



HER DYING WISH

You've come to the wild frontier outpost of Ylraphon, a town rebuilt from destruction and now ruled by adventurers, to pass on a proud noblewoman's final wish to her dungeon-raiding heirs. Yet the young heroes of House Marsh have delved too deep. Can you rescue them from a trap-filled ruin, vengeful assassins, and a mysterious entity that turns its attackers into its defenders?

A 4-hour adventure for 5th-10th level characters

JEREMY FORBING

Author

Adventure Code: CCC-YLRA01-01

Optimized For: APL 8

Version: 1.72

Edited by: Fred Upton and Mickey Tan

Ylraphon Setting Development: Jeremy Forbing, Grace Li, Gabe Resneck, Fred Upton

Ylraphon Color Map Cartography by: Derek Ruiz / Elven Tower Cartography (based on a map by Jeremy Forbing)

www.elventower.com

"Whispers over Ylraphon" Glyph by: Jay Africa

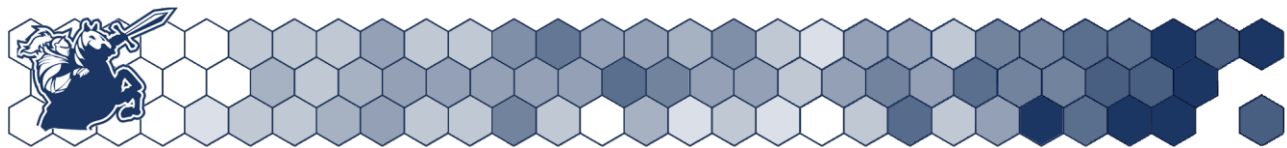
Playtested by: Jonathan Forbing, Paul Myers, Timothy Hanson, Todd Thomas, Johnathan Wright, David Pakirdjian, Benjamin Scott Iorillo, Brandon Turner, Greg Villalobos, Drew Carr, Victor Eichhorn, Brian To, Jamie Lockett, Westin Hogle, Cody Landis, Joe Gonzales, David Villareal, Wes McCann, Timothy Cheng, Buddy Arnold, Mickey Tan, Eric Montijo, Mark Mapes, Jesse Smith, Violet Fermin, Sean Frankwick, Darryl Miller, John Prichard, Shawn Callender, Carly Callender, Joey Cormane, Jackson Weaver, Erin Prichard, John Garcia, Morgan Fillion, Mary McKinny, Delaney McKinny, and Christi Kopelev.

Special Thanks to: Isaac Forbing, Celine Massuger, Tosh Le, Jonathan Forbing, Timothy Schuchard, Michael Todd, Robert Prichard, John Prichard, Jay Africa, Eric Montijo, Ryan Cannon, Mike Olson, Mickey Tan, Darryl Miller, JJ Tin, Paul Moore, and David Solon Phillips.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.
©2016 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

NOT FOR RESALE. PERMISSION GRANTED TO PRINT OR PHOTOCOPY THIS DOCUMENT FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY.

CCC-YLRA01-01 HER DYING WISH



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to YLRA01-01: *Her Dying Wish*, a D&D Adventurers League™, adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system. The YLRA series is Convention Created Content for Southern California's largest tabletop gaming conventions, the Strategicon conventions: Orcon (Presidents' Day Weekend), Gamex (Memorial Day Weekend), and Gateway (Labor Day Weekend).

*This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 8th-level characters**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.*

The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in the newly rebuilt town of **Ylraphon**, south of Mulmaster near the mouth of the River Lis, just north of the Vast.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Become familiar with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

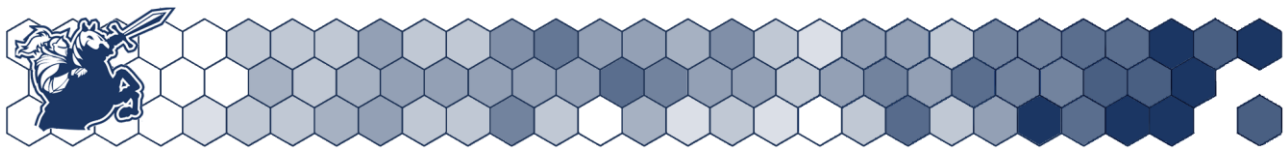
PLAYING THE DUNGEON MASTER

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. To facilitate this, consider the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your players (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

*NOTHING VENTURED, NOTHING LIVED
NO MEMORIES, NO SOUL TO GIVE
NOTHING, NOTHING, NOTHING AT ALL
INSIDE MY MIND I GENTLY FALL.*

--DAVID SOLON PHILLIPS, "AUTUMN"

THE SETTING: YLRAPHON REBORN

Ylrathon, pronounced "ILL-ra-fon", is a small but growing port outside the mouth of the River Lis, on the southern edge of the Moonsea region, just north of the Vast. Elves from Myth Drannor built the first city here, which stood for nearly a thousand years before it was overrun by orcs, conquered by dwarves, and reconquered by orcs again, before humans finally took over. Yet in time, even the last human settlement here was destroyed by the events of the Rage of Dragons, and the nearby swamp—known as the Flooded Forest—expanded to swallow the ruins. Now the town rises again, rebuilt into a bustling hive of gold-hungry adventurers, fearless pirates, and powerful merchant houses.

Today, there are three Ylrathons. Ylrathon proper is the small but thriving dockside settlement inside a recently erected Palisade. Second is the Old City, a ramshackle village of refurbished ruins just outside the port, where refugees from undone Mulmaster try to forge new lives. The third is Outer Ylrathon, which includes all the sprawling layers of ancient rubble and buried necropoli that surround these younger habitations. Only within the wooden walls of the Palisade do the five houses of the Merchant Council and their figurehead mayor hold sway. Real power lies with the local adventurers, whose exploration and plunder of nearby ruins drives the new economy. Thanks to their influence, Ylrathon remains a wild and lawless town, a frontier outpost on the borderlands of civilization.

LEVEL LIMITS ON SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Ylrathon is a wild, uncivilized frontier settlement, and not long ago it had only one proper temple (The Moonwater). Spellcasting services are available, but limited according to the particular deity and their center of worship, as follows:

- Bane (The Black Fane). Max spell level 4th.
- Berronar Truesilver (The Argent Hearth). Max spell level 3rd.
- Selûne (The Moonwater). No limit.
- Tymora (The Lady's Token). Max spell level 2nd.
- Umberlee (The Kraken's Grip). Max spell level 2nd.

THE TREE OF DOORS

Ages ago, long before Ylrathon was settled, the **Tree of Doors** was created to imprison a being called Taavor the Mad One. Taavor was bound into a prison of stone, a green monolith buried in the land that would become the Flooded Forest. The stone was the cell, but the prison structure around it was the great Tree. A mystical construct of living plant matter, the Tree stood as the tallest tree in the Flooded Forest, its 100-foot wide girth hidden in the depths of the swamp. It lived

only to confine the Mad One as its prisoner until the time came for him to be released.

In order to imprison such a powerful being, the Tree must siphon magical energy from distant lands and other worlds. It obtains this energy by opening a network of portals in the tunnels around its roots.

Eventually, during the era when elves founded the port of Ylrathon nearby, this siphoning of energy attracted a powerful being from the Astral Plane: a **morkoth**, an otherworldly aberration obsessed with collecting. This particular morkoth collects not objects, but creatures—the more powerful the better. The morkoth managed to pass through one of the portals and was able to corrupt the Tree. It now uses the Tree to imprison additional creatures in its eldritch amber, collecting the ultimate menagerie of living things. Its first catch by this means was the feared dragon Solonphill Ipsevad, known to the elves as "Smolderwrath." But it was not the last.

The Tree's prehensile roots and branches exude an eldritch sap which traps living creatures, quickly hardening into a magical substance much like amber. Trapped in their own sleeping minds, the prisoners fall deeper and deeper into the morkoth's collection. Through the rise and fall of elf, orc, dwarf, and human settlements in the region, the morkoth has remained in a cave deep beneath the Tree of Doors, on its own island surrounded by the Tree's roots, collecting creatures from every era. Occasionally, some are released in a mind-controlled state to act as bait for other potential acquisitions—or to guard against intruders who could threaten the menagerie.

The Tree of Doors itself has no reason to keep extra prisoners except for short-term self-defense. It has amassed its huge menagerie only under the morkoth's influence. If the morkoth were removed, the Tree would release all but Taavor the Mad One himself.

THE SHADOW OF MULMASTER

The events of the Elemental Evil storyline still haunt Ylrathon's residents, especially the disaster that befell the Moonsea city of Mulmaster. The four Elemental Evil Cults brought destructive magic items called *devastation orbs* into Mulmaster, intending to sacrifice the city's population to the Elemental Princes they worship. Heroes rose from the city to defend it, but defeating the cults came at a terrible price. Many of the *orbs* were deactivated or shunted away from Mulmaster, but others slipped past their grasp and exploded.

The cultists were defeated, their power in the region shattered, but at a terrible cost: the harbor, the heart of Mulmaster and a

significant trade artery in the north, was gone. Earthquakes, perpetual storms, roiling clouds of flesh-melting steam, and the wreckage of the Cult of the Howling Hatred's fallen airships make the harbor unusable to this day.

A cold and hungry population, many once of great wealth, saw the source of their city's prosperity obliterated. Many Mulmasterites realized that whatever meager amount of help they might receive from elsewhere would not be enough. A steady stream of refugees poured out of the city. Several hundred of these made their way down the North Road or the River Lis to Ylraphon.

HOUSE MARSH

In the current era, Crispin Marsh was the second son of Lady Myrandah Marsh, the matriarch of a Moonsea noble family. He was an adventurer, exploring the Flooded Forest between Ylraphon and Mulmaster, until his mind became corrupted by an evil magic item, the *orb of living water* (likely the same one seen in *DDEX 2-3: The Drowned Tower*). This compelled him to join the wicked *Cult of the Crushing Wave*.

Crispin tried to recruit his twin sons, **Bresden Marsh** and **Arden Marsh**, to the Cult as well, but only young Arden was converted. In Mulmaster, Arden and his father participated in assassinations and the sale of slaves.

Arden, who only joined to please his father, was overwhelmed by guilt, and alerted the dwarven constable **Garm Stormbright**—a paladin affiliated with the Order of the Gauntlet—to the cult's murderous plots. Though Arden's father Crispin and several other cult leaders died battling Garm and his allies in Mulmaster, the young man saved many more lives with his revelation.

Since that time, Arden has joined the Order of the Gauntlet. His singular role is to track down (and often execute) those who betray the order. He sees this as restitution for his previous acts. He has sworn never to set foot back in Ylraphon until he has done penance for his crimes, including what he sees as failing his family.

Meanwhile, Arden's twin Sir Bresden grew up to become an adventurer of some renown. He and his younger cousin **Lord Orrin** now reside in Ylraphon, delving into ruins and chasing after lost relics while helping on the side to run the family's furrier and woodcarving shop, *The Keen Edge*.

Their grandmother, the matriarch Lady Myrandah, was formerly one of Ylraphon's leaders, but retired to Elturel as her health was failing. While there, she learned to her dismay of the fate that befell her son

Crispin, and swore her grandchildren would not walk the same path. In her will she stipulates that none of her considerable inheritance may be passed on to any of her grandchildren unless they vow to give up adventuring.

The dwarf Garm Stormbright has also made a vow. After Mulmaster, he pledged to never raise his hand in violence again. He is haunted by a secret no member of the Marsh family knows: his own was the hand that killed Arden's father Crispin during the fighting against the elemental cultists. A desire to watch over the Marshes informed Garm's choice to join his brother Karl in Ylraphon, where he now serves as mentor to Sir Bresden.

RECENT EVENTS

A few weeks ago, Lady Myrandah passed away. Arden bears word of her death and terms of her will, and needs to have this information relayed to his brother Bresden and cousin Orrin in Ylraphon. Due to his oath that prohibits him from entering the city, however, he must enlist outside help to do so—therefore, he hires the player characters.

Sir Bresden and Lord Orrin are out of town, however. A few days ago, a local dwarf noblewoman offered a sizeable reward for the return of the **Blood Metal Crown**, a dwarven relic from Ylraphon's long history, and the two Marsh nobles took up the challenge. At the same time, several others became involved, in various ways, with the Marshes' quest.

Jotan Silverhammer, lieutenant guildmaster of the Ylraphon Adventurers Guild, is also hunting for the lost crown. He adventures with a pair of elves, the ranger Gythen Wildwood and a thief known as Clif.

Bresden and Orrin's guide is **Omidon Umrayle**, a half-orc living among the Mulmasterite refugees in Ylraphon. Omidon is obsessed with recovering the hidden history of the "blood orcs," bred by orc shamans of Gruumsh to win a war 700 years ago. The half-orc believes (rightly) that the Blood Metal Crown can be found in tunnels these orcs once inhabited. Omidon hopes that by leading Sir Bresden and Lord Orrin to the area, he might recover lore of this lost orc subrace while the humans obtain the crown.

The **Sunken Shadows**—water cultist monks who survived Mulmaster, led by the powerful water genasi Iselci Mondas—have come to Ylraphon seeking retribution against Arden for his betrayal of the Cult and his father Crispin Marsh. Since Bresden and Arden

are twins, the Sunken Shadows have mistakenly ended up on the trail of Bresden. They plan to assassinate him while he is out adventuring in the ruins.

Venturing into the tunnels beneath the ruins leads into the territory of the Tree of Doors. As this adventure begins, both Sir Bresden's party and Jotan's party have already been attacked underground by the Sunken Shadows, as well as preserved defenders from the morkoth's menagerie. Fleeing the assassins, the two groups met up with each other while seeking a safe place to recover from their respective ambushes. They decided to team up to defeat their would-be assassins and then seek the crown together, agreeing to share the reward.

However, other battles with defenders of the Tree of Doors went badly, splintering the unfied party. Clif and Gythen were separated from the others, and escaped the tunnels through a passage that collapsed behind them. Sir Bresden and Jotan were captured by the Tree, and are now imprisoned in its amber spheres. Omidon has fallen into a magical sleep in one of the ancient elven chambers. Orrin currently wanders through the tunnels, nearly exhausted with illness and injuries.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Arriving in Ylraphon aboard *The Blue Phantom*, a merchant ship, the characters are hired by Arden Marsh to pass on word that Lady Myrandah Marsh passed away recently in Elturel. Her grandchildren Bresden and Orrin must be told of this, and that they need to quit adventuring in order to inherit the family fortune.

Entering the town, the characters are confronted with the lawless and violent streets of this frontier port. Attempting to find the young noblemen brings them into contact with important personages in Ylraphon, entangling them in the quest for the Blood Metal Crown.

The characters may seek Bresden and Orrin's aunt, **Aislyn Marsh**, and her friend **Ilasera**, an aloof druid who represents the Emerald Enclave in these parts. They may visit a wild gambling den, becoming involved in a dwarven family dispute over law and order in the town. They may encounter the Marshes' distant cousin **Zhelad**, a follower of Umberlee who gave rival adventurers inside information to help them get to the Blood Metal Crown before Bresden and Orrin.

The trail to Bresden and Orrin will lead the heroes outside of the town. They may follow (or fight?) a group of Tyrantsworn, the Banite militia which keeps order here, to see where their orcish prisoner can lead them. They may search the tent of Omidon Urnrayle, the half-orc guide engaged by the Marsh cousins, finding a map or other clues.

Ultimately the heroes will find their way into an underground area that most recently served as the lair of the orcs of Clan Dragul. The characters first encounter the vengeful water cultist Iselci Mondas, and have to overcome or avoid a series of traps and puzzles to reach the Hall of Preservation, where Bresden and Jotan are currently imprisoned by a morkoth.

The morkoth fights back by releasing creatures in its collection to destroy the characters. If the characters escape the dungeon, they must deal with the consequences of freeing the morkoth's menagerie, the difference their actions have made in the politics of Ylraphon, and their involvement in personal struggles to unify the town's leading families.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Characters with factions are provided with letters from higher-ranking members (**Player Handout 1: Faction Letters**) that should give them ample reason to come to Ylraphon.

Non-faction characters or those who seem to require more coaxing may also be brought by the town's reputation as a community revolving around adventurers. The treasures to be found in the many local ruins and the privileges provided by the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon allow great fortunes to be made overnight.

Other opportunities that could beckon characters to town include:

- the call for veteran warriors to train a much-needed replacement for the current Town Watch;
- profitable monster hunting in the unusually well-populated Flooded Forest nearby;
- teaching and research opportunities at the new academy of magic being built by the wizard Salvar Brix;
- a need for religious leaders to serve a town with a growing population but only one real temple;
- or the chance to be a part of the initial growth of Ylraphon's new thieves' guild, the Shadowcloaks.

HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure has some extra features intended to adapt it to the needs and preferred play-styles of different DMs and groups. It is designed to include more material than you should actually use if you are running it within 4 hours, but also includes special guidance on what to leave out in order to complete it within that time limit. Prepared specifically for the Strategicon family of gaming conventions, where games are run in arranged slots with hard time limits, this guidance will prove invaluable for DMs who need to ensure its completion within 4 hours.

However, since this adventure will have a life beyond convention play, it also includes added information for running it in a more expansive context. If used, these sections lengthen the adventure's running time, but serve to deepen the story.

RUNNING ON A TIME LIMIT

If running this adventure with a hard time limit, do your best to leave two hours for Part 3, which is a small dungeon of some complexity, as well as 15 minutes for the Conclusion (not including the distribution of experience, treasure, and other rewards). The basic time structure should be:

- Part 1: 60 minutes
- Part 2: 30 minutes
- Part 3: 120 minutes
- Part 4: 15 minutes

To assist with managing time, *Pacing the Adventure* sidebars appear throughout the text. The guidance in these sections can help you begin, play, and end the adventure within four hours.

LORE SIDEBARS

Special sections on the history and details of people, places, and objects the characters will encounter appear as well. As DM, you can use or skip these at your leisure, along with the sections specifically called out as optional.

SKIPPING LOCATION C: HOSTETTLER'S HOUSE

In a time-limited situation, the most important consideration is limiting the length of part I. Initial runs of this adventure indicated the most effective way to do this is leaving out *Location C: Hostettler's House*—the characters can get enough clues to point them to the Old City outside the gates and Omidon's tent in conversing with Ilasera at Old Marsh House. One consideration when leaving out Hostettler's House comes up if you have Order of the Gauntlet members in the group, which is the requirement that they talk to Garm Stormbright. However, Garm's concerns could lead him anywhere in town, so as the DM, it is easy to use the information in Location C to run a conversation with him in any other location you wish. A successful strategy some DMs use is having Garm come to visit Aislyn Marsh at *Location B: Old Marsh House* as the characters are on their way out—this gives them the opportunity to do everything they need to do in order to go straight from Location B to the town gates.

OPTIONAL HANDOUTS

Survey input from the convention premiere of this adventure indicated that many players wanted their own map of the town and something to help them track the family members and other NPCs Arden describes. The writer and editors were initially wary of having too many handouts, especially at the beginning, but in response to this input, you may choose to have Arden distribute **Player Handout 6: Notes from Arden** and/or **Player Handout 7: Players Map of Ylraphon**, based on your sense of what your players would prefer and benefit from in the long-run.

The adventure can be run without these last two handouts, but may be easier for players with them, so we leave it to your judgment as DM.

RUNNING WITHOUT LIMITS

If you run this adventure in a situation without a hard time limit (such as a non-public Adventurers League game with a recurring group, or even as part of your own non-AL home campaign), you can use this adventure as an unbounded sandbox, letting go of a tight focus on the larger plot and allowing the characters to stride farther off the beaten path. Conversations with NPCs can wander off into interesting tangents, and characters can take time investigating seemingly minor details.

(At this adventure's Orcon premiere, one DM who was running both *YLRA01-01: Her Dying Wish* and *YLRA01-02: Uneasy Lies the Head* chose to merge both their timeslots into one 8-hour open-world adventure, using the opening of *YLRA01-01* to bring everyone to Ylraphon, but then letting the characters visit any location in town and pursue the various plot threads in whatever order they wished. Characters still overcame all the same challenges and encounters, and rewards were dispensed normally after the players completed the final encounter of each module.)

Optional expansions of the adventure appear, called out in sidebars in the text, which focus on story, atmosphere, and foreshadowing for future adventures. For example, the quick detail of a bar-fight closing Hostettler's House in the shorter version of the story can, if you let the players get involved, become a rollicking set-piece encounter between martial artists and swashbucklers in a crowded gambling den.

Special attention is given in this adventure to introducing the rebuilt town of Ylraphon, the location of other upcoming Adventurers League modules as well as this one. Ylraphon is intended to not only be a setting for future adventures, but also a home-base for characters whose exploits may take them to more distant lands, such as the Sword Coast. With a unique location—at the southernmost end of the Moonsea region, where it meets the Dragon Reach, an arm of the larger Sea of Fallen Stars that connects much of Faerûn—the town works well as a gateway between the locations of previous seasons and new adventure destinations.

PART 1: WELCOME TO YLRAPHON

WE CROSS OUR BRIDGES WHEN WE COME TO THEM AND BURN THEM BEHIND US, WITH NOTHING TO SHOW FOR OUR PROGRESS EXCEPT A MEMORY OF THE SMELL OF SMOKE, AND A PRESUMPTION THAT ONCE OUR EYES WATERED.

--TOM STOPPARD,

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD

Before starting, give each character with a faction their appropriate letter from **Player Handout 1: Faction Letters**. Allow them time to read the letters and share the contents with each other as necessary. If possible, have copies of the letters for the players to keep after the game, since the letters are also relevant to future adventures set in Ylraphon.

PACING THE ADVENTURE

If you are running the adventure to end within 4 hours, Part I should take no more than **60 minutes** of real time.

The adventure begins with the characters traveling to Ylraphon aboard *The Blue Phantom*, a merchant ship. The ship's main cargo is food, which is apparently of great value in the town, but it is also transporting about 20 passengers. Whether the characters met on board or prior to that is for you and the group to determine. During their voyage, the characters were hired as a group to perform a quest in the town. When you are ready to start playing, read the following introductory text:

After days at sea, the first sign of your journey's end is the smell of woodsmoke on the wind. Within minutes, you see the distant outline of the Flooded Forest, high-canopied black trees frosted with the whiteness of winter, meaning your destination is close. Soon, you hear a voice call from above.

You travel on a ship called *The Blue Phantom*, captained by a rock gnome who likes to scout ahead on his flying mount, a bronze dragon wyrmling. He now calls to his crew from the sky just above the ship, where you see him on dragonback, gesturing due east. Looking that direction, you finally see your destination: the rebuilt port of Ylraphon.

The center of town, a snow-covered hill, glows like a burning ember in the red light of the setting sun behind you, and a duskwood palisade curves inland to encircle it like an ebony crown. Chimneys rise from black timber rooftops to paint smudges of smoke across the clouds and rising crescent moon, all reflected on the surface of the wine-dark sea.

You stand taking in this sight with your new employer, a pale man in black with a shaved head and the hard eyes of a warrior. His name is Arden Marsh, and during your voyage, he hired you to convey news of his noble grandmother's death and final wish to relatives in town. Due to a sacred oath, Arden cannot enter Ylraphon himself, and so he has promised you 1,000 gold pieces to perform this deed.

"We're almost there," he says as he turns to you. "Most of your questions should already be answered by your copies of the letter I gave you to deliver, but do you have any last inquiries for me?"

If you haven't already done so, give the players one or more copies of **Player Handout 2: Arden's Letter**, and allow them to read it. (In-game, their characters receive three copies total.)

Order of the Gauntlet members automatically recognize the name Arden Marsh as belonging to one of the faction's most feared members. He is infamous as a relentless hunter who tracks down those who betray the Order of the Gauntlet. Some tales tell of him bringing these traitors back alive; most don't.

ROLEPLAYING ARDEN MARSH

Arden's skulking posture, along with a clean-shaven head and face, distinguish him from his twin Sir Bresden, but they share the same pale skin and kind, soft features, hardened only by a warlike gleam in their blue eyes. Still in his mid-twenties, Arden carries the regret of a much older man over his youthful misdeeds with the Cult of the Crushing Wave in Mulmaster. Betraying the cult to agents of law led to his father's death, but he believes doing so sooner would have saved his father's life. Sworn not to re-enter the gates of Ylraphon or see his family until his penance is complete, Arden believes hunting down those who betray the Order of the Gauntlet is his path to redemption. He is mercilessly intolerant of such crimes, but torn between judging others and judging himself.

Quote: "A crime has been committed, and I will not rest until justice is served."

LORE: THE MARSHES

Characters who succeed on a DC 11 Intelligence (History) check know the Marshes are an old noble family of the Moonsea, exiled from their ancestral holdings in Vaasa after the Spellplague, who have also held land in the areas of Ylraphon and Phlan since ancient times. Until she took ill, the family matriarch Lady Myrandah was a member of the Merchant Council that rules the town. Rolls of 14 or higher reveal that the Marshes have an old connection to the sea, and that one branch of the family is

mostly water genasi, descended from a Marsh who was a marid's lover. Members of this branch often worship Umberlee.

Rolls of 17 or higher note that the Marshes are known for internal religious conflicts between those family members who worship Umberlee and the main branch who worship Selûne. It is even rumored that some family members were once part of the Cult of the Crushing Wave, one of the Elemental Evil cults that devastated the Moonsea port of Mulmaster.

LORE: *THE BLUE PHANTOM*

Order of the Gauntlet members know that *The Blue Phantom* is owned by a financial supporter of the Order of the Gauntlet, a Waterdhavian noblewoman named Arilosa Adarbrent, who often charts this and other ships in her merchant fleet for the Order's use. The ship is named for a mysterious masked vigilante in Waterdeep last century who foiled an assassination plot by the Shadow Thieves. The rock gnome captain, Devorn Kee, and his bronze dragon wyrmling mount Corronorrco both act as agents of the Order on occasion as well.

Arden Marsh (LG Damaran human male) gives the characters three copies of his letter: one for his brother Bresden, one for his cousin Orrin, and one for his aunt Aislyn. If the characters have further questions, Arden can provide the following information:

- Lady Myrandah Marsh was the matriarch of House Marsh until last year, and had a seat on the Merchant Council that rules Ylraphon. She left for the healthier climate of Elturel when she took ill.
- Her two sons' adventuring careers led to their eventual ruin and death. She does not want the same for her grandchildren, which is why her will denies them their inheritance if they don't quit.
- The relatives who must quit adventuring are Arden's brother Sir Bresden, and his young cousin Lord Orrin.
- If they don't, Lady Myrandah's inheritance will instead go to Arden's cousin Zhelad. He is an evil genasi who keeps the local shrine to Umberlee.
- Arden sent word ahead to his aunt Aislyn of Lady Myrandah's death, but could not reach Bresden and Orrin, who are rumored to have both left town to pursue a relic for which a local noblewoman has offered a reward. If they have not yet returned, the best lead on their whereabouts is likely to be Aislyn, who can be found at either the family home, or at the family business *The Keen Edge*.
- Unfortunately, Arden's aunt Aislyn—the illegitimate half-drow daughter of his grandfather—is not named in the will and cannot inherit.

