

VER3-07

Decision at Sheernobb

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

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Good times at Sheernobb renew the fellowship between gnomes and the characters. But all is not joy as events turn to a most desperate hour with desperate decisions. This is the fourth event in the Verbobonc Giant series. An adventure for APLs 6 to 12.

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

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Introduction

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

Preparation

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

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

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA 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 six players participating in the game.

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

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That

said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

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

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

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

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
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 the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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	

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

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

Time Units and Upkeep

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

Adventure Background

Renewed raids on eastern gnome settlements began in CY591. Sheernobb, a village on the edge of the Gnarely Forest, found itself especially hard hit. Headgnome Glenndarc sought the assistance of adventurers to go on a scouting mission, being short handed. Adventurers located a hill giant and ogre hill fortress deep within the Gnarley, in striking distance of Sheernobb.

Gnomish forces launched a sizable punitive raid under the gnome Commander Keenbolt. Keenbolt's force did not return, nor did any of the gnome Scouts sent out to make contact with the force. Once again Glenndarc sought the assistance of trusted adventurers to discover the fate of Keenbolt's Command.

The adventurers followed Keenbolt's trail through the now dangerous forest. The deadly fate of the force was discovered, but Keenbolt's trail continued on. Finally, on a ridge top the adventurers caught up with the Commander in a battle with his foes. A costly victory saved the commander and earned the trust of the adventurers as gnome-friends. And, it was these gnome-friends who helped sway the Moot vote to not evacuate Sheernobb, but to make a stand and increase their defenses.

For a time the raids lessened and gnomish defenses were strengthened. Yet, raids continued with some further to the north into the Viscounty itself. This led to the discovery of a new advanced giant base on the edge of the Gnarely north of Sheernobb. In a swirling battle the gnome-friends, with assistance of rangers and mounted troops, reduced the base. Later, the gnome-friends passed through an entire village in the southern Viscounty completely destroyed by the giant forces.

Clearly, the giant forces are strong in the Gnarely, and directed by an unknown force. Although Sheernobb has been peaceful in the past few months, this was only the calm before the storm. The giants have rebuilt their strength, and are now poised to descend upon Sheernobb and destroy the gnomish village once and for all.

Adventure Summary

The characters are each visited by the erstwhile gnome diplomat, Meldreeb, with an invitation to the 500th anniversary of Sheernobb. When they arrive, Sheernobb no longer bears the appearance of a peaceful gnomish settlement, but looks more like an armed camp. Gnomes-at-Arms and gnome Scouts are seen everywhere. A clear defensive line surrounds the main village as well as many traps and other surprises of gnomish creation.

Encounter One

The celebration centers in the Moot Hall with the characters among the honored guests, which also include several gnome dignitaries. In the midst of conversations, Keenbolt snatches the characters attention, asking them to join him quickly and quietly into a side chamber down the front hallway. Inside the chamber are three Gnome Scouts. One is severely wounded, one slightly wounded and the last unharmed. They report the movement of a very sizable giant force heading toward the village.

Keenbolt's sub-commanders enter the room to receive orders. Defenses are prepared immediately. Keenbolt turns to the characters and asks them to hang back and guard the Moot Hall with Glenndarc inside. And, if necessary, they are a final reserve he can count on.

Encounter Two

It is only a few short minutes after the defenses were gnomed that the sounds of battle fill the night. Gnome warriors and scouts run back and forth while the characters establish their watch on the hall. From out of nowhere and everywhere the characters are suddenly attacked. Their assailants are a strike team of ogre mages originally sent in to kill Glenndarc. They did not expect to run into the caliber of opposition the characters present, but do not shrink from the challenge.

Encounter Three

No sooner is the strike team defeated than a gnome Scout runs up to the characters asking for Commander Keenbolt. He is from the northern flank screen. Before he can finish his sentence reporting on an enemy force trying to turn their flank another gnome rushes up demanding the characters follow him quickly. There has been a breach in the forward defenses threatening the middle of the village. The characters need to make a decision to either assist the northern flank or help against the breach.

Encounter Three A

The characters go to assist the northern flank. Indeed, a large force of the enemy is already pushing back the

defenders here and threatening the lightly guarded rear. The characters' assistance could be crucial.

Encounter Three B

The characters go to help against the breach in the front line. They arrive in time to meet the enemy head on. Their assistance could be crucial in establishing a new defensive line.

Meanwhile, the left flank and rear guard are turned, and as a result the characters must turn and help fight off an attack from the rear. Few gnomes from the left flank and rear guard remain.

Encounter Four

The fighting lasts until the pale gray of dawn begins to fill the village. The enemy has pulled back, but they now surround the village. All are exhausted, and casualties are many. Keenbolt has not been seen since early in the battle. A quick search finds those known to be with him all slain, and Commander Keenbolt torn to pieces. Evidence around the slain gnomes suggests they fought a similar group of ogre mage assassins as the one that had originally attacked the characters at the Moot Hall.

Encounter Five

The giant forces make no serious attacks all the next day and evening. At an early morning meeting of the surviving leaders, Glennddarc reluctantly decides it is time to evacuate the village and move the survivors into the protection of the Greenway Valley. There is one possible way for most of the villagers to sneak out past the surrounding enemy. The ranking gnome commander insists he will do what Keenbolt himself would do: remain behind to hold the defenses as long as possible to allow the non-combatants to sneak away to safety toward the Greenway Valley. Meldreeb wants to track down Keenbolt's killers. Another gnomish officer will escort the non-combatants out of Sheernobb, and may need help to defend them. Glennddarc turns to the characters and asks them what they will do. Their decision determines whether they will go to Encounter Six, Encounter Seven, Encounter Eight, or Encounter Nine.

Encounter Six

Staying to defend Sheernobb long enough for the refugees to get safely away should appear to be nothing less than a suicide mission. The remaining gnome commander does not make the best decisions. This situation is basically a last stand. The characters may buy more time, but their survival is in question unless they can make a daring escape.

Encounter Seven

Following the ogre mage assassins that killed Keenbolt leads to a cat and mouse game. Both parties at times hunt the other so that neither is sure who is the hunter and who is the hunted. The characters' skills and abilities will be tested. If the strike team can be caught one way or the other, the characters can learn new information concerning the scope of the enemy's plans.

Encounter Eight

As escorts to the survivors of Sheernobb, the characters must fight a group of trolls trying to cut off their retreat. A glow in the night sky to the northeast marks the burning of Sheernobb. Decisions need to be made for the safety of the refugees.

Encounter Nine

Characters that want to flee Sheernobb on their own encounter no significant resistance. However, the first night they camp, they can see a glow in the distance indicating the burning of Sheernobb.

Conclusion

Sheernobb has fallen. In the Greenway Valley, the Sheernobb refugees join even more refugees from other eastern settlements as news spreads of a much larger invasion than anyone expected. The characters, if they survived, are called to attend a meeting. Attending the meeting are the gnome clan leaders of the Kron, and representatives from several mixed communities from near the Kron Hills: House Asbury, House Delevue, House Milinous, the Mounted Borderers, the Gnarley Rangers, Burne's Badgers, and two of the Gnarley Elven Clans. This mixed group sits down to a council of war!

DM NOTE: Before reading the introduction have each character make two d20 rolls. Record these rolls for use in Encounter Two.

Introduction

You have looked forward to a much-needed rest for quite some time. All your adventuring is beginning to take a toll on you. The physical and mental stresses of late drift away after a good meal and a longed for restful sleep. On the morrow there is no need to awaken early.

Your dreams find you in your long imagined personal paradise.

DM's may wish to go around the table and ask the characters what they are dreaming about. At least have each player imagine for their character in their own

minds just what those dreams might be like before reading the next part.

But, something begins to nag at the back of your mind. Some tapping sound just doesn't fit into your surroundings. The tapping sound continues, and no matter how hard you try to hold onto your paradise world, it slips away into darkness and then light. After a confused moment you find yourself rolling over in bed with that tapping sound coming from the door. It must be early morning from the look of things around you.

"Wake up! I know you are in there. I have something very important that I knew you wouldn't want to wait to hear about. Open the door before I have to open it myself," says a familiar voice you begin to place as Meldreeb, (or an unfamiliar gnomish voice if none of the characters played any of the previous Giant series events).

If the character opens the door they find Meldreeb nearly bursting with excitement and holding out a very fancy envelope with a wax seal.

If the character takes their time getting up and going to their door, the door opens before they get there and entering is Meldreeb nearly bursting with excitement and holding out a very fancy envelope with a wax seal.

As the character(s) open the envelope give them Player Handout One.

"Well, don't just stand there. Get ready! Pack your things. Its going to be the greatest celebration ever with magic and fireworks and singing and dancing and eating and drinking and story telling and speeches and demonstrations— oh, did I say eating! You just have to come now. Don't wait a second. I have your transportation all arranged and ready and waiting for you.

Don't worry about those nasty giants and their allies neither. We haven't seen them for a while. Of course we can't get scouts too close to their fortress anymore with their increased patrols and all. But ever since that encampment near the old forest shrine was defeated, we just haven't seen them stick their ugly heads around nowhere near."

Meldreeb just keeps talking and won't accept no for an answer. As soon as each character actually walks out their front door Meldreeb runs off saying he has to hand out more invitations and he will see them there.

Any character that did not participate in any of the previous Giant series adventures (*Giants on the Move, Games Afoot, or Silver Moon*) is being invited based on his or her reputation as a hero.

The trip to Sheernobb passes uneventfully. The characters have all met up on their journey toward Sheernobb. If the characters have not yet introduced themselves, now is the time.

