

BIS4-03

Face of the Enemy

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK®

Bissel Regional Adventure

Version 1.1

by Matthew Pennington

Based on an Idea by John Williams and Matthew Pennington

Fourteen years ago, the Necromancer, Evard, nearly conquered the March, and paid with his life. Or did he? Current events have led many to believe him still active and a once-in-a-lifetime chance to explore his past has appeared. But are you willing to investigate the tales that have scared the children of Bissel for a generation? A Bissel Regional adventure for APLs 8 -12, and Part One of the Dusk Before the Dark series.

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

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Introduction

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

Preparation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

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

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

Time Units and Upkeep

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

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

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

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

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Adventure Background

Fourteen years ago, Bissel was a very different place.

The Margrave, Walgar, was a just man, who ruled his conflicted land as fairly as he could. But there were those that thought they could do better. One such man was the Baron Evard Markavan of Ryphthorne.

Baron Markavan came from a long line of Barons in Ryphthorne, renowned across the March for their ability to be friends with the right people at the right time, whether they came from Ket, Veluna, Gran March, or even the Old Empire of Keoland. Evard was no different. He had worked his way into the highest echelons of the old Wizard's Guilds that were the precursor to the Guild of the Arcane Path, and was a close confidant of Margrave Walgar himself. But, unlike his petty father and ancestors, Baron Evard wanted more in life. And he was determined to take it.

Prior to taking his father's role as Baron, Evard traveled far and wide in a voracious hunger for magical knowledge and power. Ironically, he found it in two places close to home. The first was the nearby Valley of the Mage. Evard became increasingly convinced that the Valley was the source of an unimaginable magical power waiting to be tapped. Unfortunately, his early attempts to gain access to this source were all turned back by the Mage of the Valley and his minions. Later attempts were made by minions of Evard (one of the cabals mentioned below) that are rumored to have been more successful. The second was in the darkest corners of Bissel itself. Evard discovered small hidden cabals of necromancers all across the March. He realized this was a force of power just waiting for someone to use it and spent time unifying the necromancer cabals under his control, convincing them that they were meant to rule Bissel (as they wielded the true powers of death and undeath). Evard also discovered some ancient Magicks of Shadow buried deep in the past of the March that he hoped to combine with his necromantic forces to make himself invincible.

In CY580, Evard struck during a Council of Barons in Thornward called by Margrave Walgar. His agents revealed themselves across the March, and Evard himself would have struck down Walgar if not for two valiant Knights of the Watch that threw themselves in Evard's path. Walgar was grievously wounded, but escaped, and the insurrection had begun.

Through blackmail and by feeding the greedy nature of men, Evard made great strides. He had many loyal allies within the Wizards Guilds that flocked to his banner, believing a magocracy was the true way to rule a land. He also swayed many humanoid tribes from the nearby Barrier Peaks and Lortmil Mountains to his banner. But he was doomed to fail, as Bissel had one of the best trained and fiercest armies that money could buy : the Border Companies.

Under Walgar's lead, the lifelong soldiers of the Border Companies focused their energies inward, reclaiming all the Baronies and Townships they came across, and burning any supposed "necromancers" they came across. With surprising ease, they finally backed Evard into a hidden keep he had built in the craggy hills of Ryphthorne, a place called Calignosus (literally "Of the Dark"). His forces in disarray, the Margraves forces flooded the valley and boxed Evard in, but only after great losses for both sides.

Walgar still remembered his old friend, and offered him one chance to redeem himself, and shouted his offer of mercy at the walls of grey granite. Luckily, the priests of Heironeous had seen something dark in their auguries, and whisked Walgar away just before a great cloud of blackness erupted from the keep, filling the valley in a bubble of night. After eight hours, the bubble vanished, and all that was left in the valley was as ash: the landscape was completely barren, all vegetation gone, and the very soil itself was grey like a rainy sky. And of the keep Calignosus, there was no trace.

Though it took many years to rebuild and destroy the remains of his undead armies, Evard finally faded into legend, and became nothing more than a boogey-man story used to scare children at night. But all stories have some element of truth and Evard's is a truth that has only just begun to haunt the March.

Adventure Summary

The PCs are summoned from their appropriate barracks (or by agents of the Mist Chameleons) to a very important and secret meeting at the church of Heironeous in Pellak. Here they meet the His Lofty Grace, the Margrave Larrangin himself. He seems to know much about the heroes in his presence, and it is because of their great prowess he has summoned them. He needs people that he can rely on to get into the old keep of Evard, Calignosus, which has suddenly reappeared in Rhomstaff. And they must do it before Evard himself realizes it is back.

The PCs meet their local operative, a Mist Chameleon, at a remote roadhouse in Rhomstaff. He gives them directions to the "gloom", and warns them that an impetuous group of members of the Nightwatch are rumored to be on their way there too. Wary PCs may find that they are being spied upon by a member of this very group.

At the valley, the heroes walk through a "bubble" of darkness and find themselves in a strange mirror-version of the Prime, the Plane of Shadow. Due to its morphyic traits, many of the remnants of the final battle are still here, including hundreds of dead bodies, all stripped of gear, yet remarkably well-preserved. While they walk the battlefields and forests, they are attacked by predators of the plane.

Finally reaching the blasted out keep, they begin to explore what is left and encounter an oddly equipped and “behind the times” group of Evard’s soldiers. If the PCs take too long exploring, they may encounter packs of Shadows. Exploring may also reward them with shards of some strangely flowing metal, which are in fact, pieces of the Portal to the Plane of Shadow that once stood there.

The only place in the keep left intact is an ancient vault, deep below. After negotiating its traps and opening it, they find a laboratory, untouched by human hands in a long time. Examining it, they find a great deal of Evard’s old journals and a few experiments, including a strange plaster deathmask, and a living woman, long trapped in stasis. While in the lab, the valley begins to destabilize and fall deeper into Shadow, causing all the lands to begin to come apart.

With the valley coming apart behind them, the PCs flee with the comatose and babbling woman. As they approach the edge of the valley, and home, they see the Nightwatchers. As they approach, they can see that the sunlight of the prime is moving towards them, reclaiming the land. Unfortunately, the Nightwatchers have already met their demise, and sinister creatures of the Plane are determined to prevent the PCs from leaving.

Back in the Prime, they meet their Mist Chameleon contact and make haste back to Pellak. Either the priests of Heironeous or the PCs may use *heal* to restore the girl’s health, and get some of her tragic story. The girl is taken by the Margrave to Lady Imycina, the leader of the Mist Chameleons. The PCs hand over whatever information they wish to the Margrave, they are rewarded and given a personal favor.

Introduction

Bissel is finally coming out of hard times. The Margrave was nearly deposed, the harvest was in jeopardy, and the very March was shaken to its core. But, as always, its people persevere. It is nearly spring, but the heavy snows of winter still blanket the land. It makes things look and sound so...peaceful, something that all of you know will not last.

Even though military service has been reduced, many soldiers (those that are not farmers, that is) are now unsure of what to do with their time, and find themselves in the barracks anyways. There is much gossip and rumor-mongering in such places, especially about the appointment of the new Field Marshal, Steich Valiserat, former baron of Swordfields, who now leads the very army that saved him from a dark fate in Deepoerth. Also on the tongues of the more adventurous soldiers are the Free Companies of Bissel, led by Cainlen Rashedra, heir to both the Besselar and Parullan baronies. All this talk of armies and combat has made you weary,

as there have been very few battles to be fought, and Thornward is still just out of reach.

It’s no wonder some of your compatriots transferred to the sunnier, more orc-filled climes of Ulek.

You reverie is broken by the entrance of a page, dripping in fine silks and velvets. He looks distastefully in your direction and asks, “Where might I find the commander of these barracks?”

PCs will no doubt give the page grief, but even if they do, the local commanding officer will come out to check on the commotion. He will retire to his chambers with the page, and follow him out a few minutes later.

“Well, aren’t you all special,” says your Commander, throwing a fancy bit of parchment on the table. The parchment is a simple list of names and ranks, YOUR names and ranks, and is marked with the seal of his Lofty Grace, the Margrave Larringan. “The softskin said you were supposed to ask for a Lord Tikeram at the south gate at Pellak. And to leave now. That’s an order”

If the PCs are NOT in the Bissel Military, a messenger delivers them a similar message, wherever they are found.

Encounter One: Something For Nothing

Your trip to Pellak was fast, the Commander even giving you mounts...a first. As you cross the rolling hills that surround Pellak, you can’t help but feel that the worst of the winter is yet to come. As Castle Oversight comes into view, you can see that the new “recruitment drive” that the Knights of the Watch have had must be going well: the castle is now surrounded by a tent-town of would-be knights, sparring and training in mounted combat and swordplay.

As you approach the gates, the guards look down at you expectantly.

Security has been tightened around Pellak since the Baron’s Council and the murders in the last few months. The guards are just meant to search anyone that comes through for anything suspicious. An Acolyte of Zilchus assists them by using *detect magic* and *detect evil* spells as needed. If any PCs have incriminating items/curses/etc or otherwise detect as evil give them a bit of grief before Lord Tikeram arrives.

