

Vanity and Vexation

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[™]

Bissel Regional Adventure

Version 0.3

by Crystal and Jay Babcock

Circle Reviewer: <Name>

Playtesters: Dashiell Anderson, Joe Boerjes, Lee Burton, Matt Maranda, Tanis O'Connor, Jon Sedich, Nopalzin Torres

In any story there are heroes and villains, and the distinctions between them are usually clear. In Bissel, however, a few of those celebrated heroes have become accustomed to the prestige that comes with the role, and have blurred the lines. Their greed and short-sightedness may cause the downfall of the March. A Bissel regional adventure for PCs of APLs 2-12, and Part Two of the *Sun after the Storm* 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.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM license, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

This is an official RPGA[®] play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.rpga.com.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, LIVING GREYHAWK, D&D REWARDS, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc and the adventure author or authors.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at www.rpga.com.

For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at rshah21@delic.com. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the *Appendices*.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Bissel. Characters native to Bissel pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

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

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook.

NOTE TO THE JUDGE

This adventure contains an investigation puzzle, and a fairly difficult one at that. This is completely intentional. It is not expected that every table will be able to solve it.

If the players are having real difficulty with the investigation, you may give them *Player Handout 8 – Hints for the Investigation*. **You are not authorized to give them any other hints.** The investigation puzzle is intended to be difficult, and their success or failure (and the campaign consequences) must reflect that.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

While the people of Bissel have won many battles, Evard the Necromancer is winning the war. His progress was, for a time, halted – and only by spending every available resource to keep his forces from advancing south from Thornward. During the summer of CY 595, Evard struck forth with another offensive, pushing through the already weakened front lines and heading directly for Pellak and total victory. Now that the year has progressed, his troops – relatively unhampered by the bitter cold of a Bissel winter – have begun making further advances. The truth is evident to all: within a few weeks, Evard will have won the war.

It is now, while nearly all eyes are distracted by the conflict on the front lines that an investment made in the past may pay off, and signal the turning point in the war.

In BIS4-02 *Two Halves of a Whole*, the Bissel Free Companies and the Knights of the Watch found evidence of two weapons that could be of use against the forces threatening Bissel – the first, a spellbook that contains the research needed to create powerful spells that can destroy powerful undead, the second, a set of rituals that Evard used to awaken a smaller undead force that has been causing issue on the border of Rhomstaff and Nightwatch. Brave adventurers recovered the weapons, but the result was less than perfect – it was discovered that only one of the weapons could be used. The Bissel Ruling Council had to choose between using one weapon immediately for a short-term victory, and researching the other weapon for a longer-term advantage. They opted for the latter.

Scholars from the Guild of the Arcane Path and the Churches of Heironeous and Pelor worked tirelessly in secret to complete the research.

In BIS5-03 *Trials and Triumphs* the weapon was taken to an undead-infested spot to be field tested. It was discovered that the combination of divine power and sunlight caused the weapon to activate with a startling potency. It was decided that it would be taken to the temple of Pelor in Nightwatch, where a sacred annual ceremony is about to take place. If the weapon works with the same efficiency, it should hamper undead within the barony, giving Bissel forces a front-line position to work from.

Meanwhile...

Dralthus Garlnorn doesn't consider himself to be a bad guy. Sure, he betrayed his own people and country. And yes, he is a necromancer in Evard's service. But that doesn't mean he should be denied certain unalienable rights – namely wealth and affluence. In fact, that's why he joined up with Evard in the first place. It certainly wasn't for 'the cause'. He simply saw the winning side in this little conflict, and joined up.

Dralthus was summoned one morning to Evard's audience chamber. The dark lord gave him a task: he was to take his undead legion to Rhomstaff, to seize control of a section of the Black Margrave's old turf.

Days later, Dralthus had completed his task – when he was set upon by a Nightwatch patrol, led by a powerful Pelorite cleric. He watched with dismay as his minions turned to dust around him. He quickly began casting his regimen of enhancement spells – preparing himself for personal combat – when he noticed something odd: the

patrol was simply leaving – departing the battlefield, without even confronting him.

The necromancer was stunned. He quickly withdrew to rebuild his forces and ponder the occurrence. When the answer came to him, an evil smile crossed his face. He knew a secret – one powerful enough that with it, he knew he could ensure his continued survival.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs are recruited to escort Saralind Markavan, the Regent of the March of Bissel, to an estate within the barony of Rhomstaff. The regent has received a message from an old acquaintance – now a necromancer in Evard's service – requesting an audience under a flag of truce.

Arriving at the manor, the PCs find a group of undead, pounding on the gates – it would seem that Evard also would like a word with Dralthus. The party is forced to defeat them before they can gain entrance to the manor house.

Once inside, Dralthus makes Saralind an offer – he will reveal what he knows, in exchange for his guaranteed survival. Once she reluctantly agrees, he relates the tale of his encounter with the Pelorite patrol – clear evidence that something foul is going on within the clerical order.

It is realized that the weapon (from BIS5-03 *Trials and Triumphs*) is currently at the temple in Truelight. Saralind dispatches the PCs to investigate, at once.

Arriving at the temple, the archpriest agrees to cooperate with the investigation – he has had his own concerns about recent happenings. The PCs begin to investigate.

On the morning of the second day, a solar – a servant of Pelor himself – arrives, and it is revealed that more may be at stake than was originally expected.

Further investigation leads the PCs to suspect two young priests. Catching up with them at a secret meeting, the two attack using items stolen from the Vault of Forbidden Magic. Once the PCs defeat their summoned allies, they agree to surrender – and reveal the mastermind.

The PCs chase after the mastermind, and if they can stop him from disrupting the ritual, the weapon activates with unexpected results.

Introduction: Summoned Once More

The PCs receive a letter from Baron Cainlan Rashedra, in which he requests an immediate audience.

Encounter 1: A Routine Assignment

The PCs meet with Baron Rashedra. He informs them of their task, and sends them off to the Barony of Rhomstaff.

Encounter 2: Under Cover of Darkness

The PCs meet up with Father Sollus and Lady Saralind at the roadhouse in Rhomstaff.

Encounter 3: Enemy at the Gates

The party heads to the manor where Dralthus is holed up. A fight ensues when they encounter some of Evard's minions.

Encounter 4: Lesser of Two Evils

The party meets with Dralthus Garlnorn, agree to the compromise, and hear about his encounter with the corrupt Pelorites.

Encounter 5: Sweeping the Clouds Away

The PCs head to Truelight, and the temple of Pelor. They catch a glimpse of the Rite of Clarity in progress, and meet with the Archcleric.

Encounter 6: Asking Around

The PCs do a little investigating, trying to identify the corrupt Pelorite.

Encounter 8: A Note From Above

The next morning a solar arrives. The Archcleric is briefed on the weapon. The PCs are told about a break-in at the Vault of Forbidden Magic.

Encounter 9: The Boys Are Back In Town

The PCs interrogate the newly-arrived solar, and a patrol captain that has returned early.

Encounter 10: Look Out Below

The PCs investigate the chambers of Captain Tyran Stel, the first of the corrupted young priests.

Encounter 11: Just a Little Peek

The PCs investigate the chambers of Captain Adel Sadra, the second of the corrupted young priests.

Encounter 12: Thy Will Be Done

The PCs confront the two young priests, and fight against some summoned minions.

Encounter 13: Celestial Full Back

The young priests reveal the identity of the mastermind, and a chase begins between him and the PCs. The PCs run into the solar, which is guarding the ritual.

Conclusion A

The PCs fail to figure out what is going on in time, and the ritual does not have the desired effect. The temple in Truelight is abandoned as Evard's forces push forth.

Conclusion B

The PCs figure out who is responsible for the problems within the clerical order, and stop him from interrupting the ritual.

INTRODUCTION: SUMMONED ONCE MORE

The leaves of the tall oak tree are a bright scarlet - a sure sign that autumn has arrived in Pellak, even though warm weather has persisted longer than usual. A stiff wind blows through the upper branches, dislodging a single leaf. It dances and twists in the currents of the air for a few moments before falling to the cobblestone street below, only to be crushed beneath the boot of a young page hurriedly making his way through town.

He pauses for a moment, and looks down at the sealed note in his hand. Over the years he had been sent around with many messages, no different than this one. But for some reason, this one seems different.

Perhaps it was the desperation he read on his liege's face when he was summoned to his office. In the past year, the Baron has lost many close friends and relatives. Most recently, the cold-blooded assassination of his grandfather led to his succession, thrusting him into a political arena he may not have been ready for.

It could be the mysterious messenger that arrived this morning. Obviously a wizard - the wand holsters were a dead giveaway - he did not wear a uniform or heraldry of any kind. Nevertheless, the guards at the front door of the Free Company headquarters did not challenge his entry at all - in fact, they offered him a crisp salute, despite his apparent lack of rank.

Maybe it is the recent trend of events in Bissel. It is no secret that the war has not been going well, and that the Necromancer has recovered quickly from every blow he's been dealt. Something must be done, and soon - both options and time are quickly running thin.

The page pauses for just a moment longer, and then pushes open the door of the Rusty Sword tavern. Many faces turn from their drinks and conversation to look at him expectantly. The page looks over the crowd, and then heads decidedly over to your table.

"Excuse me, mi'lords and ladies. I bear a message from Baron Rashedra, and have been instructed to wait for a response, if you'd be so kind."

Citizens of Bissel can roll a Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley Metaregion) check (DC 10) to know that the page is wearing the colors and insignia of the Bissel Free Companies. Members of the Bissel Free Companies automatically make this check.

PCs that have played BIS4-02 *Two Halves of a Whole*, BIS4-04 *Such a Great Weight of Water*, or BIS5-03 *Trials and Triumphs* will immediately recognize the boy as Kerik, the same page that contacted them at the beginning of those adventures.

The letter is addressed to the highest-level member of the party who is a citizen of Bissel. If no PC is from the region, the letter is addressed to whomever the DM chooses.

If the PC to whom the letter is addressed has met Baron Cainlan Rashedra give the selected PC *Player Handout 1 – Personal Letter from Cainlan Rashedra*.

If the PCs have not met Baron Cainlan Rashedra, but are members of the Great Army of Bissel give the selected PC *Player Handout 2 – Letter from Baron Rashedra*.

Finally, if the PCs are not members of the Bissel military give the selected PC *Player Handout 3 – Letter from Cainlan Rashedra*.

The page will wait patiently for the party's answer. He will provide directions to the headquarters of the Bissel Free Companies in Pellak, and will truthfully answer any questions to which he knows the answer.

- His name is Kerik, and he is a ward of Baron Cainlan Rashedra of Parulla. He was, until recently, a page for the late Baron Zafar Rashedra.

- The colors he wears are the colors of the Bissel Free Companies. He was personally dispatched by Baron Rashedra to deliver this message.
- He was told to wait for an answer, be polite and provide any directions needed.

Presuming the party agrees to the meeting, Kerik will give them directions, and then leave.

The PCs can spare a little time before heading off to the meeting. If they choose, they can shop for anything that they need. They may also wish to gather some information and rumors before heading to their meeting with Baron Rashedra. The following are rumors they can pick up with a Gather Information check that beats the DC listed. The truth or falsehood of each rumor will be revealed with the passage of time.

DC 15

- The war against Evard has not been going well. If something doesn't change soon, Evard will win by the year's end.
- Evard's forces have pushed their way south. The front lines are in the Barony of Swordfields, a stone's throw from the capital of Pellak.

DC 20

- The village of Sholem was the site of a dramatic victory for Evard's armies. The momentum gained there allowed the necromancer to push forward toward his current position.
- A dark cult of Hextor has infiltrated the Knights of the Watch in Bissel, and is manipulating the Knights to some unknown end.
- [For Nightwatch and Church of Pelor members only] The church of Pelor – the core of the Nightwatch – is tied up in a week-long ritual at their temple in Truelight.
- [For Mist Chameleons only] Evidence was obtained from Thornward Keep indicating that Evard was responsible for the disappearance of Barons Zafar Rashedra and Darius Besselar.