On a gentle rise ahead is the now familiar gnome checkpoint west of Sheernobb. After that, there is a side trail leading to the east and the village itself. A gnome scout breaks cover onto the trail and motions for you to slow down. On a Spot check (DC 20), a character notices that the trail appears different somehow. The trail through the wooded slope looks to have been improved and slightly widened. On a second Spot check (DC 25), the character notices there are three times as many scouts in hiding around this spot than usual.

As the characters pass through the notch in the ridge of trees and underbrush, the trail beneath them sounds hollow as if they are crossing a bridge.

If asked, the gnome scout smiles large and replies,

"It's just a little surprise for travelers who aren't as welcome as yourselves."

This portion of the trail has a large pit trap constructed beneath. After passing through the hollow sounding portion of the trail, a Spot check (DC 25) reveals that several well-prepared defensive positions now exist on both sides of the trail. One gets the impression that a small force here could hold off an entire army for hours.

As the characters turn to the east and begin to approach Sheernobb, they pass by several more defensive positions. All are well-gnomed. The village itself no longer bears the appearance of a peaceful gnomish settlement, but looks more like an armed camp. Gnome-at-Arms and gnome Scouts are seen everywhere. A clear defensive line surrounds the village with another line surrounding the main area of rents, as well as many traps and other surprises of gnomish creation. Despite the heavy defenses, many gnomes are out and about in high spirits and greet the characters warmly, and are full of questions.

Encounter One

You find yourselves honored guests at the main table within the impressive woodwork of the Moot Hall. At the table with you are Glenndarc, his wife, Keenbolt, and several other gnome dignitaries whose names you cannot begin to pronounce much less remember. Glenndarc stands and gives a speech announcing the beginning of the festivities celebrating the 500th anniversary of Sheernobb. He ends with an elaborate illusion of the first gnome settlers crossing the

wooded hillsides and setting up camp. Once the image fades the gnome revelries in the crowded hall are so loud it's a wonder any conversation can be heard at all. The crowd itself is so large that it must spill outside.

The Moot Hall of Sheernobb is the only rent large enough for human sized characters to walk erect. And large it is. The main table is set on a raised platform in the back opposite the entry hall. The main floor has been setup with long tables and benches of gnome size. The tiered galleries on three sides also have been setup to accommodate food and drink. Everywhere possible are gnomes laughing, eating, drinking and talking. Numerous gnomes approach the head table to offer words and ask questions of the characters, none of which can be made out due to the noise of so many gnomish conversations going on in the Moot Hall.

It is almost a relief when Commander Keenbolt snatches your attention asking you to join him quickly and quietly in the right hand side chamber down the front hallway. Working your way through the crowd is no easy task. Many gnomes pat you on the small of the back to give words of personal welcome or to ask you to join them in a toast.

Standing by the chamber doorway are two Gnome-at-Arms who usher you inside while preventing curious onlookers from following. Inside the chamber are three Gnome Scouts. One is severely wounded and is being tended by a gnome cleric. Another is bandaged sitting off to the side with a bewildered look for a gnome. A third Scout appears unharmed, but looks exhausted.

Once Keenbolt notices your arrival he nods toward you and turns to the Scouts, "Now, give your report in full."

The Scouts talk about what they thought was a random orc and ogre patrol they let pass by their observation position in the forest. However, not long after that they witnessed the approach of a very large force of orcs, ogres, giants and other creatures. There were so many they knew they could not see them all. They quickly abandoned their post to warn the village. But, they now had to weave their way through the advanced skirmishers of orcs and ogres. This is how they came to be wounded. There was no stopping to fight; they just ran. The skirmishers could be approaching the outer defenses by now.

Keenbolt's sub-commanders had already entered the room shortly after characters. The Commander turns to his subordinates and issues orders in rapid gnomish. They turn and quickly exit the chamber.

Keenbolt turns to you and in common says, "Please remain here and guard the Moot Hall with Glennddarc inside. He must be kept safe. And, when necessary you are a final reserve I know I can count on."

For a few moments all seems confusion as gnomes rush out of the chamber and the larger crowd from inside the Hall rushes out to wherever they are most needed. The characters, if they wish, may re-enter the Hall to find Glennddarc still seated at the head table with his familiar.

Glennddarc looks at you with a half smile on his worn face, "I have my orders! It appears you are to be my protectors – as if I need protection! Keenbolt feels I'm too important to be risked in the defense of my own village."

Glennddarc waits for any response from the characters. Either after their response or if they have none, he continues:

"Well, go protect me!"

Encounter Two

Ask the players how they wish to handle the protection of Glennddarc and the Moot Hall.

The Hall has only one entrance from the dirt road as far as the characters know. The stout wooden doorway leads into a large hillside. The entrance hallway is not tall enough for a normal human to stand erect, being only five feet high. Along its wood paneled walls are three doors on the right and one of the left. The door on the left leads to a small 10 x 10 storage room. The first door on the right leads to a make shift 12 x 12 guard room with two cots a small table with two chairs on the far wall, and a weapon rack on the right side of the door and a row of pegs for hanging gear on the left side. The next two doors on the right each lead into 20 x 20 side chambers. The first chamber is furnished as small meeting room while the second is the kitchen. Eighty feet down the hallway is a large opening on the left side into the large meeting hall itself. This is the north end of the meeting hall and is eighty feet long. A wooden railing extends twenty feet ahead separating the hallway from the upper tier of this end of the hall. Looking past the railing into the one hundred-foot long hall shows the main floor to be several wide steps down. Three tiers of five-foot wide steps, each having benches on which to sit, surround the sunken hall. This makes the open lower main floor about 50 x 70. The ceiling height of the main floor easily allows humans and even half-orcs to walk erect. The woodwork within the hall is impressive, from the intricately carved beams,

supports and posts to the benches and floor. The east side of the hall also has three tiers, but on the top tier's center is a long table with chairs behind.

Once they have a plan and have taken positions proceed with the following:

It is not long after you have taken up defensive positions that the sounds of battle fill the night. (If any characters assumed any positions outside the Moot Hall add the following.) *Gnomish warriors and scouts run back and forth. Now and then the familiar sounds and flashes of combat magic mix with the general din of battle. Most of the noise seems to come from the side of the village facing the great forest, but soon additional sounds of battle can be heard from both flanks. This is indeed a serious hour for Sheernobb.*

At this point refer to the two initial d20 rolls made by each character to see if they either hear or see the coming assailants. The two rolls are their Spot and Listen checks. This ogre mage strike team attacks wherever the characters have established their defensive positions. These elite giant assassins did not expect to find the characters defending Glenndarc. But, since the characters represent his defense they attempt to use their talents to both neutralize the characters and take out Glenndarc at the same time.

Creatures:

APL 6 (EL 8)

👉 **Ogre Mage:** hp 37; see *Monster Manual*. This ogre mage is equipped with a *+1 greatsword*, so add +1 to its attack and damage rolls.

APL 8 (EL 10)

👉 **Ogre Mages (2):** hp 37 each; see *Monster Manual*. These ogre mages are each equipped with a *+1 greatsword*, so add +1 to their attack and damage rolls.

APL 10 (EL 12)

👉 **Ogre Mage Assassins (2):** male ogre mage Rog4; hp 85 each; see Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 14)

👉 **Ogre Mage Assassins (4):** male ogre mage Rog4; hp 85 each; see Appendix One.

Tactics: These ogre mages are skilled assassins and use their *cone of cold* ability whenever they can affect a large number of characters. At APLs 10 and 12, they make best use of their Expert Tactician feat to make extra attacks with their greatswords when they attack from *invisibility*

(which they can use at will). This strike force fights to the death.

The ogre mages travel up to the characters in *gaseous form* and *invisible*. They dismiss the *gaseous form* (a standard action which makes no noise), remaining *invisible*, and prepare to attack the characters from surprise. To act in the surprise round, the characters must succeed at either a Spot or Listen check.

The DC for the Spot check is 26 at APLs 6 and 8, and 40 at APLs 10 and 12 (the ogre mages are taking 10 to Hide, with a +20 bonus for being invisible).

The DC for the Listen check is much lower: DC 12 at APLs 6 and 8, and DC 26 at APLs 10 and 12 (the ogre mages are taking 10 to Move Silently, with a +2 circumstance bonus for the noise of the battle).

Development: Any member of the strike team who comes close enough to threaten Glenndarc directly either “on stage” or “off stage,” will provoke a reaction from Glenndarc. Glenndarc’s survival in this encounter should rest on the shoulders of the characters as much as possible. But, Glenndarc is capable of defending himself to an extent. If at all possible, try to limit Glenndarc’s involvement in this combat to self-preservation only. Glenndarc should not save the day for the characters; it should be the other way around.

All APLs

👉 **Glenndarc:** male gnome Wiz7; hp 29; see Appendix One.

Treasure:

Defeat the ogre mage assassins and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatsword* (196 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 16 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatsword* (2) (196 gp per character/per sword).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatsword* (2) (196 gp per character/per sword); *+1 chain shirt* (2) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +1* (2) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatsword* (4) (196 gp per character/per sword); *+1 chain shirt* (4) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +1* (4) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

Encounter Three

No sooner is the strike team defeated than a Gnome Scout runs up to the characters asking for Commander Keenbolt. He appears exhausted and scared.

“Have you seen Commander Keenbolt?”

As soon as he receives any kind of answer he rushes into his next sentence.

“I’ve been sent from the northern flank screen. There is a large enemy force hitting us hard, trying to turn . . .”

Before he can finish his sentence a gnome-at-arms rushes up interrupting:

The gnome-at-arms interrupts almost ordering the characters, “You must come quickly! There is a breach in our defenses and Keenbolt said you were the last reserve. We need your help now!”

Then the first gnome scout breaks in:

“But if our flank is turned we will be surrounded and attacked from the rear.”

Both gnomes then turn to you wide eyed shouting: “We need your help now!”

