

URDI-07

FOOLS' GOLD

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK®
Duchy of Urnst Regional Adventure
Version 1

By Jonathan Ingram

A mysterious treasure map promises the way to riches, if only you can survive the journey. An adventure for characters level 1-6.

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

PREPARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

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

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

DETERMINING AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs

participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

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

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 and 1/6	0	0	0	1
1/3 and 1/2	0	0	1	1
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

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

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

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

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

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

- 3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can “enlist an iconic.” The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Miale, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

If you are using a 591 CY adventure (campaign year 1) that uses the old Tiers, assume that the Tier multiplied by 2 is the APL suitable for that encounter.

IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Wild: You are living the wild as a nomad, or perhaps in a cave. You hunt and gather your own food, and your clothes consist of furs, leathers, or hand-woven garments. At times, food is scarce and you must go hungry.

You must pass a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 16) to survive with this lifestyle, if you fail you are destitute instead. You may take 10 on this check.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Rough: You live in the wilderness, either roaming a specific territory or living in a crude shack or tent. Your meals come from hunting and foraging, possibly supplemented by a few crops or herded animals. You barter for equipment and trade for coins when possible. You wear peasant clothing, leather, furs, or hand-woven garments.

You must pass a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 14) to survive with this lifestyle, if you fail you are **poor** instead. You may take 10 on this check.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring), nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle	Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Wild	14 sp	-2*
Poor	43 sp	-1
Rough	43 sp	-1*
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

* Reduced to -1 in rural interactions

** No penalty in rural interactions

The area that Fools' Gold takes place in is considered a rural settings, but Ducal guards, nobles and the like react as urban residents.

Bard PCs who choose the Common, High or Luxury lifestyle may roll a Perform check at DC 20 to reduce their lifestyle costs by 25%.

TIPS FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER

You may find it useful to read up on the following rules from the *Player's Handbook* before running this scenario:

- ❑ cover and missile fire (pp 132-133)
- ❑ illusions and disbelieving illusions (p 158)

- ❑ using the detect magic spell (p 193)

You'll also find it useful to refer to DM Aid Six: Scenario Flowchart before running this scenario for the first time. This flowchart attempts to show likely choices that the players will make as the scenario progresses.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Tales of increased attacks from Bright Desert dervishes spread throughout the Duchy of Urnst, drawing adventurers into the East March of the Abbor-Alz to counter the dervish attacks.

Lord Drenylyn Teranor, an evil wizard of some power and one of the driving forces behind House Teranor's activities, initially organized the dervish attacks. Lord Drenylyn made contact with the Bright Desert dervishes and swayed many of them (including some of the youths of one of the High Clans) to his cause by promising them riches and glory in battle.

Little is known about the dervishes of the Bright Desert, save that they of Flan stock like the other desert nomads of the Bright Desert. The dervishes that were allied with House Teranor are religious fanatics, dedicated to old rites and traditions of the ancient Flan. They do not welcome outsiders, and have a long-standing hatred of the Duchy of Urnst. They are no friends of Rary of the Bright Lands, but neither are they likely to aid any of Suel descent. The dervishes speak a dialect of Flan; their leaders know Common as well.

On the Duchy side, word spread throughout the land of increased hostility by the dervishes and reinforcements were sent to Castle Seh, the seat of the Warden of the East March of the Abbor-Alz. The Warden increased the frequency and strength of patrols from Castle Seh, but has been unable to completely stop the attacks by the dervishes.

Recent events in the Duchy of Urnst have only compounded the problem. The evil fostered by House Teranor still lingers. When the House Teranor fell, Lord Drenylyn was consumed by demonic power. He died instantly, but some of his dervish companions became infected with the taint of evil and were granted magical abilities.

These dervishes now consider themselves to be the heirs to Drenylyn's power. Some of the dervishes have journeyed back into the desert to recruit more followers; the remaining leaders have increased the frequency and ferocity of their attacks on the villages in and near the East March.

Margren Waithek, the Warden of the East March is at a loss for the resources to stop the attacks. Duke Karll can only send so many resources to what was once a mostly quiet region, and the Warden does not have sufficient forces of his own to end the raids. The great merchant houses are making considerable noise as well, since the raids are affecting trade, and many of the noble houses are heeding their complaints. Some in the Honorable Chamber mutter openly of replacing the

Warden of the East March, while others call for renewed war against the Bright Desert dervishes.

The increased dervish activity has attracted adventurers seeking wealth and glory, as well as those of more questionable motivation. Some seem more inclined to prey on the locals rather than aid them against the dervishes. One such band of thieves and cutthroats recently happened across the lair of the dervishes while following a stolen treasure map. Since then, the dervishes have relentlessly tracked these "adventurers" and slaughtered them one by one.

All that remains of this group is the rogue, Wull, fleeing for his life. Wull spied the PCs in a small village near She. Seeing a chance to rid himself of the evidence of the dervish lair, and hopefully escape with his skin intact, Wull plants his map on one of the PCs with the intent of reclaiming it later.

Unfortunately for Wull, the dervishes caught him shortly after he planted the map. Even as the PCs are discovering the treasure map, Wull confesses where he hid it. His painful death follows soon after.

ENCOUNTER 1: THIN AIR

A long hard day on the trail from Seh brings you to the small town of Scarsdale, where you take rooms for the night at the village inn. Despite the rumors of increased raids by Bright Desert dervishes in the Abbor-Alz Mountains, your journey through the region has been uneventful. In the evening, the villagers trade tales of orcs in the nearby mountains and missing cattle that could only have been stolen by ogres or giants. Despite the bold tales of adventure, the night passes uneventfully in the small tavern.

The next morning, you awake in the common room of the tavern to the pleasant aroma of frying bacon.

Read this next paragraph to one player only:

You quickly dress and head to the dining room to eat. As you take out coin for your meal, a folded piece of parchment falls to the floor.

Wull placed the map on the PC during the night. Wull spotted the PC the previous evening, and decide to rid himself of the map in case the dervishes caught up with him. The PC, Wull decided, would be easy enough to reclaim the map from later.

The map shows the area around Castle Seh in some detail, including several local villages and a spot marked "Gold" near Rorn's Crag. Rorn's Crag is a cliff with a rather memorable profile in the heart of the Eastern March of the Abbor-Alz. At one spot roughly on the way to the mine, someone has scrawl "dervishes" in crude Common. The area where the mine is marked on the map is about a half-day's travel from here, and the dervish camp is located about a half-day out of the way of the path to the mine.

If questioned, none of the patrons of the inn will know anything about the map. Many know of Rorn's

Crag and of rumors of gold in the Abbor-Alz, but none would risk their lives in orc-controlled territory. The PCs can inquire in the village for a guide, but no one is willing to take the risk for any amount of money. Rorn's Crag is filled with orcs and the way there is notoriously infested with bandits and dervishes.

At this point the PCs can decide to follow the map or ignore it. Should the PCs decide to follow the map to the mine immediately, go to Encounter Two.

If the PCs decide to remain in town (to purchase gear, perhaps), ignore the map, or destroy the map, go to Encounter Three.

Should the PCs decide to follow the map to the dervish camp, go to Encounter Eight.

If the PCs decide to leave town, go to Encounter Six (adjust the flavor text for whatever route they choose to take).

ENCOUNTER 2: FOOLS' GOLD

Paying no heed to the villagers who warn of the dangers of the Abbor-Alz, you pack your gear and head southwest following the map. The "road" rapidly degrades to more of a game trail, and the terrain becomes rockier as you ascend higher into the Abbor-Alz.

The long-abandoned mining camp lies in a shadowy canyon and hasn't been inhabitable for decades. A heavy rock fall covers the mine entrance, making it only barely visible. Evidence of orcs is everywhere, and you feel as if eyes are on you no matter which way you turn. A large pile of rubble lies just east of the mine entrance, and a line of smaller piles of rubble lies to the west of the mine.

Refer to DM Aid Two: Map of Encounter Two.

A group of orcs lives near here and has spotted the PCs entering the area. They quickly armed themselves and moved to ambush the PCs. The orcs arrive in the area two rounds after the PCs enter the mine area (beyond the ruined mine office). The orcs are familiar with this area and know that it is rarely exposed to bright sunlight.

The orcs have also set up a special little trick to shepherd trespassers into the area just before the entrance to the mine. Inside the mine, just barely visible at 30 feet from the mine entrance, a tattered sheet hangs. The sheet billows with the constant wind that blows through the cavern, giving the appearance of movement inside the cavern unless the observer succeeds at a DC 25 Spot check.