As the guards rifle through your belongings, a small boy of perhaps ten approaches from within the city, mounted on a resplendent pony, and dressed in the finest of furs for warmth. The guards part for him and he rides directly towards you.

“Did you receive the letter? Is it you that I am to take to my master?” the boys ask excitedly.

The boy is "Lord" Tikram, the page to the Margrave. He is most loyal to the Margrave, and has been waiting to meet the "rugged heroes" that were sent for. He suffers from a bit of hero worship, as he wishes to ride the lands slaying evil when he grows up, and is unimpressed by the military and political figures he normally meets. He checks the letter that the PCs were sent very carefully, and leads the PCs to the Temple of Heironeous.

PCs who have been to the temple before will see that it is buzzing, and the PCs' steeds are taken from them quickly and efficiently, and they are led inside to the private meeting room of the high priest, where their employer waits.

You are guided through the majestic halls of the temple of Heironeous, where every priest is in full regalia and primed to perfection. "They always do this when His Lofty Grace is around," points out Tikeram with a bemused expression. The boy leads you behind the altar and into the high priest's private sanctum, where a man awaits you. To those that have never seen him, the Margrave Larrangin is a heroic figure with dark, cropped hair, a square jaw, and broad shoulders. He wears a longsword at his hip, and is in the finest of clothes. A glittering, bejeweled platinum holy symbol of Heironeous rests on his chest.

He will calmly wait for the PCs to bow before acknowledging their presence. If the PCs need some prompting, Tikeram will cough unsubtly and drop to a knee himself. If they refuse to bow, the Margrave will disdainfully look at them and order them dismissed, and find some others to do this job.

His Lofty Grace looks over your prostrate forms and smiles thinly. "My thanks Lord Tikeram, you may leave us now," he says and the boy quickly scurries out. "The rest of you may take seats, as we have much to do, and little time to do it."

Remind the players that casting spells in the presence of nobility in Bissel is punishable by death. If they have some means of doing it without being noticed, the Margrave detects as Lawful Neutral, and has a number of protective abjurations on himself (it is common knowledge that he is a priest of Heironeous).

"As your time and my own is quite precious, I will be quick. I summoned you here because you have had some experiences in the matter which we are about to discuss, and have proven yourself as most loyal subjects of the March."

If at all possible, he will identify each PC by name, and recognize a great deed that they have performed. It is apparent that he did his homework about the party.

"As you may know, fourteen years ago my predecessor Walgar ruled the March, may Heironeous watch over his soul. During his time he was a friend of the Baron of Rypthorne, which we

now know as Rhomstaff. This baron, Evard, had delusions of grandeur and attempted to conquer the march. He failed and was thought destroyed. Those who thought this were wrong. I have seen the necromancer with my own eyes, and not but a month past. I was lucky, for the Archpaladin himself watches over me, and granted me the might to survive the necromancer's foul magicks. He wished for me to join him and rule the March together. I laughed at him, and nearly paid for it with my life. Evard lives and is the greatest threat that the March faces right now." The Margrave pauses and takes a sip of wine out of his goblet, takes a deep breath, and continues.

"Evard was finally defeated at a place called Calignosus (kal-IG-no-suss), a hidden keep in Rhomstaff. Something went wrong in the last days of the siege, and the whole valley was engulfed in darkness. When the darkness finally faded, the valley was reduced to nothing but barren grey soil. Not a trace of terrain or life was left behind. Not even the keep. The valley became off-limits, and the barony was placed into the hands of Izhaar Rhomstaff, whose family had served as stewards to the former barons for generations. Nobody has wanted to speak of those dark days in a long time, but the past has come back to...haunt us," he says with an ironic laugh and a grim look in his eyes. "Calignosus has returned."

"Baron Izhaar has never once taken his eyes off of that accursed place, and his vigilance has finally been rewarded. Two days ago, a cloud of darkness appeared around the valley, and the Baron's scouts insist that they saw the trees and lands long missing inside. You all look like intelligent men, so I'll get to the point. We need information. We need weaponry. We need ANYTHING that we can get our hands on to combat Evard!" At that the Margrave angrily slams his fist down on the table, shaking it, and spilling his wine all over, causing streams of red to congeal and drip off of the table like blood. His Lofty Grace doesn't even notice, so intense is his gaze on you.

"You must beat the Necromancer there, collect all that you can and get out as quickly as possible. No others must hear of this or the place will be invaded by danger-seekers and treasure hunters. Do you understand?"

The Margrave doesn't even ask the PCs *if* they will do it. He commands it. If the PCs refuse, he will see them thrown in chains and thrown in the deepest dungeons underneath Castle Oversight, never to be seen again. Similar mentions of "rewards" will be met with an icy gaze. Those that press the issue will find themselves in cells next to those that refuse. PCs who question the Margrave's honesty may roll a Sense Motive check DC 18 + APL. If they succeed, they can tell that His Lofty Grace

is truthful... but may be holding *something* back. Anything less on the check reveals that he seems to be honest and determined to keep the March safe.

Assuming they accept, he stands, straightens himself up, regaining his composure and tells them of a roadhouse in Rhomstaff called the Farstrider's Repose. One of his Mist Chameleon agents will meet them there and guide them to where they need to go. At this, he dismisses them, distracted by his thoughts.

Encounter Two: Finding My Way

Heeding the orders of His Lofty Grace, you hurriedly exit the chambers, Tikeram close behind, glee in his eyes. "You're going on a secret mission for the good of the March, aren't you! What is it? Will there be foul beasts the need vanq...vanq-squishing?" Tikeram asks, fumbling his words, his eyes full of hero-worship.

If the PCs tell him ANYTHING of importance, the Margrave will find out, and even if successful, they will not get his favor in the end. Tikeram has no malice in mind, he just loves to hear stories of adventure.

As you pass outside the gates of the temple, the priests of Heironeous stand waiting, with your steeds at the ready. Those without mounts find that they even prepared for this, and have stout mares ready for your trip. They ask no questions, and solemnly see you on your way. The last thing you hear is Tikeram screaming after you, "Be careful! Don't let the monsters eat you!"

The rest of your trip is a blur. It is a cold, hard ride across the March, with snow dogging you nearly all of the four days it takes to reach the roadhouse. But other than the weather, and your tumultuous thoughts, the ride is uneventful.

The Farstrider's Repose is a stout inn alongside the ice-clogged Shaela River, whose rimed sign shows an enormous pair of feet propped up on a stool. Smoke wafts invitingly out of the chimney, and the smell of a warm meal is intoxicating. The stable boy takes your frothing mounts and goes back to huddling around his meager campfire.

Obviously, if the PCs choose to use other methods of travel, alter the boxed text to match.

The interior of the Repose is equally as warm as the air is frigid outside. In moments, you are stripping off your soggy cold-weather gear and absorbing as much of the heat that radiates from the roaring fireplace as possible. The taproom is fairly busy this evening, and perhaps a dozen other travelers are nestled into their seats for the night. The pretty lass serving ale promises you all bowls of venison stew with a smile as you make your way to a table.

Allow the players to take care of any business they may have and enjoy their meal in peace. The ale and mulled wine are excellent, as is the food and the service.

Not moments after you have finished your meal, a man walks over to your table and pulls himself over a chair. He looks to be in his mid thirties, has a bushy black beard and a bald pate. Dressed in the clothes of a common traveler, he fits in with the crowd here perfectly. He flashes you a toothy grin and says, "Yer all lucky I like the looks of ya's...I even let you finish your meal. Ready to go?"

Mance Rinder is an agent of the Mist Chameleons, the Margrave's best infiltrators and spies. He is quick with a smile, and even quicker with his tongue. He is a man that loves his work, and is very good at it.

But this man is not Mance Rinder.

If there are any PCs at the table that are members of the Mist Chameleons Meta Organization, give them an INT check, DC 15. If they succeed, let them know that they have heard of Mance, and that last they knew, he was under deep cover in Lopolla, the capitol of Ket. Mance will acknowledge this and cover up with a story about how his cover was blown, and for the first time in six years, he is finally home and doing local jobs. This may make the PCs suspicious, but he is in fact a member of the greatest group of spies in the March, the Mist Chameleons, a fact that is true.

All is not as it seems with Mance, but there is little the PCs will be able to do about it for the moment, as he is in fact partially telling the truth: he IS a Mist Chameleon, and he IS the only soul around that can lead them to Calignosus. A Sense Motive check DC 15 + APL will reveal that Mance is definitely hiding something...but that IS his job after all.

Particularly observant PCs that make a Spot check, DC 20 + APL, will notice a young gnome inconspicuously watching them. He is Bellowsgulch Rullo, a member of the Nightwatch, a group of warriors, priests and others dedicated to the destruction of all undead and Evard's legacy in Bissel. If pressured severely, he will reveal that he works for an independent Nightwatch operative named Akkar Moultour, a Baklunish paladin of Pelor, and enemy of all undead. Bellowsgulch is chaotic good, and scouting like he was told. His boss heard that something was up in Evard's old stomping grounds, and knew that the Mist Chameleons often use this bar as a front. He is to get all the information that he can and get it back to Akkar as soon as possible. Let the PCs do what they will with Bellowsgulch: he is an experienced rogue and will eventually escape any conventional means used to restrain him, and if they drag him along, he refuses to enter the darkness, and later escapes from Mance. Bellowsgulch should be used to press the need for haste upon the PCs, especially considering that the Nightwatch are zealots who would likely see everything

dedicated to Evard destroyed, typically with no questions asked.