DC 25

- Baron Cainlan Rashedra and Baroness Jasmine Besselar finally exchanged vows at an elaborate wedding ceremony in Calpius' Craft. The war has kept both of them busy and often apart. However, a source close to the baroness claims that she is with child already – and it isn't his.

- The Great Army has been trounced in just about every engagement in the past few months. Whispered rumors talk about some unseen weapon Evard is using to cause this, but no one is talking about specifics.

DC 30

- Adventurers taken prisoner in Thornward Keep claim to have gazed on the face of Evard, himself. Some of these claim that the man calling himself 'Evard' is not really Baron Evard Markavan.
- [Available only to a member of a recognized church in Bissel] The churches of Bissel have been working on some big joint project for the past 18 months. Details have been scarce, but every experienced scholar or researcher has been pulled away to work on it.
- [For Nightwatch members only] A large number of researchers and scholars within the churches of Bissel have been diverted onto some large project. It was rumored that it is a weapon of some sort for use in the war against Evard, but the rumors stopped flowing about six months ago.

Once the PCs are ready to head to the meeting, continue with Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: A ROUTINE ASSIGNMENT

Finishing your breakfast, you head out into the streets of Pellak. A platoon of soldiers marches by you, adorned in the colors of the Great Army. As they pass, they chant a marching cadence:

*"I don't know but I've been told,
Thornward nights are mighty cold.
I don't know; it may be true...
If it is here's what I'll do:
Find ol' Evard, string him up;
Find the boys and raise my cup;
Save the March and save the day,
Head back home, collect my pay.
Settle down with that girl of mine,
Everything would be so fine."*

As you near the edge of town, you pass another platoon - this one apparently returning from the front lines. It has less than half the number of soldiers of the previous unit, and virtually every survivor has a bandaged wound or splinted limb.

This group lacks the regimented pace and spirited cadence of the other, instead limping along in demoralized silence.

You make your way to the outskirts of Pellak and to the headquarters of the Bissel Free Companies. A long drive leads from the road up to the front of a stately manor house. The path is flanked by skeletal apple trees, their bounties long since discarded.

A pair of young guards is posted at the door. One nods at your approach. "Baron Rashedra is waiting for you in the dining room," he says, as he opens the door and leads you inside. He heads down a short corridor and into a long room with a vaulted ceiling. A large map of Bissel lies across the dining table, and is covered with many small colored pins. Piles of notes and reports surround the map.

If the PCs try to take a peek at the map, have them roll a Spot Check (DC 20). Anyone who succeeds should get the following description of the map:

The markers on the map are mostly of three colors -- numerous black ones, with the strongest concentration around Thornward and in central Bissel, a smaller quantity of silver ones, which are spread across the March, and some of which are outside the borders of the March, and red ones, of which there are small numbers in a few baronies, and a larger number grouped around Pellak. There are other color counters, primarily grouped in northern Bissel around Thornward, and a few on Bissel's northern border.

Otherwise, continue with this:

Baron Cainlan Rashedra stands near a tall window, his back to the room, lost in thought. His wife, Baroness Jasmine, sits nearby at the table. As you enter the room, the two nobles are engaged in hushed conversation.

"Of course, I will consent to whatever you think necessary." The Baroness folds her hands nervously on her lap. "I fear warfare is your talent, dear, not mine."

"It's just for a short time. If we can just hold Fals Gap for a little while longer... we'll at least have a chance of making it through this."

Noticing you for the first time, Lady Jasmine turns towards you and smiles. "Dear, we've got visitors." Baron Rashedra turns from the window, and Lady Jasmine rises. Both greet you warmly.

If the PCs have met Cainlan or Jasmine before (likely if they have adventured in Bissel before), they are greeted personally, and the nobles will spend a moment engaging in small talk before continuing.

Lady Jasmine rises resolutely from her seat, and makes her way towards the door behind you, addressing her husband as she opens it. "Well, my love, I will leave you to your affairs. Try not to send these fine folks off to their deaths."

Baron Rashedra turns his attention to you. "My thanks for coming so quickly. A friend of mine has requested a favor of me, and in turn I must ask one of you."

"Normally, this is a task I would assign to some of my own men. With so many of them away on the front lines, it's difficult to get even the simplest thing done."

"One of our local nobles is traveling through the March. I would like you to meet up with their entourage, and ensure their safety. Given the current state of affairs, I'm particularly interested in preventing any more 'incidents'."

"The land they are traveling through can be dangerous, so I'm going to authorize some generous hazard pay. In return, I have to ask for a little trust - I don't know much about the destination or reasons for traveling. I suspect that you will be told everything you need to know once you meet up."

"What do you say?"

If the PCs decline the mission, Cainlan will nod solemnly, thank them for their time, and have them escorted out. The adventure is over for them.

Cainlan can supply the following information if questioned:

- He realizes that he is being rather vague, and is avoiding pronouns. This is intentional, for security purposes. He will not bend on this.
- The noble and entourage are waiting for their escort at a roadhouse in the barony of Rhomstaff called the Farstrider's Repose.
- He does not know the exact destination – only that it is a location deeper within Rhomstaff.
- He does not know the reason for the journey. When a courier brought word from the noble this morning, he insisted that they accept a security regimen.

- He does not expect the party to encounter anything out of the ordinary; of course, being Rhomstaff, roving packs of undead are not considered 'out of the ordinary'.

If the PCs accept the mission, continue:

"Excellent! I expected no less of you, so I've taken the liberty of notifying our stables and quartermaster. Everything you should need for the trip is waiting outside, so you can leave immediately."

Cainlan picks up a sheet of parchment from his desk and hands it to you. "This writ will allow you to get past our checkpoints without question. Godspeed, and my thanks."

When the PCs are ready to head to Rhomstaff, continue with Encounter 2.

All APLs

♂ Baron Cainlan Rashedra: Male human Rng16; AL NG.

♀ Baroness Jasmine Besselar: Female human Brd13; AL NG.

ENCOUNTER 2: UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS

Your journey takes you north along the Watchtower Road through the Barony of Kynneret. At every turn, you are stopped by a Great Army patrol. They look over you with heavy scrutiny until you show them Baron Rashedra's writ – after that, they can't usher you on your way any faster.

The highway takes you through the lonely fog that covers the Misty Hills for several hours, before you strike out west. Making your way into the Barony of Swordfields, the weather gets rough. Heavy rain falls all around you, slowing your pace to a crawl, soaking through your clothing and chilling you to the bone.

You are crossing the central lowlands of the barony when you first hear the noise. At first, it appeared to be distant thunder. Now that you have gotten closer, you can see the clashing armies. An unstoppable horde of undead stretches into the distance. In front of them, three Great Army battles form a semi-circle, trying their best to keep the mass from advancing. Behind them, dark plumes of smoke mark previous victories of the Necromancer's forces.

By the evening of the fourth day, you cross into Rhomstaff and arrive at the roadhouse.

Members of the Mist Chameleons will immediately recognize this place – it is well known within the spy organization as a safe house.

The Farstrider's Repose is a stout inn alongside the frigid Shaela River, whose rimmed sign shows an enormous pair of feet propped up on a stool. Smoke wafts invitingly out of the chimney, and with it comes the enthralling aroma of the hot meal that awaits you within.

The first thing you notice about the interior of the Repose is the crackling fire in the hearth of the common room. Above the fireplace, a trophy of the head of a vicious-looking reptile surveys the room in stony silence.

If the PCs can make a Knowledge [nature] check (DC 17) they can identify the head as once belonging to a basilisk. If they examine it closely, they find that a tarnished brass plaque beneath the trophy reads:

***Gren gave this lizard a bash
Quite brave of the knight, also rash
He refused to yield
As it glared down the field
And turned him to stone in a flash.***

Otherwise, continue with this:

Within moments, you have stripped off your soggy travel gear and found yourself a table. The pretty lass behind the bar smiles as she makes grand promises of hot food and cold drink. The taproom is fairly busy this evening, and perhaps a dozen other travelers are nestled into their seats, a motley crew of colorful individuals with equally colorful stories to tell. But while the conversation and rest are comforting, you can't shake the feeling that you are being watched.

Just as you've finished your meals, a door to a side room opens, and a short, middle-aged human enters. He wears a white tunic trimmed with gold, and a holy symbol shaped like a sunburst with a face. His head is bald, and his skin appears unusually radiant.

This is Father Sollus Illuminus. If the PCs can succeed at a Knowledge [religion] check (DC 10), they can identify his holy symbol as that of Pelor. The PCs may have met Father Sollus before (BIS5-03 Trials and Triumphs or the ConnCon 2005 Interactive, BIS5-IN1), in which case he will recognize them and greet them warmly. Incidentally, this man wears a ring of mind

shielding, and so his thoughts cannot be probed by resourceful PCs.

Additionally, if a PC is a member of the Mist Chameleon meta-organization, they will notice a number of innuendos in his dialog – key phrases and gestures – that indicate that he is also an agent.

The cleric looks across the crowded taproom before making a beeline for your table. "Ahh, wonderful, you've arrived at last. Come with me... she is waiting for you."

He leads you through the door into a private chamber. At each corner of the room stands a bodyguard, protecting the noblewoman that stands at the window, peering out at the sunset.

If the PCs succeed at a Spot check (DC 20), they notice faint runes etched into the wood of the doorframe. A Knowledge [arcane] check (DC 15) allows the spotter to identify them as wards against scrying – not a common sight in a back woods roadhouse.

Lady Saralind Markavan, the Regent of the March of Bissel, is a tall and beautiful woman with pale skin and blonde hair. Though she is perhaps one of the more powerful wizards in the Sheldomar Valley, today she wears nondescript robes and a traveling cloak and a necklace with a silver pendant fashioned to look like a heraldic crest – a black hound over a tall green tree. A rose-colored ioun stone circles her head.

A PC can make a Knowledge [local - Sheldomar Valley Metaregion] or Knowledge [nobility and royalty] check (DC 15) to identify the pendant on Saralind's necklace as the old baronial crest of Rypthorn, the ancestral home of House Markavan.

"It warms my spirit to see that you have arrived safely," she begins. "I wish that we had more time for pleasantries, but time is of great import, tonight, so I will fill you in as quickly as I can."

"I recently received word from an old acquaintance, the son of a prominent noble house – a childhood playmate, if you will. Last I heard, he was a top lieutenant in Evard's service. Times change."

"Normally, I would not give heed to such a... traitor. But he sent me a message, requesting parley, and promising information that could undermine his master's campaign. But only if I met with him personally."

"That's where you come in... he is holed up at an estate nearby. I don't know if I'm walking into a trap or not, but I certainly feel more comfortable with you along for the trip."

Lady Saralind turns and gazes back out the window. "Unless you have questions, we depart immediately."

Saralind can supply the following information if questioned:

- The lieutenant's name is Dralthus Garlnorn. His family was fairly influential within Rypthorn.
- She has no reason to suspect treachery from Dralthus, other than his connection to Evard.
- Dralthus did not tell her anything about the information he holds, other than its importance.
- She is not sure if Dralthus' information is legitimate. In the worst case, she figures he might slip up and reveal some interesting tidbit about Evard's organization.
- Saralind did not tell anyone, except Father Sollus (one of her most trusted allies), about Dralthus' message. She is worried about what anyone else would think.
- If a PC asks about Saralind's necklace, she will smile wearily, and explain that it is the crest of the Barony of Rypthorn, which was ruled by House Markavan before the insurrection. She hopes, one day, to return to her homeland to its former glory.

Saralind will try to make it clear that Dralthus is NOT to be attacked during these proceedings. Anyone that suggests doing so will catch harsh criticism from her.

When the PCs are ready to head to the estate, continue with Encounter 3.