Entering the mine quickly reveals the ruse for what it is, but by then the orcs will have sprung their ambush.

Tactics: The orcs armed with crossbows take position atop the mound of rubble and fire at the PCs with their crossbows, while the leader and the rest of the orcs charge the PCs. The charging orcs will space themselves loosely, keeping five to ten feet between each orc.

The orcs on the pile of rubble have 50% cover from enemy missile attacks, but suffer no penalties of their

own. They aim at targets that are not engaged in melee, unless no other targets are available.

The orcs will not launch their attacks until the PCs are either spread out or attempt to leave. The orcs wait behind the ruined mine office until they either attack or are discovered. Make a secret Listen check at DC 20 for each character to see if they hear the orcs before the ambush is sprung.

When the orcs choose to attack, they automatically gain a partial action during the surprise round. Any characters that heard the orcs also may take partial actions. Orcs armed with crossbows use their action to run to the rubble mound and take their positions. The remaining orcs will perform a partial charge at the nearest opponents.

The PCs can eliminate the surprise round by discovering the orcs hiding behind the mine office. If the PCs have some kind of watch set, allow the characters on guard a Listen check at DC 15 and a Spot check at DC 15 to detect the orcs moving into position behind the mine office.

If the orc leader is killed, the remaining orcs will flee. The orcs will *not* flee if the leader is magically slept or held, only if he is slain.

APL 2 (EL 5)

➤ **Orcs (4):** CR ½; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); Atk +3 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar); see *Monster Manual* pages 146-147.

Possessions: Scale mail, large wooden shield, scimitar, gold nugget worth 2 gp.

➤ **Orcs (2):** CR ½; AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger) or +1 missile (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); see *Monster Manual* Pages 146-147.

Possessions: Scale mail, dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, gold nugget worth 2 gp.

➤ **Leader, male orc Bbn2:** CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 2d12+6; hp 24; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 14); Atk +6 melee (1d12+6/x3, greataxe); SQ: Light Sensitivity, Barbarian Rage 1/day, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Chr 6

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +3, Listen +6, Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +4; Alertness.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell;

Barbarian Rage (Ex): While raging, gains +4 to Strength and Constitution ability scores, a +2 Morale bonus to Will saves, and a -2 penalty to Armor Class. Rage duration is eight rounds; *Uncanny Dodge* – Retains Dex bonus to AC despite being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.

Possessions: Scale mail, greataxe, orcish dagger (“Elfskinner”), gold nuggets worth a total of 50 gp, iron holy symbol of Gruumsh One-Eye.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Orcs (4):** CR ½; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); Atk +3 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar); see *Monster Manual* pages 146-147.

Possessions: Scale mail, large wooden shield, scimitar, gold nugget worth 2 gp.

➤ **Orcs (2):** CR ½; AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger) or +1 missile (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); see *Monster Manual* pages 146-17.

Possessions: Scale mail, dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, gold nugget worth 2 gp.

➤ **Leader, male orc Bbn5:** CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 5d12+15; hp 53; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atk +9 melee (1d14+6/x3, greataxe); SQ: Light Sensitivity, Barbarian Rage 2/day, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Chr 6

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +6, Listen +9, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +7; Alertness, Iron Will.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Barbarian Rage (Ex): While raging, gains +4 to Strength and Constitution ability scores, a +2 Morale bonus to Will saves, and a -2 penalty to Armor Class. Rage duration is eight rounds;

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Retains Dex bonus to AC despite being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker, can no longer be flanked except by rogues of at least 9th level.

Possessions: Scale mail, greataxe, orcish dagger (“Elfskinner”), gold nuggets worth a total of 50 gp, iron holy symbol of Gruumsh One-Eye.

APL 6 (EL 9)

➤ **Orcs (4):** CR ½; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); Atk +3 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar); see *Monster Manual* pages 146-147.

Possessions: Scale mail, large wooden shield, scimitar, gold nugget worth 2 gp.

➤ **Orcs (2):** CR ½; AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger) or +1 missile (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); see *Monster Manual* Pages 146-17.

Possessions: Scale mail, dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, gold nugget worth 2 gp.

➤ **Sergeants, male orc Bbn3 (2):** CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 3d12+6; hp 25; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 14); Atk +7 melee (1d12+6/x3, greataxe); SQ: Light Sensitivity, Barbarian Rage 1/day, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Chr 6

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Listen +6, Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +4; Alertness, Iron Will.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Barbarian Rage (Ex): While raging, gains +4 to Strength and Constitution ability scores, a +2 Morale bonus to Will saves, and a -2 penalty to Armor Class. Rage duration is eight rounds;

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Retains Dex bonus to AC despite being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.

Possessions: Scale mail, greataxe, gold nuggets worth a total of 10 gp.

Leader, male orc Bbn8: CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 8d12+24; hp 81; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 14); Atk +13/+8 melee (1d12+7/x3, greataxe); SQ: Light Sensitivity, Barbarian Rage 3/day, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Chr 6

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +9, Listen +12, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +10; Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Orcs suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Barbarian Rage (Ex): While raging, gains +4 to Strength and Constitution ability scores, a +2 Morale bonus to Will saves, and a -2 penalty to Armor Class. Rage duration is eight rounds;

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Retains Dex bonus to AC despite being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker, can no longer be flanked except by rogues of at least 12th level.

Possessions: Scale mail, greataxe, orcish dagger, gold nuggets worth a total of 50 gp, iron holy symbol of Gruumsh One-Eye.

PCs who succeed at a Knowledge (Abbor-Alz) check (see DM Aid 1: Player Summary Sheet) at DC 15 may recognize the orcs as members of the Iron Claw tribe, one of the smaller tribes of orcs in the Abbor-Alz.

Once the PCs have defeated the orcs, they may wish to continue to the dervish camp. If so, proceed to Encounter 8.

If the PCs wish to turn around and go back to the village, proceed to Encounter Three and modify the text so that the body is discovered just as the heroes return.

If the PCs wish to head for Castle Seh, proceed to Encounter 6.

If the PCs decide to head deeper in the Abbor-Alz, make it clear that there are the tracks of hundreds of orcs ahead of them. If they don't get the hint, feel free to start ticking off days and charging extra time units (roughly one Time Unit per seven days). Players who run out of time units for the year can still finish the scenario. Players will eventually get the hint or get tired of poking around.

ENCOUNTER 3: MURDER IN A SMALL TOWN

As you go about your business, you hear an alarm bell ring in the village. A crowd begins to gather near the southern edge of the town. When you make your way to the area, you see the village sheriff and one of the stronger farmers dragging a body away for burial.

The body is all that remains of poor Wull, who no longer has any need of his map. Make a secret Intelligence check (DC 15) for each PC to see if they recall that the man being carried away was with them at the inn last night. Players who specifically state that they are seeing if they recognize the man receive a +2 circumstance bonus to their check.

Should any of the PCs wish to examine the body, a Heal check at DC 5 will show that the poor man was tortured before he was killed.

The villagers mumble in hushed whispers about attacks by dervishes. One scarred veteran of Duke Justinian's campaign against the dervishes points out that the dervishes he fought used to torture their prisoners in just that way.

Allow the PCs a Spot check at DC 15 to see a mounted dervish on the hill in the distance. If the PCs don't spot the dervish, one of the villagers will shout out an alarm of "Dervishes!" point, and run to bar himself in his home. When spotted, the dervish rides into the woods.

If the PCs decide to follow their map, proceed to Encounter 2.

If the PCs decide to remain in the village, proceed to Encounter 4.

If the PCs decide to pursue the dervishes who killed Wull, a ranger (or another PC with the Track feat) can make a Wilderness Lore check at DC 15 to find and follow the tracks left by the dervishes. Proceed to Encounter 6 and allow the PCs a reasonable chance to avoid the ambush or even to ambush their would-be ambushers...

ENCOUNTER 4: MESSENGERS

As you go about your business, the sheriff approaches you. "I'm worried about this murder and the sighting of that dervish. What with that poor fellow having been tortured before he was killed, I think the village may be in danger," he says. "Could you brave folk take a message to Castle Seh for me so that the March Warden can send a contingent of guards? I can't offer you any payment, but maybe the March Warden could use you to augment his patrols – I hear he needs more men these days. With dervishes about, the way is sure to be dangerous, so you'll need all your courage and wits about you to make it there."

Castle Seh is about two days travel from here (horses will not speed travel due to the winding and treacherous trails and poor roads in the area).

