

BDK8-02

Trouble Everywhere You Go

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons[®] Living Greyhawk[™] Bandit Kingdoms Adventure

Version 0.99

by Keith Symcox

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Vast forces are on the move as word starts to leak out about a powerful artifact that is rumored to confer the rulership of the Combination of Free Lords to its wearer. Can you win the race for the Iron Crown? A one-round Bandit Kingdoms adventure set in various locales for characters level 4-14 (APLs 6-12). This is the third and final part of the Missing Regent series. Members of the Army of the Warfields, Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe, Citizens of Redhand, Johrase Mercenaries and Moskol's Legion, and all those who wish to return Duke Gellor to power, are encouraged to play this adventure.

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

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

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

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PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NHeroes) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix 1 for full information on NHeroes and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix 1 is split by APL.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

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

	7	7	9	10	11
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3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six Heroes, add one to that average.

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

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

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

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Bandit Kingdoms. Characters native to the Bandit Kingdoms pay 1 Time Units per round; all other characters pay 2 Time Units per round.

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

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-

described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check, the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The *Iron Crown of the Bandit Kingdoms*, a powerful magic item whose creator's name has been lost to history, is a symbol of power desired by many in the Combination of Free Lords. The search for this fabled item has laid many a warlord low over the past decades, but still it is pursued. Due to its magic (*mind blank*), the crown cannot be located by any magical scrying means nor will divinations that are blocked by *mind blank* reveal any information about the crown.

Duke Gellor, believing that the crown is key if he is to survive any confrontations with luz's Bonehearts, has searched for it in secret to the point of obsession since the end of the Greyhawk Wars. The Duke has many agents searching for the fabled crown, but none better suited to the task than Larn of Salfrayfields.

With the discovery of some information about the crown, Larn now believes that the last true owner of the crown was none other than the father of Tarren Moskol, Reynard Moskol, the Earl of the Tangles before the Lesser Boneheart Aundurach killed him during the Greyhawk Wars.

The fact that Reynard possessed the crown was not widely known. Even Tarren was unaware of the crown's powers as Reynard had only told his eldest son of the crown (Tarren being the younger). Alas, both the father and his elder son died during Audurach's attack on Hallorn.

With Reynard dead, Aundurach dismissed the black iron crown as a foolish piece of headgear and ordered it melted down by his hobgoblin captain. To commemorate his victory, Aundurach instead crafted a magical scepter from Reynard's bones, a trophy that Aundurach still possesses, wherever he is.

However, immediately upon picking the crown up, the hobgoblin warrior felt a strong connection with the crown and stole it away, fleeing from

Hallorn in the chaos left in the wake of Audurach's early purges and occupation. The hobgoblin hoped to raise an army devoted only to himself and to replace Audurach as Earl of the Tangles. Unfortunately, he was soon slain by a demon as he made his way east through the Tangles (near the area now known as Green's Pond, home to Maurgaroothyx the green dragon). The crown was lost to the wilds of the Tangles Forest when the demon *teleported* away (for the demon could not sense the item's true powers and it forgot about the crown shortly after losing it).

This is as much as Larn has been able to deduce, based on research, divinations, and rumors. What follows is unknown to Larn or to anyone other than Esme, her ogre companion, or the yugoloth.

The crown languished near the pond for years until it was located by Esme, a mentally disturbed green hag who lived in the pond at that time with her covey sisters. Unfortunately for the hags, Maurgaroothyx, invited to the Tangles by the elven druid Gerland, arrived to claim the pond as her new home. Of the three hags and their ogre minions, only Esme and one ogre survived the dragon's onslaught to flee. With Esme went the crown.

Having disguised herself to look like a half-elven Suel woman as she fled south through the forest, Esme has since adopted the disguise permanently. Unfortunately for her, due to the effects of masquerading as a half-elf for so long while possessing, but never wearing, the *Iron Crown* (its magic being inimical to most spellcasters), she now truly believes this to be her real form. Esme now experiences dark and prophetic dreams and believes that she is gifted with foresight, as she "sees" when and where someone will be found dead. In fact, these are simply the memories of her periods of murderous release in hag form. It probably pleases her patron deity, Syrul (the Suel goddess of lies and deceit), how her worshipper is deluding herself.

After fleeing from the dragon, several weeks went by and, as Esme slept, the ogre, sensing a call from the crown, took it for himself. However, still loyal to Esme, he remained with her. In her crazed state, she thought nothing of the ogre having taken the crown. Oddly, the *hag eye* (MM 144) possessed by the ogre merged with the *iron crown*, allowing Esme to see what the ogre saw despite the *mind blank* effect of the crown. Esme now attributes this not to her powers as a hag but to her abilities as a seer and prophet.

Esme, still thinking herself to be a half-elven victim whose family was murdered by the green

dragon, prayed nightly for some aid to materialize to help her defeat the dragon. While she did not consciously realize it, she was in fact praying to her patron, Syrul. Syrul, being a god of lies and deception, saw the *iron crown* for what it was and desired to have it destroyed.

Thus, the goddess of lies promised aid to her worshipper while sending a yugoloth from Gehenna, a corruptor of fate with a penchant for theft and assassination, to recover and destroy the crown. Esme and her ogre companion were no match for the yugoloth; however, they survived as the creature merely wanted the crown. After subduing the ogre and taking the crown, it left the pair alive, assuming they could further serve Syrul in the future.

The yugoloth could sense the power of the crown as soon as it touched it. Seeing the item as a way to add to its own power, it defied its deity and refused to return to Gehenna.

The yugoloth now realized that returning to Gehenna was probably a bad idea anyway, as it would almost certainly be assassinated by other minions of Syrul for possession of the crown (it was unaware that the crown cannot be moved dimensionally). It therefore moved into a cave at the edge of the Wormcrawl Fissure, an environment it found hospitable and amusing (as corruptors of fate are fond of being around undead), and spent years setting up defenses against intruders and contemplated the beauty, and powers, of the crown.

However, the crown's magic hid the *hag eye* that was merged with it from the yugoloth's ability to detect. Thus, Esme knows roughly where the yugoloth took the crown. She knows that she is no match for the yugoloth, but revenge drives her to continue her watch. She cares nothing for the crown, although she vaguely understands that her ogre minion was stronger and braver while wearing it, but only desires revenge upon the demon who failed to help her slay the dragon.

Unfortunately for Larn and Duke Gellor, enough adventurers now know about the *Iron Crown* that the information about it has started to leak out. There are many important figures in the Combination besides Gellor who would love to own this powerful symbol of overlordship. Within the last week or so, General Hok and Prince Zeech have learned that it may still exist. Additionally, freelance powers such as Nevin Ringblade and Arvad Michelson want the crown for their own ends.

Larn has one advantage though: he has been searching for the crown longer than anyone else has and finally he has made sense of certain

cryptic divination answers. He knows that there is a half-elf living in the southern Tangles who has information regarding the whereabouts of the crown.

As words gets out, vast forces are moving in the combination to find the crown and only he who moves quickest and strikes the hardest will win the crown.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Encounter 1A: Contact with Bleg One Eye, informant with links to Nevin and the Death Cultists.

Encounter 1B: Contact with Larn, minion of Gellor.

Encounter 2: Travel to Esme's lair to get information about the crown. The heroes will encounter Nevin Ringblade and his minions, men who want the same information.

Encounter 3: The heroes have the opportunity to talk with Esme and perhaps gain the location of the *Iron Crown*.

Encounter 4: The heroes come upon the end of a huge fight between the current owner of the crown and the minions of Arvad Michelson (with magical support from Lord Cranzer of Riftcrag). The heroes catch up to the luzians just as they enter a magical portal.

Encounter 5: The heroes may travel through the portal after the luzians, chasing the crown, or they may stop and discuss the situation. If they enter the portal, they find themselves in Arvad Michelson's suites in Cranzer's tower in Riftcrag.

Encounter 6: Representatives of various factions arrive to plead their case for the crown. However, all agree that it must be kept out of luzian hands. Thus, the PCs must decide the fate of the *iron crown*.

Encounter 7: Cranzer sends one last strike force against the heroes, determined to win the crown back for his new general, Arvad Michelson.

Conclusion: The heroes decide who gets the crown.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Before you begin, find out which, if any, characters have the following:

- **Enmity of Nevin Ringblade** (BDK7-01 *The Halfling*) (Nevin's men target in encounter 2)
- **Hunted by assassins or Wanted for Questioning by Temple Grimacing** (various) (Arvad's men target this person in encounter 4)

- **Favor of Hok** (various) (handout 1C if they feel favorable towards Hok)
- **Trusted by Larn** (BDK7-04 *Proof of Loyalty*) (handout 1A if they feel favorable towards Larn)
- **Distrusted by Larn** (BDK7-04 *Proof of Loyalty*) (see encounter 1B for details)
- **Enmity of Larn** (BDK7-04 *Proof of Loyalty*) (no encounter 1B for parties with this person)
- Are members of the Army of the Warfields, Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe, Johrase Mercenaries, or Moskol's Legion.
- Find out the WCI score of each character. Make note of any character with a Dissenter ranking or higher.

REGIONAL WARNING

It is important to realize at all times that the Bandit Kingdoms are under the control of luz, the Old One, a chaotic, evil deity who revels in torture, depravity and trickery. Government officials tend to imitate many of the attributes of their dread lord. Things that you might take for granted in other lands, such as freedom of worship and the rule of law, are not valued by the rulers of the Combination of Free Lords. You may be able to strike at luz, but seldom can you strike at him overtly without paying the final price. Be warned, life is short for those who openly defy Old Wicked.

INTRODUCTION

Before you begin, give the players the appropriate handout.

- If the PC has the **Trusted by Larn** plot point, give them handout 1A.
- If the PC is a member of **Moskol's Legion**, give them handout 1B.
- If the PC has the **Favor of Hok** (and NOT **Trusted by Larn**), or is a member of the **Army of the Warfields**, give them handout 1C.
- If the PC is a member of the **Johrase Mercenaries**, give them handout 1D.
- If the PC is a **Citizen of Redhand**, give them handout 1E.
- **Note:** It is possible for a PC to receive more than one handout.
- If **NONE** of the PCs receives an appropriate handout, then begin the adventure with **Encounter 1A** as Bleg hires them to find the crown.

1A: THE DIRT ON THE CROWN

This is the default starting encounter. If you cannot find any other way of getting the PCs involved in this adventure, assume that Bleg hires them to locate the crown (at some exorbitant rate). Modify the text as necessary in this case.

The Dingy Coffin in Hallorn is a great place to catch a whiff of not only local intrigues, but foreign plots as well. With the upheavals of the last months caused by General Hok's return, at the head of a diabolic Horned Society army, the city is in more turmoil than usual, with new powers competing with the old guard for dominance.

Over the course of the last couple of days, you seem to have found a group of like-minded veterans who understand the rush of adrenaline that comes from putting your life on the line in battle. These personal contacts with other adventurers are important to those who have aligned themselves against the trickery of Old Wicked, as it is harder to forge a friendship than it is a document.

At this point allow the characters to introduce themselves to one another. The characters have been together off and on for the last couple of days. Ask them what, if anything, they wish to do.

You see an unusual looking hobgoblin sitting in a booth near the door. His left eye is covered by an eye patch embroidered with the words "the pain makes me stronger". He is dressed in rather shabby courtier's clothing that has the look of having been tailored for someone of a significantly different build. The small rent and the old bloodstain in the left side of the doublet bear testimony to the fate of the original owner.

When he notices your interest, he motions for you to come to his table and sit down. "Name's Bleg. I need to hire a few lads for a job. Interested?"

Bleg starts as Indifferent and knows the following about the *Iron Crown*. He believes this information to be accurate:

- Most of the previous widely known owners of the *Iron Crown* were assassinated by rivals within 5 years of obtaining the crown.

- The last widely known owner of the *Iron Crown* was Albertus Gellor of Artonsamay almost a hundred years ago. He was assassinated on a hunting trip, presumably by someone who wanted to steal the crown.
- Bleg served under a hobgoblin captain during the Greyhawk Wars in Hallorn. His captain absconded with Reynard Moskol's crown after Boneheart Aundurach ordered it melted down. Bleg never saw the captain again, but he does know that the captain had fled into the Tangles Forest.
- He believes that Reynard had somehow acquired the *Iron Crown*.
- The crown protects its wearer from many magicks as well as making him a better warrior.
- If the heroes were to recover the crown and bring it back to Bleg, he will reward them well.
- If asked who he works for, Bleg declines to answer. *Detect thoughts* or similar magicks will reveal that he works for Elhilbor, Captain of Prince Zeech's secret police.

A DC 25 Knowledge (history) check will also reveal that the *Iron Crown* cannot be moved dimensionally (Bleg DOES NOT know this fact).

If the PCs agree to undertake the mission and swear oath to return to the crown to him, he will reveal the following information:

- Bleg knows of a half-elven seer who lives in the southern Tangles. If she survived Cranzer's attack on the forest, she may be able to guide the heroes toward the crown's resting place. However, she may already be dead.
- He was duped into revealing this information to a group of people who came by yesterday. He overheard one of them mention that someone named Nevin would be happy about learning what he just told them. They then tried to kill him, but Bleg escaped. He thinks they may try to kill the half-elven seer (mentioned above) to cover their tracks.

Bleg One Eye: LN male hobgoblin expert 5; hp 32; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +8, Sense Motive +4; Will +5.

Development

The heroes should now know enough to go seek out Esme. Proceed to Encounter 2.

1B: LARN'S TALE

This encounter is run if the players have some reason to seek out Larn at the Silver Star.

This encounter does not happen if any of the heroes have the Enmity of Larn **and** have a disguise check less than DC 24 (this is what Larn gets taking 10 on his Spot).

Like most taverns in Kinemeet, the Silver Star is orderly and well maintained. The food is plain but nourishing although the ale is a bit weak. The Johrase are not known for being drunkards, after all.

There are very few people in the inn at the moment and none that you recognize. However, after your meal, the innkeep comes over to you and quietly mentions that there is someone in an upstairs room that has asked to speak to you.

Allow them to make whatever normal preparations they might wish to make (although the innkeeper will not allow spellcaster unless the PC is a cleric of a lawful human god), then continue with the following:

The door to the room opens up into a sitting room. In one of the chairs in the room is an Oeridian man of medium height and unfamiliar appearance.

Larn is disguised at present. A DC 31 Spot check is required to see through the disguise. Larn will not drop his disguise or discuss anything with any party that contains a person with the **Enmity of Larn** plot point, as these characters have betrayed Larn in the past. Should the characters force their way into Larn's presence, he will deny that he is Larn and apologize for wasting their time, explaining that he thought they were a group of old sailing buddies of his.

If a party has a character who has the **Distrupted by Larn** plot point, then he will start as Unfriendly towards the party and will only talk to them if his reaction can be changed to Indifferent or better. He will not reveal himself as Larn in the presence of these characters unless his reaction is changed to Friendly or better. Even in these circumstances, he will ask the character with the negative plot point to leave the room while he discussed his plan with the rest of the characters. In this case, he will urge the remaining characters to watch this character closely, as he cannot be trusted and is liable to betray them all.

Larn: CG male human wizard 10: hp 40; see Appendix 1.

When he is satisfied to the trustworthiness of the heroes, he will continue.

"I am sorry for the subterfuge, but I have had spies following me for some time now. I do not know who betrayed me but obviously word has gotten out about the Duke and his plans."

He leans back in his chair, then continues. "The Duke is making great progress in his recruitment of forces to help him and now only needs one more thing to make his return possible. Perhaps you have heard of the Iron Crown, a symbol of overlordship of the Combination of Free Lords? It is this that I wish to send you to retrieve for His Grace."

Larn knows the following about the *Iron Crown*:

- Most of the previous widely known owners of the Iron Crown were assassinated by rivals within 5 years of obtaining the crown.
- The last true owner of the *Iron Crown* was Reynard Moskol, father to Tarren Moskol. Reynard was the Earl of the Tangles when Aundurach slew him.
- A hobgoblin captain stole the crown from the dead Earl's corpse and fled into the Tangles with it. There, the hobgoblin was killed by a demon near the area now known as Green's Pond.

A DC 25 Knowledge (history) check will also reveal that the *Iron Crown* cannot be moved dimensionally (Larn DOES NOT know this fact).

Larn only reveals the following after everyone in the party has sworn oath to return the crown to him:

- Larn knows of a half-elven seer named Esme who lives in the southern Tangles. If she survived Cranzer's attack on the forest, she may be able to guide the heroes toward the crown's resting place. (He provides directions on how to reach her)
- The crown protects its wearer from many magicks as well as making him a better warrior.

