having heard of the great bard's exploits) then made its way from Hilldon toward the larger city of Nonsburgh. "Diambeth's" aim was to actually start making a living as a bard, as the players probably suggested.

Unfortunately, things went wrong even before the modron reached Nonsburgh. It was waylaid by a slaad (type depending on APL) that was (in the quite haphazard Slaadi fashion) shadowing the Great March ever since the modrons had come to Limbo, but had lost track and interest of proceedings. It finally caught up with the march on Oerth, but only after most of the modrons had long gone. The slaad was about to go, too, when it heard about the rogue pentadrone. This excited its curiosity (a creature of law turned rogue against the law, but still believing itself to be lawful? – what a nice chaotic concept!) and so it decided on a whim to ignore the rest of the Great March and follow this one, definitely more interesting, modron instead.

Again unfortunately, Diambeth wasn't doing anything interesting except making for Nonsburgh and rehearsing its repertoire of songs. Thus, the slaad decided to liven things up a bit by attacking the pentadrone because it sounded like a good idea at the time. The battle went well, and the slaad won easily. However, instead of dismantling its opponent, a more devious idea came upon the slaad. It was pregnant anyway, and needed some place to insert its egg, so why not a modron? That would surely be interesting! The slaad restrained the damaged modron and leant back to see what would happen.

And so it proved, but not really for the modron. "Diambeth," battered and damaged though it was, did not react too well to the chaotic creature growing fast in its insides. After just a few days it sprung a decidedly chaotic attack on the slaad, which was taken quite by surprise and died because of lucky critical.

From then on, things turned for the worse for "Diambeth." The growing chaotic entity within it began to instil its decisions with chaotic tendencies; ever so often not only clouding the modron's judgment, but sometimes also taking over its mind entirely, doing things that the modron would not have done on its own will.

One of these things was the sudden killing of an adventurer happening to also be on the way to Nonsburgh. Diambeth thought nothing of this—in fact, the modron part didn't even notice, since the slaad part was in control—and went on to Nonsburgh. On the way, it developed a problem: the slaad was maturing inside, but could not really leave the metal body of the modron (young slaadi usually burrow out of their host's body, in a rather painful way, something which is very hard when you are encased in a metal shell). The young slaad desperately started to want to get out, but could not. Control of the body shifted back and forth, resulting in some really weird ways of behaving.

In the end, Diambeth fell in with a group of evil gnomes in Nonsburgh. They were distant relatives of the former Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills (the one who was seduced by the Hand and Eye of Vecna; see WGA 4, *Vecna Lives!*, page 22) and thus worshippers of Vecna. They gained the modron's trust and managed to repair the still damaged construct by means of an abandoned construct laboratory that was part of their lair. They subtly exploited the peculiarities of the modron's two personalities to turn it into a useful agent of crime and deception. The gnomes, all four of them, had until then been living a rather quiet life as devout Vecna worshippers (so devout were they that they even shed their names in order to have some more secrets), now see a chance to further the aims of their god by sowing some discord between gnomes and humans in Nonsburgh.

It is at this point that the PCs enter into the picture.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Introduction: The adventure actually has three possible introductions, depending on the situation the players are in.

If at least one of them has played *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue*, the PCs are contacted by Diambeth in one of its more lurid moments by means of a *message* spell slightly modified by the chaos growing inside the modron.

If none of them has played *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue*, the adventurer killed by the slaad part of Diambeth is an old acquaintance of the PCs, who happened to be a mage and sent a similar message during his last few minutes.

Finally, there is always the option that the PCs are in the vicinity of Nonsburgh themselves and simply stumble upon the scene of the battle.

The order of scenes is pretty much alike in all three cases, although emphasis may of course vary slightly with the first and second encounters.

Encounter 1: This is a brief scene that takes place on the way to Nonsburgh. The PCs stumble upon the remains of the slaad that originally impregnated the modron. The remains are rather rotted already and are hard to identify. Astute PCs might also detect the traces of the battle between Diambeth and the slaad.

Encounter 2: In this scene the PCs are confronted with the body of the dead adventurer. It was literally torn apart some three weeks ago, and the remains picked clean by animals. Once again, astute PCs pick up the traces of the battle, also giving indications that the dead man had been a wizard or sorcerer. At APLs 8, 10, and 12, the PCs might also be able to find some well-concealed bit of treasure that earlier looters overlooked.

Encounter 3: This encounter is a brief description of the Lower Quarter of Nonsburgh, enabling the DM to run the rest of the adventure in a moderately detailed fashion.

Encounter 4: This is purely a roleplaying scene. The PCs go up to the Upper Quarter of Nonsburgh and learn that a strange creature (the descriptions vary, but most

sources agree about "something metallic about it") seems to be committing crimes in the Upper Quarter. All of these crimes are supposed to involve a performer of (probably magical) music cheating, dazing, and/or robbing small groups of listeners or individuals. The PCs start investigating this, and if they play their card right and present themselves as "specialists" in such affairs, might even gain an official order to aid the authorities, including some payment.

Encounter 5: While the PCs start on the trail of "Diambeth," they have several options open to them. They may simply search for Diambeth and/or set a trap for it. Thus, it should be possible for them to "catch it in the act," while the modron is just about to do its next con job. Once this is done, they may:

Attack the modron and beat it off or even destroy it, or attack the modron and beat it into submission. If the PCs damage the modron during this combat, this immediately triggers "Encounter 7." Should the modron remain undamaged, the PCs may even learn of the slaad growing within it, enabling them to take appropriate action. Tracking the gnomes behind the crimes leads to "Encounter 6."

They may also let the modron do its work and, after the con act, follow it back to its "lair." This leads directly to "Encounter 6."

Encounter 6: The PCs confront the evil gnomes behind the modron misuse scheme. Depending on the PCs' tactics in "Encounter 5," these may either be prepared or taken unawares. If Diambeth is still around, the gnomes will do their best to have the modron fight for them by craftily manipulating it. Part of the evil gnomes' hideout is a well-equipped construct laboratory, which the PCs may strip and sell to Mungus Gearhand, the last great gnomish artificer of Nonsburgh. He also grants the PCs *one* favor to do some construct repair work in the future for them (which might well probably be Diambeth).

Damaging the modron in a fight immediately triggers "Encounter 7." Should the modron remain undamaged, the PCs may learn of the slaad growing within it, enabling them to take appropriate action, also leading into "Encounter 7."

Encounter 7: This encounter is triggered either whenever the PCs damage Diambeth, or when the PCs have been informed about the slaad growing inside the modron and have worked out a solution.

Once the modron is damaged in any way, the slaad, who has grown enough to *really* want to get out now, will break through and attack the PCs. If the slaad breaks free, Diambeth immediately takes damage and will be out of the action until repaired.

The moment the slaad is destroyed (or driven off in another way), it releases a chaos wash as some kind of miniature explosion of chaos into its surroundings. Chaotic characters temporarily benefit from this, while non-chaotic PCs won't.

Conclusion: In the end, all should be well: Diambeth is saved from the slaad growing inside it, the slaad itself is dead, and the Nonsburgh operation of the evil gnomes is

thwarted. The PCs might have to deal with the effects of the chaos wash, though...

If the PCs sold the lab parts to Mungus Gearhand in Nonsburgh, they are granted *one* favour each of construct repair. Any bards among the PCs are able to reconstruct the spell *shadow cache* (bard level 3) from Diambeth's notes.

Diambeth, hopefully, be off to a better start now with its career as a bard....

Background: Diambeth

To PCs with bardic knowledge (or Knowledge [history]), the name Diambeth may ring a bell once they hear it; in fact, the character was introduced as a background element in the 1989 *AD&D* adventure, "Diambeth's Delving" in the *Fate of Istus* anthology. On a successful DC 10 bardic knowledge check or DC 15 Knowledge (history) check, reveal the following information to the PCs, taken from page 40 of *Fate of Istus* (and slightly modified for the passing of time in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK since the original publication):

Among the more intriguing residents of the Wild Coast area was the bard Diambeth. Unlike Tenser and Mordenkainen, he wasn't born in the region, but spent his twilight years in Elredd. While travelling through the area, Diambeth saved the necks of an adventuring company in a very tight spot—in fact, sparing them from the cooking pots of a family of hungry ogres—and thus was accepted as a honorary Elreddi. Finding the city to his liking and a good source of inspiration for his songs, he bought a villa, which he named Harper's Hold, within the city walls and lived out the last days of his life there. He died five decades ago, and such is the turnover in the population of Elredd that few now remember him. This is highly ironic, since his name lives on in most other civilized lands, and his wonderful songs are still sung around many hearths at night.

INTRODUCTION: COULD THIS BE A PLEA FOR HELP?

The adventure actually has three possible introductions, depending on the situations the players are in.

A: At least one of the players has played COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue

In this case, the PCs are contacted by Diambeth in one of its more lucid moments by means of a *message* spell. This hits the PC in question right in the middle of whatever they are doing:

Suddenly, you hear a voice right next to you, an agitated voice with a metallic edge to it: "Help me! I am in danger! Somewhere near Nonsburgh!" The voice sounds quite urgent... and somehow familiar... After a few seconds, you recognise it: it is the voice of Diambeth, the

strange, metallic creature called a modron who believes himself/itself to be a famous bard you met quite some time ago, in a small village quite close to Nonsburgh, in the North Kingdom. He—or it—seems to be in danger. You have to help!

If the PCs indicate that they wish to help their friend, read or paraphrase:

And so you set out into the North Kingdom, into the Blemu Hills, to find your friend.

Obviously, this works best if the PCs have established at least cordial relations with Diambeth during *Hunt for the Rogue*, because otherwise, they" probably not feel the need to come to the pentadrone's help.

The spell can be identified as a *message* spell by a DC 21 Spellcraft check, albeit one that obviously originated from a much greater distance that would usually be possible by means of that spell (a result of the modrons abilities, plus the affinity gained from meeting the PC in question earlier). Also, astute PCs realize that the spell's energy seems to be somehow fluctuating, as if influenced by an outside force.

Should one of the PCs have the monodrone cohort from *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue*, the henchmonodrone might be another means of influencing PCs' reactions to help Diambeth: The monodrone feels the need to help a fellow rogue modron, and communicates this to its master.

B: None of the players have played COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue

In this case, the adventurer killed by the slaad part of Diambeth is an old acquaintance of the PCs, and sends a message similar to the one above to his old acquaintances (via a *sending*) during his last few minutes of life. It might also be a good idea to talk to the players beforehand and find out whether there are any recently deceased clerics or wizards among their acquaintances of high enough level to cast the *sending* spell. The adventure assumes that a wizard sent the *sending*, but feel free to alter this to a cleric if it makes sense.

The wizard cast his spell right before his death, when the slaad-controlled pentadrone had already left him for dead, having lost interest. This hits the PC in question right in the middle of whatever they are doing:

Suddenly, you hear a voice right next to you, an agitated voice coming in gasps, with some moans in between: "Help me, my friend! ... I am in danger! ... On the road ... in the hills... close to ... Nonsburgh!" The voice sounds quite urgent... and somehow familiar... After a few seconds, you recognise it: it is the voice of [insert name], an old friend of yours! He seems to be in danger—you have to help!

If the PCs indicate that they wish to help their friend, read or paraphrase:

And so you set out into the North Kingdom, into the Blemu Hills, to find your friend.

The spell can be identified as a *sending* spell by a DC 25 Spellcraft check (DC 24 if cast by a cleric).

C: Finally, a "generic" introduction

It is quite possible that none of the PCs have participated in *Hunt for the Rogue* (or if they did, have not established friendly relations with Diambeth), and that there is no conveniently killable NPC spell-caster around. In such a case, the PCs are simply in the vicinity of Nonsburgh themselves (maybe investigating rumors about a strange, metallic, singing creature) and accidentally stumble upon the scene of the battle.

You have been travelling the Blemu Hills for several days now, after having heard a weird story about a strange, metallic, singing creature walking around the Hills. The inhabitants of a small village called Hilldon told you about it, and how they believe it was making its way to the city of Nonsburgh. This sounds like an opportunity for adventure – one too good to pass up!

The order of encounters is pretty much alike in all three cases, although emphasis may of course vary slightly with the first and second encounter.

Whatever the reason the PCs are on their way into the Blemu Hills—they are about to encounter the dead slaad again second now...

Travel in the Blemu Hills:

Calculating travel speeds only becomes important after the adventure starts. The road from Hilldon to Nonsburgh, counts as "Road or trail in hills" as per the rules in the *Player's Handbook* (modifier of $\frac{3}{4}$ to base speeds). Thus, parties travel at the following speeds:

Base Move	Per hour Per day	
15 ft.	1 mile	9 miles
20 ft.	1 ½ miles	12 miles
30 ft.	2 miles	18 miles

Distance and travel times between encounters are calculated on the Overland Movement Scale taking a party with an average speed of 20 ft. in mind. Feel free to modify distances if your party is faster or slower, but try to keep the relative distances between encounters intact.

The adventure starts about 50 miles away from Nonsburgh. If at all possible, the PCs should be approaching from the north. Nonsburgh is in hex 42 U as per the map of the Flanaess in the *Living Greyhawk Gazetteer* (although it is not included on this map), right opposite the fortification of Redfalls, and thus the adventure should start in hex 40 T.

ENCOUNTER 1: A GIANT-SIZE DEAD FROG WITH WEIRD SKIN COLORING?

This is a brief encounter happening early on the way to Nonsburgh. While investigating some unusual phenomena of nature, the PCs stumble upon the remains of the slaad that originally impregnated the modron:

You have traveled through the Blemu Hills for several uneventful days and believe you should be three, maybe four, days from Nonsburgh. While you routinely scan your surroundings for possible signs of life, danger, and adventure, a large swarm of flies leads you to a strange sight: Some kind of motionless creature with parchment-like skin, somewhat resembling a larger-than-human size... frog? It does not seem to mind the flies, and it does not move, so it is probably dead. But what is it?

These remains are the dried husk of a dead slaad (type depending on APL). Accordingly, use the following descriptions:

APL 6 (blue slaad):

The creature looks like a blue-skinned humanoid toad, as big as an ogre, with almost no neck and a massive, flat head. It has two legs, with clawed hands and feet. On the back of its hands are wicked-looking bony hooks.

APLs 8 and 10 (gray slaad):

The creature looks like a two-legged frog. Its skin is of a dapple gray color. It has long and clawed fingers. If standing upright, it would be about as tall as the average human.

APL 12 (death slaad):

The creature resembles a lean humanoid frog with two legs. Its skin is a dappled gray and its fingers are long and clawed. If standing upright, it would be about as tall as the average human.

Since this was something like three weeks ago, the remains are rather rotted already and may only be identified for what they are by a DC 17+ APL Knowledge (the planes) check. This encounter basically sets up the mood and hints at slaad involvement, knowledge that might come in handy later.

PCs with the Track feat realize, with a DC 10 + APL Track check, that combat must have taken place around here about three weeks ago. One set of tracks clearly belongs to the slaad, while the other looks like it was

made by a creature with five small pointed legs. If the PCs have never seen a modron before, they need to succeed in a DC 40 Knowledge (the planes) check to identify them as belonging to a pentadron.

There is no treasure or experience in this encounter. However, a DC 15 Search check reveals a few small pieces of bent and broken metal lying around (parts of Diambeth damaged in the fighting). PCs that have played *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue* recognize these as modron parts on a DC 12 Intelligence check. The pieces have no monetary value.

ENCOUNTER 2: WHO DIED HERE?

This scene confronts the PCs with the body of the dead adventurer.

After another uneventful day of journeying closer to Nonsburgh, you suddenly come upon a corpse lying only a few feet away from the path leading through the hills—or rather, the remains of it. It looks like it has been literally ripped apart, and gnawed upon by scavenging animals. You can barely make out the remains of a tattered robe. Who might the stranger have been?

Closer inspection requires a DC 15 Constitution check due to the terrible condition the corpse is in; failure results in the PC falling violently ill for two minutes.