The characters must make a decision to either assist the northern flank or help against the breach. If they decide to split themselves up to cover both trouble spots at the same time, be sure to run both combats, (yes I know it stinks), at the appropriate APL for the characters present at each combat (but at a minimum APL of 6).

Encounter Three A

Use this encounter if the characters decide to assist the northern flank.

The gnome scout leads the characters to the north. The sounds of combat are easily heard ahead. Trees and underbrush are not as thick here and what little light the moon provides helps reveal the nature of the situation. The ground slopes downward toward the attacking enemy forces trying to work their way up the wooded slope. This gives the gnomes some advantage. Some of the wounded gnomes assist in loading crossbows as best they can. Arrows whistle through the branches above the characters and their gnome guide. A boulder crashes into a tree next to the characters, but luckily bounces harmlessly to the side.

The gnome scout shouts to you, “we’ve been pushed back!”

Have the characters make Spot checks.

None higher than 10:

You think you notice the hulking form of a giant breaking through some undergrowth to your front left.

None higher than 15, but at least over 10:

You notice the hulking form of a giant breaking through some undergrowth flanked by two smaller forms to your front left.

None higher than 20, but at least over 15:

You notice the hulking form of a giant breaking through some undergrowth flanked by two ogres to your front left. Some form of magic cast by a nearby gnome immediately hits the giant. (Spellcraft [DC 12] identifies the spell as *magic missile*) But, then one of the ogres obscures the image of the gnome.

Higher than 20:

You notice the hulking form of a giant breaking through some undergrowth flanked by two ogres to your front left. Some form of magic cast by a nearby gnome immediately hits the giant. (Spellcraft [DC 12] identifies the spell as *magic missile*) But, then one of the ogres charges in front of the gnome and smashes him with his club.

It is now time for initiative and action by the characters.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Hill Giant:** hp 98; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Ogres (2):** hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Hill Giant:** hp 98; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Ogre, 4th Level Barbarian (2):** hp 79 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Hill Giant Barbarian:** male hill giant Bbn4; hp 187; see Appendix One.

☛ **Ogre, 4th Level Barbarian (2):** hp 79 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Hill Giant Barbarian:** male hill giant Bbn4; hp 187; see Appendix One.

☛ **Ogre Berserker (2):** male ogre Bbn8; hp 118 each; see Appendix One.

Tactics: These three giants rush into melee as soon as possible. They attack heavily-wounded characters when

possible, to make use of feats like Cleave and Great Cleave. At APL 12, the ogre barbarians use their Power Critical feat in their first possible attack, preferably on a charge. If the characters want to make a retreat, these giants will fight the gnomes to the left and right instead of pursuing the characters.

Throughout the characters' combat, fighting continues to their left and right. More and more enemies appear to pressure the gnomes and the characters should notice more enemy forces approaching their combat as well. Random missile fire falls in and around the characters during their combat. This is a major engagement.

If the characters defeat their opponents:

You have dropped your last opponent, but more and more of the enemy can be seen, however, they are beginning to break off contact and are pulling back down the slope. Fewer enemy missiles are falling around you now. Their assault has been blunted for the time being.

Meldreeb, comes up behind you, "If you hadn't slowed that assault I doubt we could hold this line much longer. As it is there is one more defensive line up the slope. We have too many casualties to continue to hold this line much longer, even with your help. We'd best move up hill while we can safely. Our only problem now is, I think we are totally surrounded. Lets see if we can help get the wounded back up with us."

If the characters must pull back:

You pull back higher up the slope. The shrinking defensive line tightens up making the gnomes numbers count more, but many of the wounded have been left behind. From behind, you hear a familiar gnome voice shout out for you to duck. Logs come crashing down from the trees above you and bounce, fall and roll into the approaching enemy followed by a hail of crossbow fire, blunting the assault. The enemy forces appear to pull back down the slope for the time being.

Meldreeb, comes up behind you, "If you hadn't slowed that assault I doubt we could have pulled off that little log trick. Been working on that for weeks. Pretty good huh? Only problem now is, I think we are totally surrounded."

Development: The breach in the front lines allows the enemy to reach the central rents before a new defensive line is formed. The gnomes take heavy casualties including non-combatants and half their sheep herd.

Treasure:

Defeat the giants and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 4 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 2 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); +1 *hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection* +1 (2) (167 gp per character/per ring).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); +1 *hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection* +1 (2) (167 gp per character/per ring); +1 *heavy flail* (193 gp per character); +1 *chain shirt* (104 gp per character); *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *greataxe* (2) (193 gp per character/per axe); +1 *chain shirt* (3) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance* +1 (3) (83 gp per character/per cloak); +1 *heavy flail* (193 gp per character).

Encounter Three B

Use this encounter if the characters decide to follow the gnome-at-arms to the breach in the front line.

The gnome-at-arms leads the characters to the front. The sounds of combat are easily heard ahead. Trees are not as thick here and what little light the moon provides helps reveal the nature of the situation. All is chaos. Several giants, ogres and a fair number of orcs are in amongst the gnomes in a raging battle around the uneven ground. Here and there can be seen small wooden doors set back into the sides of sloping ground marking the entrances into the gnomish rents. Even several gnome non-combatants can be seen trying to help fend off a group of orcs and an ogre trying to force their way into one of the rents. Arrows whistle through the branches above the characters and their gnome guide. A boulder crashes into a tree next to the characters, but luckily bounces harmlessly to the side.

The gnome-at-arms shouts to you, "We can't let them get to the rents! Argh!" as he charges ahead into the fighting.

The characters have two choices at this point. They can either help in the general battle going on in front of them or assist the non-combatants in keeping the ogre and orcs away from the rents. Whether the characters move to defend the rents or charge into the front lines, they encounter an ogre and several orcs. These foes shouldn't present a real challenge to the party (and therefore award no combat XP), but if the characters don't stop this group then no one will, and the rents will be invaded.

All APLs (EL 0)

👉Ogre: hp 29; see *Monster Manual*.

👉Orcs (6): hp 6 each; see *Monster Manual*. These orcs carry masterwork falchions, and so have +1 to attack rolls.

The actions of the characters help rally the gnomes in establishing a new defensive line. Keep the general impression of a larger battle going on around them as much as possible. With any success by the characters in their combat, the gnomes also begin to sort out and establish a better line of defense. In other words, the gnomes and the characters are gaining control over the immediate situation.

Treasure:

Defeat the raiders and take their equipment.

All APLs: L: 201 gp; C: 0; M: 0.

If the characters win their combat read the following:

You have dropped your last opponent, but more and more of the enemy can be seen, however, they are beginning to break off contact and are pulling back. Fewer enemy missiles are falling around you now. Their breach has been sealed at least for the time being.

If the characters need to pull back read the following:

You pull back, causing a new defensive line to tighten up making the gnomes' numbers count more. But many of the wounded have been left behind. Many of the enemy can still be seen, yet they too must have had enough for now as they begin to break off contact and are pulling back toward the forest. Fewer enemy missiles are falling around you now. The breach has been stopped at least for the time being.

Development: While the characters fight here, the left flank and rear guard are turned, resulting in the characters needing to help fight off an attack from the rear. Few gnomes from the left flank and rear guard remain.

You recognize a familiar gnome voice from behind you. "Thank Garl I found you. Quick, an enemy force has turned our left flank and is now pushing what's left of the rear guard this way. I haven't any reserves left," gasps Meldreeb.

There should be no hesitation in the characters if they are true heroes. Following Meldreeb to the rear, the characters soon run into another chaotic battle. There are few gnomes left, but they are giving ground stubbornly to a superior enemy force. The enemy too has taken heavy losses, as their numbers are not too great.

This combat takes place on ground very similar to the rolling wooded terrain they just left, with a few rent entrances here and there, (all closed).

The contingent facing off against the characters is as follows:

APL 6 (EL 8)

👉Ettin: hp 65; see *Monster Manual*.

👉Ogres (3): hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

👉Ogre 4th level Barbarian: hp 79; see *Monster Manual*.

👉Ettins (3): hp 65 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

👉Stone Giants (3): hp 119 each; see *Monster Manual*.

👉Ogre 4th level Barbarians (2): hp 79 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 8)

👉Ogre Berserkers (2): hp 118 each; see Appendix One.

👉Stone Giants (3): hp 119 each; see *Monster Manual*.

During the combat at some point have the characters make a Spot check (DC 18). If any are successful they notice Meldreeb's fighting style to be that of a rogue. He manages to sneak attack a number of opponents with great skill. In addition he springs out of the way of many return blows.

If the characters win their combat they witness the remaining enemy forces pulling back out of sight.

If the characters have to pull back, they find a newly created defensive line behind them on a favorable sloping ground, and the enemy stops their advance and pulls back out of range of the gnome crossbows. Now Sheernobb is totally surrounded.

Meldreeb approaches you, "Without your help I'm not sure what would have happened. Once again you guys save the day, or should I say morning."

Treasure:

Defeat the giants attacking from the rear and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 10 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 greatclub (192 gp per character); +1 hide armor (97 gp per character); ring of protection +1 (167 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 greatclub (2) (192 gp per character/per club); +1 hide armor (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); ring of protection +1 (2) (167 gp per character/per ring).

APL 12: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 greataxe (2) (193 gp per character/per axe); +1 chain shirt (2) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance* +1 (2) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

Encounter Four

The sounds of intermittent fighting last until the pale gray of dawn begins to fill the village. All those around you look exhausted. The ever present Meldreeb finds you, "You have been asked to attend a meeting. I think it will decide what happens next. Come on."

DM note: There has been no time to rest and renew spells.

Meldreeb leads you back to the Moot Hall. There are many wounded about being tended by only a couple of gnome clerics. Inside the Moot Hall is more of the same. More wounded, but only one cleric.