- Arden's kin can be recognized by having pale skin and dark hair like his, except Aislyn whose mother was a drow, so she has dark skin as well as dark hair. Orrin is a slender teen with the barest beginnings of a beard. Arden's brother Sir Bresden should be easiest of all to identify—Bresden and Arden are identical twins, though Arden shaves his head and beard while Bresden lets his grow.
- Arden does not ask that the characters convince his family members to do the right thing, just that they convey the letters to his kin.

Arden does not volunteer information about himself unless asked, but he gave up all claim to land, wealth, and title when he swore his oaths to the Order of the Gauntlet, so he cannot inherit any of the family fortune. He has also sworn never to enter Ylraphon again until he makes penance to his family for a great wrong he committed against them. Under no circumstance will he willingly break his oath.

Arden also gives an advance of 50 gp per character up front just for trying, and promises the remaining amount tomorrow if the characters return to the ship before it leaves Ylraphon at noon the next day. Otherwise, he says he must send their reward by messenger, which could take a while.

If the characters attempt to negotiate a higher price, Arden says that this money was left by his grandmother to see her wishes carried out, and he himself has sworn oaths of poverty and has nothing more to give.

ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET MISSION

Arden ensures that his fellow Order members have received their faction letter (**Player Handout 1E**) describing their mission, and answers any questions they may have about what they are asked to do.

DEVELOPMENTS

By the time the characters are done talking with Arden, *The Blue Phantom* has pulled up to the furthest west of Ylraphon's docking slips. Arden tells the characters that when they disembark, they just need to check in with the Town Watch at the dock. It won't take long, he says, as Ylraphon's Watch is always too short-handed to search anyone.

LOCATION-BASED EVENTS

Appendix 8: DM Map of Ylraphon shows the entire area, but on that map locations where events included in this adventure take place are marked with red letters (“A”), with all such locations described accordingly below. Unless you are running without a significant time limit, you should only use some of these location encounters, not all of them. Once the characters have information that points them out the gates of the Palisade to the Old City refugee area (such as directions to Omidon’s tent), you should move to Part 2 as soon as you can. For members of the Order of the Gauntlet seeking to complete their faction assignment, Garm Stormbright (described in Location C) can be encountered nearly anywhere in town.

Since *The Blue Phantom* arrived at sunset, darkness falls in Ylraphon, but this town is nearly as active at night as it is during the day, and businesses are open.

LOCATION A. THE DOCKS

A short line of disembarking passengers has formed, with one member of the Town Watch, Trell Bannon of the Fens (CG half-elf **berserker**), speaking to each before they step off the gangplank and onto the dock. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you disembark down the Blue Phantom’s gangplank, you are met by a single guard, his tabard marking him as a member of the Town Watch, though his appearance is that of a wild barbarian. He has the smooth, youthful face of a half-elf, but a hulking build and feral gaze. Another identical Town Watch tabard hangs from a wolf-pelt tied around his waist.

When you reach the front of the line, the hulking guard puts his hand on the hilt of a curved greatsword and says, “I am Trell Bannon of the Fens, sergeant of the Ylraphon Town Watch. State your names and business.”

Though he goes through the motions, Trell won’t bother trying to bar anyone’s passage unless they are violent in front of him or directly say they are there to attack the town or harm its inhabitants. However, before they go, Trell will ask, “You look tough enough, any interest in joining the Town Watch?” If engaged in further conversation, Trell can relate the following:

- Most of the Town Watch volunteers are members of the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon who pick up

shifts between dungeon delves out in the ruins, since those who do so have their guild dues waived. Trell himself is an adventurer paying his dues this way (he is currently looking for a group, though he won’t shirk his Watch duties today). If the characters are curious about the guild, Trell knows all the information on **Player Handout 5Z: The Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon**.

- The Town Watch is shorthanded today because several members have gone in search of finding the Blood Metal Crown, a lost relic of a dwarf king. Lady Gwynora Ironheart, the leading member of the Merchant Council, has offered a prize of 1,200 gp and forgiveness of gambling debts at Hostettler’s House.
- That extra tabard at his waist is for the other Watch member who was supposed to share Trell’s shift today, but never showed up. He likely is off in search of the crown.

If any characters express interest in joining the Adventurers Guild or working for the Town Watch, Trell is pleased, and tells them they just need to go to the dwarf Jotan Silverhammer, who is both lieutenant guildmaster and sergeant of the Town Watch. Trell says Jotan is usually at a gambling den called Hostettler’s House, run and co-owned by Jotan’s tiefling friend Patience Hostettler. If the characters don’t find him there, they can just ask Patience.

OPTIONAL DETAIL: AN ILLUSTRATIVE EXCHANGE

If you want a bit more atmospheric color to demonstrate to the characters what life in Ylraphon is like, you can include the following optional interaction:

While the characters are talking to Trell, a red dragonborn archer named Tamaron Blackfire runs up to him, covered in blood. Their exchange goes something like this:

- **Tamaron:** “The Mason Sisters murdered me in the street, I want them arrested!”
- **Trell:** “... You don’t *look* murdered...”
- **Tamaron:** “They had their uncle Cedric the cleric *revivify* me with a scroll, but—”
- **Trell:** “Probably because they didn’t want to clean your body up off the street as I commanded them. You are lucky. The sisters told me when you all got back from the ruins, everyone agreed to roll dice for the magic items, but you were greedy and ran off with a magic bow. They slew you and took it back. Sounds like a justified killing to me. Move along.”

After the dragonborn leaves angrily to seek the Mason Sisters (who are now playing Three-Dragon Ante at Hostettler’s House), Trell just apologizes to the characters for the interruption, as if this were all simply routine.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters wish to try to contact the Marsh family, proceed with *Location B: The Marsh Compound*. If they go looking for Lady Gwynora Ironheart for more information about the relic, proceed with *Location C: Hostettler's House*.

LOCATION B. THE MARSH COMPOUND

PACING THE ADVENTURE

If there is a time limit, the characters should spend less than 20 minutes at Old Marsh House.

Old Marsh House is opulent, but has fallen into recent disrepair. (Lady Myrandah stopped paying servants when her nephews initially refused to quit adventuring.) Just across the way, separated by a well-maintained courtyard garden, is a complex of storefronts owned by the family, many rented out to other businesses. All the shops are open except for one, the Keen Edge, a prosperous tanning and furrier concern owned by the Marshes. A sign in the window of the Keen Edge says, "Closed for Bereavement." There is no response to knocking, and anyone breaking in will find nothing of interest (though a glyph on the door informs Aislyn Marsh of a break-in).

If anyone knocks on the door of Old Marsh House itself, an agitated woman's voice shouts "Come in!" Inside, the only light comes from a doorway at the end of a long hallway. The door leads to a study where **Aislyn Marsh** (NG female half-elf) keeps pacing anxiously in front of a roaring fireplace.

Sitting nearby, serene and calm by contrast, is the druid **Ilasera** (N female half-elf), who considers Aislyn her only real friend in town. Normally residing in the Flooded Forest, Ilasera got word of Lady Myrandah's passing and came into town to check on Aislyn, knowing that civilized folk have trouble accepting death. The two have been sitting in silence, only occasionally conversing—their friendship is based on a shared laconic nature as well as similar backgrounds.

LORE: ILASERA

DC 14 Intelligence (History or Nature) checks (Emerald Enclave members roll with advantage) reveal the druid Ilasera is nearly revered in Ylraphon. Her ability to reclaim marshland as stable ground enables the town's growth. She permanently purified the well in the Hunter's Market, the only reliable source of safe drinking water in the town. The locals also tell you that Ilasera is hermit-like, aloof, and more comfortable with beasts than people. Of all the townsfolk, she is only close to Aislyn.

Aislyn already knows about her stepmother Lady Myrandah's death, so the characters don't need to be the ones to tell her. She is grateful for Arden's letter if the characters deliver a copy to her. Since Aislyn has not seen him in a long time, she asks when and where they saw Arden, and how he was. While Aislyn mourns her stepmother, they were never close (Aislyn was the illegitimate daughter of Lady Myrandah's husband and a drow). Mostly, she is anxious to have her other nephews Lord Orrin and Sir Bresden found before they lose their inheritance. Aislyn is willing to share the following information:

- Aislyn has been offered a seat on the town's ruling Merchant Council. However, if her nephews don't return to claim the family holdings, Aislyn will have no merchant house to represent, and no place on the council. Unless her nephews are found, she says there is no point in taking the seat at all. She is very concerned about how to respond to the Council's offer, given these circumstances, and even more nervous about the family holdings possibly falling the hands of Zhelad.
- Sir Bresden and Lord Orrin said they were headed for the ruins in search of a lost crown. Gwynora Ironheart has offered a great prize for it, and the Marsh boys spoke to Gwynora before they left town. Gwynora may have more information about where they went. Gwynora can normally be found at Hostettler's House, of which she is a co-owner.
- Aislyn can offer the characters rooms in Old Marsh House for the night, if they wish.

Ilasera also has information to share, as follows:

- Adventuring nearby has become more dangerous. There has been an increase in unusual creatures in the ruins of Outer Ylraphon recently. Such creatures often appear dripping with a sticky golden liquid, causing them to behave strangely.
- Sages have long believed that some unusual force has been stocking the Flooded Forest with dangerous monsters from distant places, but lately there are many more than before.
- Bresden and Orrin came to her recently seeking a guide to certain areas in the Flooded Forest. She referred them to Omidon, a studious young half-orc who had been researching the region's history and particularly some older dwarf-holds and orc lairs. He sought the burial place of a particular orc tribe.

- Ilasera had told Omidon that the lair of the orc clan Dragul, who had taken over an old dwarven ruin, fit his description, and it also sounded like the location Bresden and Orrin sought.
- Omidon is recognizable by a strange scar on his face in the shape of a large red handprint. She can pass on the directions she gave “the Marsh boys” to Omidon’s tent. He lives among the Mulmasterite refugees outside the Palisade walls.
- Ilasera is the local faction contact for members of the Emerald Enclave. She will need help restoring the balance between the overgrown swamp and the human settlement of Ylraphon, though she has no specific faction mission for Enclave members now.
- As a druid, Ilasera has been working to gradually turn sections of water-logged marsh into solid dry land that can be built upon, to create more places for people to live. She hopes to soon learn how to create farmland as well, since some kind of curse prevents crops from being grown locally.

UP FOR DEBATE

Before the characters leave, Aislyn asks their advice on one more matter. She and Ilasera have been debating an issue facing the Merchant Council, and since Aislyn may soon join, she is seeking other opinions. Many people now live outside the town walls, partly because wealthy adventurers have made the price of housing very high. Most are refugees from Mulmaster, who came south after the elemental cultists devastated their city. Camped at the foot of the Palisade, they are highly vulnerable to attacks by brigands, orcs, and others.

Now, the Merchant Council has purchased a new means of defense: a massive catapult, built by the artificers of Lantan, which is so large an entire tower must be built to support it. The original intention in buying such a large weapon of war was to defend against pirates of the Moonsea and Dragon Reach, who have become increasingly brazen in their attacks, threatening the maritime trade that is the lifeblood of Ylraphon’s economy. Now, however, it is being proposed that instead of building the catapult tower on the docks, it should be placed outside the Palisade to the east, to provide greater security to the refugees living outside the walls.

Since getting all the merchant houses to donate the funds for this catapult took the better part of a year, the town probably won’t be purchasing another one any time soon. Therefore, this is a decision of great

importance. Aislyn leans towards keeping it on the docks, which would benefit the whole town, but Ilasera has been arguing for placing it outside of town to guard the refugees, who are much more defenseless than anyone else. Both want to know what the characters think. Record their response, which may be important in the Conclusion.

ROLEPLAYING AISLYN MARSH

A dark-skinned, raven-haired half-elf with large blue-green eyes and a cleft in her chin, Aislyn dresses in the stained brown leathers of a forester. Her long black hair hangs straight, braided with feathers in places, hiding the pointed ears she inherited from her drow mother. Known locally as a canny merchant noblewoman, Aislyn is also a powerful warlock, but she has always kept her eldritch powers secret, due to her stepmother Myrandah’s superstitions. She tends to take in young people living in poverty, making them live-in employees or apprentices, without asking her family first. Compulsively organized, Aislyn has helped manage (and, at times, helped raise) a lot of very flawed people—she’s learned to silence most with a single hard look.

Quote: “*The men in my family are all impulsive, impetuous, overgrown boys—Someone has to be the adult.*”

ROLEPLAYING ILASERA

An auburn-haired, olive-skinned half-elf in red robes with a Calishite accent, Ilasera always has a distant look in her eyes, as if attentive to a world beyond the one around her. She seems to lack knowledge of civilized customs, but is more eager to discuss local animals and plants, and the goals of the Emerald Enclave (for which she is the main local contact). She always brings conversations back around to the wildlife of the Flooded Forest and the cause she speaks of as her sacred duty: recovering the balance between the swamp and civilization. She believes the natural order of this region—and the world—must be set right at all costs.

Quote: “*I grew up with humans, but now I live in the Flooded Forest with beasts and monsters. They’re easier to trust.*”

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters seek out Gwynora Ironheart, proceed to *Location C: Hostettler’s House*. If they wish to head to Omidon’s tent, they will go outside of the town walls—continue with *Location D: The Gates of Ylraphon*.

LOCATION C: HOSTETTLER’S HOUSE

PACING THE ADVENTURE

If you are concerned about time, try to skip this section entirely, especially if you are planning to run the “Old Zhelad” encounter in *Location D*. As long as the characters hear about Omidon from Ilasera or Clif and Gythen, they have enough information to proceed to *Part 2*. For characters pursuing the special assignment for the Order of the Gauntlet, Garm Stormbright can

be encountered on the way to the gates or elsewhere rather than here, with the same interaction.

If you think you can complete this section and still make it in under the time limit—or if your players seem especially enthusiastic about this location—the characters should spend less than 25 minutes at Hostettler’s House. The brief bar-fight described under “Developments” can clear out the establishment when you need the characters to move on.

Crowded at nearly any hour of the night, Hostettler’s is the center of the social scene for the town’s adventurers. This ask-no-questions flophouse and bar makes its real money from gambling, with high stakes games run by the house. From dusk to dawn, the place offers everything from performances by renowned bards to rooftop bare-knuckle boxing matches and other less savory forms of entertainment.

When the characters enter this establishment, read or paraphrase the following:

You step out of the cold night into the bright warmth of a bustling common room. The brass-fitted bar and many gaming tables are richly (if gaudily) appointed, but this palatial regalia contrasts with the appearance of the patrons.

A rough crowd of adventurers, hunters, swampfolk, sailors, longshoremen, fish-mongers, blacksmiths, and scavengers crowd around gaming tables, clanking tankards and guzzling ale, while a half-elf bard on a stage in the corner sings one of the famed Elanil Ellassidil’s jauntier ballads.

Everywhere you look, people of all races are gambling and carousing, and everyone is armed to the teeth.

If the characters ask for Gwynora Ironheart, Jotan Silverhammer, Garm Stormbright, or Patience Hostettler, read or paraphrase the following:

You are directed to a table in a back corner of the common room. A female tiefling deals cards to two dwarves, while a third dwarf stands nearby keeping an eye on the room.

As you approach, one of the seated dwarves—a male speaking to a female—says in a polite but steely voice, “Gwynora, I do *not*. Want. The job. And that’s final. If you ask Tarn, he’ll say the same. Now can we just play cards?”

Gwynora Ironheart (NG female shield dwarf **spy**), uses this table as her unofficial “office”, drinking hot spiced apple cider (she is currently pregnant, and does not

drink liquor) while conducting meetings and seeing to her business. She is presently in the midst of a friendly game of poker with her soon-to-be brother-in-law, **Garm Stormbright** (LG male gold dwarf **warlord**, see sidebar for details.)

Nearby stands her bodyguard and fiancé, Karl Stormbright (NG male gold dwarf **swashbuckler**), who seldom speaks here, but keeps a close eye on everything around him, especially the entrances.

Dealing the poker game is Patience Hostettler (CN female tiefling **warlock of the Great Old One**) who co-owns the establishment together with Gwynora.

As the characters approach, Gwynora asks if they’re looking for a room (modest lifestyle for 5 sp per night), a seat at one of the gaming tables, or just want a drink. If the characters say they are looking for information, she says she’ll talk if they join her game. (Though she will relent on this if you’re running in a time-sensitive environment; see the sidebar below.)

OPTIONAL EXPANSION: GAMBLING

If you’re concerned about getting to Part 2 quickly, Garm will interject when Gwynora tells the players they must join the next round of poker, insisting that the game be placed on hold while the concerns of the adventurers are addressed, to which Gwynora will reluctantly acquiesce.

If you have more time, Gwynora will only talk to those who join her poker game. See **DM Appendix 4: Gambling at Hostettler’s House** for how the game is run. Characters playing cards with Gwynora and Garm are free to talk to them as much as they wish. It only takes 10 minutes of poker (one ability check from each character playing) to get a conversation going.

If a character indicates they are affiliated with the Order of the Gauntlet, Garm offers to pay their first round’s buy in.

There are a variety of other games besides poker. All the gaming options available are listed in **DM Appendix 4**.

TALKING TO GWYNORA IRONHEART

Lady Gwynora is pleasant with anyone at her table and eager to relate any of the following:

- Gwynora has offered 1,200 gp and forgiveness of any house gambling debt to the group of adventurers that brings her the Blood Metal Crown, a platinum crown with tines of “blood metal,” which belonged to her ancestor, Deep King Tuir Stonebeard of Roldilar, when he ruled this land as a dwarven kingdom.
- Sir Bresden came to her with his cousin Orrin a few days ago, asking about the reward for the crown. Gwynora recommended that he seek a half-orc named Omidon.

- Omidon came to Gwynora shortly after she announced that she was looking for the crown. He claimed the crown was much closer to Ylraphon than anyone thought, buried under the hideout of a nearby orc clan, along with the outcast orc warriors who had claimed it in the Battle of Deepfires. Omidon had the image of a red hand tattooed on his face, and was small for a half-orc.
- Gwynora has heard that the Tyrantsworn now seek a half-orc fitting Omidon's description, but she doesn't know why. The Tyrantsworn are a Banite militia who enforce law and order outside the Palisade, in part because the Town Watch lacks the capacity to patrol out there, and because most of the refugees are Mulmasterites who worship Bane.
- The Merchant Council is presently deadlocked on whether to let the refugees become citizens—even after Serge Affapanov (a noble of Mulmaster) joined the Merchant Council recently.
- There is currently a vacancy on the council due to the departure of Myrandah Marsh. Only when the council is restored to its full complement of five voting members will the fate of the refugees be resolved. The council has offered Aislyn Marsh the crucial fifth seat, but she won't accept until her nephews Orrin and Bresden are found.
- Gwynora expects to recruit Garm to lead and reform the Town Watch (this poker game is just an excuse for her to try). If Garm hears this, he restates his firm refusal to do so, saying to his nearby brother, "Karl, if your fiancée here wants to marry a Stormbright brother, you better let her know we can't be bought."

ROLEPLAYING GWYNORA IRONHEART

Matriarch of the dwarf merchant clan Ironheart and most-beloved member of the Merchant Council that rules the town, Gwynora was once an adventurer, but gave it up to raise her son, Bartrek (who is now grown and operates the Ironhearts' alchemy shop). She has an authoritative demeanor occasionally set off by a mischievous smirk, and her probing green eyes seem to divine the secret measure of those who cross her path. Gwynora's voice is smooth as silk yet strong as steel. Several months pregnant, this red-haired dwarven lady descends from royalty, and it shows. Centuries ago her ancestor, Deep King Tuir "Stonebeard," forged the lost dwarf kingdom of Roldilar in these lands; now Gwynora has built a fiefdom of her own, growing what was once a tiny outpost into the prosperous port of Ylraphon.

Quote: *"The only way to rise above our circumstances is to work together: one and all, native and refugee, merchant and adventurer."*

Note: Gwynora has the stat-block of a **spy**, adding the following to her proficiencies: *Gaming Sets (playing cards) +5*

LORE: THE DEEP KING OF ROLDILAR

When Gwynora speaks of Roldilar or her ancestor Deep King Tuir, characters may roll DC 13 Intelligence (History) checks to know that the reign of Deep King Tuir Stonebeard was brief, and the history of his kingdom, Roldilar, was measured in decades rather than centuries. Roldilar once included these very lands, with Ylraphon the kingdom's greatest port.

It all ended in the Battle of Deepfires, a long series of underground skirmishes so infamous for their hopeless brutality that to this day laments and woeful sayings mention it. Dwarves overwhelmed with sadness, sickness, or other miseries often say, "I feel as if my axe were broken in the midst of Deepfires."

LORE: BLOOD METAL

A DC 14 Intelligence (History) check (rolled with advantage by dwarves or characters proficient in any kind of metalworking tool) recalls that blood metal was a mysterious magical steel that was toxic to orcs. A dwarven master smith worked with spellcasters of three different races to forge blood metal into a thousand *orcslayers*, legendary blades which could kill an orc with a single scratch. All but a few of these blades were lost after the fall of the Roldilarren dwarves, with no record of what happened to them. History also does not record how the orcs were later able to reconquer their lands from dwarves armed with such weapons.

TALKING TO PATIENCE

If anyone asks about Jotan Silverhammer, the Adventurers' Guild, or becoming a volunteer for the Town Watch, the tiefling dealer Patience—who remains silent otherwise—responds that Jotan would be the one to sort all that out, but she hasn't seen him for a couple days, since he and his two elven adventuring comrades headed out of town to find the Blood Metal Crown. Jotan told her he had a tip directing him out to the ruins, towards the orc lair of Clan Dragul, where "the Marsh boys" were headed. She advises the characters to seek Jotan outside the the Palisade gates.

TALKING TO GARM

Garm is eager to assist anyone who seeks to help the Marshes. As a paladin to Berronar Truesilver and keeper of her shrine in town (the Argent Hearth), he is devoted to the ideals of home and family. He is happy to share the following information:

- Since coming to town, Garm has become a mentor to Bresden Marsh, who lost his father during the troubles in Mulmaster. A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) reveals Garm is hiding something related to this,

though not what. (See “House Marsh” from the Adventure Background for more on this, if needed, though Garm will not readily speak of it.)

- Bresden said he had connected the crown to a sacred dwarven mortuary buried in the Flooded Forest north of the temple of Bane, though he would need a guide to find it.
- Garm knows a bit about the local orc tribes. A clan of orcs, the Draguls, are rumored to have been using an abandoned dwarven mortuary as a lair. Older magical traps are often corrupted by the sorcery of orc shamans, with their required words or gestures changed to glorify Gruumsh or commemorate the eye he lost battling the elf god Corellon Larethian.
- Garm is not a member of the Order of the Gauntlet, but he owes them, and he will do anything to help its members in need—so long as it doesn’t involve violence. He’s given up that life.

ROLEPLAYING GARM STORMBRIGHT

A broad-shouldered, bronze-skinned dwarf in his prime, Garm has a beard that is unusually gray for one not yet middle-aged. He almost always wears a massive iron gauntlet on only his left arm. Even though he laughs deeply and smiles easily, his flinty eyes betray regret for a life of violence. Unless another member of his family is directly in harm’s way, Garm will never attack another sentient creature, even to defend himself.

Quote: *“For once in my life, I just want to live in peace.”*

STATS (SPECIAL)

Garm does not know it, but he is being tested by Berronar Truesilver to one day become her Chosen, a mortal being imbued with special divine power to serve a special purpose. As such, he has potent divine abilities (though he does not realize their origin). Garm is a **warlord**, but he also gains the Innate Spellcasting trait, as follows:

- **Innate Spellcasting.** Garm’s spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
 - 1/day: *detect evil and good*, *banishment*, *calm emotions*
 - 3/day: *cure wounds* (as a 4th-level spell)

ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET MISSION: GAIN GARM’S AID IN REFORMING THE WATCH

If the characters seek to talk Garm into taking leadership of the Town Watch, his initial response is a hard no. However, he is willing to hear the characters out. For her part, Gwynora says, “See, they’re on my side!” but otherwise stays out of it.

Keep the conversation short and focused, but play Garm as respectful, and understanding of why the

characters would ask. He may say some version of any or all of the following:

- Garm admits that Ylrathon needs a real, professionally trained Town Watch. But Garm came here to live in peace and avoid the violence of his old life.
- Given the number of adventurers here and the lack of any real government, any officer of the law must eventually kill or be killed, and Garm says he already has as much blood on his hands as his goddess will permit.
- Since Garm won’t take the job, there’s been talk of offering it to his elder brother Tarn, who is also a respected lawman. However, when Tarn arrived in town for upcoming nuptials of Tarn and Garm’s younger brother, the first thing Garm did was hand him a letter explaining the extreme danger of trying to rein in a town this lawless and full of adventurers.

Garm has good reason for refusing command of the Town Watch himself, but is being overly stubborn about not helping in any way, given his connections and expertise. This stubbornness makes the DC of Charisma (Persuasion) checks to convince him high: DC 15 if the Average Party Level is 5th or 6th, DC 17 if it is 7th or 8th, and DC 19 if it is 9th or 10th.

However, certain arguments can reduce this DC—specifically the following:

- referencing the information Ilasera shared about a mysterious force stocking the nearby forest with monsters;
- specific references to the events that led to the undoing of Mulmaster (a source of guilt for Garm);
- accurate citations of the dwarf gods’ theology;
- or appeals to the future safety of Garm’s family (especially his unborn nephew).

Grant advantage on dice rolls for truly impassioned pleas or earnest roleplaying. However, due to the blessing of Garm’s goddess, all Charisma (Deception) checks on this subject fail automatically, and grant disadvantage on subsequent Charisma checks.

If the characters fail, Garm makes his refusal clear. He says something like, “Enough. I’m newly married myself, and the goddess I serve tells me to put family first. I have no intention of making my new wife a new widow, nor of letting any of the rest of my kin die fighting murderous vagabonds in the streets.” If the

characters try to push the conversation further, Garm excuses himself and goes home for the night.

If the characters succeed, Garm finally gives in, with words to this effect: “Alright, you’ve convinced me I can’t sit idly by while my home, and the home of my brother’s unborn child, descends into lawlessness. I won’t take the job myself, but I’ll make it my purpose to find the man or woman who will. You can tell the Order of the Gauntlet that Garm Stormbright said this: Within a tenday, Ylraphon will have a new Captain of the Watch.”

Whether the characters succeed or fail, if they respect Garm’s decision, he will bless one nonmagical weapon belonging to a member of the Order of the Gauntlet. For 24 hours, this item is magical, granting a +1 bonus to attack rolls. However, while the item has this magical bonus, anyone carrying it gains this temporary Ideal: “Home, family, and peace are worth any sacrifice.”