Summing up, Larn concludes:

"I cannot seek this woman out as I am being followed. If I were to go to her, I would not only put her life in danger but I would lead our

enemies that much closer to the crown. Find the crown if you can and return to my tower near Salfrayfields. I will have travel arranged for us to proceed to the County of Urnst to meet with Duke Gellor and to collect your reward. Any who recover the crown for Duke Gellor will surely be honored and will fight at his side to drive Cranzer from the region!"

Kinemeet (Small city): Conventional; AL LN; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 5,250,000 gp; Population 7,000; Mixed (human [OFsb] 6,720, halfling 70, gnome 70, dwarf 35, half-elf 35, half-orc 35).

SHOPPING

Should the PCs need to re-supply, they can purchase any non-Evil Open item from the PHB or DMG with a cost of 15,000 gp or less.

Development

The heroes should now know enough to go seek out Esme. Proceed to Encounter 2.

2: SOUTHERN DEAD

Assume that the heroes make their way to the southern Tangles without any problems (for a change). Feel free to describe them avoiding luzian patrols, Morginstaler (if they travel near the Rift Canyon), etc., to make it seem like the journey was fraught with danger.

This area of the Tangles is still completely decimated. It counts as a sparse forest (DMG 87) for purposes of terrain, except there is no undergrowth and the trees are all dead. Roughly 50% of the squares contain a 30-foot tall dead typical tree (AC 2, hardness 2, hp 75). A creature standing in the same square as a typical tree gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus to Reflex saves. The trees do not hinder tactical movement, regardless of a creature's size.

Once ready, proceed with the following:

The weather has turned nasty as you travel through the southern Tangles. This part of the forest is still dead, meaning you are dangerously exposed to view as you travel, but you dare not travel along the roads between the Leering Keeps for fear of luzian patrols.

During your travels, you stumbled upon a small inn. Previously hidden by the forest, it is clear that this way station serves as a lookout point for the men of Moskol's Legion. Several men take their ease in the tavern, large hunting

hounds at their feet. The sign of the Summoner hangs around more than one neck. All look at you warily as you enter.

This unnamed tavern was created to assist travelers from Hallorn as they moved through the southern forest to avoid luzian patrols.

If you wish, feel free to roleplay the encounter at the tavern. All inhabitants start out as Indifferent unless the PC is either a member of Moskol's Legion or a worshipper of Trithereon, in which case they are Friendly.

If made Friendly, the innkeeper or a patron will reveal the following:

- Something has been terrorizing the area on and off for the past few years.
- They are unable to describe this "monster" as it only comes out infrequently and only takes children when no witnesses are around. Gerland and Otolle have been so far unable to locate the creature.
- No one can confirm that the monster actually exists, but they all "know" it does.
- A strange group just moved through the area, seeking a local witch's hut. (They will be described as appropriate for the APL [see below]). They were a rough lot, but started no trouble. Still, the locals got a sense of unease when they were around.
- The witch, a half-elf, is named Esme. She lives only a few miles to the north. She keeps to herself and harms no one.
- Esme has strange powers of divination. It is usually she who finds the missing children's bodies after the monster has slain them. Unfortunately, she has never been able to pin down the creature's location in time for the hunters to find and kill the beast.

By now, the heroes should be aware that someone else is seeking the witch, and thus they should hurry to find her.

Nevin and his minions arrived at Esme's home before the heroes and are currently negotiating with her inside the hut. Esme wants Nevin's help in killing the yugoloth before she tells him of the crown's location. Naturally, Nevin wants no part of this and he is seeking to intimidate Esme into just giving him the information. He does not realize that she is actually a hag, nor is he aware that her bodyguard is an ogre (because it is *invisible*, but he is aware that something else is in the hut).

Note: Both Esme and her ogre are invisible due to her at will spell-like ability. Should a PC look inside the hut, take this into account.

As the heroes approach Esme's hut, be sure to give the NPCs appropriate Spot and Listen checks. If they detect the PCs, they will react accordingly. Nevin does not want to be interfered with while he deals with the witch. Killing meddling fools should prove how dangerous he can be.

As the PCs approach the witch's hut, read or paraphrase the following.

Your journey seems to end at a squat and dirty hut. This is a residence that has seen better days and has an air of long-term poverty about it. This makes the horses tethered outside look more out of place.

Nevin and Groc are inside the hut. Bulgo (or the demon at APL 12) has taken up a position high in a nearby tree to keep an eye out for intruders. As soon as intruders are spotted, the sentry will attack. If the PCs haven't spotted the hiding sentry, this will earn the villain a surprise round.

See DM map 1 for the layout of the hut and its environs. Once alerted to the PCs presence, Nevin will order his men to kill the interlopers, promising Esme that they will continue negotiating once the intruders have been dealt with.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Nevin: NE male human Rog 7; hp 44; Appendix 1.

Groc: CN male orc barbarian 3; hp 32; Appendix 1.

Bulgo: CN male human Wiz 3; hp 16; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Nevin: NE male human Rog 7; hp 44; Appendix 1.

Groc: CN male orc barbarian 7; hp 68; Appendix 1.

Bulgo: CE male dire wereboar rogue 2/assassin 1; hp 90; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Nevin: NE male human Rog 7; hp 44; Appendix 1.

Groc: CN male goliath barbarian 1/Fighter 4/Occult Slayer 4; hp 92; Appendix 1.

Bulgo: CE male dire wereboar rogue 2/assassin 3; hp 102; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Nevin: NE male human Rog 7; hp 44; Appendix 1.

Groc: CN male goliath barbarian 1/Fighter 4/Occult Slayer 4; hp 92; Appendix 1.

Bulgo: CE male dire wereboar rogue 2/assassin 3; hp 102; Appendix 1.

Advanced Arrow Demon: hp 228; Appendix 1.

Tactics

At all APLs, Nevin will signal for his men to focus on the characters with the Enmity of Nevin Ringblade plot point, unless this tactic would be suicidal.

At APLs 8 and 10, the wereboar assassin starts the combat hiding in a tree in the woods near the front of the hut. Bulgo will have studied the PC with the highest WCI score (if he sees through their disguise), and who looks like they have a low Constitution (elves are high priority targets), as they approach and then will attempt an assassination.

At APL 12, the demon will preferentially target heroes who are lightly armored first, working its way to the heavily armored foes, unless this tactic would be suicidal.

Nevin has no intention of fighting to the death. Should he feel that his men are losing, he will flee into the forest. It will then be up to the PCs to find him. Should he escape, so be it. The PCs will still have Esme to talk to.

Treasure

APL 6: Loot 73 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 1,053 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *potion of invisibility* (12 gp), *scrolls of glitterdust* [13 gp], *grease* [2 gp], *invisibility* [13 gp], *mage armor* [2 gp], *ray of enfeeblement* [2 gp], *scorching ray* [13 gp], *shield* [2 gp]), *spellbook* (92 gp), *wand of magic missile* [CL 3, 10 charges, 38 gp]); Total 1,130 gp.

APL 8: Loot 43 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 1,642 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 cold iron spear (359 gp), +1 greataxe (193 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), +1 studded leather (98 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *potion of invisibility* (2@12 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp); Total 1,689 gp.

APL 10: Loot 92 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 3,053 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 cold iron spear (359 gp), +1 corrosive goliath greathammer (694 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1 (2@83 gp each), *bracers of quick strike* (117 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (2@333 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *potion of*

invisibility (2@12 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp); Total 3,149 gp.

APL 12: Loot 92 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 5,061 gp -- +1 *chain shirt* (104 gp), +1 *cold iron spear* (359 gp), +1 *corrosive goliath greathammer* (694 gp), +1 *large seeking composite greatbow* (2@754 gp each), +1 *mithral chain shirt* (175 gp), +1 *shock rapier* (693 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1 (2@83 gp each), *bracers of quick strike* (117 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (2@333 gp each), *potion of barkskin* (+5) (100 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2@63 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (3@12 gp each), *quiver of Ehlonna* (150 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp); Total 5,157 gp.

Troubleshooting

If the heroes do not want to start a fight, perhaps because they wish to ambush Nevin and his men later (which is actually a good idea), then be sure to have Esme start screaming from inside the hut as Nevin attacks her (after she had told him where the yugoloth lairs). Nevin is unaware that Esme is really a hag, and he has not yet figured out that the other invisible creature in the hut is an ogre.

Should the heroes not interfere, he and his henchman easily kill the hag and the ogre (once it attacks and becomes visible, although it will nearly kill Nevin with its first attack) and then search her hut. A short while later, they leave for Wormcrawl Fissure.

If the PCs allowed all this to happen, then they will either have to follow Nevin all the way to the Fissure, or they will have to capture him and intimidate the information out of him or they will have to kill him and try *speak with dead*.

Development

Nevin has Player Handout 2 on him. When Nevin and his companions have been defeated, the heroes can attempt to negotiate with Esme.

3: DISCUSSIONS WITH ESME

Note: Both Esme and her ogre are invisible due to her at will spell-like ability (she believes this to be a gift from the gods). Should a PC look inside the hut, take this into account.

Esme isn't coming out of the hut as long as she senses danger on the other side of the door. When the heroes finish off Nevin and his crew, they can attempt Diplomacy or Intimidate to convince her to come out (she starts off as Unfriendly and she must be made Indifferent to talk with the adventurers. If made Friendly, she will become visible).

Unless the heroes do something completely stupid, have her eventually open negotiations (her ogre remains silent throughout). When she does, read or paraphrase the following.

The hut's deer-hide door opens to reveal a half-elven woman with flaming red hair. Various arcane fetishes adorn her clothes, which are patched and tattered and of an unusual style. She has a cunning, almost feral, look in her eye as she looks you up and down, then glances past you to the bodies of your defeated foes.

"What do you lot want?", she says, adjusting her gown and standing up a little straighter.

Esme's grasp on reality is pretty tenuous and she should be played as a bit schizophrenic, talking to the thin air as she wonders about things (she's actually talking to her ogre, as if she is talking to herself. The ogre remains silent). **Under no circumstances** will she reveal that she is a hag as she truly believes that she is a half-elven woman who has divination abilities (which is why she finds dead bodies from time to time in the forest; they appear to her in her "dreams"). Note that this means that there is no opposed Bluff vs. Sense Motive, as in HER reality, she is a half elf.

If the heroes are friendly towards her, and have made her Friendly, she will relate to them the tale of the *Iron Crown* as she knows it (see Background, but remember that she does not think she is a hag). She does not know the item's true nature or powers, nor does she know that she can scry on it because of her ogre's missing *hag eye*. She just knows that from time to time she has dreams that show her what the yugoloth who stole the crown is up to. She will then offer to tell the PCs where the crown is so that they may seek it out in exchange for their promise that they will slay the demon.

If the characters agree to help her (or if they lie and convince they will try), she will tell them the following:

- The yugoloth lives alone in a cave at the edge of the Wormcrawl Fissure. She can provide directions and describes the yugoloth. A DC 17 Knowledge (the planes) check will confirm that the yugoloth described is a corruptor of fate (MM4 190) with assassin abilities. A DC 20 reveals that being touched by one brings ill fortune. A DC 25 reveals that it has a gaze attack that also brings ill fortune.

- A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) or (geography) check regarding the Wormcrawl Fissure reveals that the area is tied to the god Kyuss. A DC 15 reveals that the area is purported to be overrun with unusual undead creatures known as Sons of Kyuss.
- The yugoloth is a powerful assassin. His lair is hard to reach and is protected by several traps.
- If the PCs have detected her ogre bodyguard and ask her about him, she claims that he is a gift from the gods to protect her.
- If *detect thoughts* or similar magic is used on the ogre, he knows that she is really a hag that is self-delusional. However, he doesn't care much as he still is loyal to her, crazy or not.

All APLs (EL 8)

Esme: CN female green hag (disguised as a half-elf, DC 25 Spot to see through the disguise--*disguise self*); hp 49; *MM* 143.

Krag: CN male ogre barbarian 4; hp 79; *MM* 198.

Troubleshooting

A DC 25 Spot check will allow a hero to see past her disguise and recognize her for a green hag. She will deny this to the death, even if confronted with this "reality" (which is not her reality and an insult in her mind). She will even claim to be cursed, or that the heroes are delusional.

If attacked, she will not defend herself until she has taken lethal damage (although the ogre will immediately move to attack), as her half-elven persona is a non-combatant. However, once she has taken lethal damage, her alignment will switch to CE and she will fly into a rage, attempting to kill everyone within sight, except her ogre. Utterly crazy, she will fight to the death.

Treasure

Esme possesses very little in the way of treasure, having lost hers when she fled from Maurgoroothyx several years ago. The ogre only possesses the items detailed in its *Monster Manual* entry.

Also, a DC 25 Search of her lair will reveal several human bones hidden under rugs, buried in the floor, in a kettle, etc. These are the remains of her victims.

All APLs: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 457 gp -- +1 *large hide armor* (98 gp), +1 *large greatclub* (192 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp); Total 457 gp.

Development

The PCs **MUST** get the yugoloth's lair's location information or the adventure is over. If they kill her before getting it, then they acted rashly.

Most tables should be able to figure out that Esme is in fact a green hag, and probably the monster responsible for the infrequent murders. However, they might be confused because she does not have an evil aura (until she is attacked, at which time her hag persona takes over). Once the PCs have the directions to the lair, they may do what they will with Esme. Keep in mind that lawful PCs who negotiated with her in good faith may require an *atonement* if they deal with her and then attack her without warning.

If the PCs try to get Esme to go with them, she refuses to do so. Only magical compulsions will force her and her ogre to do so.

4: YUGOLOTH LAIR

Background

The minions of Arvad Michelson, Blackguard of luz and new General of Riftcrag (serving under Boneheart Cranzer) have started their assault upon the yugoloth that currently holds the crown. Arvad would be there himself, but luz himself requested his presence in Dorakaa. Unwilling to wait to recover the crown, Arvad ordered his men to go ahead with the attack without him.

Arvad, with the backing of Cranzer, was able to obtain the information about the owner of the crown via his contacts on the plane of Gehenna (the yugoloth's home plane). While he is worried about the yugoloth's lair's proximity to Wormcrawl Fissure, he is willing to risk his troops to obtain the fabled crown.

As a favor to Arvad, Cranzer himself has created a portal that goes straight from Arvad's suites in Cranzer's tower in Riftcrag to the area near the yugoloth's lair. Unfortunately for the yugoloth, it is unaware that it is being hunted.

As this encounter begins, the fight with the yugoloth has just ended with the yugoloth being dismissed back to Gehenna. Cranzer's support wizards have already *teleported* back to Riftcrag to report, leaving Arvad's men to loot. Arvad's main supporters are preparing to use the portal to return back to Riftcrag with the crown as the heroes show up.

As the heroes approach Wormcrawl Fissure, read the following:

The travel to Wormcrawl Fissure was eerily uneventful. You had to dodge an luzian and

demon patrol here and there, but you made it to the western Rift Barrens safely. Like much of the Rift Barrens, this area is dry and rugged and completely empty of wildlife and game. Unlike other areas, this region is reputedly rife with undead that crawl out of the infamous Wormcrawl Fissure. Even the luzians avoid this place, it is said.

However, you have yet to see any fresh signs of unusual undead as you approach the area that was described to you. As you are still a mile or so away from the fissure itself, maybe this isn't that unusual.

A DC 20 Spot check will reveal a gully a bit of a distance off to the west. In that galley is a cave entrance. See DM Map 2 for a map of the cave.

Up a slight ridge is a narrow cave entrance. In a rough semi circle around the entrance are the corpses of two human soldiers, their blood having dried on the rocks beneath them. Their tabards bear the grinning skull motif.

The smell of brimstone and chlorine lies heavily in the air. There is no sound coming from inside the cavern.

A DC 15 Heal check will reveal that the humans have been dead only a few minutes. Each was slain by a single arrow through the neck.

A DC 17 Survival check made by a character with the Track feat will reveal that at least nine humanoids were in the area, having approached from the opposite end of the gully than the PCs approached from. A DC 20 check will also reveal that two sets of similar prints leave the area and head back down the gully. If the PCs follow these tracks, which lead to a portal a half-mile away, go to Encounter 5.

Inside the cavern is the body of one more soldier killed by a poison dart trap that he triggered.

When the heroes decide to enter the cavern, read the following:

Inside the cavern is carnage. Scorch marks are on the walls, with several more bodies lying scattered around the cave, one of which is oddly enough that of a female gnoll dressed in the bloodstained robes of a cleric of the Old One.

Read the following once the PCs have opened the door to the back chamber:

In the back of the cavern is a wall of fog that is so thick it seems almost solid. Suddenly the fog disappears, revealing several human soldiers! Each wears a grinning skull tabard and has weapons at the ready.