Once somebody has mustered the strength to take a closer look, they find that the body was literally torn apart. This occurred a bit less than three weeks ago (a day or two after the frog-like creature died, maybe), and the remains have been picked clean by animals. There are no claw marks, though. Nobody seems to have really bothered about a decent burial. It does look like the corpse was searched and plundered, though. This was done by others passing this way between the man's death and now.

Once again, a PC with the Track feat making a DC 10 + APL Track check realizes that some personal combat must have taken place around here. The PCs will be able to make out the same set of weird tracks as they did in *Encounter 1* (with the same chances of finding out what made these tracks). If the Track check is successful, it also reveals that the dead man must have been a wizard or sorcerer (by indications of spell damage such as scorched wood or acid-holes in stones).

If you opted for "Introduction B," the PC who received the *sending* sooner or later realizes that these are the remains of his or her acquaintance!

At APLs 8, 10, and 12, the PCs might also be able to find some well-concealed bit of treasure that earlier looters overlooked (not too many had the nerve to approach a corpse in such condition). To find this treasure the PC must succeed on a Search check. The DC of this check is APL-dependant. At APL 8 the PCs require a DC 22 Search check. The DC increases by 2 for each subsequent APL.

Speak with Dead

Should the PCs bring a *Speak with Dead* spell to bear on the dead wizard, the body still counts as "mostly intact" (the skeleton is more or less undisturbed) and nobody has questioned the corpse within the last two weeks. Unless you have used "Introduction B," the corpse's alignment is neutral good for purposes of a saving throw.

Unless you opted to use a particular NPC here to get the PCs into the adventure, the corpse turns out to have been a wizard from Johnsport by the name of Rydhallan. He had been to Nonsburgh to see the Elevator and to receive Ulaa's blessing to travel the hills. He was on his way to Knurl by means of a *phantom steed* when he saw the strangest creature he had ever seen (Diambeth). He recognized the modron for what it was, though, and stopped to gather information on these extraplanar constructs. All seemed to go well, until the modron suddenly and very unexpectedly rushed him and viciously killed him, causing him much pain in the process. This is all Rydhallan remembers.

Treasure

APL 6: None.

APL 8: Magic: *brooch of shielding* (125 gp)

APL 10: Magic: *brooch of shielding* (125 gp)

APL 12: Magic: *brooch of shielding* (125 gp)

ENCOUNTER 3: SO THIS IS NONSBURGH?

Nonsburgh lies in the foothills of the Blemu Hills, on about the same height than Redfalls, the capital of the Highlander principality of the North Kingdom. From Redfalls, a great castle and military fortification on the Teesar Torrent, Baron General Shalhaster rules the Highlander principality with an iron hand. On a clear day, the spires of Redfalls may be seen from Nonsburgh, but that is about the extent of the significance of Redfalls for this adventure.

Nonsburgh is another two days from the scene of *Encounter 2*.

This is not actually an encounter, but rather a brief introduction to the town of Nonsburgh, especially its Lower Quarter. Since Nonsburgh is not too large (a small village, rather), only some important buildings and personalities are detailed here. A capsule recap of Nonsburgh and its most important locations is found in "Appendix 5: Fact Sheet: Nonsburgh." Some of the information on the Lower Quarter is repeated here for ease of reference.

Some of the NPCs in this and the next encounter are listed as offering money to the PCs to help in solving the situation. Regardless of how many NPCs the PCs speak to, and how often they agree to help, in the end the money is only awarded once, for reason of the treasure cap.

👑 **Nonsburgh (Small town):** Conventional; AL (L)N; 800 gp limit; Assets 52,800 gp; Population 1,324; Mixed (62% humans, gnomes 30%, halflings 5%, dwarves 3%).

Authority Figures: Juliette Tilk, mayor, LN human female Nob 6 (for the Upper Quarter); Murgal Gemsource, head priest of Garl Glittergold, LG gnome male Cle 8 (for the Lower Quarter).

Important Characters: Mungus Gearhead, male gnome, Wiz 8 (artificer, Lower Quarter); Arlan Qennt, head priest of Ulaa, male human, Cle 7 (Upper Quarter); Ostraka Goldborer, priest of Flandal Steelskin, female gnome, Cle 4 (Lower Quarter); Querca Oaktree, cleric of Yondalla, female halfling, Cle 5 (Lower Quarter); Orina Zento, representative of the miners, female human, Exp 8 (miner, Upper Quarter); Wellagon Chierns, male half-elf Wiz 4 (trader in magic items, Upper Quarter).

Nonsburgh was founded by the gnomes of the Blemu Hills at a time when the gnomes were expanding in the area, probably during or soon after the days of the infamous Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills (the one who was seduced by the Hand and Eye of Vecna; see *WGA4 Vecna Lives!*, page 22)—hence the name: Nonsburgh is an obscured form of the original name of "Nonizburrow." For a while, Nonizburrow was an important center of gnomish artificers, and many interesting artefacts were created here in these days. Later, as the importance of the gnomes in the Blemu Hills declined after the Gnomelord's defeat. Humans began to move into the town, slowly making it their own and, in doing so, changing the name by sheer ignorance and mispronunciation of the original name. (Manuscripts from these tumultuous years show no less than seven different spellings of the name during the course of no more than 19 years, most prominent of which being the malignant form, "Nonceburgh" that was used with a certain malicious glee by some of the humans).

Due to its shared history, Nonsburgh has a highly unique appearance: The town is basically constructed out of two levels, separated by a steep cliff. The "lower" part contains the earlier gnomish warrens plus a few of the earliest human houses, while most of the human population dwells on the "higher" level of the town, some 120 feet above the original gnomish settlement.

To unite the two parts of Nonsburgh, the gnomes living here built an ingenious cranelike contraption of enormous complexity that allows goods to be raised and lowered between the two levels of the town. Of course, over the times several sets of stairs have been carved into the rocks by humans not really trusting this gnomish invention. The device actually works (it is, after all, diligently maintained by the gnomes, with Mungus Gearhead being its chief maintenance gnome) and still plays a somewhat important part in the inner workings of Nonsburgh.

However, next to anyone who is important in Nonsburgh nowadays resides in what is called the "Upper Quarter," including Mayor Juliette Tilk and most of the high-profile establishments. Since this is where the humans and the money are, Diambeth has also made it

way there by means of its innate *levitation* ability, thus ignoring the ingenious gnomish device altogether.

The town faces north. If the PCs approach Nonsburgh from the north, as would be preferred, they get to the Lower Quarter first and then may have to use the "elevator" to ascend to the Upper Quarter. If they do not want to do so, the stairs provide an alternative means of getting up or down. The rest of this encounter briefly deals with what happens if the PCs explore the Lower Quarter and ends with a description of the ride up to the Upper Quarter. One the PCs leave the Lower Quarter, cut to "*Encounter 4.*" The same applies if the PCs come from the south, for this leads them directly to the Upper Quarter. Approaching from the south may speed things up a bit because there won't be that much interaction with the inhabitants of the Lower Quarter, but then again the PCs might be missing out on some clues.

About three-quarters of Nonsburgh's gnomish population, as well as all of the halflings living here, dwell in the Lower Quarter. The Lower Quarter has its own authority figure, the aging Garl Glittergold priest Murgal Gemsource. While he often confers with mayor Juliette Tilk about matters concerning the entire town, he is fairly free to administer the Lower Quarter as he sees fit. Nonsburgh's halflings look to Querca Oaktree, the resident Yondalla priestess, as their spiritual and worldly leader.

Most of the Lower Quarter consists of gnomish burrows and halfling holes, with a few more modern halfling houses in between. There are two aboveground inns, the *Sparkling Gem* and the *Jewel of the Lower Quarter*. The *Sparkling Gem* only caters to gnome- and halfling-sized guests, while the *Jewel* also has a few rooms for medium-sized guests. Prices are standard.

Asking around the Lower Quarter of Nonsburgh reveals the following, more or less automatically (no rolls needed): A strange creature that looked like a metallic starfish on legs, speaking in a grating metallic voice and dressed gaudily (even for gnomish standards) appeared in the lower quarter about three weeks ago. It did not seem well, for it sometimes stumbled, lost its way, and generally seemed confused. After a few hours, it made its way to the elevator up to the Upper Quarter, but instead of using it, simply lifted itself up into the air and gently flew upwards! Since then, not much has been heard about the strange creature. It has probably already left.

There is more information to be gained here, but it is tied to successful Gather information checks. Each PC may roll once for each item of information listed below. Of course, if the PCs employ other means of getting information (magic, contacts, favours, good role-playing), you may dispense with these rolls and give them the information anyway:

DC 10+APL: A strange creature (the description varies, but most sources agree about "something metallic about it") seems to be committing crimes in the Upper Quarter. All of these crimes are supposed to involve a performer of (probably magical) music cheating, dazing, and/or robbing small groups of listeners or individuals. The crimes seem to be centered around the four "older"

inns, the ones close to the Arrival Ledge (*The Floating Rock, The Cage on a Chain, The Traveler's Delight, and Pot Kiln*).

DC 15+APL: The creature seemed to have been damaged. Parts of it were scorched, and there seemed to be some holes and dents in the metal skin.

DC 20+APL: The creature seemed to have been damaged (as per above). Mungus Gearhead, the last of the great artificers of old, was very interested in seeing the creature, but learned about it just too late. He is too old to want to go up to the upper quarter.

DC 20+APL: Travel from the Lower Quarter to the Upper Quarter has recently decreased. This is supposedly due to the fact that a secret cult of Vecna cultists seems to have emerged among the humans and thus the gnomes (and the halflings) tend to keep to themselves, to avoid being enmeshed in *that* ancient conflict again.

This last bit of information might direct the players to the history the gnomes of the Blemu Hills have with Vecna. Knowledge of this is not widespread (about 20% of the gnomes know about this), but a DC 15 Sense Motive check with those who do know reveals that the gnomes are very touchy about the subject and would very much like to leave it at rest.

◆ Mungus Gearhead

PCs who have heard the name of Mungus Gearhead might want to seek him out, believing the old gnome might have some information for them. He indeed does, but only in a very general way.

Mungus resides deep within a very old warren. He is 142 years of age and well past his prime. He talks to the PCs in his workshop, where it becomes clear that he is a skilled artificer and very capable of dealing with anything mechanical. He sees himself as the last great gnomish artificers of the region, and he probably is.

Mungus has never seen Diambeth, but if given a detailed description concludes that it must be a pentadron modron. If the PCs are lacking the background info on modrons, Mungus is able to tell them. Mungus regrettably tells the PCs that he does not feel fit enough to go "uptown," especially with all these rumours about Vecna cultists, but would be very keen for the PCs to do so, offering information (and the use of his lab if needed) in return. If the DM is in a pinch, Mungus might step in to offer the reward listed in "Encounter 4."

Mungus does know about the history of the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills (see below) and gladly relays the story to anyone who shows interest. If pressed for further details about the alleged Vecna cultists, he refers the PCs to Murgal Gemsource with a sad "He should be doing something, but Garl's gems have blocked his vision" (an old gnomish proverb; it has nothing to do with Murgal in any way being bribed, which he isn't).

If the PCs have played *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue* and one of them has the monodrone cohort with them, Mungus immediately starts bartering for the use of the modron (buy or lease) to perform some experiments on. The monodrone of course refuses. It is up to the respective PC to deal with the situation. Mungus might

offer up to the amount listed in "Encounter 4" for buying the monodrone. Should the PC agree, scratch the monodrone off his AR. The money gained by selling the monodrone cannot be used to exceed the overall gp cap of the adventure, but may be used to make up for other treasure missed along the way.

◆ Murgal Gemsource

Murgal Gemsource is even older than Mungus Gearhead (176 years). He resides in a splendid underground temple as befits his station as high priest of Garl Glittergold.

Murgal is not particularly interested in the modron and refers the PCs to Mungus Gearhead if they have any questions about strange, metallic creatures. He does know the history of the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills (actually, he has access to the history books of his temple and is thus very well versed in that type of lore), but is loathe to tell non-gnomes about it. A DC 20+APL Diplomacy check however gets this information out of him. Even gnomes in the party need to succeed in a DC 10+APL Diplomacy check—the less known about this dark chapter in gnomish history, the better!

If asked about the rumours of a Vecna cult, Murgal immediately becomes very concerned, although he tries to downplay this, but a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check indicates the PC notices this. However, he is not trying to hush up anything, as the PCs might believe after having talked to Mungus Gearhead—he merely hopes that he won't actually have to deal with this problem. If cornered, he reveals that he believes that the Cult of the Whispered One may well be on the rise again with the humans of the Upper Quarter, but that they are hiding their tracks well and that he has not yet found any viable proof. If the PCs press further, Murgal tries to talk them into investigating in his stead, if necessary offering the reward as listed in "Encounter 4."

The Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills

The PCs might become interested in the history of the region after hearing of the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills and the unfortunate influence of Vecna in this region. If so, they may learn about this in the following ways:

- Talking to Mungus Gearhead in the Lower Quarter (for free).
- Talking to Murgal Gemsource in the Lower Quarter (on a successful Diplomacy check).
- Talking to Mayor Juliette Tilk in the Upper Quarter (for free).
- Talking to Ostraka Goldborer in the Upper Quarter (on a successful Diplomacy check).
- Inquiring in the inns of the Upper Quarter (on a successful Gather Information check).
- Succeeding in a DC 20 Knowledge (history) check.
- Succeeding at a DC 20 Bardic lore check.
- Cashing in one Favour relating to information.

Regardless of how they get the information, this is what they are able to learn:

The Hand and Eye of Vecna are among the most powerful, and dangerous, artifacts in the history of the Oerth. After Vecna was slain by his trusted lieutenant, Kas, more than a thousand years ago, the Eye and Hand have surfaced ever so often. Each time they have attracted an individual, enticing him to affix the Eye and the Hand to his body. They then slowly pervert him to evil. Thus it happened with the Yaheetes long ago, and later in Tyrus. In both cases, evil empires were created and later crushed by the forces of good, but the Eye and the Hand remained.

And thus it was that, some 500 years ago, a gnomish explorer of the Blemu Hills claimed the Hand and Eye while exploring the Abbor-Alz. He returned home with his finds and went on to consolidate his rule over the gnomes and halfings of the Blemu Hills, taking the title of Gnomelord. He rose in power until he threatened the trade routes of the Great Kingdom, attracting the attention of the Overking. Less than ten years later, the Gnomelord was destroyed by the armies of Aerdy. After the battle the gnomes of the Blemu Hills slunk back into thankful oblivion, the blemish of that short lapse in judgment of one of their leaders (whose name was all but forgotten) forever etched in their memory.

Getting Up

Sooner or later, the PCs finish their exploration of and investigations in the Lower Quarter and decide that they need to get to the Upper Quarter. If you ask the gnomes, this absolutely requires the use of the gnomish elevator. If the PCs comply, read or paraphrase:

In front of you stands a weird contraption, set off against the steep cliffs rising up. It looks like one huge cage with bars, open to the elements, affixed to a mighty chain leading up, up and up to a height of about 120 feet, where, so the gnomes manning the weird device tell you, the Upper Quarter is situated. They also explain to you that use of this "elevator" is free and that it is perfectly safe.

In the end, you decide to step in. A gaudily dressed gnomish operator accompanies you. The iron-barred door closes behind you, and the gnomes begin to busily and quite non-methodically push buttons and pull levers while your guard says, "And off we go!"

Suddenly, there is a great lurch as the cage is lifted off the ground by the mighty chain. Dangling precariously in the air, you are slowly pulled up until, only minutes later (very long minutes, to be sure), the cage comes to a stop 120 feet up in the air, next to a ledge of rock.

"Arrival Ledge!" the attendant announces brightly. You have reached the Upper Quarter of Nonsburgh.

There may be PCs who do not trust the gnomish contraption and simply to not want to use the elevator. The gnomes don't understand this, but nevertheless do not press the issue. The PCs might just as well use the stairs. This needs some careful navigation of the long

flight of stairs that has been eroded by centuries of wear and weather, but unless the PCs try some fancy movement, using the stairs should not pose any problems.

Treasure

Either Munges Gearhead or Murgal Gemsources might offer this as a reward if the PCs agree to investigate the strange occurrences.

APL 6: Coin: 150 gp.