If the PCs refuse to carry the message, the sheriff will leave to deliver the message himself. If any PCs are members of any order of knighthood, the Bar Rampant, the Ducal Guard, the Ducal Navy, or any other knightly or noble organization sponsored by a noble house or the Duchy, void their membership in that organization for failure to fulfill their duty and award the PC the Mark of the Coward.

PC members of noble and merchant houses in the Duchy are also obligated to carry the message. PCs from these houses who refuse to carry the message receive the Mark of the Coward and can receive no benefits from their house affiliations while they carry this cert. [The Mark of the Coward is a special cert that can not be voided until the PC earns three awards for heroism and bravery in three different scenarios. Once a PC performs an act of cowardice, it takes a great deal of effort to overcome the reputation.]

PC Members of Houses Lorinar, Grek, or Kaste who refuse to carry the message will later be imprisoned. *At the end of the scenario*, collect the PCs character sheet, log sheets, and certs. Mail these pages, with a written statement of the PC's actions in the scenario, to the Duchy of Urnst Triad at the following address:

Doutriad@yahoo.com

PCs subject to this treatment will be summoned before the Lord of the appropriate house to answer for their cowardice. If no sufficient explanation is given, the PC is exiled from the Duchy of Urnst (i.e., the PC is permanently removed from play). These houses do not lightly accept cowardice within their ranks, as it dishonors the house as much as the PC.

When removing PCs from play in this way, make sure the player completes the log sheet entry for the PC for this scenario. It is possible that the noble house might give the PC a chance to redeem himself or herself instead of exiling the PC immediately; if this is the case, the PC's character sheet, certs, and log sheets will be mailed back to the player with a special cert.

If the PCs refuse to deliver the message, go to Encounter 5.

If the PCs agree to deliver the message, go to Encounter 6.

ENCOUNTER 5: ATTACK OF THE BRIGHT DESERT DERVISHES

The sheriff departs for Castle Seh to request a squad of guards for the village. The rest of the day passes uneventfully and you settle in for the night. Around midnight, you hear shouts from the edge of the village, and then suddenly a bloodcurdling scream pierces the air as a torch is hurled through the window of the common room. Outside you hear shouts and screams and the

sound of hoof beats; you can see flames rising from houses around the inn already.

Note: At this point refer to DM Aid Four: Map of Encounter 5. The statistics of the dervishes for this encounter appear in Encounter 6.

If dervishes ambush the PC carrying the map, this encounter can never take place since there is only one group of dervishes.

Someone in the common room douses the torch before a fire can spread, but the PCs have another problem. Dervishes are overrunning the village. Since the PCs won't come out of the village, the dervishes have come in after them. The tactics are simple: burn the adventurers out, killing everyone in the village if necessary.

Tactics: The dervish leader will stay back and use his *cause fear* power on the PC who appears to be the strongest threat. He will fire arrows from horseback at the PCs (targeting spellcasters first using readied actions to hopefully ruin spells), but will not dismount and will not get involved in a melee unless it's clear that his men will lose without his involvement.

If the PCs form up in a group to fight, the dervishes will stand off from a safe distance and use missile fire on the PCs (targeting arcane spellcasters first, then anyone who appears to be trying to heal someone else, and finally combatants).

If the PCs scatter to fight the dervishes, the dervishes will use their superior speed to surround and target a single PC. Their preference is to hit obvious spellcasters fast and hard, in hopes of demoralizing their enemy while depriving them of firepower.

If a dervish fells a PC and there are no other PCs who can be reached easily by the dervish (i.e., if the next nearest PC is at least ten feet away), the dervish will dismount (a free action) and use a coup de grace on the fallen PC. The intent of this attack is to kill the PCs and the dervishes kill without mercy.

If hard pressed and he can't get away, the dervish leader will take an innocent villager hostage (preferably a child) and demand that the PCs allow him to leave unharmed or he will kill the hostage.

If this situation develops, pay close attention to the PCs. Any PC who challenges or dares the dervish leader to "go ahead" has performed an evil act. Enter this on their log sheet. If they show another evil act on their log sheet in the past six real months of game play, their character to be removed from play at the conclusion of the scenario and all the player's certs confiscated for commission of an evil act. They may appeal this action to the triad, so do not void their certs or destroy their sheets. The only really viable courses of action here are to attack the leader, which isn't an evil act but isn't a good one, or to let him go.

At this point it is possible that one or two PCs have escaped his notice if they didn't actively participate in the fighting (for instance, a rogue who noticed the leader and was sneaking around behind him).

The dervish leader is true to his word. If he is allowed to go and isn't followed or tracked, he will release his hostage outside the village. If anyone gives him trouble, he will kill the hostage.

If the leader is attacked while holding the hostage and survives, he will kill the hostage as his first action and try to fight his way out. Even a *charm person* spell will not prevent him from attacking the hostage – a *charm person* spell does not immediately sway the target to the point of view of the caster or cause the target to "switch sides"; it just makes the target regard the caster as a friend. Even if the dervish captain is the spellcaster's friend, he still regards the rest of the PCs as his enemy. (It is possible that the leader's new "friend" might be able to talk him out of harming the hostage, perhaps by promising to let him go once the hostage is released unharmed.)

If the taking of a hostage to allow the leader to escape seems cruel and unfair to the PCs, keep in mind that the PCs could have avoided any harm coming to the villagers by taking the message to Castle Seh themselves. This is what they reap for the cowardice they sowed.

The dervish-trained warhorses will scatter and run as soon as their rider is killed. The PCs may *not* keep these horses. Even a ranger or druid will have a tough time approaching one of these horses for a brief moment before it shies and runs away.

Once the dervishes have been defeated, the PCs have several options.

If the PCs wish to follow their map to the dervish camp, proceed to Encounter 8.

If the PCs wish to follow their map to the mine, proceed to Encounter 2.

If they wish to go to Castle Seh for help, go to Encounter 7.

If they decide to remain in the village, the scenario is over. They're either dead or lazy or cowards. Award everyone the Mark of the Coward and be done with the "heroes".

ENCOUNTER 6: AMBUSH

The trail seems eerily quiet around you as you make your way east and north towards castle Seh. Light woods surround the wide trail, and occasional rock formations sprout from the ground like melons in a field. The sounds of birds are all around you.

At this point refer to DM Aid 6: Map of Encounter Six.

The dervishes are lying in wait for the party just outside the village on the trail. They don't know exactly which PC carries the map, but they do have a general description of the bearer (and the people accompanying him or her) from poor Wull.

Make a secret Spot or Listen check, whichever is higher, for each PC. If they succeed at a DC 30 check, they have some idea that something is amiss, but haven't actually noticed the dervishes. The dervishes are in

prepared ambush positions, and there are only two chances to detect the ambush before it is sprung.

First, make a secret check for any PC with Wilderness Lore or Knowledge (nature) at DC 20. Use only their best skill if they possess both. Characters who succeed notice that some of the birds are natural to the south side of the Abbor-Alz (the PCs are on the north side of the mountain range).

Second, if one of the PCs decides to cover the party's flank at a distance of 60 to 100 feet or more, her or she has a chance of spotting the hidden dervishes. The dervishes have had significant time to hide and are in prepared positions, giving them a +5 circumstance bonus to their Hide checks. They have taken 10 on their Hide checks, so the Spot check has a DC of 20 at Tier 1, 23 at Tier 2, and 26 at Tier 3. Modify the check by –6 for the distance (60 feet) involved.

If a PC does try to cover the party's flank, two dervishes attack the flanking character, two attack with missile fire, and the other two charge as outlined below.

Tactics: The objective of this attack is to kill the PCs. Dervishes will attack until party members are downed (rendered unconscious, not necessarily killed), and will begin using coup de grace attacks on wounded foes if clerical healing is used against them. They will not make coup de grace attacks if it exposes them to attacks of opportunity or if other targets are within a five-foot step, however.

From prepared positions that afford them 50% cover (but give their opponents no corresponding cover), two of the dervishes and their leader begin peppering obvious spellcasters with arrows. The leader uses readied actions to target the most dangerous looking spellcaster, firing if they cast a spell or use a magical device. He is not knowledgeable of magic, so it is possible to fool him into believing that a spell is being cast with an opposed Bluff check (against his Sense Motive skill of –1). A character with 5 or more ranks of Spellcraft gets a +2 circumstance modifier on their Bluff check, a character with no Spellcraft and no spellcasting ability (including low-level paladins and rangers) receives a –5 circumstance penalty, as does a character trying the same trick twice. If a character wishes to fake casting a spell, treat it as a move-equivalent action.

At APL 6, the dervish rangers use their *entangle* spells to box in the characters, channeling them so that they have only one or two routes of escape.