Mance will give them a few minutes to get ready, and then lead them out into the snowstorm and their destination. It takes them close to eight hours to reach the valley, far off the beaten path, and concealed by snow and ice.

After another cold and wet eight hours of seemingly aimless wandering in the snowy night, Mance flashes a wide grin and says, "almost there!" What you thought was a mountain looming ahead of you in the clouds is not. Not that you are closer, you can see that it is a towering cloud of inky blackness, darker than the night sky. Mance rides you right up alongside it, and squinting, you can see through the darkness. There is a mountain pass on the other side...a pass that has not even a single flake of snow upon it.

"One of the weirdest things I've ever seen," quips Mance. "But its not my job to care much about it...unless of course you fail," he accentuates with a friendly wink and a smile. "I'll wait here a few days, but if I see any of Evard's crew roll in, you're on your own, and I go get the damned army!"

When the PCs are ready, they can pass right through the dark, and into the valley. The wall of darkness radiates a strong conjuration aura with a hint of necromancy. There are no signs of any tracks in the snow. Remind them how cold it is, and how long it took them to get here...

Encounter Three: Show Don't Tell

As you touch the field of blackness, there is no resistance. Your fingers tingle slightly, but there are no other ill effects. Gritting, you push yourself through easily, and are suddenly...elsewhere. You can see snow-covered Mance waving at you from the other side of the darkness, but the place YOU are at is completely dry and of a moderate temperature. There is not a single hint of snow, and the wind does not appear to pass through the barrier of darkness.

You are standing in a fifteen foot wide crevasse that leads down into a valley. But things are just wrong. It takes a second, but you figure it out: everything is colored in shades of black and grey. The rock around you, the gravel beneath you, and the trees and shrubbery you can see ahead. The only things that are not grey or black are your own belongings that were once brightly colored, but are now strangely muted, but even then stick out a little too much for comfort.

The sky above you is grey and dark, almost as if it was about to rain. But there are no clouds in the sky,

just a flat, dusky canvas with nothing to break its utter featurelessness.

It is then that you notice that there are a great number of tracks all around you.

Allow PCs to make a Survival or Search check DC 10 to determine that there are signs of passage of what appears to have been an army: hundreds of men, horses, and wagons must have passed through here recently. If the PC has the Track feat and makes DC 20 + APL on the Survival check, let them notice that there are some sets of bootied tracks that somehow look...newer. This is the morphic effects of the Plane of Shadow. The army has not been here for fourteen years. Though the other bootied tracks are far more recent...

Give inquisitive PCs a Knowledge (the Planes) check DC 10 + APL to realize that they are somehow now in the Plane of Shadow. If they make DC 15 + APL, give them a basic rundown of the Plane's effects (as seen in Appendix Two).

It is constantly dark as a moonless night here, and remember that all light effects, magic or otherwise, are halved here.

The whole valley is under the effects of an *unhallow* spell, from the days of Evard's reign. Thus, all evil creatures are under the effect of a *protection from good*, and all turning attempts are at a -4 penalty. Should the PCs attempt to *dispel* this effect, they can clear an area equal to forty feet in diameter if they can *dispel* caster level 15th.

Allow the PCs to head down the path or off the path, either way they will end up at the edge of the valley.

After a short while walking through the pass, you come into the valley proper. It is hard to tell, but beyond your light you can hear some sort of wind whispering through trees, and a moment later, the breeze hits you. Instead of being refreshing, the stale air feels somehow foul. Looking around as you walk out in the open, you can see that there are in fact trees and vegetation in this area, though it seems somehow unhealthy and grey like the land itself. Much like the bones that jut out of the ground around you.

These are the remains of both Evard's forces and those of the Margrave Walgar. Human, elven, hobgoblin, orc and ogres died en-masse here, and little has disturbed them since. Unfortunately, poking around keeps the light still for a bit too long, attracting the natural predators of this place. These shadows come in all shapes, not all were created from dying humanoids. Some may appear vaguely equine, canine or feline.

APL 8 (EL 9)

✦ **Advanced Shadows (6):** hp 63 each; see Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 11)

✦ **Advanced Shadows (6):** hp 81 each; see Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 13)

✦ **Greater Shadows (6):** hp 81 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: At APL 8, the shadows will focus their attempts on any pack animals or companions, in order to create more of their kind (which rise as standard shadows). At APL 10 and 12, they will attack anyone that reveals themselves to be a priest, and use spring attack to strike and then drop into the ground.

Encounter Four: La Villa Strangiato

You continue to move into the valley, your passage silent except for the muted crunching of dead, grey leaves and bones. The battle must have been truly great, and filled the valley. All of the bodies have been stripped of all weapons and armor, though many still bear the tower-crest of the Border Companies of Bissel on their tattered uniforms. The valley has begun to narrow, heading to the point where the keep Calignosus was supposed to stand. Though it would seem impossible, it is almost as if it is getting darker, the closer you get.

Feel free to play up the paranoia, and call for listen and spot checks to keep them squirming. If the party attempts to rest, or spends an hour or more in any area outside the keep, have them get attacked by a pack of shadows equal in number to the APL - 2. Give them the chance to see the shadows coalescing in the murk around them, so that they can run if they'd like. The shadows will pursue, but not attack unless the party stops. The PCs should be well aware that time is of the essence. The shadows attacks should continue until they get the picture (i.e. no resting outside the keep).

You finally start passing signs that indicate that you must be near the keep: ruined siege engines litter the area and in the deeper darkness ahead looms a boxy shape with battlements: the fortress of Evard known as Calignosus. The fighting must have been most intense here, as the ground around the walls is scorched from oil and spell, and there are craters from where much arcane might must have been unleashed upon the Border Companies. Though you are unable to tell exactly what happened, much of the walls have collapsed, and there are gaping holes in the stonework all over. Whereas the walls once must have stood forty feet above you, now only portions remain intact. The highest tower of the keep is missing, as if it had simply been torn off the structure. The gate looks to have completely blown off of its hinges...from the inside out.

Allow the PCs to wander about a bit outside...this is a look at a piece of Bissel's history that has been lost and forgotten. The battle was very harsh, and there were many casualties that were never reported home. With the keep built into the "V"-shaped end of the valley, it was very secure and defensible. If you feel they are spending too much time, allow some shadows to come into view, but not approach.

As you cautiously pass into the interior of the keep, it becomes more and more obvious that the keep fell from a great explosion within. The walls are blackened, blistered and cracked from the force of the blast. Strangely, there are no bodies at all within the courtyard. Passage into the battlements and towers has long been collapsed, but the doors into the bailey are strangely intact.

Mixed in amongst the rubble are some strange pieces of black marble that seem to writhe and pulse when held in the hands of a living creature. Either a Knowledge (the Planes) or Knowledge (arcana) check at DC 15 + APL will reveal that it appears to be bits of the raw shadowstuff that makes up the Plane of Shadow, and that such materials are often used in the construction of permanent gates to a specific plane. PCs that keep a piece of the rock receive a *Shard of Shadowstuff* (see the *Treasure Summary*).

At this point the PCs have been noticed by the guardians inside, who have realized that they are not their master returned to them. They will wait until the PCs enter the bailey itself before striking.

The inside of the bailey is disturbingly neat, all of the rubble and ruin has been brushed to the side of this huge dining hall. But that is far from the most worrisome aspect of this place, for at the opposite end is a collection of banners and standards, all of the traditional Bissel rook, but rotated upside-down, making it look suspiciously like a black skull. Surrounding them, on the floor, are dozens of lit candles, casting muted, flickering light across the walls.

The guardians of the shrine will attack as soon as everyone has entered the hall. They attack with strange battle cries of "*Death to Walgar's puppets!*" and "*For the glory of the Black Margrave!*" They all are of ashen skin as a result of their time spent here. They all but disappear when in the darkness.

APL 8 (EL 10)

✦ **Captain Musaad ak'Kinar:** Shadow Creature Human (B) Ftr6; hp 59; see Appendix One.

✦ **Beligos Drossal:** Shadow Creature Human (OS) Rgr5/DeepwoodSniper1; hp 45; see Appendix One.

✦ **Jonas Williar:** Shadow Creature Human (S) Sor6; hp 27; see Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Captain Musaad ak'Kinar:** Shadow Creature Human (B) Ftr8; hp 78; see Appendix One.

☛ **Beligos Drossal:** Shadow Creature Human (OS) Rgr6/DeepwoodSniper2; hp 60; see Appendix One.

☛ **Jonas Williar:** Shadow Creature Human (S) Sor8; hp 36; see Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Captain Musaad ak'Kinar:** Shadow Creature Human (B) Ftr10; hp 98; see Appendix One.

☛ **Beligos Drossal:** Shadow Creature Human (OS) Rgr6/DeepwoodSniper2/Ftr2; hp 78; see Appendix One.