APL 8: Coin: 200 gp.

APL 10: Coin: 250 gp.

APL 12: Coin: 300 gp.

ENCOUNTER 4: WHO'S BEHIND THE MODRON CRIME?

The gnomish elevator deposits the PCs right at the entry point of the Upper Quarter (see the map and notes in *Appendix 5: Fact Sheet: Nonsburgh*). Should the PCs have come from the north instead of the south, they instead enter the Upper Quarter from "behind," passing either of the two "backside" taverns before getting into the town proper.

Ideally, the PCs have entered the town via the Lower Quarter and already know a bit of what they should do next. They probably know that Diambeth has levitated up to the Upper Quarter, that it seems to be committing crimes, and that the gnomes are afraid of a rising cult of human Vecna worshippers. They may even have already been asked to look into the situation for a reward.

If the PCs come from the south, you can provide them with the same information in one of the two inns flanking the path from Knurl (*The Martingale* and the *Oast House*). The DCs for getting the information should be the same, but should be given from a human point of view. This means that no prominent mention should be made of Mungus Gearhead, and the fact that the gnomes are now visiting the Upper Quarter less often is *not* attributed to a "human Vecna cult," but rather to some new and probably bizarre ploy on the part of the gnomes to get some more business. The PCs may also learn about the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills here (see "Encounter 3" for the respective passage). If the PCs care to ask, Rydhallan (or whomever you used as the dead spell-caster in *Encounter 2*) had taken lodgings in the *Oast House*.

The PCs also learn that the crimes seem to be centered around the four "older" inns, the ones close to the Arrival Ledge (*The Floating Rock*, *The Cage on a Chain*, *The Traveler's Delight*, and *Pot Kiln*). The other two inns, so it appears, are currently experiencing an increase in customers due to these strings of crimes, and are operating with profit for the first time in years....

This is a red herring: If the PCs assume that the proprietors of the *The Martingale* and/or the *Oast House* have something to with the reported crimes, they are wrong. Talking to the innkeepers finds, with a successful DC 15 Sense Motive check that, while they are happy

about the increase in customers, they really know nothing about the crimes and are innocent.

The same information may be gleaned by PCs who came via the Lower Quarter and are now investigating the two outlying inns.

If the PCs ask whether anyone might be interested in having the problem solved for them, they are given directions to the council hall, where they are to meet Mayor Julette Tilk. Any miners asked (the most likely people to meet if the PCs visit *The Floating Rock* and *The Cage on a Chain*) also refer the characters to Arlan Quennt, the Ulaa priest, who is supposed to "know about such things."

Some of the NPCs in this and the preceding encounter are listed as offering money to the PCs to help in solving the situation. Regardless of how many NPCs the PCs speak to, and how often they agree to help, in the end the money is only be awarded once, for reason of the treasure cap.

☞ **Julette Tilk**

The mayor dwells in the upper storey of the council hall, on the edge of Speakers Ring. Unless you want to delay the PCs or push them into another direction, the mayor should be present in her quarters, and ready to talk to the characters. An appointment may be made quite informally by a clerk in a small room on the ground floor of the building, and Julette makes her way down to the PCs within minutes. She is a woman in her late thirties, the daughter of a Nonsburgh trader (and a noble by function rather than by birth).

Julette Tilk has heard about the recent crimes, but doesn't put too much faith in them. A "metallic man" stalking patrons of the inns close to the Arrival Ledge? Oh, please! These are doughty miners, mostly, who clearly know how to defend themselves! Julette does know about the strange visitor flying up to roam the Lower Quarters a few weeks ago. She has never seen it and believes it gone anyway, since nothing of the sort has ever shown up in the town since. If the PCs propose the idea that this strange visitor and the "metallic menace" might be one and the same, she is willing to concede the possibility, but does not think it too likely. If the PCs follow up on this and present themselves as "specialists" in such affairs, the mayor may be persuaded into letting them look after things; if the PCs succeed in a DC 15 Diplomacy or Bluff check, Julette offers to make them into "ancillary constables" (a position she has just invented), complete with makeshift badge to be delivered within 12 hours and some payment (see below), to pursue the affair. If the PCs have already been promised such a reward in "Encounter 3," they are offered another, although the offer to turn them into "ancillary constables" is still made.

Should the PCs have heard the rumors about the human Vecna cultists, Julette is of no help, since this is the first time she has heard about it. She is quite willing to disregard the entire idea as a ploy cooked up by the gnomes in the Lower Quarter to improve their position in the town council. The mayor does know the Vecna back story of the region, and tells the PCs if asked about it.

☞ **Arlan Quennt**

A bit apart from the Arrival Ledge is the temple of Ulaa, a low stone structure with several levels of basement dug deep into the mountain. Head priest Arlan Quennt oversees the workings of his four sub-priests and acolytes here. Arlan, a miner himself who stills helps out in the mines in times of need, is a strong, heavy-set man with a rather single-minded disposition: to facilitate Nonsburgh's mining as best he can. The upside to this is that he has not started preaching Ulaa's teachings to the PCs as soon as he notices that none of them is a miner. He will give them Ulaa's blessing (cast a *bles* spell on the PCs once per day) if the group shows proper devoutness and interest in the welfare of the miners. He is not persuaded into offering the PCs any reward for solving any "crimes," for he firmly believes that the miners' lot is a harsh one already, and that his small church cannot spare any of its limited funds.

Arlan does not put much faith in either the information about a "metallic menace" or a secret Vecna cult. (He clearly fails however to understand why any human – or dwarf or other intelligent creature for that matter would be stupid enough to do such a thing). He has though recently heard one of his flock tell him about a weird kind of mugging happening right next to the small shrine to Flandal Steelskin. The shrine is sandwiched between *The Floating Rock* and *The Cage on a Chain*. The miner's name is Corx Maar and Arlan is willing to introduce the PCs to him if they want to.

Arlan is a veritable source of information about anything having to do with mining, including the history of the town and the early gnomish exploits. Thus, he also knows the Vecna back story, but not in too much detail except for the fact that during the period of the rule of the Gnomelord the gnomes suddenly developed much more advanced mining techniques, which they nowadays no longer use.

Arlan remembers Ryhdallen (or whomever you chose for "Encounter 2") as a wizard from the north who wanted Ulaa's blessing to travel the Blemu Hills going south, a blessing Arlan Quennt granted readily.

☞ **Corx Maar**

The miner is in his late twenties and lives in a small house somewhere between the Speaker's Ring and the Arrival ledge, together with his wife Naerie and their two sons, Relph and Drick (both of which look set to become promising miners in their own right).

Corx has this to say: He was on his way to *The Cage on a Chain* one night to spend his hard-won earnings on a well-earned round of drinks as he heard some entrancing music (instrument depending on APL; see *Appendices 1 to 3*). He felt somehow compelled to follow the music (the modron's bardic abilities, combined with a failed save) and suddenly felt rather woozy. A DC 15 Spellcraft check determines this effect to be a *daze* spell. Next, he felt something hard and cold brushing against his arm, then a sharp tug at his waist, and when his senses cleared, he found that somebody had ripped off his money pouch

from his belt, taking his entire earnings of 7 silver pieces! He immediately confided in Father Arlan, but has seen no need to inform the authorities, trusting in Ulaa to right things for him.

This is all the miner knows. Corx is an Exp 3.

The Temple of Flandal Steelskin

This is a small building catering to the few gnomish miners in the Upper Quarter. Neither it nor priestess Ostraka Goldborer have anything to do with the modron crimes—another red herring, as the location was cleverly chosen by the gnomish cultists to redirect attention.

Ostraka, a young and resolute gnome, is visibly abhorred at the notion of even being vaguely connected to these acts of thievery. (A DC 15 Sense Motive check proves her emotional outburst to be real).

Ostraka has heard rumors about a Vecna cult operating in secrecy somewhere in the Upper Quarter. She is reasonably certain that this is a human ploy to tighten up security and diminish gnomish rights even more, probably by preparing to impose a curfew or something like this in the near future. She does know about the history of the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills, but is loathe to tell non-gnomes about it. A DC 20+APL Diplomacy check however winks this information out of her. Even gnomes in the party need to succeed in a successful DC 10+APL Diplomacy check—the less known about this dark chapter in gnomish history, the better!

In her outrage, Ostraka is willing to scrape what meagre funds she has to entice the PC to help her in ridding her temple of these allegations and prove her idea of a human conspiracy (see below for the money). If the PCs have already accepted a financial offer from another party, you should not offer that money again, but have Ostraka plead with the PCs anyhow.

However, there *is* a clue the PCs might find not in, but near the shrine. Some feet behind the back of the shrine, concealed by natural and thus inconspicuous-looking rocks, is a secret door of ingenious gnomish construction leading down (without any stairs, ladders, or ropes) into a narrow (for humans, at least) tunnel running in the direction of Speaker's Ring. A successful DC 20 Search check however discovers this.

The tunnel ends in the basement of the abandoned gnomish house, which the cultists have turned into their lair. They bring the modron via this tunnel, and then instruct it to levitate upwards (and return the same way). Thus there is no means of getting down. The PCs must succeed a DC 10 Climb or Jump check to avoid 1d6 points of damage. The PCs of course may employ other magical or mundane methods to traverse the shaft.

If the PCs have restored Jandranna's memory (see below), they might already have got the idea of secret tunnel close to the shrine, and the DC of the Search check is lowered to 15.

The tunnel is pretty coarse. It almost looks like it was literally scratched out of the earth; a DC 15 Knowledge (the planes) check determines that an earth elemental probably did this. Following the tunnel leads the PCs to

Room 1 of the basement of the gnomish house as described in "Encounter 6."

Investigating the Inns

There are four inns around the Arrival Ledge in the area where the crimes are supposed to have happened: *The Floating Rock*, *The Cage on a Chain*, *The Traveler's Delight*, and *Pot Kiln*. Miners almost exclusively frequent the first two, while the patrons of the other two inns are a more varied bunch. Dwarves are most likely to be found on the *Pot Kiln*, while most gnomes frequent *The Traveler's Delight*.

It is up to the interest of the PCs and the current time slot situation of the adventure how much the PCs learn here. Just asking around the taverns for a few minutes and offering a round of drinks gives them the lowdown about goings-on in Nonsburgh without any rolls necessary. Feel free to add as many rumours and variant viewpoints as necessary.

If the PCs have not yet learned about the history of the region and the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills, they find somebody who knows about it on a successful DC 15 Gather Information check. If they have missed out on the info regarding Corx Maar, another DC 15 Gather Information check does nicely in providing his name and address.

There is one additional bit of information that may *only* be gleaned if the PCs visit the inns. On a successful (and separate) DC 20 Gather Information check, the PCs will, in hushed tones, be directed to "a second victim" (gaining the info about Corx in passing if they don't have it already), sitting in a corner in an inn of your choosing (the victim is sitting in the inn in which the PCs succeed in the appropriate check). Her name is Jandranna and she is currently drinking away her sorrow, for it seems she is missing several hours of her life!

☞ Jandranna

Jandranna is a human miner who was on her way to *The Floating Rock* several days ago to spend her hard-earned money on some well-deserved drinks. She remembers having been there, spending all her money on drinks (quite uncharacteristically), and then having lost her empty coin pouch on the way home. So far, this would not have been exceptional.

However, a day or two later some of Jandranna's acquaintances inquired why she had not shown up at the inn that very same night! She herself, however, was (and still is) firmly convinced that she *did* spend the evening at the inn. With her acquaintances insisting, though, it slowly dawned on her that something had happened to her mind that the memory might have been tampered with.

What happened is the following: Jandranna was "Diambeth's" chosen victim for the night, but proved extremely resilient to its spells (made all her saving throws except the initial one to get enraptured by the music). In the end, the modron had to physically restrain the miner, knocking her senseless. What happened then depends on the APL. At APL 12, Diambeth knows the

modify memory spell and simply applied it to the woman. At all lower APLs, the modron immediately contacted the gnomes by means of a *message* spell and the wizard came from the secret hideout. He then used a *scroll of modify memory* (the only one he had, so the PCs won't be able to find any) to solve the problem.

A simple DC 25 Sense Motive check detects that Jandranna is indeed under the influence of a mind-affecting Enchantment (see *Player's Handbook*). This does not exactly identify the *modify memory* spell, but will allow the PCs to know that something is indeed wrong. *Detect magic* reveals a moderate aura of enchantment magic (the spell's duration is permanent, thus the aura does not fade).

The spell's effect may be broken either by the application of another *modify memory* spell that is used to restore the original memory, or by casting *dispel magic* against a DC 22 dispel check.

If Jandranna's memory is restored, she is eternally grateful and immediately reports her newly discovered knowledge. It sets in with Jandranna near the Flandal Steelskin shrine and proceeds with quite an accurate portrayal of "Diambeth's" current tactics (See "Encounter 5," below), up to the point when Jandranna made her save against the *daze* spell. What happened then depends on the APL of the table.

APLs 6 through 10:

And then I saw it—a weird creature with long, thin legs and arms, many of them, clad in metal.... It grabbed me with one of its long, thin arms and hit me on the head.... I got dizzy.... Nothing happened for a while then...wait...I think I heard the creature whispering.... Then, later, it grabbed me, lifted me up...and then we went underground, into a dark, narrow tunnel.... we flew down, kind of...the creature held me fast, and then someone approached...a gnome! It was a gnome! A gnome in a dark robe! It grinned at me, then took out something from its robe... some kind of parchment.... It unrolled it. And then read it out ... That's all, I'm afraid.

APL 12:

And then I saw it— a weird creature with long, thin legs and arms, many of them, clad in metal.... It grabbed me with one of its long, thin arms and hit me on the head.... I got dizzy... and then it sang... quite horribly... That's all, I'm afraid.

Treasure: This money is offered by one of the persons listed above if the PCs agree to investigate the occurrences.

APL 6: Coin: 150 gp.

APL 8: Coin: 200 gp.

APL 10: Coin: 250 gp.

APL 12: Coin: 300 gp.

This applies only if the PCs have not already received a similar offer in "Encounter 3."

Development: Take care that you only offer the PCs the reward for resolving the situation once!

Unless the PCs manage to find Jandranna, their options are limited to scouting out the area between the inns at night, leading into Encounter 5." Some resources at the PCs' disposal (divination spells, items from ARs, favors) may increase their options, but since it has become impossible to keep track of all this, you might well have to wing it.

Resolving Jandranna's problem might lead the PCs directly to the Vecna-worshipping gnomes. Should this happen, go to "Encounter 6."

ENCOUNTER 5: WHAT IS HE DOING?

Once the PCs start on the trail of Diambeth in earnest, their most likely course of action is to simply search for Diambeth and/or set a trap for the modron. Thus, it should be possible for them to "catch it in the act," while the modron is just about to do its next con job. They have basically three options in this situation:

They may simply sit back, wait, and observe until a situation presents itself that might trigger another attack. Unless the PCs do something to "help out," such a situation will present itself within 1d6-1 days (a result of "0" means that it happens the same night).

The PCs may also force the gnomes to show their hand by provoking an attack of the "metallic menace." This would imply deliberately placing a towns person in danger (paladins beware!) and lurking nearby, to catch the perpetrator in the act. If the PCs are acting in one or the other official capacity, it should not be a problem to find some volunteer. This would depend on which authority figure or important personality the PCs are working for:

- **The PCs are working for Mungus Gearhead:** The old gnome do not volunteer, but one of his friends might be persuaded on a DC 15 Diplomacy check.
- **The PCs are working for Murgal Gemsourc:** a Garl Glittergold worshipper volunteers.
- **The PCs are working for Juliette Tilk:** the PCs may simply command a volunteer to help them.
- **The PCs are working for Arlan Quennt:** an Ulaa worshipper volunteers (Corx Maar, if the PCs have already met him).
- **The PCs are working for Ostraka Goldborer:** a Flandal Steelskin worshipper volunteers.

If none of these conditions apply, the PCs might still be able to find a volunteer, but need to succeed in a DC 25 Diplomacy check to do so.