If Glenndarc survived the strike team against him, he is in charge of the meeting. If he did not survive the strike team the meeting is lead by Mumbleflash, one of the village elders. Also in attendance are a few junior gnome commanders. It looks like they are waiting on the characters. Mumbleflash is present as well, even if Glenndarc is leading the meeting.

Glenndarc (or Mumbleflash) looks you over. "Glad you are still with us. Here is what we know. The enemy forces have pulled back, but they likely now surround the village. Their numbers are larger than we ever expected. And, they have fought with a coordination we find curious."

Continue with one of the two options below based upon previous character actions.

- If the characters went to fight on the north flank (Encounter Three A) add the following:

"The north flank held thanks to our friends. The breach up front was stopped, but at great cost. And, the south flank held well. The enemy has not retreated. It appears they are trying to surround the village and are regrouping. It is even possible they are receiving reinforcements. I'm sorry to say Commander Keenbolt has not been seen nor heard from since early in the battle when he went to help out the south flank."

- If the characters went to help close the breach (Encounter Three B) add the following:

"The breach up front was stopped thanks to our friends. The north flank was turned and the rearguard nearly overrun. Once again we owe our thanks to our friends for helping to prevent total disaster to the rear. And, the south flank held well. The enemy has not retreated. It appears they have surround the village and are regrouping. It is even possible they are receiving reinforcements. I'm sorry to say Commander Keenbolt has not been seen nor heard from since early in the battle when he went to help out the south flank."

If the characters wish to go search for Keenbolt, Glenndarc (or Mumbleflash) asks them to do so quickly and return with news of what they find. Skip to "The Slain Site." If they do not offer to search for Commander Keenbolt, skip to Encounter Five.

The Slain Site

A quick search along the south flank, Search (DC 15), finds those last known to be with Keenbolt all slain near a spot not far within the southern defenses. It appears this particular area saw some heavy combat. Pieces of torn gnome bodies are everywhere. Here are some clues that the characters might discover:

- A Search check (DC 10) reveals the bodies of Jebedar the Cleric and several Gnome-at-Arms. A Heal check (DC 18) reveals the cleric was killed by some cold spell, not by a weapon. The other two gnomes were killed with a precise slash to the throat, although they sport other much less lethal wounds. All the wounds were delivered by a very large slashing weapon.
- A Search check (DC 20) reveals torn, bloody pieces that are identifiable as the remains of Commander Keenbolt himself. There is not enough of the gnome left to *raise dead*, and if the characters use other means to try to resurrect Keenbolt, his soul is either unwilling or unable to return. Someone took great pains to eradicate the famed Commander of Sheernobb.
- A Survival check (DC 15) reveals sparse tracks of the enemies. Only an occasional giantish boot-print is found, as though the giants didn't touch the ground very often. With a successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) or a Wisdom check (DC 15), the character realizes that the gnomes' opponents were probably flying very close to the ground.
- If the characters have some means to communicate with any of the dead gnomes (except Keenbolt, who cannot be contacted in any way), the gnomes remember being attacked by a group of ogre mages.

They were surprised by the giants because they attacked quickly from within the defensive line during an intense part of the battle. The gnome cleric died first from a *cone of cold*. The two gnome-at-arms fought bravely, but were overcome by a *sleep* spell. While sleeping, the ogre mages slit their throats. None can recall seeing Keenbolt's death. They all remember him still fighting.

Encounter Five

Have the characters return to the Moot Hall and report what they learned of Keenbolt if they searched the Slain Site. The other gnomes are visibly shaken by the news.

After a moment of silence, Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) declares, "It is now time to think about evacuating the village and move the survivors into the protection of the Greenway Valley. There is one possible way for most of the villagers to sneak out past the surrounding enemy. Keenbolt himself insisted on it just in case. There is a small unassuming rent just to the southwest of the Moot Hall. Inside is a well-concealed entrance into an escape tunnel, which leads to a hidden spot west of the village."

APL 6 & 8

Our scouts report the enemy has pulled back even further, but they still surround us here. It will take time to gather the villagers and prepare for their escape. We may just have a day or so before the enemy attempts another full scale assault."

The party may rest somewhat peacefully. There are small probing missions by the giant forces but nothing major during the night.

APL 10 & 12

Our scouts report the enemy has pulled back for the moment, but they still surround us here. It will take time to gather the villagers and prepare for their escape. We may just have a few hours or so before the enemy attempts another full scale assault."

No rest for a APL 10 and 12 party. They must push on to try and save Sheernoob and it's population.

ALL APL's

Swifttoe, the ranking gnome commander adds, "I intend to do what Keenbolt himself would have done. I will remain behind to hold the defenses as long as possible to allow the non-combatants to sneak away to safety." Several of the other armed gnomes present shout out their will to stay behind as well.

Meldreeb barks out, "And I intend to track down Keenbolt's killers." A few gnome scouts shout out their will to go with Meldreeb.

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) breaks into the shouting, "This is all very brave, but we will need an escort for the refugees. Commander Brimblesock, you will lead the refugees. You may encounter resistance outside the escape passage; we don't know where the giant forces are."

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) then turns to you and asks, "And what of our good friends? We dare not ask more than you have already given. Your sacrifices have bought us invaluable time. There is no need for you to die on this ground. You could yet make an escape and swing north away from the invaders on your own. What will you do now?"

The characters have really four choices here: help defend Sheernoob to give the refugees more time to escape (go to Encounter Six), attempt to track down Keenbolt's killers (go to Encounter Seven), escort the refugees to the Greenway Valley (go to Encounter Eight), or escape the village and head north back to the viscounty on their own (go to Encounter Nine).

For Glennddarc's (or Mumbleflash's) part, he announces his intent is to remain in Sheernoob, entrusting the escaping refugees to the leadership of the best of the remaining gnome commanders, Commander Brimblesock. No argument will convince Glennddarc to leave Sheernoob.

There are only a couple of minor probing enemy attacks during the rest of the day and the following evening. This has provided valuable time to assemble the villagers and start them on their way.

DM note: Extra healing is available if the characters need it. One *raise dead*, one *reincarnation*, one *cure critical wounds*, two *cure serious wounds*, three *cure moderate wounds*, and four *cure light wounds* can be provided at standard cost by surviving gnome clerics. Each of these spells is cast by a 9th level caster. Characters must pay to receive this healing.

Encounter Six

Staying to defend Sheernoob long enough for the refugees to get safely away should appear to be nothing less than a suicide mission. Scouts have been coming in with reports all morning about the enemy regrouping on all sides. Enemy missile fire, both arrow and stone, resumes in full force. Meanwhile, in small groups, those

who are to flee have been going into the rent with the escape tunnel entrance.

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) approaches the characters:

“Once we get word that the refugees are away to the west, I shall give the order to have the tunnel collapsed. In that way the enemy may not learn so quickly that some have escaped.”

He looks up at the sparse clouds passing overhead lit by the morning sun, “On this ground and on this day it will not be so bad to die.”

At that moment an orc arrow strikes a tree next to him. “Though, I could be wrong. I still have a few tricks up my sleeve,” he says with a wink aimed in your direction.

Swifttoe, the last ranking Gnome-at-Arms officer, shouts up the same tree for a scout to come down and report. The Scout drops a rope and quickly slides down as an occasional arrow streaks past him. He reports the enemy is now on the move in all directions with the heaviest numbers still on the east and south. Among them are more heavily armored orcs with shields.

“That must be their miners prepared to fight in the warrens,” replies Swifttoe. He raises his voice so all those still left around him can hear. “We must hold the inner perimeter for 15 minutes against the first assault before retreating into the Moot Hall. Wait for the command. Now, go to your positions.”

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) cautions, “That may be too long.”

“You two come with me,” commands Glennddarc at two nearby Gnome-at-Arms. “We will prepare the Moot Hall for uninvited guests.”

The conversation ends with the rise of guttural battle cries from all around the village. Swifttoe runs off to the east, but not before asking the characters if they wouldn't mind keeping the area in front of the Moot Hall clear of the enemy for the next 15 minutes or so. After a few nervous minutes, a large group appears to challenge the characters. This group is spread out, and approaches from the north up a gentle slope.

The area in front of the Moot Hall is relatively clear as the dirt road from the west passes directly in front of the Hall widening into a fifty foot clearing before continuing on to the east and into more of the sloping ground making up the village. Across the clearing to the north is scattered underbrush and trees. The Hall itself is set into a large wooded hillside.

APL 6 (EL 8)

- ☛ Ogres (2): hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Wolves (6): hp 15 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Orcs (12): hp 6 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

- ☛ Ogres (4): hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Dire Wolves (6): hp 45 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Orcs (12): hp 6 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

- ☛ Ogre 4th Level Barbarian (2): hp 79 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Trolls (4): hp 63 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Ogres (9): hp 30 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Troll Hunter:** hp 130; see *Monster Manual*. This troll has just cast his two ranger spells for the day, so they are active when he enters combat. They are *longstrider* and *resist energy* (fire).

- ☛ Hill Giants (4): hp 102 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Trolls (4): hp 63 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ Ogres (9): hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: These foes try to swamp the characters with their sheer numbers.

Treasure:

Defeat the giant horde and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 101 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 102 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); +1 *hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection* +1 (2) (167 gp per character/per ring).

APL 12: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *battleaxe* (193 gp per character); +1 *chain shirt* (104 gp per character).

While you finish off the last of the enemy on the road, you can't help but be aware of the large number of enemy forces closing in all around you. To your right, Swifttoe races onto the road with nearly a dozen other gnome fighters. Two gnomes disappear as a boulder slams into them from their right. Orcs, orges, some wolves, and a giant burst onto the road behind them. Other gnomes from different directions rush past you into the Moot Hall.