All APLs

☛ **Father Sollus Illuminus:** Male human Clr6 / RSoP6 (Bluff +18, Knowledge [religion] +12, Sense Motive +18); AL NG.

☛ **Lady Saralind Markavan:** Female human Wiz20 (Bluff +9, Diplomacy +15, Sense Motive +9); AL LG.

☛ **Mist Chameleon Guards (4):** Male human Rog10; AL NG.

ENCOUNTER 3: ENEMY AT THE GATES

Heading back out into the storm, your party quickly leaves the Farstrider's Repose behind. Saralind's Mist Chameleon guards fan out, disappearing into the darkness down the road in either direction.

You travel quickly, slowed only slightly by the downpour. Every once in a while, Father Sollus catches some sort of signal from the scouts, and stops the group to let other travelers pass by.

Shortly after midnight, you leave the forest cover and approach the gates of an expansive manor. The wrought-iron shows signs of many years of neglect and exposure to the elements. However, what catches your attention much more immediately is the other party standing before the gates.

"Come out, come out Dralthus, you wretch!" A deep, foreboding voice rings from the leader, a tall humanoid completely concealed in black robes and a cowl. Even from this distance, you can feel the power that emanates from his being.

"The Black Margrave does not take kindly to betrayal. Submit to me, and I will carry out his sentence with haste. I could use another minion."

Suddenly, the cowed figure cocks his head, and turns in the direction of your group.

"Dralthus, it appears you have visitors. Watch what we do to them, and decide if that sways your decision to cooperate."

Lady Saralind casts off her cloak, and begins intoning the words of a spell. Her bodyguards draw slender blades, while Father Sollus turns to you.

"Clear a path through the minions. We'll handle the leader."

Please refer to DM Aid – Map #1 – Combat at the Gates. As this combat begins, the PCs are 50 feet from their opponents. The terrain is plain and level.

APL 2 (EL 3)

☛ **Ghouls (3):** hp 18 each; see Monster Manual page 118.

APL 4 (EL 5)

☛ **Owlbear Skeletons (3):** hp 45 each; see Monster Manual page 225.

APL 6 (EL 7)

✦ **Vampire Spawn** (3): hp 39 each; see *Monster Manual* page 253.

APL 8 (EL 9)

✦ **Advanced Megaraptor Skeletons** (3): hp 108 each; see *Monster Manual* page 225.

APL 10 (EL 11)

✦ **Bodaks** (3): hp 81 each; see *Monster Manual* page 28.

APL 12 (EL 13)

✦ **Dread Wraiths** (2): hp 144 each; see *Monster Manual* page 257.

All APLs (EL 19)

✦ **Vampire Leader**, noncombatant: Sor 16; hp 144.

✦ **Dread Wraiths**, noncombatant (4): hp 144 each; see *Monster Manual* page 257.

Tactics: The minion tactics are straightforward: they advance on the PCs, and attempt to slaughter them.

In general, the NPC members of the PC's party and the monsters listed above in the 'All APLs' are handled separately. All the PCs have to worry about are the normal EL critters. If they ignore Father Sollus' statement, they are just making more work for themselves.

During the first round, the four dread wraiths advance, and go toe to toe with the Mist Chameleon guards. Two of the dread wraiths are injured, and one of the guards is hit with a Constitution drain. Father Sollus uses a greater turning attempt, and vaporizes all four. The vampire leader casts *power word stun* at Saralind, but it is reflected by a *spell turning* effect, but the vampire is unaffected. Saralind responds by concentrating a *meteor swarm* on him, but it fails to penetrate his SR.

During the second round, the vampire kills one of the guards with a *finger of death*, and immobilizes the others with a *quicken'd Evard's black tentacles*. Both Father Sollus and Saralind cast *greater dispel magic* on the *tentacles*, with Saralind succeeding.

During the third round, the vampire hits Saralind with a *maximized scorching ray*, nearly killing her. Father Sollus casts *heal* upon Saralind. Saralind traps the leader in a *force cage*, and casts a *quicken'd dimension door* to pull the fallen guard to safety. The other guards withdraw to protect her.

During subsequent rounds, Saralind and Father Sollus will cast buffing spells, as they keep a close eye on the leader.

Once the PCs have dispatched their foes, the vampire *disintegrates* the force cage. Father Sollus uses another greater turning, vaporizing the leader.

The treasure mentioned below is present on the body of the fallen vampire leader.

Treasure

APL 2: L: 20 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Wand of Inflict Light Wounds (62 gp).

APL 4: L: 20 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Wand of Inflict Moderate Wounds (375 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Chain Shirt +1 (104 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Moderate Wounds (375 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Chain Shirt +1 (104 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Goggles of Day (375 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Serious Wounds (937 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Styptic Chain Shirt +1 (770 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Goggles of Day (375 gp), Helm of Glorious Recovery (466 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Serious Wounds (937 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Styptic Chain Shirt +1 (770 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Goggles of Day (375 gp), Helm of Glorious Recovery (466 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Critical Wounds (1750 gp).

Once the PCs have dispatched their foes, continue with Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 4: LESSER OF TWO EVILS

If the battle in Encounter 3 did not last long enough for one of the Mist Chameleon guards to get killed, this text should be altered appropriately.

The last of your foes fall before you, and you take a quick look around at your companions. Father Sollus makes his way through the group, healing what wounds he finds. He sadly looks over the form of the fallen guard.

"This, I'm afraid, is beyond my means. We will have to seek other aid to restore him."

Suddenly, one of the guards cries a warning. His companions instantly respond, forming a defensive ring around the Regent.

Following his gaze, you notice another shadowy form – another wraith – just beyond the entrance gate. After a moment, however, it becomes apparent that this one isn't rushing in to assault you. Instead, its arm reaches out to the entrance, which slowly swings open in response.

The wraith moves a short distance away, towards the manor house. It turns, its empty gaze penetrating you, and waits to see what you do.

The wraith is waiting for the PCs to follow it. If they decide to harm it, they will have to find their own way to Dralthus' audience chamber, and his attitude will begin at Hostile.

If the PCs decide to follow the wraith, continue with this:

The wraith glides silently through an archway, and into the manor house. The manor is in poor condition, as if it hasn't been occupied for quite a while.

"This estate once belonged to the Garlnorn family, before things changed." Saralind gestures at a side room, containing a long dining table. "I remember coming here as a child with my parents for formal affairs. The roses outside those windows were beautiful... such a pity."

Your spectral guide leads you through a series of hallways, finally arriving at a large room, the most notable features of which are bookshelves taking up three of the walls. A number of other shadowy forms flit about the room – it is impossible to tell exactly how many there are, but you think you are easily outnumbered.

A man reclines in a comfortable looking chair, leisurely thumbing through a thick tome. His hair is slick and greasy, coming to a sharp widow's peak. His pale skin and sharp features are hallmarks of his Suel heritage, but combined with his black tunic they make him look downright menacing.

"Isn't it interesting what someone takes with them, when they are in a hurry?" The man speaks without looking up from his book. "And more so, what they choose to leave behind..." He closes the book suddenly, and idly tosses it on a nearby table.

"Milady," The man smirks as he gazes at Lady Saralind. "It has been far too long since I have seen your face. Far too long."

Lady Saralind does not look amused. "Why have you summoned me here, Dralthus?"

"Yes, yes... I know, get to the point. Hmph. You're more like yourself than you know." The necromancer shakes his head. "I called you here because I want something."

Dralthus extends his arms, and surveys the room around him. "I like this estate. Have ever since I was young. You are going to give it to me."

Lady Saralind's eyes widen in confusion.

"Don't bother saying 'I can't' or 'I won't', because I know you can and you will. Now, let me finish. You are going to grant me the title of 'Baron' or 'Lord', or whatever you like. I don't want some overzealous knight coming to spoil my fun, so I want you to declare my sovereignty over this place. The laws of the March will not apply here. My thralls and I will remain confined within the estate borders, and everyone else will stay out, unless invited."

The Regent pauses for a long moment, before speaking. "I do not understand. Why would you choose now, of all times, to forsake Evard?"

"Sharp as ever, milady." Dralthus nods respectfully. "It is a good question. The answer is one of survival. I've recently come into some information that can help you end this war – quickly and in your favor. And when you do, I intend to remain."

The PCs now have an opportunity to draw more information out of Dralthus. However, before he will acknowledge anyone besides Lady Saralind, they must use Diplomacy checks to shift his attitude to 'Friendly'. He is currently at 'Indifferent', unless the PCs attacked his servant earlier in this encounter, in which case he is 'Hostile'. If the PC making the check is actually a noble (from anywhere, not just Bissel) they may take a +4 circumstance bonus on these checks.

Use the following information to play out the conversation with Dralthus:

- Dralthus was born into a noble family, has always been surrounded by nobility, and generally looks down on anyone he considers 'common'. He views commoners the same way he views cattle.
- He will not give any clue or hint to what his information may be, until his demands are met.
- He is sincere about his demands – if granted this land, he and his minions will remain here

indefinitely. He is tired of war and wishes to retire to his books.

- He began working for Evard when the practice of necromancy – or association with the Black Margrave – was not illegal. If accused of any wrongdoing, he will smugly inform his accusers that those new laws were proclaimed by an ‘illegitimate government’.

It is entirely possible that the PCs will try to convince the Regent to deny Dralthus’ request. In this case, treat Lady Saralind as having an initial attitude of ‘Hostile’ towards this idea. If the PCs can use Diplomacy checks to shift this attitude to ‘Friendly’, she will agree. In this unfortunate case, Dralthus thanks Lady Saralind for the audience, and the entire party returns to Pellak without further incident. The adventure is then over.

If the PCs foolishly violate the truce and attack Dralthus unprovoked, they will be beset by not only all of Dralthus’ minions, but also Lady Saralind and her Mist Chameleon guards. The offending PCs are easily subdued. In this case, collect all of the PC’s paperwork, and turn it into the Bissel Triad with a short description of the incident. The character is removed from play until the incident is reviewed and punishment assessed – the Bissel leadership won’t take kindly to a violation of parlay.

If left to her own devices, Lady Saralind will reluctantly agree to Dralthus’ demands, given one condition – if his information is not as important as he claims, then the deal is void. In that case, read the following:

Lady Saralind silently locks gazes with the necromancer for a long moment, before speaking.

“I don’t trust you, Dralthus. But you’ve never lied to me before, so I will give you the benefit of the doubt. It’s against my better judgment, but I will grant you the survival you want... but I warn you – if this information isn’t as earth-shattering as you claim, the deal is off.”

Dralthus smiles. “Fair enough, milady. Allow me to relate my experiences from... about six months ago...”

“I was summoned one morning to Evard’s audience chamber, and given a task: I was to take my legion here, to Rhomstaff, to seize control of a section of his old turf. Barely a challenge, really... those that still remain have little fight left in them.”

“A few days in came the first challenge – I ran straight into one of your Nightwatch patrols, led by

one of those insufferable sun-worshippers.” Dralthus shoots a disapproving glance at Father Sollus. “In but a moment, all of my strongest minions were reduced to dust clouds.”

“So, I gritted my teeth, and began cloaking myself in my most powerful battle magic. I knew that this would be my last stand... and that’s when I noticed something odd: the cleric was leading the patrol away, off the field, without confronting me.”

“As you might imagine, I was stunned. I’d like to say that I did something to scare them away, but I didn’t even have the chance.”

“So I fled back to a place that I once called home. While I restocked my forces, I contemplated the occurrence. Slowly, I came to a realization – the same conclusion I see coming to you.”

Pause dramatically for a moment, allowing the PCs to come to terms with what they’ve just heard. If they seem completely oblivious, spell it out – the Nightwatch patrol let him live. Once they understand that, continue:

“And this isn’t an isolated event, either... I’ve heard of a number of ‘my kind’ running into the Pelorites. The clerics weaken and push back our forces, but then don’t go for the kill.”