Finally, the PCs may decide to act as bait themselves. Doing so allows them easiest access to the perpetrator but may not be as easy as they believe. The operation calls for at least a minimal amount of disguise, as the PCs need to

look like harmless townspeople and not like capable adventurers. Thus, an undisguised group of PCs just waiting next to the inns will be waiting in vain, since the cultists have no intention of attacking such a group. Disguising themselves as simple townspeople requires an opposed Spot check against Diambeth's Spot check. "Diambeth receives an 8+APL modifier on this check (the more powerful you are, the harder it gets for you to look like a "normal" person).

If the PCs know about the secret tunnel and have already concluded that this is how the mysterious criminal gets to and from the scene, they might be able to set a trap right at the entrance of the tunnel, greatly improving their chances (DM's discretion as per the ideas of the players).

Things get a lot more difficult if there are players acting as bait who have played *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue*. These will most certainly have met Diambeth before, and are much more likely to be recognised by the modron. Disguising themselves as simple townspeople requires an opposed Spot check against "Diambeth's" Spot check. "Diambeth receives an 15+APL modifier on this check (the more powerful you are, the harder it gets for you to look like a "normal" person). Diambeth gets an automatic Spot check in any case.

Regardless of the set-up, this scene is about dealing with the ill guided Diambeth in one way or the other. Thus, unless the PCs take too obvious an approach and void their own plan (see "Attracting the Attention of the Cult" below), the modron approaches the "bait" and things start rolling. Depending on the PCs' actions, you might need to modify the description accordingly.

From afar, you hear the sound of music, a pleasant sound, played by a master musician, just music, no vocals... it is getting closer, and it touches some chord in you...

This is Diambeth, using a combination of its bardic abilities, spells, and the magical instrument it is using as per APL.

Before going in, the modron has instructions to make sure that the area is safe and that it's not a set-up, and thus makes Spot checks to look around whether anyone may be in hiding. If the modron actually detects someone, it will first try to distract that observer with a *silent image* spell of itself approaching the observer, stopping short at "seeing" him, and then moving away. Diambeth then casts *resistance* on itself and goes in.

The modron uses its *fascinate* ability to get the victim(s) to become entranced by the music, then follows up with spells as appropriate (*charm person*, *hypnotism*, *enthral*, at APL 12 possibly also *dominate person*). Once it is close and the intended victim more or less under control, a *daze* spell (if necessary preceded by a *slow* spell at APLs 10 and 12) follows. After that, the modron moves in, grabs what treasure it can as quickly as it can, and retreats. At APL 12, it also uses a *modify memory* spell on a single victim.

If the gnomes behind the modron expect something may be up, they instruct Diambeth to try and fool possible

observers with a *silent image* spell. It also does so if it detects hidden observers on its initial Spot check (see above).

At least, this is the general plan, part of which the gnomes suggested, part of which the modron thought up itself (it's pretty clever and its last encounter with adventurers in *COR3-14 Hunt for the Rogue* has taught it a few tricks, too). To which extent the plan succeeds, is for the DM to decide, depending on the situation. However, there is an additional complication that may come into play: the influence of the slaad growing inside the modron (see "The Slaad Stirs," below).

Regardless of what the PCs may have heard so far, the modron is undamaged when they encounter it (since the gnome wizard repaired it). At APL 6, however, the repair job looks rather patchy, since the wizard does not have the Craft Construct feat at this APL and had to be... creative.

The Slaad Stirs

During each round of combat or similar stressful activity, there is a chance that the slaad growing inside the modron might actually get to influence Diambeth, like when it forced him to kill the adventurer three weeks ago.

In game terms, on Diambeth's initiative roll a Will save for the modron, the DC of which depends on the APL: At APL 6 he requires a successful DC14 Will save. Increase the DC at each subsequent APL by +1. (I.e. the DC is always calculated that there is a 10% chance that the save fails if a *resistance* spell is in effect, 15% chance otherwise).

If the save is made, nothing happens, and the modron continues as planned. If the save fails, however, the presence of the slaad makes itself felt as if Diambeth were under the effect of a (slightly modified) *lesser confusion* spell. Roll on the following table as regards its action this very round:

d%	Behaviour
1-10	Attack itself with one single attack, inflicting automatic damage.
11-20	Act normally.
21-50	Do nothing but babble incoherently.
51-70	Flee from the scene as fast as possible, levitating if necessary.
71-100	Attack nearest creature, regardless of original plan and situation.

Out of this basic situation, a number of possible outcomes may develop:

Attack the modron and beat it off or even destroy it

This is quite possible, but will make it harder for the PCs to find the real culprits. This course of action will also immediately trigger "Encounter 7."

The modron defends itself, its main objective being to get away as quickly as possible.

At all APLs, *blindness/deafness* against opposing spellcasters is always a preferred option, as are *cause fear* and *scare* and, at higher APLs, *fear*. *Sound burst* will only

be used if Diambeth is forced to fight; this spell is used preferably against opponents blocking its flight path. At APL 10, the modron also casts *slow* on its fastest pursuer(s) if it hasn't done so earlier. At APL 12, Diambeth prefers *shout* to *sound burst* to overpower opponents in its path, but otherwise uses the same tactics as described earlier.

If possible, Diambeth brings his magical instrument to bear in any fight. The *horn of fog* (APLs 6 and 8) may help to cover the modron's retreat. There won't be time enough to use the *hairp of charming* at APLs 10 and 12, though.

Diambeth has already used one of its five possible uses of its *levitate* ability, and is likely to reserve one to get down the tunnel again. Thus, it may *levitate* or use its paralyzing breath weapon (30 feet, cone of gas, Fortitude save (DC 14) or paralyzed 2d4 rounds) up to three times during this battle.

When running a combat with the "Diambeth," never forget the possible effects of the slaad's attempt at influencing the modron's actions! Also take into account that Diambeth casts its first *resistance* before the attempted robbery and that this spell runs out after 1 minute, probably in the middle of combat.

Attack the modron and beat it into submission.

This enables the PCs to find out about the situation and get at the gnomes behind. The modron is using the same tactics as described above. If the PCs damage the modron during this combat, this immediately triggers "Encounter 7" Should the modron remain undamaged, the PCs may even learn of the slaad growing within it, enabling them to take appropriate action.

The modron might then be willing to talk. At the beginning of such a conversation, Diambeth is hostile to the PCs as regards attempts at Diplomacy. At this point it believes the gnomes to be its friends and regards the PCs as enemies trying to hinder it from helping these friends. It is up to the PCs to improve this attitude, as per the rules in the *Player's Handbook*. Bluff and Intimidate might also be used to such effect.

If at least one of the PCs has played *COR3-14 The Hunt for the Rogue* and has had peaceful relations with the modron (ask the PCs in question about this at some inconspicuous time during the adventure, preferably way before this situation), Diambeth's initial attitude is indifferent, due to the influence of the gnomes.

If the PCs get the modron to be at least friendly, they may start questioning it. They may then learn that it is actually gnomes that are behind the entire operation, and that Diambeth is "helping" the gnomes to reach some goal they have not yet disclosed. There are four gnomes in all, and careful questioning reveals enough details about them to guess their character classes. Diambeth also tells the PCs that the gnomes lair in a below-ground lair, one room of which is full of metallic stuff that was used to "heal" it. If the DM has used Introduction A, Diambeth remembers that it called out to the PCs for help, but has no clear recollection of why. Regardless of who the dead

spellcaster in "Encounter 2" was, the modron remembers meeting him, but not killing him.

If the PCs even achieve a helpful attitude, the moron offers two more bits of information: the location of the gnomes' hideout (an empty gnomish house on Speaker's Ring), including the entrance to the secret tunnel next to the Flandal Steelskin shrine—and the fact that "something hideously chaotic" is hatching inside it! This bit of info might be stressed by a short outburst of slaad chaos (see "The Slaad Stirs"); you should not roll for this, but just decide on a roll of 1-10 and have Diambeth yell: "I want it out! I want it out!" If the DM has used "Introduction A," Diambeth adds: "And this I why I called for you! You have helped me before!"

If the PCs get the exact information about the gnomes' hideout, they may proceed to "Encounter 6"

If, on the other hand, they learn about the "evil growing inside" the modron and want to do something about it, cut to "Encounter 7."

Let the modron do its "work" and follow it back to its "lair."

Since Diambeth does not aim to kill its victims, this option should leave the "bait" relatively unharmed, but bereft of their valuables. The modron tries to get in and out as quickly as possible and makes only a cursory Spot check to see whether it is being followed.

Trailing it back to its lair requires two opposing Hide checks against the modron's Spot checks. If both checks succeed, the PCs have trailed Diambeth back to the hiding place of the evil gnomes.

Since this is not a combat situation, Diambeth's "confusion" will not manifest while it is being shadowed.

Other means of following the modron back might also be possible. Flying familiars might be used to keep track of the modron, or a *locate object* spell may be placed on the stolen belongings. Again, you will have to be on your toes as DM and react accordingly to the suggestions of your players.

In the end, the option described here will lead directly to *Encounter 6: They Have What Here?*

APL 6 (EL 9)

➤ **Diambeth:** Pentadrone Brd 5; Medium construct (extraplanar); hp 65; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

➤ **Diambeth:** Pentadrone Brd 7; Medium construct (extraplanar); hp 74; see Appendix 2.

APL 10 (EL 13)

➤ **Diambeth:** Pentadrone Brd 9; Medium construct (extraplanar); hp 83; see Appendix 3.

APL 12 (EL 15)

➤ **Diambeth:** Pentadrone Brd 11; Medium construct (extraplanar); hp 93; see Appendix 4.

Treasure

The modron's magical instrument is the same as in *Hunt for the Rogue* (except for APL 12, of course) and depends on APL. At APLs 6 and 8, it's a *horn of fog*; at APLs 10 and 12, it's a *harp of charming*. Diambeth also has notes for the *shadow cache* spell (see *Manual of the Planes*, p. 39); it just can't use the spell at APL 6, but this has no effect on the adventure.

All in all, this amounts to:

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), *harp of charming* (625 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), *harp of charming* (625 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

Attracting the Attention of the Cult

Depending on how the PCs proceed, there is a good chance to attract the attention of the Vecna cult even before confronting Diambeth. You as DM need to judge this as based on the situation.

The bottom line is that this is a *Vecna* cult, and this means operating in secrecy. If the cult feels that the PCs are on their tracks, they simply lie low and prepare for a possible attack (see "Encounter 6" for details). In no way the cultists attack the PCs outright!

If the PCs are too obvious in their means of setting up a trap for the "metallic menace," the cult simply responds by not sending the modron out and the PCs must resort to a different tack.

ENCOUNTER 6: THEY HAVE WHAT HERE?

The gnomes' hideout is an empty gnomish house on Speaker's Ring. The PCs may get here in one of three ways: They may follow the modron back here in secret; they may know the location after talking to the modron; or they may have found the entrance to the secret tunnel.

When running this encounter with its probably inevitable combat, it is important to note whether the gnomes have ample time to prepare or not. This depends on the actions on the PCs and on how fast the group is. If the PCs find the secret tunnel and get to the hideout without even waiting for the modron to appear, the gnomes most likely not have time to prepare for the arrival of the PCs. If the PCs battle, trap, or talk to the modron (possibly fighting the slaad in between), the amount of time spent determines whether the gnomes are prepared or not.

As per standard tactics, the gnomes have decided to wait for exactly 33 minutes after sending out the modron (198 rounds) before getting concerned. Unfortunately, they never told Diambeth about this deadline... As soon as this span of time has elapsed, the gnomes believe that something has gone amiss and start preparing.

The game statistics in Appendices 1 through 4 have sections called *Preparation* listed at the end of each NPC description. Have the gnomes prepare in the sequence listed there, taking care of duration times. If need be (the PCs are already on their way while the gnomes start preparing), you might need to keep track of the gnomish state of preparation round by round. The gnomes improved statistics are listed under the *Improvement* heading beneath each individual entry. Unless they have very good evidence to the contrary the gnomes, if alerted, prepare for an attack from the direction of the underground tunnel, not from that of the emergency exit in the ground floor of the house.

If Diambeth is still around (for instance because the PCs followed the modron home) when combat breaks out, the gnomes will do their best to have Diambeth fight for them by craftily manipulating it (it does trust them after all, at least as long as the slaad isn't in control). The gnomes will not fight to the death and flee as soon as they are on the losing side, preferring capture to death if necessary.

The gnomes' battle tactics are also described in the respective entries in *Appendices 1* through *4*. This, and the description of the hideout below, should give you enough information to run this battle.

The Hideout

The gnomes' hideout is an empty gnomish house on Speaker's Ring. The aboveground part of the house is quite unremarkable: it is one-story, rather small, and pretty much unused. The windows are empty, the shutters are broken, and the door is swinging in the wind. The interior of the house is full of dirt and dust, with a few broken bits of furniture lying around. There are no tracks of any kind and the only living beings found here are some insects and a pack of mice that have made their lair here.

The only feature of interest the PCs may find here is a trapdoor leading down; serving some kind of "emergency exit" if the main approach through the tunnel is compromised. This trapdoor has not been used for years and is thus very hard to find, although a successful DC 25 Spot check identifies it. The door is slightly rusted and is not trapped. The gnomes watch this exit only very casually and will not notice the PCs if they go in swiftly, find the trapdoor, and go down. If, however, the PCs take 20 on their search, the gnomes will notice at about the same time that the PCs find the trapdoor, thus starting the gnomish cycle of preparation as outlined in *Appendices 1* through *4*.

The trapdoor deposits the PCs in Room 8, while the tunnel from near the Flandal Steelskin shrine ends in Room 1.

Unless otherwise specified, all corridors within the hideout are 5 feet wide. All rooms and corridors except the original basement (which is 7 feet high) are no higher than 5 ½ feet (more than enough for gnomes), which means that all Medium creatures in the hideout fight at –2 to all their attack rolls. Except the original basement, all construction was done in secret by using conjured earth

elementals and *move earth* scrolls. Thus, all rooms and corridors except the original basement (Room 8) and the Vecna temple (Room 9) look somewhat rough and unfinished in appearance. Globes of continual flame spread throughout the hideout light the place.

Please refer to the accompanying map in Appendix 8: Maps.

Room 1: Tunnel Entry: The tunnel from the secret trapdoor next to the Flandal Steelskin shrine ends here. The gnomes have not thought it necessary to install a door.

Room 2: Entry Room: This room was created to be a defensive position in case it were ever needed. On the west wall, there are stashes with (non-magical) reserve weapons, while to the north and the south wall, wooden benches are stacked that can be used to create a makeshift barrier to block off either end of the room. Unless there is an emergency, the room also serves as a makeshift kitchen. If the barricade is in place, it provides cover as per Table 8-6 in the *Player's Handbook*. It has a Hardness of 5 and 10 hp.

Room 3: Central Corridor: This is probably the least finished part of the structure, intended to serve as a link between the exit tunnel and the original basement. The rooms 4 through 7 were added later. The only interesting feature in this corridor is the secret door in the centre of its southern wall. This can be noticed by a successful DC 25 Search check. The secret door glides down into the floor once opened; it is not trapped. All doors to the living quarters are locked (Vecna *is* a god of secrets, after all). Opening this requires a DC 20 Open Lock check. Each gnome carries its own room key with him or her, though.

Room 4: Fighter's Room: In this non-descript room, the gnomish fighter dwells (or rather, sleeps). The bed contains nothing more than a simple bed, a table, a chair, a trunk, and a wardrobe. Except for some spare clothing and typical utensils belonging to a fighter, the room holds nothing of interest.

Room 5: Rogue's Room: In this non-descript room, the gnomish rogue dwells (or rather, sleeps). The bed contains nothing more than a simple bed, a table, a chair, a trunk, and a wardrobe. Except for some spare clothing and typical utensils belonging to a rogue, the room holds nothing of interest. At APLs 6 and 8, you might want to put the gnomes' money (35 and 93 gp, respectively) here.

Room 6: Cleric's Room: In this non-descript room, the gnomish cleric dwells (or rather, sleeps). The bed contains nothing more than a simple bed, a table, a chair, a trunk, and a wardrobe. Except for some spare clothing and a few spare religious symbols, the room holds nothing of interest.