OPTIONAL EXPANSION: OTHER GAMING GROUPS

If there is time and the characters seek to try their hand at other games besides poker, or simply wish to check out other areas of Hostettler’s House the DM has the option of including others whose games they can join or observe. If the characters do, roll on the rumors table in **DM Appendix 3: Rumors** to determine gossip that comes up in these gamblers’ conversations:

- Over a game of High Dragon, the elderly and cranky Cristobella Crexi (LN female gold dragonborn), the Emberstar Exchange’s most renowned swordsmith, is getting increasingly annoyed. Her opponent, Gwynora’s niece Cora Ironheart (CG female shield dwarf) runs her family’s brewery and distillery; she irritates Cristobella with both her luck at cards and chatty banter. The third player, a navigator for the Chiang Emporium named Yi Zhong Fan (N male Shou human), focuses on his beer rather than the awkwardness between his fellow players, seeking distraction from a bittersweet love affair.
- At the Thabort table, four sinister monks of an order called the Sunken Shadows (LE water genasi **martial arts adepts** who are disciples of Iselci Mondas (see Part 3)) use the game to practice their manual dexterity by getting dice to come up as they wish. If asked their names, they say they have none, having given them up in an occult ritual.
- The Mason Sisters (most are actually cousins), a group of Vaasan noblewomen, are raucously playing Three-Dragon Ante. They are three **swashbucklers** (two CN human females named Rustine and Edera and their CG goliath bodyguard Wargo the Goat) and a monk of the Yellow Rose named Luellen (LN female human (Damaran) **martial arts adept**), celebrating how they dealt with a dragonborn partner who tried to steal from them by the docks.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters linger too long at Hostettler’s House, a bar-fight breaks out between two groups of gamblers: the Sunken Shadows and the Mason Sisters. The fight ends quickly, however—Patience shouts that the next person who strikes a blow is banned from Hostettler’s House for life, and that stops both groups in their tracks. After that, Gwynora and Patience shut down all gambling for the night, and Hostettler’s House clears out.

OPTIONAL EXPANSION: FULL BAR-FIGHT

If you are not restricted by time, letting the bar-fight between the Sunken Shadows and the Mason Sisters become a full combat can get some action happening earlier while also demonstrating more of Ylraphon’s lawlessness. Also, the Sunken Shadows are disciples of Iselci Mondas, who the characters will encounter in Part 3. Their sinister nature and presence in town can foreshadow that encounter, especially if they threaten the Masons with retribution when their absent master returns. If you choose to play out the fight, use the information in the Optional Expansion: Other Gaming Groups sidebar above for details on these combatants.

If the characters have not yet visited the Marsh compound and want to try to contact Aislyn Marsh, proceed with *Location B: Marsh Compound*. If they are headed outside the city to look for either Omidon, or to search directly for Orrin and Bresden, proceed to *Location D: The Gates of Ylraphon*.

LOCATION D: THE GATES OF YLRAPHON

Ultimately the characters will need to leave town, either to seek Omidon, or the lost ruin near the temple of Bane. There are two gates out of town: the Marsh Gate, and the Shou Gate. The Marsh Gate is directly between Hostettler’s House and the Marsh Compound that gives the gate its name. The Shou Gate is on the other side of town, far to the east.

Whichever gate they exit through or visit first is being guarded by Clem Stouthandle (NG female halfling **guard**), while the other is currently unmanned. Read or paraphrase the following:

Ylraphon's Palisade is a wall of sturdy duskwood trunks lined in a row, still clad in their black bark, each sharpened to a point. A small wooden platform stands next to the gate, giving the watcher on duty—a female halfling—a view of both the city within and the ruins outside. The halfling does not bar your passage, and nods as you pass. As you walk north towards the gate, it begins to snow.

Clem can provide essentially the same information as Trell Bannon of the Fens (from *Location A*), though she is more talkative and friendly. After the characters finish with Clem, move on as follows:

- If the characters have not visited both *Location B: The Marsh Compound* and *Location C: Hostettler's House*, run the encounter *Old Zhelad*, but only if you have 3 or more hours of real-time left to finish this adventure. (If you have enough time, you may optionally run this encounter even if they visited both places.)
- If the characters have already been to both *Location B* and *Location C*, nothing more of interest happens here. They may proceed out the gate, directly to Part 2: On the Borderlands

OLD ZHELAD

PACING THE ADVENTURE

Make sure you reference the above guidance before choosing whether to run this encounter. If you have less than 3 hours left to complete the adventure, or if the characters have already visited both *Location B: The Marsh Compound* and *Location C: Hostettler's House*, you should not include this encounter at all—as long as the characters already intend to leave through the town gates, by now they should have all the information they need to proceed.

As the characters are about to exit through the gate read or paraphrase the following:

As you are about to leave town, a rugged individual with greyish-blue skin and shocking white hair is on his way in through the gate. Clem appears to recognize him and gives him a cool yet polite nod. As soon as he is within the gates, two elves run up from a nearby alley, shouting “You sent us into an ambush!” and “Why are your friends trying to kill Orrin Marsh?” The blue man looks confused as the elves begin to attack him, then cries out for help.

The man with the bluish skin is “Old” **Zhelad** (LE male water genasi, see sidebar for stats), the cousin of the

Marshes who keeps the local shrine to Umberlee. The two elves attacking Zhelad are **Gythen Wildwood** and **Clif** (CG male wood elves). Clif and Gythen originally accompanied Jotan Silverhammer in search of the lost crown. Their adventuring group met up with that of Bresden and Orrin Marsh, before an attack by water cultists, including several water genasi, nearly killed everyone in both companies.

Clif and Gythen escaped and were coming back to town when they saw Zhelad behind them on the road. They are suspicious that Zhelad may have been involved with the water cultists who attacked them (Zhelad is a water genasi, priest of Umberlee who historically had rocky relations with the rest of House Marsh.) In fact, Old Zhelad had nothing to do with it, but Clif and Gythen don't know that yet. They don't want to kill Zhelad, but they want to drag him someplace private and question him, and if no one interferes, they will beat him unconscious.

STATS FOR CLIF AND GYTHEN WILDWOOD

These two elves have minor psionic abilities, and are seasoned adventurers, but neither is feeling their best at the moment. Both have a level of exhaustion from deepdelve fever (described at the beginning of Part 3), which gives them disadvantage on ability checks (but not saves or attack rolls). Each has the stats of a drow elite warrior, with the following minor changes:

- Alignment is chaotic good
- Under Skills, add Sleight of Hand +7 (for Clif) or Survival +4 (for Gythen)
- Under Languages, replace Undercommon with Common
- Remove the Sunlight Sensitivity trait
- Replace spells for Innate Spellcasting with the following:

At will: *mage hand*, *spare the dying*

1/day: *jump*

2/day: *invisibility* (for Clif) or *pass without trace* (for Gythen)

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Clif and Gythen have been reduced to 45 hp each in previous fights and their weapons are not poisoned (they don't inflict extra poison damage or effects).
- **Weak:** Clif and Gythen have been reduced to 45 hp each in previous fights.
- **Strong:** Clif and Gythen each have 107 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Clif and Gythen each have 133 hit points and Dexterity of 20, increasing their Armor Class to 20 and adding +2 to their attack and damage rolls for their shortsword and hand crossbow attacks. In addition, they can each make a shortsword attack as a bonus action.

TACTICS

If the characters fight Clif and Gythen, it should not be a fight to the death. In fact, if the characters try to protect the water genasi, the two elves take pains to convince the characters the attack is justified. They don't want to kill the characters, or even Zhelad, since they want to interrogate him. If the characters intervene to protect him,

Zhelad tries to get away from the elves, but not leave the area entirely. He tries to defend himself and escape as soon as he can. If necessary, he will cast the *tidal wave* spell (from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide*, also described in **DM Appendix 7**) to help cover his escape, and while he'll try not to get Clem or the characters in the effect area, he doesn't mind doing so if necessary. If Zhelad gets a bit of distance between himself and his attackers, he will feel more comfortable using his spells to punish the elves for assaulting him.

It takes Clem a round to climb down off her platform, but when she does she will try to protect Zhelad while shouting for help from her fellow Town Watch members (none of whom are within hearing). The elves will try to get at Zhelad without doing Clem any lasting harm.

If they are losing the battle, the elves break off their attack and run as fast as they can towards the Marsh gate to try to hide out in the wild. If they are unable to leave the fight safely, they may try to surrender and make a deal, especially if they begin to believe the characters are not here to kill them.

If the characters try to help attack Zhelad or don't offer him help, he is quick to surrender to the elves and try to ask what the trouble is. If Zhelad is surrendering without any trouble, the elves will accept his surrender before reducing him to 0 hit points.

ROLEPLAYING GYTHEN AND CLIF

These two affable elven adventurers are only attacking Zhelad out of loyalty to Jotan, the comrade they believe he endangered. They're always eager for gold and glory, but not to the point of ignoring the consequences of what they do. Loyal to a fault, they've followed Jotan Silverhammer into plenty of tight corners, though they're too ill to try rescuing him now.

Gythen Wildwood takes a childlike glee in his life as an adventurer. He dreams of greatness, longing to restore the original Ylraphon as the capital of a new elven kingdom.

Clif (short for Accliferaeth) is a prolific thief but only steals from those who can spare it. He is constantly annoyed by how many things can still detect him when he's invisible.

TALKING TO ZHELAD

Zhelad wants to make it clear that he did nothing that would justify the two elves attacking him. He can reveal any or all of the following, which Wisdom (Insight) checks reveal to all be true:

- Zhelad was just returning from a visit to Salvar Brix's. Zhelad had been helping the wizard tend to his pet octopus, Wobbles. This attack has taken him completely by surprise.
- Zhelad knows of Lady Myrandah Marsh's death, will, and dying wish. He openly admits he would like to inherit her wealth. However, he believes his goddess punishes kinslayers, so he doesn't intend to kill any relatives to make that happen.
- Zhelad learned from Ilasera that his cousins Orrin and Bresden sought the Blood Metal Crown, and that they would be seeking it in the lair of orc caln called Dragul.
- When Zhelad heard that Jotan Silverhammer was also planning to go in search of the crown, Zhelad offered to tell Jotan the area Bresden and Orrin were headed to, in exchange for 200 gp of the prize money if it helped Jotan find the crown first.
- In doing so, Zhelad also hoped to delay Bresden and Orrin by giving them some competition, which might cause them to return to town too late to claim their inheritance.

ROLEPLAYING ZHELAD MARSH

Though "Old" Zhelad (as he's often called) is the fanatical local leader of Umberlee's cult, he thrives by being calm and rational in his dealings. Despite his nickname, this water genasi looks young. His dark sense of humor and rugged good looks hide the grim ruthlessness of Umberlee's clergy. He has large sea-foam green eyes, silver hair, and greyish-blue skin the color of storm clouds. Few realize the charm he wears around his neck is the mummified hand of a drowned halfling. Zhelad is extremely patient, instinctively manipulative, and quietly insane. Yet he keeps the Bitch Queen's shrine immaculate, and most sailors who pass through live to tell the tale—he sees all who live on or near the sea as potential members of his flock.

Quote: *"Until Umberlee comes to flood the world with brine and blood, Ylraphon is my home, and anyone who threatens it will die with saltwater in their throat."*

STATS FOR ZHELAD

Zhelad has the same stats as **Shoalar Quanderil** from *Princes of the Apocalypse*, adding *Religion +2* to his skills

TALKING TO THE ELVES

Clif and Gythen have a story to tell, but they do so as quickly as possible. They are very ill and need rest.

- The dwarf Jotan Silverhammer is the leader of the elves' adventuring company, as well as the lieutenant guildmaster of the Adventurers Guild.
- Jotan said he had a lead from Zhelad that would help them beat the Marshes to the crown. After hours of spelunking, they ultimately found what appeared to be tunnels leading to the right area.
- They were attacked by water cultists. They managed to escape into a secret passage where they found Sir Bresden Marsh, Lord Orrin, and a half-orc called Omidon, likewise recovering from an attack by the water cultists.
- Jotan and Sir Bresden agreed to join forces against the water cultists, and then work together to find the crown and split Lady Ironheart's prize.
- They rested, but when they awoke, Jotan and Bresden, who had taken the last watch, were gone.
- When they set out to find them, again however, they were attacked by some strange undead, dripping with a golden syrupy liquid. Clif and Gythen were forced to retreat, and when they returned there was no sign of Orrin or Omidon—only trails of the golden sap.
- They searched for Jotan and the others for hours, but they were already weak from *deepdelve fever*, a sickness that affects those who stay down in the dungeons outside Ylraphon for too long. So, they decided to return to town and seek help.
- The tunnel they exited from collapsed as they were leaving. Sir Bresden, however, had mentioned that Omidon had guided them down through a much quicker entrance.
- Clif and Gythen suspect that Zhelad had sent them out to be ambushed with the Marshes. Water genasi are rare, and it seemed like too great a coincidence that other water genasi tried to kill them. So, when they saw Zhelad, they attempted to waylay him so they could interrogate him.

LORE: DEEPELVE FEVER

By making a DC 13 Intelligence (History or Medicine) check (or by asking any local), a character discerns that *deepdelve fever* is known to adventurers in Ylraphon as a sickness afflicting those who spend too many hours underground in certain local ruins. There is no cure, not even magical healing, until those suffering get a good night's sleep above ground.

DEVELOPMENTS

It's likely that the characters will be able to talk to both sides and clear things up. If the characters side with Zhelad and help him fight the elves, Zhelad likely flees, but if still present after their defeat, he will suggest taking them to the jail in the aging Town Hall. Even if jailed, the elves will be released after sleeping off their deepdelve fever—they are volunteer members of the Town Watch and friends with Jotan, one of the Watch's leaders.

If the characters help the elves capture Zhelad, the elves will stealthily smuggle him up to their rooms at Hostettler's House for interrogation. They likely end up believing Zhelad's story, however, and in any case, they will be too sick by then to do much else but let the genasi go.

After the characters have finished talking to Zhelad and/or the elves as much as they wish, proceed to Part 2: On the Borderlands.

PART 2: ON THE BORDERLANDS

SOCIETY, AS WE HAVE CONSTITUTED IT, WILL HAVE NO PLACE FOR ME, HAS NONE TO OFFER; BUT NATURE, WHOSE SWEET RAINS FALL ON UNJUST AND JUST ALIKE, WILL HAVE CLEFTS IN THE ROCKS WHERE I MAY HIDE, AND SECRET VALLEYS IN WHOSE SILENCE I MAY WEEP UNDISTURBED.

—OSCAR WILDE, *DE PROFUNDIS*

Clues from investigations in town guide the characters beyond Ylraphon's protective Palisade and into the surrounding ruins, which sprawl out into the Flooded Forest. Refugees from Mulmaster have constructed a makeshift town of their own just outside the Palisade, hastily rebuilding ruins or erecting other forms of shelter against a relentless winter.

PACING THE ADVENTURE

If you are running the adventure to end within 4 hours, Part 2 should take no more than **30 minutes** of real time.

MANAGING RESTS

If the characters are about to enter Part 2 short on hit points or any other significant resource, circumstances and NPCs should both encourage them to take a long rest before they get too far from Ylraphon. Almost all the intended combat challenge for this adventure will be happening in Parts 2 and 3, so the characters should be prepared when they leave the town. Characters can camp safely out here in the Old City, which is relatively secure due to the constant patrols of the relentless Tyrantsworn militia, but may be more comfortable—and certainly warmer—resting back in town.

In addition to Aislyn Marsh offering rooms at Old Marsh House, Garm will offer to put them up at his shrine to Berronar Truesilver, the Argent Hearth. Characters who finish a long rest at the Argent Hearth are healed for 2d4 hit points.

Gwynora is willing to offer a discount on rooms at Hostettler's House as well. However, due to the noise, characters who attempt a long rest at Hostettler's House must roll a DC 17 Constitution save (creatures like elves who don't require sleep automatically succeed). Those who fail require an extra hour of rest before their rest is finished.

LOCATION E: THE OLD CITY

When the characters exit the gates of Ylraphon or otherwise enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

A second, more ragged town has sprung up among the ruins just outside Ylraphon's palisade, like weeds at the foot of a walled garden. The area hosts a wild mix of dwellings.

Icicle-covered yurts stand next to newly reinforced ruins, heavily-patched tourney pavilions, hastily erected wooden shacks, and crude cabins half-collapsed with heavy snow. The inhabitants are all refugees, but a few live more comfortably than the others. In the distance, more ancient ruins spread in every direction, to the edge of the Flooded Forest and beyond.

As you cross beneath an ancient stone bridge—now snow-covered and leading only to rubble—you see a group of ten black-armored soldiers in heavy fur cloaks on a side path off to the side of the Hunt Trail. They wear symbols of the god Bane and lead a shackled orc in red plate armor. They march in silence, but their orc prisoner sings a defiant, dirge-like song in Orcish as they go. The leader gives you a simple but polite nod of his head, as they march past you into the nearby wilderness.

These Banites are not hostile, but they are very officious. The officers, three Banite **knights**, lead seven **guards** escorting their prisoner. They are part of a local Banite militia called the Tyrantsworn, mercilessly efficient keepers of the peace.

LORE: THE TYRANTSWORN

Characters who spent time in Phlan recognize the officers' plate as armor of the Knights of the Black Fist, refurbished with a slightly different symbol of Bane. Phlan's rising and falling fortunes have placed many such suits of armor into the hands of scavenging iron mongers.

The orc prisoner is **Krim Dragul** (LN male orc, see sidebar for details). He is kinsman to the half-orc Omidon, but is not a half-orc and does not have the mark of a red hand. He keeps singing, but never smiles. Those who make a DC 12 Intelligence (History or Religion) check identify the song as "The Dirge of Ilneval's Vengeance," a religious anthem devoted to Ilneval, the orcish god of battle and leadership. The same roll also identifies the symbol Krim wears on his red armor (a longsword with a red blade) as that of Ilneval. He refuses to speak, only singing. (Krim can kill all his captors at any time, but that is not his plan...)

A paladin of Bane called Darkhand is the leader of the Tyrantsworn militia, and he ordered them to seek a half-orc called Omidon, who has a red hand tattoo on his face. (Secretly, Darkhand did so because of a prophecy from a high-ranking priest of Bane in

Mulmaster, who predicted this half-orc would ignite great chaos in this region.) Darkhand also ordered them to question any orcs in the area.

These Banites found their orc prisoner walking his horse through the refugee camp. He appeared to be drunk. They killed his horse and captured him. This orc has offered to guide them to the hideout of the orc Clan Dragul, which the Tyrantsworn have long sought.

The Tyrantsworn won't stop to talk, and won't let anyone talk to their prisoner. If questioned, they try to avoid a fight, but do not stop their march. Instead, one of the officers peels off from the main group to deal with the characters. This officer will reveal only that this orc has been taken prisoner on orders from Darkhand, their commander at the Black Fane, the nearby shrine of Bane, and that they have legal authority to do so outside of the Palisade.

If anyone is asking about Krim, or paying specific attention to him, or trying to make sure he is not being treated unjustly, he looks right at that person and winks. Then Krim increases the volume of his Orcish song, intoning the lyrics "Our war god's name protects us as we reveal the hidden depths." (Anyone who identified the song realizes these lyrics are not normally part of it.) A DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Krim is in no distress, has no wish to be freed, and is not drunk, even though the Banites think he is.

KRIM DRAGUL, OF CLAN DRAGUL

Krim is a natural rebel, yet he prides himself on discipline, stoicism, and self-control. Kin to King Obould Many-Arrows, he believes orcs can raise cities and empires as great as those of humans, and considers Ilneval the greatest of the orc gods, with Groomsh having held orcs back from greatness. He is descended from the leaders of the blood orcs, and shares both their physical traits and beliefs. An ally of the Order of the Gauntlet, he plays the part of the savage orc here to fool his enemies. He is a **warlord** with the following altered traits:

- Race is orc
- Alignment is Lawful Neutral
- Add History +5 to Skills
- As a bonus action, Krim can cast the *spare the dying* cantrip or move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.
- Magical effects which specifically target orcs do not treat Krim as an orc.
- Krim is immune to the effects of deepdelve fever
- Krim can innately cast the following spells (his spellcasting ability is Charisma), requiring no material components:
1/day each: *aura of purity*, *cure wounds* (as a 4th-level spell), *dimension door*

DEVELOPMENTS

The characters may choose to follow or accompany the Banites and Krim instead of heading for Omidon's tent. Doing either should eventually lead them to *Location G: The Flooded Forest*. If the Tyrantsworn notice they are being followed, they don't like it, but won't be the ones to start a fight.

Characters who follow the group may end up witnessing or even participating in Krim's plan. Having no issue with the characters, Krim tries not to catch them in what he has planned for the Banites. Krim knows all the information in **Player Handout 3: Omidon's Journal** and **Player Handout 4: The Notes on the Map**, and he is trying to keep the Tyrantsworn off his cousin Omidon's trail as long as he can.

To this end, Krim intends to lead his "captors" on a long, circuitous wilderness route (taking over an hour) to *Location G: The Flooded Forest*, then the pit described in detail as Area 1 in Part 3). He knows the orcs of Clan Dragul no longer live in the tunnels beneath the pit, but does not reveal that fact. He will point out the tunnel entrance, but will refuse to go near it, saying he fears his people will kill him if they see he betrayed them. In fact, he does not want to be in the area of the magical ward that will be triggered. Krim knows the ward can be avoided by speaking the name "Ilneval," but he doesn't tell the Banites that. He believes the effect will likely leave all the Tyrantsworn dead, or wounded enough that Krim can kill them all himself.

Krim's plan was originally to distract these Banites, not harm them, but they've earned his ire; the horse they killed was one he had raised from a foal. Once all the Banites are dead, Krim will ensure the bodies end up in or near the pit, so that the hungry roots from below will hide the bodies from the other Banites (see Part 3 for details; having grown up in this underground ruin when it was an orc lair, Krim understands how the roots and eldritch amber prisons work).

Unless the characters interfere, Krim's plan above is exactly what happens. After that, the orc intends to hide in the nearby woods and watch the pit for Omidon's return. Since his cousin asked him to wait here, Krim will not leave for any reason.

The characters should not fight Krim. If for some reason they attack him, Krim will do his best to retreat, likely casting *dimension door* to escape. He will avoid killing anyone besides Banites, even using *spare the dying* on fallen characters.

FIGHTING THE TYRANTSWORN

The characters have little reason to fight the Banites. Characters who do likely win easily, but if any Tyrantsworn are killed, divinations at the nearby temple reveal that some of Bane's faithful have been harmed. 10 minutes later a larger force sweeps across the refugee area to restore order and seek anyone who harmed their comrades. This larger group consists of seven Banite **knights**, led by the Captain of the Tyrantsworn, Kelrom "Darkhand" al-Tahaad (LE male human (Zakharan) **blackguard**). This second group is almost certainly not a fight the characters can win, so if they are wise they won't stay out here on Ylraphon's outskirts.

If the characters are defeated by Tyrantsworn forces, they will not be killed. Instead, the Banites capture as many as possible and leave them tied up unconscious at the Marsh Gate of Ylraphon—after tattooing the back of each character's right hand with the black hand symbol of Bane. If this occurs, the characters earn the *Old City Infamystory* award at the adventure's end.

LOCATION F: OMIDON'S TENT

This small tent seems ready to collapse at any moment. It seems as if no one has brushed off the snow accumulating on top of it for days.

Omidon placed a *glyph of warding* on his tent, which can be noticed only if someone examines it with a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Anyone besides Omidon or his cousin Krim who opens a tent flap triggers an *erupting earth* spell in a 20-foot cube that includes the creature who triggered it but not the tent itself (*erupting earth* is a spell from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide*, and also appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**). Saving throws against the damage and other effects of this spell are made at DC 15.

Furs line the inside of the tent, and tall arrow-reeds help keep it propped up. Its floor is a thick bear pelt. Beneath the pelt, two flat books are hidden, wrapped in a sack (DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) to find).

The first book is a thin tome called *A Treatise on Selûne's Phases and the Prediction of Future Events*. A DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) reveals this text to be wildly incorrect on matters of astrology, but an excellent academic study of the Selûnite faith, as well as a perfect almanac for predicting the moon's phases. Someone has recently circled a chart showing the moon phases for the current tenday. In its final third, it is a spellbook, containing the following wizard spells:

- 1st level: *chromatic orb*, *find familiar*, *ice knife**, *Tasha's hideous laughter*
- 2nd level: *crown of madness*, *Maximilian's earthen grasp**
- 3rd level: *erupting earth**, *tidal wave**

* = This spell appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**.

The second book is Omidon's journal, written in erudite Common. Studying Omidon's journal reveals the information found in **Player Handout 3: Omidon's Journal**, though doing so requires an Intelligence (Investigation) roll that only has a DC of 9, but requires 1 hour of speed-reading. For every 5 by which a character beats the DC, they reduce this time by 10 minutes (to a minimum of 10 minutes).

In addition to recording Omidon's thoughts and experiences, the journal also has a map folded between its pages. Two notes are written on the map, both in the Orcish language. If the characters can read these notes, give the characters **Player Handout 4: The Notes on the Map**. The map leads to a pit in *Location G: The Flooded Forest*, in the ruins north of the temple of Bane. The journal indicates this is the entrance to the lair of Clan Dragul, the orc tribe that banished Omidon.

LORE: CLAN DRAGUL

DC 12 Intelligence (History) checks (orcs and half-orcs roll with advantage) recall that Clan Dragul is a feared orc horde that has terrorized caravans on the nearby Hunt Trail and hunters in the Flooded Forest for centuries. The name "Dragul" is an Orcish word meaning "dragon-blooded," a reference to a legendary half-blue dragon ancestor. Those who roll 15 or higher have heard that the clan's shamans of Gruumsh have an unusual fear of their spiritual leadership being usurped by worshipers of the other orc gods. Rolls of 18 or higher remember tales of Clan Dragul keeping their lair amid the roots of a great and powerful tree, with hungry roots that claimed the unwary as sacrifices.

LOCATION G: THE FLOODED FOREST

Omidon's map or Gythen's directions lead the characters into the Flooded Forest. When they enter it, read or paraphrase the following:

Even as far as swamps go, the Flooded Forest is uniquely unpleasant. It exudes a stench of decay that can be detected even hundreds of feet outside of it, and as one gets closer, the buzz of insects becomes a constant drone. Via sluggish channels, murky waters stagnate between grimy snowdrifts, dead trees, treacherous marshlands, and bogs of deep quicksand. Towering duskwood trees, with their thick canopies 60 feet above the ground, create patches of absolute darkness.

The Flooded Forest is commonly referred to as one of the most dangerous locations in the Moonsea region, if not all of Faerûn. Fortunately, the characters don't have to travel too far in. Reaching the location shown on

Omidon's map takes twice the normal amount of travel time to reach, due to the difficult terrain (though a ranger with a favored terrain of coast, swamp, or forest allows travel at the normal rate).