Just as it appears Swifttoe and his last companions are about to be overrun before they can reach your position, a large shadow passes over the approaching combatants' pathway. The trees overhead make it too

difficult to see what that was, but it must have been immense.

Allow the characters to think what they will about the shadow. (It was a dragon roused by the conflicts in the Gnarley. It was only curious at the activity in the area. Feeling neither threatened by the battle below nor hungry, it has flown off back to its lair.) However, the impact on the approaching groups is quick. The orcs panic and begin to dart about in all directions. The wolves slink away into the brush. The ogres chase after the orcs and the giant just stands there looking around. Meanwhile Swifttoe and his companions are pumping their legs for all they are worth in the direction of the characters. Seconds later additional enemy numbers renew their pursuit of the gnomes, and more can be heard and seen closing in from nearly all directions.

Swifttoe shouts at the characters, "Into the Moot Hall, NOW, FAST!"

Impress upon the characters, that to stand here and continue to fight is hopeless. The surrounding enemy forces are too many and closing fast. The Moot Hall offers the only alternative.

Once all are inside, Swifttoe closes the door and begins to set in the crossbar timbers, locking the door from the inside. As he goes about this task, the sound of missiles striking the door from the other side can be heard. No sooner is the last cross-timber ready to set into place than the door shudders with a loud bang. Glenndarc, calls for the characters to come back further into the Moot Hall.

(The Hall has only one entrance from the dirt road as far as the characters know. The stout wooden doorway leads into a large hillside. The entrance hallway is not tall enough for a normal human to stand erect, being only five feet high. Along its wood paneled walls are three doors on the right and one of the left. From the small vertical openings in the wooden walls near each right hand doorway are a couple of gnomes pulling out thick wooden panels. Eighty feet down the hallway is a large opening on the left side into the large meeting hall itself. This is the north end of the meeting hall and is eighty feet long. A wooden railing extends twenty feet ahead separating the hallway from the upper tier of this end of the hall. Looking past the railing into the one hundred-foot long hall shows the main floor to be several wide steps down. Three tiers of five-foot wide steps, each having benches on which to sit, surround the sunken hall. This makes the open lower main floor about 50 x 70. The ceiling height of the main floor easily allows humans and even half-orcs to walk erect. The woodwork within the hall is impressive, from the intricately carved beams, supports and posts to the benches and floor. The east side

of the hall also has three tiers, but on the top tier's center is a long table with chairs behind.)

"Quickly, we have little time. Swifttoe will see to it that three more defensive portals along the front hallway are sealed. Please look around you at the walls. Do you see the four open panels?"

There are four panels open, one on each wall. Two already have their stout defensive iron bound replacements in place. They appear to have enough room for several defenders to fire missile weapons into the Moot Hall through waist high murder holes. The positioning of the defensive panels allows for crossing fields of fire.

Glenndarc continues, "Behind each panel is an escape tunnel which winds around the Hall to join up with the one behind the main table on the top tier. Please, take the one behind the table, as your size will make it difficult for you to manage the other three tunnels. Where they all join, the passage becomes a little larger where it descends deeper into the hill."

At this point Swifttoe comes out of the front hallway and directs the few gnomes with him to take the defensive panel opposite the one the characters are to man. The pounding coming from the front door becomes muted behind the closure. Soon, the sound of the outer door splintering is shortly followed by a slightly louder pounding noise.

"Quickly, take your positions behind the panels," directs Swifttoe. "Those behind the panel furthest from the hallway fire first to draw them in, then the panel opposite the platform with me fires on the second volley from the first group, then the panel from behind the main table fires on the second volley from the group opposite you, and finally the panel closest to the hallway fires on the second volley from the panel behind the platform. The panel opposite the platform seals up first to escape through the tunnels, then the one near the hallway, then the one opposite the hallway, and last the one behind the platform. Go, quickly and prepare. They will be amongst us shortly."

Glenndarc (or Mumbleflash) accompanies the characters to the panel behind the main table. Inside Glenndarc shows the characters how to close and bar the defensive panel and open the murder holes. There is just enough room inside for three characters to shoot or cast spells. For larger than gnome sized characters, the murder holes are waist high, making a kneeling position the only way to use them. (Remember that characters gain the effects of cover behind the panel: +4 to AC and +2 to Reflex saves. Also, they receive +10 to Hide checks.)

All APLs

Orcs (hundreds): hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*. These orcs all wear splint mail and carry heavy wooden shields, raising their AC to 18. Rather than usual orcish armament, these orcs carry spears, short swords, and crossbows.

Combat here basically goes like this:

First round: after the enemy enters the Hall, the far panel fires a volley. The orcs rush into the Hall and attempt to spot targets on the far wall and fire crossbows.

Second round: the far panel fires a volley and the panel opposite the characters fires a volley. The orcs raise shields and rush the far wall as they take fire from their right flank as even more orcs enter the Hall.

Third round: the first two panels fire a volley and the characters should now be firing or taking their action if they chose to follow instructions. The orcs have formed two fronts as their numbers increase and attempt to engage the first panel with spears while rushing the right flank. They now take fire from or suffer from the characters' actions.

Fourth round: the first three panels fire a volley and the panel nearest the entry hall fires a volley. The orcs now have formed a three-sided formation, attempting to engage the first two panels and rushing the characters' position. They now take fire from their rear. New groups of orcs enter the Hall with small battering rams.

Fifth round: those behind the panel opposite the characters seal up and start down the escape tunnel. The other three panels fire or engage at close range through the murder holes. The orcs now form a square engaging all four panels. Battering rams are in position against the panel nearest the entryway and the panel opposite the characters.

Sixth round: those behind the panel nearest the entry hall seal up and start down the escape tunnel. The other two remaining groups fire or take actions. The orcs now begin to batter the characters' panel along with the other two and are trying to get a fourth battering ram across to the far panel.

Seventh round: those behind the panel opposite the entry hall seal up and start down the escape tunnel. The characters now take their action. The orcs nearly have the panel opposite the characters splintered unless the characters have taken any action to slow them down.

Eighth round: the characters seal up and join the others down the escape tunnel. The orcs break through the panel opposite the characters.

Development: Providing the characters are able to get away down the escape tunnel and join the others, they will find themselves descending deeper underground into the hill itself. The tunnel behind them is collapsed. Those larger than a gnome will have to crouch as they wind their way following the gnomes through the underground passageway. Here and there the tunnels appear natural, while in some stretches they have been improved. After what seems like a couple of hours travel, some of the gnomes in front breakthrough a shallow wall of earth and stone into daylight. They are just past an enemy encampment to the south of the village. After a short skirmish with a few camp guards, they rapidly make their way for the Greenway Valley in hopes of meeting up with the refugees. Go to the Conclusion.

Encounter Seven

Meldreeb's plan is to first leave the village with those fleeing to the Greenway Valley. Once out of the escape tunnel beyond the village to the west he plans to strike out to the south away from the refugees and then swing back to the east to attempt to pick up the trail of the assassins south of the enemy besieging the village. He tells the characters to meet him in front of the Moot Hall in a few minutes.

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) approaches the characters:

"Once we get word that your party and the refugees are away to the west, I shall give the order to have the tunnel collapsed. In that way the enemy may not learn so quickly that some have escaped."

He looks up at the sparse clouds passing overhead lit by the morning sun, "On this ground and on this day it will not be so bad to die."

At that moment an orc arrow strikes a tree next to him. "Though, I could be wrong. I still have a few tricks up my sleeve," he says with a wink aimed in your direction.

"Ah, here comes Meldreeb now."

Meldreeb approaches the characters along with five gnome scouts in muted brown leathers. Meldreeb is outfitted nearly the same as his companions.

"Well, are we ready to go play hide and seek – revenge?" Meldreeb wears an intense look on his face you have never seen before.

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) turns to the now enlarged group, "Time to go. The last of the villagers

to leave have entered the rent behind you. Good hunting.”

Allow the characters to role-play their goodbyes as they wish. No powers of persuasion can convince Glenndarc (or Mumbleflash) to leave Sheernobb.

Following the refugees down the escape tunnel takes some time for those larger than gnomes. Crouching is necessary to make it through the passageway. Two of the gnome scouts go last. After they pass through the entranceway into the escape tunnel from the back of the rent, they pull out hammers left on either side of the tunnel and pound out wedges. Once the wedges pop out the tunnel behind them collapses sealing off any possible pursuit, or turning back.

By the time the characters emerge back into daylight to the west of Sheernobb, the sounds of battle can easily be heard. Fortunately, no enemy is in sight. The refugees and their escort make haste to the west, toward the Greenway Valley.

Meldreeb calls for his small force to gather around.

“First, we travel south for a little less than a hour and then turn east and enter the forest south of the attackers. We must be watchful not to run into any of their patrols. We need our passing to go unnoticed if we are to succeed. It is my guess the assassins are likely making their way back to the hill fortress in the forest. Their talents are not needed for the grunt work of battering down the village. If we are lucky they are in no hurry and expect no pursuit.”

He looks at you, “You are the only ones left who fought a group such as this and can tell if we come across the right ones. Your help is greatly appreciated.”

Allow the characters to interact with Meldreeb and make any adjustments to the plan that seem reasonable. If the characters argue that flying ogre mages will be impossible to track, Meldreeb suspects that the ogre mages will probably keep very close to the ground to avoid notice by the gnomes of Sheernobb. They may knock the occasional leaf or snag the occasional branch as they move.

If any of the characters ask Meldreeb why he is doing this he will look at the character(s) with the most serious and intense expression they have ever seen and say:

“Commander Keenbolt has left a widow and young ones behind, and his widow is my daughter and his young ones my . . . I cannot face them without doing everything I can. Do you understand?”