Room 7: Wizard's Room: In this non-descript room, the gnomish wizard dwells (or rather, sleeps). The bed contains nothing more than a simple bed, a table, a chair, a trunk, and a wardrobe. Except for some spare clothing and a few scraps of (empty) parchment, the room holds nothing of interest.

Room 8: Original Basement: This room is slightly higher than the others (about 7 feet) and was constructed in a more "conservative" way than the rest of the hideout.

A dust-covered stairwell leads up to the trapdoor hidden in the abandoned house on Speaker's Ring. Judging from the smell, the room is basically used as a place of waste and other disposal, to which a smelly hole in the north-eastern corner testifies.

Room 9: Shrine to Vecna: The door to this room has a very complex triple lock. Opening this requires a DC 30 Open Lock check. All three keys are with the priest. The room is empty, except for a small shrine to the Whispered One and a small cabinet. The walls are draped in black cloth adorned with Vecna's symbols (the hand and the eye). A blood-stained sacrificial dagger lies on the altar. The cabinet holds treatises on the teachings of Vecna and the history of the eye and the hand, including the history of the Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills (in case the PCs haven't found out yet).

Room 10: Construct Lab: The door to this room is securely locked. Opening this requires a DC 25 Open Lock check; the wizard has the key. Behind the door is a well-equipped construct lab maintained by the gnomish wizard. There is quite an array of materials lying around, and there are some basic texts delving into the mechanics of construct creation and repair. The room shows signs of recent use (when the wizard repaired Diambeth). Among the texts is a set of notes on modrons, enabling the PCs to get the information found in *Appendix 7: On Modrons* should they not already have them. The stuff in the lab is not enough for the PCs to learn the Craft Construct feat, but they may sell it to Mungus Gearhead if they like (which accounts for the "loot" section of the treasure listing for this encounter).

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Cleric of Vecna:** female gnome Clr3; hp 27; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr3; hp 34; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog3; hp 23; see Appendix 1.

➤ **Wizard:** male gnome Wiz3; hp 19; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Cleric of Vecna:** female gnome Clr5; hp 43; see Appendix 2.

➤ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr4; hp 44; see Appendix 2.

➤ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog5; hp 37; see Appendix 2.

➤ **Wizard:** male gnome Wiz6; hp 37; see Appendix 2.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Cleric of Vecna:** female gnome Clr7; hp 59; see Appendix 3.

➤ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr7; hp 74; see Appendix 3.

➤ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog7; hp 51; see Appendix 3.

➤ **Wizard:** male gnome Wiz7; hp 43; see Appendix 3.

APL 12 (EL 13)

➤ **Cleric of Vecna:** female gnome Clr9; hp 75; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr9; hp 95; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog9; hp 65; see Appendix 4.

➤ **Wizard:** male gnome Wiz9; hp 55; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: At all APLs, the fighter has a *+1 battle axe*. The cleric has a *+1 dagger* at APLs 6 and 8, and, as befitting a priest of Vecna, a *+1 frost dagger*. At APL 12, the rogue also has *elven chain mail*. The gnomes also have a bit of coins and gems at APLs 6, 8, and 12 (35 gp, 93 gp, and 208 gp, respectively).

Thus:

APL 6: Loot 150 gp; Coin 35 gp; Magic: *+1 battle axe* (192 gp), *+1 dagger* (192 gp)

APL 8: Loot 300 gp; Coin 93 gp; Magic: *+1 battle axe* (192 gp), *+1 dagger* (192 gp)

APL 10: Loot 400 gp; Coin —; Magic: *+1 battle axe* (192 gp), *+1 frost dagger* (692 gp)

APL 12: Loot 615 gp; Coin 218 gp; Magic: *+1 battle axe* (192 gp), *+1 frost dagger* (692 gp), *elven chain mail* (345 gp)

Development: If, after the battle, the PCs have not yet in some way dealt with the modron, they may want to do so now. Damaging it in a fight immediately triggers “Encounter 7.” Should the modron remain undamaged, the PCs may even learn of the slaad growing within it, enabling them to take appropriate action, also leading into “Encounter 7,” but with the cards stacked toward the PCs' favor.

ENCOUNTER 7: NOW WHAT'S THIS?

This encounter is triggered either whenever the PCs damage Diambeth, or when the PCs have been informed about the slaad growing inside the modron and are working on a solution. In any case, immediately interrupt the encounter you are playing and cut to this one.

Once the modron is damaged in *any* way, the slaad, who has grown enough to *really* want to get out now, will break through (it couldn't do so when the damaged pentadron was found by the gnomes, because it was too young and too weak then). If the slaad breaks free, Diambeth will immediately take 1d10 points of damage. Subsequently he is out of the action (any action) until repaired. The slaad attacks the PCs without abandon and the final combat of the adventure ensues.

PCs who have talked Diambeth into a *helpful* attitude in “Encounter 5” will have learned about the presence of “something hideously chaotic hatching inside” the modron. It takes a DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check to determine that this is probably a slaad. On a successful DC 10 Intelligence check, the PCs notice in any case that, whatever it is that may be “hatching” inside the modron, is best let out of the modron. If nobody succeeds in this check, Diambeth might have another slaad fit again, yelling “Get it out of me!”

To actually get the slaad out of the modron, all the PCs need to do is to “break open” the modron, doing 1d6 points of damage in the process. This is regrettable, but Diambeth readily agrees with the plan. Of course, this set-up allows the PCs to prepare for the coming fight.

Regardless of how the slaad gets out of the modron, the resulting effect is similar (except in the case when the modron is totally destroyed).

Suddenly, there is a break in the metallic “skin” of the creature, and you see a kaleidoscope of swirling colours emerge from the very body of the modron, just like a gust of wind breaking free.

Within seconds, the colors settle on the ground and begin to coalesce, turning into a weird being resembling an upright, humanoid frog!

The creature looks very much like a healthy version of the dried husk the PCs found in “Encounter 1.”

Infused by the chaotic magic of Limbo, the slaad gains its full-grown form very quickly, effectively allowing the PCs no more than a surprise round to act.

You may want to fight the slaad as chaotically as possible, but still should make full use of its abilities. It may *summon* other slaadi, but should definitely do so if on the verge of death; however, unless the PCs are very lucky. It could not *summon* other slaadi as long as it was trapped within the modron's body. At APL 6 it has forgotten this ability and so does not use this ability in this combat.

Whether gray and death slaadi change shape during combat is totally up to you; it might be useful if the mimic the appearance of lightly armed PCs for maximum confusion.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Blue Slaad:** hp 68; See *Monster Manual* page 229.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Gray Slaad:** hp 95; see *Monster Manual* page 231

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Advanced Gray Slaad:** hp 135; see *Appendix 3*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

➤ **Advanced Death Slaad:** hp 162; see *Appendix 4*.

The moment the slaad is destroyed (or driven off in another way), it releases a chaos wash as some kind of miniature explosion of chaos into its surroundings (for effects, see “Conclusion: That's It?”). The chaos wash may be avoided by a successful Will save based on the slaad's Charisma modifier and an assumed spell level of 6: APL: APL 6 – DC 16; APL 8 – DC 18; APL 10 – DC 18; APL 12 – DC 20.

The slaad does not have any treasure. As for the modron's treasure, see “Encounter 5.”

CONCLUSION: THAT'S IT?

In the end all should be well. Diambeth saved from the slaad growing inside it, the slaad itself dead, and the Nonsburgh operation of the evil gnomes thwarted.

If the PCs sold the lab parts to Mungus Gearhand in Nonsburgh, they are granted *one* favour each of construct repair. To claim it, the PCs must spend 1 TU at the end of any adventure they want to repair a construct. This represents their travel to Nonsburgh and hiring of the services of the artificer. They still need to pay the full repair cost as per the feat description in the *Monster Manual*. Repairing Diambeth in case it has taken any damage *will* count as this one favor; the grateful pentadron in exchange presents the heroes with its magical instrument, though. Repairing Diambeth at the end of the adventure doesn't take up an additional Time Unit.

Any bards among the PCs are able to reconstruct the spell *shadow cache* (Bard level 3) from "Diambeth's" notes. They are now able to count this spell among their "Known Spells." The PCs may also sell the notes as such, which is already accounted for in the treasure summary.

Chaos Wash

The slaad's chaos wash results in the following:

All non-chaotic characters are struck with a -3 modifier on all Wisdom, Charisma, and Intelligence-related skills for their next adventure. This penalty drops to 2 after they have spent one TU and to 1 after they have spent another TU. After the third TU spent after paying this adventure, everything returns to normal.

The characters may immediately spend these TUs; thus, it is possible to negate this penalty right after the module by immediately spending 3 TUs. However, TUs spent to reduce these penalties may only be those used adventuring, or those used doing nothing at all. PCs may not use TUs allocated for Meta-Game activity as indicated in *Chapter 6* of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*, nor may they use TUs allocated to Meta-Organisations or magic item creation to reduce these penalties.

Chaotic characters, on the other hand, gain corresponding increases of +3 to all Wisdom, Charisma, and Intelligence-based actions for their next TU, +2 for the second TU after *COR5-07 Rings within Rings* and +1 for the third TU after playing *COR5-07 Rings within Rings*. Once 3 TUs have passed since playing *COR5-07 Rings within Rings*, all values return to normal.

While under the effect of the chaos wash, the PCs may not change their alignment!

Characters under the effect of a *protection from chaos* or stronger spell of similar function in the round the slaad is defeated are not affected by the chaos wash.

Other Rewards

Finally, as a sign of gratitude from their deity for defeating the Vecna priest, the priest's *frost dagger* is

made available as a general *frost* enhancement. In addition the gnomes have several other items which they make available to you.

☛ **Item and Enhancement Access:** As a sign of gratitude of defeating the Vecna cultists the gnomes of Nonsburgh have made available to you the frost weapon enhancement. You now have access to this weapon enhancement and may apply it to as many weapons as you wish. You may use this favour multiple times. You must however pay full price to upgrade your weapons(s). In addition you are now considered to have Core access to the following items: ring of force shield, bag of holding (type I), stone of alarm and deck of illusions.

CAMPAIGN CONSEQUENCES

Once you have played the adventure, please send answers to the following questions to GH_Adri@web.de:

- (1) Did Diambeth survive?
- (2) Was the Vecna cult destroyed?

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 5: What *Is* He Doing?

Defeating, neutralizing, or freeing Diambeth

APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Encounter 6: They Have *What* Here?

Defeating the Vecna-worshipping gnomes

APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP

Encounter 7: Now *What's This*?

Defeating the slaad

APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP

Discretionary Role-playing Awards:

APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	225 XP
APL 10	270 XP
APL 12	315 XP

Total Experience Possible:

APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP
APL 12	1,575 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

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

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

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

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

Encounter 2: Who Died Here?

APL 6: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

APL 8: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: *brooch of shielding* (125 gp)

APL 10: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: *brooch of shielding* (125 gp)

APL 12: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: *brooch of shielding* (125 gp)

Encounter 4: Who's Behind the Modron Crimes?

APL 6: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 150 gp; Magic: 0 gp

APL 8: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 200 gp; Magic: 0 gp

APL 10: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 250 gp; Magic: 0 gp

APL 12: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 500 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Encounter 5: What *Is* He Doing?

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), *harp of charming* (625 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: *horn of fog* (167 gp), *harp of charming* (625 gp), spell *shadow cache* (31 gp)

Encounter 6: They Have *What* Here?

APL 6: Loot 150 gp; Coin 35 gp; Magic: *+1 battle axe* (192 gp), *+1 dagger* (192 gp)

APL 8: Loot 300 gp; Coin 93 gp; Magic: *+1 battle axe* (192 gp), *+1 dagger* (192 gp)

APL 10: Loot 400 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic: +1 *battle axe* (192 gp), +1 *frost dagger* (692 gp)

APL 12: Loot 615 gp; Coin 218 gp; Magic: +1 *battle axe* (192 gp), +1 *frost dagger* (692 gp), *elven chain mail* (345 gp)

Total Possible Treasure

APL 6: Loot: 150 gp; Coin: 185 gp; Magic: 582 gp - Total: 917 gp [capped at 900 gp]

APL 8: Loot: 300 gp; Coin: 293 gp; Magic: 707 gp - Total: 1300 gp

APL 10: Loot: 400 gp; Coin: 250 gp; Magic: 1832 gp - Total: 2482 gp [capped at 2300 gp]

APL 12: Loot: 615 gp; Coin: 518 gp; Magic: 2167 gp - Total: 3300 gp

Special

Manual of the Planes

Shadow Cache

Illusion (Shadow)

Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Area: 1 ft.-diameter circle

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

You can temporarily stash small items on the Plane of Shadow or permanently dispose of them there. This spell opens a small portal to the Plane of Shadow that is invisible on the Material Plane and a small dish on the Plane of Shadow.

You can reach into the Plane of Shadow through the portal created by *shadow cache*, but only small nonliving objects may pass entirely through the hole.

You can recover objects placed in the portal throughout the duration of the spell, or by casting another *shadow cache* later. The shadow cache remains stationary at the point where you create it. Items placed in the shadow cache can possibly be picked up by natives of the Plane of Shadow, and in any event are slowly moved by the morphic trait of the plane. There is a 10% chance per day that objects laced on the Plane of Shadow with *shadow cache* are gone (either moved or taken). After ten days, the items are definitely gone.

The spell cannot be cast on the Plane of Shadow itself, but only on planes coexistent with the Plane of Shadow.

Items for the Adventure Record

☛ **Chaos Wash:** The slaad's chaos wash has the following affects:

All non-chaotically-aligned characters suffer a -3 modifier on all Wisdom, Charisma, and Intelligence-related skill checks.

Chaotically-aligned characters gain a +3 bonus to all Wisdom, Charisma, and Intelligence-related skill checks.

These bonuses/penalties last for one adventure. During the second adventure the bonus/penalty becomes +2/-2. During the third adventure played after *COR5-07 Rings within Rings* the bonuses/penalties become +1/-1. During subsequent adventures the affected PC is no longer affected by the chaos wash.

It is possible to negate the penalties right after *COR5-07 Rings within Rings* by immediately spending 4 TUs; during these TUs the PC may engage in no other activity.

While under the effect of the chaos wash, the PCs may not voluntarily change their alignment.

Characters under the effect of a *protection from chaos* or stronger spell of similar function in the round the slaad is defeated are not affected by the chaos wash.

☛ **Construct Laboratory Use:** You have sold what remains of the lab of the evil gnomes to Mungus Gearhand, an artificer in Nonsburgh. In return, he has granted you *one* favour of construct repair. To claim it, you must spend 1 TU at the end of any adventure in which you wish to repair a construct. This TU represents travel to travel to Nonsburgh and the engagement of Mungus Gearhand's services. You still need to pay the full repair cost as per the feat description in the *Monster Manual*. After you have used this benefit once, cross it off this AR

☛ **Access to a New Bard Spell:** From "Diambeth's" notes, you are able to reconstruct the spell *shadow cache* (Brd 3). You are now able to count this spell among your known spells. Shadow Catch can be found in *Manual of the Planes*.

☛ **Item and Enhancement Access:** As a sign of gratitude of defeating the Vecna cultists the gnomes of Nonsburgh have made available to you the frost weapon enhancement. You now have access to this weapon enhancement and may apply it to as many weapons as you wish. You may use this favour multiple times. You must however pay full price to upgrade your weapons(s). In addition you are now considered to have Core access to the following items: ring of force shield, bag of holding (type 1), stone of alarm and deck of illusions.

Item Access

APL 6

❖ *Shadow cache* spell (Frequency: Adventure, CL 5, Manual of the Planes)

❖ *Horn of fog* (Frequency: Adventure, CL 3, DMG)

APL 8 (All of APL 6 plus the following)

❖ *Brooch of Shielding* (Frequency: Adventure, CL 1, DMG)

APL 10 (All of APLs 6-8 plus the following)

- ❖ *Frost* special weapon ability (Frequency: Any, CL 1, DMG)
- ❖ *Harp of charming* (Frequency: Adventure, CL 5, DMG)

APL 12 (All of APLs 6-10 plus the following)

- ❖ *Elven chain mail* (Frequency: Adventure, CL --, DMG)

Appendix 1: APL 6

Encounter 5: What *Is* He Doing?