The destination is a trash pit formerly used by the residents of the Temple of Bane before they created a more convenient dumping ground. Detailed as Area 1 in Part 3, the pit also conceals the entrance to the underground area where the Marshes are.

However, when the characters get within 100 feet of the pit, they enter an area where the morkoth is not only aware of them, but can claim and release prisoners via the Tree of Doors. At that point, there is a ground-shaking rumble as the Tree of Doors extrudes some of its captured creatures up into the pit to attack the characters. Go to **DM Appendix 6: Preserved Defenders Table** and choose or roll for one entry on the table there. The preserved defender rolled on that table appears and attacks, under the morkoth's mental sway. They are accompanied by four **orc blades of Ilneval**.

These creatures do not rise out of the ground under their own power, but are forced up by a mass of tentacle-like roots. Dripping with a golden sap-like substance, each creature appears on a different side of the characters, opening its eyes as if slapped awake from a deep sleep. The creatures attack the characters at once, under the complete control of the morkoth and the Tree of Doors. They want to keep the characters out, but also want to reduce them to 0 hit points so they too may be claimed by the Tree.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the creature rolled on the Preserved Defenders table and remove one **orc blade of Ilneval**.
- **Weak:** Remove one **orc blade of Ilneval**.
- **Strong:** Remove the creature rolled on the Preserved Defenders table and remove one **orc blade of Ilneval**; add one **warlock of the Great Old One** recently captured by the Tree of Doors (see the Lore: Warlocks in the Ruins sidebar below).
- **Very Strong:** Remove the creature rolled on the Preserved Defenders table and add two more **orc blades of Ilneval**.

PACING THE ADVENTURE

If you are low on time, remove the battle here if necessary, or reduce the number of monsters, and usher the characters on to Part 3. The characters should be entering Area 1 of Part 3 with more than two hours of real time remaining to play.

THE BLOOD ORCS

All **orc blades of Ilneval** in this adventure are members of the subrace called "blood orcs." These orcs differ from most of their kind due to their innate intelligence, discipline, and tactical acumen. Also, they tend to be Lawful Neutral or Lawful Evil in alignment, rather than chaotic, and magical effects which specifically target or affect orcs do not treat blood orcs as orcs. In addition, they are immune to the effects of deepdelve fever.

DEVELOPMENTS

When any creature is reduced to 0 hit points or fails a death save in these areas, tentacle-like tree roots burst from the ground, oozing a golden, syrupy substance. This is the Tree of Doors trying to "preserve" the creature. These roots attempt to grapple the creature, as described under *Hungry Roots* in the **General Features** section at the beginning of Part 3.

TREASURE

Between them, all creatures in this battle have a total of 140 gp, and one also carries a *potion of fire giant strength*. If there is a warlock of the Great Old One in this battle, it bears one ring and one dagger made of the magical material ironfell. Each ironfell item is worth 45 gp.

LORE: WARLOCKS IN THE RUINS

Each **warlock of the Great Old One** here or in Part 3 wears a ring and a dagger made of a metallic magical substance called "ironfell." Any warlock encountered in these locations is a former Warlock Knight of Vaasa, now turned renegade.

Each has made a new pact with a mysterious patron to maintain their powers. They have temporarily allied with Iselci Mondas, in pursuit of an unknown agenda. DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or History) checks identify the ironfell items as the implements of the Warlock Knights of Vaasa, spellcasting noble elites of Vaasa's brutal, slave-based feudal system.

The Vaasans' warped knightly order is based on an otherworldly being, a colossus known as Telos that fell onto Vaasa during the Spellplague. Ironfell is harvested from Telos's body; it is hard as steel when worked, though more crystalline in structure and duller in luster.

These particular warlocks also all wear shining copper cloak-pins bearing the image of a flaming spirit hound, but the meaning of these insignias cannot yet be discerned.

OPTIONAL EXPANSION: THE IRONFELL PACT

If you wish, once during their turn, you can allow warlocks of the Great Old One bearing ironfell items to inflict extra damage equal to their Charisma modifier (+4) against one target on a successful attack roll. Attacks dealing this extra damage blaze with a violet, starlight glare.

OPTIONAL EXPANSION: A NEW MASTER

For **Strong** or **Very Strong** parties: You may choose to have warlocks encountered in this adventure reveal a clue to their new allegiance when they die. When one of these warlocks of the Great Old One is reduced to 0 hp (regardless of whether the damage is lethal or not), the warlock exclaims, “Dark Whisperer, grant me power to strike my foes down before I am defeated!” The warlock then explodes in roaring flames that blossom out from their body in a 10-foot radius sphere. Anyone caught within this effect must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) fire damage on a failure, and half as much damage on a success. If there are multiple warlocks of the Great Old One in an encounter, only the last one to die triggers this effect, though the bodies of all fallen warlocks are turned to ash.

When the flames dissipate, all that is left of the warlock is a pile of smoldering ashes and their ironfell items. Their distinctive cloak pins are seemingly destroyed with them.

PART 3: THE TREE OF DOORS

FOR A GOOD TREE BRINGETH NOT FORTH CORRUPT FRUIT;
NEITHER DOTH A CORRUPT TREE BRING FORTH GOOD FRUIT.
--LUKE 6:43

THE TREE OF DOORS

The concealed excavation in the pit opens the way down to the dwarven mortuary, which in turn opens into tunnels dug by the roots of the Tree of Doors. These tunnels join several different local underground areas into one large “super-dungeon,” centered on the central trunk of the Tree itself (only part of which appears in this adventure). The upper portions included here are a mix of dwarven and elven ruins, but both later became the home of the orc clan called Dragul. Recently, adventurers cleared out the orcs—only to themselves fall victim to the Tree of Doors.

PACING THE ADVENTURE

If you are running the adventure to end within 4 hours, Part 3 should take **2 hours or less** of real time. After the characters complete Part 3, allow 15 minutes for the Conclusion.

GENERAL FEATURES

See **Appendices 5A and 5B** for a map of most of these areas. The underground portions consist of crudely dug caverns connecting various buried rooms constructed in different eras. The following features apply to Areas 1-8.

Light. Unless otherwise specified, there are no light sources in any of these areas, except the amber prisons (which shed dim light in a 10-foot radius).

Ceilings. Unless otherwise specified, all rooms have 15-foot high ceilings.

Scents. Everything down here smells like wet soil. Areas dominated by tree roots also have a heavy, smoky smell, like recently felled oak, tinged with the sweetness of maple syrup.

Morkoth's Awareness. The morkoth in Area 8 is aware of all objects and creatures within 100 feet of any part of the Tree of Doors. This area of awareness extends to all of Areas 1-8 plus parts of the surrounding forest. Creatures here feel like they are being watched (even when they are not).

Hungry Roots. Whenever any creature falls unconscious or is reduced to 0 hit points within 5' of any surface (including the floor), a swarm of grappling roots extends from that surface and grapples the

creature. Escaping this grapple requires a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. The roots can also be attacked, and have AC 15, 12 hit points, and an effective grapple check modifier of +6.

Any creature that ends two turns in a row grappled by the roots is absorbed into the adjacent floor or wall. The roots then automatically stabilize any dying creature, and begin burrowing through the earth at a speed of 90 ft. per round, bearing their grappled captive. After three rounds, a portal will open that allows the roots to deposit their grappled creature in Area 8. One round later, more roots will place the creature into an amber prison, not far from where Sir Bresden is being held.

Eldritch Amber Prisons. These spheres vary in size. Any prison large enough that it takes up at least the majority of a 5-foot space can be used as cover. Each amber prison sheds dim light in a 10-foot radius and has AC 17 and 44 hit points regardless of size. Creatures within these large, translucent golden spheres are unconscious and cannot regain consciousness until freed. Outside of Area 8, any attempt to free their prisoners causes tree roots to grapple and try to remove the amber prison to Area 8 (as described above under *Hungry Roots*).

Until the morkoth in Area 8 is defeated, any creature freed from an eldritch amber prison remains psionically linked to the Tree, maddened by the need to protect it. Such creatures attack the characters as if affected by a *crown of madness* spell, rolling a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw at the end of each round to shake off this effect.

Dangerous Rests. Trying to rest in the underground areas (Areas 2 through 8) is very risky. See the *Effects of Resting* sidebar below for details.

EFFECTS OF RESTING

The Tree of Doors and the warping of reality's laws created by the morkoth and its lair create several risks for those attempting to rest in this area. These effects include:

Hungry Roots. Whenever a creature attempts to rest here for more than two hours (i.e. a long rest), there is a 50% chance for every two hours spent resting that hungry roots will attempt to collect them. (Roll individually for each resting creature.) Those targeted by the roots must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled, as described in the General Features under *Hungry Roots*. Any creature that remains grappled two turns in a row is absorbed as described in that section and taken to Area 8.

Deepdelve Fever. Whenever a creature finishes a short or long rest here they must roll a DC 15 Constitution save. The save is

made with a cumulative penalty of -1 per 24 hours that the creature has been in this area, and with advantage if the rest was only a short rest. On a failure, the character receives a level of exhaustion (this cannot increase their exhaustion level above 4). This exhaustion cannot be cured by anything short of a *wish* until the afflicted creature spends at least 8 hours above ground.

Unbeknownst to anyone, this fever is caused by sentient pollen the Tree of Doors releases into the air around its roots, which is why only dungeons intruded upon by the Tree's roots are affected. The pollen prepares the bodies of those it affects for later hibernation, making it easier for the Tree to "preserve" them in its eldritch amber later.

1. THE PIT

Read or paraphrase the following:

This smell of damp earth and rotting food permeates this 25-foot by 25-foot trash pit. The garbage has been shoved over into the southwest corner, while the northeast corner is just flat earth, with a couple piles of recently dug soil.

The tunnel is hidden in the northeast corner, but can be found easily if Krim spoke of it. Otherwise, a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or a passive Perception of 14 or higher can reveal it, hidden by a large piece of camouflaged rotting plywood.

Moving the plywood without first saying the name *Ilneval* triggers a *glyph of warding*, which can be noticed only if someone examining it succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Like at Omidon's tent, this triggers an *erupting earth* spell (from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide* and described in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**), but this one was cast with a 6th-level spell slot, increasing its damage from 19 (3d12) to 39 (6d12)!

The open shaft underneath is 10 feet wide and descends 20 feet into the wet earth before opening into a dark space. Some kind of magic (Omidon's spells) keeps the tunnel from collapsing despite the wetness of the earth. An appropriate light source will reveal an uneven tiled floor about 15 feet below the end of the shaft (Area 2).

The Call of the Tunnel. When the tunnel is revealed, every creature within 30 feet of it must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. This is a charm/enchantment effect generated by the Morkoth in Area 8. On a failed save, affected creatures feel an intense urge to take the most direct path they can to Area 8. They use their fastest means of movement to proceed to Area 2, enter the pool to swim down to Area 6, then move to Area 7

where they will likely be stymied by the door to Area 8 if they are still under the effect. The creature has no idea what it is moving towards, nor why.

At the end of each of its turns, whenever it takes damage, or when it first sees the morkoth, the creature can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself with a success.

2. SACRED DWARVEN MORTUARY

Read or paraphrase the following:

The sides of this hexagonal antechamber are lined with alcoves bearing standing stone coffins carved with images of dwarven warriors. Four empty rectangular slabs hang at waist level, suspended by rusted iron chains anchored in long grooves in the ceiling. The smooth granite walls have been vandalized with crude graffiti and drawings in red, white, and black paint.

Two archways -- one to the east and one to the west -- are both blocked by closed doors of beaten brass. At the northern corner a yawning crack in the wall edged in winding tree roots radiates a faintly glowing light. The southeast corner of the room has partially sunk, and is filled with water.

There are signs of battle everywhere—splattered blood stains, nicks and cracks in the stone, fragments of weapons and ammunition—but strangely, not a single body.

The brass doors in the archways to the east and west lead to Areas 3 and 4, respectively. The 10-foot wide crack in the wall leads to Area 5. The hole in the ceiling leads back up to Area 1.

LORE: THE DWARVEN MORTUARY

Intelligence (History) rolls of 10 or higher determine that this granite stonework is of Dwarven make and at least 900 years old. Characters who roll 14 or higher on this check determine this room was built during the era of the lost dwarf kingdom of Roldilar, the Realm of Glittering Blades, which ruled the port of Ylraphon almost a millennium ago.

A DC 13 Intelligence (Medicine or Religion) check determines that the moveable hanging slabs here were used by dwarven morticians to give special funerary rites. Those who discern this and also know the history can put together what would have happened here. This place would have serviced a growing number of war-dead as the orcs reconquered these lands. Eventually, as the losing war grew more desperate and there wasn't enough time to bury all the dead elsewhere, this room became a tomb as well.

The graffiti is all in Orcish, claiming these ruins as the lair of the orc clan Dragul. It is clear this was once a dwarf-hold that orcs later took over. Painted in red are special warnings against "the

roots of the evil tree.” DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) checks identify symbols of Gruumsh and other orc gods. Black paint crosses out the symbol of the god Ilneval.

The Moving Slabs. Thanks to rolling mechanisms in the grooves from which the chains hang, these four slabs can be moved up to 15 feet in a straight line north or south with a good shove or kick. A creature who makes a melee attack while standing on or leaping from a moving slab has advantage on that attack roll if their target is on the ground. The slabs hang 3 feet above the ground, and moving onto (or off) a moving slab just requires a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

The Brass Doors. These two sets of double doors are always magically locked, except while being touched by a creature who is not at their maximum hit points or has touched the remains of a dead creature within the last minute. Otherwise they can be picked with a DC 22 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) roll. If a locked door is touched by a creature who does not meet the criteria to unlock it, a *magic mouth* appears on that door and speaks a message in Dwarven: “The unbloodied cannot enter here.” One of these doors leads to Area 3, the other to Area 4.

The Pool. The dark water at the southeast corner of the room conceals a much deeper drop than one might suspect. The floor here collapsed decades ago, creating a 40-foot deep pool. At the very bottom, a hidden passage (DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check) leads to Area 6, the Defaced Shrine, via a very dark and claustrophobic 60-foot swim.

HERE COMES TROUBLE

After a few rounds of investigation (some unlucky characters may still be under a compulsion to move to Area 8), read or paraphrase the following:

A ragged-looking figure enters from the crack in the wall. He is pale and slender, with close-cropped black hair, icy blue eyes, and the barest beginnings of a beard. No sooner does he enter the room when he collapses on the floor. Immediately, root tendrils begin to reach out from the floor and enwrap his body.

This is 17-year-old Lord **Orrin Marsh** (LN male Damaran human **knight**), recognizable from prior description and his resemblance to Arden. His deepdelve fever gives him four levels of exhaustion. In addition, earlier he barely escaped Iselci Mondas (see

below), who hit Orrin with a poison dart. As he enters, ongoing poison damage reduces him to 0 hp.

As Orrin falls to the ground, roots emerge from beneath the ground to pull his body into the earth. He begins to suffer the full effects of the *Hungry Roots* described under General Features at the beginning of Part 3 unless the characters intervene.

The poison affecting Orrin is *firethorn*, harvested from flowers that grow on an island off the coast of Zakhara. At the end of each of his turns, Orrin must make a DC 15 Constitution save to recover from the poison. If he succeeds, this effect ends, but each time he fails, he takes 9 (2d8) poison damage. If healed, Orrin will likely fall unconscious again unless this ongoing damage has ended. Note that if he is taken by the hungry roots, he will be automatically stabilized.

Allow each of the characters try to help Orrin. After everyone has had an opportunity to take an action, **Iselci Mondas** (see sidebar) emerges from Area 4 and attacks, aided by four **orc red fangs of Shaargas**, attempting to kill Lord Orrin. (If Orrin is somehow conscious and able to fight, add one extra **orc red fang of Shargaas**). Having drunk magical water from Area 4, Iselci and her allies currently have climbing speeds of 30, and can move across any vertical or narrow surface at normal speed.

RUNNING THE BATTLE

Having the enemies use the terrain is a good way to inspire the characters to do the same. If the characters aren't using the moveable slabs in Area 2, have their opponents do so, encouraging them to follow suit. Since the characters are unlikely to know that Iselci is hiding in Area 4, she and her allies probably attack with surprise.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters manage to save Orrin Marsh, he mostly has the same story to tell as Clif and Gythen Wildwood from Part 1 did, and not much in the way of new information. While he can be healed, his deepdelve fever gives him four levels of exhaustion that cannot be removed by any magic short of a *wish* until he spends 8 hours outside these tunnels.

The characters may take him with them, take him back up the tunnel to the pit, or leave him here. In any case, the characters' quest is not complete until they find Sir Bresden Marsh as well.

ROLEPLAYING LORD ORRIN MARSH

With pale skin, icy blue eyes, and the beginnings of a beard the same color as his short auburn hair, 17-year-old Lord Orrin is small and slim, but has a natural bearing of command. Though well-mannered and generally pleasant, he expects deference and obedience from those below his station. Smarter than nearly everyone he meets, Orrin feels obligated to give others orders for their own good. A chess master, he always thinks twenty moves ahead, and finds it tedious to explain his plans to those who can't keep up. He has enjoyed his time as an adventurer with his cousin Sir Bresden, but now he's ready to shift his focus to House Marsh's day-to-day needs.

Quote: *"I may be young, but I know we nobles have a moral obligation to help those in need, regardless of whether those in need are equal to or below us."*

Note: Orrin is a **knight** with a 20 Intelligence, and the following skills: *Gaming Set (Chess Set) +7, History +7.*

TREASURE

Iselci Mondas carries 70 gp and a *spell scroll of water breathing* she found down here in the dungeon. She also bears an unusual *ioun stone of reserve*, a purple gem cut like a coin, with a face on each side. If there are warlocks of the Great Old One in this battle, each bears one ring and one dagger made of the magical material ironfell. Each ironfell item is worth 45 gp.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove all **orc red fangs of Shargaas**; add a **warlock of the Great Old One** who has allied with Iselci
- **Weak:** Remove two **orc red fangs of Shargaas**
- **Strong:** Add one **orc red fang of Shargaas**
- **Very Strong:** Remove all **orc red fangs of Shargaas**; add two **warlocks of the Great Old One**

ISELCI MONDAS

Iselci Mondas uses the same stats as a **githzerai zerth** with the following changes:

- Iselci can breathe both air and water.
- Iselci has a Wisdom of 20 (raising her AC to 19 and giving her a spell save DC of 16 and +8 to hit with spell attacks)
- The following spells are added to Iselci's Innate Spellcasting trait:

At will: *shape water**

1/day: *create or destroy water*

(* = This spell also appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**.)

Background. Iselci is a water genasi monk with psionic powers who came down here to kill Sir Bresden, aided by her cult, the Sunken Shadows. She believes Sir Bresden's betrayal of the Cult of the Crushing Wave in Mulmaster caused her liege Crispin Marsh (father of Arden and Bresden and a leader of the cult) to die

battling Garm Stormbright. (In fact, she has confused Bresden with his twin Arden.)

Despite Iselci's ambush, the Marshes escaped to hide elsewhere in the dungeon with their adventurer allies. She has found no sign of Bresden recently, but managed to wound Orrin with a poison dart before he eluded her. Unfortunately, that was her last poison dart. Since then, the strange roots and creatures have claimed Iselci's students, and she has replaced them by recruiting new allies, including vengeful survivors of the slaughtered orc tribe who once claimed this ruin.

Seeking the Marshes, she discovered Area 4 and the properties of the water there. Iselci carries an *ioun stone of reserve* that allows her to cast one of the following spells of your choice once during the battle: *counterspell*, *fireball* or *tidal wave*. In battle, she dispenses with most opponents using spells, but seeks to duel powerful hand-to-hand combatants.

CONSEQUENCES OF PLANE SHIFT

Iselci Mondas's spells include *plane shift*, which can shunt a character to another plane. Guidance on this spell appears in the most up-to-date version of the Adventurers' League FAQ, outlining how spells or downtime can be used to return. For example, if the character lacks the ability to return to Faerûn by magic, they must spend 50 downtime to wander randomly throughout the planes until they find a portal to Faerûn.

However, if you, as a DM, feel that you do not want a stranded character to miss the rest of the story, this adventure provides another way out: the many portals in Area 8. When the other characters arrive in that area (or sooner if you wish), the character can simply return through one of those portals, hopefully with a good story to tell.

3. EASTERN SACRED SPRING

This 20-foot by 20-foot antechamber is mostly featureless save for a white marble basin built around a bubbling spring against the far wall. The water bubbling up has a bluish color, and above it is a dwarvish rune. A brass ladle chained to the wall seems to indicate this water was meant for drinking.

Characters who speak Dwarvish know the rune symbolizes purification. This water here has a bluish color, but is normal water, with a minor magical effect that keeps it fresh and pure. Dwarf clerics used it to cleanse the wounds of fallen soldiers.

OPTIONAL EXPANSION: WILD MAGIC FOUNTAIN

If you wish, the water in this room can be infused with wild magic, giving it a much stranger magical effect. Anyone drinking from the spring in Area 3 is affected by random wild magic. They must roll 1d20 and compare the results to the Sacred Spring Water Table. Sorcerers with the Wild Magic sorcerous origin who drink instead roll 1d12, and they may also roll twice and choose

which of the two effects they prefer. Lasting effects can be dispelled with dispel magic as if they were 5th level spells.

SACRED SPRING WATER TABLE

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1 | The character is healed for 2d8 hit points and recovers 1 level of exhaustion, if they have any. |
| 2 | The character's hit point maximum and current hit points increase by 5 for 8 hours, as if they had benefitted from an <i>aid</i> spell. |
| 3 | The character is affected by an <i>enhance ability</i> spell, gaining the benefit connected to whichever of their ability scores is lowest. The benefit continues for 8 hours. |
| 4-5 | The character's shadow appears to be armored in magnificent spiked plate mail and carrying a massive kite shield for 8 hours, no matter what armor they wear. This grants them a +1 bonus to AC, as their shadow actually raises its shadow shield to block attacks. The next time the character would take radiant damage, they are immune to that damage, but this effect ends and their shadow returns to normal as soon as this benefit is used. |
| 6-7 | The character grows a red insect-like hard carapace over its skin for 8 hours, during which time their AC can't be less than 16, regardless of what kind of armor they wear, as if benefitting from a <i>barkskin</i> spell, and they gain a climbing speed of 20. |
| 8-9 | The character takes on the froglike appearance of a bullywug for 8 hours, as if affected by the Change Appearance effect of an <i>alter self</i> spell. They do not change their other physical traits, except that for 8 hours they can now breathe water as well as air, their jumping distances are tripled, and they have advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to jump or swim. |
| 10-11 | For 8 hours, the character can communicate with all beasts as if they had benefitted from a <i>speak with animals</i> spell. |
| 12-13 | The character grows massive, curving ram-horns, as per the Natural Weapons effect of an <i>alter self</i> spell. The horns persist for 8 hours. |
| 14-15 | The character's head catches fire, but the fire is harmless and does not burn them, functioning exactly as a continual flame spell would. The fire remains for 8 hours. |
| 16-17 | For a duration of 8 hours, the character is reduced as if by an <i>enlarge/reduce</i> spell. |
| 18-19 | The character must roll a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. If it fails, it has disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks related to hearing for 8 hours. If it succeeds, it suffers the same effect for only 10 minutes. Either way, for the duration, they hear a deep voice in their heads, delivering a long-winded lecture in the Dwarven tongue, recounting the names of all of the 1,000 legendary <i>orcslayer</i> weapons forged by the dwarves of Roldilar, and the deeds and histories of their wielders. |
| 20 | The character must roll a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they take 9 (2d8) poison damage and 1 level of exhaustion. If they succeed, the damage is halved. |

Water taken away from this spring in a container only retains its magical effects for 8 hours. Once, these magical waters had very different properties, but in the time since, portals opened to the plane of Limbo by the Tree of Doors near the sources of the springs have leaked chaotic energies into the waters, which have transformed their once reliable blessings into wild magic effects.

4. WESTERN SACRED SPRING

This room appears identical to Area 3, except the water here has a reddish color rather than bluish. Those who drink from it gain all the benefits of a *potion of climbing* (for 1 hour, gain a climb speed equal to their walking speed and advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to climb). For the same duration, they can move across surfaces as narrow as one inch wide at their full speed without making a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Water taken away from this spring in a container only retains its magical effects for 8 hours.

5. ROOT STAIRCASE

A staircase of carved green marble proceeds downwards for 70 feet before it turns sharply left. It is replaced here by angular tree roots, growing in unnatural step-like patterns that twist and tunnel deeper into the earth.

The root walls and ceilings are festooned with a menagerie of creatures, imprisoned in translucent spheres glowing with golden light. Humanoids of many kinds are here, mostly orcs, dwarves, and elves, dressed in the trappings of different eras. As the passage continues it becomes wider, and larger spheres hold larger creatures: horses, dinosaurs, and what may even be a beholder.

The tunnel winds erratically, in some places sloping back up towards the surface before spiraling down again, making a U-turn, etc. A DC 12 Intelligence (History) check determines that there is no engineering logic to the route this passage takes. Eventually, the passage resumes a more direct path. Read or paraphrase the following:

The tunnel is now thirty feet wide as it resumes a step-like descent. An amber prison here holds what looks to be a giant nearly twenty feet tall. By the dim light of this and the other amber spheres you can make out a landing at the bottom of the stairs, sixty feet ahead. Red graffiti marks one of the walls here.

The Warning. Words have been painted in red on the wall of roots. They read, in Orcish, "Walk with the visage of our highest god to pass unharmed." This was written by the orcs of Clan Dragul who exiled Krim and Omidon, and thus are referencing the god Gruumsh One-Eye as a warning on how to avoid the stair trap (by covering one eye; see below).

Stair Trap. This trap was originally only part of the green marble staircase (built by the elves of old), but over time, the stairs formed by the tree roots have emulated it. The orcs later adapted it as well.

The final thirty feet of stairs just above the landing are trapped. If anyone steps into this area without covering one eye (with their hand, an eyepatch, or anything else), every step on the staircase (the full 60 feet, not just the last 30 feet) shifts to form one long, smooth, 45-degree sloped ramp.

Anyone who fails a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw slides down the length of the staircase to a 10-foot by 5-foot landing at the bottom of the stairs. Those sliding down take only 7 (2d6) falling damage, but also likely trigger the trapdoors at the end of the stairs (see below).

The trapped area can be detected by a DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check or DC 19 active Intelligence (Investigation) check. If detected, it can be disabled with a DC 19 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check, though a failure on this check by 5 or more triggers the trap.

Trapdoors. The landing at the bottom of the stairs is 10 ft. x 5 ft. and is composed of two 5 ft. x 5 ft. trapdoors. Anyone approaching at normal speed notices the trapdoors on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check, but those approaching at a faster pace (such as sliding down from the stair trap) don't have the chance.