☛ **Jonas Williar:** Shadow Creature Human (S) Sor10; hp 45; see Appendix One.

Tactics: Musaad is the leader of this group, and has had many years to train with his men. However, his transformation has subtly altered his sanity a bit, and he will always attack a dwarf if at all possible. (During Evard's uprising, he earned a name for himself as a killer of many dwarves.)

Beligos will try to stay just outside of the PCs' light radius (likely 30 feet) so that he can fully *shadow blend*, and will plunk away at anyone that visibly looks like a wizard. If there are any halflings, he will pick on them first. (As a short man, he was ridiculed and called "Halfling" by his peers. All of whom were found dead by mysterious arrows through the throats. He still gets sensitive about it.)

Jonas is a fragile man, very afraid of physical contact with enemies. He will do his best to also stay out of sight using his *shadow blend* to cast spells from afar. Most of his spells deal with weakening and otherwise hindering the movements of enemies so that Beligos and Musaad can pick them off. If he can, he will lead with a *haste* on himself and his companions.

All of the men have been here for 14 years, though they have no idea how much time has passed. Though they will be surprised by any revelations made by PCs, they will try not to be taken alive, confident that their master will return for them. Their blind fanaticism to Evard is most unusual.

Encounter Five: Time Stand Still

Having destroyed the anachronistic defenders, the PCs may explore what is left of the lower levels of the keep. There are several exits to side chambers long collapsed, and a few hallways that lead to stairways up that are in even worse shape, lending credence to thoughts that the explosion must have come from the high tower that is no longer there. Searching the entire ruin is a long job, and will take the PCs at least eight to nine hours. Spellcasters

would be well advised to rest and replenish spells during this time, but leave it to the PCs to decide whether or not they do so.

But, they find some stairs that lead down into the depth of the keep...only to dead-end into rubble. Allow PCs a Search check DC 12 + APL (DC 8 + APL for dwarves) to find micro-fractures in one wall of the stairway...fractures appear to hide an open space behind the wall. With a half-hour of work, they should be able to dig out a hole in the brittle wall large enough to pass through.

Having found little else of interest in this forsaken place, you had begun to lose hope...until finding this shaft buried deep inside the bowels of the keep. You've cleared an area large enough to see through to a shaft of smooth stone, perhaps ten feet in diameter that plunges into the darkness below.

PCs with Stonecunning should be able to tell that there would not have been much construction lower in the keep, and that the shaft was definitely not crafted by tools. The shaft actually begins six feet above where they find it. It descends another one-hundred feet to the vault below. Evard would normally *dimension door* and *feather fall* down to the vault, which nobody else knew of.

At the bottom of the shaft is a small 10 foot square room, with one wall taken up completely by a massive round door made of steel. Burned into the surface of the door is that same image of a black skull that looks similar to the ones seen above. There are no other exits from the chamber.

The eye sockets in the door are actually covered by a *persistent image* spell that hides the elaborate locking mechanism. Allow PCs that do an extensive search of the door to make a Will save DC 12 + APL to realize that something is amiss. PCs that make a DC 15 Appraise (or an appropriate Craft) check can identify the metal of the vault door as mithral. In addition to the lock, it is also *arcane locked* at caster level 17th, thus to open it would require two *knock* spells, one for the *arcane lock*, and one for the man-made lock. Barring all of the above methods, a single spell of the Necromancy school cast at the door will cause it to open. A *detect magic* will reveal traces of necromancy on the door.

☛ **Vault Door:** hardness 15; hp 70; Break DC 30 (40 with *arcane lock*).

The huge metal door creaks open with a loud groan, and the rush of stale air in your faces is sickening. Beyond the door lies some sort of laboratory vault. The room is twenty foot square and littered with benches, tables and desks. Nearly all of them are covered with tools, bottles, books and worse. One slab appears to have a human woman laying on it, and another seems to have some poor soul who has had iron, weapon-studded limbs and plates attached to his very skin.

This was Evard's personal lab and office, where he developed spells such as *black tentacles*, and created a great many devices, such as the *Staff of Withering Death*. Try to get across the sense of wonder to arcane caster's in the party...this place is a treasure trove of arcane lore and lab to one of the mightiest archmagi in all Oerth. But also accentuate the cost at which this knowledge came. Many jars are filled with body parts of various creatures, and other jars are filled with their blood. Though this is a place of knowledge, it is a place of horror. Also note that much of the place is as Evard left it, for he did not expect to lose, let alone see Calignosus explode into the Plane of Shadow.

The lab room is under the effects of a permanent variant of *dimensional anchor* that fills it and affects all within.

There are a number of items of interest in this chamber:

- The iron-man is recognizable to those that have seen one before, as one of Evard's early attempts at crafting half-golems. This particular one was a volunteer from his army, who was willing to take the risk, and try for immortality. Evard failed, and the man is long dead...but I'm sure the player's will expect the worst from him.
- The various desks are covered with notes and papers that may be of great interest (see **Player Handout #1**). They deal in many subjects, both political and magical.
- The woman is perhaps the greatest treasure here. Attentive PCs that make either a DC 25 Heal check or a DC 30 Search check will notice that she is actually breathing almost too shallow to see. A Spellcraft check DC 28 will reveal that she is under the effects of a *temporal stasis* spell (caster level 17). She also seems to quietly mumble words occasionally...most of which are unintelligible gibberish except for one phrase: "Evard...no..." If the PCs manage to dispel the effect, see the information in Encounter Seven about her. She will be all but comatose and rather insane if the PCs try to awaken her here.
- An anvil and tongs show signs of much use, and a hole in a nearby wall is actually a magical forge, that lights to full heat in moments after saying the command word "*ignum*". Scattered around the area are many bits and pieces of weapons and armor, including some notes about Evard's experiments.
- Hidden inside a compartment in one of the desks (Search DC 15 + APL) are a set of Planar Forks (for the Abyss, the Nine Hells, the Plane of Shadow, and the Outlands), a stash of potions and scrolls, and a gruesome plaster deathmask of a man in intense agony, his mouth open in a cry of pain and suffering, with holes cut out for the eyes. This is the *deathmask of Evard* (see the

Treasure Summary for more information). If any PC handles the mask and brings it near their face, they must make a Reflex save DC 22, or else it attaches to their face, causing 2d6 damage, after which it seems to disappear.

After the players have searched for about ten minutes, read the following:

Without warning, the room begins to shudder, and you'd swear that a ripple just passed through the walls and floor. The shuddering is becoming a rumble and getting audibly louder.

Time is up for the valley of Calignosus, and the Plane of Shadow is beginning to de-stabilize in the area. The Plane itself is starting to devour the land here, and after it is done, little will have survived. When this happens, the spells binding the girl begin to unravel, and she screams, "***Evard! Please! Stop!***"

Give the PCs two minutes (real time) to decide what to do and get moving. After those two minutes, the ceiling will begin to start to cave-in and the floor will start to vanish into the nothingness of the Plane. Randomly choose a PC each round and have them make a DC 10 + APL Reflex save to avoid the falling stonework, which causes 2d6 damage, half if they save. After 5 rounds of this, the floor begins to fade. Choose one five-foot chunk of floor per round (or if you are not using a battlemat, have each PC pick a number between 1 and 16. Then roll a d20 each round to see what square vanishes. Treat rolls of 17-20 as if nothing fell that round, but cross off that number. Any duplicate rolls should be re-rolled.) If a PC is standing there, they must make a DC 10 + APL Reflex save or else fall into the void. If this happens, and they have no way to go after the PC, then that PC is gone (see *Lost in Shadow* in the Treasure Summary). If they have the means to fly or otherwise chase the falling character, they can go after them. Assume that they are falling at a speed of 60 ft/round, as the gravity of the Plane is not quite the same. If the PC has not been saved after 6 rounds, they are gone. A PC that flies after a falling companion (or falls and is able to save himself) can actually look up and see that the valley itself is like an island floating in the void...an island that is crumbling into nothingness.

If they haven't figured it out by now, it's time to leave. Once they begin to ascend the shaft, play up the suspense as they see the void eating away after them. Unless they stop to do something time consuming, nobody else should fall in, but the threat of oblivion should nip at their heels.

The woman will also begin to come to as soon as she is taken outside the lab. Though physically unharmed, she will babble incoherently and curl herself into a fetal ball, ignoring all of the PCs' attempts to aid her.

Encounter Six: Beneath, Between and Behind

With the very makeup of the valley collapsing around you, you flee back to the place you came in. Moments after you leave the keep, huge sections of it crack and disappear from view. Looking back a few seconds later, you can see that Calignosus, the lost fortress of Evard has fallen wholly into the void of the Plane of Shadow, lost forever.

When they encounter the next fight, the void should start fifteen feet behind them and forty feet above them. Each round, the sky drops five feet closer, and the land behind them comes ten feet closer (see **DM Aid: Map #1**). If a PC falls into the void, follow the rules from Encounter Five.

With the collapsing abyss at your heels, you finally see the pass out of the valley ahead... and a number of humanoid shapes waiting for you, unmoving forms at their feet.