During the battle with the yugoloth, the luzians cast *solid fog* to slow its movement down, which then allowed them to banish it via a *dismissal* spell. Naturally, they didn't care that three of their number were trapped in the fog as well. The remaining luzians (Arvad's cohort and his squire) searched the cavern and located the crown, leaving these three to loot the cavern once the fog expired.

The spell's duration expires just as the heroes enter the cavern.

All APLs (EL 5)

Arvad's Dragoon Privates (2): CE male human fighter 1; hp 10 plus 10 temp each; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Dragoon Corporal: CE male human fighter 2; hp 18 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Note: The EL has been raised by to account for the *greater magic weapon* spells that Arvad's cohort cast on the soldiers' weapons the day before.

Tactics

The luzians, being outnumbered, seek to flee back to the portal. They have no wish to die here, but if cornered, they will fight to the death.

If captured alive, they may be interrogated. To get them to talk requires a DC 28 Intimidate check (consider this an opposed check, opposed by Arvad's +18 Intimidate modifier). Even death doesn't scare them, as they have been promised that their souls will become demons when they die. If convinced to talk, they will reveal the location of the portal and the fact that it leads to Arvad's suites in Cranzer's Tower in Riftcrag. They will also reveal that Arvad is in Dorakaa meeting with luz himself.

Treasure

All APLs: Loot 264 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 83 gp; vest of resistance +1 (83 gp); Total 347 gp.

Development

The purpose here is for the PCs to discover the trail that leads to the portal, if they have not already done so, by having to chase the luzians.

Once the PCs have located the portal, go to Encounter 5.

5: THE PORTAL

Having secured the crown, Arvad's trusted cohort is waiting for the rest of her men to join her at the portal (she has already sent the squire through to ensure no ambush is waiting for her in the tower).

Why doesn't she just attempt to *word of recall* with it to Dorakaa? She is worried that were she to show up in Dorakaa with the crown, all manner of things could happen to her before she reached her lord in luz's audience chamber. At least she knows that in Cranzer's tower in Riftcrag she is relatively safe until her lord returns to claim the crown.

See DM Map 3. Read the following as soon as any of the PCs can see the portal:

As you move up the gulley, you round have gone perhaps half-a-mile from the cave entrance when you see a large-door-sized shimmering wall of grey. Striding toward it is a human female in heavy armor, her bloodstained black robes marking her as a cleric of luz. In her hand she clutches a dull black iron crown as she steps through the portal, disappearing to lands unknown.

NOTE: The Iron Crown cannot be transported dimensionally. When an attempt is made to move it into an extradimensional space or via dimensional travel (i.e. *Heward's handy haversack*, *dimension door*, *teleport*, etc.) an effect is triggered that is nearly identical in form to *greater anticipate teleportation* (SpC). When moved dimensionally, the crown disappears immediately and reappears at the point of dimensional entry **three rounds later**. Arvad's cohort was not aware of this property of the crown. Thus, once she entered the portal, the crown disappeared. In three rounds it will reappear in midair just before the portal in the Rift Barrens and fall to the ground.

Development

What the PCs do determines how the action goes in this encounter. If a PC immediately follows her through the portal (foolish, but brave, especially at lower APLs if they don't know where it leads or how long the portal will remain open), go to Encounter 5A: The Tower.

If the PCs wait to discuss strategy, buff, etc., go to Encounter 5B: Look What We Found.

Regardless, once the PCs have the crown, proceed to Encounter 6. If the PCs failed to recover the crown, proceed to the Conclusion.

5A: THE TOWER

Brazenly you step through the portal, arriving in a large, garishly decorated hall. Immediately upon arriving, you feel something tear at your soul.

Important Note: Cranzer's Tower in Riftcrag is under the protection of a *forbiddance* spell (DC 30, CE, CL 18), which prevents planar travel into or within it. The only extradimensional travel allowed is the portal they just came through, which was specifically designed to bypass the *forbiddance* (both of which were cast by Cranzer, a master at portal construction and planar travel. Plus, he used *wish* in the construction of the *forbiddance* to allow himself to create portals that could enter the *forbiddance* area).

Remember that *forbiddance* damages creatures based on their alignment. The heroes will be at a distinct disadvantage fighting in Cranzer's Tower. See PHB 232 for information on *forbiddance*. Have all PCs that enter the area make saving throw attempts and take damage as appropriate (note that this damage can be disregarded by a character with the Mettle special ability if that character makes their saving throw). It is quite likely at lower APLs that this effect will outright kill PCs with low hit point totals. Such is the danger of entering Cranzer's Tower.

Behind you stands a duplicate of the portal you just walked through, its shimmering grey field giving no hint as to its destination.

A set of closed doors are off to your left and the heads of many beasts, ranging from ankhegs to ogres to a copper dragon's, adorn the walls of the chamber. In addition, several shields hang about, each with the same heraldic device of a greatsword under a grinning skull.

Tall south-facing windows look out from on high over a city that is perched on a plateau at the edge of a massive canyon. Several large flying demons can be seen hovering over the city, scanning it for prey.

Standing twenty feet in front of you, and startled by your appearance, are a female human cleric of luz and a male human warrior in dark armor, a greatsword in his hands. There is nothing in the woman's hands and she has a perplexed look on her face.

This is Arvad's audience chamber. It is here that he instructs his cohort and followers on the days activities. See DM Map 4 for a map of the hall.

A DC 15 Knowledge (geography) or (local – luz Border States) check will reveal that the heroes are standing inside Cranzer's tower in Riftcrag, a city at the edge of the Rift Canyon. A DC 20 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check will reveal the heraldry as that of Arvad Michelson, Blackguard of luz and new general of Cranzer's army in Riftcrag. PCs that have seen Arvad before will recognize that the warrior is NOT Arvad.

Arvad's cohort is doubly shocked. First, the crown is no longer in her grasp, and she has no idea where it is (she was just about to go back through the portal and look for it when the PCs arrived). Second, the heroes, who she has never seen before, just stepped out of the portal instead of her privates and corporal.

The PCs gain a surprise round if they move swiftly through the portal as a group. If just one comes through and the others wait, then only that PC gains the surprise round.

APL 6 (EL 9)

Injured Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 57; Appendix 1.

Injured Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1; hp 58; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Injured Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 75; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1; hp 68 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 111 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1; hp 68 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 111 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1; hp 68 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Glabrezu: hp 186; MM 43.

Note: For EL purposes, the *forbiddance* effect is considered a CR 8 trap. The EL has been lowered by 1 because the heroes gain surprise.

At lower APLs, the cohort and squire have expended spells (and higher level short term buff spells have expired) and have taken damage to make them an appropriate challenge for that APL (for instance, at APL 6 she can only cast 3rd level or lower spells as she used all her higher level spells in the fight against the yugoloth). Note that she is not proficient with her greatsword. This should help offset her high Armor Class at lower APLs.

Still, this meant to be a very tough fight that should cause most parties to flee from Cranzer's Tower. Fleeing does not equal failure as the crown is not there.

Tactics

During the fight, Arvad's cohort will scream her head off, trying to summon reinforcements. She will fight with a vengeance, seeking to kill the PCs. If the heroes flee through the portal, they will chase them as she thinks they now have the crown (somehow). The squire defends her to the best of his ability, attempting to sunder the weapons of those who move to attack them. Despite their alignment, the two fight well together, for they are Arvad's two most powerful followers and each worships Arvad in their own way.

Treasure

APL 6: Loot 508 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 4,982 gp -- , +1 *full-plate* (221 gp), +1 *greatsword* (196 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (83 gp), *periapt of wisdom* +2 (333 gp), *rod of extend* (lesser, 250 gp), *strand of prayer beads* (2,150 gp), *vest of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *vest of resistance* +4 (1,333 gp); Total 5,490 gp.

APLs 8-12: Loot 508 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 5,057 gp -- , +1 *full-plate* (221 gp), +1 *greatsword* (196 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (83 gp), *periapt of wisdom* +2 (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith* (+5, 75 gp), *rod of extend* (lesser, 250 gp), *strand of prayer beads* (2,150 gp), *vest of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *vest of resistance* +4 (1,333 gp); Total 5,565 gp.

Reinforcements

During the time that this combat is going on, you should describe the sounds of a tower in an uproar. The players should get the distinct feeling that time is running out, but that retreat is always an option back through the portal. Starting on round 5, reinforcements will start to arrive through

the double doors. If the double doors are blocked somehow, then the reinforcements will be delayed as appropriate. More reinforcements will arrive on round 10. If the PCs aren't out of there by round 15, one final reinforcement arrives.

See below for details (note that R# designates the round the reinforcement arrives on).

All APLs

R5 Tower Guards: male half-orc barbarian 5 (4); hp 43 each; DMG 112.

R5 Tower Guard Leader: male half-orc barbarian 10; hp 90; DMG 112.

R10 Vrock: hp 115; MM 48.

R15 Marilith: hp 216; MM 44.

The tower guards and demons will NOT step through the portal under any circumstances (their job is to defend the tower, not chase people).

Development

When the heroes step back through the portal, assuming several rounds have gone by, read the following:

Sitting on the floor of the gulley near the base of the portal is a dull grey, unadorned crown of iron.

If the PCs have defeated Arvad's cohort and have recovered the crown and have fled, then the portal will close on its own in a few minutes.

If the PCs fail to defeat Arvad's cohort and fail to recover the crown, then the cohort summons reinforcements from inside the portal to escort her and the crown back to Riftcrag. The PCs lose their chance at recovering the crown. In this case, go to the Conclusion.

5B: LOOK WHAT WE FOUND

Allow the PCs three rounds worth of preparation, discussion, buffing, etc., before continuing with the following:

That's odd. You just heard a dull "clang" noise come from the direction of the portal. As you glance that way, you notice that a dull iron crown now rests on the ground directly in front of the portal.

A moment later, you see the female cleric of luz, now accompanied by a male warrior, appear as they exit the portal, a perplexed look on her face and a greatsword at the ready in

his hands. She sees the crown and frowns, bending over to pick it up while muttering something to herself.

PCs that would recognize Arvad from previous adventures will realize that the warrior is NOT Arvad.

If the heroes are hiding, then the luzians will not likely see them, and thus the PCs may surprise them. They should have no idea that anyone else is in the area at this point in time. On the other hand, if the PCs are just standing around the portal while buffing and planning, the luzians will immediately attack.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 57; Appendix 1.

Injured Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1; hp 58; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 75; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1: hp 68 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 111 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1: hp 68 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Arvad's Cohort: CE female human cleric of luz 12; hp 111 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Squire: CE male human fighter 5/pious templar 2/blackguard of luz 1: hp 68 plus 10 temp; Appendix 1.

Glabrezu: hp 186; MM 43.

Tactics

During the fight, Arvad's cohort will fight with a vengeance, seeking to kill the PCs. She now realizes that the crown cannot be moved through the portal, and she will not fail her master.

Treasure

APL 6: Loot 508 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 4,982 gp -- , +1 full-plate (221 gp), +1 greatsword (196 gp), gauntlets of ogre power (333 gp), hat of disguise (83 gp), periapt of wisdom +2 (333 gp),

rod of extend (lesser, 250 gp), *strand of prayer beads* (2,150 gp), *vest of resistance +1* (83 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1,333 gp); Total 5,490 gp.

APLs 8-12: Loot 508 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 5,057 gp -- , +1 *full-plate* (221 gp), +1 *greatsword* (196 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (83 gp), *periapt of wisdom +2* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith* (+5, 75 gp), *rod of extend* (lesser, 250 gp), *strand of prayer beads* (2,150 gp), *vest of resistance +1* (83 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1,333 gp); Total 5,565 gp.

Reinforcements

If the PCs have not yet been in the cave, then on round 5 of the fight, the soldiers who were stuck in the *solid fog* arrive. See Encounter 4 for their treasure.

All APLs (EL 5)

Arvad's Dragoon Privates (2): CE male human fighter 1; hp 10 each; Appendix 1.

Arvad's Dragoon Corporal: CE male human fighter 2; hp 18; Appendix 1.

Development

If the PCs have defeated Arvad's cohort, the portal will close on its own in a few minutes.

If the PCs fail to recover the crown and fail to defeat Arvad's cohort, then she summons reinforcements from inside the portal to escort her and the crown back to Riftcrag. The PCs lose their chance at recovering the crown. In this case, go to the Conclusion.

6: WHY ARE WE SUDDENLY SO POPULAR?

Background

Guardian General Hok's contacts in the Death Cultists/Horned Society have revealed that both Nevin Ringblade, a slaver from Stoink, and Arvad Michelson, a notorious blackguard of Iuz and Cranzer's new general, are looking for something called the *Iron Crown of the Bandit Kingdoms*. Hok is very much aware of this item's lore and now desires to possess it.

Oddly, he does not desire it for himself (although that is what he has made the Unnamable Hierarch believe), but rather he wants to give it to his nephew, Laren, also known as the Lion, to help protect him from the dangers of Cranzer and the influence of the Horned Society. Should Hok be able to give the fabled crown to his nephew, he will finally be able to tell the Horned Society, who have been holding his nephew's life

over his head this whole time (forcing him to work for them), to go to hell. Should this result in his death, so be it.

Hok's spies have been trailing Larn for months. When the people that Larn last talked to (the PCs) suddenly appear riding with a purpose near Hallorn (at the tavern near Esme's hut [Hok has contacts in Moskoll's Legion still]), Hok has them followed at a safe distance.

Hok has one advantage that no one else has when it comes to the crown: he knows that it cannot be dimensionally moved. As a result, he has told his men to stay out sight until the heroes have reached whatever destination it is they are seeking and have secured the crown (he does not know about the yugoloth). While he would prefer to just mobilize his diabolic forces and secure the crown with force, such a strategy would alert the other factions who are seeking the crown; thus he has sent a small, elite team to secure the crown.

At the same time, Elhilbor, Captain of Prince Zeech of Redhand's formerly-secret police (see BDK8-01), has sources which indicate that Hok's men might have located the people who are searching for the crown (wheels within wheels). Thus, a group led by Major Blaine was teleported to Hallorn, quickly equipped, and rode off trailing Hennen's group, keeping a safe distance to avoid being spotted.

All this commotion attracted the notice of Tarren Moskoll, so he dispatched several rangers to see what the fuss was all about. Thus, they followed the team from Redhand.

Lastly, a group from Kinemeet trailed the PCs as soon as they left the meeting with Larn. Being slower in the woods, they fell further behind and they will be the last to arrive on the scene.

How do all these groups find the PCs? Well, each contains a skilled tracker, plus it is likely that at least one PC in the group is allowing himself to be scryed. Thus, they all lead each other to the PCs. However, if it makes sense for you that one of the groups is NOT here, then remove them from the scenario.

Setup

All the groups have kept a safe distance up until this point. If the PCs engaged in battle in the tower, they will arrive just as the heroes are exiting the portal and discovering the crown. If the PCs engaged Arvad's cohort outside the portal, they will arrive shortly after the conclusion of the battle. Every group will approach openly but with weapons sheathed, none desiring to fight the others. With the number of armed men in the area,

any fight could turn into a chaotic melee that all sides wish to avoid.

Dust hangs over the horizon and the clatter of horses' hooves on rock approaches from every direction. Looking up from your looting, you see four groups of horsemen coming towards you from each compass direction. Each group consists of roughly six armed and armored mounted soldiers. All have their weapons sheathed and are warily eyeing each other as they slowly approach your group.

From the west approach men who display the grey banner of the Army of the Warfields. Their handsome leader raises his hand in a gesture that indicates that he wishes to parley.

From the north ride a group of foresters, led by a priest, war hounds at their sides. Several wear the symbol of the Summoner openly, all wearing the symbol of the Earl of the Tangles, Tarren Moskol.

From the east come a disciplined group of soldiers bearing the black morningstar of the Johrase, their heavy armor gleaming in the light. A beautiful, but stern lady leads them.

From the south arrives a group of humans, the symbol of Redhand upon their standards. Their cavalry officer warily eyes the other groups.

A DC 15 Knowledge (local – IBS) check will confirm that these men are wearing the proper uniform of their various factions. A DC 20 will identify the leaders respectively as: Captain Hennen, one of the Army of the Warfields' finer young officers and one of the swordmasters at the Hallorn Fencing Academy; Otolle, priest of Trithereon and advisor to Tarren Moskol; Lady Taleetha Hind, Billet of the Cudgel and Johrase noble; Captain Blaine, commander of Prince Zeech's cavalry and former commander of one of Xavendra's forts.