Putting more than 30 lbs. of weight on either trapdoor causes it to swing open, exposing a 50-foot deep pit. Anyone on or entering the area of the trap door when it is open must make a DC 17 Dexterity save or fall in, taking 17 (5d6) falling damage when they hit the ground. Anyone who rolls a natural 1 on this save strike the broken statue in the room at the bottom, and takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage.

Those who succeed on the Dexterity save catch the edge of the pit, hanging there until a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check pulls them up or they find another way out of their predicament. Once open, the trap door cannot be closed again.

Those who fall through the trapdoor land in Area 6, the Defaced Shrine. There is no other exit from the landing other than down 50 feet to Area 6.

6. THE DEFACED SHRINE

(Note that this area does not appear on the maps in the Appendix.) When the characters enter this room, read or paraphrase the following:

This domed chamber is constructed of green marble, though the floor is tangled with tree roots. Two archways—one to the north, one to the south—open onto green marble passages leading out of this room.

In the center of the chamber stands a granite statue of an elf. The statue has been beheaded, and the body vandalized with profane drawings in red, black, and white paint.

Towards the east side of the room, a half-orc lies upon the floor. Brackish water gushes out of a hole in the wall to the northeast, splashing down into a small dip in the floor before flowing out through a number of small cracks.

The passage to the north angles up, but after 50 feet it ends in a thick wall of jumbled earth, having collapsed in a massive cave-in. This is the passage by which Clif and Gythen escaped earlier, but it is now impassible.

The passage to the south angles down, and leads 20 feet to Area 7, the Chamber of the Door.

The half-orc is **Omidon Umrayle** (LN male half-orc, stats described below), also known as Omidon of the Red Hand or Omidon Two-Eyes, the guide who led the Marshes down here and left his journal behind for his cousin Krim. He lies unconscious but uninjured. The most distinctive thing about him is that he has a red scar on his face the size and shape of a human handprint.

Unusually, the roots of the tree have not tried to assimilate him at all—for mysterious reasons related to its larger purpose, the Tree of Doors has long awaited this half-orc's return, and not even the morkoth's influence can cause it to harm him.

It is up to the characters to decide if they move, disturb, or do anything else with him. However, he cannot be awakened by any means until he is removed to the surface or the morkoth is defeated in Area 8. As soon as the morkoth is reduced to 0 hit points, however, Omidon will awake on his own and seek to escape this place.

Near the sleeping Omidon a rolled *spell scroll* of *glyph of warding* has fallen to the ground; in his hand, Omidon holds a tin box (described below).

OMIDON URNRAILE

Omidon has identical statistics to **Miraj Vizann** from *Princes of the Apocalypse*, except that he is a half-orc and his alignment is Lawful Neutral. Also, like all descendants of the orc clan Dragul, he is immune to the effects of deepdelve fever. His personality and interests are captured in his writings in **Player Handout 3** and **4**.

The Tin Box. This box is unlocked and nonmagical, though its contents radiate an aura of transmutation magic. The box contains 112 pieces of silver. One fourth of these are complete silver coins; another fourth are half coins, a fourth of them are coins with a sizeable sliver sliced off, and the final fourth are just the slivers sliced off the other coins. Thus, they comprise only 70 sp worth of silver. The complete coins are each marked with symbol of a star. The fractional pieces each have a corresponding fractional star symbol upon them.

If the tin box and coins are taken from this area, they disappear from anyone who possesses them the next time they take a long rest, reappearing here in Area 6. Omidon found the box after arriving here, just before he fell asleep. The pieces of silver are needed to pass the warded door in Area 7.

The Brackish Waterfall. Water streams out of a hole ten feet above the floor in the northeast wall. Characters attempting to swim upstream find a dark and cramped passage that slopes up 60 feet to the bottom of the pool in Area 2. Strength (Athletics) attempts to swim upward are at disadvantage, as it requires swimming against the current.

7. THE CHAMBER OF THE DOOR

(Note that this area does not appear on the maps in the Appendix.) When the characters enter this room, read or paraphrase the following:

This 40-foot by 40-foot green marble room looks much like the shrine from which you entered it. A stone statue stands atop a much older and more beautiful pedestal. The only exit besides the way you came is a wooden door leading south.

Next to the door is carved a round hole roughly the size of a coin. Etched above the hole is a symbol: a pair of eyes surrounded by seven silver stars.

The Statue. The statue here is again a beheaded elf, and again has been graffitied in Orcish. The stone head lies nearby in a corner. The statue holds some sort of chart in its hands. A DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that it contains astronomical markings. If

the stone head is fit back onto the statue, it can be seen to be facing upwards.

The Warded Door. The magical door cannot be opened until its puzzle is solved. Any attempts at forcing it or picking a lock automatically fail.

- Anyone making a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check realizes there is some kind of magical trap on the door, activated by even the slightest touch.
- The ward is also detectable as an aura of transmutation magic on the door with detect magic or a DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check.
- A DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the pattern of eyes and stars above the hole as the holy symbol of the goddess Selûne, also known as the Moonmaiden.

Anyone touching the door must attempt a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they are pushed back 20 feet and take 17 (3d6) radiant damage, as rays of magical moonlight blast them back. On a success, a character takes half as much damage and is only pushed back 10 feet.

The hole next to the door radiates magic (transmutation), and is key to deactivating the warded door. To do so, one of the coins or partial coins from the tin box found in Area 6 must be inserted to deactivate the ward, but the coin must represent the current phase of the moon: full coins represent the full moon, half coins represent a half-moon, sliver of coins represent a quarter moon, and the coins missing a sliver represent a gibbous moon.

Since the adventure began on the night of a crescent moon, one of the slivers must be inserted (unless many days have passed.) Inserting the wrong coin has the same effect as touching the door.

If the correct coin is inserted, the door opens of its own accord. Opening it reveals a magical portal, like that of an *arcane gate* spell, which leads to Area 8.

If the characters are struggling to figure out the puzzle, allow them Intelligence (Arcana, Investigation, or Religion) checks to determine how various components of it may be intended to work.

Once the characters realize what they must do, if they don't remember descriptions of the phase of the moon from earlier, allow them to figure it out with a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana, Nature or Religion) check. If the characters have the tome from Omidon's tent entitled *A Treatise on Selûne's Phases and the Prediction of Future Events*, they gain advantage on this roll.

TREASURE

The prior adventurers who drove out the orcs consolidated their pillaging in this room. At the north end of the room is a chest filled with 188 gp worth of coins and art objects portraying Gruumsh.

8. THE HALL OF PRESERVATION

The characters appear in this room adjacent to the portal they entered through, marked as X on **DM Appendix 5B: Underground Map II (Area 8)**. Read or paraphrase the following:

The air is heavy and humid in this wide hallway, quickly drenching you with moisture. All is silent except for the rustle of slithering tree roots, which cover every surface.

They even cover the ceiling, from which globe-shaped prisons of eldritch amber hang everywhere, both here and to the south, where the hallway opens up into a massive chamber, with a 60-foot high ceiling, from which hangs what appears to be the prize of the collection: a massive red dragon is imprisoned in an enormous amber sphere. Looking at the chamber, you can make out a single gigantic piece of hard amber beneath the roots criss-crossing the floor.

Beneath the imprisoned dragon, two more of the amber globes radiate a particularly bright glow as they are spun in place by tentacle-like roots. The roots are layering them thinly with oozing sap that seems to harden into more of the confining amber. As they rotate, you can see the first contains a well-armored human male, and the second a male dwarf, wearing a platinum crown with tines of a strange, crimson colored metal.

As the human's face turns up towards you, you see he looks just like Arden Marsh, save for long black hair and a well-groomed goatee. Surely this imprisoned man is Sir Bresden Marsh!

The "air" in this room is actually water, magically made clear and breathable by the morkoth's power.

The human in the amber sphere is indeed Sir Bresden Marsh. The dwarf is Jotan Silverhammer. They are both trapped and unconscious. If the characters examine the other amber prisons, about half of them contain tall, red-armored orcs. The rest contain mostly humanoids, some seemingly local, some from other planes (i.e. githyanki, slaadi, etc.)

Any humanoid creatures who were reduced to 0 hit points in Areas 1 through 7 (such as Iselci Mondas or her allies) are also now imprisoned here.

Characters with passive Perceptions of 13 or higher realize that beneath all the tree roots, the floor of the chamber is one massive block of amber, containing a colossal humanoid with coal-black skin, at least twice as large as a storm giant.

When someone attempts to free any of the caught creatures, the master of this menagerie knows and responds at once. Read or paraphrase the following:

A portal opens ahead of you, and a man-sized, squid-like aberration emerges, its bulging eyes flashing with anger. Its skin and tentacles are black and spotted with patches of luminescence. It rises on translucent red segmented legs in a threatening stance and hisses through a hawk-like beak.

No no no no! you hear in your head, as the horror chatters telepathically. Pathetic mortal worms of a backwater plane, you dare steal from my menagerie? These beings are mine, do you hear me? Mine mine mine mine mine! The dragon is mine, the adventurers are mine, the rare orcs and the titan are mine, the whole Tree of Doors is mine! Surrender now and I may simply make you part of my collection, you mindless insects!

This is the **morkoth**. Interrupting its telepathic speech does not surprise it, as it is expecting battle. In fact, it has already summoned creatures to defend it. Roll 1d6 for (or simply select) *two* creatures from the table in **DM Appendix 6: Preserved Defenders Table**. Those creatures are pushed out of the nearby wall by the roots, dripping with golden sap, and will fight to protect the morkoth.

The morkoth is upset for a reason. Since Omidon entered the area of the Tree of Doors, the Tree and the creatures it has captured resist the morkoth's control, causing it to occasionally need to stop and concentrate to keep its collection intact. Because of this, it takes no chances now, devoting its full attention (though only a small portion of its precious menagerie) to capturing or destroying the characters. Unless the characters immediately surrender, the morkoth attacks at once. This is the morkoth's lair, and it gains its lair actions.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** This is not the morkoth's lair, and it does not gain its lair actions. The morkoth does not have its hypnosis action, its spell reflection, or any 6th-level spells.
- **Weak:** This is not the morkoth's lair, and it does not gain its lair actions.
- **Strong:** Replace the preserved defenders with two **orc red blades of Ilneval**, one of whom is not freed from its mind control until it is incapacitated or the morkoth is defeated.
- **Very Strong:** Replace the preserved defenders with Smolderwrath, a red dragon. Smolderwrath uses the statblock of a **young green dragon**, but has damage immunity to fire instead of poison, and its bite and poison breath inflict fire damage instead of poison damage.

TACTICS

The morkoth initially appears as far away from the characters as is practical. It keeps its distance if it can, only moving as close as necessary for the range of its spells or its potent Hypnosis. It should be one of the smartest opponents most characters have ever fought, and its decisions in battle reflect this. In fact, given the morkoth's scrying and its genius intelligence, you're not metagaming if you play the morkoth as knowing everything you know.

The morkoth's minions attempt to protect it by interposing themselves between the morkoth and any characters not hypnotized by it. Those creatures just released from an eldritch amber prison are still partially sustained by the sap in their lungs, and do not need to breathe for 1 minute after their release. The morkoth's magic also grants them each a swim speed equal to their walking speed.

In addition, whenever the morkoth takes damage, 1d4 of the amber prisons liquefy, freeing their various humanoid prisoners. Since the morkoth is concentrating on controlling other minions, these freed prisoners are not under its control. They do not seek to participate in the fight, but immediately attempt to flee (using portals if any are open yet).

DEVELOPMENTS

If the morkoth is not yet defeated, the following events occur each round on initiative count 20:

- **1st round:** Unless the Party Strength is Weak or Very Weak, all the air in the entire room instantly turns into its true form – that of murky water. See *Player's Handbook* Chapter 9 for rules on underwater combat.

(Among other things, note that the underwater combat rules state that creatures fully immersed in water have resistance to fire damage, but disadvantage with most weapon attacks unless they have a swim speed.)

- **2nd round:** The morkoth's allies, if still conscious, stop fighting for a moment, looking confused. They will not attack again until after the morkoth's turn, when it uses a bonus action to concentrate on regaining mental control. (For Weak or Very Weak parties, this requires the morkoth to use its action rather than its bonus action.)
- **3rd round:** Portals wink open in random locations every 15 to 30 ft., all over this room and in Areas 5, 6, and 7. Each portal leads to the Flooded Forest near Area 1, the pit.
- **4th round:** The morkoth's allies, if still conscious, suddenly shake their heads, as if waking from a dream. They do not attack this round—instead they attempt to flee through one of the open portals. The morkoth's telepathic voice shouts out in possessive anger at this. On its turn, the morkoth again uses a bonus action to concentrate on regaining mental control—but fails. (For Weak or Very Weak parties, this requires the morkoth to use its action rather than its bonus action.)

RUNNING THE BATTLE

This fight is designed to be extremely difficult but still winnable; maintaining that balance requires your careful attention. Depending on the characters' performance in the fight, you may wish to have the morkoth's allies shake off its mind control later or earlier than indicated above under Developments. In fact, if the battle seems too challenging once it is underway, you may choose to allow allies who stop being mind-controlled (or creatures freed from amber prisons when the morkoth takes damage) to join the fight on the characters' side, seeking vengeance for their long imprisonment. Creatures freed when the morkoth takes damage can be from **DM Appendix 6: Preserved Defenders Table**, or they may even be **orc blades of Ilneval** (blood orcs).

In fact, as a reminder, the rules of *Adventurers League* do allow DM's to add or substitute thematically appropriate monsters to any encounter, in order to create the most enjoyable level of challenge. Given the nature of the morkoth's menagerie, nearly any monster makes thematic sense as a substitute for, or addition to, the morkoth's allies. Use your best judgment in giving this fight a satisfying level of difficulty, with the characters battling antagonists that are appropriately challenging.

If the characters flee via the portals rather than killing the morkoth, none of the creatures trapped in amber prisons

(including Bresden or Jotan) are freed unless the characters directly free them. Omidon is not awakened unless the characters take him with them. Therefore, you'll need to alter descriptions after the battle, removing all references to the creatures who instead remain trapped in the dungeon.

If the characters reduce the morkoth to zero hit points, all its allies cease fighting and the Tree of Doors is free from the morkoth's will. All amber prisons in Areas 2 through 8 immediately melt into golden sap, though most of the freed creatures only have 1 hit point when they emerge. When this happens, read or paraphrase the following:

All at once, everything begins to shake, and all the amber spheres remaining in the chamber begin to quickly dissolve. Within seconds, Sir Bresden and the dwarf spill out, covered in liquefied amber, looking weak but otherwise unharmed. The orcs and other creatures in the chamber begin to free themselves as well. The quaking becomes more violent, and clumps of heavy earth begin dropping from the ceiling.

With the roots retreating, you gain a better view of the amber prison that forms the floor of the chamber. It isn't melting, but one long jagged crack appears in its surface, and the titanic being imprisoned within opens its eyes. Immediately, the chamber is filled with an oppressive heat.

If they have not already done so during the third round of combat, portals now open throughout the entire dungeon, appearing every 15 to 30 feet.

Sir Bresden Marsh (LG male Damaran human **champion**) and the dwarf **Jotan Silverhammer** (N male shield dwarf **assassin**) are alive and conscious, with 1 hit point each. The sleeping half-orc, Omidon, awakes wherever he is, and rushes for the nearest portal unless compelled to do otherwise.

The chamber is beginning to collapse. The characters must escape or die. If the chamber is filled with water, creatures must swim to escape via the portals. A creature remaining in this room or in Areas 5, 6, or 7 after one minute has elapsed must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw each round or take 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage from falling pieces of the earth above. After ten more rounds, the damage for a failed Dexterity save starts increasing by an additional +1d12 every round.

TREASURE

Jotan Silverhammer is wearing the blood metal crown. This elaborate platinum crown has tines of the strange, crimson colored metal that gives it its name. Both Bresden and Jotan relinquish all claim to the crown, saying the characters earned the prize by freeing them from imprisonment.

BACK TO THE PIT (AREA 1)

Any portal the characters enter leads to Area 1 or near it. The weather has turned suddenly hot, and the earth is shaking as much of the tunnel system beneath the area collapses. The pit itself is flooded, and the area around it is ankle deep in water as well, as more water rushes out of the many open portals.

When the characters arrive, Krim is here, waiting for Omidon with several saddled horses. About a dozen tall, tall red-armored **orc blades of Ilneval** (blood orcs) have gathered with him. No words seem to be exchanged, but all the orcs appear to begin following Krim's lead instinctively. They are respectful and grateful towards the characters.

Various other creatures the characters fought or saw trapped underground can be seen nearby—covered in sap and confused, but alive and awake. Most run away towards the nearby cover of the Flooded Forest with splashing steps, but some of the humanoids seem more disoriented than frightened. After 10 minutes or so, all the portals suddenly blink out of existence, and no more creatures appear to be escaping. One way or another, among the humanoids that appear with the characters should be Sir Bresden, Jotan Silverhammer, and Omidon.

Bresden and Jotan are confused, unsure how long they've been gone. They were taking the last watch in a passage when roots came out of the walls and snatched them away. While in the Tree of Doors, they were in telepathic contact with thousands of minds, not all of them friendly, and they believe the morkoth has been using the Tree to capture creatures for millennia—and now most or all seem to have been set free by the morkoth's defeat. In the distance, they can even see the red dragon, soaring away over the treetops. The Flooded Forest has become a more dangerous place.

When they reach someplace safe, Bresden, Jotan, and Omidon are happy to discuss any subject the characters wish. Bresden is receptive to the message about his inheritance, and Jotan is enthusiastic if they ask about joining the Adventurers Guild.

Omidon is also eager to explain. He says the underground ruins used to be home of the orc clan Dragul, but adventurers cleared them out. The red-armored orcs are blood orcs—imprisoned in the Tree of Doors purposefully by orc shamans of Gruumsh, who betrayed them for trying to elevate Ilneval as the greatest orcish god, as well as trying to organize and transform orc society.

Omidon thanks the characters for rescuing him, and departs together with Krim and the blood orcs for the Flooded Forest. There they will seek a new home, a haven where they can regroup, recover, and make plans. As they ride away on the horses—mounts which clearly once belonged to members of the Tyrantsworn militia the characters encountered earlier—the orcs all begin singing, in loud and deep voices, the song Krim sang when he was the Banites' prisoner: "The Dirge of Ilneval's Vengeance."

RETURNING TO TOWN

It doesn't feel like winter out here anymore—snowdrifts and icicles are rapidly melting, and the humid air has turned fatiguingly hot. Local streams are on the verge of flooding from all the snowmelt combined with the water that flowed out of the portals. The characters see some of the ramshackle homes the refugees lived in being swept out to sea.

Whatever else happens that night, one noteworthy event is the appearance of a comet of copper-red color in the night sky. For the next few months, this new comet can be seen in the night sky—since it accompanies this new heat wave, many townsfolk consider it an ill omen. It does not move with the stars, but always appears in the center of the firmament directly above Ylraphon.

LORE: THE CRIMSON COMET

DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) checks reveal that while many such celestial objects cross the skies of Toril at regular intervals—allowing their appearance to be predicted—no almanac or sage's writing anticipated the new copper-colored reddish comet which now blazes above the region.

Rolls of 19 or higher note that it looks like a smaller version of the King-Killer Star, a reddish comet whose rare appearances used to cause all Faerûn's dragons to go mad, before an ancient curse tied to it was broken—the same curse that made the dragons destroy Ylraphon a century ago.

CONCLUSION

*THE LIGHTS BEGIN TO TWINKLE FROM THE ROCKS:
THE LONG DAY WANES: THE SLOW MOON CLIMBS: THE DEEP
MOANS ROUND WITH MANY VOICES. COME, MY FRIENDS,
'TIS NOT TOO LATE TO SEEK A NEWER WORLD.*

--ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON, "ULYSSES"

RETURNING THE CROWN

If the characters take the Blood Metal Crown to Gwynora Ironheart at Hostettler's House, she will happily pay them 1,200 gp for it.

COMPLETING THE MISSION

After their recent experience, Orrin and Bresden are more than willing to give up the adventuring life to claim their inheritance. Sir Bresden swears the oath required of him before the altar of Selûne. One way or the other, young Lord Orrin (whether rescued by the characters or preserved by the Tree of Doors until being released) should be present as well, and he too will swear the oaths. Andorran Bree, the town's leading cleric of Selûne bears witness, passing the Marshes legal title to their inheritance.

Afterwards, 17-year old Orrin thanks the characters again for his rescue and saving the family's legacy. Orrin reports that as part of efforts to unify the town, a marriage has been arranged between himself and Ting-Ting Chiang of the merchant house of Chiang.

MEETING THE MERCHANT COUNCIL

If the characters succeeded in bringing Bresden and Orrin back alive, they are summoned to a meeting of the Merchant Council that rules Ylraphon after they have rested and recovered. The meeting is being held at Old Marsh House, which has had a recent cleaning and is already being restored.

All five current members of the Merchant Council—including Gwynora and the heads of the merchant houses of Affapanov, Chiang, and Emberstar, as well as the newest member, Aislyn Marsh—are present. Other attendees include Lord Orrin. Sir Bresden, and three dwarves: Jotan Silverhammer, Gwynora's fiancé Karl Stormbright, and another dwarf who looks like an elder brother to Karl and Garm—because he is. This is **Tarn Stormbright** (LG male gold dwarf **warlord**).

If the characters advised Aislyn on the question of where to build the tower to house their new catapult, then before or after the meeting, she takes a moment to

tell them she will be advocating for the council to follow their advice (whatever it was).

The atmosphere is that of an official proceeding and ceremony. Gwynora Ironheart stands and addresses the characters on behalf of the council. Read or paraphrase the following:

Speaking for her peers, the councilwoman addresses you in a formal voice. "Your efforts to aid the Marsh family have filled the fifth seat of our council, giving us a needed quorum to pass emergency laws to address our town's problems. A new Town Watch is being formed, and the new Captain of the Watch will be Tarn Stormbright, older brother to friends of the council Garm and Karl. Our town will be a safer and more unified place thanks to your deeds. For these achievements, please accept these golden medallions and the thanks of a grateful city."

Each character is awarded a gold medallion worth 50 gp. All characters so recognized also receive the *Founding Landowner* story award, which gives them the option to purchase land in the city (now or in the future). After this, the formal meeting is concluded.

GARM STORMBRIGHT

As the characters finish their conversations, Garm Stormbright knocks on the door of Old Marsh House with his enormous iron gauntlet.

If the characters convinced Garm to help with the Town Watch: Garm has come to congratulate his older brother and declares his willingness to advise Tarn and to help him organize, drill, and train the new Watch. He thanks the characters for helping him realize that the local chaos must be reined in, even if he himself is not the one to do it.

Otherwise: Garm marches in, points a thick finger at his older brother Tarn and says, "You bloody fool! I warned you not to take this job. You're making a great mistake. Don't ask me for anything until you figure that out!" And with that, Garm stomps out the way he came in, ignoring anyone in his way.

THE YLRAPHON ADVENTURERS GUILD

If Jotan Silverhammer was rescued, characters may join the Ylraphon Adventurers Guild with his assistance. In addition, characters who join the guild are now in contact with various influential residents, and gain the

opportunity to participate in important local activities. Characters who wish to pursue one of these activities may select **one** of the “Local Pursuit” story awards. Give the characters **Player Handout 5Z and Player Handout 5Y**, which detail how the Guild and Local Pursuit awards work.

ROLEPLAYING JOTAN SILVERHAMMER

Clad in the wintry garb of the north no matter the weather, this steel-eyed dwarf sports a well-kept platinum beard, a brace of daggers holstered across his torso, and the bemused gaze of someone who suspects he’s seen it all. Though some would call him a criminal, Jotan acts to preserve the wild freedom that he believes makes Ylraphon unique. He is jovial, friendly, manipulative, and absolutely ruthless when crossed. A self-described “dwarf of many parts,” Jotan is leader of an adventuring party with his two elven friends, as well as assistant guildmaster of the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon, lieutenant to the captain of the Town Watch, a respected ally of the Zhentarim, and—secretly—the leader of the Shadowcloaks, Ylraphon’s thieves’ guild.

Quote: “*I’m here to save this town, whether they know it or not.*”

SEEKING ARDEN

If the characters return to the docks to seek their reward, Bresden insists on accompanying them. He is very anxious to see his twin Arden after a long separation. In fact, if they don’t tell him they are going, the characters simply see Bresden at the docks when they arrive.

ROLEPLAYING SIR BRESDEN MARSH

Sir Bresden’s well-groomed black goatee, proud posture, and long dark brown ponytail distinguish him from his twin Arden, but they share the same pale skin and kind, soft features, hardened only by a warlike gleam in their blue eyes. Still in his mid-twenties, Bresden is already famed as a swordsman. His code of honor binds him to protect the church of Selûne and to serve his noble family, especially his younger cousin Lord Orrin and aunt Aislyn. He feels an urgent need for his family to accept his calling as their guardian, as well as a leader when it comes to spiritual matters. Desperate for his brother Arden to return to the family, Bresden is terrified that House Marsh’s former ties to the Cult of the Crushing Wave will become public. He tries to be a voice of morality and reason, but also often checks in with others to ensure he is on solid ethical ground.

Quote: “*That’s reasonable, isn’t it?*”

Unfortunately, *The Blue Phantom* seems to have left early (in fact, it put out to sea hours ago). However, Arden Marsh knows the characters succeeded in their task, and has arranged for Corronorrco—the **bronze**

dragon wyrmling mount of *The Blue Phantom*’s rock gnome captain—to await their arrival at the docks.

The dragon speeds down out of the sky like the flash of a falling star to greet the characters in Common when they approach. He gives the characters a great blue tourmaline gem, worth an amount equal to the remaining gp owed to the characters, and says it is from Arden.

Corronorrco also explains that while *The Blue Phantom* was chartered by the Order of the Gauntlet and had to sail to Phlan suddenly, Arden has not left the area. He was dropped off just a short way up the coast. The dragon was told that that Arden’s current assignment for the Order will keep him near Ylraphon for the foreseeable future.

Before the bronze dragon flies away to catch up with his ship, Sir Bresden will pull out a folded letter he’s been keeping tucked into his glove and ask the dragon to give it to Arden if he sees him again. Judging by the letter’s condition, Bresden has had it in his glove for a very long time. The dragon will agree to pass this missive on if it has the chance, and soon takes to the skies once more, quickly vanishing toward the northern horizon. The characters may not see what the letter said, but if they do, or they ask Sir Bresden about it, it says simply, “Brother, we pray every day to see you again. You are truly missed.”