APL 8 (EL 11)

🐉 **Advanced Cloakers** (3): hp 117; see Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 13)

🐉 **Dread Wraith**: hp 144; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Greater Shadows** (3): hp 81 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

🐉 **Nightwing**: hp 179; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Dread Wraith**: hp 144; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: All of these creatures are natives to the plane that are in no danger from the collapsing valley, but would like to keep these nice, living snacks here with them. None of them will pursue the PCs into the Prime Material Plane (where it is currently nice and sunny). The unmoving shapes are the remains of the Nightwatchers, led by Akkar Moultour (the gnome Bellowsgulch is also there). All are dead, but PCs may be rewarded if they get out with their bodies or some sign of their fates (such as Akkar's gaudy emerald holy symbol of Pelor)

APL 8: The humanoid shapes are actually *silent images* of the Nightwatchers created by the cloakers. They will lurk 80 feet up in the shadows controlling them until the PCs get close enough to attack. Give the PCs Spot checks (DC 15 + 2/ten feet out) as the shapes get into the light to realize that the figures match the dead bodies on the ground. One will keep up a moan in the hopes of unnerving the PCs.

APL 10: The Dread-Wraith and minions are cleaning up the scraps from a Nightwing, who killed the

Nightwatchers. As soon as the PCs get into visual range (keeping in mind the effects of the plane on light), they will see that something is amiss. All of the undead will spring attack in and out of the ground, unless the PCs look like they are going to escape, in which case they will interpose themselves.

APL 12: The Nightwing is soaring above *invisible*, and will have begun to summon undead (2 to 4 greater shadows will appear in d10 rounds, minus the one round that has already passed) immediately. It will have *see invisibility* active at all times, and will attempt to hit the PCs with as many ranged spell effects as possible before swooping in for flyby-attack magic drains.

Encounter Seven: Nothing for Something

As you cross the barrier between Oerth and the Shadow there is a loud sound, like the sizzle of a lightning bolt, then silence. Looking behind you, color has returned to the world and you almost go blind from its brilliance. Of the valley, all that remains is a crater, miles across.

Mance will then come out of hiding, looking just as chipper and arrogant as usual. He will ask lots of questions, curious about what they found, and especially about the woman they came out with. The farther they get from the valley, the better she will get. Kindly PCs may get the following out of her during moments of lucidity.

- Her name is Saralind
- Her last memories are of a man in black... torturing her mercilessly. Mocking her and calling her weak.
- She remembers praying to Heironeous for help, but even he wouldn't answer.
- Her father is a powerful man, sure to punish her captor. If pressed, she reveals that her father is a Baron, but refuses to say any more.

If any PC was cursed with the *deathmask* of Evard or allows her to see it, she will scream in mortal terror and go unresponsive again. She can actually see the mask on its host.

After a few hard days ride, you arrive back in Pellak. Even the weather seems to agree with your haste, as you have clear skies and perhaps what may be the first spring thaw making the trip that much easier. Pellak seems a happier place for it, with people in the streets smiling as they go about their business.

Tikeram rushes out to meet you at the Temple of Heironeous, and somewhere in the commotion, you notice that Mance has vanished.

Tikeram wants to hear stories, but quickly remembers his duty, and take them inside to the same room they were in before.

You wait in the room for nearly a half hour before the Margrave arrives. He storms in and looks you over, and demands, "Well, what have you brought us?"

As the PCs fill His Lofty Grace in on the events of their trip, allow any female PCs to make a Spot check DC 10 + APL. If they succeed, they can see him stealing glances at Saralind, obviously enraptured by her. If the PCs don't explain her first, the Margrave will interrupt them and ask about her. Hearing their story, he summons in a priest, who then ushers her out comfortingly. He says that they may be able to heal her mind, and if they can, then the Lady Imycina should be able to find out if she knows anything of use. A Knowledge (local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) check DC 18 will reveal that the Lady Imycina Trefeloess, the Baroness of Misty Hills, is supposedly the spymistress of Bissel and the leader of the Mist Chameleons.

Assuming the PCs tell him about their experiences, and show him any papers they found, he rounds the materials up and thanks them. If nobody has been cursed by the deathmask of Evard, he will expect it to be handed over.

Conclusion

"You have done the March, and myself a great deed this day. All of this information promises to enlighten us more on the enemy we face, and WILL destroy some day. I must ask that you keep your work most confidential, as we do not need to trouble the people of the March any more than they have been of late...and just in case Evard never found the place. Perhaps he will still be using resources to find Calignosus. You have won my personal favor and attention for these deeds...and I always repay my debts. Now, please take your leave of me, and may Heironeous always bless your blades." His Lofty Grace actually bows his head, almost imperceptibly, at you saying these words, and you leave him in deep thought about the future of the March.

If the PCs were successful, they are rewarded with the Personal Favor of the Margrave and a Military Commendation. If they retrieved the remains of the Nightwatchers or some sign of their fate, they receive the Favor of the Nightwatch. See the Treasure Summary for details on these three rewards.

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter Three

Defeat the shadows

APL 8 – 270 xp.

APL 10 – 330 xp.

APL 12 – 390 xp.

Encounter Four

Defeat the guardians

APL 8 – 300 xp.

APL 10 – 360 xp.

APL 12 – 420 xp.

Encounter Six

Defeat or escape the natives

APL 8 – 330 xp.

APL 10 – 390 xp.

APL 12 – 450 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Judge may allocate up to the following for good roleplaying

APL 8 – 225 xp.

APL 10 – 270 xp.

APL 12 – 315 xp.

Total Possible Experience

APL 8 – 1,125 xp.

APL 10 – 1,350 xp.

APL 12 – 1,575 xp.

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters come upon 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. In the case of potions, they may use *Spellcraft* to identify them. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

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

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter Four:

APL 8: L: 175 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 greataxe (193 gp), +1 composite longbow (+3 Str bonus) (225 gp), gauntlets of ogre power (333 gp), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp), arcane scroll of Evard's black tentacles (58 gp), potion of mage armor (4 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp).

APL 10: L: 37 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 full plate (221 gp), +1 bane (dwarf) greataxe (693 gp), +1 frost composite longbow (+3 Str bonus) (725 gp), gauntlets of ogre power (333 gp), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp), arcane scroll of Evard's black tentacles (58 gp), potion of mage armor (4 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp), boots of the winterlands (208 gp), slippers of spider climbing (400 gp).

APL 12: L: 29 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 light fortification full plate (471 gp), +2 mithral chain shirt (425 gp), +1 bane (dwarf) greataxe (693 gp), +1 frost composite longbow (+3 Str bonus) (725 gp), gauntlets of ogre power (333 gp), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp), arcane scroll of Evard's black tentacles – 7th level caster (58 gp), potion of mage armor (4 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp), boots of the winterlands (208 gp), slippers of spider climbing (400 gp), chime of opening (250 gp), circlet of persuasion (375 gp), necklace of adaptation (750 gp).

Encounter Five:

All APLs: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: planar fork – the Abyss (17 gp), planar fork – the Nine Hells (17 gp), planar fork – the

Plane of Shadow (17 gp), planar fork – the Outlands (17 gp), arcane scroll of enlarge person – 1st level caster (2 gp), arcane scroll of false life – 2nd level caster (13 gp), arcane scroll of blur – 2nd level caster (13 gp), arcane scroll of blindness/deafness – 2nd level caster (13 gp), potion of mage armor (4 gp), potion of jump (4 gp), potion of protection from good (4 gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 8: L: 175 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,808 gp – Total: 1,983 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 37 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 3,637 gp – Total: 3,674 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 29 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 5,687 gp – Total: 5,716 gp (3,300 gp).

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 8:

- ❖ Gauntlets of Ogre Power (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Cloak of Charisma +2 (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Gloves of Dexterity +2 (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Arcane Scroll of Evard's Black Tentacles (Adventure, 7th level caster, DMG)
- ❖ Scarab, Golembane (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Planar Fork – the Abyss (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ Planar Fork – the Nine Hells (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ Planar Fork – the Plane of Shadow (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ Planar Fork – the Outlands (Adventure, see above)

APL 10 (all items from APL 8 plus):

- ❖ +1 Frost Composite Longbow (+3 Str bonus) (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ +1 Bane (Dwarf) Greataxe (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Boots of the Winterlands (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Slippers of Spider Climbing (Adventure, DMG)

APL 12 (all items from APL 8, 10 plus):

- ❖ +2 Mithral Chain Shirt (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ +1 Light Fortification Full Plate (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Chime of Opening (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Circlet of Persuasion (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ Necklace of Adaptation (Adventure, DMG)

Special

Planar Fork – the Plane of Shadow

This small piece of metal has shadows upon its surface that are constantly moving. This item can be used as the necessary focus for the spell *plane shift*. This particular fork only allows travel to the Plane of Shadow.

Market Price: 200 gp; Weight: - lbs.

Planar Fork – the Abyss

This small piece of metal is constantly shifting in temperature and firmness. This item can be used as the necessary focus for the spell *plane shift*. This particular fork only allows travel to the Abyss.

Market Price: 200 gp; Weight: - lbs.