If the PCs move to attack any of the groups, proceed with the combat (Encounter 7). If the PCs agree to parlay, continue with the following. **NOTE**, this is A LOT of box text. It is meant as a guide, not to be read verbatim.

The silence is palpable until finally the priest of Trithereon, the oldest of the four, speaks.

"I am Otolle, servant of the Summoner, friend to Tarren Moskol. First thing's first. That portal may not stay open much longer, but we should close it now just to be sure. Lady Hind? Will you assist me?"

With a nod, she indicates her acquiescence. The two then begin a divine chant, the lawful words of the Cudgel's prayer interwoven by the chaotic melody of the Summoner's. After a moment, the portal silently and without fanfare disappears, and the two stop chanting.

A DC 20 Spellcraft check reveals that each cast a greater dispel magic.

"Thank you, Lady Hind," the older man says before turning to address your group.

"I would discuss the matter of the crown with you, as I am sure these gentlemen, and this lady, seek to do. I hope that you who have recovered it will listen to all of our words before passing judgment. Know that whomever you choose, I will respect that choice. Too much is at stake now for us to fight when our enemies grow stronger."

The haughty woman grudgingly nods at the older man before replying, "You have the right of it, Father Otolle. I am Lady Taleetha Hind, Billet of the Cudgel, niece to Lord Hind, ruler of the Johrase in the absence of our King, Ramiki the Third." Grudgingly, she adds, "I too pledge that we will honor any decision reached."

Boldy, the young, handsome captain of the Army of the Warfields steps forward and says, "I am Captain Hennen, Sheriff of Hallorn and an officer in the Army of the Warfields. I know you have little reason to trust Guardian General Hok as of late, but I ask that you hear me out. If you will, then I too agree that my men and I will abide by your decision.

Finally, the Redhand commander, a black haired man with piercing green eyes, addresses you. "I have been sent here by my liege lord, Prince Zeech, to help you bring him the crown, should you so choose. Perhaps you have feared m'lord in the past, but he has changed thanks to Hieroneous' mercy. I come to beg on his behalf, not demand. I have explicit orders to respect your final decision."

Allow the PCs to react as they see fit. If asked why all have agreed to accept the heroes' decision, the leaders will mention the various threats that everyone faces (especially That Which Slept, Cranzer, and the Horned Society). It is clear in these times that the less fighting the forces of law and good do amongst themselves, the more

chance they have of defeating the chaos and evil that seek to destroy them.

Unless they attack the soldiers, none of the soldiers will attack. If the PCs seek to ride off, all the groups will fall into defensive positions, as if protecting the PCs from an unseen threat. The groups do not wish to take the crown by force, as each follows a code of conduct that is either Good or Lawful.

If they allow the groups to continue, ask them which group they wish to hear from first. Each will plead its case, keeping silent while the others speak. Each leader feels that heated debate will only drive the heroes away from their cause, plus will give the enemy time to gather forces.

The following is ALOT of text. Feel free to try to modify it to give the PCs more input instead of just reading it as an impassioned plea. Use what you know of our regional plots, mods (both current and retired), and meta-orgs so that each leader fully sells why his group should have the crown.

Captain Hennen

"Look, I could make a big fancy speech about why General Hok should get that crown, but we both know it wouldn't mean spit. It's well known that he's sided with the Horned Society, and I can't lie and say I am happy about that. However, there is a method to his madness."

Hok died during Cranzer's attack on the Tangles two years ago. You probably already knew that. What you didn't know was that he was worrying his soul sick wondering what would become of his nephew."

See, the General has a nephew, a promising young lad who's training to be a knight down in Furyondy. Some call him 'The Lion' because of his mane of blonde hair and his unrelenting courage."

Problem is, the devil worshipers know about him, and they threatened to have him killed if Hok didn't serve them as the general of their armies. The Hierarchs rarely take no for an answer, and thus Hok came back from the dead, again and this time scarred by what they did to his body, to lead their armies. Every day in service to them is another day in the Nine Hells for Hok, but he loves his nephew dearly."

Now word has reached him of this fabled crown. Sure, it makes warriors better fighters, but its true power is that it helps them lay low, helps hide them from magical detection and mind-control."

So the Guardian General comes up with a plan: Get the crown and give it to his nephew.

Once done, his nephew can live a normal life as a noble knight in Furyondy, battling demons until he dies a noble death, and Hok can tell the Hierarchs to kiss his arse and finally free his soul of their control."

So I ask, will you please accompany us back to Hallorn to give the crown to Hok?"

Captain Blaine

"It's true that Prince Zeech strayed from the path of Heironeous all those years ago, just as I have strayed. I hated myself for having to work for Xavendra, curse her black heart, but I had no choice if my wife and child were to survive. At least I was able to protect some of my friends and family from her grisly dungeon with my rank, but the marks on my soul are deep and black."

So it is with Zeech. I understand the man, which is why I left Xavendra to serve him. While I am still not a servant of the Arch-Paladin, Zeech has returned to the religion of his family and ancestry! You can ask my men behind me, one of whom is an actual paladin!"

I tell you this so that you will believe me when I tell you: Zeech needs the crown. He needs it to lead Redhand from the darkness. With it, he can marshal his forces and help those in the Shield Lands. With their help, he can then drive north and drive the demons and Cranzer from this land! Only Redhand has the strategic position necessary to roll back the demonic tide. Please, I beg of you, consider not Zeech's previous darkness but rather the light he can now bring to the entire Combination."

High Priest Otolle

"The Summoner protects those who seek freedom and pursues those who seek to abolish it. For too long, these others have worked with the darkness, they are unworthy of the crown. The Johrase were slaves to Cranzer after the war; Zeech was a foul servant of the Scourge of Battle and trafficked with devils; and Hok is a man who does what is best for Hok at all times!"

In addition, only one man truly has a legitimate claim to the crown, and that is Earl Moskol. Tarren's father, Reynard, was the previous owner of the crown! I have only recently discovered this myself, but I swear it to be true. Reynard was brutally slaughtered by Aundurach, the Old One's insane Boneheart who attacked Hallorn. but he knew not what

the crown was. The crown disappeared, only now to be rediscovered by your hands.

With the crown, Tarren can lead his men into Hallorn, driving the evil Horned Society minions out once and for all. With the city secure, Tarren can lead his men as they help the druids reclaim the dead forest."

In addition, with a secure western flank, the Johrase and their allies can safely assault Cranzer in Riftcrag while Zeech attacks from the south. By giving Moskol his family heirloom, finally can we all know peace by destroying those who oppress it, demon and devil worshippers alike!"

Lady Taleetha Hind

"I will not lie and say that the Johrase have a lawful claim to the crown. Its previous ownership has always been soiled with strife and chaos, its owners as likely to wind up dead as not. What I will say is that we need this crown because alone of all the factions, we can drive Cranzer from Riftcrag."

When our king was foully taken from us, it was through magicks that the crown can prevent. I know now that one of the crown's powers is to prevent the soul from being separated from the body by anything less than death itself. When we recover our king, and when he leads our army into battle, he will need such protection from Cranzer if we are to win the day. We finally know now where our king's soul gem is being kept. The time is coming when we must move to free him 'les he be lost to us forever. When we do, he will need the crown."

With the Cudgel at our side, and our morningstars and lances to the front, we will sweep the Old One's scum into the very Rift Canyon itself, stopping only when we have slain Cranzer and the monstrous red dragon he calls ally. Once we have done that, we will turn to the west and drive the devil worshipping scum across the Ritensa, so that Furyondy's might may smash them against that foul and polluted river. From there, we will drive north and raze the tower known as Fleischshriver, and the Combination will finally be free of demonic gods and devil worshipping madmen."

Once the heroes have heard from the factions they wish to hear from, give them a few minutes to discuss it amongst themselves. The leaders will back off, giving the heroes as much time to think

as they wish. However, each will pledge to guard the heroes to whatever destination to wish to take the crown to, as their overall goal is to keep it out of the hands of Arvad Michelson or any other luzian warrior. Plus, they wish to know where the crown is going to end up.

If the PCs want to begin riding away from the area, which is probably a good idea anyhow, the groups will accompany at a respectful distance that allows them to protect the PCs from each direction (Moskol's men to the front, Redhander's to the right, Johrase to the left, and Warfields to the rear).

Allow some time to pass, as if the luzian threat ended with the portal closing, and allow the players to discuss their options for a few minutes. **Once the players are ready to tell you what they want to do with the crown, go to Encounter 7!** This will give any sneaky PCs one last chance to try and abscond with the crown during the heat of the battle.

Captain Hennen: CN male human marshal 4/fighter 6; hp 69; Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 18; Will +5; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +18, Gather Info +6, Intimidate +7, Sense Motive +6.

Captain Blaine: LN male human fighter 8/cavalier 4; hp 90; Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16; Will +8; Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12.

Otolle: CG male human cleric of Trithereon 13; hp 94; Int 12, Wis 22, Cha 14; Will +14; Diplomacy +18.

Lady Taleetha Hind, Billet of the Faith: LN female human (Oeridian) Favored Soul 3/Church Inquisitor 6/Combat Medic 5 (St. Cuthbert); Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 22; Will +17; Can cast *detect evil* at will as a spell-like ability.

7: CRANZER SEES ALL

In actuality, the early closing of the portal alarmed Cranzer, as he knew that Arvad's cohort had not the power, nor the desire, to close it. Thus, he orders a minion to cast *invisibility* on a vrock and then he orders the vrock to teleport (after first leaving the area of the *forbiddance*) high (200 feet) above the portal's location. With no real cover on the ground in the Rift Barrens, and roughly 30 people and horses on the ground below it, the vrock easily sees (Spot +24) the discussions taking place. After observing for a few rounds, the

vrock then teleports back to Riftcrag and flies to Cranzer's tower to report.

Upon the vrock's report, Cranzer immediately recognizes the descriptions of the *Iron Crown* (assuming that the vrock could see it), Otolle and Lady Hind (he knows not who the other leaders are, assuming they are just officers in their respective armies because if they were truly powerful, he'd know who they were). If the vrock sees past a Wanted PC's disguise score (remember, at 200 feet of altitude, that's -20 to the vrock's Spot modifier), then Cranzer will know who they are as well.

Cranzer then swiftly puts together a group of demons to attack the groups defending the heroes. A retriever construct (ordered to recover the crown by the scout vrock, if it saw it) will be sent to attack the heroes and recover the crown. Cranzer plans to give the crown to his new general, Arvad, as a sign of good faith (after studying its powers [and perhaps neutralizing a few of them], of course).

Naturally, the demons will pre-buff before attacking (vrocks will use their *heroism* spell-like ability, etc.). At APL 12, this means the nalfashnee will use its *unholy aura* ability and will include its allies in the effect. Be sure to modify their stats accordingly.

Just have you have reached a decision, but have not yet told the various leaders what it is, you hear the distinctive pop of air being displaced. Lots of pops!

In the air above your position and on the ground between you and the various soldiers are dozens of demons of various shapes and sizes. With screeches, roars, hissing, and blood curdling wails, they dive to attack everyone on the plains!

With shouted orders, the other groups draw weapons and close up ranks, each man or woman intent on staying alive and their horses from panicking. There are more than enough demons to keep everyone occupied!

There is no surprise round! Neither side is technically aware of the other until the demons teleport onto the scene. For the idly curious, the retrievers are *teleported* to the scene by an invisible luzian mage who then goes off to fight one of the other factions.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Vrock: hp 123; MM 48. Be sure to include the *mirror image* and *heroism*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Retriever: hp 144; MM 46.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Retriever: hp 144; MM 46.

Hezrou: hp 146; MM 44.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Retriever: hp 144; MM 46. Be sure to include *unholy aura*.

Vrock: hp 123; MM 48. Be sure to include *heroism*, *mirror image* and *unholy aura*.

Nalfashnee: hp 185; MM 45. Be sure to include *unholy aura*.

Note: The EL has been lowered by 1 to take into account the fact that each of the NPC leaders may be able to provide the PCs with help during the fight (see below). None of the demons will attempt to summon another demon to the fight.

Special: Remember that the *Iron Crown* is protected by a *mind blank*. Thus, the retriever is unable to use its *Find Target* spell-like ability to know exactly where the crown is. If the PCs have hidden it somehow, then the retriever attempts to "retrieve" the heroes by killing them and delivering them to Cranzer.

Tactics

The demons fight to the death, seeking to kill whoever the scout vrock saw holding the crown (if anyone was openly holding it). In addition, if they get a chance to seize the crown, they will. Cranzer has told them that the crown cannot be *teleported*, so they will fly towards Riftcrag at maximum speed if they have it.

The vrocks open up with their stunning screech ability to stun the heroes. The hezrou opens up with blasphemy for the same effect while wading in to melee range so that its stench ability affects the heroes. The nalfashnee will target *holy* and *bane (evil outsider)* weapons with *greater dispel magic*, to suppress their deadliness during the fight. After that, it will attempt to use its smite ability to daze the heroes.

WCI Effect

If the scout vrock successfully saw through a Wanted PC's disguise, then Cranzer knows who they are, just how Wanted they are, and what their signature magic items and tactics are. While Cranzer doesn't kow-tow to the luzian clerics, he does relish the chance to capture Wanted PCs so that he may personally present them to the Lord of

Pain in Dorakaa. Such keeps in good standing with his dark lord.

If the vrock saw a Wanted PC or PCs, determine the highest Wanted ranking PC that the vrock saw (i.e., Dissenter, Malcontent, Insurgent, Seditionist, Enemy of the State). The more wanted the PC(s), the more Cranzer buffs his demons (and the retriever) before sending them in to the fight. The buffs stack (thus, if Cranzer knows an Enemy of the State is there, he will cast 5 buffs on his demons before sending them to attack). All spells are cast at 18th CL by a CE wizard.

Note that this does not impact the EL because if a +4 Spot check (the vrock's after distance is taken into consideration) can see past a Wanted PCs disguise, then they aren't worthy of the title Dissenter, Malcontent, etc., OR they are just asking for trouble.

Dissenter: *mass cat's grace*

Malcontent: *mass bull's strength*

Insurgent: *mass bear's endurance*

Seditionist: *haste*

Enemy of the State: Cranzer uses a *wish* to cast a chained *greater magic fang* on all the demons, granting them each a +4 enhancement bonus to their primary natural attack.

Getting Some Help

While Hennen, Taleetha, Otolle, and Blaine will all be busy fighting their own demons, **PCs who are members of their meta-organizations, or PCs who have earned favors with their meta-orgs in the past**, may call on them for aid. Granted, they are already trying their hardest to keep the PCs alive to protect the crown, but this mechanic allows us to reward PCs for their involvement in BK meta-orgs and plots.

A summary of what each of the NPC leaders can do is below. Each NPC will only be able to help the PCs once, as they will be busy with their own fights, unless otherwise specified. At the beginning of the combat, roll initiative for each leader (assume a +0 Init modifier for this purpose). If the PCs ask for help, the NPC will do what they can on their turn, so long as the PCs qualify for getting that help.

Captain Hennen (Army of the Warfields, Hallorn Fencing Academy): Whenever the bearer of the crown is targeted by a retriever's eye ray attack, that PC receives a +3 bonus on the Reflex save as Hennen shouts "Duck!" (*watchful eye*, marshall ability, MH 12). At APL 6, replace this with a +3 on damage rolls when flanking (*master of tactics*).

Captain Blaine (Citizen of Redhand, Favor of Zeech, Favor of Major Blaine): Blaine will be able to line up one mounted charge on one of the opponents (he will use his *deadly charge* cavalier special ability, which allows him to do quadruple damage with a lance during a mounted charge). **Melee +1 axiomatic lance +19** (1d8+4/x3 plus 2d6 vs. chaotic).

Otolle (Moskol's Legion, clergy of Trithereon): If the heroes cry out for healing, Otolle will cast a *mass cure serious wounds* (3d8+13). If the PCs cry out for offensive help, he will *flame strike* the demon(s) (13d6 [half fire, half holy], Reflex DC 21 half).

Lady Taleetha Hind (Johrase Mercenaries, clergy of St. Cuthbert): If the heroes cry out for healing, she will cast a *mass cure serious wounds* (3d8+14) with an *aid* kicker (13 temp hit points, *aid* lasts 1 minute or until temp hit points are gone, whichever comes first). If the PCs cry out for offensive help, she will *flame strike* the demon(s) (14d6 [half fire, half holy], Reflex DC 19 half).

Development

Here's the tricky part: what if one PC doesn't want to give the crown to the same group that everyone wants to but instead wants to give it to someone else? They might use the chaos of combat to attempt to get the crown for themselves. You, the DM, will just have to resolve that to the best of your ability based on the rules of the game. DO NOT ALLOW lethal Player vs. Player combat to be an option. However, you may choose to allow nonlethal combat, at your own discretion.