REWARDS

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure logsheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

EXPERIENCE (MIN: 4,500/MAX: 7,500 EACH)

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Archer	700
Assassin	3,900
Berserker	450
Blackguard	3,900
Bronze dragon wyrmling	450
Champion	3,900
Drow elite warrior	1,800
Eternal Flame priest	700
Githyanki warrior	700
Githzerai zerth	2,300
Guard	25
Knight	700
Martial arts adept	700
Morkoth (<i>with lair actions</i>)	8,400
Morkoth (<i>without lair actions</i>)	7,200
Omidon (<i>stats as Miraj Vizann</i>)	2,300
Orc blade of Ilneval	1,100
Orc red fang of Shargaas	700
Smolderwrath (<i>stats as young green dragon</i>)	3,900
Spy	200
Swashbuckler	700
Warlock of the Great Old One	2,300
Warlord	8,400
Zhelad (<i>stats as Shoalar Quanderil</i>)	1,100

NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Deliver letter to Aislyn Marsh	500
Deliver letter to Orrin Marsh	1,000
Deliver letter to Sir Bresden Marsh	1,000

TREASURE

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Treasure on Preserved Defenders in <i>Location G</i>	140 gp
Ironfell ring	45 gp each
Ironfell dagger	45 gp each
Iselci Mondas's coins	70 gp
Treasure chest	188 gp
Quest reward from Arden Marsh	1,000 gp
Lady Gwynora's Prize (Blood Metal Crown)	1,200 gp
Gold medallion of honor	50 gp per character

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to the system provided in the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

SPELL SCROLL: GLYPH OF WARDING

Scroll, uncommon

This *spell scroll* contains a single *glyph of warding* spell. A description of *spell scrolls* can be found in the in the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

SPELL SCROLL: WATER BREATHING

Scroll, uncommon

This *spell scroll* contains a single *water breathing* spell. A description of *spell scrolls* can be found in the in the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

IOUN STONE OF RESERVE

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Rather than appearing as a prism like a normal *ioun stone* of its type, however, this purple gem is cut like a coin, with a face on each side. One is an elf woman whose long hair has a ruby tint, and the other is an older dwarf in a helm bearing the symbol of the dwarf god Clangeddin Silverbeard. In darkness, one can see ghostly shapes trailing after the coin-like jewel as it moves. When a spell is cast into the stone, the caster hears a male and female voice arguing. When a spell is unleashed from it, the same voices are heard chanting in unison by the user. Anyone attuned to this item receives to +1 bonus on Charisma (Persuasion) checks to resolve conflict or calm emotions. Research indicates this item was known as the *Peacemaker's Coin* in the old dwarf kingdom of Roldilar, where it belonged to the human mage and dwarf ally Beldossan the Short.

A TREATISE ON SELÛNE'S PHASES AND THE PREDICTION OF FUTURE EVENTS

Written a century ago by a deranged clone of the archmage Halaster Blackcloak, this thin leather-bound tome is a glimpse into the mind of a madman. Its first half consists of wildly inaccurate theories on matters of astrology, but the latter appendices include excellent academic studies of the moon and the Selûnite faith, as well as a perfect almanac for predicting the moon's phases.

Consulting this book grants advantage on all Intelligence checks related to the moon, its phases and movements, or the religion of Selûne. If consulted on matters of divination or astrology, however, it grants disadvantage on all related Intelligence checks. In addition, the last third of the book functions as a spellbook, containing the following wizard spells:

- 1st level: *chromatic orb*, *find familiar*, *ice knife**, *Tasha's hideous laughter*
- 2nd level: *crown of madness*, *Maximilian's earthen grasp**
- 3rd level: *erupting earth**, *tidal wave**

*= This spell from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide* also appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**.

POTION OF FIRE GIANT STRENGTH

Potion, rare

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

STORY AWARDS

The characters can earn the following story awards during play.

FOUNDING LANDOWNER

Spend 1,000 gp and 30 downtime days to obtain this award, which marks you as a resident of Ylraphon. You are the owner of a 10-foot by 10-foot room in town which you can call entirely your own, which contains a bed, one chest, two chairs, and a very small table. In addition, while adventuring in the Ylraphon area, you can reduce the cost of a comfortable, wealthy, or aristocratic lifestyle by 2 gp per day (to a minimum of 1 gp per day).

This award is available to characters who succeeded in bringing Orrin and Bresden back alive.

ELDRITCH AMBER PRISON

Great misfortune caused you to be trapped and locked away in an eldritch amber prison controlled by the ancient entity called the Tree of Doors. You remain there, alive but in a death-like hibernation, until you are rescued by members of the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon. Spend 20 downtime days to wait until you are rescued. If you do not have the downtime days to spend, you are still eventually freed, but whenever you earn downtime during any future adventure, it is immediately spent towards repaying the downtime cost of this story award, until you have spent a total of 20, after which you resume earning downtime normally. *A character receives this story award if they were left behind unconscious, incapacitated, or dead in one of the underground areas in Part 3.*

LOCAL PURSUIT

You have become involved with a local institution in Ylraphon. You may choose **one** (and only one) of the "Local Pursuit" story award options described in **Player Handout 5Y: Local Pursuits** for successfully completing this adventure. This signifies your character having the opportunity to become more involved with day-to-day life and significant institutions in Ylraphon. You may gain only one of the story award options listed for completing this adventure, though you may later gain additional ones if other adventures grant these story award options.

This award is available to characters who successfully completed this adventure.

OLD CITY INFAMY

Your activities have earned you both respect and contempt. Rumors of your activities alienate the Mulmasterites who live in the Old City. You have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with refugees living in the area outside the Palisade. However, due to the rivalry between these newcomers and the natives, you gain advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with Ylraphon locals who live within the Palisade.

Characters earn this story award if they were defeated and captured by the Banites of the Tyrantsworn, or if witnesses reported seeing them killing these Banites or refugees of Mulmaster without provocation.

YLRAPHON ADVENTURERS GUILD

You may join the Ylraphon Adventurers Guild if you either obtain one of the Local Pursuit story awards (as described above) or are willing to pay 50 gp initial dues as described in **Player Handout 5Z: The Ylraphon Adventurers Guild**. This grants access to the Guild Delving downtime activity described in that handout, as well as other benefits to be seen in future modules set in Ylraphon.

This award is available to characters who succeeded in bringing Jotan Silverhammer back alive.

PLAYER REWARDS

The characters earn downtime and renown in accordance with the guidance prescribed by the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Order of the Gauntlet characters whose influence causes Garm Stormbright to support his brother Tarn becoming Captain of the Town Watch earn **one additional renown point**.

DM REWARDS

In exchange for running the adventure, you earn XP, gp, and downtime days in accordance with the guidance prescribed by the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

If you enjoyed this adventure, or have any suggestions as to how it could be improved, please leave a rating and review on its DM's Guild page (at [DMsguild.com](https://www.dmsguild.com) where you downloaded it). Even a brief review is greatly appreciated, and you can share any observations you'd like the author and his collaborators to be aware of as they continue to produce content for *Dungeons & Dragons* and especially the Adventurers League!

APPENDIX 1. NPC/MONSTER STATISTICS

ARCHER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

ASSASSIN

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +5

Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +4, Perception +4, Stealth +11

Damage Resistances poison

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Thieves' cant plus any two languages

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The assassin deals an extra 13 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The assassin makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

BERSERKER

Medium humanoid (any race), any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (–1)	11 (+0)	9 (–1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

BLACKGUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis+5, Cha+5

Skills Athletics +7, Deception +5, Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Spellcasting. The blackguard is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *protection from evil and good*, *thunderous smite*

2nd level (3 slots): *branding smite*, *find steed*

3rd level (2 slots): *blinding smite*, *dispel magic*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The blackguard makes three attacks with its glaive or its shortbow.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Dreadful Aspect (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The blackguard exudes magical menace. Each enemy within 30 feet of the blackguard must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If a frightened target ends its turn more than 30 feet away from the blackguard, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

BRONZE DRAGON WYRMLING

Medium dragon, lawful good

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +2, Con +4, Wis +2, Cha +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +2

Damage Immunities lightning

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

Breath Weapons (Recharge 5-6). The dragon uses one of the following breath weapons.

Lightning Breath. The dragon exhales lightning in a 40-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Repulsion Breath. The dragon exhales repulsion energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is pushed 30 feet away from the dragon.

CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str + 9, Con + 6

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception + 6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Indomitable (2/Day). The champion rerolls a failed saving throw.

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). As a bonus action, the champion can regain 20 hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The champion makes three attacks with its greatsword or its light crossbow.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage, plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the champion has more than half its total hit points remaining.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the champion has more than half its total hit points remaining.

DROW ELITE WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +10

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages: Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge: 5 (1,800 xp)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *Dancing lights*

1/day: *Darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft, one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

REACTIONS

Parry. The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

ETERNAL FLAME PRIEST

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Intimidation +5, Religion +2

Damage Resistances fire

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Ignan

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. The priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *control flames**, *create bonfire**, *fire bolt*, *light*, *minor illusion*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur*, *scorching ray*

3rd level (2 slots): *fireball*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

*= This spell from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide* also appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**.

GITHYANKI WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (githyanki), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half-plate)

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Int +3, Wis +3

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Gith

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence. It can innately cast the following spells:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The githzerai makes two greatsword strikes.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

GITHZERAI ZERTH

Medium humanoid (githzerai), lawful neutral

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +7, Int +6, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +6, Insight +6, Perception +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Gith

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githzerai's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *feather fall*, *jump*, *see invisibility*, *shield*

1/day each: *phantasmal killer*, *plane shift*

Psychic Defense. While the githzerai is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The githzerai makes two unarmed strikes.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 13 (3d8) psychic damage. This is a magic weapon attack.

GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The knight makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

Parry. The knight adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

MARTIAL ARTS ADEPT

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 60 (11d8 + 11)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Insight +5, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Unarmored Defense. While the adept is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The adept makes three unarmed strikes or three dart attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, the adept can choose one of the following additional effects:

- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or drop one item it is holding (adept's choice).
- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the adept's next turn.

Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Deflect Missile. In response to being hit by a ranged weapon attack, the adept deflects the missile. The damage it takes from the attack is reduced by 1d10 + 3. If the damage is reduced to 0, the adept catches the missile if it's small enough to hold in one hand and the adept has a hand free.

MIRAJ VIZANN

Medium humanoid (earth genasi), neutral evil

Armor Class 10 (13 with mage armor)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (0)	18 (+4)

Skills Arcana +4, Deception +7

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Primordial

Challenge 6 (2,300 xp)

Earth Walk. Moving through difficult terrain made of earth or stone costs Miraj no extra movement.

Innate Spellcasting. Miraj's innate spellcasting ability is Constitution (spell save DC 14). Miraj can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
1/day: *pass without trace*

Spellcasting. Miraj is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Miraj knows the following sorcerer spells:
Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, blade ward, friends, light, message, mold earth* *

1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb, mage armor, magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *Maximilian's earthen grasp* *, *shatter, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, erupting earth* *

4th level (3 slots): *polymorph, stoneskin*

5th level (2 slot): *wall of stone*

6th level (1 slot): *move earth*

ACTIONS

Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning when used with two hands.

*= This spell from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide* also appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**.

MORKOTH

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 130 (20d8 + 40)

Speed 25 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +9, History +9, Perception +10, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Amphibious. The morkoth can breathe air and water.

Spellcasting. The morkoth is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The morkoth has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *ray of frost*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *identify*, *shield*, *witch bolt*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *shatter*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *sending*

4th level (3 slots): *dimension door*, *Evard's black tentacles*

5th level (3 slot): *geas*, *scrying*

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The morkoth makes three attacks: two with its bite and one with its tentacles or three with its bite.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. **Hit:** 15 (3d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Large or smaller creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and takes 15 (3d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of the morkoth's turns and the morkoth can't use its tentacles on another target.

Hypnosis. The morkoth projects a 30-foot cone of magical energy. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the morkoth for 1 minute. While charmed in this way, the target tries to get as close to the morkoth as possible, using its actions to dash until it is within 5 feet of the morkoth. A charmed creature can repeat the saving throws at the end of each of its turns and whenever it takes damage, ending the effect on itself with a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature has advantage on saving throws against the morkoth's hypnosis for 24 hours.

REACTIONS

Spell Reflection. If the morkoth makes a successful saving throw against a spell, or a spell attack misses it, the morkoth can choose another creature (including the spellcaster) it can see within 120 feet of it. The spell targets the chosen creature instead of the morkoth. If the spell forced a saving throw, the chosen creature makes its own save. If the spell was an attack, the attack roll is rerolled against that creature.

LAIR ACTIONS

While fighting in its lair, the morkoth can invoke the ambient magic of the area around its sanctum to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the morkoth takes a lair action to cause one of the effects described below:

- The morkoth uses its Hypnosis action, originating at a point within 120 feet of itself. It doesn't have to see the effect's point of origin.
- The morkoth casts *darkness*, *dispel magic*, or *misty step*, using Intelligence as its spellcasting ability and without expending a spell slot.

ORC BLADE OF ILNEVAL

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (-3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +3

Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Foe Smiter of Ilneval. The orc deals an extra die of damage when it hits with a longsword attack (included in the attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc makes two melee attacks with its longsword or two ranged attacks with its javelins. If Ilneval's Command is available to use, the orc can use it after these attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage when used with two hands.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Ilneval's Command (Recharge 4-6). Up to three allied orcs within 120 feet of this orc that can hear it can use their reactions to each make one melee attack.

ORC RED FANG OF SHARGAAS

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Intimidation +1, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the orc can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Hand of Shargaas. The orc deals an extra 2 dice of damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack (included in its attacks).

Shargaas's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the orc's darkvision.

Slayer. In the first round of combat, the orc has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn yet. If the orc hits a creature that round who was surprised, the hit is automatically a critical hit.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc makes two scimitar or dart attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Veil of Shargaas (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The orc casts *darkness* without any components. Wisdom is its spellcasting ability.

SHOALAR QUANDERIL

Medium humanoid (water genasi), lawful evil

Armor Class 10 (13 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Skills Arcana +4, Deception +5, Insight +2, Persuasion +5

Damage Resistances acid

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amphibious. Shoalar can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. Shoalar's innate spellcasting ability is Constitution (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells:

At will: *shape water**

1/day: *create or destroy water*

Spellcasting. Shoalar is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *chill touch*, *friends*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *disguise self*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *tidal wave**

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

*= This spell from the *Elemental Evil Player's Guide* also appears in **DM Appendix 7: Special Spells**.

SPY

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any two languages

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the spy can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). The spy deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spy makes two melee attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

SWASHBUCKLER

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. The swashbuckler can take the Dash or Disengage action as bonus action on each of its turns.

Suave Defense. While the swashbuckler is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The adept makes three attacks: one with a dagger and two with its rapier.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

WARLOCK OF THE GREAT OLD ONE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances psychic

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any two languages, telepathy 30 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The warlock's spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic, jump, levitate, mage armor, speak with dead*

1/day each: *arcane gate, true seeing*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 14th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, eldritch blast, guidance, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*

1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *armor of Agathys, arms of Hadar, crown of madness, clairvoyance, contact other plane, detect thoughts, dimension door, dissonant whispers, dominate beast, telekinesis, vampiric touch*

Whispering Aura. At the start of each of the warlock's turns, each creature of its choice within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 10 (3d6) psychic damage, provided that the warlock isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

WARLORD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 229 (22d8 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Str + 9, Dex + 7, Con + 8
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception + 5, Persuasion + 8
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages any two languages
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Indomitable (3/Day). The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

Survivor. The warlord regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit points than half its hit point maximum.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warlord makes two weapon attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The warlord can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The warlord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Weapon Attack. The warlord makes a weapon attack.

Command Ally. The warlord targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear the warlord, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.

Frighten Foe (Costs 2 Actions). The warlord targets one enemy it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear the warlord, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the warlord's next turn.

YOUNG GREEN DRAGON

Large dragon, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +6, Wis +4, Cha +5
Skills Deception +5, Perception +7, Stealth +4
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Poison Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales poisonous gas in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

APPENDIX 2: FEATURED NPCs

The following NPCs are featured in this adventure.

- **Aislyn Marsh**, female half-drow warlock, aunt to Bresden, Arden, and Orrin Marsh, runs the house holdings, soon to be member of the Merchant Council that rules Ylraphon.
- **Sir Bresden Marsh**, male human (Damaran) swordsman and knightly champion of House Marsh, Arden's twin brother.
- **Lord Orrin Marsh**, male human (Damaran) knight-in-training, Bresden and Arden's cousin, young heir to the noble titles of House Marsh.
- **Trell Bannon of the Fens**, male half-elf barbarian, volunteer member of the town guard.
- **Gwynora Ironheart**, female shield dwarf, pregnant matriarch of the Ironheart Clan, leading member of the Merchant Council that rules Ylraphon. Part-owner of Hostettler's House. Offers reward for the Blood Metal Crown.
- **Karl Stormbright**, male gold dwarf warrior, Gwynora's fiancé and bodyguard and father to her unborn child, youngest brother to Tarn and Garm. Too affable to be Captain of the Town Watch.
- **Garm Stormbright**, male gold dwarf paladin, head of the shrine to Berronar Truesilver called the Argent Hearth, younger brother to Tarn, elder brother to Karl. Really, really doesn't want to be Captain of the Town Watch.
- **Tarn Stormbright**, male gold dwarf lawman, brother to Karl and Garm. Eldest Stormbright, later becomes Captain of the Guard.
- **"Old" Zhelad**, distant water genasi cousin of the Marshes, keeper of the local shrine to Umberlee. Stands to inherit the family fortune if Bresden and Orrin don't quit adventuring.
- **Omidon Urnrayle**, *aka Omidon Two-Eyes*, *aka Omidon of the Red Hand*, male half-orc, heretic shaman and occultist, small and bookish for a half-orc, hired as guide by Sir Bresden.
- **Krim Dragul**, male orc paladin of the god Ilneval, Omidon's cousin, seeks to reclaim an ancestral legacy and change orcish society forever.

- **The Tyrantsworn**, a volunteer militia that polices the Mulmasterite refugees outside of town, sworn to Bane, the god of tyranny. Their leader is the Banite paladin called *Darkhand*.
- **Iselci Mondas**, female water genasi monk, leader of a water-worshipping ki martial arts cult. Seeks to assassinate Sir Bresden Marsh (thinking him guilty of Arden's past deeds).
- **Jotan Silverhammer**, male shield dwarf rogue, Lieutenant Guildmaster of the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon, who is also a sergeant in the volunteer town guard. His loyal adventuring comrades are two elves: the skilled thief Acclifferraeth (known locally as "*Clif*") and the wilderness scout *Gythen Wildwood*.

FACTION CONTACTS

The characters may seek out their faction contacts within Ylraphon.

- **Harpers**. The steward of the Moonwater, High Initiate **Andorran Bree**, male half-elf cleric of Selûne. Most respected man in town.
- **Order of the Gauntlet**. Male human avenger **Arden Marsh**, refuses to enter the actual town, asks the characters to inform his kin about Lady Myrandah Marsh's final wish.
- **Zhentarim**. A male kenku spy called **Clank**, lurks in Zhentish Corners facilitating the black market, often accompanied by the blind human beggar girl **Zoya**.
- **Emerald Enclave**. A female half-elf druid from Calimshan, **Ilasera Kombul**, mostly dwells in the Flooded Forest, but can be found visiting her friend Aislyn Marsh at Old Marsh House.
- **Lords Alliance**. Male human noble **Zor Serge Affapanov**, Mulmasterite gem dealer and member of the Merchant Council that rules Ylraphon, sequestered in deep negotiations during this adventure.

APPENDIX 3: RUMORS

Characters may choose to seek rumors out, making various checks (such as Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) to converse or carouse with locals to seek information, or Wisdom (Perception) to eavesdrop), with the DCs varying based on circumstances. If the character is specifically seeking information on a topic, try to find a rumor related to it. If a character buys someone a drink, takes the time to establish a special rapport, or otherwise expends real effort or resources, roll twice and give the character both results.

Unless you are specifically running this adventure as part of an ongoing campaign including all of the YLRA-series modules, you shouldn't just roll a d20 for the whole table. Instead, roll **1d10+8** to obtain a rumor intended for this particular module, or simply choose a logical result.

Die roll	Result		
1	Some of the refugees have had their minds taken over by brain-eating fungus from the Underdark that got in the air when Mulmaster exploded. (FALSE)	11	A great knight of the Order of the Gauntlet was murdered out on the Hunt Trail two winters ago, and he rose again as a death knight. He haunts the coast, tricking the living into becoming his unwitting pawns as he hunts down all those who betray his Order and drags them screaming into the Nine Hells. (FALSE)
2	One of the acolytes at the Moonwater is the avatar of the goddess Selûne herself! She sleeps in a hidden vault under the temple. The High Priest, Andorran Bree, has sworn to protect her, that's why he's so secretive—some say he's in love with her! (FALSE)	12	Hostettler's House used to be more tavern than gambling house, until Old Man Hostettler's tiefling wife killed him and took over—that's why they call her the Red Widow! (FALSE)
3	You ever heard of the Shadovar? Shades of Old Netheril who ruled the Anauroch desert? Some say they were defeated, but I hear they still secretly rule places like Sembia and Mulmaster—all those Mulmasterite refugees coming here is prelude to an invasion. (MOSTLY FALSE)	13	Something, or someone, keeps filling the Flooded Forest with monsters from other lands. Some say it's the forest's master, the Mage Who Never Dies. (HALF TRUE)
4	The priests of Chauntea had to flee their shrine in the Old City of Ylraphon when a group of reckless adventurers opened a portal to the Abyss within it. Some new Chauntea priests went out looking for it, and they never returned! (MOSTLY FALSE)	14	A whole caravan of Cormyrean nobles was kidnapped by orcs in the Flooded Forest and locked away in the caverns they call home—I wager their wealthy families would pay a pretty penny to get them back. Some the orc caverns aren't outside town at all, but actually beneath the town, though they say our soil is too soft and muddy for that... (MOSTLY FALSE)
5	I don't trust the merchant houses who rule within the Palisade walls, except for the Ironheart dwarves. The Ironhearts have always been honest neighbors, but all the rest of them care about is money. (MOSTLY TRUE)	15	Over a hundred years ago, in the Year of Rogue Dragons, an old elvish curse made all manner of drakes and wyrms go mad, coming from the swamps to destroy the Old City of Ylraphon and kill everyone who didn't flee—They cursed the land, and now no crops grow around here. That's why food costs so much. (MOSTLY TRUE)
6	House Emberstar will take in anyone. Not only do they allow goblins and half-orcs and the like to join their house, but they even took in former members of the Elemental Evil Cults who begged for shelter after Mulmaster fell—especially fire cultists who could help work metal. (MOSTLY TRUE)	16	Buried around these parts are a thousand <i>orcslayer</i> blades, made of a magical steel poisonous to orcs. The dwarves of Roldilar used these weapons to break out of the mountain caverns to run in waist-high riot across these lands. No one knows how the orcs managed to drive the dwarves back out decades later, nor what happened to all those enchanted blades! (TRUE)
7	They say the Chiang Emporium have the largest fleet in the Sea of Fallen Stars. A woman at their boat repair shop told me one of their ships is magical, and can fly to the very stars! It's also said they never forget a debt, good or bad, so if you do work for them, it's best to do it right! (MOSTLY TRUE)	17	Gwynora Ironheart already has a grown son, but now she's pregnant again, and her bodyguard's the father! And they're not even married! Gwynora's always been honest and fair, but what kind of example is that for a leader to set? (MOSTLY TRUE)
8	The Affapanovs are nobles from Mulmaster who got wealthy dealing in gems. They lock their enemies away in their deep underground treasure vaults, never to be seen again. (HALF TRUE)	18	The druid Ilasera can reclaim lands from the swamp! It's thanks to her the whole Palisade doesn't sink into the marsh. Without her this would still just be a muddy trading post next to the docks. That's why they can't dig a sewer here—the ground under us is too wet and unstable! (TRUE)
9	House Marsh seems like a good family, but their leaders are all too young. I heard the older generation were all fanatics from one of the Elemental Evil Cults that destroyed the harbor in Mulmaster, and they died trying to destroy the rest of the city. (MOSTLY TRUE)	19	The well at Hunter's Market is the only clean drinking water in town, and anyone who stands near it must tell the truth, thanks to a blessing from Waukeen. (MOSTLY TRUE)
10	No one knows this, but that dwarf paladin Garm Stormbright killed Sir Bresden Marsh's father in that big battle in Mulmaster—he felt so guilty that now he's sworn to never pick up a weapon again. In fact, all the sons of that family grew up without fathers, and it's made them desperate to start families of their own. (HALF TRUE)	20	"Bree-yark" is goblin-language for "we surrender!" (FALSE)

APPENDIX 4: GAMBLING AT HOSTETTLER'S HOUSE

There are many games on offer at Hostettler's House. When a character gambles, ask which strategy for winning they will rely on the most. This determines what kind of ability check they will use, as well as certain benefits and penalties in terms of winnings and the type of game played, as shown on the Gambling Strategies table. (If you have a time limit, hold the characters to three rounds of ability checks before a bar-fight ends the evening's entertainments.)

GAMBLING STRATEGIES TABLE

Technique	Ability Check	Special Modifiers
Precise hands	Dexterity	Advantage on checks for dice games; disadvantage on all card games
Calculation	Intelligence	-2 penalty to ability check; any winnings are doubled
Reading your opponents	Wisdom	Disadvantage on checks for dice games; -2 penalty on checks for card games; any winnings are doubled
Table talk or bluffing	Charisma	+2 bonus on checks for card games

Each roll represents about 10 minutes of in-game time, during which time any character playing can bet a maximum of 10 times the minimum buy-in for that particular game (see the House Games table, below). Checks do not include a proficiency bonus unless the character is proficient with the gaming set that game uses (also determined on the house games table).

When playing against random patrons, the characters make their ability check against a DC of 14. If they fail, they lose all of their bet; if they succeed, they break even; if they roll 19 or higher, they keep their bet and gain the same amount in winnings.

When characters play against more specific characters (such as Garm or other player characters), replace the DC rules above with an opposed ability check among all participants. The highest roll keeps their bet and gains the same amount in winnings; the lowest roll loses their bet; other rolls break even. Ties for highest roll are settled by a random d20 roll; anyone tied for the lowest roll loses their bet.