The gnome the characters once knew as happy-go-lucky and overly chatty now sets a swift and silent pace in pursuit of his quarry. Not long after entering the forest a scout sent ahead, (or a character who volunteered to take point and discovers a patrol ahead in the woods heading their way), stops the group. A small patrol of six orcs, an ogre and a wolf are approaching in this direction. The group can make any decision they wish. They can hide in the hopes the patrol does not see them, circle around them, or take them out and leave no witnesses. As this attack poses no real challenge for even an APL 6 party, no combat experience is awarded for this fight.

All APLs (EL 0)

🐉 **Ogre:** hp 29; see *Monster Manual*.

🐺 **Wolf:** hp 15; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Orcs (6):** hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Treasure:

Defeat the scouting party and take their equipment.

All APLs: L: 51 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

After dealing with the patrol, the group continues on through the forest for nearly two hours before coming across a well-used trail. From the looks of things this trail has been used by some of the forces now attacking the village and very possibly leads back to the hill fortress deeper in the forest. It is now mid-day. On a Survival check (DC 20) tracks similar to those left at Keenbolt's murder site are discovered. The tracks appear to be the most recent and head away from the village. The ogre mages didn't think anyone was left in the village to follow them, and so they aren't worried about leaving tracks. In fact, they're walking. Luck is with the characters.

Following the trail is easy. Clearly, the ogre mage assassins haven't thought they might be tracked, and are walking on foot. The trail winds its way through the forest and the signs of the assassins continue to be the most recent along the way. Crossing one small creek proves a little nervous, but the signs of the assassins did appear again on the other side. The day passes on into twilight. Meldreeb would like to press on, but admits resting now might be for the best.

Have the group set their watches for the night. They will notice a glow in the sky to their northwest in the direction of Sheernobb. Sheernobb has fallen and is burning. The evening passes without incident, but feel free to make things tense if time permits – just no actual encounters of a non-mundane nature.

The morning dawns clear with the faint smell of smoke in the air coming from the direction of the village.

A couple of hours' travel continues to show the assassins are still ahead of them. On a Survival check (DC 25) the characters discover signs of a cold camp made by the assassins.

Ahead, the sound of flowing water can be heard signaling another stream.

The group may approach the stream any way they wish. What they discover is that the tracks lead into the stream, but not out of it on the other side.

The Assassins' Tale

After ambushing Keenbolt and his forces, the assassins stayed through the following night in one of the giant encampments outside the village and left camp the next morning about the same time the characters entered the escape tunnel. Their pace has been leisurely and unhurried, having completed their mission to kill Keenbolt. However, one of their number felt they were becoming too lax and should take more precautions. So, they used this stream as a means to check out if they had any unwanted company. The ogre mages walked out into the water, flew directly up, and have hidden themselves, *invisible*, in the forest behind the characters. These cunning assassins intend to stalk the characters for a while and, if necessary, kill them later.

The characters need to make three successful Survival checks (DC 25) to discover the assassins have doubled back on them and are now behind them. Of course, they could possibly figure this out on their own without making these checks. However, the assassins are now following the characters and remaining out of sight. Use of opposing Hide and Spot/Move Silently and Listen rolls become necessary if the characters attempt to back track behind them. Remember that *invisible* characters have +20 to Hide checks if they are moving, and +40 to Hide checks if they are standing still. It is now time for a cat and mouse game. Opposing skill checks need to be used as each group stalks the other and tries to jockey for position. Give the assassins a slight edge unless the characters made their three Survival rolls earlier. Give the assassins a clear advantage if the characters continue on the trail across the stream anyway toward the hill fortress, unless the characters are using this as a ruse to flush out the assassins.

This entire situation depends on the actions of the characters. You could even allow the assassins the luck of picking off one or more of the gnome scouts, if this will put a scare into the characters. Feel free to describe the forest setting as time allows. The forest here spreads

across uneven ground with rock outcroppings here and there. This all culminates in either the two groups discovering each other or one or the other attacking first. Combat occurs in the forest either on or off the trail depending on the situation.

All APLs

Ogre Mages (2): hp 37 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Meldreeb: male gnome Rog7/Wiz(III)2; hp 58; see Appendix One.

Gnome Scouts (5): male gnome Rog3; hp 20 each; see Appendix One.

Setup: Meldreeb and his scouts will face off against these two ogre mages, leaving the rest of the assassin group (depending upon APL, below) to deal with the characters directly. You don't need to fight out this "side combat" roll by roll; just describe Meldreeb and his scouts in pitched battle. As long as the characters win their fight, Meldreeb and his scouts win theirs.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Ogre Mage:** hp 37; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Ogre Mages (2):** hp 37 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Ogre Mages (4):** hp 37 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Ogre Mage Assassins (4):** male ogre mage Rog4; hp 85 each; see Appendix One.

Tactics: These assassins prefer confusion and misdirection to straight-up combat. They often become invisible and retreat, only to strike again from an unexpected direction. They also use their *darkness* ability (which they can use while invisible) to split up the party as best they can.

Treasure:

Defeat the ogre mages and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 38 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 50 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 75 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 12: L: 25 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *greatsword* (4) (196 gp per character/per sword); +1 *chain shirt* (4) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance* +1 (4) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

A search of the fallen assassins turns up three items of interest. First is a note detailing the contract to kill Keenbolt during the battle at Sheernobb including his

description and a rough layout of the village itself. The note is unsigned, but the reward is listed as 3,000 gp plus an undisclosed item previously agreed upon. Second, the coins in their sacks come from Dyvers, Verbobonc, Furyondy, and Hardby. Lastly, there is a crude map of the region with unknown markings next to each hamlet, village, town, crossroads, and bridge appearing on the map. (These are all references written by one of the assassins, which only he knows. And if spoken to after death, he will not care to reveal their meaning.) If the map is closely examined by dusting it with powder, slight indentations can be made out showing lines drawn from the Gnarley into the Greenway Valley, into the southern Viscounty as far as Fort Wilfrick and across the Gnarley near Twilight Falls. This cryptic map identifies the targets of the Divide and Conquer Interactive at Stuffed COWS 2003.

Development: If the characters eliminate this second group of assassins, they have deprived the enemy of over half their spies in the region of Verbobonc and the Gnarley. Also, Meldreeb insists upon heading with all speed to the Greenway Valley in order to catch up with the survivors of Sheernobb. On this return trip the group encounters two more enemy patrols, one nearly half way between the Gnarley Forest and the Greenway Valley. Neither group poses a challenge to a skilled and careful party. Go next to the Conclusion.

Encounter Eight

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) thanks the characters for offering to escort the refugees to the Greenway Valley. He now provides instructions on the morning after a tense day and night of preparation and waiting.

“I must admit, I feel better knowing that our villagers have the best escort guards I have left to spare between yourselves and Commander Brimblesock.”

Scouts begin coming in with reports about the enemy regrouping on all sides. Enemy missile fire, both arrow and stone, resumes. Meanwhile, in small groups, those who are to flee have been going into the rent with the escape tunnel entrance under the direction of Brimblesock. The commander has seen to it those gnome-at-arms and scouts going along as escorts are sent into the rent one at a time with different groups of villagers.

Glennddarc (or Mumbleflash) continues:

“Once we get word that the refugees are away to the west, I shall give the order to have the tunnel collapsed. In that way the enemy may not learn so

quickly that some have escaped. It is important that you strike hard to the west. Try not to have any enemy see the refugees and live to tell of it.”

He looks up at the sparse clouds passing overhead lit by the morning sun, “On this ground and on this day it will not be so bad to die.”

At that moment an orc arrow strikes a tree next to him. “Though, I could be wrong. I still have a few tricks up my sleeve,” he says with a wink aimed in your direction.

Brimblesock approaches, “Glennddarc, it is time we were away. One of my scouts returned to let us know the villagers are well screened from the enemy on the west after leaving the tunnel. It seems all their attention is focused on their final assault. But, we dare not count on our luck too long. I hope to see you again soon.”

He clasps arms with Glennddarc, looks your way, and says “We need to leave. I’ll be your guide.”

Ducking into the rent is bad enough for those taller than a gnome, but having to crouch through the long escape tunnel makes it difficult to stand erect once on the outside again. The refugees are all hidden amongst the heavy undergrowth of a ravine completely screened from the direction of the village. A few gnome scouts can be seen watching in that direction as the sounds of the assault reaches into the ravine.

A gnome-at-arms approaches Commander Brimblesock and yourselves, “Commander, we have some of the stronger adults taking turns carrying the little ones, but even at that we cannot make much speed and keep together. Everyone who can use a crossbow has been issued one and a case of bolts. We have sent out scouts ahead and await your command.”

“Let us move,” orders the Commander. Turning to you, “I would consider it an honor if you would assist the rear guard. At this point that would consist of yourselves and the three scouts watching our backs above us. The remainder of my gnomes will be spread along the flanks of the column as well as a vanguard. In this way we should be able to prevent stragglers and mount a quick defense if necessary.”

Have the characters create a marching order showing how they intend to follow the column of retreating gnomes.

The retreat of the refugees from Sheernobb so far has proceeded smoothly. The going is slower than you expected. But the use of the terrain to screen the movement of the gnomes toward the west does make

it difficult for such a large group to be noticed from a distance. The sounds of the morning assault on Sheernobb have faded into the sounds of the gnomes trudging ahead and the normal sounds of the hill country known as the Kron.

Ahead, the refugees cross the road that leads north towards Homlet and south towards Celene. The road west into the Greenway Valley lies to the north, but Brimblesocks thinks it best to remain in the hill country ahead for better cover.

Have any of the characters on the right (north) make a Spot check (DC 15). Successful characters notice a very large ogre patrol making way rapidly in their direction from the northeast. They estimate its size to be over fifty. Any character with Spot check over 20 also notices another smaller patrol closing in from the north, consisting of trolls.