“I could not tell much about the cleric – the full plate obscured much. But I sketched this out.” Dralthus hands you a piece of parchment. “The cleric that I encountered wore something that looked like this. Maybe it means something to you.”

Give the PCs Player Handout 4 – Dralthus’ Sketch. If a PC is a member of the Church of Pelor in Bissel meta-organization, and makes a Knowledge [religion] check (DC 30) they can identify the symbol as belonging to the Seers of the Unclosing Eye, a Pelorite fraternity. Father Sollus has seen the symbol before, but does not remember what its significance is.

“So, now you have your big secret. Your clerics could probably turn the tide of this war. But it seems they are choosing not to. If I were you, I’d question where their loyalties lie.”

If the PCs succeed at a Spot check (DC 15), they notice Father Sollus as he leans close to the Regent, and whispers something in her ear. If those that succeed also make a Sense Motive check (DC 15), they notice that for a moment, a look of great concern crossed her face when he spoke.

Lady Saralind nods. "I see. Our deal is complete then, Dralthus. You have your sanctuary. I advise you to honor your end, and remain here."

Wordlessly, the Regent turns and leads you out of the room, and does not pause until you have left the estate altogether. She turns to Father Sollus as she points at your group.

"Take them, and get to the temple. See what you can find out in a hurry. I know that the church can be trusted, but if there are traitors within, we need to flush them out before they can do real harm."

"And yourself, my liege?"

"I'm going back to Pellak, to tell them Truelight is going to fall."

Father Sollus sends the Mist Chameleon guards a quick glance and a hand gesture. The guards instantly step to the Regent's side. She speaks a few hasty words of magic, and she and the guards vanish.

If the PCs succeed at a Spellcraft check (DC 20) they recognize her spell as *teleport*.

Father Sollus turns back to you and smiles weakly. "Well, get the horses ready to go – I'll try to fill you in on the way."

Father Sollus can now relate the following information. He will try to tell the PCs as little as possible to get the job done:

- Their new destination is the Temple of Pelor in Truelight, the capital of the barony of Nightwatch.
- The Pelorites make up the core of the Nightwatch organization.
- Something is obviously going on within the organization, and Father Sollus believes that it could probably be traced all the way back to Truelight.
- Currently, the Temple residents are engaged in a week-long annual ritual. When the ritual is complete, Truelight's defenses against undead will be strengthened against undead for another year.
- Even though Nightwatch – so close to Evard's base of operations in Thornward - has been overrun by the necromancer's forces, the capital of Truelight has not fallen. If the ritual was disrupted, however...

If the PCs already know about the weapon, and ask if it is part of the ritual, Father Sollus will shrug, and say that including the weapon in the ritual was considered, but he can't say more.

Keep in mind; Father Sollus wears a *ring of mind shielding*, so he is immune to most mind probing abilities PCs may possess.

When the PCs are ready to head to Truelight, continue with Encounter 5.

All APLs

 **Dralthus Garlnorn:** Male human Nec 16 (Bluff +12, Sense Motive +13); AL LE.

ENCOUNTER 5: SWEEPING THE CLOUDS AWAY

Please refer to DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple. This encounter occurs at the Central Atrium and the Archcleric's Sanctum - Locations B and E on that map.

The next three days are a blur. Traveling as quickly as possible, you push north through Rhomstaff, into the Barony of Nightwatch. At several points, you encounter signs of Evard's patrols – it would seem that nowhere is safe this close to Thornward and the Black Margrave.

The foul weather has persisted until late on the third day, when you finally catch a glimpse of Truelight. Still miles away from the town walls, you can make out the stark-white marble domes of the Temple of Pelor, atop a hill near the town center. Remarkably, directly over the town is a break in the clouds and the sun shines brightly down upon the temple.

Without hesitation, Father Sollus leads you past the town walls and the temple gates, pausing only to exchange a few hurried words with an acolyte. The young man nods, and hurries off to deliver Sollus' message.

At the center of temple is a large circular atrium, open to the sky above. Several balconies encircle a central altar, making it look similar to a stadium. Each section is full of clerics of Pelor, their voices filling the temple with their rhythmic chanting. Father Sollus points and smiles softly. "The Rite of Clarity. I remember taking part during my time here – that spot over there was mine. They've been doing this constantly for five days. That's real devotion for you."

The temple bells ring out their midday chorus. As you watch, a stream of clerics wordlessly enter the atrium, silently taking up position behind their chanting comrades. They start reciting the same mantras softly, almost inaudibly, gradually getting louder. At the same time, the original group slowly lowers their volume until they've stopped entirely. The new group steps forward, seamlessly switching places, and the old group files out. If your eyes were shut, you doubt you would know that anything had changed.

If the PCs succeed at a Spot check (DC 15), they notice that there are a number of items down on the altar. There are several books, a few burning candles, a crystal ball, some incense burners, and a great number of religious icons. If the PCs ask Father Sollus about them, he will mention that they are here to be blessed during the ritual.

The acolyte returns, bowing slightly to Father Sollus. "He will see you in his chambers."

You are led to a sparsely decorated chamber deeper within the temple. Archpriest Hissler is a fairly old man, but appears to be in remarkable health for his age. He is dressed in simple white robes with gold embroidery.

"Illuminus." The Archpriest rises, and smiles at Father Sollus. "I did not expect to see you here again. I am glad to see I was mistaken."

"I wish it was under better circumstances, I'm afraid." Father Sollus quickly introduces you, and then relates all of the events of the past week. Notably, he does not mention Lady Saralind's name throughout the conversation.

Archpriest Hissler listens wordlessly, until Father Sollus has finished, then rises from his chair, and paces to the window. "I have suspected that something is wrong. Our campaigns against the minions of darkness have made almost no progress. I was starting to wonder if they were beyond our abilities..."

"I am not comfortable suggesting it," Father Sollus sighs, "but I suspect that someone within the Temple is making sure that we do not succeed. My friends and I are here to find out what, exactly, is going on."

The Archpriest nods solemnly. "I will, of course, cooperate in any way I can. What do you need from me?"

Archpriest Hissler can relate the following information:

- The Archpriest will tell the clerics of the temple that the PCs are a detachment from the Great Army, sent to review the temple's defenses. With reports of Evard's forces so close by, no one should question that cover story.
- The PCs are authorized to investigate any of the common areas of the temple. The personal chambers of the clerics are off limits without proof that they've committed a crime.
- The temple will provide lodging for the PCs during their stay.
- The Rite of Clarity will be complete in two more days.
- The Nightwatch patrols that the temple dispatches are each led by a Patrol Captain – a mid-ranked cleric. He can furnish the PCs with a list of the five captains – give them *Player Handout 5 – List of the Patrol Captains*.
- The Patrol Captains are all out on patrol. They are due back sometime in the next two days.
- If they show him Dralthus' sketch, he can identify it as a symbol of the Seers of the Unclosing Eye – one of the major Pelorite secret societies.
- Many of the clerics within the church belong to one of the secret societies. Certainly, each of the Patrol Captains does. However, the temple has a restriction that no two of the Patrol Captains can belong to the same society. If the PCs can figure out which Patrol Captain belongs to the Seers of the Unclosing Eye, they will have their suspect.
- There is certainly more information on the secret societies in the temple library. The Librarian - Cardinal Velles - can probably help them find it.
- Cardinal Milivus is the Patrol Coordinator. He can likely help them identify the leader of the patrol they are looking for.
- Cardinal Satara is the Quartermaster, and deals very closely with every patrol that goes out.
- If anything suspicious is going on around the temple, the Keeper of Grounds – Cardinal Philins – will probably know. He is known to be quite a gossip.

The PCs now have several options on how to proceed with their investigation. The specific information that can be gained is contained in Encounter 6.

The PCs have until dawn the next morning to investigate. At that point, proceed to Encounter 7.

All APLs

☛ **Archpriest Andrin Hissler:** Male human Clr 17 (Bluff +4, Sense Motive +10); AL NG.

ENCOUNTER 6: ASKING AROUND

This encounter details the investigation points that are available on both Day 1 and Day 2 at the temple.

General Investigation

This sub-encounter occurs at any of the common areas of the temple.

The following is information that can be gained by questioning the general population of the temple:

- Ashseri Buran is a middle-aged woman of mixed descent. She is the highest-ranking Patrol Captain, having held the position since the temple was founded. She is a resident of Nightwatch, and fought during the siege that nearly destroyed the capital township.
- Turnther Polenth is a young man of Suel descent. He is the newest patrol captain. He comes from a wealthy family in Veluna, and migrated to Bissel to serve what he saw as a greater need.
- Alelye Redmond is a young woman of mixed descent from Thornward. The church of Pelor – a deity that celebrates health and life – does not require its clerics to be celibate. She has a reputation for celebrating that fact, quite often.
- Adel Sadra is a young Baklunish man from Jadarta, fairly new to the Patrol Captain ranks. He enjoys less prestige than most, due to racism against his ethnic heritage. However, those that know him well can attest that he is a friendly, outgoing cleric.
- Tyran Stel is a young man of Flan descent from the Misty Hills. He takes his faith very seriously, even to the point of annoying some of his fellows. He has been known to quip ‘What would Pelor do?’ in response to just about any

question. He is also known for being obsessive-compulsive.

The following statistics represent typical temple residents:

All APLs

- ☛ **Acolyte:** Human Clr 1; AL NG.
- ☛ **Cleric:** Human Clr 3; AL NG.
- ☛ **Bishop:** Human Clr 8; AL NG.
- ☛ **Cardinal:** Human Clr 11; AL NG.

Librarian – Cardinal Velles

This sub-encounter occurs at the Library - Location D on DM Aid – Map #3 – *The Truelight Temple*.

Cardinal Velles can provide the following information if questioned:

- He is a true bookworm, and considers himself to be the lone historian at the temple.
- He values his work above all else. To him, the worship of Pelor is all about clarity and vision. What better way to spread clarity than through the printed word?
- He can provide them with a book that describes the secret societies within the local church. If they spend two hours reading through the book, give them *Player Handout 6 – Pelorite Secret Societies* – which contains several important clues.

All APLs

- ☛ **Cardinal Weltan Velles:** Male human Clr 13; AL CG.

Patrol Coordinator – Cardinal Milivus

This sub-encounter occurs at the temple offices - Location H on DM Aid – Map #3 – *The Truelight Temple*.

Cardinal Milivus can provide the following information if questioned:

- It is his job to review patrol reports, remap the routes based on sightings, and assign the routes to patrols.
- He does not keep records of which Patrol Captains take which routes longer than a few weeks, so he can't tell which particular captain took a particular route six months ago.

- The patrols have produced disappointing results, lately. They've managed to assist local defenses in keeping Evard away from Truelight, but they've not otherwise gained any ground. He doesn't understand it, and it frustrates him. (A lie – he knows full well why this is happening)
- He can provide the PCs with a map of the current patrol routes – give the PCs *Player Handout 7 – Map of the Patrol Routes*. He will emphasize that the actual routes change every time, to reflect current conditions and sightings, but they always fall within the marked regions.
- The assignment of routes is unfortunately political. For instance, the Dawning Route, which heads towards the rising sun, is always granted to someone from the Vigilant Flame, as the Archcleric belongs to that group – a dubious honor, as Evard's forces are now heaviest along that route.
- The Rypthorn Lowlands route is particularly rough, and so it is generally assigned to the more combat-capable clerics. Ashseri Buran and Turnther are the least hearty in battle.
- The Estermarsh route, which cuts through the Fetid Fens of Cullen Drae, is by far the most dangerous route. It is never given to the two least experienced Patrol Captains - Adel Sadra and Turnther Polenth.

Note that while Cardinal Milivus has fallen from the faith – and thus no longer receives his class abilities from Pelor – he has had months to practice his deception. As well, he has stolen a *ring of mind shielding* from the Vault of Forbidden Magic. The PCs should not be able to detect any problem with him, at this point.