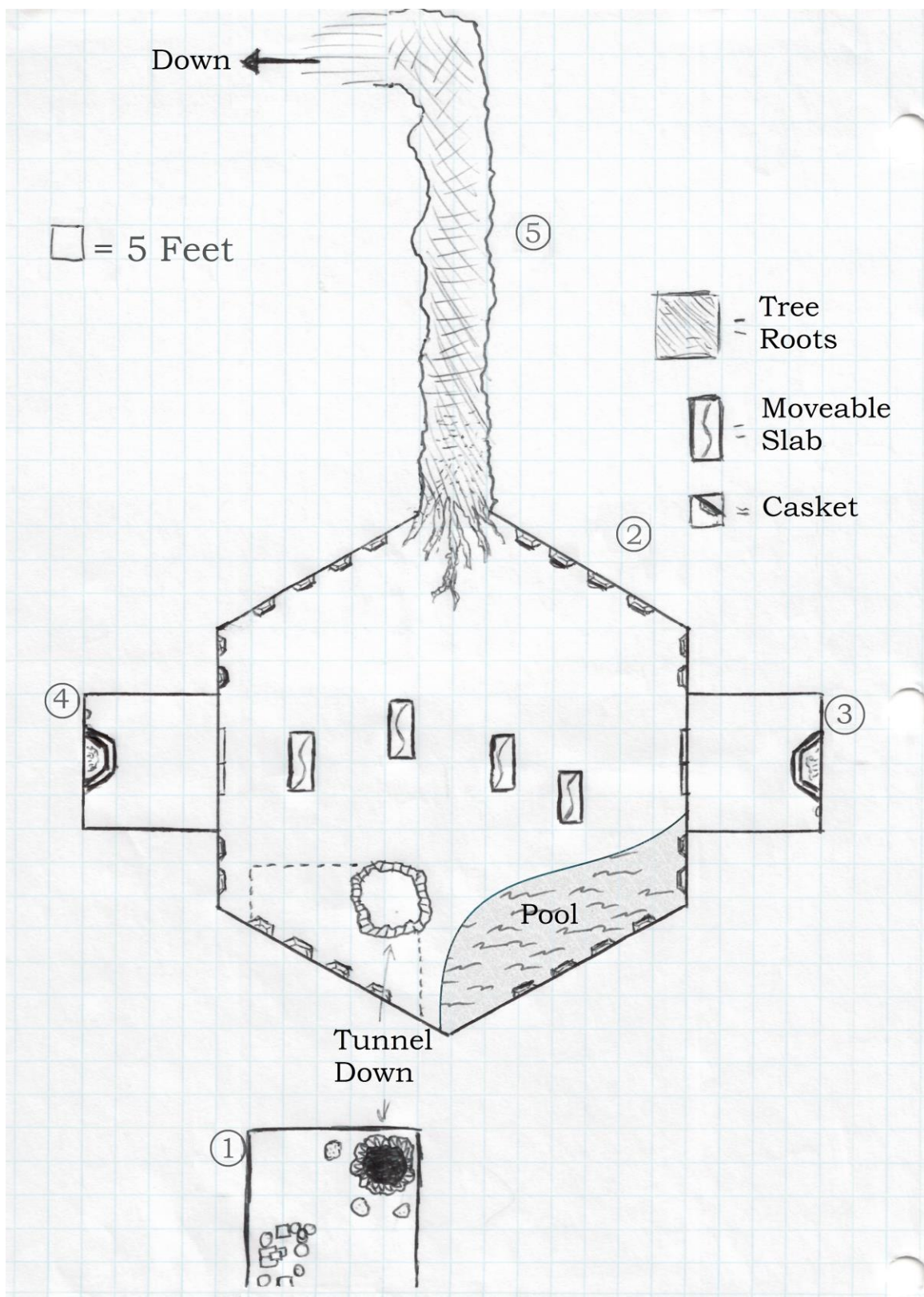
Most NPCs utilize Wisdom for their gambling checks. Both Gwynora and Garm use Charisma, relying on a combination of bluffing and table talk when playing poker, giving them a +2 bonus on top of their normal check. (Meaning Gwynora rolls with a total modifier of +7, while Garm's modifier is +6.)

Many games are available at this establishment. Those hosted by the house on the night the characters visit in this adventure are listed below.

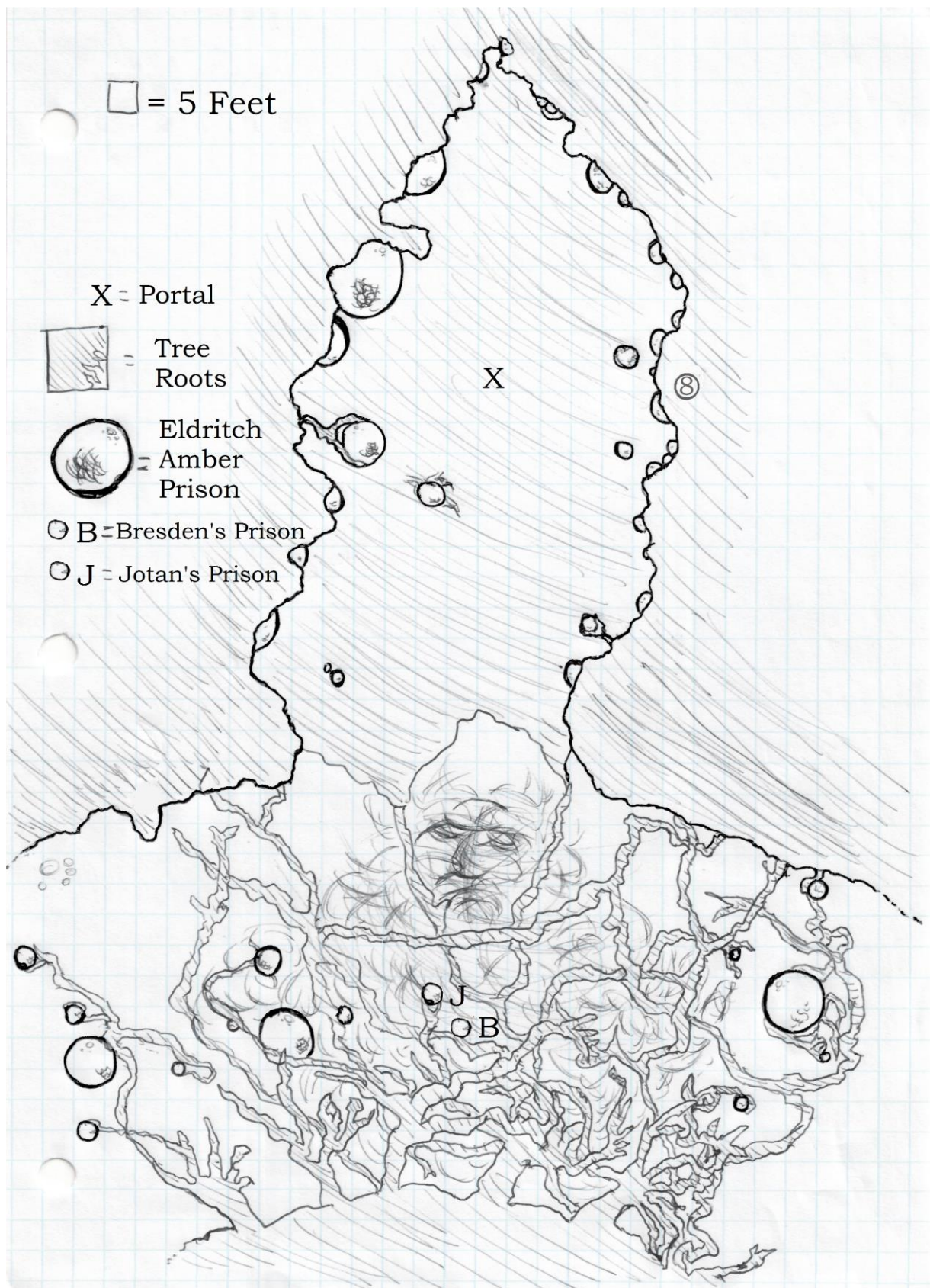
HOSTETTLER'S HOUSE GAMES TABLE

Game	Gaming Set Used	Minimum Buy-In
Three-Dragon Ante	Three-Dragon Ante	1 gp
Thabort, Traitor's Heads	Dice set (two six-sided for thabort, five six-sided for traitor's heads)	1 sp
Talis, Poker	Playing cards (Tarokka or Talis deck)	2 gp, or 10 gp for high stakes games (such as Garm and Gwynora's game)
Archers, High Dragon, Smashcastle	Playing cards (High Dragon deck)	5 sp

APPENDIX 5A: UNDERGROUND MAP I (AREAS 1-5)



APPENDIX 5B: UNDERGROUND MAP II (AREA 8)



APPENDIX 6: PRESERVED DEFENDERS TABLE

This table represents the adventurers the morkoth has collected using the Tree of Doors. He occasionally releases them to bait adventurers or to fight unwanted intruders. Adventurers preserved in this way may be highly confused if released, as they do not perceive any time as having passed since their imprisonment—some have been trapped here for mere days, others for millennia!

If the characters can defeat the morkoth who controls the Tree of Doors, all the creatures listed here are released into the Ylraphon area at the end of the story. Thus, this table is also good resource if you ever need a random NPC during any future adventure set around Ylraphon or another Moonsea locale.

DMs preparing this adventure may wish to roll or choose beforehand, rather than waiting to do so during the game, so they can familiarize themselves with only those stat-blocks they know they will use.

If two Preserved Defenders are needed for the same encounter, roll a d6 instead of d12, and use both the entries indicated by the number rolled. Ignore all results for creatures the characters have already encountered this adventure.

Each entry on the table includes a name and description for that adventurer, the statblock you use for them (in bold), a bit of background, and a tiny description of the events which led to that character being trapped in the Tree of Doors. Some are members of the factions; if so, that faction is listed in parentheses at the end of the entry.

In general, these are **not** NPCs you need to prepare to roleplay. The background details are provided in case the characters free them from the morkoth's control and want to ask them how they got here, but most will be too disoriented for deep conversation. Feel free to customize names, gender, backgrounds, personalities, alignments, or races for these NPCs if you wish.

Table: Preserved Defenders

Choose, or roll 1d12 (d6 if you need two)

D6 ROLL	D12 ROLL	ADVENTURER ENCOUNTERED
1	1	<i>Lady Bister</i> , LN female copper dragonborn knight , mercenary chaplain of the Red Knight and expert in military tactics, lone survivor of a doomed dungeon-delve (Lords Alliance)
	2	<i>Drath of the Shining Lands</i> , LN male Durpari human knight , pathologically curious, split the party while adventuring in the ruins by opening the wrong secret door (Harpers)
2	3	<i>Sutora Jubei</i> , CG male drow elf archer , raised in the isles of Wa, came west with a Chiang Emporium caravan to seek his drow kin, lost in the Flooded Forest (Emerald Enclave)
	4	<i>Starlanthra</i> , NG female dusk elf archer , wandered through the Mists from Barovia many years ago while fleeing a massacre by the evil lord Strahd's enforcer Rahadin
3	5	<i>Darkhelm</i> , LE male drow elf (stats as Eternal Flame priest), born Kaltheas Ned'razak, exiled son of the archmage ruler of Szith Morcane, turned on his allies in the ruins (Zhentarim)
	6	<i>Dreagan</i> , CN female tiefling (stats as Eternal Flame priest), raised by the unicorn Dialon in the Flooded Forest, tracked cultists of Tiamat into a dwarven tomb (Emerald Enclave)
4	7	<i>Veridian</i> , LG female githyanki warrior turned constable, with glowing green tattoos, exiled for showing mercy to githzerai, wandered through a portal from Sigil (Order of the Gauntlet)
	8	<i>Ismael Djaduur</i> , NG male Bedine human (stats as a githyanki warrior), swordsman with psychic gifts, came to these lands hunting vampires who enslaved his nomadic tribe
5	9	<i>Mingh</i> , CN female tabaxi (feline humanoid) swashbuckler , Shadowcloaks member, sells black market alchemy and illicit consumables, betrayed at meeting in the ruins (Zhentarim)
	10	<i>Rualdor Thann</i> , CG male half-elf swashbuckler , carefree Waterdhavian noble, friend and ally of House Marsh, entered the underground as part of Bresden's party (Harpers)
6	11	<i>Hojo Mashiko</i> , N female Shou human martial arts adept , from the distant realm of Kozakura, member of the Sunken Shadows' rival monk clan, followed Iselci here seeking a duel
	12	<i>Henry of Sudia's Spire</i> , CG male lightfoot halfling martial arts adept wanderer from another world, escaped from a crashed mind flayer nautiloid long ago, when elves still ruled Ylraphon

APPENDIX 7: SPECIAL SPELLS

CONTROL FLAMES

Transmutation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: S

Duration: Instantaneous or 1 hour (see below)

You choose nonmagical flame that you can see within range and that fits within a 5-foot cube. You affect it in one of the following ways:

- You instantaneously expand the flame 5 feet in one direction, provided that wood or other fuel is present in the new location.
- You instantaneously extinguish the flames within the cube.
- You double or halve the area of bright light and dim light cast by the flame, change its color, or both. The change lasts for 1 hour.
- You cause simple shapes—such as the vague form of a creature, an inanimate object, or a location—to appear within the flames and animate as you like. The shapes last for 1 hour.

If you cast this spell multiple times, you can have up to three of its non-instantaneous effects active at a time, and you can dismiss such an effect as an action.

CREATE BONFIRE

Conjuration cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You create a bonfire on ground that you can see within range. Until the spell ends, the bonfire fills a 5-foot cube. Any creature in the bonfire's space when you cast the spell must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 1d8 fire damage. A creature must also make the saving throw when it enters the bonfire's space for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there.

At Higher Levels. The spell's damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8).

ERUPTING EARTH

3rd-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S, M (a piece of obsidian)

Duration: Instantaneous

Choose a point you can see on the ground within range. A fountain of churned earth and stone erupts in a 20-foot cube centered on that point. Each creature in that area must make a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 3d12 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Additionally, the ground in that area becomes difficult terrain until cleared away. Each 5-foot-square portion of the area requires at least 1 minute to clear by hand.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d12 for each slot level above 3rd.

ICE KNIFE

1st-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: S, M (a drop of water or piece of ice)

Duration: Instantaneous

You create a shard of ice and fling it at one creature within range. Make a ranged spell attack against the target. On a hit, the target takes 1d10 piercing damage. Hit or miss, the shard then explodes. The target and each creature within 5 feet of the point where the ice exploded must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 cold damage.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the cold damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 1st.

MAXIMILIAN'S EARTHEN GRASP

2nd-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S, M (a miniature hand sculpted from clay)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You choose a 5-foot-square unoccupied space on the ground that you can see within range. A Medium hand made from compacted soil rises there and reaches for one creature you can see within 5 feet of it. The target must make a Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage and is restrained for the spell's duration. As an action, you can cause the hand to crush the restrained target, who must make a Strength saving throw. It takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. To break out, the restrained target can make a Strength check against your spell save DC. On a success, the target escapes and is no longer restrained by the hand. As an action, you can cause the hand to reach for a different creature or to move to a different unoccupied space within range. The hand releases a restrained target if you do either.

MOLD EARTH

Transmutation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 Action

Range: 30 feet

Components: S

Duration: Instantaneous or 1 hour

You choose a portion of dirt or stone that you can see within range and that fits within a 5-foot cube. You manipulate it in one of the following ways:

- If you target an area of loose earth, you can instantaneously excavate it, move it along the ground, and deposit it up to 5 feet away. This movement doesn't have enough force to cause damage.
- You cause shapes, colors, or both to appear on the dirt or stone, spelling out words, creating images, or shaping patterns. The changes last for 1 hour.
- If the dirt or stone you target is on the ground, you cause it to become difficult terrain. Alternatively, you can cause the ground to become normal terrain if it is already difficult terrain. This change lasts for 1 hour. If you cast this spell multiple times, you can have no more than two of its non-instantaneous effects active at a time, and you can dismiss such an effect as an action.

SHAPE WATER

Transmutation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: S

Duration: Instantaneous or 1 hour (see below)

You choose an area of water that you can see within range and that fits within a 5-foot cube. You manipulate it in one of the following ways:

- You instantaneously move or otherwise change the flow of the water as you direct, up to 5 feet in any direction. This movement doesn't have enough force to cause damage.
- You cause the water to form into simple shapes and animate at your direction. This change lasts for 1 hour.
- You change the water's color or opacity. The water must be changed in the same way throughout. This change lasts for 1 hour.
- You freeze the water, provided that there are no creatures in it. The water unfreezes in 1 hour.

If you cast this spell multiple times, you can have no more than two of its non-instantaneous effects active at a time, and you can dismiss such an effect as an action.

TIDAL WAVE

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

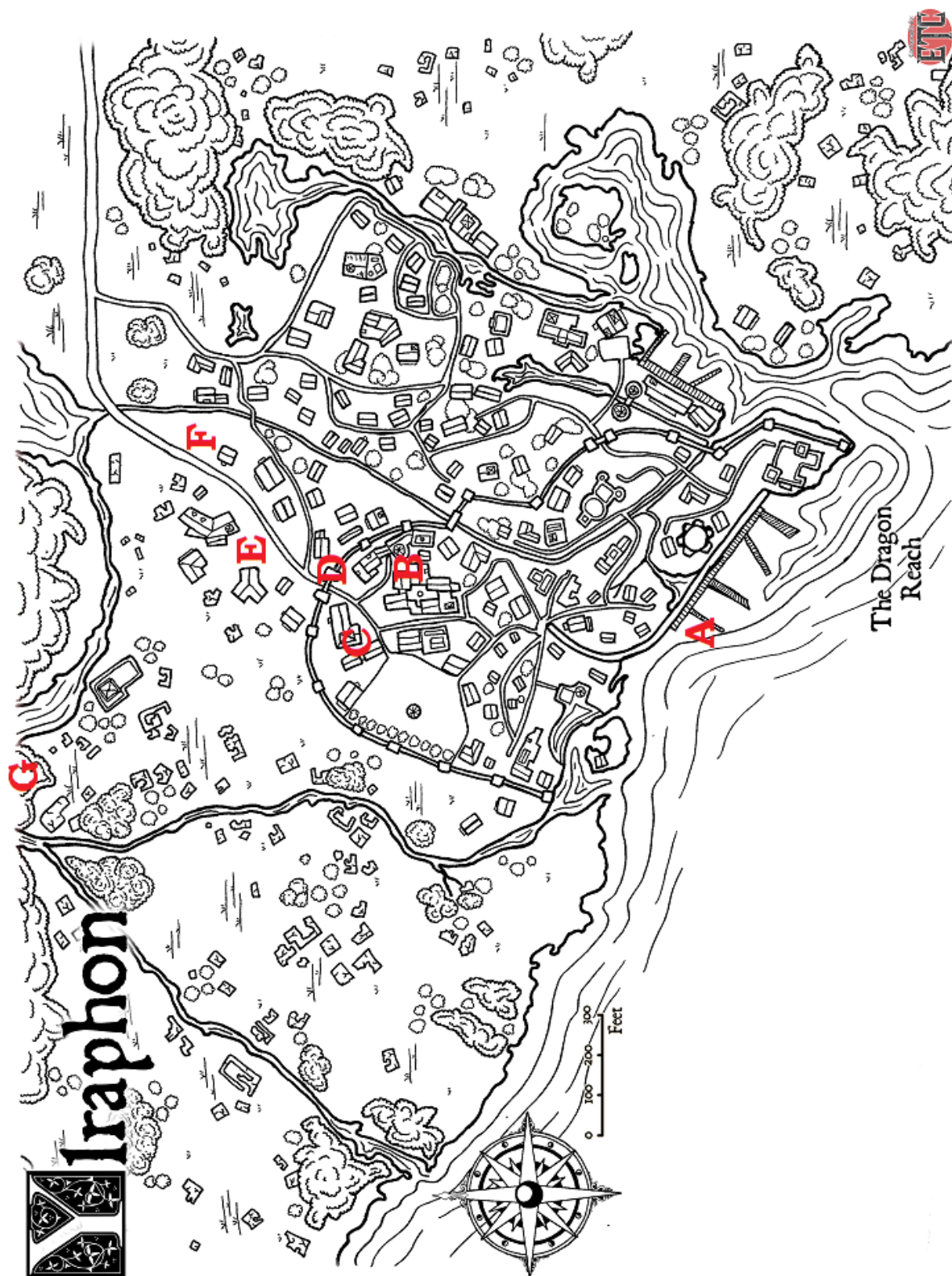
Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S, M (a drop of water)

Duration: Instantaneous

You conjure up a wave of water that crashes down on an area within range. The area can be up to 30 feet long, up to 10 feet wide, and up to 10 feet tall. Each creature in that area must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 4d8 bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone. The water then spreads out across the ground in all directions, extinguishing unprotected flames in its area and within 30 feet of it.

APPENDIX 8: DM MAP OF YLRAPHON



PLAYER HANDOUT 1: FACTION LETTERS

PLAYER HANDOUT 1A: LORDS ALLIANCE LETTER



FROM THE DESK OF THE HONORABLE FIRST LORD VUHM YESTRAL OF HILLSFAR:

POINTS OF CIVILIZATION SHINE IN THIS UNTAMED LAND LIKE CANDLES IN THE NIGHT. ONE FLICKER WE MUST FAN INTO A FLAME IS THE BORDERLANDS OUTPOST CALLED YLRAPHON, JUST SOUTH OF THE MOONSEA. MENACES FROM OTHER NEIGHBORS THREATEN PROSPERITY IN THIS HIGHLY PROFITABLE PORT. THEY SAY DRAGON CULTISTS DRIVEN FROM PHLAN DWELL AMONG THE WYRMS AND DRAKES OF THE FLOODED FOREST, WHILE WORSHIPPERS OF ELEMENTAL EVIL HIDE AMONG THE SETTLERS FROM UNDONE MULMASTER.

OUR BEST ALLY IN YLRAPHON IS THE EMINENT **ZOR SERGE AFFAPANOV**, WHO HAS LED LOWLY REFUGEES AND NOBLE SCIONS ALIKE DOWN FROM MULMASTER TO WRSET CIVILIZATION FROM THIS DEN OF MISRULE. ZOR AFFAPANOV IS A HARD MAN, SHAPED BY YEARS OF RUTHLESS POLITICAL RIVALRY, AND AT TIMES HIS MOTIVES MAY SEEM INSCRUTABLE. YET HIS PLANS BENEFIT BOTH HIS AIMS AND OURS, AND HE HAS TAKEN A SEAT ON THE MERCHANT COUNCIL THAT RULES YLRAPHON. SOON, A GREAT CITY MAY RISE FROM THIS REMOTE OUTPOST, REBORN IN THE IMAGE OF ONCE-GREAT MULMASTER.

SINCE THE EFFORTS OF A CALISHITE DRUID AND OTHER LOCALS TO RECLAIM SWAMPLAND HAVE MADE GOOD LAND AVAILABLE FOR A PITTANCE, OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND, YET SO DO CHALLENGES. A PROPER TOWN WATCH IS NEEDED (INSTEAD OF THE UNRULY RAGAMUFFINS, PIRATES, TOMB ROBBERS, AND ADVENTURERS WHO CURRENTLY PASS FOR LOCAL LAW), BUT THE MERCHANT COUNCIL IS DEADLOCKED AND MUST FILL ONE MORE VACANT SEAT BEFORE IT CAN TAKE NECESSARY ACTION.

IF YOU CAN CARVE OUT YOUR OWN PIECE OF STABILITY AMID THIS CHAOS, SO MUCH THE BETTER FOR YOU, AND THE LEGENDS THAT WILL BECOME YOUR LEGACY!

BY DIVINE GRACE I REMAIN,
FIRST LORD VUHM YESTRAL OF HILLSFAR



PLAYER HANDOUT 1B: EMERALD ENCLAVE LETTER

The balance is broken.

The earth is overwhelmed.

The land cries out for your aid.

Once, the boundary between the coast town of Ylraphon and the expanding swamp of the nearby Flooded Forest was clear. Then the water-logged bogs began to consume all.

We venerate the Flooded Forest for its primal life, but some unnatural force taints this fetid swampland. For centuries, something has introduced foreign monsters to these woods—perhaps the legendary Mage Who Never Dies spoken of by the locals, or the rumored Tree of Doors, said to spread branches down into other worlds.

Our best hope to restore the balance is the druid Ilasera, a half-elf of Calimshan. The Flooded Forest is her protectorate. Closeness to primal spirits has given her the power to reclaim land drowned by the swamps, allowing the folk of Ylraphon to build on stable soil and grow their town once more. If your path wends near Ylraphon or the nearby wilderness, seek Ilasera's counsel, for she speaks with the Emerald Enclave's voice there.

She also warns that certain creatures have still grown too powerful or numerous near the local human settlement: black puddings, foul fey hags, fire giants, shambling mounds, dinosaurs, umber hulks, and even beholders and their kin, as well as unnatural horrors such as elementals, golems, and the walking dead. For centuries druids have suspected some mysterious force stocks the Flooded Forest with monsters, but lately it grows worse.

Other reports speak of red dragons breeding in the mountains, though Ilasera believes these to be mere tales.

Something breaks the balance of this wild frontier.

See if you can find out what.



PLAYER HANDOUT 1C: HARPER LETTER

(This letter does not record its writer's name, but certain hidden markers tell you that it comes from Darathra Shendrel, Lord Protector of Triboar.)

To Whom It May Concern:

If you should find yourself in the borderlands keep and port known as Ylraphon, we have friends there.

There is a great temple to Selûne called the Moonwater. We have helped preserve its secrets for longer than you might imagine. If you find the half-elf called **Andorran Bree**, who leads the worshippers there, then you have found the local voice of Those Who Harp.

In addition, an old alliance from elsewhere may prove useful here as well. Before Mulmaster was undone by elemental cults, we made common cause with the city's guild of wizards, the Cloaks. Though now we fear the leader of the Cloaks in Mulmaster has fallen under the influence of the Red Wizards of Thay, one of the Cloaks who fled to Ylraphon is still an ally.

His name is Salvar Brix, and he seeks to found a new school of wizardry in the town. His silent partner in this is a local noblewoman, Aislyn Marsh. If they succeed, we may regain old allies in a new place. You may wish to aid these scholars of the Art in their endeavor.

Then again, you may not. For now, we give no specific orders to our agents in the town, nor can we grant any safe conduct. It is a wild place. What must be done there will become clear before long.

If you would communicate with us further, go through Bree at the Moonwater. Trust no one else until they prove worthy, and walk quietly in this savage place.

Best of luck,

Anonymous

From One Friend to Another:

You're lucky. You're headed to Ylraphon, one of our fastest growing & most profitable strongholds in the Moonsea region. All the local powers, from Mulmaster to Galaunt, want the place for themselves. Pirates, brigands, adventurers, & merchant lords alike pass their riches through this port on the borderlands. Yet the Zhentarim still claim the sweetest cut of the spoils.

Remember how in Mulmaster, all our people from lost & lamented Zhentil Keep were forced to live in the slums of the so-called "Zhent Ghetto"? Well in Ylraphon, those tables are turned—descendants of Zhentil Keep are well-established within the town walls, while refugees from Mulmaster have to camp on swampland outside the Palisade.

In the neighborhood called Zhentish Corners, you'll find not only our power base, but a thriving black market & your main Zhentarim contact in town, a kenku called Glank, recently come from Mulmaster.

The newly-established local thieves' guild, the Shadowcloaks, are really an expansion of Galaunt's guild, but no matter. Most of their leadership works for us.