Brimblesock can be heard shouting orders ahead, while a scout rushes up to you, "The commander requests that you skirt behind our position on the hill in front just past the crest so as not to be seen by a second group of the enemy coming at us from the left. This should allow you to attack them from seemingly out of nowhere. He wants you to keep that group from attacking our left flank while we engage the larger group."

The sight in front of you is a strange one. Brimblesock has the gnomes in a formation you have never seen before with his warriors in line facing the enemy and two lines of villagers in the grass in front of the warriors with another line of villagers behind in the grass above the warriors. But there is no time to fully take it in as you run past the crest behind them to get into position on the left flank.

No sooner do you round the slope to take up the left flank on a grassy slope than you see a group of trolls making straight for the position you just took up at an all out run. This gives them only a moment's pause before they launch themselves at you.

Creatures:

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛Trolls (3): hp 63 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛Troll Ranger: hp 89; see Appendix One.

☛Trolls (3): hp 63 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛Troll Hunter: hp 130; see *Monster Manual*. This troll has just cast his two ranger spells for the day, so they are

active when he enters combat. They are *longstrider* and *resist energy*(fire).

Trolls (4): hp 63 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛Troll Hunters (3): hp 130 each; see *Monster Manual*. These trolls have just cast their two ranger spells for the day, so they are active when they enter combat. They are *resist energy*(acid) and *resist energy*(fire).

Tactics: These trolls fight fearlessly, and to the death.

Treasure:

Defeat the trolls and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *battleaxe* (193 gp per character); +1 *chain shirt* (104 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *battleaxe* (3) (193 gp per character/per axe); +1 *chain shirt* (3) (104 gp per character/per shirt).

Development: By the time the characters are finished with their combat, the larger one behind them is also nearly finished. Some of the ogres can be seen running off, while there are only a couple of minor combats being handled by some gnome-at-arms and scouts. Many of the enemy dead and wounded lay scattered over the hillside. Most are in front of where the gnome line stood sporting crossbow bolts. But, there are also a number of gnome casualties: six dead and eighteen wounded.

A tired looking and bloody Brimblesock trudges over to you, "We need to find a defensible location with water. There are some rougher hills ahead that just might work for us. But they can work for the enemy as well. I don't like that fact that they had such a sizable force this far west. And, the fact that they came at us from the north means they probably control the road to the north as well. We can't take more encounters like this. If you wouldn't mind taking rear guard again, we need to get moving."

If the characters want to find such a location, they can do so in a couple of hours with a successful Survival roll (DC 15). If the characters don't find one, then within two hours the advanced scouts locate a good defensible camping site. The refugees set up for the night in a protected notch between two hills where a small stream passes. A picket line is established. Brimblesock asks the characters to be part of the night watch. As darkness falls a glow can be seen to the east. Sheernobb has fallen and is burning. Morale in the camp is low.

On the last watch, a new glow can be seen. This time it is to the west. Brimblesocks will approach any characters on the third watch and tell them that must be a village he knows of down this very stream toward the Greenway Valley. He was hoping to find temporary refuge there later today before moving into the valley. The gnome commander always seemed to share Keenbolt's confident manner. He now looks at the characters with bewilderment in his eyes as he asks for any suggestions.

Whatever suggestions the characters have which lead them into the valley skirting the road to the north and the village to the west keep them out of harm's way. Keep it tense however, with descriptions of coming upon an empty campsite used by the enemy, passing through an abandoned village, and a hillside with signs of a herd of sheep having been slaughtered and carried off, leaving behind the bodies of several shepherds. Some relief is felt when coming upon a strong gnome defensive position. Finally, the Greenway Valley spreads out before the refugees. Go to the Conclusion.

Encounter Nine

If the characters decide to leave Sheernobb on their own, Glenndarc (or Mumbleflash) suggests they take off to the north, where the patrols are probably weakest. As long as the characters are at least a little bit careful, they can avoid all giant patrols in the area and escape Sheernobb's fate. The first night camping away from Sheernobb, the characters can see an orange glow on the horizon to the south. Clearly, Sheernobb has fallen and is now in flames. Go to the Conclusion.

Conclusion

Sheernobb has fallen along with other gnome and mixed communities to the east. In the Greenway Valley, the Sheernobb refugees join even more refugees from other eastern settlements with news of a much larger invasion than anyone expected.

The characters are called to attend a meeting. Attending the meeting are the gnome clan leaders of the Kron Hills Alliance, and representatives from House Asbury, House Delevue, House Milinous, the Mounted Borderers, the Gnarley Rangers, Burne's Badgers, several mixed race communities of the Kron Hills, and two of the Gnarley Elven Clans. This mixed group sits down to a council of war!

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 role-playing) to each character.

Encounter Two:

Defeat the ogre mage assassins

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

Encounter Three:

Defeat the giants on the north flank **-or-** defend the breach

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

Encounter Six, Seven, -or- Eight:

Defeat the invading giants and orcs (Encounter Six), ogre mage assassins (Encounter Seven), **-or-** the troll support force (Encounter Eight)

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

Story Awards

Good roleplaying

APL 6	120 XP
APL 8	150 XP
APL 10	180 XP
APL 12	210 XP

Combat heroism and skillful strategy

APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP

Total Possible Experience

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.

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

Encounter Two:

Defeat the ogre mage assassins and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatsword* (196 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 16 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatsword* (2) (196 gp per character/per sword).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatsword* (2) (196 gp per character/per sword); *+I chain shirt* (2) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +I* (2) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatsword* (4) (196 gp per character/per sword); *+I chain shirt* (4) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +I* (4) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

NOTE: Award treasure from either Encounter Three A or Encounter Three B, NOT both.

Encounter Three A:

Defeat the giants and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 4 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 2 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); *+I hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection +I* (2) (167 gp per character/per ring).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); *+I hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection +I* (2) (167 gp per character/per ring); *+I heavy flail* (193 gp per character); *+I chain shirt* (104 gp per character); *cloak of resistance +I* (83 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greataxe* (2) (193 gp per character/per axe); *+I chain shirt* (3) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +I* (3) (83 gp per character/per cloak); *+I heavy flail* (193 gp per character).

Encounter Three B:

Defeat the raiders and take their equipment.

All APLs: L: 201 gp; C: 0; M: 0.

Defeat the giants attacking from the rear and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 10 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatclub* (192 gp per character); *+I hide armor* (97 gp per character); *ring of protection +I* (167 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); *+I hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection +I* (2) (167 gp per character/per ring).

APL 12: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+I greataxe* (2) (193 gp per character/per axe); *+I chain shirt* (2) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +I* (2) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

NOTE: Award treasure from either Encounter Six, Encounter Seven, or Encounter Eight, NOT all three.

Encounter Six:

Defeat the giant horde and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 101 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 102 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatclub* (2) (192 gp per character/per club); *+1 hide armor* (2) (97 gp per character/per hide); *ring of protection +1* (2) (167 gp per character/per ring).

APL 12: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 battleaxe* (193 gp per character); *+1 chain shirt* (104 gp per character).

Encounter Seven:

Defeat the scouting party and take their equipment.

All APLs: L: 51 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

Defeat the ogre mages and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 38 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 50 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 75 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 12: L: 25 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatsword* (4) (196 gp per character/per sword); *+1 chain shirt* (4) (104 gp per character/per shirt); *cloak of resistance +1* (4) (83 gp per character/per cloak).

Encounter Eight:

Defeat the trolls and take their equipment.

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 battleaxe* (193 gp per character); *+1 chain shirt* (104 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 battleaxe* (3) (193 gp per character/per axe); *+1 chain shirt* (3) (104 gp per character/per shirt).

Total Possible Treasure:

APL 6 514 gp

APL 8 1,250 gp

APL 10 2,100 gp

APL 12 3,000 gp

Items for the Adventure Record

☛ **Gratitude of the Kron Hills gnomes:** For their bravery in the defense of Sheernobb, the characters have earned an Influence Point with the Kron Hills Gnomes. Furthermore, the gnomes of the Kron will provide access to the items listed under “Items Found During the Adventure,” below. This character receives further reward based on the decision made in the course of the

adventure, as follows (mark only one, at most, of the following, and cross out the others)

☛ **If the characters stayed to defend Sheernobb,** then Lord Avgustin admires their bravery. The characters earn an Influence Point with Lord Avgustin, and will be accepted into the Avgustin House Guard meta-org if they choose. If already members of the Avgustin House Guard, they can accept an early promotion to a higher level if they meet the other qualifications. Furthermore, this character can purchase the armor enhancement *invulnerability* after any Verbobonc regional scenario. They do this by paying the difference in cost between the old and new armor.

☛ **If the characters hunted down the assassins,** then Lord Milinous admires their unquenchable lust for vengeance. The characters earn an Influence Point with House Milinous, and will be accepted into the Milinous House Guard meta-org if they choose. If already members of the Milinous House Guard, they can accept an early promotion to a higher level if they meet the other qualifications. Furthermore, this character can purchase the weapon enhancement *bane (giants)* after any Verbobonc regional scenario. They do this by paying the difference in cost between the old and new armor.

☛ **If the characters led the refugees to safety,** then Lady Asbury admires their dedication to the defenseless. The characters earn an Influence Point with House Asbury, and will be accepted into the Asbury House Guard meta-org if they choose. If already members of the Asbury House Guard, they can accept an early promotion to a higher level if they meet the other qualifications. Furthermore, this character can purchase the weapon enhancement *axiomatic* after any Verbobonc regional scenario. They do this by paying the difference in cost between the old and new armor.