The remaining dervishes charge the PCs, using hit and run tactics to try and split up their opposition. Once the PCs are separated, they become easy prey.

If the PCs stay together as a group, they should have no problems with this encounter. If they split up or if someone goes out on his own chasing the dervishes, the dervishes won't hesitate to surround an individual and concentrate all their attacks on him/her.

The best course of action for the PCs here is to stick together and go through the ambush, forcing the dervishes to leave their prepared positions to engage the party *en masse*.

APL 2 (EL 6)

➤ **Bright desert dervishes, human Rgr1** (6): CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d10+1; hp 6 (each); Init +1; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. mounted); AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +2 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar), +1 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Favored enemy (humans) +1; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +5; Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: Scimitar, dagger, leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows.

➤ **Dervish leader, male human Ftr2:** CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 2d10+4; hp 19; Init +4; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. mounted); AC 16 (touch 14, flatfooted 12); Atk +4 melee (1d6+3/18-20, scimitar) or +7 ranged (1d8+2/x3, mighty [+2] composite longbow); SA *Cause fear* (1/day); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Chr 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Jump +7; Iron Will; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

Cause fear (Sp): (1/day), as the 1st level Sorcerer spell *cause fear*, save DC 11.

Equipment: Leather armor, scimitar, mighty composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), 20 arrows, dagger, 2 gp, 5 sp

APL 4 (EL 9)

➤ **Bright desert dervishes, human Rgr3** (6): CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d10+3; hp 19 (each); Init +1; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. mounted); AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar), +3 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Favored enemy (humans) +1; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Move Silently +7, Ride +7, Spot +7, Wilderness Lore +7; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Equipment: Scimitar, dagger, leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows.

➤ **Dervish leader, male human Ftr 6:** CR 6; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 49; Init +4; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. mounted); AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+3/crit 18-20, scimitar) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+4, mighty [+2] composite longbow); SA *Cause fear* (1/day); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Chr 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Jump +11; Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on

the Run, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Cause fear (Sp): (1/day), as the 1st level Sorcerer spell *cause fear*, save DC 11.

Possessions: Leather armor, scimitar, mighty composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), 20 arrows, dagger, 2 gp, 5 sp

APL 6 (EL 11)

➤ **Bright desert dervishes, human Rgr5** (6): CR 5; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 5d10+5; hp 32 (each); Init +1; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. mounted); AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar), +4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Favored enemy (humans) +2, Favored enemy (elves) +1, spells; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Move Silently +9, Ride +9, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st – entangle.

Possessions: Scimitar, dagger, leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows.

➤ **Dervish leader, male human Ftr9:** CR 6; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 9d10+18; hp 72; Init +5; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. mounted); AC 17 (touch 15, flat-footed 12); Atk +11/+5 melee (1d6+3/18-20, scimitar) or +13/+13/+8 ranged (1d8+4/19-20/x3, mighty [+2] composite longbow); SA *Cause fear* (1/day); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Chr 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Jump +14; Dodge, Improved Critical (composite longbow), Iron Will, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Cause fear (Sp): (1/day), as the 1st level Sorcerer spell *cause fear*, save DC 11.

Possessions: Leather armor, scimitar, mighty composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), quiver of 20 arrows, dagger, 2 gp, 5 sp

The dervish-trained warhorses will scatter and run as soon as their rider is killed. The PCs may *not* keep these horses. Even a ranger or druid will have a tough time approaching one of these horses for a brief moment before it shies and runs away.

Once the ambush is over, the PCs can continual towards Castle Seh. If they decide to do this, proceed to Encounter 7.

If the PCs decide to follow their map to the mine, proceed to Encounter 2.

If the PCs decide to follow their map to the dervish camp, proceed to Encounter 8.

ENCOUNTER 7: CASTLE SEH

The town of Seh appears in the distance and you breathe a sigh of relief. The gates of Castle Seh are open, but one look tells you that the fortress isn't easy pickings. Soldiers inside and outside the gate watch vigilantly, ready to order the fortress closed at a moment's notice; at least a dozen archers stand ready on the wall above the gate. Around the castle walls you can see the town and many farmsteads scattered about.

As you make your way through the town and approach the gate an armed man steps forward and orders you to halt and identify yourselves and your purpose. The man identifies himself as Sergeant Rollis of the East-March Guard.

If any PCs are members of the Ducal Guard, they may identify themselves to the sergeant and he will treat that PC with the respect that he would treat any other soldier with. Suel characters who identify themselves as members of noble houses will be treated with respect by the sergeant. Other PCs will be treated as commoners, even if clearly of Suel descent. (A PC with dark hair, dark skin, or dark eyes does not appear to be of Suel descent and will not be treated as such no matter what the character claims).

If the PCs are bearing a message from the sheriff of Scarsdale, Sergeant Rollis will escort them to the Castellán immediately.

If the PCs failed to carry the message and inquire about the sheriff, Sergeant Rollis knows the sheriff and can tell the PCs that the sheriff hasn't been in the castle for several weeks. Upon receiving the news that the sheriff was carrying a message to the March-Warden, the sergeant will escort the PCs immediately to the Castellán.

You are escorted into a large but simply decorated office. A middle-aged soldier, obviously a veteran of many campaigns judging by the scars he bears, sits behind a desk. When he sees the sergeant with you, he stops his work and beckons you forward. "Who are these people, Rollis?" he asks.

After the PCs have introduced themselves, the Castellán introduces himself as Moran Grek (of House Grek). Moran will pay most of his attention to Suel PCs, especially those who identified themselves as belonging to noble houses. At this point Moran has not aware of any acts of cowardice on the part of any of the PCs unless they carry a Mark of Cowardice (or a similar cert) from a different scenario.

At this point the PCs can relay their message to the Castellán if they're carrying one or can tell the Castellán that the Sheriff was supposed to arrive with a message the previous day. Either way, the Castellán immediately orders the sergeant to have a squad dispatched to Scarsdale immediately.

If the PCs tell the Castellán about the dervish attack on the road/village, he is extremely interested. He can tell the PCs several valuable pieces of information:

1. Their map does lead to a gold mine, but it was abandoned over a century ago to the orcs and other

humanoids in the area. The mine was never very productive, so it wasn't considered that much of a loss. (I.e., the map is worthless as far as gold is concerned).

2. The dervish activity has increased since House Teranor fell, although he doesn't know why.
3. He has heard rumors that Lord Drenylyn Teranor was in the area, but he has not seen him or heard any reports of anyone seeing him since House Teranor fell.
4. The area marked "dervisses" on the map is the area where the March-Warden suspects the dervishes have their base, but he hasn't had time to muster the forces or magical support for a successful attack.

The Castellán will offer the PCs the job of cleaning out the dervish camp. PCs who turn the job down are done with the scenario. If this is the case, the March-Warden himself will muster his forces when he returns from patrol. Armed with the knowledge of where the dervishes are camped, he will exterminate them without mercy.

The only reward the Castellán is authorized to offer is the ownership of all captured goods, livestock, and wealth taken from the dervishes. The Castellán will not negotiate on this point – the PCs either accept the mission or they don't.

If the PCs accept the mission, the Castellán suggests that the PCs rest in Seh for the night (or even two nights if they are in serious need of healing). He arranges lodging and meals for them in the barracks. They can purchase equipment that they need in Seh for the standard prices listed in the Players' Handbook.

The Castellán can also arrange for up to two cure light wounds spells (total) to be cast for the PCs. There will be no charge for the casting, but he makes the offer only if he deems it necessary and if the characters have not insulted or offended him in any way.

DM's Option for Tier One only: If the party is extremely weak (no fighter types *and* only three to four PCs), the Castellán will dispatch two guardsmen to accompany the PCs (assuming the PCs did not insult the Castellán in any way).

☠ **East-March Guardsman, human War1** (2): CR 1/2; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +1/+1 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Profession (Farmer) +5, Ride +4, Spot +5; Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Possessions: Chain shirt, longsword, shortbow, 20 arrows

The PCs may not claim the gear from the fallen guardsmen as treasure. The gear is either equipment issued to the guardsmen by the Ducal Guard or is their personal property, and is to be returned to their families.

PCs who steal from fallen guardsmen (picking up an item to use in an emergency is acceptable, keeping them after the mission is not) will be punished in accordance with the terms defined in the Treasure section of this scenario.

If a PC tries to steal from one of the guardsmen, dead or alive, and cannot or will not pay the, the character must spend 13 time units in prison as payment for his crime. Time units in excess of the 52 allotted for the current year will be applied to the next campaign year.