☛ **Diambeth:** Pentadrone Bard5: Medium construct (extraplanar); CR 9; HD 5d8+20 + 5d6; hp 65; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural); Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +12 melee (1d4+4, slam); Full Atk: +12 melee (1d4+4, 5 slams); SA Breath weapon, spells; SQ: All-around vision, bardic knowledge (+6), bardic music (*countersong*, *fascinate*, *inspire competence*, *inspire courage +1*) damage reduction 10/chaotic, modron traits, outsider traits, resistances, spells, superior multi-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 16, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Concentration +4, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +10, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (planes) +7, Listen +9, Perform (horn) +11, Scry +3, Search +10, Sense Motive +11, Spot +13; Alertness, Iron Will, Track.

Breath Weapon (Ex): 30 feet, cone of gas, Fortitude save (DC 14) or paralysed 2d4 rounds, usable 1/hr, up to 5/day.

All-Around Vision (Ex): With an eye set into each of its five appendages, a pentadrone can see in all directions at once. Because of this, it gains a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and cannot be flanked.

Levitation (Ex): The pentadrone can aim its breath weapon downward to levitate up to 20 feet per round, up or down, as a move-equivalent action. It can maintain this levitation for up to 1 hour. Each use of its breath weapon in this way counts against its breath weapon limit for the day.

Modron Traits: Immune to mind-influencing effects; not subject to subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain; not subject to critical hits.

Construct Traits: Low-light vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; cannot be raised or resurrected; cannot heal damage on their own, but can be repaired by magic or using the Craft Construct feat; immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless); 20 bonus hit points due to being of Medium size.

Resistances (Ex): Acid, cold, and fire resistance 10.

Spells known (3/3/2; DC 13 + spell level): 0 – *dancing lights*, *daze*, *flare*, *message*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st – *cause fear*, *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *silent image*; 2nd – *blindness/deafness*, *scare*, *sound burst*.

Possessions: horn of fog.

Encounter 6: They Have *What* Here? **Evil Gnomes (EL 7)**

☛ **Cleric:** female gnome Clr3 (Vecna); CR 3; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 3d8+9; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +2; Grp -1; Atk +5 melee (1d3+2 / 19-20, +1 *Small dagger*); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3+2 / 19-20, +1 *Small dagger*); SA turn undead; SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Spellcraft +1, Spot +3; Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds*, *resistance (3)*; 1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds*, *protection from good**, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *detect thoughts**, *remove paralysis*.

**Domain spell. Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Knowledge (cast divination spells at +1 caster level, all Knowledge skills are class skills).

Possessions: 15 gp, +1 *dagger*, full plate, heavy steel shield, key to room, keys to shrine.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves).

Preparation: *bless*, *bull's strength* on Fighter, *protection from good* on Fighter, *shield of faith* on Rogue, *resistance* on Rogue, *resistance* on Cleric, *resistance* on Fighter.

Tactics: (1st round) melee or first four preparation spells, then melee.

☛ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr3; CR 3; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 3d10+12; hp 34; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +3; Grp +1; Atk +8 melee (1d6+3/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +5 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+3/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +5 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Jump -7, Listen +4, Spot +2, Tumble -3; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Focus (battle axe).

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion

spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: 6 gp, +1 battle axe, bolts [10], light crossbow, full plate, heavy steel shield, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage, grapple and jump), *protection from good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves).

Tactics: use Combat Expertise to boost AC for 3 points (attack drops the same amount), use Dodge against melee fighters; always try to flank opponents with the Rogue (+2 to attack).

♣ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog3; CR 3; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 3d6+9; hp 23; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp -1; Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, gnome traits, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Disable Device +6, Escape Artist +9, Hide +13, Jump +2, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +7, Search +7, Spot +7, Tumble +11; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: 3 gp, bolts [10], leather, light crossbow, masterwork small rapier, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *cat's grace* (+4 Dexterity: +2 to AC, attack, initiative, reflex saves and escape artist, hide, move silently, open lock, tumble), *shield of faith* (+2 deflection bonus to AC), *Resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves).

Tactics: if prepared, hide and attack spellcasters from behind; always try to flank opponents (+2 to attack, sneak attack).

♣ **Wizard:** male gnome Transmuter 3; CR 3; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 3d4+9; hp 19 (+1d10+3 temp. hp); Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk +1 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +1 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ familiar,

gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Listen +3, Spellcraft +11, Spot +1, Tumble +5; Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Transmutation).

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level, DC 14 + spell level for illusion and transmutation spells): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*; 1st—*color spray*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*; 2nd—~~*cat's grace*~~, ~~*false life*~~, *Melf's acid arrow*.

Possessions: 11 gp, bolts [20], dagger, small light crossbow, spellbook, key to room, key to lab.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *shield* (+4 shield bonus to AC, blocks magic missiles).

Preparation: *cat's grace* on rogue, *shield* on wizard, *message*.

Tactics: (1st round) *ray of enfeeblement* on melee fighter, (2nd round) *Melf's acid arrow* on spellcaster, (3rd to 5th round) first two preparation spells or *color spray*, then ranged combat.

APPENDIX 2: APL 8

Encounter 5: What *Is* He Doing?

☞ **Diambeth:** Pentadron Bard7: Medium construct (extraplanar); CR 11; HD 5d8+20 + 7d6; hp 74; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +14 melee (1d4+4, slam); Full Atk: +14 melee (1d4+4, 5 slams); SA Breath weapon, spells; SQ: All-around vision, bardic knowledge (+8), bardic music (*countersong*, *fascinate*, *inspire competence*, *inspire courage +1*, *suggestion*) damage reduction 10/chaotic, modron traits, outsider traits, resistances, spells, superior multi-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +12; Str 18, Dex 16, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +10, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (planes) +7, Listen +9, Perform (horn) +13, Scry +3, Search +10, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13; Alertness, Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Track.

Breath Weapon (Ex): 30 feet, cone of gas, Fortitude save (DC 14) or paralysed 2d4 rounds, usable 1/hr, up to 5/day.

All-Around Vision (Ex): With an eye set into each of its five appendages, a pentadron can see in all directions at once. Because of this, it gains a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and cannot be flanked.

Levitation (Ex): The pentadron can aim its breath weapon downward to levitate up to 20 feet per round, up or down, as a move-equivalent action. It can maintain this levitation for up to 1 hour. Each use of its breath weapon in this way counts against its breath weapon limit for the day.

Modron Traits: Immune to mind-influencing effects; not subject to subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain; not subject to critical hits.

Construct Traits: Low-light vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; cannot be raised or resurrected; cannot heal damage on their own, but can be repaired by magic or using the Craft Construct feat; immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless); 20 bonus hit points due to being of Medium size.

Resistances (Ex): Acid, cold, and fire resistance 10.

Spells known (3/4/3/1; DC 13 + spell level): 0 – *dancing lights*, *daze*, *flare*, *message*, *read magic*, *resistance*, 1st – *cause fear*, *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *silent image*; 2nd – *blindness/deafness*, *enthrall*, *scare*, *sound burst*; 3rd – *fear*, *shadow cache*.

Possessions: horn of fog.

Encounter 6: They Have *What* Here?

☞ **Cleric:** female gnome Clr5 (Vecna); CR 5; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 5d8+15; hp 43; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +3; Grp +0; Atk +6 melee (1d3+2/19-20, +1 *Small dagger*); Full Atk +6 melee (1d3+2/19-20, +1 *Small dagger*); SA turn undead; SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Spellcraft +3, Spot +3; Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (5/5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – *cure minor wounds*, *resistance* (4); 1st – *bles*, *cure light wounds*, *protection from good**, *shield of faith* (2); 2nd – *bull's strength* (2), *detect thoughts**, *remove paralysis*; 3rd – *dispel magic*, *magic circle against good**, *prayer*.

**Domain spell. Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Knowledge (cast divination spells at +1 caster level, all Knowledge skills are class skills).

Possessions: 32 gp, +1 *dagger*, full plate, heavy steel shield, key to room, keys to shrine.

Improvement: *bles* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage and grapple), *shield of faith* (+2 deflection bonus to AC), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Preparation: *bles*, *bull's strength* on Fighter, *magic circle against good* on Fighter, *shield of faith* on Rogue, *bull's strength* on Cleric, *shield of faith* on Cleric, *protection from good* on Wizard, *resistance* on Rogue, *resistance* on Cleric, *resistance* on Fighter, *resistance* on Wizard.

Tactics: (1st round) *prayer*; (2nd round) melee or first six preparation spells, then melee.

☞ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr4; CR 4; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 4d10+16; hp 44; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +4; Grp +2; Atk +9 melee (1d6+5/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+5/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Jump -5, Listen +4, Spot +2, Tumble -1; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Focus (battle axe), Weapon Specialization (battle axe).

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: 12 gp, +1 battle axe, bolts [10], light crossbow, masterwork full plate, heavy steel shield, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage, grapple and jump), *magic circle against good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters in 10 ft. radius), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Tactics: use Combat Expertise to boost AC for 4 points (attack drops the same amount), use Dodge against melee fighters; always try to flank opponents with the Rogue (+2 to attack).

➤ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog5; CR 5; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 5d6+15; hp 37; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +0; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +7 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +7 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, gnome traits, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +11, Hide +15, Jump +2, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +9, Search +9, Spot +9, Tumble +13; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: 9 gp, bolts [10], leather armor, light crossbow, masterwork buckler, masterwork small rapier, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *cat's grace* (+4 Dexterity: +2 to AC, attack, initiative, reflex saves and escape artist, hide, move silently, open lock, tumble), *shield of faith* (+2 deflection bonus to AC), *resistance* (+1 resistance

bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Tactics: if prepared, hide and attack spellcasters from behind; always try to flank opponents (+2 to attack, sneak attack), probably fight defensively (+3 to AC, -4 to attack).

➤ **Wizard:** male gnome Transmuter 6; CR 6; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 6d4+18; hp 37 (+1d10+6 temp. hp); Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp -2; Atk +3 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ familiar, gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Listen +3, Spellcraft +14, Spot +1, Tumble +6; Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Transmutation).

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; base DC = 13 + spell level, DC 14 + spell level for illusion and transmutation spells): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*; 1st—~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile* (2), *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, ~~*false life*~~, *fox's cunning*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *web*; 3rd *dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *slow*.

Possessions: 40 gp, bolts [20], dagger, small light crossbow, spellbook, key to room, key to lab.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *protection from good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters), *shield* (+4 shield bonus to AC, blocks magic missiles), *fox's cunning* (+4 Intelligence: +2 DC for spells), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Preparation: *cat's grace* on Rogue, *shield* on Wizard, *fox's cunning* on Wizard, *message*.

Tactics: (1st round) *haste*, (2nd round) *slow*, (3rd round) *displacement* on Fighter, Rogue or Cleric, (4th round) *ray of enfeeblement* on melee fighter, (5th round) *Melf's acid arrow* on spellcaster, (6th to 8th round) first two preparation spells or *magic missiles*, then ranged combat.

APPENDIX 3: APL 10

Encounter 5: What *Is* He Doing?

➤**Diambeth:** Pentadron Bard9; Medium construct (extraplanar); CR 13; HD 5d8+20 + 9d6; hp 83; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural); Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +15/+10 melee (1d4+4, slam); Full Atk: +15/+10 melee (1d4+2, 5 slams); SA Breath weapon, spells; SQ: All-around vision, bardic knowledge (+10), bardic music (*countersong*, *fascinate*, *inspire competence*, *inspire courage* +2, *inspire greatness*, *suggestion*) damage reduction 10/chaotic, modron traits, outsider traits, resistances, spells, superior multi-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +13; Str 18, Dex 16, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +11, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +10, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (planes) +7, Listen +9, Perform (harp) +15, Scry +3, Search +10, Sense Motive +15, Spot +13; Alertness, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Track.

Breath Weapon (Ex): 30 feet, cone of gas, Fortitude save (DC 14) or paralysed 2d4 rounds, usable 1/hr, up to 5/day.

All-Around Vision (Ex): With an eye set into each of its five appendages, a pentadron can see in all directions at once. Because of this, it gains a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and cannot be flanked.

Levitation (Ex): The pentadron can aim its breath weapon downward to levitate up to 20 feet per round, up or down, as a move-equivalent action. It can maintain this levitation for up to 1 hour. Each use of its breath weapon in this way counts against its breath weapon limit for the day.

Modron Traits: Immune to mind-influencing effects; not subject to subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain; not subject to critical hits.

Construct Traits: Low-light vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; cannot be raised or resurrected; cannot heal damage on their own, but can be repaired by magic or using the Craft Construct feat; immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless); 20 bonus hit points due to being of Medium size.

Resistances (Ex): Acid, cold, and fire resistance 10.

Spells known (3/4/4/3; DC 13 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights*, *daze*, *flare*, *message*, *read magic*, *resistance*, 1st—*cause fear*, *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *silent image*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness*, *enthrall*, *scare*, *sound burst*; 3rd—*fear*, *shadow cache*, *slow*.

Possessions: *harp of charming*.

Encounter 6: They Have *What* Here?

➤**Cleric:** female gnome Clr7 (Vecna); CR 7; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 7d8+21; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +2; Atk +8 melee (1d3+2/19-20 +1d6 cold damage, +1 *Small frost dagger*); Full Atk +8 melee (1d3+2 / 19-20 +1d6 cold damage, +1 *Small frost dagger*); SA turn undead; SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +3; Divine Metamagic (Quicken Spell), Extra Turning, Quicken Spell.

Divine Metamagic (Quicken Spell): as a free action, you can spend 5 turning attempts to spontaneously quicken a spell without increasing the spell slot.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (6/6/5/4/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*create water*, *cure minor wounds*, *resistance* (4); 1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds* (2), *protection from good**, *shield of faith* (2); 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *detect thoughts**, *eagle's splendor*, *remove paralysis*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good**, *prayer*; 4th—*divine power*, *unholy blight**.

**Domain spell. Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Knowledge (cast divination spells at +1 caster level, all Knowledge skills are class skills).

Possessions: *frost +1 dagger*, full plate, heavy steel shield, key to room, keys to shrine.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *shield of faith* (+3 deflection bonus to AC), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round), *divine power* (+6 Strength, +7 temp hp, +7 base attack: +5 to attack, second attack, +3 to damage and grapple).

Preparation: *bless*, *bull's strength* on Fighter, *magic circle against good* on Fighter, *shield of faith* on Rogue, *shield of faith* on Cleric, *eagle's splendor* on Cleric, *bull's strength* on Wizard, *protection from good* on Wizard, *resistance* on Rogue, *resistance* on Cleric, *resistance* on Fighter, *resistance* on Wizard.

Tactics: (1st round) *unholy blight* (*quickened*) and *prayer*, (2nd round) *divine power* (*quickened*) and melee or first seven preparation spells, then melee.

➤ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr7; CR 7; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 7d10+28; hp 74; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +7; Grp +5; Atk +12 melee (1d6+5/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +9 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+5/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or whirlwind attack +12 melee (1d6+5/x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +6 ranged (1d6 / 19-20, small light crossbow); SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Jump +0, Listen +4, Spot +4, Tumble +2; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (battle axe), Weapon Specialization (battle axe), Whirlwind Attack.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: +1 *battle axe*, bolts [10], light crossbow, masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage, grapple and jump), *magic circle against good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters in 10 ft. radius), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Tactics: use Combat Expertise to boost AC for 5 points (attack drops the same amount), use Dodge against melee fighters; always try to flank opponents with the Rogue (+2 to attack).

➤ **Rogue:** male gnome Rog7; CR 7; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 7d6+21; hp 51; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +5; Grp +2; Atk +10 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +9 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +10 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +9 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SA sneak attack +4d6; SQ evasion, gnome traits, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Disable Device +10, Escape Artist +13, Hide +17, Jump +2, Listen +13, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +11, Search +11, Spot +11, Tumble +15; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion

spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: bolts [10], light crossbow, masterwork buckler, masterwork small rapier, masterwork studded leather, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *cat's grace* (+4 Dexterity: +2 to AC, attack, initiative, reflex saves and escape artist, hide, move silently, open lock, tumble), *shield of faith* (+3 deflection bonus to AC), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Tactics: if prepared, hide and attack spellcasters from behind; always try to flank opponents (+2 to attack, sneak attack), use Combat Expertise to boost AC for 5 points (attack drops the same amount).