☛ **If the characters left on their own and left Sheernobb to fend for themselves,** then bards of Verbobonc learn of their actions and spread the word of their unheroic deeds to one and all in the Viscounty. All Charisma based checks in the region of Verbobonc suffer a –2 modifier. Furthermore, all goods and services in the Verbobonc region cost 10% more for the character. Contact the Verbobonc Triad for details on fixing this problem.

Appendix One: Non-Player Characters

Residents of Sheernobb

☛ **Glennddarc:** male gnome Wiz7; CR 7; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 7d4+7; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB +3; Grapple -2; Atk +4 melee (1d3/17-20, +1 *keen dagger*) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, light crossbow); SA spells; SQ familiar (weasel), gnome traits; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +10, Appraise +6, Concentration +6, Craft (gemcutting) +10, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +2, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +6, Search +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4, Tumble +3; Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Illusion).

Possessions: wool clothing, spell component pouch, light crossbow, various gems (total value 300 gp), +1 *keen dagger*, *ring of minor energy resistance (fire)*, *amulet of natural armor +2*.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/2; save DC 14 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level for Illusion spells): 0—*dancing lights, flare, light, open/close*, 1st—*grease, obscuring mist, silent image, unseen servant, ventriloquism*, 2nd—*glitterdust, hypnotic pattern, minor image, Tasha's hideous laughter*, 3rd—*hold person, displacement, major image*, 4th—*lesser geas, shadow conjuration*.

☛ **Meldreeb:** male gnome Rog6/Wiz(Ill)2; CR 8; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 6d6+2d4+18; hp 58; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 leather armor), touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB +5; Grapple +2; Atk +8 melee (1d3+2/19-20, +1 *dagger*) or +9 ranged (1d6/19-20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +3d6, spells; SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +13, Appraise +11, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +12, Gather Information +10, Hide +16, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Open Locks +12, Profession (herbalist) +3, Spot +9, Tumble +5, Use Rope +5; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll.

Possessions: +1 *dagger*, leather armor, dagger, light crossbow, flint and steel.

☛ **Gnome Scouts:** male gnome Rog3; CR 7; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 3d6+6; hp 20; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 leather armor), touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB +2; Grapple -1; Atk +4 melee

(1d3/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d6/19-20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, gnome traits, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Hide +13, Move Silently +9, Listen +8, Search +5, Spot +8, Tumble +9; Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: leather armor, dagger, light crossbow, flint and steel, 25 gp.

Giant Forces

Encounter Two (APL 10 and 12) and Encounter Seven (APL 12)

☛ **Ogre Mage Assassins:** male ogre mage Rog4; CR 10; Large Giant; HD 5d8+4d6+45; hp 85; Init +6; Spd 40 ft. fly 40 ft. (good); AC 21 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural, +5 +1 *chain shirt*), touch 11, flat-footed 21; BAB +6; Grapple +18; Atk +14 melee (3d6+13/19-20, +1 *greatsword*) or +13 melee (1d6+8/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (3d6+13/19-20, +1 *greatsword*) or +13/+8 melee (1d6+8/19-20, dagger); Space/Reach 10 ft/10 ft; SA sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 90 ft., evasion, low-light vision, regeneration 5, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; SR19, AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 26, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +16, Concentration +11, Hide +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +14, Spellcraft +7, Spot +8; Combat Reflexes, Expert Tactician*, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: +1 *chain shirt*, +1 *greatsword*, *cloak of resistance +1*, six daggers.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*darkness, invisibility*, 1/day—*charm person* (DC 15), *cone of cold* (DC 19), *gaseous form, polymorph, sleep* (DC 15). Caster level 9th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Flight (Su): An ogre mage can cease or resume flight as a free action. When using *gaseous form* it can fly at its normal speed and has perfect maneuverability.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid do normal damage to an ogre mage.

*see Appendix Two

Encounter Three A (APLs 10 and 12)

☛ **Hill Giant Barbarian:** male hill giant Bbn4; CR 11; Large Giant; HD 12d8+4d12+96; hp 187; Init -1; Spd 50 ft.; AC 22 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural, +5 +1 *chain shirt*), touch 8, flat-footed 22; BAB +12; Grapple +27; Atk +24 melee (2d8+17/17-20, +1 *heavy flail*) or +22 melee (1d4+11, slam) or +11 ranged (2d6+11, rock); Full Atk

+24/+19/+14 melee (2d8+17/17-20, +1 *heavy flail*) or +22/+17/+12 melee (1d4+11, slam) or +11/+6/+1 ranged (2d6+11, rock); Space/Reach 10 ft/10 ft; SA rage 2/day, rock throwing; SQ fast movement, rock catching, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +19, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 32, Dex 8, Con 22, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Intimidate +12, Jump +13, Listen +5, Spot +5; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (heavy flail), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 heavy flail, cloak of resistance +1, rocks.

Rage (Ex) 2/day – HD 12d8+4d12+128; hp 219; AC 20, touch 6, flat-footed 20; Grapple +29; Atk +26 melee (2d8+20/17-20, +1 *heavy flail*) or +24 melee (1d4+13, slam) or +11 ranged (2d6+13, rock); Full Atk +26/+21/+16 melee (2d8+20/17-20, +1 *heavy flail*) or +24/+19/+14 melee (1d4+13, slam) or +11/+6/+1 ranged (2d6+13, rock); SV Fort +21, Will +10; Str 36, Con 24; lasts 10 rounds.

Encounter Three A (APL 12) and Encounter Three B (APL 12)

Ogre Berserker: male ogre Bbn8; CR 11; Large Giant; HD 4d8+8d12+48; hp 118; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural, +5 +1 *chain shirt*), touch 10, flat-footed 20; BAB +11; Grapple +23; Atk +20 melee (3d6+13/19-20/x3, +1 *greataxe*) or +11 ranged (1d8+8, javelin); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (3d6+13/19-20/x3, +1 *greataxe*) or +11/+6/+1 ranged (1d8+8, javelin); Space/Reach 10 ft/10 ft; SA rage 3/day; SQ damage reduction 1/–, fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 26, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Climb +13, Hide –5, Jump +17, Listen +6, Spot +2, Survival +12; Cleave, Improved Critical (greataxe), Power Attack, Power Critical (greataxe)*, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 greataxe, cloak of resistance +1, four javelins.

Rage (Ex) 3/day – HD 4d8+8d12+75; hp 142; AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; Grapple +25; Atk +22 melee (3d6+16/19-20/x3, +1 *greataxe*) or +11 ranged (1d8+10, javelin); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (3d6+16/19-20/x3, +1 *greataxe*) or +11/+6/+1 ranged (1d8+10, javelin); SV Fort +17, Will +6; Str 30, Con 22; lasts 9 rounds.

*see Appendix Two

Encounter Eight (APL 8)

Troll Ranger: male troll Rgr3; CR 8; Large Giant; HD 6d8+3d8+54; hp 89; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (-1

size, +1 Dex, +5 natural, +4 chain shirt), touch 10, flat-footed 18; BAB +7; Grapple +18; Atk +14 melee (1d8+7, claw); Full Atk +14 melee (1d8+7, 2 claws) and +11 melee (1d6+3, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft/10 ft; SA rend 2d6+10; SQ darkvision 90 ft., favored enemy (elves +2), low-light vision, regeneration 5, scent, wild empathy, AL NE; SV Fort +14, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 24, Dex 12, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide –2, Listen +14, Knowledge (nature) +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +14, Survival +5; Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Multiattack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (claw).

Possessions: battered chain shirt.

Rend (Ex): If a troll hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+10 points of damage.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a troll.

Appendix Two: New Rules

Expert Tactician [General] (from Song and Silence)

Your tactical skills work to your advantage.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, base attack bonus +2, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: You can make one extra melee attack (or do anything that can be done as a melee attack or a melee touch attack, including attempts to disarm, trip, or make a grab to start a grapple) against one foe who is within melee reach and denied a Dexterity bonus against your melee attacks for any reason. You take your extra attack when it's your turn, either before or after your regular action. If several foes are within melee reach and denied Dexterity bonuses against your attacks, you can use this feat against only one of them.

Note: This feat first appeared in *Sword and Fist*. This version supersedes the one originally printed there.

Power Critical [General] (from Masters of the Wild)

Choose one weapon, such as a longsword or a greataxe. With that weapon, you know how to hit where it hurts.

Prerequisites: Improved Critical with weapon, base attack bonus +12, proficiency with weapon.

Benefit: Once per day, you can declare a single melee attack with your chosen kind of weapon to be an automatic threat before you make the attack roll. If the attack is successful, you roll to confirm the critical, regardless of whether the actual attack roll was a threat.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you do, it applies to a new kind of weapon. You may use this ability only once per day per kind of weapon to which it applies.

Player Handout One

Invitation

You are cordially invited to attend the 500th Anniversary of the founding of Sheernobb. As an honorary citizen of the village and defender of the same, you will be treated with all honors according to gnome traditions.

Signed,

Glennddarc
Headgnome

Critical Events Summary Decision at Sheernoob

Did the characters ever treat any of the ranking gnomes poorly? Yes No

If yes what are the characters names and player names?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

Did the character keep *Glennddarc alive in the Moot Hall?* Yes No

Did the characters go assist the northern flank? Yes No

Where they successful in their mission there? Yes No

Did the characters go to stop the breach at the front gate? Yes No

Did the characters help defend the rents and the npc's? Yes No

If yes please list the characters names who did so.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 2 |
| 2 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 |

Did the characters then help defend the breach? Yes No

Did they discover the remains of Keenbolt? Yes No

Which ending did they choose?

Helped to defend Sheernobb to give the refugees more time to escape. Yes

Attempted to track down Keenbolt's killers. Yes

Helped escort the refugees to the Greenway Valley. Yes

Left the village and head north back to the Viscounty on their own. Yes

If yes please list the characters names who left on their own.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 |