If the PCs are facing defeat and *teleport* away, by the time they come back the battle will be over. If they left the crown with someone else, that NPC will have had to retreat, leaving the crown for the demons to claim. In this case, a vrock will be flying with all speed with it towards Riftcrag.

If the PCs *teleport* away while holding the crown, this might buy them some time (however, the other groups will think the PCs are fleeing and will flee themselves unless the PCs have relayed a plan to them somehow). The crown will reappear in three rounds in the same location. Thus, clever parties might *teleport* away, cast some healing spells, then return to the fight. If the PCs are victorious, so then to are the other groups.

It is now time for the heroes to finally decide what they are going to do with the crown. Once they have told you, proceed to the Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion A: Crown to Larn/Gellor

After a long and harrowing journey from the western Rift Barrens to Larn's Tower in Salfreyfields, you are road weary but alive. As you approach the tower, a hidden door opens, allowing you entrance. Inside stands Larn next to a powerful warrior bedecked in the heraldry of the Gellor clan. He is too young to be the duke.

Larn looks at you with an almost fatherly expression. "You have truly been a friend to the Duke and his family," he says, while pointing at the armored man. "This here is one the Duke's last blood kin, his nephew. He will safeguard the crown as we deliver it to His Grace."

With this crown, the Duke will be able to convince the nobles of the County to support him as he frees the Duchy of Artonsamay from the forces of Old Wicked. With their support, Wraithkeep will be destroyed and the Johrase should be able to drive Cranzer from Riftcrag. You have done well, my friends!"

Heroes receive the Favor of Duke Gellor.

Conclusion B: Crown to Moskol

After a long ride that took you deep into the heart of the now recovering forest, Otolle has led you to stand before Tarren Moskol, the true Earl of the Tangles, himself.

The Earl looks at the Iron Crown with disbelief. "It is hard to believe that something this ugly is the cause of so much death. It seems like yesterday when my father, Earl Reynard, wore this helm in battle against the mad Aundurach. Alas, it did not keep him alive that day, but perhaps it will serve me better. It is only just that it repay the debt by helping me to lead our forces out of the Tangles and back to Hallorn. With this crown I will drive Hok and the Horned Society from these lands; freeing up the Johrase' western flank so that they may concentrate on Riftcrag in the attack to come.

I thank you and will not forget your service!"

Heroes receive the Favor of Earl Moskol.

Conclusion C: Crown to Hok

The ride back to Hallorn was short but harried by demons. Luckily, Captain Hennen proved an able escort, and soon you neared the city of Hallorn.

Now you stand before Guardian General Hok himself, a female elven archer and a human cleric of Molaho Khem at his sides. Hok's body is oddly malformed now by dark grafts (one of his arms is red and scaly!), his eyes blazing with strange colors.

As you sit at his banquet table, he appears to look around the dining hall, peering into the corners, before he leans forward and whispers, "Finally, none of the invisible fiends are present at the moment. Listen, take the crown to my nephew in Furyondy. I will give you a map later tonight that will take you to him. Explain to him what it is you give him. I will send a patrol to guard you all the way to the Shield Lands' border, but they must not go further unless they give up the ruse. Tell no one who you have taken the crown to. Let all think you have given it to me. I shall have a replica made to fool the foolish."

With that, his red glowing eye darts to the right and he leans back in his chair, raising a glass. "A toast to my new friends! May their raid on the Shield Lands bring the Reaper many souls!" With a wink at you, he quickly downs his wine.

PC's receive the Favor of General Hok.

Conclusion D: Crown to Prince Zeech

The ride through the southern Rift Barrens was punishing, but, escorted by Captain Blaine, you made it to Alhaster alive.

Blaine guides you right up to Zeech's white-washed castle's postern gate, and soon you are standing before Prince Zeech himself. It is odd seeing him attired in the full regalia of a paladin of Hieroneous.

"By the gods of light, thank you for this gift!" he says, his famous effete mannerisms gone. "With this crown, Redhand shall be safe from the Old One's tyranny. I will forge new treaties with my neighbors in Urnst and the Shield Lands, and together we will secure this portion of the Nyr Dyv's coastal region for our peoples against the demons that plague Oerth."

Once secured, I will cleanse Balmund of the Old One's minions, The Johrase will have a secure southeastern flank and they should be

able to flush Cranzer from Riftcrag. With my forces to the south of the Rift Canyon, Duke Gellor's to the east, and King Ramiki's to the north, we should be able to flush the vermin out of the Rift Canyon, even bringing the great red dragon to heel!"

I declare this day to be a holiday in honor of our guests! Eat, drink, and be merry, friends, for tomorrow we plan a war! Someone go tell that dwarven baron that I require that he attend!"

PC's gain the Favor of Prince Zeech.

Conclusion E: Crown to the Johrase

A punishing ride through the regrowing Tangles took you to Kinemeet. Lady Taleetha Hind, while a bit aloof, clearly was proud of your group's decision to give the crown to the Johrase. Plus, she proved to be an able ally in the few times you encountered luzians along the way, blasting them aside with her magic from afar.

When you reached Kinemeet, she led you to Lord Hind's house itself, and now you stand before the Johrase regent, Chancellor Marischal Hind.

"Welcome and thank you! This is a glorious day! We shall soon march on Riftcrag, and, once we have rescued our king, this crown shall protect him from Cranzer's vile magicks. With Ramiki's lance leading us, the Johrase shall be made whole at last and Sir Derf will finally be able to quit blaming himself for our king's absence. Thank you, my friends, thank you!"

PC's gain the Favor of the Johrase.

Conclusion F: Crown to PC

If the PC is a warrior by nature (has only classes that grant a +1 BAB/level, such as fighter, paladin, pious templar), continue with the following:

As you set the crown upon your head, you feel the power flow through your veins. More confident? Yes! More competent? Yes! Able to take on anyone who will deny the Combination its rightful ruler? Yes! No one can stop you now!

If the PC is a spellcaster by nature (i.e. has **any** spellcasting class levels that are granted by a class that does **not** have a +1 BAB/level, such as

wizard, cleric, bard, etc.), continue with the following:

As you set the crown upon your head, you feel the magic flow through you...then it warps and claws at your soul! You can tell that you benefit from some of its protections, but its almost as if the crown itself hates you!

The PC gains one negative level while the crown is worn.

Conclusion F: Crown to other BK meta org

Your contact looks over the crown and then thoughtfully back at you. "This is a very powerful and dangerous item to have. We will keep it safe from those who would misuse it. Our thanks."

PC's gain one Influence Point with the meta org.

Conclusion G: Failure

The forces massing to recapture the crown are such that no sane person would wish to stand in their way. Sometimes it is better to retreat and fight another day than to be the pawn in the games of others. The Iron Crown is not worth your life.

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

2: Southern Dead

Defeat Nevin and his men

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

3: Esme

Defeat Esme

All APLs	240 XP
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4: Yugoloth's Lair

Defeat Arvad's minions

All APLs	180 XP
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5A: The Tower

Defeat Arvad's minions

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

-OR-

5B: Look What We Found

Defeat Arvad's minions

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

7: Cranzer Sees All

Defeat the demons

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

Story Award

Recover the *Iron Crown*:

All APLs	100 XP
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Total Possible Experience

APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1125 XP

APL 10
APL 12

1350 XP
1575 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

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

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

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

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

2: Southern Dead

APL 6: Loot 73 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 1,053 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *potion of invisibility* (12 gp), *scrolls of glitterdust* [13 gp], *grease* [2 gp], *invisibility* [13 gp], *mage armor* [2 gp], *ray of enfeeblement* [2 gp], *scorching ray* [13 gp], *shield* [2 gp], *spellbook* (92 gp), *wand of magic missile* [CL 3, 10 charges, 38 gp]; Total 1,130 gp.

APL 8: Loot 43 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 1,642 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 cold iron spear (359 gp), +1 greataxe (193 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), +1 studded leather (98 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *potion of invisibility* (2@12 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp); Total 1,689 gp.

APL 10: Loot 92 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 3,053 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 cold iron spear (359 gp), +1 corrosive goliath greathammer (694 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1 (2@83 gp each), *bracers of quick strike* (117 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (2@333 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *potion of invisibility* (2@12 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp); Total 3,149 gp.

APL 12: Loot 92 gp; Coin 4 gp; Magic 5,061 gp -- +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 cold iron spear (359 gp), +1 corrosive goliath greathammer (694 gp), +1 large seeking composite greatbow (2@754 gp each), +1 mithral chain shirt (175 gp), +1 shock rapier (693 gp), *cloak of resistance* +1 (2@83 gp each), *bracers of quick strike* (117 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (2@333 gp each), *potion of barkskin* (+5) (100 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2@63 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (3@12 gp each), *quiver of Ehlonna* (150 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp); Total 5,157 gp.

3: Discussions with Esme

All APLs: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 457 gp -- +1 large hide armor (98 gp), +1 large greatclub (192 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp); Total 457 gp.

4: Yugoloth's Lair

All APLs: Loot 264 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 83 gp; *vest of resistance* +1 (83 gp); Total 347 gp.

5: The Portal

APL 6: Loot 508 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 4,982 gp -- , +1 full-plate (221 gp), +1 greatsword (196 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (83 gp), *periapt of wisdom* +2 (333 gp),

rod of extend (lesser, 250 gp), *strand of prayer beads* (2,150 gp), *vest of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *vest of resistance* +4 (1,333 gp); Total 5,490 gp.

APLs 8-12: Loot 508 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 5,057 gp -- , +1 full-plate (221 gp), +1 greatsword (196 gp), *gauntlets of ogre power* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (83 gp), *periapt of wisdom* +2 (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith* (+5, 75 gp), *rod of extend* (lesser, 250 gp), *strand of prayer beads* (2,150 gp), *vest of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *vest of resistance* +4 (1,333 gp); Total 5,565 gp.

Treasure Cap

APL 6: 900 gp

APL 8: 1,300 gp

APL 10: 2,300 gp

APL 12: 3,300 gp

ADVENTURE RECORD ITEMS

Cross off all favors not earned. Each Favor confers 1 permanent Influence Point with the person or organization named.

See AR

ITEM ACCESS

See AR

LARN	CR 10
Male human Wizard 10 CG Medium humanoid (human) Init +3; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2 Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc	
AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 armor, +1 deflection) hp 40 (10 HD) Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +8	
Speed 30 ft. (6 squares) Melee dagger +4 (1d4-1/19-20) or Melee touch spell +4 (varies/x2) Ranged masterwork light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20) or Ranged ranged touch spell +8 (varies/x2) Base Atk +5; Grp +4 Combat Gear <i>potion of cure serious wounds</i> (2), <i>staff of fire</i> (13 charges), <i>wand of fox's cunning</i> (28 charges), 20 bolts Wizard Spells Known (CL 10th): 5th (2x/day)— <i>cloudkill</i> (DC 20), maximized <i>scorching ray</i> 4th (4/day)— <i>dimension door</i> , <i>Evard's black tentacles</i> , maximized <i>magic missile</i> , <i>polymorph</i> 3rd (4/day)— <i>fireball</i> , silent <i>invisibility</i> , <i>stinking cloud</i> (DC 18), <i>suggestion</i> (DC 17) 2nd (5/day)— <i>blur</i> , <i>glitterdust</i> (DC 17), <i>levitate</i> , <i>resist energy</i> , <i>web</i> (DC 17) 1st (5/day)— <i>grease</i> (DC 16), <i>identify</i> , <i>magic missile</i> , <i>shield</i> , <i>silent image</i> 0 (4/day)— <i>detect magic</i> , <i>open/close</i> , <i>prestidigitation</i> , <i>ray of frost</i>	
Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 11, Cha 12 SQ tiny viper familiar, empathic link, share spells, speak with snakes Feats Alertness (if familiar within 5 ft), Craft Wondrous Item, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (conjuration), Spell Mastery (<i>fireball</i> , <i>invisibility</i> , <i>mage armor</i> , <i>magic missile</i>), Spell Penetration, Silent Spell Skills Bluff +9, Concentration +14, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local: Iuz Border States) +13, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Listen +2, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +22, Spot +2 Possessions combat gear plus <i>bracers of armor</i> +1, <i>ring of protection</i> +1, <i>cloak of resistance</i> +1.	
NEVIN	CR 7
Male Human(Oeridian) Rog 7 NE Medium humanoid (human) Init +3; Senses Listen +0, Spot +10 Languages Common	

APPENDIX 1: ALL APLS

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +3 armor) hp 37 (7 HD) Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +2
Speed 30 ft. in light armor (6 squares) Melee +1 <i>shock rapier</i> +10 (1d6/18-20 plus 1d6 electricity) Ranged dagger +9 (1d4-1/19-20) Base Atk +5; Grp +4 Special Attacks Sneak Attack (+4d6) Combat Gear <i>potion of invisibility</i> , <i>potion of cure serious wounds</i> , shortsword, dagger (x3)
Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12 SQ Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense, Evasion, Sneak Attack (+4d6), Trapfinding Feats : Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Rapier), Arterial Strike*, Hamstring* Skills Bluff ¹ +11, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy ¹ +15, Disable Device +12, Disguise ¹ +11, Forgery ¹ +12, Gather Information ¹ +11, Sense Motive ¹ +10, Sleight of Hand +15, Spot ¹ +10, Tumble +13 Possessions combat gear plus mwk studded leather, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse (tack, harness, etc.), 12 gp

4: THE FIGHT FOR THE CROWN

ARVAD'S DRAGOON PRIVATE	CR 1
Male human fighter 1 CE Medium humanoid (human) Init +1; Senses Listen +1, Spot +1 Languages Common	
AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +6 armor) hp 10 (1 HD) Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +3	
Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft. Melee +4 <i>longspear</i> +8 (1d8+7/x3) or Melee +4 <i>greatsword</i> +7 (2d6+7/19-20) Ranged composite longbow +2 (+2 Str) (1d8+2/x3) Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with longspear) Base Atk +1; Grp +3 Combat Gear mwk longspear (+4 after <i>greater magic weapon</i>), greatsword (+4 after <i>greater magic weapon</i>), 20 arrows	
Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8 Feats Quickdraw, Iron Will ^B , Weapon Focus (longspear) ^B Skills Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +3, Ride +5 Possessions combat gear plus mwk banded mail	

Power-Up Suite (*heroes' feast*, CL 16):

hp 10 plus 10 temp (1 HD)
Immune fear, poison
Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

Melee +4 *longspear* +9 (1d8+7/x3) or
Melee +4 *greatsword* +8 (2d6+7/19-20)
Ranged composite longbow +3 (+2 Str) (1d8+2/x3)

ARVAD'S DRAGOON CORPORAL CR 2

Male human fighter 2
CE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16
(+1 Dex, +6 armor)

hp 18 (2 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +4 *longspear* +9 (1d8+7/x3) or

Melee +4 *greatsword* +8 (2d6+7/19-20)

Ranged composite longbow +3 (+2 Str) (1d8+2/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with *longspear*)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4

Combat Gear mwk *longspear* (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), *greatsword* (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), 20 arrows

Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8

Feats Quickdraw, Iron Will^B, Weapon Focus (longspear)^B, Combat Reflexes^B

Skills Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +4, Ride +8

Possessions combat gear plus mwk banded mail, *vest of resistance* +1

Power-Up Suite (*heroes' feast*, CL 16):

hp 18 plus 10 temp (2 HD)

Immune fear, poison

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Melee +4 *longspear* +10 (1d8+7/x3) or

Melee +4 *greatsword* +9 (2d6+7/19-20)

Ranged composite longbow +4 (+2 Str) (1d8+2/x3)

2: ESME'S HUT

GROC

CR 3

male orc barbarian 3

AL CN humanoid (orc)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Orc

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16

(+1 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 32 (3 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

Speed 40 ft. in chain shirt (8 squares)

Melee masterwork greataxe +9 (1d12+6 /x3) or

Ranged javelin +4 (1d6+4)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +7

Combat Gear short sword, dagger

Abilities Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Fast Movement(Ex), Illiteracy, Rage, Uncanny Dodge(Ex), Trap Sense(Ex)

Feats Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greataxe)

Skills Jump +10, Listen +6, Ride +3, Survival +6,

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *potion of cure light wounds*, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

Light Sensitivity (Ex): You are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

BULGO

CR 3

Male human wizard 3

CN medium human(Oeridian)

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages Common, Orc, Old Oeridian, Ancient Suloise

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+1 Dex, +4 *mage armor*)

hp 16 (3 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +0 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8/19-20)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +0

Combat Gear *scrolls of glitterdust*, *grease*, *invisibility*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *scorching ray*, *shield*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 3, 10 charges), 10 bolts

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):

2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *scorching ray*

1st—*mage armor* †, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

† Already cast

Abilities Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ Familiar, Alertness

Feats Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative^B, Spell Focus (Conjuration), Scribe Scroll^B

Skills Concentration +8, Decipher Script +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Spellcraft +11

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, spell component pouch (2), *spellbook* (as spells prepared), belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

5: THE PORTAL

INJURED ARVAD'S COHORT

CR 6

Female human cleric 12 of luz

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6; *deathwatch*

Aura *invisibility purge* 80 ft.