If the PCs accept the mission against the dervishes, proceed to Encounter 8.

ENCOUNTER 8: INTO THE VALLEY OF DEATH

The area marked on the map is a small canyon that is hidden from view until you're almost upon it. Below you in the canyon you can make out a rough campsite around a cave entrance.

At this point refer to DM Aid 8: Map of Encounter Eight.

The PCs first observe the dervishes on a ridge above their campsite. PCs who observe the campsite for more than 30 seconds are likely to be spotted by the dervishes on watch (+5 Circumstance bonus to the Spot check because the player's are basically silhouetted against the sky behind the ridgeline that they're observing the camp from. Make an opposed check against the observing character's Hide skill).

From the ridge, the PCs will likely move quietly into the canyon under the cover of the light woods in the area. Unless the PCs make an enormous racket (shouting, banging shields and weapons together, etc) or ride mounts, they can get to within 100 feet of the cave without being heard or seen.

The remaining 100 feet to the cave is clear ground that slopes slightly uphill towards the "camp". The camp itself is a large fire pit with some obvious sleeping areas around it; beyond the fire pit is a cave entrance. Occasional movement can be seen inside the cave.

Note that without the aid of invisibility or similar magic that can conceal a person, it is impossible to hide on the approach to the cave, there's simply no cover available.

Tactics: If the dervishes did not spot the PCs on the ridge, the dervish leader and several of his followers will be inside the cave going about routine business.

Two dervishes will be stationed outside the cave, watching the ridge and the approaches to the cave. If they spot the PCs on the ridge, one of the men will shout a warning to the cave and the two guards will act as if they have not seen the PCs.

When the guards spot the PCs as they're approaching the cave, the guards will shout a warning and run into the cave. If playing in APL 6, the two guards will use their *entangle* spells in an attempt to delay the party before entering the cave.

When the guards shout a warning that enemies are approaching, the dervish leader will use his *minor image* power to create an illusionary rock wall with himself and two of his men behind it. The remaining dervishes will take up defensive positions in the cave and wait for the PCs to come in.

Once the PCs are engaged with the dervishes that aren't hidden behind the "rock wall", the leader will drop the illusion so that he and the remaining dervishes can hit the attackers from the rear.

This is a very dangerous situation for the PCs. Even careful PCs are likely to fall for the illusionary wall. When the PCs enter the cave, you should make secret skill checks as appropriate. PCs with Knowledge (geology) or Profession (miner) who make a DC 20 skill check notice something odd about the northwest wall of the cave. Dwarf and gnome PCs receive a +2 competence bonus to this check and can make a check even if they do not have the Knowledge (geology) skill.

Each PC and NPC is also entitled to a secret Listen check at DC 20 to hear a clank from the northwest wall of the cave.

If a PC has a *detect magic* spell running, the northwest wall of the cave will radiate illusion magic. (Remember that the PC must concentrate for a full round to detect magic and for at least two full rounds to determine the type of magic.)

The dervishes here will *not* use the coup de grace action to finish off downed PCs. The dervish leader wants to interrogate the PCs and find out how they found the camp.

APL 1 (EL 6)

➤ **Bright desert dervishes, male human Rgr1** (6): CR 1; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 1d10+1; hp 6 (each); Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +2 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar), +1 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Favored enemy (humans) +1; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +5; Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: Scimitar, dagger, leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows.

➤ **Dervish leader, male human Ftr 2**: CR 2; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 2d10+4; hp 19; Init +4; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d6+3/18-20, scimitar) or +7 ranged (1d8/x3, composite longbow); SQ *Minor image* (1/day); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Chr 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Jump +7; Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

Minor image (Sp): (1/day), as the 1st level Sorcerer spell *minor image*, save DC 12.

Equipment: Leather armor, scimitar, dagger, composite longbow, 20 arrows, 5 gp, 5 sp.

APL 4 (EL 9)

➤ **Bright desert dervishes, male human Rgr3** (6): CR 3; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 3d10+3; hp 19 (each); Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar), +3 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Favored enemy (humans)+1; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7 Move Silently +7, Ride +7, Spot +7, Wilderness Lore +7; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: Scimitar, dagger, leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows.

➤ **Dervish leader, male human Ftr6**: CR 6; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 49; Init +4; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+2/x3, composite longbow); SQ *Minor image* (1/day); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Chr 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Jump +11; Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Minor image (Sp): (1/day), as the 1st level Sorcerer spell *minor image*, save DC 12.

Possessions: Leather armor, scimitar, dagger, composite longbow, 20 arrows, 5 gp, 5 sp

APL 6 (EL 11)

➤ **Bright desert dervishes, male human Rgr5** (6): CR 5; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 5d10+5; hp 32; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar), +5 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Favored enemy (humans) +2, Favored enemy (elves) +1; Spells; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Chr 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Move Silently +9, Ride +9, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st – entangle.

Possessions: Scimitar, dagger, leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows

➤ **Dervish leader, male human Ftr9**: CR 9; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 9d10+18; hp 72; Init +5; AC 17 (touch 15, flat-footed 12); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+3/18-20, scimitar) or +13/+13/+8 ranged (1d8+2/19-20/x3, composite longbow); SQ *Minor image* (1/day); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Chr 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Jump +14; Dodge, Iron Will, Improved Critical (composite longbow), Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the

Run, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Minor image (Sp): (1/day), as the 1st level Sorcerer spell *minor image*, save DC 12.

Possessions: Leather armor, scimitar, dagger, composite longbow, 20 arrows, 5 gp, 5 sp

Once the PCs have defeated the dervishes, they'll undoubtedly want to search the cave. Tucked away behind what used to be the illusionary wall is a small chest.

Inside the chest, the PCs find several letters marked with the emblem of noble house. A Knowledge (nobility & royalty) skill check at DC 10 allows a PC to identify it as House Teranor. Certified noble PCs recognize the symbol automatically. It also contains an arcane spell scroll of flaming sphere and a now-worthless letter of credit from House Teranor for 500 gp (remember, House Teranor is no longer in business!). The letters are correspondence between Lord Drenlyyn Teranor and other members of House Teranor and detail a plot to enlist the Bright Desert dervishes to undermine confidence in the March-Warden's abilities to control his territory. The letters are written in the dialect of Flan of the Bright Desert dervishes.

If the PCs wish to continue on to the mine after defeating the dervishes, proceed to Encounter 2.

If the PCs want to return to Castle Seh after defeating the dervishes, proceed to the Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

The guards stand aside as you enter Castle Seh and Sergeant Rollis, approaches you to escort you before the Castellan and the March Warden. You are led to the March-Warden's audience hall, a vast hall simply decorated with the banners of the noble houses of the Duchy, the emblem of House Lorinar predominant among them. Banners of various units that have served at Castle Seh also hang on the walls.

Margren Waithek, the March-Warden of the East March and Knight-Commander of the East March Ducal Guard, sits next to Moran Grek at the far end of the room; both men stand when you enter.

At this point the PCs have an opportunity to report to the March-Warden directly about the dervishes and orcs they encountered. If a character with appropriate Perform skill (storytelling, poetry, or singing) wishes to tell the story, they may make a check at DC 20 to impress the March Warden. Untrained perform checks may not be made, and the circumstances do not lend themselves to assisted checks. Success earns the party an Influence Point each in Castle Seh. Encourage the PCs to tell the story in character, this can grant a +2 circumstance bonus if it does well.

The PCs automatically earn an influence point if they turn over the letters from the chest in the dervish cave. The March-Warden is very grateful to receive these letters, as the PCs have basically saved his bacon. The

characters can earn only a single influence point, even if they also impress the March Warden with their storytelling.

Once the PCs have completed their tale (and assuming that the PCs acted bravely throughout the adventure), the March Warden offers any PC who is a resident of the Duchy of Urnst and who is not already a member of the Ducal Guard a position as a guardsman in the East-March Reserve. Membership in the reserve carries with it a cost of 13 time units per year in training and patrol duties. Again, this benefit is available only to residents of the Duchy of Urnst.

PCs who earned the Mark of the Coward are not offered positions in the East-March Reserve and do not earn an influence point, regardless of efforts to impress the March-Warden. The March-Warden and Castellán will treat these PCs as beneath contempt, having heard of their cowardice by now.

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary role-playing experience award. The role-playing award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different role-playing amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus role-playing) to each character.