You should also know about the Adventurer's Guild of Ylraphon. The town has so many adventurers that its ruling Merchant Council chartered a guild to help oversee the various claims on all the old ruins that surround the current town. What the Merchant Council doesn't know is that Shadowcloaks mostly run the Adventurer's Guild, & since we mostly run the Shadowcloaks... Well you get the idea.

The real punch line is that the Town Watch is pretty much just volunteers from the Adventurers Guild. So as of now, local law is not a problem.

Like I said, you're lucky.

Just keep your eyes open. People in Ylraphon—even our people—have a tendency to sometimes disappear.

—Chaab

BROTHERS and SISTERS of the ORDER:

We fight to smash evil on many fronts. You go now to a battlefield of growing importance: Ulraphon, keep and port on the borderlands, home to many adventurers. It is a lawless place, a refuge for pirates and brigands, and requires strong local law. Unfortunately, the town currently has no real watch or guard, just raucous volunteers from the local Adventurers Guild who clash with the overzealous Banite soldiers who patrol outside the walls. Only a proper Town Watch, led by someone the locals respect, will bring civilization to this lawless place. Aid in establishing such a Watch if you can.

The town also needs greater bastions of faith, and you are encouraged to assist local shrines to law and good, or to found new ones yourself.

Our representative locally will be **Ardan Marsh**, who you likely know by reputation. Bring any reports of progress to him, and he will convey them directly to myself and his mentor, our leader Ontharr Frume of Etarel.

YOUR BROTHER in Vigilance,
ZERN XERKSTIL
Hammer of Impiturn

P.S. If you believe yourself worthy, I can give you **an assignment** which will earn you great glory. There is one simple solution to reforming the Ulraphon Town Watch. The dwarf paladin Garm Stormbright, a legendary constable from Ravens Bluff, now calls Ulraphon home. Once, he and his elder brother Tarn were the most feared fighters of crime in all the Vast. Though his aid was crucial in preventing greater loss of life when the elemental cults attacked Mulmaster, Garm is not a member of the Order. Of late, he refuses all our entreaties to action. Garm comes from a family of constables, and if you can convince him or one of his qualified kin to take over as captain of the local Watch, or at least to help with reforming it, it would be a great service, not only to the Order, but to the larger cause of justice.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: ARDEN'S LETTER

TO MY OWN FLESH & BLOOD:

Much time has passed since we last saw each other. I swore holy oaths of penance after failing our family in Mulmaster, forsaking all claim to our family title or wealth, & constraining myself not to set foot in Ylraphon until I earn your forgiveness.

It pains me to report that the strong foundation upon which our family has stood, Lady Myrandah Marsh, is no more. In Elturel, where she had retired after such long service on the Merchant Council that rules Ylraphon, she passed in her sleep.

Her final wish was that those of her descendants remaining in the world should foreswear the life of the adventurer. If you fail to swear sacred oaths to this effect before the altar of Selûne at the Moonwater, by Lady Myrandah's will, your inheritance shall pass to our hateful cousin Zhelad.

The honored Andorran Bree, High Initiate of the Moonwater, is witness & executor of the will, and he shall bestow our birthright on our unworthy kinsman if such oaths are not sworn before the altar by dawn on the first day of the month of Ches. The text of the will reads: "Both Sir Bresden and Lord Orrin must swear to never adventure again, or else both shall forfeit the family fortune to Zhelad."

Beggar-like, I am poor even in condolence. I can offer little to soften this cold news, except to say that though I cannot return, my heart is with yours as we endure this new burden.

-Arden

PLAYER HANDOUT 3: Omidon's Journal

A thorough read of Omidon's journal reveals a first-person narrative of the events summarized below:

- Omidon is a bookish half orc. He is raised by his human kin, a noble family called Urnrayle, but runs away due to mistreatment.
- He joins up with his orc relations, members of Clan Dragul, who live in the Flooded Forest near Ylraphon.
- Clan Dragul's lair is an old dwarf-hold filled with strange magic and dangerous tree roots they've learned to carefully avoid.
- Omidon's (full orc) cousin Krim, son of the clan chieftain who is later overthrown, becomes his best friend and protector.
- In their late teens, Omidon and Krim are banished for rejecting the teachings of Gruumsh's shamans, in favor of the worship of the orcish war god Ilneval. They then take up residence on the outskirts of Ylraphon.
- Krim, now a formidable mercenary lord, discovers the story of the "blood orcs," Ilneval-worshippers bred by the lost orc nation of Vastar to drive out conquering dwarves.
- Omidon learns that the blood orcs are his and Krim's ancestors, and that they claimed the dwarf Deep King Tuir's crown as a prize after winning the Battle of Deepfires. It is either buried or imprisoned with them in an ancient dungeon connected to the prison of someone (or something) called Taavor the Mad One.
- The penultimate entry mentions a druid named Ilasera telling Omidon that a great tree with deep roots spreads far and wide beneath the Flooded Forest, and may be involved with the imprisonment of Taavor. She describes a series of underground ruins connected by the roots of the tree, which Omidon realizes includes his own former home, the lair of Clan Dragul.
- In the final entry, Omidon agrees to act as a guide for a group of adventurers led by Sir Bresden Marsh and his cousin Lord Orrin, who seek the Blood Metal Crown. He hopes that leading these humans down into the lair of Clan Dragul will uncover the mystery of the blood orcs' final fate.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: THE NOTES ON THE MAP

(A hand-drawn map leading to a place in the Flooded Forest north of the Temple of Bane is tucked into the pages of the journal. Written on the map are two notes in Orcish, written in two different hands.)

COUSIN KRIM--

OUR FORMER HOME, THE LAIR OF CLAN DRAGUL, IS NO MORE.

ADVENTURERS ATTACKED THE TRIBAL CAVES AND SCATTERED OUR KIN TO THE WINDS IN SEARCH OF TREASURE. THE GODS HAVE AVENGED OUR EXILE FROM THE TRIBE.' YET UNLIKE THE ORCS OF DRAGUL, THE ADVENTURERS KNEW NOT HOW TO AVOID THE UNNATURAL ROOTS IN THE DEEP CAVES. IN THE END, THE TREE CLAIMED THEM ALL.

NOW I RETURN TO THOSE CAVES MYSELF. WE SHOULD'VE BEEN LOOKING TO OUR FORMER HOME ALL ALONG. IF THE DRUID IS RIGHT, THEN EVERYTHING-- THE RESTING PLACE OF THE BLOOD ORCS, THE DWARF KING'S CROWN, THE LOST LORE OF ILNEVAL-- LIES BENEATH OUR FORMER HOME.

I FOUND A HIDDEN ENTRANCE, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHEN YOU WOULD RETURN FROM FIGHTING GIANTS ON THE SWORD COAST. KNOWING THE DANGER, I FOUND ALLIES TO ACCOMPANY ME. THAT HUMAN LORDLING WHO ONCE DEFEATED YOU AT CHESS AND HIS COUSIN THE KNIGHT SEEK THE CROWN, SO I HAVE AGREED TO GUIDE THEM TO IT. THE BOOK YOU BROUGHT ME WAS USEFUL IN PLANNING HOW TO GET AROUND THE TRAPS, BUT I HAVE NO NEED OF IT NOW, SO I LEFT IT HERE. TAKE IT BACK IF YOU WANT IT.

THE TUNNEL ENTRANCE WILL BE IN A PIT SHOWN ON THIS MAP, HIDDEN AND Warded. THOSE WHO SPEAK THE NAME OF THE GREATEST OF THE TRUE ORC GODS WILL NOT BE HARMED BY THE WARD. IF I'M NOT BACK WHEN YOU RETURN, WAIT FOR ME AT THE PIT.

--O

Omidon: You are hunted. The warriors of Bane seek you, fearing some false prophecy. I returned this map to its hiding place.

If you read this, get within the walls of Ylraphon at once, where the Banites have no authority. I will keep these fool soldiers of the Black Lord distracted as long as I can.

-Krim

PLAYER HANDOUT 5X: ADDITIONAL STORY AWARDS

STORY AWARDS

The characters can earn the following story awards during play.

FOUNDING LANDOWNER

Spend 1,000 gp and 30 downtime days to obtain this award, which marks you as a resident of Ylraphon. You are the owner of a 10-foot by 10-foot room in town which you can call entirely your own, which contains a bed, one chest, two chairs, and a very small table. In addition, while adventuring in the Ylraphon area, you can reduce the cost of a comfortable, wealthy, or aristocratic lifestyle by 2 gp per day (to a minimum of 1 gp per day).

This award is available to characters who succeeded in bringing Orrin and Bresden back alive.

ELDRITCH AMBER PRISON

Great misfortune caused you to be trapped and locked away in an eldritch amber prison controlled by the ancient entity called the Tree of Doors. You remain there, alive but in a death-like hibernation, until you are rescued by members of the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon. Spend 20 downtime days to wait until you are rescued. If you do not have the downtime days to spend, you are still eventually freed, but whenever you earn downtime during any future adventure, it is immediately spent towards repaying the downtime cost of this story award, until you have spent a total of 20, after which you resume earning downtime normally. *A character receives this story award if they were left behind unconscious, incapacitated, or dead in one of the underground areas in Part 3.*

LOCAL PURSUIT

You have become involved with a local institution in Ylraphon. You may choose **one** (and only one) of the “Local Pursuit” story award options described in **Player Handout 5Y: Local Pursuits** for successfully completing this adventure. This signifies your character having the opportunity to become more involved with day-to-day life and significant institutions in Ylraphon. You may gain only one of the story award options listed for completing this adventure, though you may later gain additional ones if other adventures grant these story award options.

This award is available to characters who successfully completed this adventure.

OLD CITY INFAMY

Your activities have earned you both respect and contempt. Rumors of your activities alienate the Mulmasterites who live in the Old City. You have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with refugees living in the area outside the Palisade. However, due to the rivalry between these newcomers and the natives, you gain advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with Ylraphon locals who live within the Palisade.

Characters earn this story award if they were defeated and captured by the Banites of the Tyrantsworn, or if witnesses reported seeing them killing these Banites or refugees of Mulmaster without provocation.

YLAPHON ADVENTURERS GUILD

You may join the Ylraphon Adventurers Guild if you either obtain one of the Local Pursuit story awards (as described above) or are willing to pay 50 gp initial dues as described in **Player Handout 5Z: The Ylraphon Adventurers Guild**. This grants access to the Guild Delving downtime activity described in that handout, as well as other benefits to be seen in future modules set in Ylraphon.

This award is available to characters who succeeded in bringing Jotan Silverhammer back alive.

PLAYER HANDOUT 5Y: LOCAL PURSUITS

If you successfully completed this adventure, you may choose one “Local Pursuit” story award. This signifies your character becoming involved with significant Ylraphon activities or institutions. You may gain only one of the story award options listed below for completing this adventure, though other adventures may offer additional ones.

LOCAL PURSUIT: ACADEMIC RESEARCHER

You enjoy research privileges at Master Salvar’s Academy of Spellcraft and the Arcanist’s Art, a school of magic still under construction. Choose one of the following skills: Arcana, History, Investigation, Nature, or Religion. Record the chosen skill as part of this story award (“*Local Pursuit: Academic Researcher (Skill)*”). Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 5 downtime days performing special research. Once during your next game session, you may inform your DM you are using this benefit to gain advantage on a single Intelligence check or on a single Constitution saving throw to maintain your concentration on a spell when you take damage. If you use this benefit on an Intelligence check for the skill you chose when you gained this story award, you may treat a d20 roll of 9 or lower as a 10 for that check.

LOCAL PURSUIT: MONSTER HUNTING

You hunt a certain type of creature in the local wilderness during your spare time in Ylraphon. Choose one of the following: black puddings, hags, fire giants, shambling mounds, dinosaurs, umber hulks, beholders (and beholder-kin, such as gauths or mindwitnesses), yugoloths, golems, zombies, red dragons, or hell hounds. (If you have the Favored Enemy feature, you may instead choose one type of humanoid that is your favored enemy.) Record your choice as part of this story award (“*Local Pursuit: Monster Hunting (Creature Type)*”). Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 5 downtime days hunting with experienced trackers. Once during your next game session after this activity, you may inform your DM you are using this benefit to gain advantage on a single attack or initiative roll against a creature of the type you chose for this story award, or on one Wisdom check.

LOCAL PURSUIT: PREACHING THE FAITH

You take on an important role at a local temple or shrine. Choose a deity you worship. If you do not already worship a chosen deity, you must choose one worshiped by a fellow member of your party. Record your choice as part of this story award (“*Local Pursuit: Preaching the Faith (Deity)*”). Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 5 downtime days participating in or leading religious rites (such as weddings, funerals, ordinations, or rituals recognizing holy occasions). If you do so, you gain the benefits of having spent 3 days performing the Recuperating downtime activity (as described in the *Player’s Handbook*), and you begin your next game session with Inspiration.

LOCAL PURSUIT: SHADOWCLOAK SPECIALIST

You have become an influential member or ally of the Shadowcloaks, Ylraphon’s thieves’ guild, and they rely on you for your expertise in a particular illicit activity. Choose any one tool. Record the chosen tool as part of this story award (“*Local Pursuit: Shadowcloak Specialist (Tool)*”). Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 5 downtime days performing illicit activities with the Shadowcloaks in town. Once during your next game session after this activity, you may inform your DM you are using this benefit to gain advantage on a single ability check with the tool you chose for this story award or on a single initiative roll.

LOCAL PURSUIT: TOWN WATCH TRAINING

You help to train the new Town Watch. Choose a type of simple or martial weapon that you and your comrades train with and record it as part of this story award (“*Local Pursuit: Town Watch Training (Weapon)*”). (If you wish, you may choose Unarmed Strike as a weapon for this purpose.) Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 5 downtime days training Town Watch members or recruits. Once during your next game session after this activity, you may inform your DM you are using this benefit to gain advantage on a single attack roll with the weapon you chose for this story award or on a single social interaction check with members of a law enforcement organization (such as the Ylraphon Town Watch).

PLAYER HANDOUT 5Z: ADVENTURERS GUILD OF YLRAPHON

The Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon is a loose-knit league of “dungeoneers, tomb-robbers, errant crusaders, swashbuckling mercenaries, and sundry formidable scalawags of all races and vocations” (according to its charter). It represents adventurers’ interests in town and helps regulate the profitable exploration of the surrounding ruins.

JOINING THE GUILD

To initially join the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon, a character must speak to Jotan Silverhammer, lieutenant guildmaster and volunteer sergeant of the Town Watch. There is no cost if you obtain one of the *Local Pursuit* story awards (described in **Player Handout 5Y: Local Pursuits** or appearing in other adventures), due to your substantial contribution to the town’s prosperity. Otherwise, initial dues are 50 gp, with additional payments of 12 gp a month. These costs are waived, however, for volunteers either who work three shifts a month for the Town Watch. In game terms, this means a character must spend 50 gp to join, and to remain a member, whenever they spend downtime, they must spend an additional 4 gp for every 10 downtime days they spend (though you may be able to substitute downtime for this cost, see below).

If a character who owes these dues fails to pay them as soon as they spend downtime, they must pay them by the end of their next game session or they lose all benefits of guild membership, and must pay the 50 gp initial dues again to regain them.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Adventurers Guild may delve local ruins in search of treasure. They gain access to the *Guild Delving* downtime activity before or after any adventure set in Ylraphon.

NEW DOWNTIME ACTIVITY: GUILD DELVING

Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend up to 30 downtime days (minimum 10) to attempt to research, find, and explore some of the ruins of Outer Ylraphon in search of treasure. In the presence of the DM, roll percentile dice and add the number of days spent on this downtime activity, comparing the total to the Guild Delving Table on this page.

GUILD DELVING TABLE

d100 +

Downtime

Spent

Result

1-35

A fatiguing and fruitless cavern exploration. You spend 10 gp on expenses and gain 4 levels of exhaustion. For each downtime day you spend recovering before your next adventure, you remove one of these exhaustion levels.

36-50

A difficult and taxing trudge through the Flooded Forest. You gain 2 levels of exhaustion. For each downtime day you spend recovering before your next adventure, you remove one of these exhaustion levels.

51-65

A strange and discouraging affair. You make only enough to recuperate half of your lifestyle expenses.

66-79

A lengthy but unremarkable overland trip. You recuperate half your lifestyle expenses and gain 2d12 gp.

80-89

A profitable expedition to the Underdark. You recuperate half your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d4 x 10 gp.

90-99

An exciting delve into a lost dwarven tomb. You recuperate half your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d6 x 10 gp.

100-109

An unexpected discovery of a long-lost merchant house compound. You recuperate all your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d8 x 10 gp, as well as a book on the history of a Sword Coast city or town. (Have your DM select a title for it.)

110-119

A lost shrine. You recuperate all your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d10 x 10 gp as well as a holy symbol for a deity of your choice.

120 or

Higher

Altar of the Ghost Hound. You find a millennia-old shrine to a god you cannot identify, with treasures laid upon an altar deep beneath the ground. You recuperate all your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d12 x 10 gp as well as a *potion of healing*.

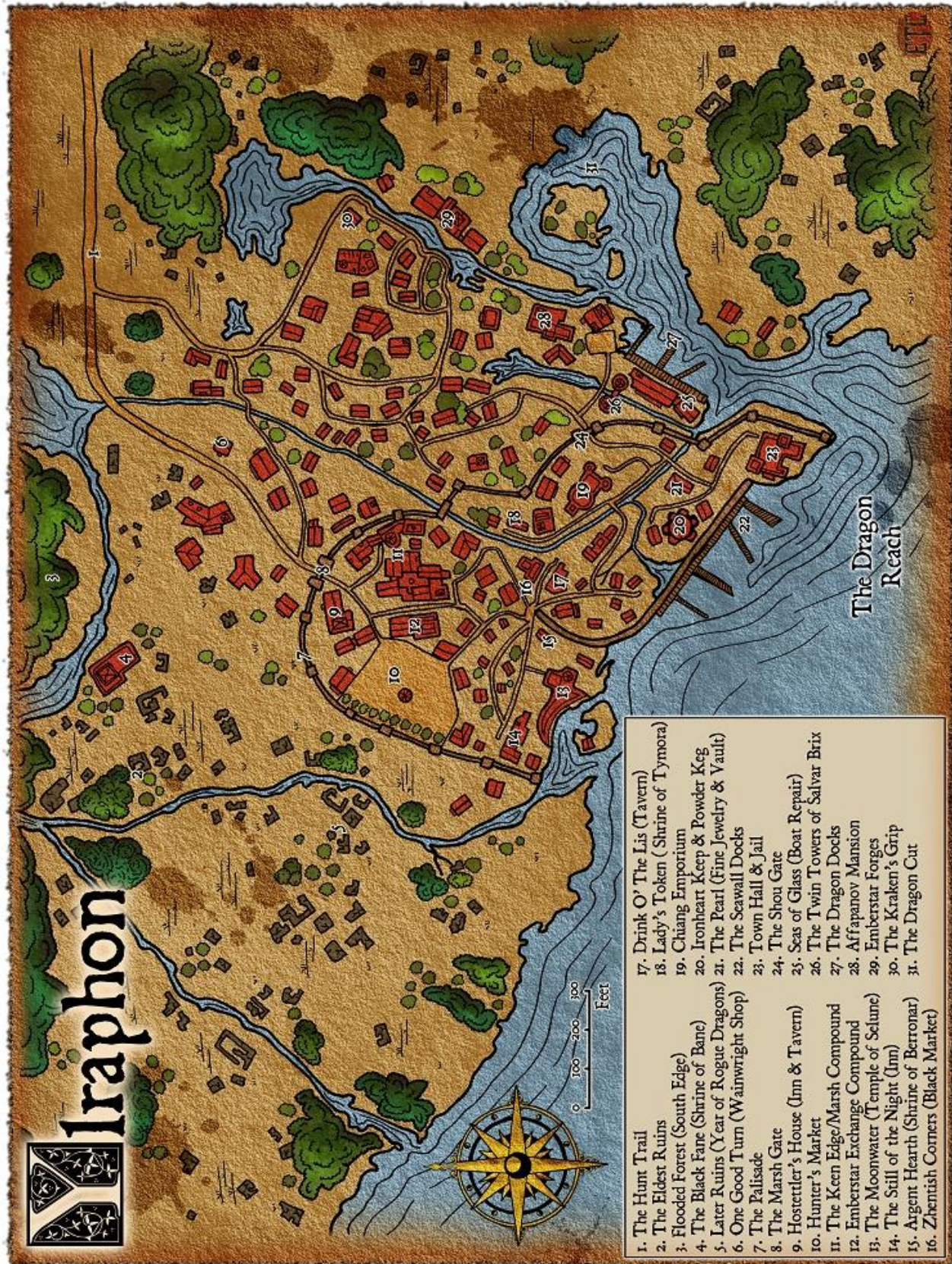
If this is the first time you have rolled this result: You also gain a shining copper cloak-pin bearing the image of a flaming spirit hound. Write down “Copper Pin of the Spirit Hound” as a separate story award on your logsheet.

PLAYER HANDOUT 6: NOTES FROM ARDEN (ON NPCs)

TO HELP YOU KEEP TRACK OF PEOPLE YOU MEET, DURING THE SEA VOYAGE ARDEN DESCRIBED SOME LOCAL PERSONAGES WHO MAY COME UP IN YOUR QUEST. THE FOLLOWING NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS ARE SUMMARIZED IN YOUR NOTES; USE THE SPACE AT THE BOTTOM FOR NOTES ON OTHERS YOU MIGHT MEET:

- **ARDEN MARSH**, ASKS YOU TO DELIVER LETTERS INFORMING THREE OF HIS KIN ABOUT HIS GRANDMOTHER LADY MYRANDAH MARSH'S FINAL WISH. ALSO THE LOCAL CONTACT FOR THE ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET, HE TRAVELS ABOARD A SHIP CALLED THE BLUE PHANTOM.
- **SIR BRESDEN MARSH** IS ARDEN'S TWIN BROTHER, WITH THE SAME PALE SKIN AND BLUE-GREEN EYES, SO HE SHOULD BE EASY TO RECOGNIZE, BUT HE LETS HIS BLACK HAIR AND GOATEE GROW LONG INSTEAD OF SHAVING THEM LIKE ARDEN DOES. NEEDS A COPY OF ARDEN'S LETTER.
- **LORD ORRIN MARSH**, BRESDEN AND ARDEN'S COUSIN, YOUNG HEIR TO THE NOBLE TITLES OF HOUSE MARSH. ONLY SEVENTEEN, SLENDER WITH ONLY THE BAREST BEGINNINGS OF A BEARD. HE HAS THE PALE SKIN OF A MARSH, BUT ICIER BLUE EYES AND A MORE AUBURN TINT TO HIS HAIR. NEEDS A COPY OF ARDEN'S LETTER.
- **AISLYN MARSH**, HALF-ELF AUNT TO BRESDEN, ARDEN, AND ORRIN MARSH, RUNS THE HOUSE HOLDINGS BUT CAN'T INHERIT. HAS THE SAME RAVEN-BLACK HAIR AND BLUE-GREEN EYES AS MOST MARSHES, BUT HER MOTHER WAS A DROW, SO SHE HAS DARK SKIN INSTEAD OF PALE. SHOULD KNOW WHERE BRESDEN AND ORRIN WENT—NEEDS A COPY OF ARDEN'S LETTER (THOUGH SHE ALREADY KNOWS OF LADY MYRANDAH'S PASSING).
- **"OLD" ZHELAD**, WICKED DISTANT WATER GENASI COUSIN OF THE OTHER MARSHES, KEEPER OF THE LOCAL SHRINE TO UMBERLEE. STANDS TO INHERIT THE FAMILY FORTUNE IF BRESDEN AND ORRIN DON'T QUIT ADVENTURING. BLUE SKIN AND A SHOCKINGLY WHITE BEARD.
- **GWYNORA IRONHEART**, PREGNANT RED-HAIRED DWARF LADY, LEADING MEMBER OF THE MERCHANT COUNCIL THAT RULES YLRAPHON, PART-OWNER OF THE LOCAL GAMBLING HOUSE. RUMOR IS SHE OFFERS A REWARD FOR THE RETURN OF A RELIC WHICH BRESDEN AND ORRIN WENT TO FIND.
- **KARL STORMBRIGHT**, BROWN-BEARDED DWARF, GWYNORA'S FIANCÉ AND BODYGUARD, FATHER TO THEIR UNBORN CHILD, YOUNGEST OF THREE BROTHERS.
- **GARM STORMBRIGHT**, GRAY-BEARDED, FLINTY-EYED DWARF, ELDER BROTHER TO KARL, FORMER CONSTABLE, HEAD OF THE SHRINE TO BERRONAR TRUESILVER CALLED THE ARGENT HEARTH, MENTOR TO BRESDEN. THE ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET WANTS HIM TO BE CAPTAIN OF THE TOWN WATCH.
- **JOTAN SILVERHAMMER**, DWARF ADVENTURER, LIGHT-HAIRED LIEUTENANT GUILDMASTER OF THE ADVENTURERS GUILD OF YLRAPHON AND SERGEANT IN THE VOLUNTEER TOWN GUARD. ALWAYS DRESSES LIKE IT IS WINTER. HIS LOYAL ADVENTURING COMRADES ARE TWO ELVES: THE SKILLED THIEF ACCLIFFERAETH (KNOWN LOCALLY AS **CLIF**) AND THE WILDERNESS SCOUT **GYTHEN WILDWOOD**.
- **ILASERA KOMBUL** IS A HALF-ELF DRUID FROM CALIMSHAN WITH RED HAIR AND OLIVE SKIN. SHE MOSTLY DWELLS IN THE FLOODED FOREST, BUT SHE IS AISLYN MARSH'S BEST FRIEND AND OFTEN VISITS HER AT OLD MARSH HOUSE. SHE REPRESENTS THE *EMERALD ENCLAVE* AS WELL. HER ABILITY TO RECLAIM SWAMPLAND IS WHAT HAS ALLOWED YLRAPHON TO GROW.

PLAYER HANDOUT 7: MAP OF YLRAPHON



AUTHOR'S DEDICATION

This adventure is dedicated to the memory of *David Solon Phillips* (1972-2016), a fellow D&D player, published RPG author, game-store owner, and beloved friend to many. Though we lost Dave tragically, not long before work on this setting began, some of his many characters live on in these pages, including Sir Bresden Marsh, Trell Bannon of the Fens, Jotan Silverhammer, the Blue Phantom, and Clif the Elf. Clif appears here in the company of his best friend Gythen Wildwood, the creation of Dave's real-life best friend, *Brandon Dee Rogers* (1972-2003), also a gamer, Dungeon Master, game-store owner, and well-loved friend, also lost to us far too soon. Many of these characters return in other modules in the YLRA series. It is hoped that these small samplings from a lifetime of creativity will continue to inspire other Adventurers League writers, and remain a source of enjoyment and adventure to players and DMs everywhere, for years to come.