Languages Common

AC 33, touch 13, flat-footed 33

(-1 Dex, +12 armor, +4 deflection, +5 shield, +3 sacred)

hp 57 of 111(12 HD)

Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +4 *greatsword* +12/+7 (2d6+8/19-20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +12

Special Actions rebuke undead

Combat Gear mwk greatsword (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), 10 bolts

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th or 16th [*bead of karma*, used for all buff spells]):

6th—**D:** ~~quickened invisibility~~, ~~heroes' feast~~, ~~banishment~~

5th—**D:** ~~greater command~~ (DC 24), ~~flame strike~~ (DC 21), ~~spell resistance~~, ~~quickened divine favor~~

4th—**D:** ~~confusion~~ (DC 23), ~~air walk~~, ~~cure critical wounds~~, ~~freedom of movement~~, ~~greater magic weapon~~ †

3rd—**D:** ~~invisibility~~, ~~dispel magic~~, ~~invisibility purge~~ †, ~~magic vestment~~ †, ~~magic vestment~~ †, ~~shield of warding~~ †

2nd—**D:** ~~invisibility~~, ~~bear's endurance~~ †, ~~bull's strength~~ †, ~~hold person~~ (DC 21), ~~owl's wisdom~~ †, ~~sound burst~~ (DC 18)

1st—**D:** ~~command~~ (DC 20), ~~bless~~, ~~command~~ (DC 20), ~~cure light wounds~~ x2, ~~deathwatch~~ †, ~~shield of faith~~ †

0—~~detect magic~~, ~~guidance~~, ~~guidance~~, ~~read magic~~, ~~resistance~~, ~~virtue~~

D: Domain spell. Deity: luz. Domains: Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, Hide added to class skills), Tyranny (+1 to the DC of enchantment [compulsion] spells).

† Already included in stats

Abilities Str 16 (12), Dex 8, Con 18 (14), Int 10, Wis 22 (20), Cha 14.

Feats Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Skill Focus (Bluff), Craft Wondrous Item, Quicken Spell, Chain Spell

Skills Concentration +18, Bluff +20, Disguise +27 (+29 when in character), Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +5

Possessions combat gear plus *strand of prayer beads*, *rod of extend (lesser)*, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *vest of resistance* +4, *hat of disguise*, copper dragonhide full plate (+4 with *magic vestment*), copper dragonhide buckler (+4 with *magic vestment*), holy symbol of luz (2), holy symbols of most good-aligned human deities (for bluffing), spell component pouch (2), Johrase tabard

Rebuke Undead (Su) 5/day; 1d20+6/2d6+14.

INJURED ARVAD'S SQUIRE CR 7

Male human fighter 5/pious templar (luz) 2/blackguard (luz) 1

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 27
(+1 Dex, +12 armor, +5 shield)

hp 58 of 68 (8 HD)

Resist mettle, True Believer 1/day (+2 insight bonus to any one save)

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +4 *greatsword* +17/+12 (2d6+12/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (+4 Str) +10/+5 (1d8+4/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder (+4 *greatsword* +21/+16 [2d6+12]), ~~smite 1/day (+4 to hit/+2 damage)~~

Combat Gear +1 *greatsword* (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), 20 arrows, mwk longsword, mwk dagger

Blackguard Spells Prepared (CL 1st):

1st—~~cure light wounds~~

Pious Templar Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—*corrupt weapon* †, ~~cure light wounds~~

† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

At will—*detect good*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ aura of evil, poison use

Feats True Believer (luz), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Iron Will

Skills Concentration +8, Hide +1, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +7

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full-plate* (+4 after *magic vestment*), *vest of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, copper dragonhide buckler (+4 after *magic vestment*), silver holy symbol of luz

Aura of Evil (Ex): The power of a blackguard's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his class level plus his cleric level, if any.

Poison Use: Blackguards are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Corrupt Weapon: Blackguards have access to a special spell, *corrupt weapon*, which is the opposing counterpart of the paladin spell *bless weapon*. Instead of improving a weapon's effectiveness against evil foes *corrupt weapon* makes a weapon more effective against good foes.

Power-Up Suite (*heroes' feast*, CL 12; *corrupt weapon*, CL 2):

hp 58 of 68 ~~plus 10 temp~~ (8 HD)

Immune fear, poison

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

Melee +4 *corrupted greatsword* +18/+13 (2d6+9/19-20, evil-aligned, auto-confirms against good creatures)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (+4 Str) (1d8+4/x3).

2: ESME'S HUT

GROC

CR 7

male orc barbarian 7

AL CN humanoid (orc)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Orc

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16

(+1 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 68 (7 HD); **DR** 1/-

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

Speed 40 ft. in +1 *chain shirt* (8 squares)

Melee +1 *greataxe* +14/+9 (1d12+8/x3)

Ranged javelin +8 (1d6+5/x2)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +12

Combat Gear short sword, dagger

Abilities Str 20, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Fast Movement, Illiteracy, Rage, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense, Light Sensitivity

Feats Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greataxe)

Skills Jump +15, Listen +9, Ride +3, Survival +9,

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, potion of *cure moderate wounds*, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

Light Sensitivity (Ex): You are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

BULGO (HYBRID FORM)

CR 7

Male Human (Flan) Dire Wereboar Rog2/Assassin 1

CE Medium Humanoid (human, Shapechanger)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Common, Orc

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +8 natural)

hp 90 (10 HD); **DR** Silver 10

Fort +11, **Ref** +13, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. in +1 *Studded Leather* (6 squares)

Melee +1 *cold iron spear* +19/+14 (1d8+17/x3) and gore +12 (1d8+5 plus disease) or

Melee 2 claws +17 each (1d6+11) and gore +12 (1d8+5 plus disease)

Ranged +1 *cold iron spear* +8 (1d8+11/x3)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +17

Special Actions Death Attack (DC 12)

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*, dagger, sap

Abilities Str 32, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Evasion, Sneak Attack (+2d6), Trapfinding, Death Attack, Poison Use, Alternate Form, Boar Empathy, Curse of Lycanthropy, Ferocity

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Spear), Close-Quarters Fighting

Skills Balance +8, Climb +15, Disguise +3, Hide +14, Jump +17, Listen +16, Move Silently +10, Spot +16, Tumble +9, Use Magic Device +3.

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

Death Attack (Ex): If you study your victim for 3 rounds, attack that target within another 3 rounds, then make a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, you can paralyze or kill the target if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 12).

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid or giant hit by the wereboar's gore attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract Lycanthropy.

Ferocity (Ex): A wereboar is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

5: THE PORTAL

INJURED ARVAD'S COHORT

CR 10

Female human cleric 12 of luz

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6; *deathwatch*

Aura *invisibility purge* 80 ft.

Languages Common

AC 33, touch 13, flat-footed 33

(-1 Dex, +12 armor, +4 deflection, +5 shield, +3 sacred)

hp 75 of 111(12 HD)

SR 27 (*spell resistance*)

Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.; *freedom of movement*

Melee +4 *greatsword* +12/+7 (2d6+8/19-20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +12

Special Actions rebuke undead

Combat Gear mwk greatsword (+4 after *greater magic weapon*)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th or 16th [*bead of karma*, used for all buff spells]):

6th—**D:** ~~quickened invisibility, heroes' feast, banishment~~

5th—**D:** *greater command* (DC 24), ~~flame strike~~ (DC 21), ~~spell resistance~~ +, quickened *divine favor*

4th—**D:** *confusion* (DC 23), *air walk*, ~~cure critical wounds, freedom of movement~~ +, ~~greater magic weapon~~ +

3rd—**D:** ~~invisibility, dispel magic, invisibility purge~~ +, ~~magic vestment~~ +, ~~magic vestment~~ +, ~~shield of warding~~ +, +

2nd—**D:** *invisibility*, ~~bear's endurance~~ +, ~~bull's strength~~ +, *hold person* (DC 21), ~~owl's wisdom~~ +, *sound burst* (DC 18)

1st—**D:** *command* (DC 20), *bless*, *command* (DC 20), ~~*cure light wounds* x2, *deathwatch* †, *shield of faith* †~~

0—*detect magic, guidance, guidance, read magic, resistance, virtue*

D: Domain spell. Deity: luz. Domains: Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, Hide added to class skills), Tyranny (+1 to the DC of enchantment [compulsion] spells).

† Already included in stats

Abilities Str 16 (12), Dex 8, Con 18 (14), Int 10, Wis 22 (20), Cha 14.

Feats Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Skill Focus (Bluff), Craft Wondrous Item, Quicken Spell, Chain Spell

Skills Concentration +18, Bluff +20, Disguise +27 (+29 when in character), Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +5

Possessions combat gear plus *strand of prayer beads, rod of extend (lesser), periapt of wisdom* +2, *vest of resistance* +4, *hat of disguise*, copper dragonhide full plate (+4 with *magic vestment*), copper dragonhide buckler (+4 with *magic vestment*), holy symbol of luz (2), holy symbols of most good-aligned human deities (for bluffing), spell component pouch (2), Johrase tabard

Rebuke Undead (Su) 5/day; 1d20+6/2d6+14.

ARVAD'S SQUIRE

CR 8

Male human fighter 5/pious templar (luz) 2/blackguard (luz) 1

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 27

(+1 Dex, +12 armor, +5 shield)

hp 68 (8 HD)

Resist mettle, True Believer 1/day (+2 insight bonus to any one save)

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +4 *greatsword* +17/+12 (2d6+12/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (+4 Str) +10/+5 (1d8+4/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder (+4 *greatsword* +21/+16 [2d6+12]), smite 1/day (+4 to hit/+2 damage)

Combat Gear +1 *greatsword* (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), *potion of shield of faith* (+5), 20 arrows, mwk longsword, mwk dagger

Blackguard Spells Prepared (CL 1st):

1st—*cure light wounds*

Pious Templar Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—*corrupt weapon* †, *cure light wounds*

† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

At will—*detect good*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ aura of evil, poison use

Feats True Believer (luz), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Iron Will

Skills Concentration +8, Hide +1, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +7

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full-plate* (+4 after *magic vestment*), *vest of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, copper dragonhide buckler (+4 after *magic vestment*), silver holy symbol of luz, light warhorse (mwk studded leather barding).

Aura of Evil (Ex): The power of a blackguard's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his class level plus his cleric level, if any.

Poison Use: Blackguards are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Corrupt Weapon: Blackguards have access to a special spell, *corrupt weapon*, which is the opposing counterpart of the paladin spell *bless weapon*. Instead of improving a weapon's effectiveness against evil foes *corrupt weapon* makes a weapon more effective against good foes.

Power-Up Suite (*heroes' feast*, CL 12; *corrupt weapon*, CL 2):

hp 68 plus 10 temp (8 HD)

Immune fear, poison

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

Melee +4 *corrupted greatsword* +18/+13 (2d6+9/19-20, evil-aligned, auto-confirms against good creatures)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)

2: ESME'S HUT

GROC

CR 10

Male goliath barbarian 1/Fighter 4/Occult Slayer 4

CN Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +5; Senses Listen +9, Spot +1

Languages Common, Gol-Kaa, Cold tongue

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15

(+1 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 92 (9 HD)

Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +7; Magical Defense

Speed 40 ft. in +1 *chain shirt* (8 squares)

Melee +19/+14 +1 *corrosive goliath greathammer* (3d6+14/19-20/x4 plus 1d6 acid)

Ranged mwk large javelin +11/+6 (1d8+6/x2)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; Grp +19

Combat Gear mwk large shortsword, large dagger, 2 large javelins

Abilities Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Fast Movement, Rage, Magical Defense, Weapon Bond, Mind over Magic, Vicious Strike, Auravision, Nondetection Cloak, Powerful Build, Mountain Movement

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Greathammer, Goliath), Improved Critical (Greathammer, Goliath), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greathammer, Goliath), Weapon Specialization (Greathammer, Goliath), Melee Weapon Mastery (Bludgeoning).

Skills Craft (Weaponsmithing)¹ +4, Jump¹ +11, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Listen¹ +5, Spellcraft +11

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *bracers of quick strike*, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

Powerful Build: You function in many ways as if you were one size category larger. If subject to a size modifier, you are treated as one size larger if it is advantageous to you. You are considered as one size larger to determine if special attacks affect you. You can use weapons designed for a creature one size larger without penalty. The benefits stack with the effects of powers, abilities and spells that change your size category.

Mountain Movement: You may make standing long jumps and high jumps as if you were running. You can engage in accelerated climbing without taking the -5 penalty on the Climb check.

Magical Defense (Ex): You have a +2 bonus to saving throws vs. spells and spell-like abilities.

Weapon Bond (Su): You must choose a particular weapon of at least masterwork quality as a focus for your power. The chosen weapon is imbued with the force of your hatred for spellcasters. A successful attack with this weapon against spellcasters or creatures with spell like abilities deals an extra 1d6 points of damage. If the weapon

is lost or destroyed you lose this ability until you form a bond with the same kind of weapon.

Mind over Magic (Su): You can cause a spell or spell-like ability targeted against you to rebound onto the originator as a free action. This ability function like a *spell turning* spell (caster level 9). You can use this ability 2 times per day.

Vicious Strike (Ex): If you ready an action to disrupt a spellcaster you deal double damage, if the attack hits.

Auravision (Su): You can see magical auras at a range of up to 60 ft. as a free action. This ability functions as a *detect magic* spell but can only be used to detect the number of magical auras present.

Nondetection Cloak (Su): You and your gear are difficult to locate through divinations. You gain the equivalent of a *nondetection* spell (caster level 4, affecting only you).

BULGO (HYBRID FORM)

CR 9

Male Human (Flan) Dire Wereboar Rog2/Assassin 3

CE Medium Humanoid (human, Shapechanger)

Init +6; Senses low-light vision; Listen +18, Spot +18

Languages Common, Orc

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 23

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +8 natural, +1 deflection)

hp 102 (12 HD); DR Silver 10

Fort +12 (+13 versus poison), Ref +14, Will +7

Speed 30 ft. in +1 *Studded Leather* (6 squares)

Melee +1 *cold iron spear* +22/+17 (1d8+19/19-20/x3) and gore +15 (1d8+6 plus disease) or

Melee 2 claws +20 each (1d6+20) and gore +15 (1d8+6 plus disease)

Ranged +1 *cold iron spear* +10 (1d8+12/19-20/x3)

Base Atk +8; Grp +20

Special Actions Death Attack (DC 14), Sneak Attack (+3d6)

Combat Gear dagger, sap

Abilities Str 35, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge, Sneak Attack (+3d6), Trapfinding, Death Attack, Poison Use, Poison Resistance, Alternate Form, Boar Empathy, Curse of Lycanthropy, Ferocity

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (Spear), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Spear), Close-Quarters Fighting

Skills Balance +8, Climb +16, Disguise +3, Hide +16, Jump +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +14, Spot +18, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +4.

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of invisibility*, *ring of protection* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

Death Attack(Ex): If you study your victim for 3 rounds, attack that target within another 3 rounds, then make a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, you can paralyze or kill the target if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 14).

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid or giant hit by the wereboar's gore attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract Lycanthropy.

Ferocity (Ex): A wereboar is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

5: THE PORTAL

ARVAD'S COHORT

CR 12

Female human cleric 12 of luz

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6; *deathwatch*

Aura invisibility *purge* 80 ft.

Languages Common

AC 33, touch 13, flat-footed 33

(-1 Dex, +12 armor, +4 deflection, +5 shield, +3 sacred)

hp 111 plus 10 temp (12 HD)

Immune fear, poison (*heroes' feast*)

SR 27 (*spell resistance*)

Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.; *freedom of movement*

Melee +4 *greatsword* +12/+7 (2d6+8/19-20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +12

Special Actions rebuke undead

Combat Gear mwk greatsword (+4 after *greater magic weapon*)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th or 16th [*bead of karma*, used for all buff spells]):

6th—**D**: quickened *invisibility*, ~~*heroes' feast*~~, ~~*banishment*~~

5th—**D**: *greater command* (DC 24), *flame strike* (DC 21), ~~*spell resistance*~~, quickened *divine favor*

4th—**D**: *confusion* (DC 23), *air walk*, *cure critical wounds*, ~~*freedom of movement*~~, ~~*greater magic weapon*~~

3rd—**D**: *invisibility*, *dispel magic*, ~~*invisibility purge*~~, ~~*magic vestment*~~, ~~*magic vestment*~~, ~~*shield of warding*~~

2nd—**D**: *invisibility*, ~~*bear's endurance*~~, ~~*bull's strength*~~, *hold person* (DC 21), ~~*owl's wisdom*~~, *sound burst* (DC 18)

1st—**D**: *command* (DC 20), *bless*, *command* (DC 20), *cure light wounds* x2, ~~*deathwatch*~~, ~~*shield of faith*~~

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

D: Domain spell. Deity: luz. Domains: Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, Hide added to class skills), Tyranny (+1 to the DC of enchantment [compulsion] spells).