Encounter 1

Ask the villagers about the map	10 xp
Ask the villagers about Rorn's Crag	10 xp

Encounter 2

Defeat the orcs	75 xp
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Encounter 3

Investigate Wull's body	15 xp
Ask the villagers about dervishes	10 xp

Encounter 5 or Encounter 6

Defeat the dervishes	100 xp
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Encounter 7

Report to the Castellán	10 xp
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Encounter 8

Defeat the dervishes	150 xp
Capture/defeat the dervish leader	50 xp

Encounter 9

Report to the March-Warden	10 xp
Turn over House Teranor evidence	10 xp

Total experience for objectives	450
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Discretionary role-playing award 0-50 xp

Total possible experience **500 xp**

TREASURE SUMMARY

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g. armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp, that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules which does not have a certificate will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter 2

Elfskinner (Value: 15 gp, Uses: N/A, Tradable: Yes, Weight: 2 pounds, Materials: steel with silver and bone hilt, Rarity: Unusual): This gruesome dagger of Orcish design has a serrated steel blade and an ivory hilt carved at the pommel end to resemble a skull. Silver etching decorates the hilt and two small garnets serve as blood-red eyes for the skull.

Encounter 4

Mark of the Coward (Value: 0 gp, Uses: N/A, Tradable: No, Weight: N/A, Materials: N/A, Rarity: Uncommon): The above-named PC has a reputation throughout the Duchy of Urnst as a coward and will be treated as such by

all members of noble houses and all members of the Ducal Guard who encounter the PC.

Encounter 5 or Encounter 6

Mighty Composite Longbow (+2 Str bonus) (Value: 300 gp, Uses: N/A, Tradable: Yes, Weight: 3 pounds, Materials: ash and yew, Rarity: Uncommon): This exceptional bow is crafted from well-cured ash and yew. The heavy pull bow cannot be drawn and fired by any character with a Strength score of 11 or less. The bow is decorated with an ornate carving of creeping vines and tipped with silver string-guards at either end.

Encounter 8

Arcane Spell Scroll – *Flaming Sphere* (Value: 300 gp, Uses: 1, Tradable: Yes, Weight 0.5 pounds, Materials: N/A, Rarity: Rare): This scroll contains the arcane spell *flaming sphere*, cast at the 3rd level of experience.

Encounter 9

Member of the Ducal Guard (Value: 0 gp, Uses: N/A, Tradable: No, Weight: N/A, Materials: N/A, Rarity: Rare): The above-named PC is a member of the East March Reserve of the Ducal Guard of the Duchy of Urnst and bears the rank of Guardsman. The PC must spend 13 time units when this certificate is awarded and 13 time units at the beginning of each subsequent year carrying out the duties of this position. Only residents of the Duchy of Urnst may receive this position.

Members of the East March Reserve of the Ducal Guard are exempted from paying lifestyle costs while adventuring in the Abbor-Alz East March. In addition, Knowledge (Abbor-Alz) is always considered a class skill to PC members of this branch of the Ducal Guard.

Members of the Ducal guard may earn the opportunity to advance in rank during future scenarios.

Influence Point in Seh (Value: 0 gp, Uses: N/A, Tradable: No, Weight: N/A, Materials: N/A, Rarity: Common): The above-named PC bears some measure of influence in the town of Seh and with the March-Warden of the East March (presently Margren Waithek).

Treasure Summary

All told, the players can gain the following certified items from these encounters:

- Orcish dagger (15 gp value)
- Mighty Composite Longbow (+2 Str bonus) (300 gp value)
- arcane spell scroll of *flaming sphere* (300 gp value)
- Influence Point in Seh (no value)
- Member of the Ducal Guard (no value)

DM AID 1: PLAYER SUMMARY SHEET

Before play begins, record the following information for each character:

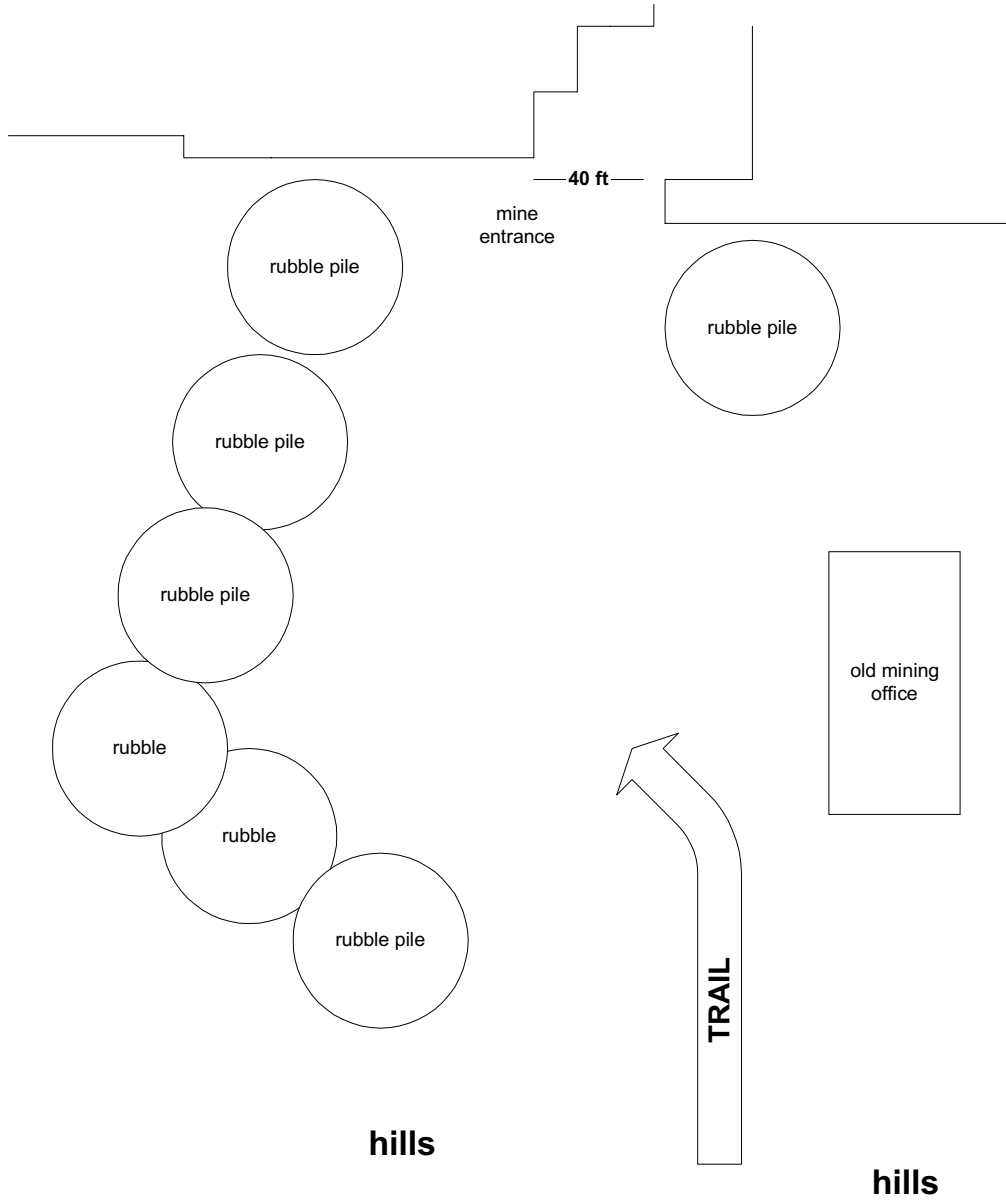
	PC #1	PC #2	PC #3	PC #4	PC #5	PC #6
Name						
Character Name						
Race						
Class						
Speed						
Armor class						
Hit points						
Strength						
Dexterity						
Constitution						
Intelligence						
Wisdom						
Charisma						
Listen						
Search						
Spot						
Sense Motive						
Profession (miner)						
Knowledge (Duchy of Urnst)*						
Knowledge (Abbor-Alz)*						

* Duchy of Urnst residents may substitute Knowledge (local)