➤ **Wizard:** male gnome Transmuter 7; CR 7; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 7d4+21; hp 43 (+1d10+7 temp. hp); Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp -2; Atk +3 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ familiar, gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +3, Spellcraft +15, Spot +1, Tumble +7; Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Transmutation).

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (5/6/5/4/2; base DC = 13 + spell level, DC 14 + spell level for illusion and transmutation spells): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*; 1st—~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile* (3), *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, ~~*false life*~~, *fox's cunning*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *web*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *slow*; 4th—*greater invisibility*, *polymorph*.

Possessions: bolts [20], dagger, small light crossbow, spellbook, key to room, key to lab.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *protection from good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage, grapple and jump), *shield* (+4

shield bonus to AC, blocks magic missiles), *fox's cunning* (+4 Intelligence: +2 DC for spells), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round), *greater invisibility*.

Preparation: *cat's grace* on Rogue, *shield* on Wizard, *fox's cunning* on Wizard, *polymorph* on Wizard (into Annis Hag), *message*, *greater invisibility* on Wizard.

Tactics: (1st round) *haste*, (2nd round) *slow*, (3rd round) *displacement* on Fighter, Rogue or Cleric, melee combat as Annis Hag or *ray of enfeeblement* on melee fighter, *Melf's acid arrow* on spellcaster, then preparation spells or *magic missiles*.

Encounter 7: Now What's This?

☛ **Gray Slaad, Advanced (+4 HD):** CR 12; Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 14d8+70; hp 135; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +11; Grp +15; Atk +20 melee (2d4+5, claw); Full Atk +20 melee (2d4+5, 2 claws) and +16 melee (2d8+3, bite); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities, *summon slaad*; SQ Change shape, damage reduction 10/lawful, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, immunity to sonic, resistance to acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, and fire 5; AL CN; SV Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +22, Concentration +19, Hide +20, Jump +17, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +15, Move Silently +20, Search +15, Spellcraft +17, Spot +19; Survival +5 (+7 following tracks); Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claw).

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*chaos hammer* (DC 16), *deeper darkness*, *detect magic*, *identify*, *invisibility*, *lightning bolt* (DC 15), *magic circle against law*, *see invisibility*, *shatter* (DC 14); 3/day—*animate objects*, *dispel law* (DC 17), *fly*; 1/day—*power word stun*. Caster level 10th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Change Shape (Su): A gray slaad can assume any humanoid form as a standard action. In humanoid form, a gray slaad cannot use its natural weapons (although a slaad can equip itself with weapons and armor appropriate to its appearance). A gray slaad remains in one form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, but the slaad reverts to its natural form when killed. A *true seeing* spell reveals its natural form.

Summon Slaad (Sp): Twice per day a gray slaad can attempt to summon 1-2 red slaadi or 1 blue slaad with a 60% chance of success, or 1 green slaad with a 40% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 5th-level spell.

APPENDIX 4: APL 12

Encounter 5: What *Is* He Doing?

➤ **Diambeth:** Pentadron Bard 11: Medium construct (extraplanar); CR 15; HD 5d8+20 + 11d6+ hp 92; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +17/+12 melee (1d4+4, slam); Full Atk: +17/+12 melee (1d4+2, 5 slams); SA Breath weapon, spells; SQ All-around vision, bardic knowledge (+12), bardic music (*countersong*, *fascinate*, *inspire competence*, *inspire courage* +2, *inspire greatness*, *suggestion*) damage reduction 10/chaotic, modron traits, outsider traits, resistances, spells, superior multi-weapon fighting; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +14, Will +14; Str 18, Dex 16, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Concentration +9, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +11, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (planes) +7, Listen +10, Perform (harp) +17, Scry +3, Search +10, Sense Motive +16, Spot +13; Alertness, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Track.

Breath Weapon (Ex): 30 feet, cone of gas, Fortitude save (DC 14) or paralysed 2d4 rounds, usable 1/hr, up to 5/day.

All-Around Vision (Ex): With an eye set into each of its five appendages, a pentadron can see in all directions at once. Because of this, it gains a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and cannot be flanked.

Levitation (Ex): The pentadron can aim its breath weapon downward to levitate up to 20 feet per round, up or down, as a move-equivalent action. It can maintain this levitation for up to 1 hour. Each use of its breath weapon in this way counts against its breath weapon limit for the day.

Modron Traits: Immune to mind-influencing effects; not subject to subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain; not subject to critical hits.

Construct Traits: Low-light vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; cannot be raised or resurrected; cannot heal damage on their own, but can be repaired by magic or using the Craft Construct feat; immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless); 20 bonus hit points due to being of Medium size.

Resistances (Ex): Acid, cold, and fire resistance 10. *Spells known* (3/4/4/4/1; DC 13 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights*, *daze*, *flare*, *message*, *read magic*, *resistance*, 1st—*cause fear*, *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *silent image*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness*, *enthrall*, *scare*, *sound burst*; 3rd—*fear*, *glibness*, *shadow cache*, *slow*; 4th—*dominate person*, *modify memory*, *shout*.

Equipment: harp of charming.

Encounter 6: They Have *What* Here?

➤ **Cleric:** female gnome Clr9 (Vecna); CR 9; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 9d8+27; hp 75; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +6; Grp +3; Atk +9 melee (1d3+2 / 19-20 +1d6 cold damage, +1 *Small frost dagger*); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d3+2 / 19-20 +1d6 cold damage, +1 *Small frost dagger*); SA turn undead; SQ gnome traits, spell immunity (*fireball*, *magic missile*, *scorching ray*); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Spellcraft +7, Spot +3; Divine Metamagic (Quicken Spell), Extra Turning (x2), Quicken Spell.

Divine Metamagic (Quicken Spell): as a free action you can spend 5 turning attempts to spontaneously quicken a spell without increasing the spell slot.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/2; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*create water*, *cure minor wounds*, *resistance* (4); 1st—*bleed*, *cure light wounds* (2), *protection from good**, *shield of faith* (2); 2nd—*bear's endurance* (2), *bull's strength*, *detect thoughts**, *eagle's splendor*, *remove paralysis*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good**, *magic vestment*, *prayer*; 4th—*divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *spell immunity**, *unholy blight**, 5th—*righteous might*, *true seeing**.

**Domain spell. Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level); Knowledge (cast divination spells at +1 caster level, all Knowledge skills are class skills).

Possessions: +1 *frost dagger*, full plate, heavy steel shield, key to room, keys to shrine.

Improvement: *bleed* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *shield of faith* (+3 deflection bonus to AC), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round), *divine power* (+6 Strength, +9 temp. hp, +9 base attack), *righteous might* (increase size, +4 Strength, +2 Constitution, +2 natural armor, DR 3/good).

Righteous might and divine power: Medium humanoid (gnome); HD 9d8+36+9; hp 93; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 25 (touch 14, flat-footed 25); Base Atk +7; Grp +15; Atk +16 melee (1d4+7 / 19-20 +1d6 cold damage, +1 *Small frost dagger*); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d4+7 /

19-20 +1d6 cold damage, +1 *Small frost dagger*); SA turn undead; SQ DR 3/good, gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 26, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Preparation: *bless*, *bull's strength* on Fighter, *magic circle against good* on Fighter, *shield of faith* on Rogue, *shield of faith* on Cleric, *bear's endurance* on Fighter, *eagle's splendor* on Cleric, *bear's endurance* on Wizard, *protection from good* on Wizard, *true seeing* on Cleric, *resistance* on Rogue, *resistance* on Cleric, *resistance* on Fighter, *resistance* on Wizard.

Tactics: (1st round) *unholy blight (quicken)* and *prayer*, (2nd round) *righteous might (quicken)* and melee, (3rd round) *divine power (quicken)* and melee or additional preparation spells than melee.

➤ **Fighter:** female gnome Ftr9; CR 9; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 9d10+36; hp 94; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +8 masterwork full plate, +2 masterwork heavy steel shield); Base Atk +9; Grp +8; Atk +16 melee (1d6+6 /19-20x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +11 ranged (1d6 / 19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6+6/19-20x3, *Small +1 battle axe*) or whirlwind attack +16 melee (1d6+6/19-20 x3, +1 *Small battle axe*) or +11 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Jump +2, Listen +4, Spot +5, Tumble +3; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (battle axe), Improved Critical (battle axe), Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (battle axe), Weapon Specialization (battle axe), Whirlwind Attack.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: +1 *battle axe*, bolts [10], light crossbow, masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage, grapple and jump), *magic circle against good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters in 10 ft. radius), *bear's endurance* (+4 Constitution: +18 hp, +2 Fort saves), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Tactics: use Combat Expertise to boost AC for 5 points (attack drops the same amount), use Dodge against melee fighters, probably fight defensively (+3 to AC, -4 to attack); always try to flank opponents with the Rogue (+2 to attack).

➤ **Rogue: male gnome Rog9;** CR 9; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 9d6+27; hp 65; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +3; Atk +12 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork Small rapier) or +11 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork small rapier) or +11 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SA sneak attack +5d6; SQ evasion, gnome traits, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Disable Device +12, Escape Artist +14, Hide +18, Jump +0, Listen +15, Move Silently +14, Open Lock +14, Search +13, Spot +13, Tumble +16; Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Possessions: bolts [10], *elven chain mail*, light crossbow, masterwork buckler, masterwork small rapier, key to room.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *cat's grace* (+4 Dexterity: +0 to AC, attack, initiative, reflex saves and escape artist, hide, move silently, open lock, tumble), *shield of faith* (+3 deflection bonus to AC), *resistance* (+1 resistance bonus on saves), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round).

Tactics: if prepared, hide and attack spellcasters from behind; always try to flank opponents (+2 to attack, sneak attack), use Combat Expertise to boost AC for 5 points (attack drops the same amount), Feint in combat as move action to catch opponent flat-footed.

➤ **Wizard: male gnome Transmuter 9;** CR 9; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 9d4+27; hp 55 (+1d10+9 temp. hp); Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +4; Grp -1; Atk +4 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +7 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d3-1/19-20, Small dagger) or +7 ranged (1d6/19-20, Small light crossbow); SQ familiar, gnome traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +3, Spellcraft +17, Spot +2, Tumble +8; Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (Transmutation), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Transmutation).

Gnome Traits (Ex): Low-light vision, Weapon Familiarity (gnome hooked hammer), +2 racial bonus

on saving throws against illusions, Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for the saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes, +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids, +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures of the giant type, Spell-Like Abilities.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/5/4/2; base DC = 14 + spell level, DC 15 + spell level for illusion spells, DC 16 + spell level for transmutation spells): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*; 1st—*mage armor*, *magic missile* (3), *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cat's grace* (2), ~~*false life*~~, *fox's cunning*, *web*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *fly*, *haste*, *slow*; 4th—*dimension door*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *greater invisibility*, *polymorph*; 5th—*baleful polymorph* (2).

Possessions: bolts [20], dagger, small light crossbow, spellbook, key to room, key to lab.

Improvement: *bless* (+1 morale bonus on attack and saves against fear), *protection from good* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against good foes, counter mind control, hedge out summoned monsters), *bull's strength* (+4 Strength: +2 to attack, damage, grapple and jump), *bear's endurance* (+4 Constitution: +18 hp, +2 Fort saves), *Cat's Grace* (+4 Dexterity: +2 to AC, initiative and reflex saves), *shield* (+4 shield bonus to AC, blocks magic missiles), *fox's cunning* (+4 Intelligence: +2 DC for spells), *prayer* (+1 luck bonus on attack, damage, saves and skill checks), *haste* (+1 AC, attack, reflex saves, +20 ft. movement, 1 additional attack per round), *greater invisibility*.

Preparation: *cat's grace* on Rogue, *shield* on Wizard, *fox's cunning* on Wizard, *cat's grace* on Wizard, *bull's strength* on Wizard, *lesser globe of invulnerability* on Wizard, *fly* on Wizard, *polymorph* on Wizard (into Annis Hag), *message*, *greater invisibility* on Wizard, *displacement* on Fighter, Rogue or Cleric.

Tactics: (1st round) *haste*, (2nd and 3rd round) *baleful polymorph* on wizards and rogues, (4th round) *slow*, melee combat as Annis Hag or *ray of enfeeblement* on melee fighter, then preparation spells or *magic missiles*. *Dimension door* as escape spell.

Encounter 7: Now What's This?

☛ **Death Slaad, Advanced (+2 HD):** CR 14; Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 17d8+85; hp 162; Init +10; Spd 30 ft.; AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +15; Grp +20; Atk +22 melee (3d6+5 plus stun, claw); Full Atk +22 melee (3d6+5 plus stun, 2 claws) and +20 melee (2d10+2, bite); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Stun, spell-like abilities, *summon slaad*; SQ Change shape, damage reduction 10/lawful, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, immunity to sonic, resistance to acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, and fire 5, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +16, Will +14; Str 21, Dex 23, Con 21, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Climb +25, Concentration +17, Escape Artist +26, Hide +26, Intimidation +24, Jump

+25, Knowledge (history, religion) +24, Listen +24, Move Silently +26, Search +22, Spot +22; Survival +12 (+14 when tracking), Use Rope +8 (+8 with bindings); Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Stun (Ex): Three times per day, a death slaad can attempt to stun its opponent on an attack with one of its natural weapons. If the opponent fails a DC 21 Fortitude save, it is stunned for 1 round in addition to taking normal damage from the attack. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*animate objects*, *chaos hammer* (DC 18), *deeper darkness*, *detect magic*, *dispel law* (DC 19), *fear* (DC 18), *finger of death* (DC 21), *fireball* (DC 17), *fly*, *identify*, *invisibility*, *magic circle against law*, *see invisibility*, *shatter* (DC 16); 3/day—*circle of death* (DC 20), *cloak of chaos* (DC 22), *word of chaos* (DC 21); 1/day—*implosion* (DC 21), *power word blind*. Caster level 15th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Change Shape (Su): A death slaad can assume any humanoid form as a standard action. In humanoid form, a death slaad cannot use its natural weapons (although a slaad can equip itself with weapons and armor appropriate to its appearance). A death slaad remains in one form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, but the slaad reverts to its natural form when killed. A *true seeing* spell reveals its natural form.

Summon Slaad (Sp): Twice per day a death slaad can attempt to summon 1-2 red or blue slaadi with a 60% chance of success, or 1-2 green slaadi with a 40% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 6th-level spell.

APPENDIX 5: FACT SHEET: NONSBURGH

👑**Nonsburgh (Small town):** Conventional; AL (L)N; 800 gp limit; Assets 52,800 gp; Population 1,324 (384 in the Lower Quarter, 940 in the Upper Quarter); Mixed (62% humans, gnomes 30%, halflings 5%, dwarves 3%).

Authority Figures: Juliette Tilk, mayor, LN human female Nob 6 (for the Upper Quarter); Murgal Gemsourc, head priest of Garl Glittergold, LG gnome male Cle 8 (for the Lower Quarter).

Important Characters: Mungus Gearhead, male gnome, Wiz 8 (artificer, Lower Quarter); Arlan Qennt, head priest of Ulaa, male human, Cle 7 (Upper Quarter); Ostraka Goldborer, priest of Flandal Steelskin, female gnome, Cle 4 (Lower Quarter); Querca Oaktree, cleric of Yondalla, female halfling, Cle 5 (Lower Quarter); Orina Zento, representative of the miners, female human, Exp 8 (miner, Upper Quarter); Wellagon Chierns, male half-elf Wiz 4 (trader in magic items, Upper Quarter).