‡ Already included in stats

Abilities Str 16 (12), Dex 8, Con 18 (14), Int 10, Wis 22 (20), Cha 14.

Feats Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Skill Focus (Bluff), Craft Wondrous Item, Quicken Spell, Chain Spell

Skills Concentration +18, Bluff +20, Disguise +27 (+29 when in character), Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +5

Possessions combat gear plus *strand of prayer beads*, *rod of extend (lesser)*, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *vest of resistance* +4, *hat of disguise*, copper dragonhide full plate (+4 with *magic vestment*), copper dragonhide buckler (+4 with *magic vestment*), holy symbol of luz (2), holy symbols of most good-aligned human deities (for bluffing), spell component pouch (2), Johrase tabard

Rebuke Undead (Su) 5/day; 1d20+6/2d6+14.

ARVAD'S SQUIRE

CR 8

Male human fighter 5/pious templar (luz) 2/blackguard (luz) 1

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 27

(+1 Dex, +12 armor, +5 shield)

hp 68 (8 HD)

Resist mettle, True Believer 1/day (+2 insight bonus to any one save)

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +4 *greatsword* +17/+12 (2d6+12/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (+4 Str) +10/+5 (1d8+4/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder (+4 *greatsword* +21/+16 [2d6+12]), smite 1/day (+4 to hit/+2 damage)

Combat Gear +1 *greatsword* (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), *potion of shield of faith* (+5), 20 arrows, mwk longsword, mwk dagger

Blackguard Spells Prepared (CL 1st):

1st—*cure light wounds*

Pious Templar Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—~~*corrupt weapon*~~ ‡, *cure light wounds*

‡ Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

At will—*detect good*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ aura of evil, poison use

Feats True Believer (luz), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Iron Will

Skills Concentration +8, Hide +1, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +7

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full-plate* (+4 after *magic vestment*), *vest of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, copper dragonhide buckler (+4 after *magic vestment*), silver holy symbol of luz, light warhorse (mwk studded leather barding).

Aura of Evil (Ex): The power of a blackguard's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his class level plus his cleric level, if any.

Poison Use: Blackguards are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Corrupt Weapon: Blackguards have access to a special spell, *corrupt weapon*, which is the opposing counterpart of the paladin spell *bless weapon*. Instead of improving a weapon's effectiveness against evil foes *corrupt weapon* makes a weapon more effective against good foes.

Power-Up Suite (*heroes' feast*, CL 12; *corrupt weapon*, CL 2):

hp 68 plus 10 temp (8 HD)

Immune fear, poison

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

Melee +4 *corrupted greatsword* +18/+13 (2d6+9/19-20, evil-aligned, auto-confirms against good creatures)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)

2: ESME'S HOUSE

GROC

CR 10

Male goliath barbarian 1/Fighter 4/Occult Slayer 4

CN Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +9, Spot +1

Languages Common, Gol-Kaa, Cold tongue

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15

(+1 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 92 (9 HD)

Fort +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7; Magical Defense

Speed 40 ft. in +1 *chain shirt* (8 squares)

Melee +19/+14 +1 *corrisve surge goliath greathammer* (3d6+14/19-20/x4 plus 1d6 acid plus 3d6 acid 5/day)

Ranged mwk javelin +11/+6 (1d8+6/x2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +19

Combat Gear large mwk shortsword, large silver dagger, 5 large cold iron javelins

Abilities Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Fast Movement, Rage, Magical Defense, Weapon Bond, Mind over Magic, Vicious Strike, Auravision, Nondetection Cloak, Powerful Build, Mountain Movement

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Greathammer, Goliath), Improved Critical (Greathammer, Goliath), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greathammer, Goliath), Weapon Specialization (Greathammer, Goliath), Melee Weapon Mastery (Bludgeoning).

Skills Craft (Weaponsmithing)¹ +4, Jump¹ +11, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Listen¹ +5, Spellcraft +11

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *bracers of quick strike*

Powerful Build: You function in many ways as if you were one size category larger. If subject to a size modifier, you are treated as one size larger if it is advantageous to you. You are considered as one size larger to determine if special attacks affect you. You can use weapons designed for a creature one size larger without penalty. The benefits stack with the effects of powers, abilities and spells that change your size category.

Mountain Movement: You may make standing long jumps and high jumps as if you were running. You can engage in accelerated climbing without taking the -5 penalty on the Climb check.

Magical Defense (Ex): You have a +2 bonus to saving throws vs. spells and spell-like abilities.

Weapon Bond (Su): You must choose a particular weapon of at least masterwork quality as a focus for your power. The chosen weapon is imbued with the force of your hatred for spellcasters. A successful attack with this weapon against spellcasters or creatures with spell like abilities deals an extra 1d6 points of damage. If the weapon

is lost or destroyed you lose this ability until you form a bond with the same kind of weapon.

Mind over Magic (Su): You can cause a spell or spell-like ability targeted against you to rebound onto the originator as a free action. This ability function like a *spell turning* spell (caster level 9). You can use this ability 2 times per day.

Vicious Strike (Ex): If you ready an action to disrupt a spellcaster you deal double damage, if the attack hits.

Auravision (Su): You can see magical auras at a range of up to 60 ft. as a free action. This ability functions as a *detect magic* spell but can only be used to detect the number of magical auras present.

Nondetection Cloak (Su): You and your gear are difficult to locate through divinations. You gain the equivalent of a *nondetection* spell (caster level 4, affecting only you).

BULGO (HYBRID FORM)

CR 9

Male Human (Flan) Dire Wereboar Rog2/Assassin 3

CE Medium Humanoid (human, Shapechanger)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +18, Spot +18

Languages Common, Orc

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 23

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +8 natural, +1 deflection)

hp 102 (12 HD); **DR** Silver 10

Fort +12 (+13 versus poison), **Ref** +14, **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. in +1 *Studded Leather* (6 squares)

Melee +1 *cold iron spear* +22/+17 (1d8+19/19-20/x3) and gore +15 (1d8+6 plus disease) or

Melee 2 claws +20 each (1d6+20) and gore +15 (1d8+6 plus disease)

Ranged +1 *cold iron spear* +10 (1d8+12/19-20/x3)

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +20

Special Actions Death Attack (DC 14), Sneak Attack (+3d6)

Combat Gear dagger, sap

Abilities Str 35, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge, Sneak Attack (+3d6), Trapfinding, Death Attack, Poison Use, Poison Resistance, Alternate Form, Boar Empathy, Curse of Lycanthropy, Ferocity

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (Spear), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Spear), Close-Quarters Fighting

Skills Balance +8, Climb +16, Disguise +3, Hide +16, Jump +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +14, Spot +18, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +4.

Possessions combat gear plus *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of invisibility*, *ring of protection* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, belt pouch, backpack, usual traveling gear, light horse, tack, harness, etc., 6 gp

Death Attack(Ex): If you study your victim for 3 rounds, attack that target within another 3 rounds, then make a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, you can paralyze or kill the target if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 14).

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid or giant hit by the wereboar's gore attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract Lycanthropy.

Ferocity (Ex): A wereboar is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

ADVANCED ARROW DEMON **CR 12**

Male advanced arrow demon fighter 4

CE medium outsider (tanar'ri, evil, extraplanar, chaotic)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Listen +16, Spot +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, telepathy 100 ft.

AC 32, touch 22, flat-footed 25

(+7 Dex, +5 armor, +5 deflection, +5 natural)

hp 228 (16 HD); **DR** 5/good and cold iron

Immune electricity and poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10; fire 10; **SR** 20

Fort +21, **Ref** +16, **Will** +12

Speed 40 ft. (4 squares)

Ranged (w/ Rapid Shot) 2 Large +1 *seeking composite greatbows* (+6 Str)
+23/+23/+23/+23/+18/+18/+13/+13/+8/+8
(2d8+11/19-20/x3)

Melee 4 claws +22 each (1d6+6)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +16; **Grp** +20

Atk Options Close combat shot, oversized weapons, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*, symmetrical archery

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* (+5), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, 100 arrows

Abilities Str 22, Dex 20 (24), Con 29, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Composite Greatbow), Improved Precise Shot, Improved Critical (Composite Greatbow), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*dimension door*), Weapon Specialization (Composite Greatbow), Ranged Weapon Mastery*.

Skills: Balance +20, Bluff +16, Climb +20, Concentration +24, Hide +20, Jump +24, Listen +18, Move Silently +20, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18.

Possessions: Combat gear plus ~~potion of cat's grace~~, quiver of Ehlonna, +1 mithral chain shirt, and ~~potion of shield of faith~~ +5

Physical Description: *Lean and wiry, this four-armed creature holds two powerful greatbows in its left arms and draws the strings back in parallel with its right arms. The massive arrows notched in the bows draw the eye, and the emaciated limbs with which it holds its twin bows obviously conceal an*

abyssal strength. The creature's gray skin is oily and moist, and it is entirely hairless. The creature's long legs end in four-jointed toes, and it grips the ground as it walks.

Close Combat Shot (Ex): An arrow demon does not incur attacks of opportunity for firing a bow while threatened. In addition, the arrow demon can shoot its bows to make attacks of opportunity as if it threatened the squares adjacent to it with its bows.

Oversized Weapons (Ex): Arrow demons can use bows of any kind that are up to one size larger than their size would allow without penalty.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – dimension door (self plus 50 pounds of objects only). Caster level 12th.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp): Once per day, an arrow demon can automatically summon 1d6 dretches, or attempt to summon another arrow demon with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th level spell.

Symmetrical Archery (Ex): The arrow demon has an amazing ability to wield two bows at once in unison. Any time the arrow demon could make a single attack with a bow, it can attack with both of its bows, at -2 to all of its attack rolls that round. For example, when making an attack action, an arrow demon can fire one arrow from each bow at its normal attack bonus minus 2, and when making a full attack action, it can fire one arrow from each bow for each of its normal iterative attacks (two arrows from each bow, each shaft at a -2 penalty). The statistics block above already includes these bonuses. The arrow demon takes no additional penalties for using multiple weapons as long as it is using only bows.

Telepathy (Su): Arrow demons can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

5: THE PORTAL

ARVAD'S COHORT **CR 12**

Female human cleric 12 of luz

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6; *deathwatch*

Aura *invisibility purge* 80 ft.

Languages Common

AC 33, touch 13, flat-footed 33

(-1 Dex, +12 armor, +4 deflection, +5 shield, +3 sacred)

hp 111 plus 10 temp (12 HD)

Immune fear, poison (*heroes' feast*)

SR 27 (*spell resistance*)

Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.; *freedom of movement*

Melee +4 *greatsword* +12/+7 (2d6+8/19-20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +12

Special Actions rebuke undead

Combat Gear mwk greatsword (+4 after *greater magic weapon*)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th or 16th [*bead of karma*, used for all buff spells]):

6th—**D**: quickened *invisibility*, ~~*heroes' feast*~~ †, ~~*banishment*~~

5th—**D**: *greater command* (DC 24), *flame strike* (DC 21), ~~*spell resistance*~~ †, quickened *divine favor*

4th—**D**: *confusion* (DC 23), *air walk*, *cure critical wounds*, ~~*freedom of movement*~~ †, ~~*greater magic weapon*~~ †

3rd—**D**: *invisibility*, *dispel magic*, ~~*invisibility purge*~~ †, ~~*magic vestment*~~ †, ~~*magic vestment*~~ †, ~~*shield of warding*~~ †

2nd—**D**: *invisibility*, ~~*bear's endurance*~~ †, ~~*bull's strength*~~ †, *hold person* (DC 21), ~~*owl's wisdom*~~ †, *sound burst* (DC 18)

1st—**D**: *command* (DC 20), *bless*, *command* (DC 20), *cure light wounds* x2, ~~*deathwatch*~~ †, ~~*shield of faith*~~ †

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

D: Domain spell. Deity: luz. Domains: Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, Hide added to class skills), Tyranny (+1 to the DC of enchantment [compulsion] spells).

† Already included in stats

Abilities Str 16 (12), Dex 8, Con 18 (14), Int 10, Wis 22 (20), Cha 14.

Feats Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Skill Focus (Bluff), Craft Wondrous Item, Quicken Spell, Chain Spell

Skills Concentration +18, Bluff +20, Disguise +27 (+29 when in character), Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +5

Possessions combat gear plus *strand of prayer beads*, *rod of extend (lesser)*, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *vest of resistance* +4, *hat of disguise*, copper dragonhide full plate (+4 with *magic vestment*), copper dragonhide buckler (+4 with *magic vestment*), holy symbol of luz (2), holy symbols of most good-aligned human deities (for bluffing), spell component pouch (2), Johrase tabard

Rebuke Undead (Su) 5/day; 1d20+6/2d6+14.

ARVAD'S SQUIRE

CR 8

Male human fighter 5/pious templar (luz) 2/blackguard (luz) 1

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 27

(+1 Dex, +12 armor, +5 shield)

hp 68 (8 HD)

Resist mettle, True Believer 1/day (+2 insight bonus to any one save)

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Speed 20 ft. in heavy armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +4 *greatsword* +17/+12 (2d6+12/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (+4 Str) +10/+5 (1d8+4/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder (+4 *greatsword* +21/+16 [2d6+12]), smite 1/day (+4 to hit/+2 damage)

Combat Gear +1 *greatsword* (+4 after *greater magic weapon*), *potion of shield of faith* (+5), 20 arrows, mwk longsword, mwk dagger

Blackguard Spells Prepared (CL 1st):

1st—*cure light wounds*

Pious Templar Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—*corrupt weapon* †, *cure light wounds*

† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

At will—*detect good*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ aura of evil, poison use

Feats True Believer (luz), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Iron Will

Skills Concentration +8, Hide +1, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +7

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full-plate* (+4 after *magic vestment*), *vest of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, copper dragonhide buckler (+4 after *magic vestment*), silver holy symbol of luz, light warhorse (mwk studded leather barding).

Aura of Evil (Ex): The power of a blackguard's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his class level plus his cleric level, if any.

Poison Use: Blackguards are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Corrupt Weapon: Blackguards have access to a special spell, *corrupt weapon*, which is the opposing counterpart of the paladin spell *bless weapon*. Instead of improving a weapon's effectiveness against evil foes *corrupt weapon* makes a weapon more effective against good foes.

Power-Up Suite (*heroes' feast*, CL 12; *corrupt weapon*, CL 2):

hp 68 plus 10 temp (8 HD)

Immune fear, poison

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

Melee +4 *corrupted greatsword* +18/+13 (2d6+9/19-20, evil-aligned, auto-confirms against good creatures)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES ITEMS

FEATS

Hamstring:

You can wound your opponents' legs, hampering their movement.

Prerequisites: sneak attack ability, base attack bonus +4

Benefit: If you hit with a melee sneak attack, you may choose to forgo 2d6 points of extra sneak attack damage to reduce your opponent's base speed by half. This speed reduction ends after 24 hours have passed or a successful DC 15 Heal check or the application of any *cure* spell or other magical healing is made. Creatures immune to sneak attack damage and creatures with no legs or more than four legs can't be slowed down with a hamstringing attack. It takes two successful hamstringing attacks to affect quadrupeds. Other speeds (fly, burrow, and so on) aren't affected. You may use this ability once per round.

Complete Warrior 100

Ranged Weapon Mastery:

You have mastered a wide range of weapons. Your training with one specific weapon now extends to other weapons of a similar sort.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon, Weapon Specialization with selected weapon, base attack bonus +8.

Benefit: When you select this feat, choose bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing. You must have Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization with a ranged weapon that deals this type of damage. When using any ranged weapon that has the damage type you selected, you gain a +2 bonus on attacks and a +2 on damage. In addition, you increase its range increment by 20 feet.