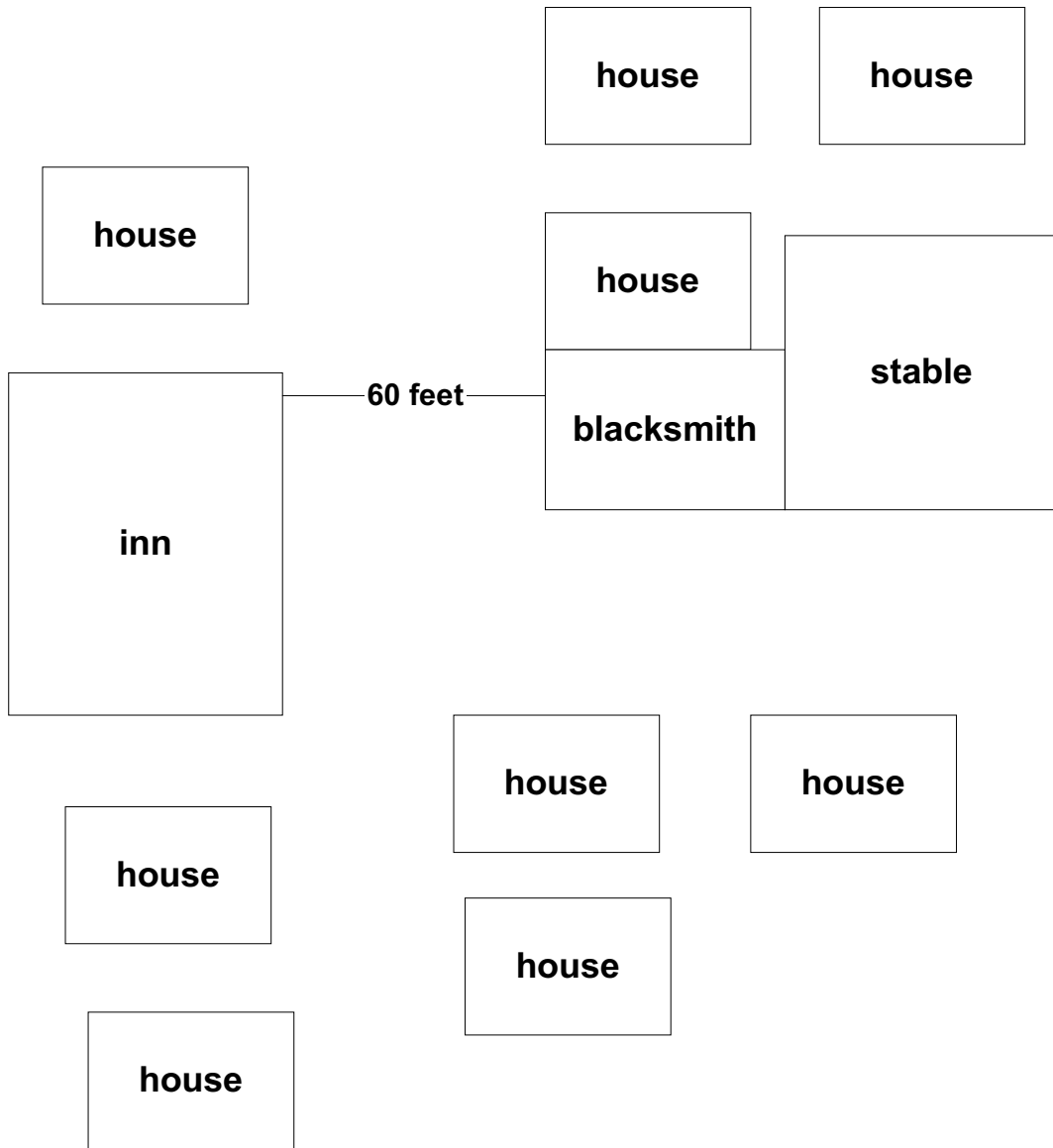
** Duchy of Urnst residents may substitute Knowledge (geography), with a -2 penalty

This will allow you to make secret skill checks when appropriate.