All APLs

- **Cardinal Rastus Milivus:** Male human Clr 12 (Bluff +10, Sense Motive +8); AL NE; *ring of mind shielding*.

Quartermaster – Cardinal Satara

This sub-encounter occurs at the temple offices - Location H on *DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple*.

Cardinal Satara can provide the following information if questioned:

- She is responsible for equipping the patrols that depart from the temple.
- She is too busy to really talk for long. Similarly, she doesn't know the temple inhabitants very well.
- Patrols that are heading into the Rypthorn Lowlands carry extra equipment, due to the frequent undead activity there. She doesn't remember who needed that equipment – only that it wasn't Ashseri Buran or Turnther Polenth.

All APLs

- **Cardinal Cynthia Satara:** Female human Clr 13; AL LG.

Keeper of Grounds – Cardinal Philins

This sub-encounter occurs at the Sun Gardens - Location I on *DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple*.

Cardinal Philins can provide the following information if questioned:

- He is responsible for the care and upkeep of the temple.
- He generally keeps an eye on outsiders around the temple. Except for the PCs, no one unusual has been hanging around the temple.

All APLs

- **Cardinal Gregor Philins:** Male human Clr 12; AL NG.

ENCOUNTER 7: A NOTE FROM ABOVE

This encounter occurs shortly after dawn on the second day at the temple. You will need to modify this text if the PCs decide not to remain in their rooms overnight. If any of the PCs are clerics of Pelor, they are invited to take part in the dawn rituals.

This encounter occurs at the Central Atrium, the Archcleric's Sanctum, the Reliquary, and the Vault of Forbidden Magic - Locations B, E, F, and G on *DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple*.

Your second morning at the Temple of Pelor comes way too early – the clerics are awake and active shortly before dawn, preparing to greet the dawning sun. Shortly thereafter, there is a knock on

your door: An acolyte bearing a summons to the Archpriest's chambers.

Assuming the PCs follow the acolyte, continue with the following:

Your path to the Archpriest's sanctum takes you past the central atrium, where the clerics maintain their rhythmic chanting. You notice something startling – near the altar at the center of the chamber is a huge, shimmering gate. With each passing moment, it gets dimmer and dimmer, until it has faded entirely. In front of the gate stands a towering, powerfully-built being. It would appear to be human, except for its size, brilliant topaz eyes, silvery skin, and its gleaming white wings. A number of clerics bustle about the creature, tending to it.

Entering the Archpriest's chambers, you immediately notice that he appears agitated. His gaze fixes upon Father Sollus. "Good morning, Illuminus. Would you mind telling me why there is an angel in my temple?"

"I'm not sure I..."

"Drop the act, old friend. This temple has never before had such a visitor. So I ask you again – what is going on?"

Father Sollus wrings his hands together, and stands in silence for a long moment. "What I am about to tell you cannot leave this room."

"Over the past 18 months, we've been working on a weapon for the war against Evard. We believe that if it is present during the ritual, it should strengthen the area around Truelight against undead."

"This weapon," the Archpriest interrupts, "Is that the crystal ball that the Barons insisted be blessed during the ceremony?"

"Yes. I'm afraid so. With Evard's forces so far south, everyone is understandably worried. If the weapon works as expected, Truelight will become a strong forward position for the Army to march on Thornward. It'll give us a few more months of survival, they hope."

Archpriest Hissler scratches his head. "I just wish I'd been kept abreast of the situation. Maybe then I wouldn't have to show you this..."

The aging cleric leads you wordlessly out of his sanctum and through a maze of corridors, well away from the common areas of the temple. He finally

stops at a heavy iron door, flanked by a pair of armed guards. They quickly step aside, allowing the Archpriest to pass. He makes a few quick gestures, and the door grates open. The room beyond is full of shelves containing a plethora of trinkets and icons.

"This is the reliquary. Our most holy artifacts are stored here, for safe keeping. But almost no one is aware of what else is here."

He approaches a bare wall, and taps his staff on the stone face three times. The outline of a door glows brightly, and a section of the wall fades from view. The room beyond looks much like the previous one, except it appears that it has been ransacked.

"This is the Vault of Forbidden Magic. When our patrols have captured evil or dangerous items, they are hidden away here. As you can see, several days ago, it was raided. I'm now convinced – I think this is all related, and I'm worried as to what it might mean."

Archpriest Hissler can relate the following information, if questioned:

- Only the most senior clergy at the temple are aware of the existence of the vault.
- The wards on the vault prevent anyone from entering the vault except through the hidden door.
- The contents of the room have not been inventoried since the attack, so there is no way of telling what is missing, if anything.
- Pretty much anything in the vault should be considered extremely dangerous.
- The first of the Patrol Captains - Alelye Redmond – has just returned from her patrol, and is available for questioning.

Father Sollus can also provide the following information about the weapon:

- The original research for the weapon was recovered from Evard's own collection.
- A year-long research project altered the researched ritual to utilize positive energy, rather than negative, and encapsulated it within a small glass orb.
- If the PCs ask how the weapon works, Father Sollus will happily relate a million esoteric details. In summary, the weapon makes the 'distance' between the Prime Material and

Positive Energy Planes shorter, making a small area uninhabitable by undead. It should be useful for weakening small groups of undead.

- During the field test, it was discovered that it was the combination of sunlight and positive energy that made the weapon work.
- He believes that the combination of sunlight and positive energy released during the Rite of Clarity will seal the area around Truelight from undead.

The PCs will probably now wish to continue with their investigation, using the options presented in Encounter 5.

The PCs may want to search the Vault of Forbidden Magic for clues. Archcleric Hissler will allow it, under his personal supervision. There is, unfortunately, nothing of value to find here.

Additionally, they may want to speak with the solar or newly-returned captain. In this case, proceed to Encounter 8.

Once they have exhausted all of the options, they should come to the conclusion that Captain Tyran Stel was the only patrol captain that could have possibly run into Dralthus. If they bring their evidence to Archpriest Hissler, he will give permission to search Tyran Stel's room. Continue with Encounter 9.

If the players are having real difficulty with the investigation, you may give them *Player Handout 8 – Hints for the Investigation*. **You are not authorized to give them any other hints.** The investigation puzzle is intended to be difficult, and their success or failure (and the campaign consequences) must reflect that.

Encounter 11 occurs on the third day at the temple, just before the end of the Rite of Clarity. If the PCs do not successfully conclude the investigation before then, proceed to Conclusion A.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN

This encounter details the new investigation points that are available on Day 2 at the temple.

Patrol Captain Alelye Redmond

This sub-encounter occurs at the Library - Location D on DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple.

After asking around, you make your way to the rear shelves of the temple library. Sitting near one of

the tall windows is a young woman dressed in white robes. In one hand, she holds a book. In the other, a partially eaten apple.

At your approach, the woman looks up, and quickly hides her snack. A moment later, she breathes a sigh of relief.

“You scared me for a moment there.” She holds up the piece of fruit. “Not supposed to have this in here... Cardinal Velles would kill me. I can’t help it though – can’t get either while out on patrol.”

She looks you over carefully. “You’re new around here. I’m Alelye.”

Alelye can provide the following information, if questioned:

- She just returned from a patrol on the River’s Haven Route. The patrol was pleasantly quiet, so she is back ahead of schedule.
- She always requests (and is given) the River’s Haven Route. She requests it because the Order of the Murky Chalice (said with a sneer) would probably want that route, and she enjoys sticking it to them.
- She will not say why she dislikes the Order of the Murky Chalice, only that she loathes those ‘secretive, exclusivist fools’.
- She does not know which Patrol Captain belongs to the Order of the Murky Chalice. That group is ultra-secretive about their members.
- She will not tell them which group she belongs to.

All APLs

☞ **Patrol Captain Alelye Redmond:** Female human Clr 4 (Bluff +1, Sense Motive +2); AL NG.

Solar Eternal Vigilance

This sub-encounter occurs at the Central Atrium - Location B on DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple.

Keep in mind that it has permanent tongues ability, and will use it to speak in whatever language a given PC is most comfortable with.

You approach one of the balconies surrounding the temple’s central atrium. The towering angel stands on the balcony, watching the ritual below, seemingly basking in the rhythmic chanting.

As you approach, it turns to gaze upon you. "Welcome, mortals." The angel's commanding voice booms forth. "I am Solar Eternal Vigilance, archangel of Pelor, second choir of the Fortress of the Sun. I understand that we are both in search of answers."

The solar can provide the following information, if questioned:

- It is a direct attendant of Pelor, at its home – the Fortress of the Sun, in the blessed fields of Elysium.
- It was sent here to accomplish some task.
- Pelor did not tell it what its task is... the gods have an accord preventing direct interference in mortal affairs.
- It would only be sent here if a critical event was going to occur for Pelor's faithful. The Rite of Clarity, by itself, is not that important.
- It is aware that while all of the clerics here believe they serve Pelor's interests, most of them are mistaken. It is not uncommon for followers to better learn what true service means along their journeys.
- It will remain here, watching over the ritual, until something seems more important.

The solar can inherently *detect evil* and *detect lies*, and its Sense Motive skill is substantial – it is a fair bet that it will be aware of anyone whose heart is not pure. However, it will not confront such individuals unless they interfere with its mission.

All APLs

☞ **Eternal Vigilance:** Solar (Sense Motive +32); AL NG; see *Monster Manual* page 10.

ENCOUNTER 9: LOOK OUT BELOW

This encounter occurs when the PCs have brought enough evidence to the Archcleric to suspect Captain Tyran Stel.

This encounter occurs at Captain Stel's Room - Location M on DM Aid – Map #3 – *The Truelight Temple*. Please refer to DM Aid – Map #4 – *Captain Stel's Room* for the specific layout of this room.

The key that you obtained from the Archcleric slips into the lock, and turns the tumblers with a

slight click. The door squeaks open in protest, allowing you entry into Captain Stel's room.

The room beyond is unremarkable. There is little more than a bed, a writing desk, an armoire, and an oak footlocker. Everything has a very austere feel to it. The bed is meticulously made and the pillow smooth.

It is important to note exactly where each PC is during the course of this encounter. This is due to the nature of the trap and its area of effect.

The armoire in the room is trapped. If it is opened without flipping a hidden catch first, a section of the ceiling collapses on the area around the chest.

APL 2 (EL 2)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling Trap:** CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +14 melee (2d6, bricks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APLs 4, 6 (EL 3)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling Trap:** CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +14 melee (4d6, bricks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 24.

APLs 8, 10, 12 (EL 4)

↗ **Collapsing Ceiling Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +14 melee (6d6, bricks); multiple targets (all targets in two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 24.

The armoire contains clerical clothes and religious texts, but nothing of relevance to the investigation.

If the PCs search the desk drawer and succeed at a Search check (DC 15) they find Captain Stel's journal. Give them *Player Handout 9 – Patrol Captain Stel's Journal*. This journal mentions another Patrol Captain – Adel Sadra – as involved in the conspiracy.

If the PCs show this journal to Archcleric Hissler, he will grant permission to search Captain Sadra's room. In this case, proceed to Encounter 10.

ENCOUNTER 10: JUST A LITTLE PEEK

This encounter occurs when the PCs have brought enough evidence to the Archcleric to suspect Captain Adel Sadra.

This encounter occurs at Captain Sadra's Room - Location N on DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple. Please refer to DM Aid – Map #5 – Captain Sadra's Room for the specific layout of this room.

The key that you obtained from the Archcleric slips into the lock, and turns the tumblers with a soft click. The door swings open in silence, allowing you entry into Captain Sadra's room.

The room beyond is moderately ornamented – a large Baklunish falchion is mounted on the wall, hung opposite a decorative tapestry. There is a bed, a writing desk, an armoire, and an oak footlocker. The room smells strongly of incense.

It is important to note exactly where each PC is during the course of this encounter. This is due to the nature of the trap and its area of effect.