Special: You can select this feat more than once. Each time, you can select a new damage type. A fighter can choose Ranged Weapon Mastery as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Players Handbook 2

MAGIC ITEMS

Bracers of Quickstrike

Price (Item Level): 4,000 gp (8th)

Body Slot: Arms

Caster Level: 11th

Aura: Moderate; (DC 20) evocation

Activation: Swift (command)

Weight: --

When you activate *bracers of quick strike*, you can make one extra attack with any weapon you are holding if you already made a full attack on this turn. This attack is made at your full base attack bonus, plus any modifiers appropriate to the situation. This effect is not cumulative with any other effect that grants you an extra attack when making a full attack, such as the Rapid Shot feat, a speed weapon, or the *haste* spell.

Bracers of quick strike function once per day.

You must wear *bracers of quick strike* for 24 hours before you can access their abilities. If you take them off, they become inactive until worn for an additional 24 hours.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *haste*.

Cost to Create: 700 gp, 56 XP, 2 days.

Corrosive

Price: +1 bonus

Property: Weapon

Caster Level: 10th

Aura: Moderate; (DC 20) conjuration

Activation: Standard (command)

When activated, a corrosive weapon is sheathed in acid. The acid does not harm you as long as you have the weapon in hand. The effect persists until you speak a second command word. A weapon that has this property deals an extra 1d6 points of acid damage on a successful hit.

Projectile weapons bestow this property upon their ammunition.

Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *acid fog*, *acid storm* (SC 7), *Melf's acid arrow*, or *storm of vengeance*.

Cost to Create: Varies.

Energy Surge [Synergy]

Price: +1 bonus

Property: Melee weapon

Caster Level: 5th

Aura: Faint (DC 17) evocation

Activation: Swift (command)

An energy surge weapon functions as a weapon of the prerequisite type (corrosive, flaming, frost, shock).

In addition, on a successful melee attack with an energy surge weapon, you can command it to expel a blast of energy, of the same type as the prerequisite property, which deals an extra 3d6 points of damage to the target of the attack. The synergy prerequisite

property need not be active to activate the energy surge property.

This ability is usable a number of times per day equal to 1 + your Con bonus (if any). Once you activate this property, it can't be activated by any other creature until the following day.

A weapon can have this property more than once, but only once per synergy prerequisite, and each activation only triggers one type of surge. For example, you could have a *+1 corrosive surge flaming surge longsword*, and each activation would deal either 3d6 points of acid damage or 3d6 points of fire damage.

Each diamond set into the pommel or haft of an energy surge weapon radiates a different color that corresponds to the energy damage dealt by the weapon: green (acid), blue (cold), yellow (electricity), or red (fire).

Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, spell for the prerequisite property.

Cost to Create: Varies.

Iron Crown of the Bandit Kingdoms

Price (Item Level): 35,000 gp (17th)

Body Slot: Head

Caster Level: 17th

Aura: Strong; (DC 23) abjuration

Activation: --

Weight: 2 lb.

Fashioned in the land of warriors, this metal headgear grants its wearer the benefit of the *mind blank* spell at all times. In addition, the crown protects its wearer from *magic jar*, *trap the soul*, and all other effects that seek to separate the wearer's soul from his or her body (except death). As a side effect of this, neither the wearer nor the crown can be dimensionally transported or moved into extra-dimensional spaces (such as a *bag of holding*).

Finally, the crown grants the benefit of a positive level (+1 on all skill checks and ability checks, +1 on attack rolls and saving throws, +5 hit points, +1 effective level, cast spells as if one level higher) to its wearer as long as the wearer only has class levels in classes that grant a +1 BAB at every level (fighter, ranger, etc.). A creature that has levels in any spell-casting class that does not grant a +1 BAB at every level (such as cleric or wizard, but not pious templar or paladin) instead suffers 1 negative level while the crown is worn. This negative level cannot be removed in any manner while the crown is worn.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *heroism*, *mind blank*.

Cost to Create: 17,500 gp, 3,000 xp.

Source: *Greyhawk Adventures* (1988).
Updated to 3.5 by the BK Triad.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1A

You are sitting at a tavern outside Kinemeet when the serving wench brings you this note:

My Friend,

You have proven yourself trustworthy in the past and I hope that I can count on you one more time. Events move towards a climax, and the Duke needs you. If you can help, be at the Silver Star Tavern outside Kinemeet on the 13th of Sunsebb. Tell no one why you are there, as many who would foil our plans seek as we do.

Yours in Confidence,

Larn

PLAYER HANDOUT 1B

Recently, as you were in the Tangles training with the Legion, a messenger delivered the following note to you, unopened and properly sealed.

Comrade in arms,

You have proven trustworthy in the past and I hope that you can be trusted one more time. I have recently been visited by a scholar who claimed to work with the last Duke of Artonsamay. He seemed trustworthy but had disturbing news about my family. I would wish for you to meet with this sage and see that he does not dishonor the family name or give up the family inheritance. You should be at the Silver Star tavern in Kinemeet on the 13th of Sunsebb. There you can make contact with this Larn.

I know not what he seeks, but I am advised that we should keep an eye on him. Thus, with your consent, we will sry on you each morning just before dawn and each night just after darkness has fallen.

Be warned! Spies are everywhere and few are to be trusted, so keep this secret! We must know what this sage is looking for!

For Freedom!

Tarren Moskol

PLAYER HANDOUT 1C

You are hanging out at the Dingy Coffin in Hallorn when a woman wearing the insignia of a corporal in General Hok's army enters. Looking around, she sees you and approaches your table. Without a word, she hands you a sealed letter and salutes you, then marches out of the tavern.

Comrade in Arms,

I bring you greetings from General Hok. His battles to free these lands from the yoke of Old Wicked proceed apace. We have recently heard rumors that an item that would allow the General to finally strike at the heart of the Old One's power has resurfaced. I ask you, who have done me service in the past, to help retrieve this for us.

If our information is correct, one who has crucial information about this crown is to meet with some of his supporters at a tavern called the Silver Star in Kinemeet on the 13th of Sunsebb. Seek one called Larn, but do not let him know of this letter.

With your consent, we will scry on you each morning just before dawn and each night just after darkness has fallen.

If you succeed, return to Hallorn with the crown.

Safe journey to you!

Guardian General Hok

PLAYER HANDOUT 1D

During your travels, you receive the following note:

Loyal Johrase,

Word has reached us that forces are at play in the Combination. Each seeks to play a game of chess, with a powerful magic item being the prize. This prize, the *Iron Crown*, is a legendary piece of headgear that confers great powers upon its wearer, the most important of which is to protect its wearer from spells that separate soul and body.

As I am sure you are aware, such magic is exactly how Cranzer trapped our King. Recovering this *Iron Crown* is of utmost importance if the King is to remain with us after we rescue him.

Our divinations have revealed that a man named Larn, who works for Duke Gellor, will be at the Silver Star Tavern just outside Kinemeet's walls on the 13th of Sunsebb. He will be there to recruit adventurers to recover the crown. Your orders are to get yourself hired by Larn and to ensure that the crown is returned to the Johrase upon its recovery. We will scribe on you each morning just before dawn and each night just after darkness has fallen.

Once we have recovered our King and the Crown, we can bring law and order to this chaotic land and long will the Johrase know peace!

Lady Taleetha Hind,
Billet of the Cudgel

PLAYER HANDOUT 1E

During your travels, you receive the following note:

Loyal Citizen of Redhand,

My loyal captain, Elhílbör, has advised me that a once-lost artifact, the *Iron Crown*, is on the verge of resurfacing. This crown will help me to secure a brighter future for our land as we drive the demonic minions of Old Wicked from our lands!

For too long I walked a dark path, but through Heíroneous' grace I have once again found my true soul. I, who once would have commanded, now beg of you to find this crown and bring it to me for the good of your neighbors and kinfolk.

Elhílbör has discovered that a man named Larn, who works for Duke Gellor, will be at the Silver Star Tavern just outside Kínemeet's walls on the 13th of Sunsebb. He will be there to recruit adventurers to recover the crown. I ask that you get hired by Larn so that you may find the crown. Once secured, do with it as your heart tells you you must. Know that I now serve the Arch-Paladin again, and with the crown Redhand's darkness can be turned into light.

If you accept, we will sory on you each morning just before dawn and each night just after darkness has fallen to see what assistance we may offer.

Into you hands I place this trust,

Prince Zeech

PLAYER HANDOUT 2

The following letter was found on Nevin

Nevin,

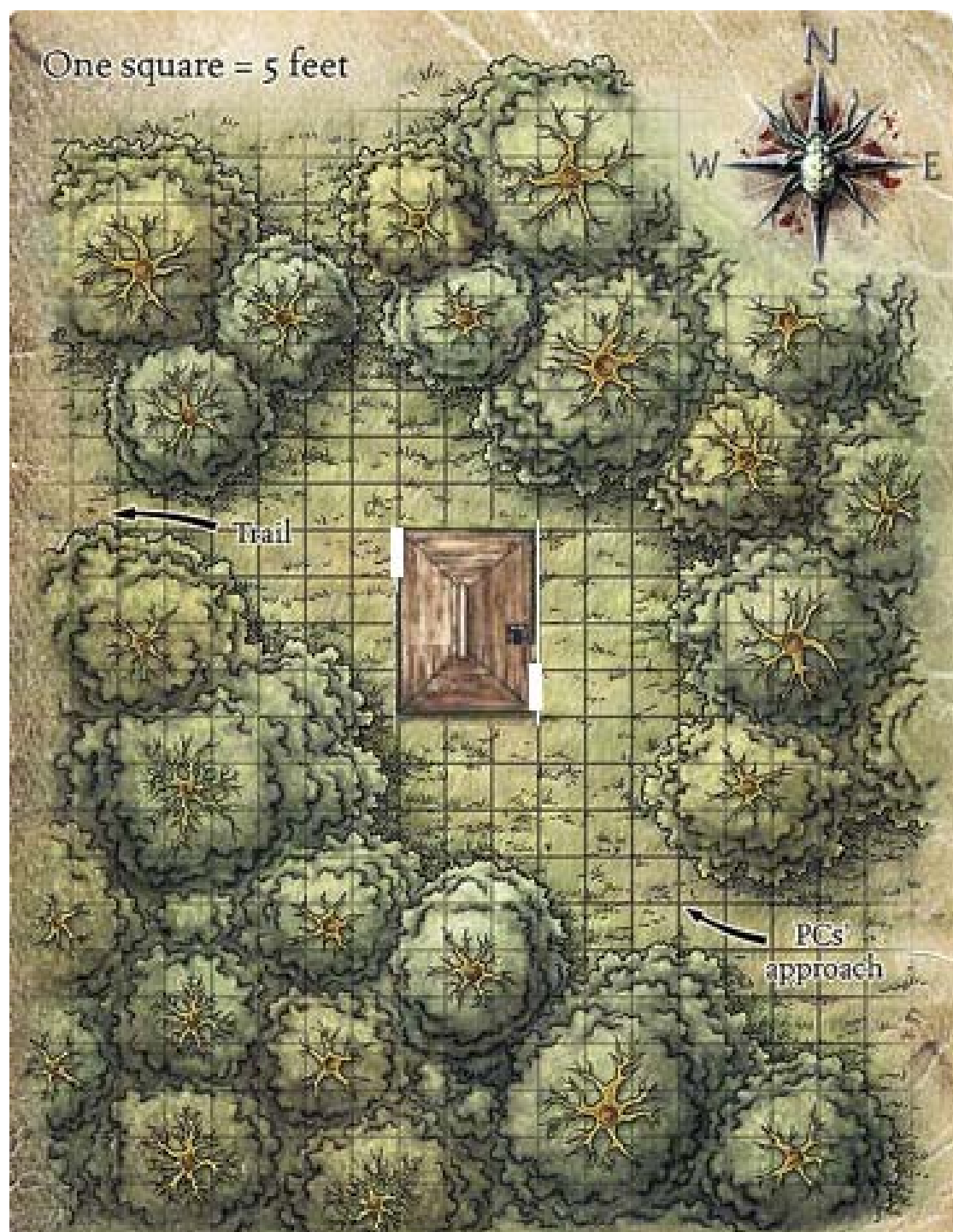
You had better watch it. I am hearing that there are others than you that are looking for this Duke and his crown. Urvag down at the slave pens tells me that the new general of his Lordship Cranzer, that blackguard named Arvad, has been calling in favors to do something about it. Rumor has it that they have called in some favors with the Yugoloths, although why anyone in Gehenna cares about the Duke I don't know. A guy who owes me a favor told me that this General Arvad is even doing something with a portal in his tower. Are you sure it is worth it for you to risk angering someone that favored by his Lordship?

If you are still after this thing, you better move fast, as I hear that they are getting ready to move from Riftcrag. Your best bet for good information is Bleg One Eye at the Dingy Coffin in Hallorn. Be sure to kill him once you have the information.

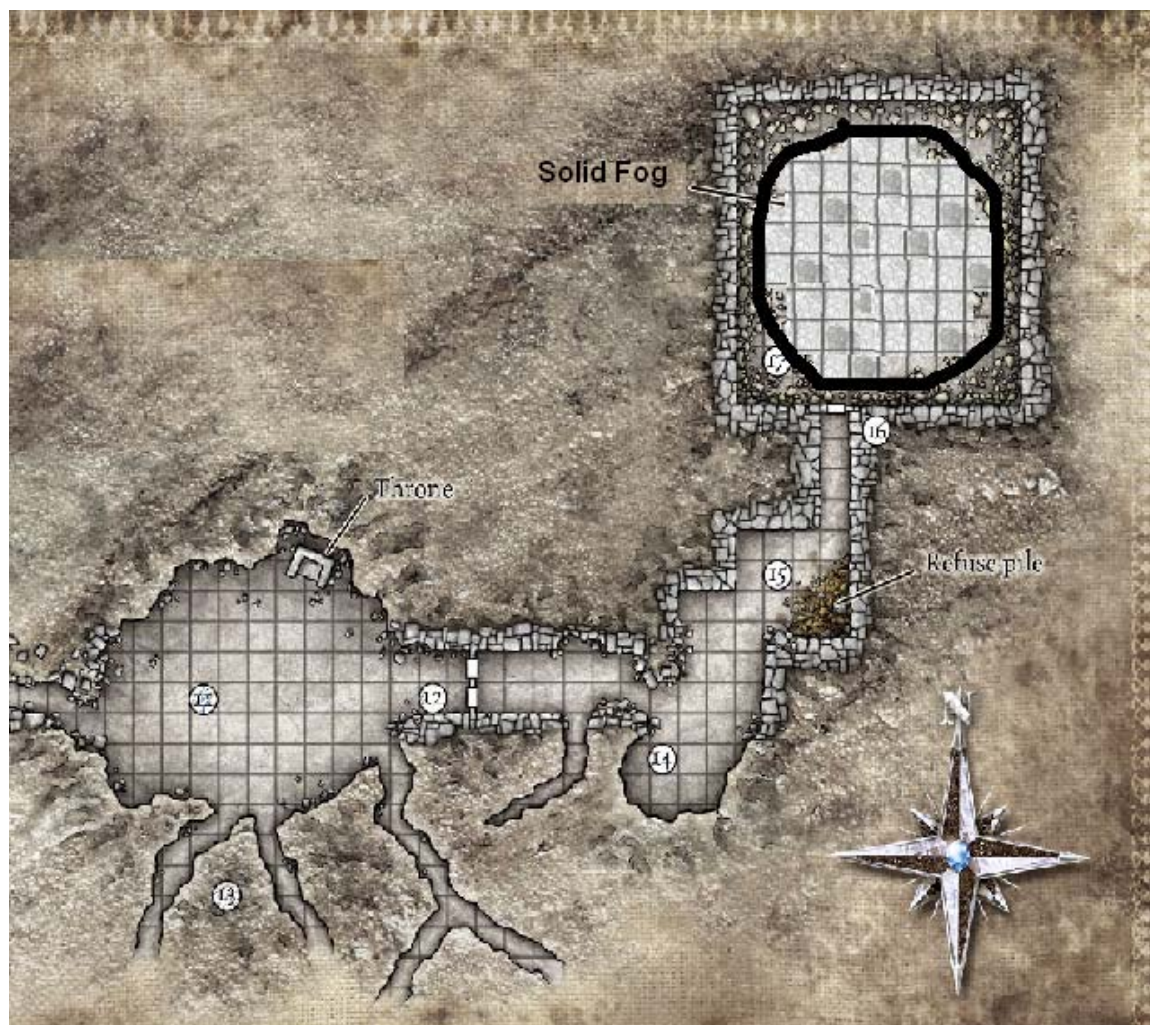
Ruvash Bloodarrow

DM MAP 1

All maps courtesy of Wizards of the Coast's map archives.



DM MAP 2



DM MAP 3



DM MAP 4