Planar Fork – the Nine Hells

This small piece of metal is extremely hard and rigid. This item can be used as the necessary focus for the spell *plane shift*. This particular fork only allows travel to the Nine Hells.

Market Price: 200 gp; Weight: - lbs.

Planar Fork – the Outlands

This small piece of metal is very smooth and rounded, showing no sharp edges. This item can be used as the necessary focus for the spell *plane shift*. This particular fork only allows travel to the Outlands.

Market Price: 200 gp; Weight: - lbs.

Lost in Shadow

You have fallen into the void of the Plane of Shadow, from which few ever return. This PC is immediately taken out of play. Please contact the Bissel Triad for more details.

Favor of the Nightwatch

For brining back a sign of the fate of their lost agents, the Nightwatch has promised you aid. If you are a member of the Nightwatch, you may use this specific favor twice, rather than the single use a non-member receives. If you have any additional favors of the Nightwatch, you may trade them in for the same benefits listed here. Each use of this favor during a Bissel Regional adventure grants access to purchase one, and only one, of the following:

- Divine Scroll of Remove Curse (5th level caster).
- Divine Scroll of Break Enchantment (7th level caster).
- Divine Scroll of Restoration (7th level caster).
- Divine Scroll of Heal (11th level caster).
- Staff of Healing.

Military Commendation

For your good work, the powers on high have granted you a commendation in the Great Army of Bissel. Please contact the Bissel Triad for further details.

Personal Favor of the Margrave

You have done a great task for His Lofty Grace, the Margrave Larrangin, and he repays his debts in full. You may hold onto this Personal Favor to see if it may have

some later use OR trade it in (mark it as consumed) during a Bissel Regional or Sheldomar Valley Metaregional adventure to gain access to purchase one, and only one, of the following:

- One *raise dead* spell cast on your behalf at the Temple of Heironeous in Pellak. The cost is 3,500 gp and 2 TU.
- One weapon, armor, or shield upgrade (from the DMG) costing 8,000 gp or less (Frequency: Adventure).
- One wondrous item (from the DMG) costing 8,000 gp or less (Frequency: Adventure).

Shard of Shadowstuff

You have kept a piece of the strange shadowstuff that may have once made up a great Portal to the Plane of Shadow. It has a strange effect on light, causing shadows to seem somehow longer and deeper when you are near them. If you have the shard in hand, you receive a +1 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when in shadowy light or darker. The shard is in no way cursed, and may be discarded at any time. It can not be sold or traded. It may have a further use in the future.

Deathmask of Evard (Cursed)

You have been bonded to a strange funerary mask, whose plaster visage is contorted in unbearable pain. It may or may not be that of Evard himself, based on the reactions of the woman Saralind. Nothing short of a *true-seeing* will reveal its presence on your face, and only you can see it otherwise (with the exception of Saralind). It and you radiate as strong evil while it is worn. Nothing short of a *miracle* or *wish* can remove it. While wearing it, you have the spell-like ability to *detect undead* once a day, and all of your saves vs. necromancy spells and effects are at +2. Unfortunately, it also causes all of your saves against evocation spells and effects to be at -3. Periodically, you hear an unintelligible whispering voice. When it happens, it sometimes gets louder when you move in one direction or another, different every time. All of the masks abilities/effects function at a caster level of 15th. More information about this deathmask will be revealed in future Bissel events and adventures.

Appendix One: NPCs

APL 8

Encounter Three

Advanced Shadows: Incorporeal undead; CR 4; Size medium; HD 7d12; hp 63; Init +2; Spd Fly 40ft. (good); AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk +3; Grp -; Atk incorporeal touch +5 melee touch (d6 Str); Full Atk incorporeal touch +5 melee touch (d6 Str); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Create spawn, strength drain; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6; Str -, Dex 15, Con -, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12*, listen +9, search +4, spot +9; Alertness, dodge, mobility. * Shadows receive a +4 racial bonus to hide checks in shadowy areas. In brightly illuminated areas, they receive a -4 on hide checks.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

Encounter Four

Captain Musaad ak'Kinar: shadow creature human (B) Ftr6; CR 7; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 6d10+18; hp 59; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +9 armor); Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk greataxe +12 melee (d12+9/X3); Full Atk greataxe +12/+7 melee (d12+9/X3); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA -; SQ cold resistance 11, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, fast healing 2; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 16 (18), Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Move Silently +2*, Power attack, cleave, weapon focus (greataxe), weapon specialization (greataxe), combat reflexes, blind-fight. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Possessions: Masterwork full plate, gauntlets of ogre power, +1 greataxe.

Beligos Drossal: Shadow creature human (OS) Rgr5/DeepwoodSniper1; CR 7; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 6d8+12; hp 45; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 45 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (armor +4, Dex +4); Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk longbow +12 ranged (d8+3+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or greatsword +10 melee (2d6+3/19-20 X2); Full Atk longbow +12/+7 melee (d8+4/19-20 X3) or rapid shot longbow +10/+10/+5 ranged

(d8+3+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or greatsword +10/+5 melee (2d6+4/19-20 X2); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Favored enemy Halflings +4, favored enemy elves +2, combat style (archery), keen, range increment bonus +10 ft.; SQ Wild empathy +3, cold resistance 11, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, evasion; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 16 (18), Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (bowyer/fletcher) +8, Hide +13, Listen +9, Move Silently +19*, Search +8, Spot +9, Survival +9, Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Tracking, Endurance, Weapon Focus (longbow), Precise Shot, Rapid Shot. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Evasion (Ex): Beligos can avoid even magical and unusual attacks with great agility. If he makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage.

Keen Arrows (Ex): At 1st level, all projectiles the deepwood sniper fires behave as if they were keen weapons in addition to any other properties they might possess. Thus, a normal arrow fired by a deepwood sniper has a threat range of 19-20 instead of 20. This effect does not stack with any other keen effect.

Range Increment Bonus (Ex): With each level the deepwood sniper gains, the range increments of her projectile weapons increase by +10 feet (added after all multipliers). Thus a 10th-level deepwood sniper who has the Far Shot feat would have a 280-foot range increment with a heavy crossbow (120 feet x 1.5 + 100 feet).

Possessions: chain shirt, +1 composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), gloves of dexterity +2, masterwork greatsword.

Jonas Williar: Shadow creature human (S) Sor6; CR 7; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 6d4+12; hp 27; Init +2; Spd 45 ft.; AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (mage armor +4, Dex +3); Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk dagger +3 melee (d4/19-20 x2); Full Atk dagger +3 melee (d4/19-20 x2); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA -; SQ familiar (black cat), cold resistance 11, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, mirror image; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16 (18).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +2, Move Silently +11*, Spellcraft +10, Spot +2; Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (ray), Point Blank Shot, Combat Casting. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear

into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Mirror Image (Sp): Jonas can cast a *mirror image* on himself once per day as a 5th level caster (d4+1 images).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/6/4 per day; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level Necromancy): 0 – *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st – *grease*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*; 2nd – *blindness/deafness*, *scorching ray*; 3rd – *ray of exhaustion*.

Possessions: Cloak of charisma +2, arcane scroll of Evard's black tentacles (caster level 7th), potion of mage armor, dagger, golembane scarab.

Encounter Six

Advanced Cloakers: CR 8; Huge aberration; HD 12d8+60; hp 117; Init +6; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (natural +10, Dex +2, Size -2); Base Atk +9; Grp +27; Atk tail slap +18 (d8+10); Full Atk tail slap +18 melee (d8+10) and bite +12 melee (d6+5); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft. (10 ft. with bite); SA Moan, engulf; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., shadow shift; AL CN; SV Fort +9 Ref +6, Will +9; Str 30, Dex 14, Con 21, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Listen +19, Move Silently +18, Spot +19; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Ability Focus (moan), Weapon Focus (tail).

Moan (Ex): A cloaker can emit a dangerous subsonic moan as a standard action. By changing the frequency, the cloaker can cause one of four effects. Cloakers are immune to these sonic, mind affecting attacks. Unless otherwise specified, a creature that successfully saves against one of these effects cannot be affected by the same moan effect from the same cloaker for 24 hours. All save DCs for moan effects are Charisma-based.

-**Unnerve:** Anyone within a 60-foot spread automatically takes a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls. Those forced to hear the moan for more than 6 consecutive rounds must succeed on a DC 21 Will save or enter a trance, unable to attack or defend themselves until the moaning stops.

-**Fear:** Anyone within a 30-foot spread must succeed on a DC 21 Will save or become panicked for 2 rounds.

-**Nausea:** Anyone in a 30-foot cone must succeed on a DC 21 Fortitude save or be overcome by nausea and weakness. Affected characters fall prone and become nauseated for 1d4+1 rounds.

-**Stupor:** A single creature within 30 feet of the cloaker must succeed on a DC 21 Fortitude save or be affected as though by a *hold monster* spell for 5 rounds. Even after a successful save, the creature must repeat the save if the cloaker uses this effect again.

Engulf (Ex): A cloaker can try to wrap a large or smaller creature in its body as a standard action. The cloaker attempts a grapple that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and bites the engulfed victim with a +4

bonus on its attack roll. It can still use its whip-like tail to strike at other targets. Attacks that hit an engulfing cloaker deal half their damage to the monster and half to the trapped victim.