If the PCs search the footlocker and succeed at a Search check (DC 22) they find a message addressed to Captain Sadra. Give them Player Handout 10 – Message to Patrol Captain Sadra. This message mentions a meeting between Captain Stel, Captain Sadra, and the author of the note to discuss sabotaging the ritual.

However, the footlocker also contains a deadly trap, set to catch anyone pawing through it. At APLs 2 - 6, the trap is activated by a touch trigger, a pressure plate set into the bottom of the chest. At APLs 8 – 12, the trigger is visual (with a *true seeing* effect). The trap is activated if there is ever line of sight between the 'trigger spot' on the bottom of the chest and a PC. Note that these traps cannot be detected by searching outside of the footlocker. Likely, the PCs will search the outside of the chest, find nothing, and then start emptying it – setting off the trap in the process.

APL 2 (EL 2)

✦ **Inflict Light Wounds Trap:** CR 2; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*inflict light wounds*, 1st-level cleric, 1d8+1, DC 11 Will save half damage); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

APL 4 (EL 3)

✦ **Inflict Moderate Wounds Trap:** CR 3; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*inflict moderate wounds*, 3rd-level cleric, 2d8+3, DC 13 Will save half damage); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27.

APL 6 (EL 5)

✦ **Poison Trap:** CR 5; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*poison*, 7th-level cleric,

DC 16 Fortitude save partial); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

APL 8 (EL 6)

✦ **Plane Shift Trap:** CR 6; magic device; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset; spell effect (*plane shift*, 9th-level cleric, negative energy plane, DC 17 Will save negates); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 10 (EL 8)

✦ **Finger of Death Trap:** CR 8; magic device; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset; spell effect (*finger of death*, 13th-level cleric, DC 20 Fortitude save partial); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 12 (EL 10)

✦ **Implosion Trap:** CR 10; magic device; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset; spell effect (*implosion*, 17th-level cleric, closest 4 targets, 1 target per round, DC 23 Fortitude save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

If the PCs show the message to Archcleric Hissler, he will suggest that the PCs attend this meeting, to try and stop any sabotage attempts. In this case, proceed to Encounter 11.

ENCOUNTER 11: THY WILL BE DONE

This encounter occurs shortly before noon on day three at the temple.

This encounter occurs at the Sun Gardens - Location I on DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple.

This encounter may proceed very differently, based upon the PC's tactics. The events will proceed as follows, unless interrupted by the PCs:

- (11:30 AM) Adel Sadra arrives at the Sun Gardens.
- (11:40 AM) Tyran Stel arrives at the Sun Gardens. The two clerics make small talk.
- (11:45 AM) Cardinal Milivus arrives, unseen, at a balcony overlooking the gardens.
- (11:48 AM) Cardinal Milivus overhears Tyran Stel express apprehension about his demand to sabotage the ritual. He decides not to further involve the two clerics.
- (11:52 AM) Cardinal Milivus arrives at the Central Atrium.

- (11:54 AM) Cardinal Milivus does enough damage to the ritual to disrupt it. He does it subtly enough, though, that he is not noticed.
- (11:55 AM) Sadra and Stel decide Cardinal Milivus isn't coming, and head off towards the Central Atrium.
- (12:00 noon) The ritual concludes, with no effect.

Keep in mind that Cardinal Milivus would not seem out of place at the altar in the middle of the ritual – several senior clergy bustle around it already. He won't be noticed, while he does his dirty work.

If the PCs attend the meeting – overtly or otherwise - the two clerics will notice them. Once this happens, read the following:

Captain Sadra grabs the tunic of his companion, and gestures emphatically in your direction.

"He spoke the truth! The outsiders seek to destroy our faith."

The clerics quickly produce several flasks from their robes. "You shall not shake our brothers. For Pelor's might!"

They quickly remove the stoppers from their flasks, and hurl them at the ground between you. Smoke bellows forth, curling around itself. In moments, it has coalesced into several fiendish shapes that begin to move of their own accord.

The two clerics look at each other, in shock. "Wh-what?!" Captain Stel stammers. "What have we done? Why would he... what servant of the light would deal with such creatures?!"

"Please! Save us from these fiends! We'll talk!"

Please refer to DM Aid – Map #2 – Combat in the Temple. As this combat begins, the PCs are 20 feet from their opponents.

APL 2 (EL 5)

☞ **Imps** (3): hp 18 each; see *Monster Manual* page 50.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☞ **Bearded Devils** (2): hp 54 each; see *Monster Manual* page 50.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☞ **Hellcats** (2): hp 72 each; see *Monster Manual* page 50.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☞ **Bone Devils** (2): hp 110 each; see *Monster Manual* page 50.

APL 10 (EL 13)

☞ **Barbed Devils** (2): hp 144 each; see *Monster Manual* page 50.

APL 12 (EL 15)

☞ **Ice Devils** (2): hp 168 each; see *Monster Manual* page 50.

All APLs

☞ **Patrol Captain Tyran Stel**: Male human Clr 5 (Bluff +2, Listen +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6); AL NG.

☞ **Patrol Captain Adel Sadra**: Male human Clr 6 (Bluff +4, Listen +3, Sense Motive +3, Spot +9); AL CG.

Tactics: The devils' tactics are simple – attempt to do as much damage as possible to the weakest perceived foe. They will try to get next to spellcasters, in order to disrupt spells.

The two clerics will not participate in the combat. If the PCs are defeated, the devils will turn on them.

Once the PCs have dispatched the devils, proceed with Encounter 12.

ENCOUNTER 12: CELESTIAL FULL BACK

This encounter occurs after the PCs defeat the devils unleashed by the two corrupted young clerics.

This encounter occurs at the Central Atrium - Location B on DM Aid – Map #3 – The Truelight Temple.

The bodies of the fallen fiends shimmer and fade from view. The two clerics approach you, and fall to their knees.

"Please, spare us. We did not know that we were walking so far from the light."

The two young clerics can now relate the following information:

- For months, they've been hampering the temple's efforts to combat undead in the region.
- Before the Insurrection, Pelor barely had a following in the March. But with the coming of

the undead hordes, the Sky Father gained much local prestige.

- Cardinal Milivus convinced them that if the undead were exterminated, the Pelorites would be 'out of a job', and the religion would be weakened.
- Cardinal Milivus has been rearranging patrol routes, so that the undead are weakened or kept in check, but not entirely destroyed.
- Last night, Cardinal Milivus mentioned that he needed the Rite of Clarity to be sabotaged, for the good of the Temple. The two clerics are naïve, but they felt funny about this request, and refused.

Once the PCs have gotten the identity of the big bad guy, and understand what is really going on, continue with this:

Suddenly, Captain Stel turns ashen, looking past you to the balconies above. "Cardinal Milivus," he whispers in shock.

A loud noise rings from above – the thud of a door being slammed, followed by the sound of someone running away.

Assuming they give chase, continue:

The echo of Cardinal Milivus' steps seems to be always just ahead of you, as you pursue him through the halls of the Temple. You know you are getting closer to the central atrium, as the sound of the rhythmic chanting is getting louder and louder.

You round a corner, and see him for the first time. The Cardinal is already halfway down the stairs, running as fast as he can towards the altar at the center of the ritual. The chanting clerics recite their rhythmic mantras all around him, much louder than they were before. All about the arena, a strange glow fills the air, and the sun overhead seems oddly bright.

You move to follow Cardinal Milivus, or to get a clean shot, when a large form interposes itself, blocking the way.

"Stop!" The angel regards you with a stony look, its hands firmly gripping its huge radiant greatsword. "You may not enter this sacred place, until the ritual is complete."

The PCs can attempt a Diplomacy check (DC 25) to convince the solar that Cardinal Milivus is trying to sabotage the ritual. If they point out that he is running

like mad toward the center of the ritual, they can get a +4 circumstance bonus on this check. Also, for each bit of evidence that is mentioned, increase this bonus by +2. If the check is made by a paladin or by a cleric of Pelor, they can get a +4 class bonus to this check. Each attempt takes a full round.

The PCs can attempt an Intimidate check (DC 40) against the solar, but it is highly unlikely that they will succeed. Angels are not easily bullied.

If the PCs do not convince the solar within three rounds, the Cardinal will have enough time to reach the altar and sabotage the ritual. Proceed with Conclusion A.

Once the PCs have convinced the solar of Cardinal Milivus' guilt, proceed to Conclusion B.

CONCLUSION A

This conclusion occurs if the PCs do not keep Cardinal Milivus from sabotaging the ritual. This sample ending text assumes that the PCs do not discover the identities of the culprits. It should be altered to fit the actual outcome.

The voices of the chanting Pelorites rise sharply in volume, and then, in perfect unison, go silent. All of their faces are upturned towards the sun, which is now at its highest point in the sky. Its rays bathe the courtyard as if it was a midsummer's day, instead of the beginning of winter.

Suddenly, murmurs start flowing throughout the crowd. The white and gold robes of the clerics flutter as an icy cold wind blows through the courtyard. Above, the glow of the sun appears to dim, until it is no different than normal.

There is suddenly a hand on your shoulder. "Come with me, quickly," says Archpriest Hissler.

The Archpriest leads you back to his sanctum, once more. As you enter, you find Father Sollus and another man – adorned in the blue and black of the Bissel Free Companies – waiting for you within. The man's tunic is torn and bloodstained.

"This messenger just arrived," Father Sollus says with a nod of greeting. "We thought you should hear this, as well."

The messenger takes a deep breath. "My unit was attacked by a great force of undead, a little to the north. They wiped us out... but not before trouncing every garrison between here and Thornward. Our forces have been decimated."

Father Sollus looks distracted, as he paws through a large pile of notes. "I don't know what happened. The weapon didn't have any effect. It's as if the ritual never happened."

"The 1st Davoniya battle and Srinivan Heavy Horse are heading for here, as we speak," the messenger continues. "But they will not get here in time. My orders are to gather all able men and women, and rally to the field. We will hold them back long enough for Truelight to be evacuated."

Archpriest Hissler looks at each of you in turn, obviously saddened. "No rest for the weary, it would seem." He turns back to the messenger. "Nightwatch will stand with you, until the end."

With that, you are left to begin preparations to depart once more. You can only wonder at what consequences may be right around the corner and how the tide of battle may turn.

For their service, each PC is granted 50 gp by the Bissel Ruling Council.

As well, they receive the 'Church Inquisitor of Pelor' item on the Adventure Record if they uncovered the corruption of Cardinal Milivus.

They also receive the 'Contemplative of Pelor' item if they have interacted with the solar before the end of the adventure.

The End

CONCLUSION B

This conclusion occurs if the PCs successfully track down the culprits, follow Cardinal Milivus to the ritual, and convince the solar of his guilt.

The solar listens to your words, and a look of anger crosses its face. It turns, and its gaze focuses on the running cleric. It reaches out, and mutters a few arcane syllables. Its visage grows cold, and a look of anger crosses its face.

If the PCs succeed in Spellcraft checks (DC 24 and 17) they can tell that the solar used a wish spell, followed by its detect thoughts ability.

"You will not darken this place any longer", bellows the enraged angel. "His judgment is upon you!"

Its enormous muscles flex, and it hurls its huge greatsword into the air. The blade flies unerringly, and strikes Cardinal Milivus. The force of the blow tosses the cleric to the ground like a rag doll. His

lifeless body comes to rest mere inches from the altar, the angel's blade still embedded in his back.

The voices of the chanting Pelorites rise sharply in volume, and then, in perfect unison, go silent. All of their faces are upturned towards the sun, which is now at its highest point in the sky. Its rays bathe the courtyard as if it was a midsummer's day, instead of the beginning of winter.

Suddenly, murmurs start flowing throughout the crowd. On the altar at the center of the atrium, a tiny glass orb glows with a brilliant yellow light. As everyone watches, the glow intensifies, until it is as brilliant as the sun above. The light abruptly flares up, and a shimmering wave of force flows from the orb. As it passes by, you feel its warmth surround and permeate you. You feel the very hand of Pelor upon you.