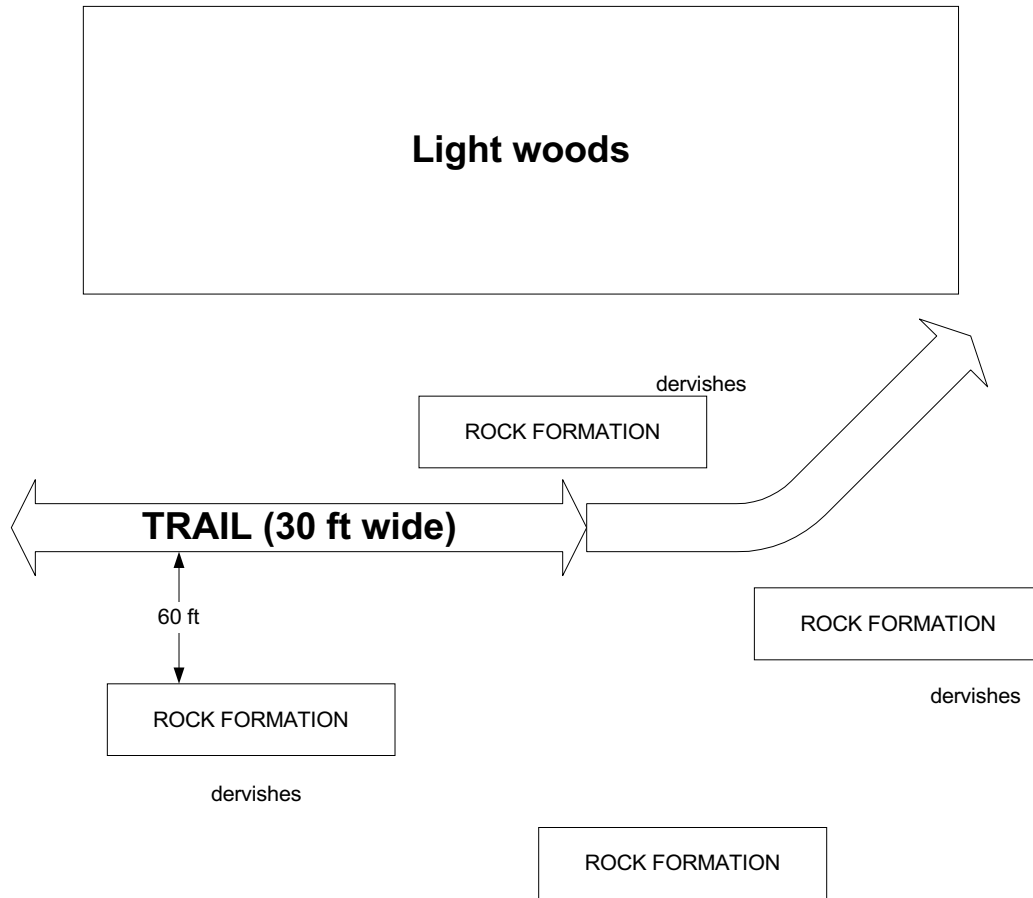
DM AID 2: MAPS OF ENCOUNTER 2



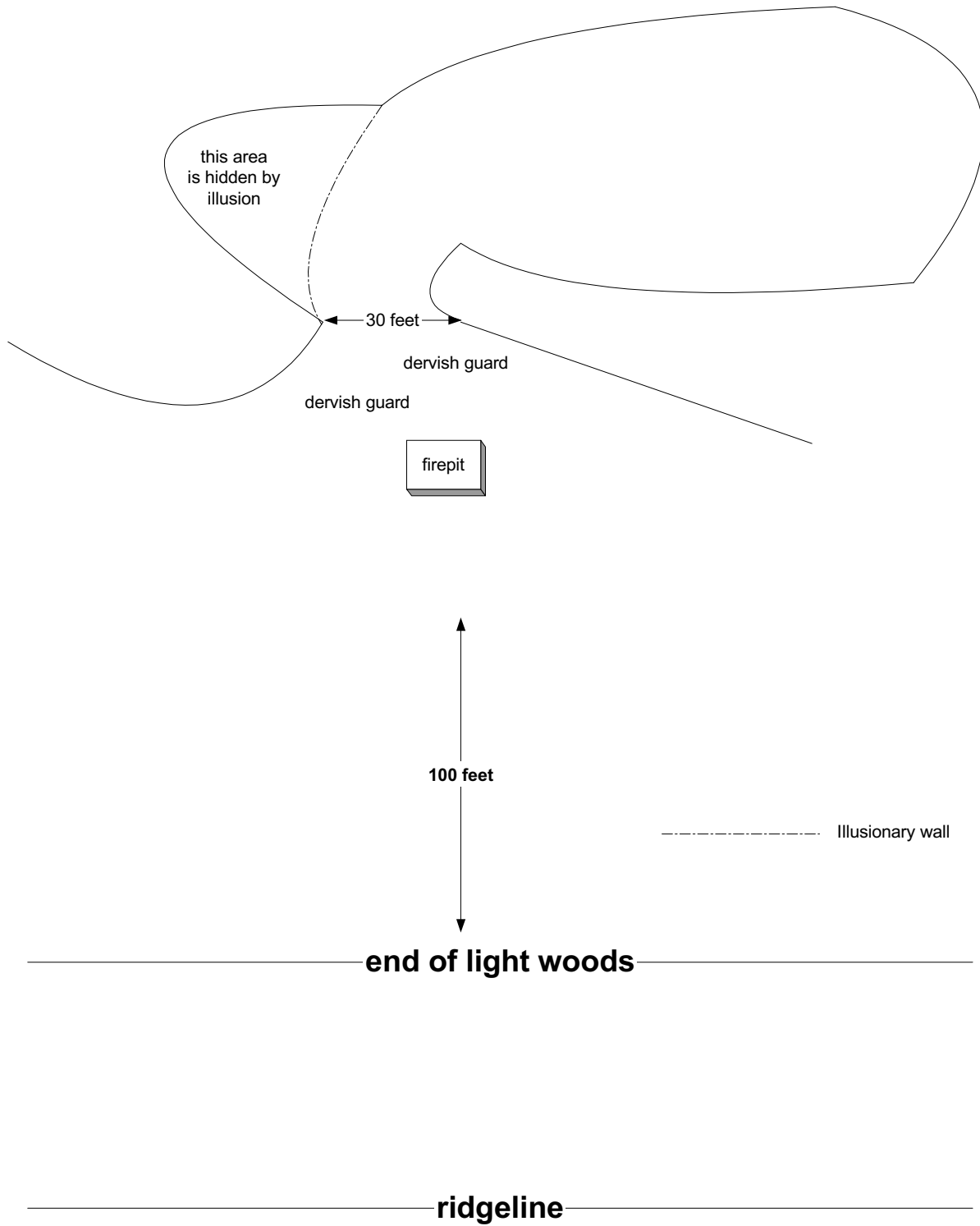
DM AID 3: MAP OF ENCOUNTER 5



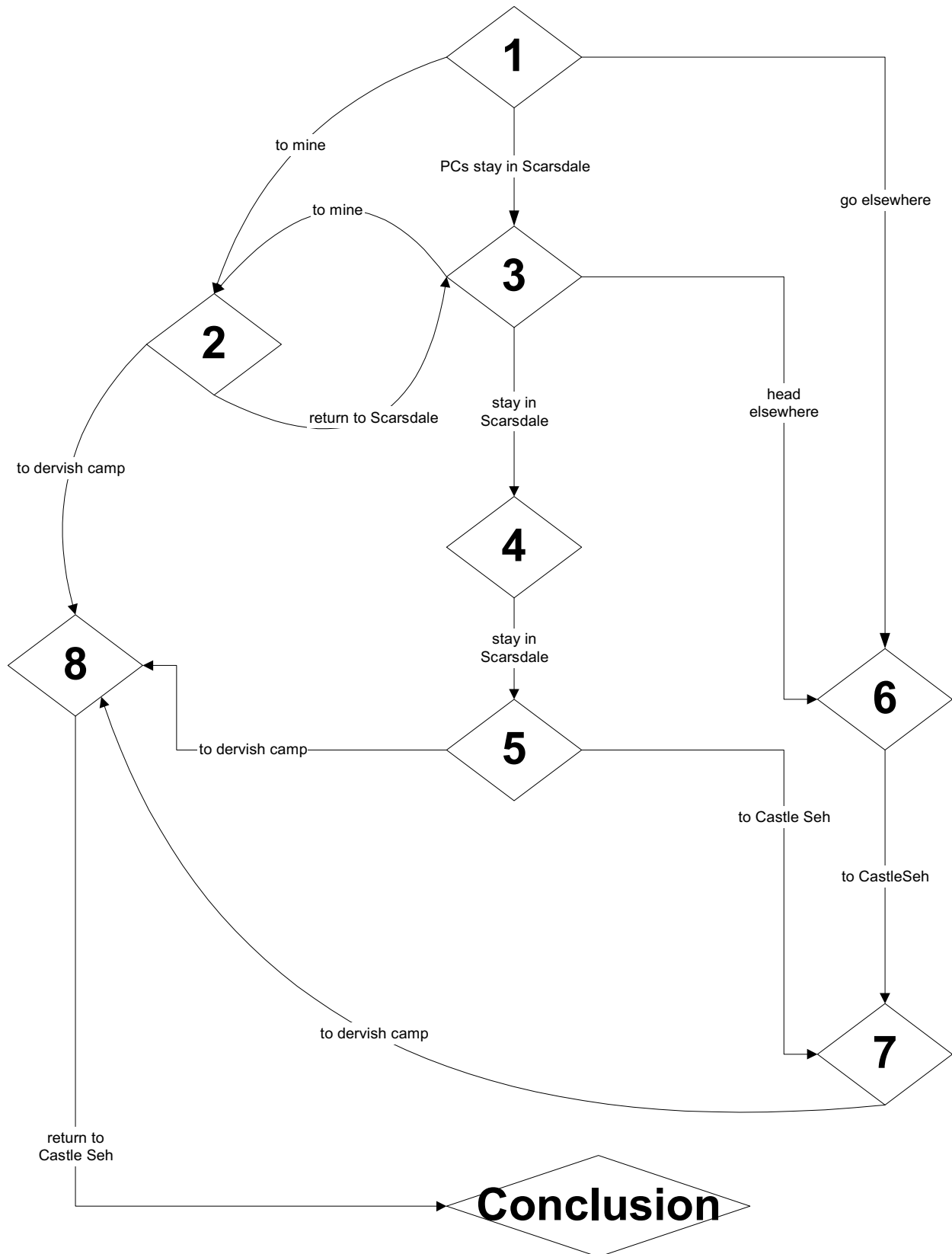
DM AID 4: MAPS OF ENCOUNTER 6



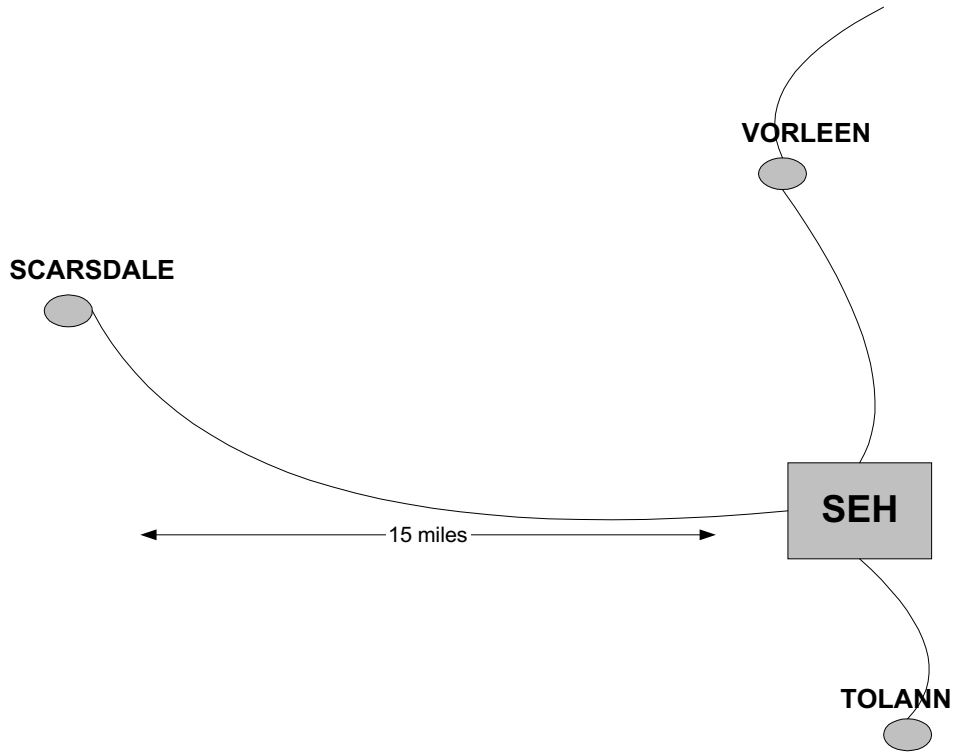
DM AID 5: MAP OF ENCOUNTER 8



DM AID 6: SCENARIO FLOWCHART



PLAYER HANDOUT 1



dervisses

X

Rorn's Crag

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☞ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☞ **Mialee, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or -6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and -10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, sleep*.

Spellbook: 0—all of them; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I*.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☞ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☞ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or -1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref -1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level); 0—*detect poison, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*bles, protection from evil**, *shield of faith*.

* Domain spell; *Deity:* Pelor; *Domains:* Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.