Shadow Shift (Su): A cloaker can manipulate shadows. This ability is effective only in shadowy areas and has three possible effects.

- **Obscure Vision:** The cloaker gains concealment (20% miss chance) for 1d4 rounds.

- **Dancing Images:** This effect duplicates a *mirror image* spell (caster level 12th).

- **Silent Image:** This effect duplicates a *silent image* spell (DC 19, caster level 12th). The save DC is Charisma-based.

APL 10

Encounter Three

Advanced Shadows: Incorporeal undead; CR 6; Size medium; HD 9d12; hp 81; Init +2; Spd Fly 40ft. (good); AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection); Base Atk +4; Grp -; Atk incorporeal touch +7 melee touch; Full Atk incorporeal touch +7 melee touch (d6 Str); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Create spawn, strength drain; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7; Str -, Dex 16, Con -, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14*, listen +10, search +4, spot +10; Alertness, dodge, mobility, spring attack. * Shadows receive a +4 racial bonus to hide checks in shadowy areas. In brightly illuminated areas, they receive a -4 on hide checks.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

Encounter Four

Captain Musaad ak'Kinar: Shadow creature human (B) Ftr8; CR 9; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 8d10+24; hp 78; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +9 armor); Base Atk +8; Grp +12; Atk greataxe +14 melee (d12+9/X3); Full Atk greataxe +14/+9 melee (d12+9/X3); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA -; SQ cold resistance 13, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, fast healing 2, mirror image; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 17 (19), Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Intimidate +11, Jump +10, Move Silently +2*, Power attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe), Combat Reflexes, Blind-fight, Improved Sunder. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial

illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Mirror Image (Sp): Musaad can cast a *mirror image* on himself once per day as a 5th level caster (d4+1 images).

Possessions: +1 full plate, gauntlets of ogre power, +1 bane (dwarf) greataxe.

Beligos Drossal: Shadow creature human (OS) Rgr6/DeepwoodSniper2; CR 9; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 8d8+16; hp 59; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 45 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (armor +4, Dex +4); Base Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk longbow +14 ranged (d8+4+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or greatsword +12 melee (2d6+3/ 19-20 X2); Full Atk longbow +14/+9 ranged (d8+4+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or rapid shot longbow +12/+12/+7 ranged (d8+4+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or greatsword +12/+7 melee (2d6+4/19-20 X2); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Favored enemy Halflings +4, favored enemy elves +2, combat style (archery), keen, range increment bonus +10 ft.; SQ Wild empathy +4, cold resistance 13, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, evasion, +2 luck bonus to all saves; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 17 (19), Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (bowyer/fletcher) +9, Hide +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +21*, Search +9, Spot +11, Survival +10, Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Tracking, Endurance, Weapon Focus (longbow), Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Manyshot. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Evasion (Ex): Beligos can avoid even magical and unusual attacks with great agility. If he makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage.

Keen Arrows (Ex): At 1st level, all projectiles the deepwood sniper fires behave as if they were keen weapons in addition to any other properties they might possess. Thus, a normal arrow fired by a deepwood sniper has a threat range of 19-20 instead of 20. This effect does not stack with any other keen effect.

Range Increment Bonus (Ex): With each level the deepwood sniper gains, the range increments of her projectile weapons increase by +10 feet (added after all multipliers). Thus a 10th-level deepwood sniper who has the Far Shot feat would have a 280-foot range increment with a heavy crossbow (120 feet x 1.5 + 100 feet).

Concealment Reduction (Ex): When the deepwood sniper reaches 2nd level, her miss chance against opponents with concealment drops by 10%. Thus, she has a miss chance of 10% rather than 20% against an opponent with normal concealment. This ability never reduces her miss chance against any opponent below 0%.

Magic Weapon (Sp): At 2nd level, the character can produce an effect identical to that of a *magic weapon* spell

cast by a cleric of her deepwood sniper level. This ability is usable once per day on projectile weapons only.

Projectile Improved Critical (Ex): When the deepwood sniper reaches 2nd level, the critical damage multipliers of all her projectile weapons increase by +1. Thus, an arrow that normally deals x3 damage on a critical hit instead does x4 damage in her hands.

Possessions: chain shirt, +1 frost composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), gloves of dexterity +2, boots of the winterlands, masterwork greatsword.

Jonas Williar: Shadow creature human (S) Sor8; CR 9; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 8d4+16; hp 36; Init +2; Spd 45 ft.; AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (mage armor +4, Dex +3); Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk dagger +4 melee (d4/19-20 x2); Full Atk dagger +4 melee (d4/19-20 x2); Space/Reach 5 ft./ 5 ft.; SA - ; SQ familiar (black cat), cold resistance 13, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, mirror image, fast healing 2; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 17 (19).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15, Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +2, Move Silently +11*, Spellcraft +12, Spot +2; Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (ray), Point Blank Shot, Combat Casting. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Mirror Image (Sp): Jonas can cast a *mirror image* on himself once per day as a 5th level caster (d4+1 images).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/7/6/4 per day; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level Necromancy): 0 – detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – expeditious retreat, grease, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd – blindness/deafness, false life, scorching ray; 3rd – haste, ray of exhaustion; 4th – enervation.

Possessions: Cloak of charisma +2, arcane scroll of Evard's black tentacles (caster level 7th), potion of mage armor, dagger, golembane scarab, slippers of spider climbing.

APL 12

Encounter Four

Captain Musaad ak'Kinar: Shadow creature human (B) Ftr10; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 10d10+30; hp 98; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +9 armor); Base Atk +10; Grp +14; Atk greataxe +17 melee (d12+9/X3); Full Atk greataxe +17/+12 melee (d12+9/X3); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA - ; SQ cold resistance 15, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, fast healing 2, mirror image; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 17 (19), Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Intimidate +13, Jump +12, Move Silently +2*, Power attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus

(greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe), Combat Reflexes, Blind-fight, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Greater Weapon Focus (greataxe). *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Mirror Image (Sp): Musaad can cast a *mirror image* on himself once per day as a 5th level caster (d4+1 images).

Possessions: +1 *light fortification full plate*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, +1 *bane (dwarf) greataxe*, *chime of opening*.

Beligos Drossal: Shadow creature human (OS) Rgr6/DeepwoodSniper2/Ftr2; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 8d8+2d10+20; hp 78; Init +8 (Dex, improved initiative); Spd 45 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (armor +6, Dex +4); Base Atk +10; Grp +13; Atk longbow +16 ranged (d8+4+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or greataxe +14 melee (2d6+3/19-20 X2); Full Atk longbow +16/+11 ranged (d8+4+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or rapid shot longbow +14/+14/+9 ranged (d8+4+d6 frost/19-20 X3) or greataxe +14/+9 melee (2d6+4/19-20 X2); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Favored enemy Halflings +4, favored enemy elves +2, combat style (archery), keen, range increment bonus +10 ft.; SQ Wild empathy +4, cold resistance 15, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, evasion, +2 luck bonus to all saves; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 17 (19), Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (bowyer/fletcher) +9, Hide +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +22*, Search +9, Spot +12, Survival +10; Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Tracking, Endurance, Weapon Focus (longbow), Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Manyshot, Improved Initiative, Dodge. *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Evasion (Ex): Beligos can avoid even magical and unusual attacks with great agility. If he makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage.

Keen Arrows (Ex): At 1st level, all projectiles the deepwood sniper fires behave as if they were keen weapons in addition to any other properties they might possess. Thus, a normal arrow fired by a deepwood sniper has a threat range of 19-20 instead of 20. This effect does not stack with any other keen effect.

Range Increment Bonus (Ex): With each level the deepwood sniper gains, the range increments of her projectile weapons increase by +10 feet (added after all multipliers). Thus a 10th-level deepwood sniper who has the Far Shot feat would have a 280-foot range increment with a heavy crossbow (120 feet x 1.5 + 100 feet).

Concealment Reduction (Ex): When the deepwood sniper reaches 2nd level, her miss chance against opponents with concealment drops by 10%. Thus, she has a miss chance of 10% rather than 20% against an opponent with normal concealment. This ability never reduces her miss chance against any opponent below 0%.

Magic Weapon (Sp): At 2nd level, the character can produce an effect identical to that of a *magic weapon* spell cast by a cleric of her deepwood sniper level. This ability is usable once per day on projectile weapons only.

Projectile Improved Critical (Ex): When the deepwood sniper reaches 2nd level, the critical damage multipliers of all her projectile weapons increase by +1. Thus, an arrow that normally deals x3 damage on a critical hit instead does x4 damage in her hands.

Possessions: +2 *mithral chain shirt*, +1 *frost composite longbow* (+3 Str bonus), *gloves of dexterity* +2, *boots of the winterlands*, *circlet of persuasion*, *masterwork greatsword*.