And then, as suddenly as it came, the light is gone. The glass orb is dark, but in its wake the entire courtyard appears to glow with a radiance of its own.

Two days pass. You are milling about the temple, watching the clerics go about their daily rituals, when there is a hand on your shoulder.

"It is amazing how quickly things return to normal," says Archpriest Hissler. "Even those two..." He gestures, and you see Tyran Stel and Adel Sadra amongst the crowd of clerics. "Led astray, but none sing the hymns of the Sky Father louder than they. One day, it will be as if this never happened."

The Archpriest leads you back to his sanctum, once more. As you enter, you find Father Sollus and another man – adorned in the blue and black of the Bissel Free Companies – waiting for you within.

"This messenger just arrived," Father Sollus says with a nod of greeting. "We thought you should hear this, as well."

The messenger takes a deep breath. "We don't know what happened. Forces stationed near Thornward report seeing a great light in the southern sky. The undead they were fighting just... turned to dust. Evard's forces between Thornward and Rhomstaff have been decimated."

Father Sollus looks distracted, as he paws through a large pile of notes. "I don't know what happened. The weapon wasn't supposed to... this is completely unexpected. Pleasant, but unexpected."

"The 1st Davoniya battle and Srinivan Heavy Horse have been pushing the hordes back north, away from the capital," the messenger continues.

“All of the remaining battles are marching on Thornward. My orders are to gather all able men and women, and rally to the field.”

Archpriest Hissler looks at each of you in turn, obviously pleased, and chuckles quietly. “No rest for the weary, it would seem.” He turns back to the messenger. “Nightwatch will stand with you.”

With that, you are left to begin preparations to depart once more. You can only wonder at what consequences may be right around the corner and how the tide of battle may turn.

For their service, each PC is granted 50 gp by the Bissel Ruling Council. As well, they also receive the following items on the Adventure Record: ‘Bissel Military Commendation’, ‘Church Inquisitor of Pelor’, and ‘Favor of the Church of Pelor’.

They also receive the ‘Contemplative of Pelor’ item if they have interacted with the solar before the end of the adventure.

They also receive the ‘Touched by Pelor’s Hand’ item if they were at or near the Central Atrium of the temple when the weapon activated. It is possible for the party to split up, and only some PCs receive that effect.

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 3

Defeat the undead

APL 2: 90 xp.
APL 4: 150 xp.
APL 6: 210 xp.
APL 8: 270 xp.
APL 10: 330 xp.
APL 12: 390 xp.

Encounter 9

Survive the ceiling trap

APL 2: 60 xp.
APL 4: 90 xp.
APL 6: 90 xp.

APL 8: 120 xp.
APL 10: 120 xp.
APL 12: 120 xp.

Encounter 10

Survive the magical trap

APL 2: 60 xp.
APL 4: 90 xp.
APL 6: 150 xp.
APL 8: 180 xp.
APL 10: 240 xp.
APL 12: 300 xp.

Encounter 11

Defeat the fallen clerics’ minions

APL 2: 150 xp.
APL 4: 210 xp.
APL 6: 270 xp.
APL 8: 330 xp.
APL 10: 390 xp.
APL 12: 450 xp.

Story Award

Discover the identities of the fallen clerics

APL 2: 65 xp.
APL 4: 87 xp.
APL 6: 110 xp.
APL 8: 132 xp.
APL 10: 155 xp.
APL 12: 177 xp.

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2: 25 xp.
APL 4: 48 xp.
APL 6: 70 xp.
APL 8: 93 xp.
APL 10: 115 xp.
APL 12: 138 xp.

Total possible experience

APL 2: 450 xp.
APL 4: 675 xp.
APL 6: 900 xp.
APL 8: 1,125 xp.
APL 10: 1,350 xp.
APL 12: 1,575 xp.

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section

within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

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

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

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

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

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

Encounter 3:

APL 2: L: 20 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Wand of Inflict Light Wounds (62 gp).

APL 4: L: 20 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Wand of Inflict Moderate Wounds (375 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Chain Shirt +1 (104 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333

gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Moderate Wounds (375 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Chain Shirt +1 (104 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Goggles of Day (375 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Serious Wounds (937 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Styptic Chain Shirt +1 (770 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Goggles of Day (375 gp), Helm of Glorious Recovery (466 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Serious Wounds (937 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: Styptic Chain Shirt +1 (770 gp), Elixir of Fire Breath (91 gp), Goggles of Day (375 gp), Helm of Glorious Recovery (466 gp), Ring of Counterspells (333 gp), Unguent of Timelessness (12 gp), Wand of Inflict Critical Wounds (1750 gp).

Conclusion:

All APLs: L: 0 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 20 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 395 gp – Total: 465 gp (450 gp).

APL 4: L: 20 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 708 gp – Total: 778 gp (650 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 915 gp – Total: 965 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 1852 gp – Total: 1902 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 2984 gp – Total: 3034 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 3797 gp – Total: 3847 gp (3,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

☛ **Bissel Military Commendation:** You have been granted a commendation in the Great Army of Bissel. Please contact the Bissel Triad for further details.

☛ **Church Inquisitor of Pelor:** This PC has uncovered and purged corruption from within the Church of Pelor. If the PC is or becomes a member of the Nightwatch meta-organization, this fulfills the special requirement for the Church Inquisitor prestige class for followers of Pelor.

☛ **Contemplative of Pelor:** This PC has met a solar in the service of the Sky Father. This fulfills the special requirement for the Contemplative prestige class for followers of Pelor.

☛ **Favor of the Church of Pelor:** This favor counts as an Influence Point with the Church of Pelor in Bissel. The PC can spend this favor to gain access (Frequency: Any) to purchase any one, and only one of the following items/upgrades (circle when chosen): *cloak of resistance* +2 to +4, *gem of brightness*, *globe of sunlight*^{LM}, *lesser strand of prayer beads*, *pearl of power* (1st level to 4th level), *phylactery of undead turning*, *sacred scabbard*^{CW}, +4 ability boost item from DMG, armor/shield special abilities (*angelic*^{BOED}, *blinding*, *death ward*^{CA}, *ghost ward*^{LM}, *sacred*^{BOED}), weapon special abilities (*ghost touch*, *sacred*^{LM}).

If you also possess *Favor of the Churches of Heironeous and Pelor* from BIS5-03 *Trials and Triumphs*, you may spend both favors at once and instead choose from the following list: rings (*freedom of movement*, *shooting stars*), +6 ability boost item from DMG, armor/shield special abilities (*ghost touch*), *bracers of dawn*^{CW}, *lantern of revealing*, *sun blade*, weapon special abilities (*disruption*, *ghost strike*^{LM}, *heavenly burst*^{BOED}, *holy*, *sacred burst*^{LM}). Mark this favor as USED once it has been spent.

☛ **Touched by Pelor's Hand:** This PC was present at the Rite of Clarity, when Pelor's wrath was released upon Oerth, and has been permanently affected.

Your skin glows softly with a radiant aura of white light. This radiance sheds light as a common lamp, providing bright light to a radius of 5 feet and shadowy illumination to 10 feet. This aura detects mildly as good.

Good creatures automatically recognize the radiance surrounding you as a mark of what you have achieved for the forces of good. You gain a +2 divine bonus on all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks made when interacting with good creatures.

It is impossible for this PC to hide in shadows or darkness, and the PC suffers a -10 divine penalty to other Hide checks and Bluff checks to seem inconspicuous, as the aura naturally draws attention. A *darkness* spell can temporarily counter this radiance effect. Illusion magic such as *disguise self* or *alter self* cannot hide it – the altered form will still radiate light. This effect can be removed via *remove curse*, *wish*, or *miracle*.

Item Access

APL 2:

- True Holy Symbol [Pelor] (Regional; Planar Handbook)
- Wand of Cure Light Wounds (Regional; DMG)

- Wand of Inflict Light Wounds (Adventure; DMG)
- Ring of Counterspells (Adventure; DMG)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- Oil of Greater Magic Weapon +2 (Regional; DMG)
- Potion of Shield of Faith +5 (Regional; DMG)
- Wand of Inflict Moderate Wounds (Adventure; DMG)

APL 6 (all of APLs 2, 4 plus the following):

- Divine Scroll of Restoration (Regional; DMG)
- Unguent of Timelessness (Adventure; DMG)
- Elixir of Fire Breath (Adventure; DMG)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6 plus the following):

- Oil of Greater Magic Weapon +3 (Regional; DMG)
- Wand of Inflict Serious Wounds (Adventure; DMG)
- Goggles of Day (Adventure; Libris Mortis)

APL 10 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6, 8 plus the following):

- Divine Scroll of Hallow (Regional; DMG)
- Styptic Chain Shirt +1 (Adventure; CW)
- Helm of Glorious Recovery (Adventure; MH)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 plus the following):

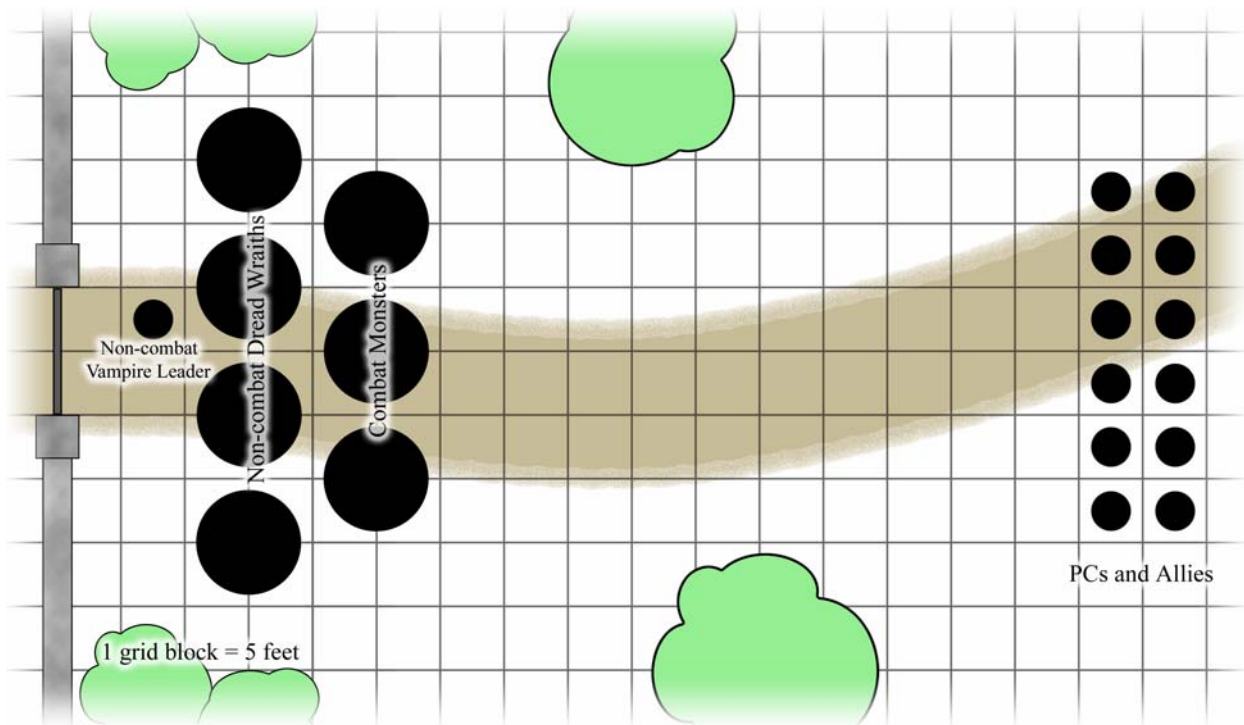
- Staff of Healing (Regional; DMG)
- Oil of Greater Magic Weapon +4 (Regional; DMG)
- Wand of Inflict Critical Wounds (Adventure; DMG)