Nonsburgh was founded by the gnomes of the Blemu Hills at a time when the gnomes were expanding in the area, probably during or soon after the days of the infamous Gnomelord of the Blemu Hills (the one who was seduced by the Hand and Eye of Vecna; see WGA 4, *Vecna Lives!*, p. 22) – hence the name: Nonsburgh is an obscured form of the original name of "Nonizburrow." For a while, Nonizburrow was a important centre of gnomish artificers, and many an interesting artefact was created here in these days. Later, as the importance of the gnomes in the Blemu Hills declined after the Gnomelord's defeat, humans moved into the town, slowly making it their own and, in doing so, changing the name by sheer ignorance and mispronunciation of the original name (manuscripts from these tumultuous years show no less than seven different spellings of the name during the course of no more than 19 years, most prominent of which being the malignant form, "Nonceburgh" that was used with a certain malicious glee by some of the humans).

Due to its shared history, Nonsburgh has a highly unique appearance: The town is basically constructed out of two layers, separated by a steep cliff. The "lower" part contains the earlier gnomish warrens plus a few of the earliest human houses, while most of the human population dwells on the "higher" level of the town, some 120 feet above the original gnomish settlement.

To unite the two parts of Nonsburgh, the gnomes living here when the influx of humans increased built an ingenious crane-like contraption of enormous complexity that allows goods to be raised and lowered between the two levels of the town. Of course, over the times several sets of stairs have been carved into the rocks by humans not really trusting this gnomish invention, but the device still works (it is, after all, diligently maintained by the gnomes, with Mungus Gearhand being its chief maintenance gnome) and still

plays a somewhat important part in the inner workings of Nonsburgh.

However, next to anything that is important in Nonsburgh nowadays resides in what is called the "Upper Quarter," including mayor Juliette Tilk and most of the high-profile establishments. Since this is where the humans and the money are, Diambeth has also made it way there by means of its innate *levitation* ability, thus ignoring the ingenious gnomish device altogether.

About three-quarters of Nonsburgh's gnomish population, as well as all of the halflings living here, dwell in the Lower Quarter. The Lower Quarter has its own authority figure, the aging Garl Glittergold priest Murgal Gemsourc. While he often confers with mayor Juliette Tilk about matters concerning the entire town, he is fairly free to administer the Lower Quarter as he sees fit. The church of Garl Glittergold consists of him and three more priests of lower levels. Nonsburgh's halflings look to Querca Oaktree, the resident Yondalla priestess, as their spiritual and worldly leader; Querca resides with one under-priest (her husband, in fact) in a small halfling-hole (including a fenced-in garden, complete with oak sapling).

Most of the Lower Quarter consists of gnomish burrows and halfling holes, with a few more modern halfling houses in between. There are also some humans and dwarves down here, but their numbers are negligible. There are two above-ground inns, the *Sparkling Gem* and the *Jewel of the Lower Quarter*. The *Sparkling Gem* only caters to gnome- and halfling-sized guests, while the *Jewel* also has a few rooms for medium-sized guests. Prices are standard.

The Upper Quarter of Nonsburgh is of more recent construction than the ancient gnomish warrens of the Lower Quarter, and is also much more spacious. Those few gnomes who still live here (mostly because they are directly involved in mining or trading) live in stout houses built similar to dwarvish stone houses.

The layout of the Upper Quarter is not less haphazard as that of the warrens of the Lower Quarter: buildings were erected as they were needed, and although the plateau on which the Upper Quarter sits is quite spacious and has room for extension into the hinterlands of the Blemu Hills, the first few generations centred their buildings around the then-new gnomish elevator, leading to a massing of buildings round the cliff side. There are no less than four inns clustered around what is called the "Arrival Ledge," all of them vying for those few customers that the town gets beyond traders and miners (who usually are regulars with one particular inn). Prices in these four inns (*The Floating Rock*, *The Cage on a Chain*, *The Traveler's Delight*, and *Pot Kiln*) are usually at three-quarters of the base list prices in the *Player's*

Handbook. Of these inns, *The Floating Rock* and *The Cage on a Chain* are heavily frequented by miners, lending these inns a certain rough atmosphere.

Only two inns have so far sprung up around the "Rear End" of the Upper Quarter. Both of these (*The Martingale* and the *Oast House*) are fairly new, spacious, and more expensive (base list prices times 1.5). These inns rely basically on trade from the newly-established route to and from Knurl, but are currently not yet working at profit and need to be subsidized by the town council. Both inns are on the outskirts of town, to the right and left of the path leading here from Knurl.

A bit apart from the Arrival Ledge is the temple of Ulaa, a low stone structure with several levels of basement dug deep into the mountain. Head priest Arlan Quennt oversees the workings of his four sub-priests and acolytes here. A small shrine to Flandal Steelskin, staffed by only two priests led by Ostraka Goldborer, stands close to the Ledge, sandwiched between *The Floating Rock* and *The Cage on a Chain*.

Roughly in the "middle" of the (more or less) rectangular array of the Upper Quarter, the founders of the town have left a large open space intended for public meetings. His place is called "Speakers Ring." Here, the miners may gather when there are things of general importance to discuss. "Speakers Ring" is lined by most of the shops and stalls found in the town, where next to anything in normal gear can be bought. Exceptions are draft and riding animals, which are in very short supply in Nonsburgh, and magical items which are restricted to those things PCs may generally buy during any adventure (i.e., additional items they might be able to obtain from ARs with the Frequency of "Any" or "Core" are not available here). That there are any items for sale at all is due to Wellagon Chierns, a rather portly half-elf (mother wood-elf, father cleric of Boccob; he's counted as human in the racial listing) who has inherited his mother's talent for magic and his father's love for magic items. Being a magic-user himself, he has need for such items, and being the only half-elf in town, he is often a bit lonely and would dearly like to strangers, especially if these are also able to wield magic. He does not have much to offer in return, but may turn out as a valuable source of information.

It is ancient custom in Nonsburgh that the current mayor resides in specially-arranged quarters in the upper floor of the somewhat over-named council hall, which is also on one side of the Speakers Ring. Current mayor Juliette Tilk is no exception here. Meetings of the town council take place on the ground floor of the building, which is little more than one large room for such meetings. The council meets basically once per fortnight, unless emergency situations demand additional meetings.

The town council is headed by the mayor, who has the power to resolve ties. The other members are: Murgal Gemsourer to represent the gnomes, Arlan Quennt to represent the human religions, and Orina

Zento to represent the miners. Querca Oaktree is an advisory member of the council, i.e., she has the right to speak, but not to vote. Other advisory members may be invited on a temporary basis.

The position of miners' representative is elected for one year, taking into account the dangerous business of mining in the Blemu Hills and the quick turnover in workers. Traditionally, the fact that three-quarters of the miners nowadays are humans ensures that a human wins that position, reducing the gnomish influence on the town council to that of the Garl Glittergold priest.

APPENDIX 6: NEW RULES ITEMS

Manual of the Planes

Shadow Cache

Illusion (Shadow)

Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Area: 1 ft.-diameter circle

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

You can temporarily stash small items on the Plane of Shadow or permanently dispose of them there. This spell opens a small portal to the Plane of Shadow that is invisible on the Material Plane and a small dish on the Plane of Shadow.

You can reach into the Plane of Shadow through the portal created by *shadow cache*, but only small nonliving objects may pass entirely through the hole.

You can recover objects placed in the portal throughout the duration of the spell, or by casting another *shadow cache* later. The shadow cache remains stationary at the point where you create it. Items placed in the shadow cache can possibly be picked up by natives of the Plane of Shadow, and in any event are slowly moved by the morphic trait of the plane. There is a 10% chance per day that objects laced on the Plane of Shadow with *shadow cache* are gone (either moved or taken). After ten days, the items are definitely gone.

The spell cannot be cast on the Plane of Shadow itself, but only on planes coexistent with the Plane of Shadow.

Complete Divine

Divine Metamagic [Divine]

You can channel energy into some of your divine spells to make them more powerful.

Prerequisite: Ability to turn undead or rebuke undead.

Benefit: When you take this feat, choose a metamagic feat. This feat only applies only to that metamagic feat. As a free action, you can take the energy from turning and rebuking undead and use it to apply a metamagic feat to spells you know. You must spend one turn or rebuke attempt, plus an additional attempt for each level increase in the metamagic feat you're using. For example, Jozan the cleric could sacrifice three turn attempts to empower a holy smite he's casting. Because you're using positive or negative

energy to augment your spells, the spell slot for the spell doesn't change.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take this feat multiple times. Each time you take this feat choose a different metamagic feat to which to apply it.

APPENDIX 7: ON MODRONS

The following information is taken from the *Manual of the Planes* web supplement "The Modrons" by Mark Jindra. Most of it is not really needed in the course of the adventure, but it explains a lot about where Diambeth comes from.

The Realm of the Modrons

The city of Regulus occupies sixty-four of the coglike wheels of Mechanus, called sectors. Each group of four sectors is called a region, and each group of four regions is called a quarter. Modrons of increasingly greater authority oversee each of these units, and over it all reigns Primus, the One and the prime, supreme ruler of all modrons. The Tower of Primus stands at the hub of the central cog.

Modron Castes

In all, there are more than 360 million modrons, divided into fifteen ranks, or castes. Castes are hardly unique, but the modron approach to them is. Each caste has not only its own functions, but its own body shape as well. Thus, a modron's physical appearance is a direct indicator of its rank.

The castes are further categorized into base modrons and hierarch modrons. Base modrons perform mundane tasks; hierarch modrons plan and organize, oversee others, and manage entire areas. At the top of the list, of course, is Primus.

No individuality, in either form or thought, exists within a caste. Each modron calls itself "we" and can interchange posts and positions with others of the same caste. Thus, a traveller has no way of knowing whether the pentadrone encountered today is the same one who held that post yesterday. This would be only a minor inconvenience were it not for the rigid and complex bureaucracy of Regulus, which requires visitors to appear and reappear before clerks, courts, and boards before even the smallest of requests can be granted.

This rigid caste system also defines the modrons' ability to interact with other members of their own race. Each modron is aware of and recognizes other modrons of the same or lower caste, as well as those of the next-higher caste (their supervisors). Modrons more than one rank higher simply appear as incomprehensible creatures. Of course, a pentadrone might be assigned to guard a hexton, but it understands only that it is to guard a creature matching the description of the hexton; it has no conception of that hierarch's place in the overall social structure. Likewise, a duodrone assigned to maintain the residence of a secundus does not understand who built that structure, or why.

The Modron Life Cycle

Some speculate that the modrons descended from some type of intelligent insect, and that this heritage has given them an incredible hive mind. There is, of course, no proof of this theory, nor is there really any way to check. Whatever their ancestors may have been, it's clear that the modrons function in a communal manner, right down to life and death.

Long ago, the modrons somehow learned to place energy into a central pool in Regulus and draw it back out again to power their own forms. When a modron dies, its life force is absorbed back into that pool, and a modron from the next lower rank is immediately promoted to replace it. This in turn creates a gap in the caste below, which is filled by promotion from the one below that. This process continues right down to the monodrone level. Monodrones, having no castes below them, reproduce by fission to replace lost members. The new monodrone formed when an existing one divides draws its life essence out of the pool. (In light of this life cycle, the claim that all modrons are one might be truer than it first seems.)

Individual promotions occur seemingly by accident. Since modrons have no individuality, there's no point in trying to promote the "best and the brightest" – all modrons of a given rank are equal. Thus, the nearest one of an appropriate rank is promoted when a vacancy occurs.

This process of promotion is traumatic – not only does the chosen modron undergo a wrenching change of shape to the new rank's form, but it suddenly gains knowledge previously veiled to it – the existence of another superior rank. Imagine the shock of a duodrone, which previously knew only of monodrones, duodrones, and tridrones, when it undergoes a promotion to tridrone. Suddenly, it discovers that some of those inexplicable creatures around it are quadrones – members of its own race and its new superiors! Nevertheless, a newly promoted modron seems to adapt instantly to its new form. Indeed, it is the humanoid observer who is often most shaken by the experience.

Modron Society

Because of their method of reproduction, modrons have no families, tribes, or clans. They live in rigid numerical units called, for lack of a better word, battalions. This term makes modrons sound more warlike than they really are, although they do maintain standing armies that are not to be trifled with.

Modrons spend their lives performing the duties that Primus assigns, either directly or indirectly. Each modron accepts orders from members of the next-higher caste and can, in turn, give instructions to members of the next-lower caste. In this way, orders

filter down from Primus through all the modron ranks until they reach the caste capable of carrying them out.

Although some less-informed scholars state that no modron acts except by the orders of a superior, this is not perfectly accurate. In general, a modron can act and react on its own, provided that the situation at hand falls within the range of its purpose. Thus, monodrones are rightly seen as incapable of reacting because each can perform only a single task at any given time. Modrons of higher ranks have correspondingly greater ranges of function, so they can react to more and more complex situations. Even so, modrons are notorious for their predictable and rigid reactions to events.

The Modron Mentality

Modrons are the ultimate creatures of law. Their very bodies conform to the unflinching regularity of geometry, and the flawless logic of their alien minds can lead them to conclusions that others might not even consider. Modrons have pitted themselves against – and beaten – all challengers at games of logic, so their supremacy in this area is undisputed.

Modrons care only about order and law; they have no concept of good or evil. They can decide what is best and what is worst, but they cannot distinguish between right and wrong. This limited viewpoint makes dealing with these creatures a challenge. Attempts to explain good and evil to a modron can only result in it equating good with order and evil with chaos, for those are the best and worst possibilities it can imagine.

It should be no surprise that the goal of every modron is to organize Mechanus in the most orderly fashion possible. Given the opportunity, of course, modrons would spread their rigid pattern of organization over the entire multiverse. Fortunately for the rest of the planes, order is constantly challenged by chaos, even in the clockwork vastness of Mechanus. Since even the slightest imperfection is enough to disturb the ultimate harmony that modrons seek, the seldom find the time or resources to carry their crusade to other realms or planes.

Rogue Modrons

Of course, every rule has its exception, and rogue modrons are the exception to the rule of orderly modron society. Rogues are modrons who, for one reason or another, suddenly find that they cannot accept the orders of their superiors, or that they have lost the concept of the orderly modron society. Modrons who spend long periods alone, or have many superiors, or who advance in Hit Dice (thus becoming different than others of their rank) are the ones most likely to "go rogue." Naturally, the modrons have tried to cut down on the factors that lead to this outcome, but there's an indefinable factor in operation that they can't isolate or identify.

The most dangerous aspect of rogue modrons is the fact that they retain the power of command over

lesser modrons. Though most rogues simply go off alone to explore the individuality they've discovered, it's not unheard of for one to gather lesser modrons about it and establish its own power base. This makeshift army then goes forth to conquer, though for what purpose only the rogue itself could explain.

Because of the possibility that such a creature could subvert others and wreak havoc on the order of Regulus (and even Mechanus as a whole), rogues are considered menaces to modron society. The hierarchs pour almost every resource they have into hunting them down, bringing them to trial, and destroying them. This is a difficult process since it's often hard to tell when a modron goes rogue. A modron who told others of lower ranks to disobey their superiors would surely earn the designation of rogue, for this is tantamount to blasphemy in Regulus. But it is rare for even rogue modrons to do this because of their innate respect for order.

The Great March

Once every Grand Cycle (seventeen cycles, each of which is about seventeen years – the time it takes for the largest gear on Mechanus to turn once), a horde of modrons spills out of Mechanus and marches through the planes. Why? Nobody knows for sure, although it seems as if they're gathering information as they march.

The modrons cause all kinds of havoc in the planes through which they march. They don't stop for anyone or anything, trampling right through towns and over any inhabitants who are too slow to get out of the way. It is ironic that these lawful automatons can be the cause of so much chaos. When they reach the Lower Planes, the conflict begins in earnest, with the inhabitants attacking the invaders from Regulus every step of the way.

When the much-reduced force returns to Mechanus, the few remaining troops march straight to their superiors to report. What they say in this meeting is the subject of much speculation: Some claim that they report on the progress of the modron invasion; others insist that they merely describe the state of the planes. Granted, this seems a difficult way to gather knowledge, but perhaps the modron mind sees some particular logic about it. Whatever the case, the report is inexplicable to everyone except modrons.

Over the centuries, the inhabitants of the other planes have grown accustomed to the March. Previous Marches are well documented, and an adventurous few have roughed out some of the probably routes for upcoming ones.

Appendix 8: Maps

Regional Map