Jonas Williar: Shadow creature human (S) Sor10; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (augmented humanoid); HD 10d4+20; hp 45; Init +2; Spd 45 ft.; AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (mage armor +4, Dex +3); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk dagger +5 melee (d4/19-20 x2); Full Atk dagger +5 melee (d4/19-20 x2); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA -; SQ familiar (black cat), cold resistance 15, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, shadow blend, mirror image, fast healing 2; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 17 (19).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +17, Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +2, Move Silently +11*, Spellcraft +14, Spot +2; Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (ray), Point Blank Shot, Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy). *Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus to move silently checks.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Mirror Image (Sp): Jonas can cast a *mirror image* on himself once per day as a 5th level caster (d4+1 images).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/7/7/6/3 per day; save DC 14 + spell level, 16 + spell level Necromancy): 0 – detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue; 1st – expeditious retreat, grease, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd – bear's endurance, blindness/deafness, false life, scorching ray; 3rd – haste, ray of exhaustion, slow; 4th – enervation, Otiluke's resilient sphere; 5th – shadow evocation (which functions at 30% power in the Plane of Shadow).

Possessions: Cloak of charisma +2, arcane scroll of Evard's black tentacles (caster level 7th), potion of mage armor, dagger, golembane scarab, slippers of spider climbing, necklace of adaptation.

Appendix Two: The Plane of Shadow

The Plane of Shadow is a dimly lit dimension that is both coterminous to and coexistent with the Material Plane. It overlaps the Material Plane much as the Ethereal Plane does, so a planar traveler can use the Plane of Shadow to cover great distances quickly.

The Plane of Shadow is also coterminous to other planes. With the right spell, a character can use the Plane of Shadow to visit other realities.

The Plane of Shadow is a world of black and white; color itself has been bleached from the environment. It is otherwise appears similar to the Material Plane.

Despite the lack of light sources, various plants, animals, and humanoids call the Plane of Shadow home.

The Plane of Shadow is magically morphic, and parts continually flow onto other planes. As a result, creating a precise map of the plane is next to impossible, despite the presence of landmarks.

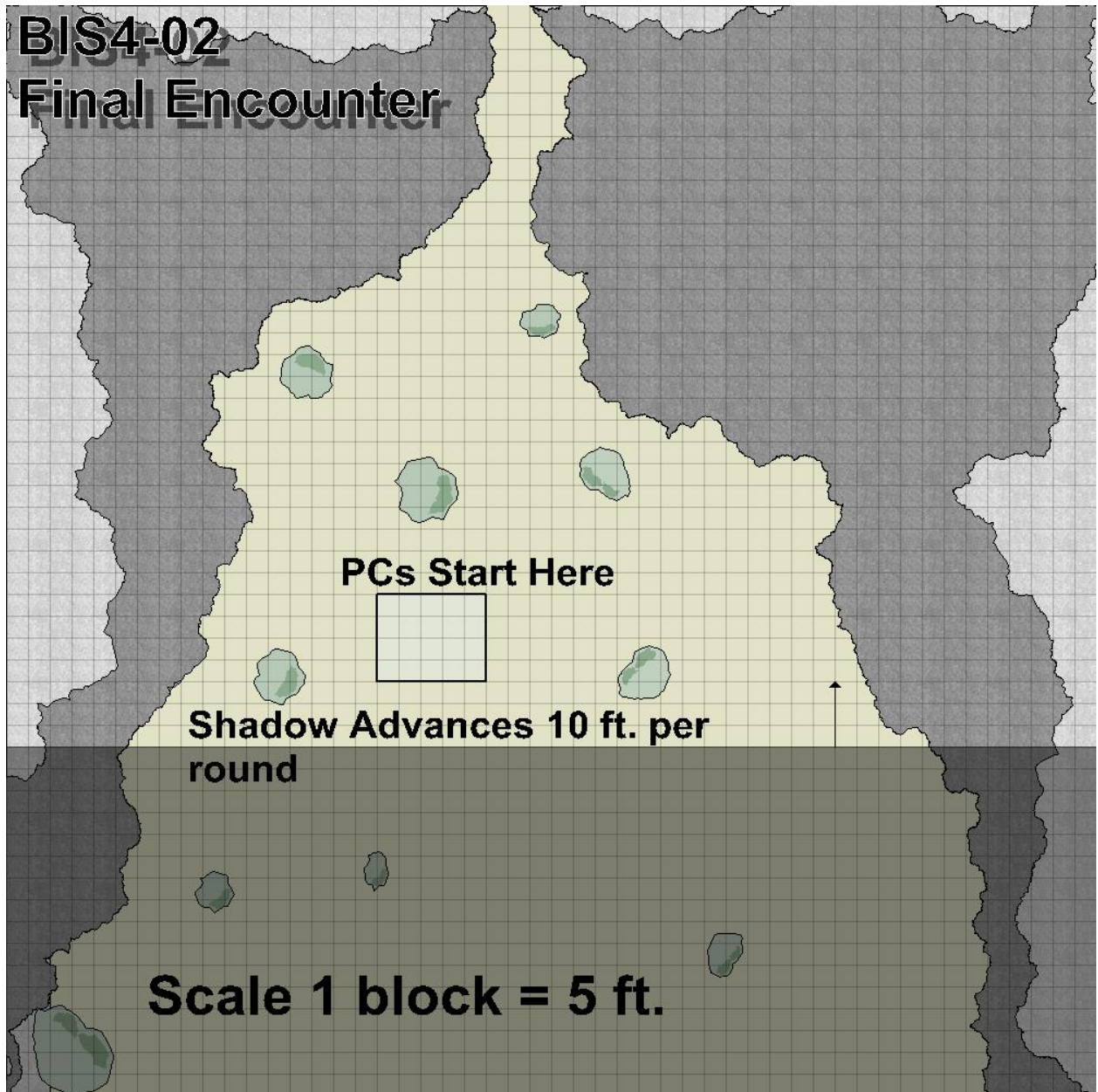
The Plane of Shadow has the following traits:

- Magically morphic. Certain spells modify the base material of the Plane of Shadow. The utility and power of these spells within the Plane of Shadow make them particularly useful for explorers and natives alike.
- Mildly neutral-aligned.
- Enhanced magic. Spells with the shadow descriptor are enhanced on the Plane of Shadow. Such spells are cast as though they were prepared with the Maximize Spell feat, though they don't require the higher spell slots.

Furthermore, specific spells become more powerful on the Plane of Shadow. *Shadow conjuration* and *shadow evocation* spells are 30% as powerful as the conjurations and evocations they mimic (as opposed to 20%). *Greater shadow conjuration* and *greater shadow evocation* are 70% as powerful (not 60%), and a *shades* spell conjures at 90% of the power of the original (not 80%).
- Impeded magic. Spells that use or generate light or fire may fizzle when cast on the Plane of Shadow. A spellcaster attempting a spell with the light or fire descriptor must succeed on a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the level of the spell). Spells that produce light are less effective in general, because all light sources have their ranges halved on the Plane of Shadow.

Despite the dark nature of the Plane of Shadow, spells that produce, use, or manipulate darkness are unaffected by the plane.

DM Aid: Map #1



Player Handout #1

An interesting passage from a very old looking leather journal:

"Though he means well, my friend Walgar is not proactive enough to keep the March in line...perhaps someday something might occur to wake him up. For all of our sakes, I hope so. I fear that there are those in the Sheldomar that fancy taking the March back...they scheme and plot of it behind closed doors and it sickens me."

From a newer leather covered journal on a work desk:

"I often wonder how things would be different if I had made a very different decision so very long ago. The burden on my soul would surely be lighter, but would the March be a better place? I suppose we will all find out very soon. Goodbye, father."

And later in the same journal...

"I met with Walgar again today. He has absolutely no idea what is about to happen. It's rather sad really, to see what could have been a great man made into a simpering, sleepy eyed fool. I might even feel guilty afterwards if he is unable to put up a fight."

Near the very end of the journal:

"Preparations are complete. Many deaths paved this path...but I must remember that these deaths are my fuel...my motivation. When it is all done, no one will need fear death ever again. The cabals have served their purpose, and will rain down unholy death on all of the sheep...unless the shepherd stands tall and defends them."

On some loose papers on a work-bench:

"The golem-work is tedious...but I am close. Those milky eyed little curs will yield their secrets to me in one way or another."

"She mocks me with her weakness. She sickens me with her fear and revulsion. But as with the first two, her death will pave the way to my immortality."

A bundle of papers, dated fourteen years ago this week:

"I am overjoyed that the old dog has shown his teeth. His whores are fighting like men possessed (possessed with a love of money, no doubt), and the cabals are weakening. A pleasant surprise."

The last sheets in the bundle:

"All the way to my front door he has come, his toy soldiers with him. I have released the final cabalists from service, to ensure that things happen correctly, one way or another...though I wonder if I should have let Altgarn keep the Staff. I believe it has a mind of its own. Excellent. The sycophant deserves whatever fate it deals him."

"He actually calls out to me, thinking that I will end the fighting and go quietly. Walgar, old friend, you only accentuate your own weakness. If you were intelligent enough, you'd see that what I do is the RIGHT thing to do. The only way to make the changes needed to survive. Dark clouds brew, and it would appear that I am the only one with the foresight to see it. Enough idle musing though, it is time. I hear the rumble of the trebuchet on my walls."

"It is time to activate the portal and end it all. And herald the dusk before the dark."