APPENDIX ONE – THE TEMPLE OF PELOR

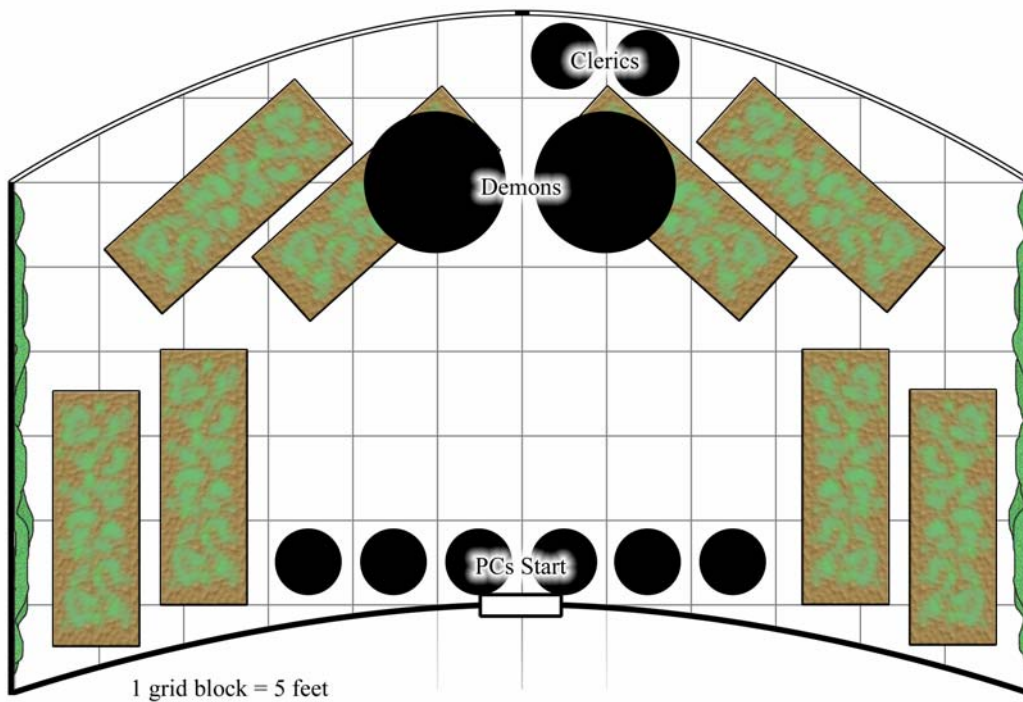
The letter designations of locations in this appendix correspond with locations marked on DM Aid – Map #3 – *The Truelight Temple*. Many other locations exist within the temple – it is a fully-functioning home for hundreds of clergy – but only those of importance to this module are detailed here.

- A. **Entrance** – The temple stands prominently on top of the central hill in the middle of Truelight, Capital Township of the Barony of Nightwatch. 48 marble steps lead from the street up to the front entranceway of the temple – one for each of the hero-protectors that fell defending the town during the Insurrection. A pair of armed Nightwatch guards is always stationed here.
- B. **Central Atrium** – Resembling an amphitheater, the central forum of the temple is open to the sky. It is surrounded by a number of raised tiers and balconies. This is where the Rite of Clarity – a week-long ritual before the coming of winter - is performed.
- C. **Chapel** – This is the primary location of worship at the temple. Masses are held daily at noon, when the sun is highest in the sky, and the chapel is always packed with both clergy and local worshippers. At dawn and dusk, clergy can be found here performing other daily rituals.
- D. **Library** – Despite it's respectable size, the library is full to less than a quarter of its capacity. This is due to the relatively young age of the temple.
- E. **Archcleric's Sanctum** – This chamber is the personal space of the Archcleric. It contains both an office and living quarters.
- F. **Reliquary** – This chamber is guarded at all times by Pelorite acolytes, as many important artifacts are stored here. It is strongly warded against dimensional travel and evocation magic – an effort to prevent theft or destruction of the contents.
- G. **Vault of Forbidden Magic** – This sub-chamber of the Reliquary is accessible only by a hidden door, and is only known to senior members of the clergy. Dangerous and evil items that are confiscated by the Nightwatch patrols are secreted here, until they are destroyed. This chamber is warded similarly to the main room of the Reliquary.
- H. **Offices** – These chambers serve as office space for the cardinals and administrative staff within the temple.
- I. **Sun Gardens** – This windowed room is full of various plants, many not native to Bissel. Protected from the elements, the plants remain healthy even through the harsh winters in the Marsh. It is a popular hang-out spot for clergy, especially during those grey months.
- J. **General Living Quarters** – These small chambers house the low-ranked clergy at the temple. They contain little more than a bed and a footlocker.
- K. **Visitor's Quarters** – These chambers are reserved for guests of the temple. While they are fairly meager, they are still substantially larger than the general quarters. They each contain a bed, footlocker, armoire, writing desk, and chair. The PCs are housed here during their stay.
- L. **Senior Staff Quarters** – These living chambers house the higher-ranked clergy, except for the Archcleric. They each contain a bed, footlocker, armoire, writing desk, and chair.
- M. **Captain's Stel's Room** – One of the Senior Staff Quarters. This one belongs to Captain Stel.
- N. **Captain Sadra's Room** – One of the Senior Staff Quarters. This one belongs to Captain Sadra.

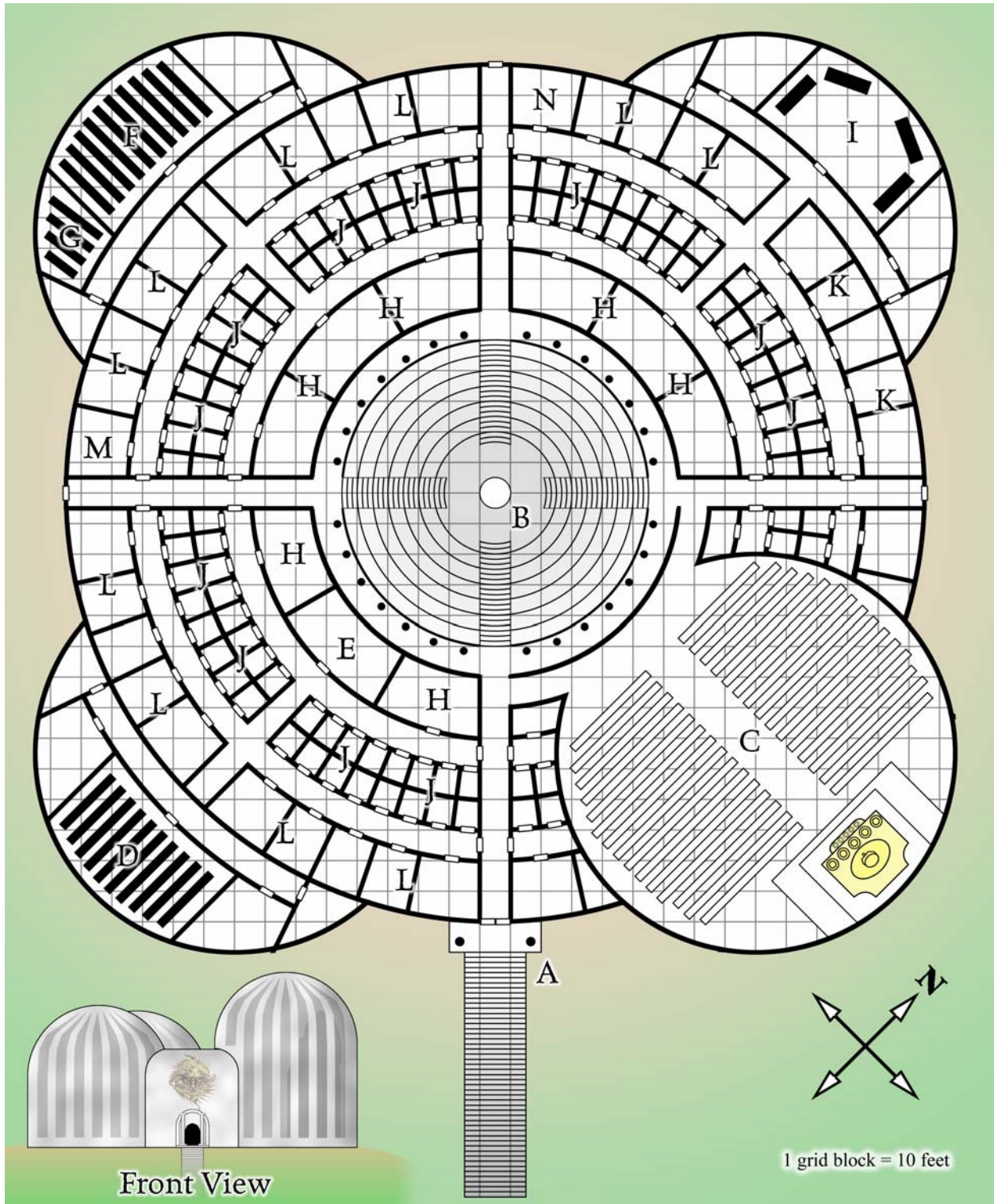
DM AID – MAP #1 – COMBAT AT THE GATES



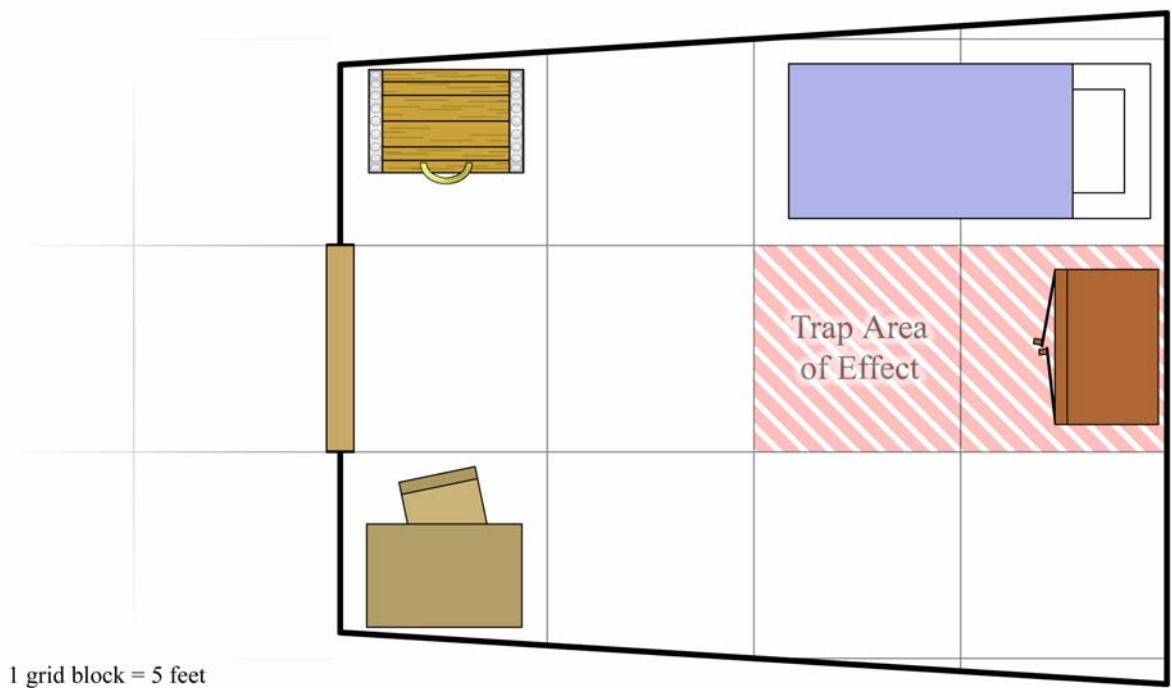
DM AID – MAP #2 – COMBAT IN THE TEMPLE



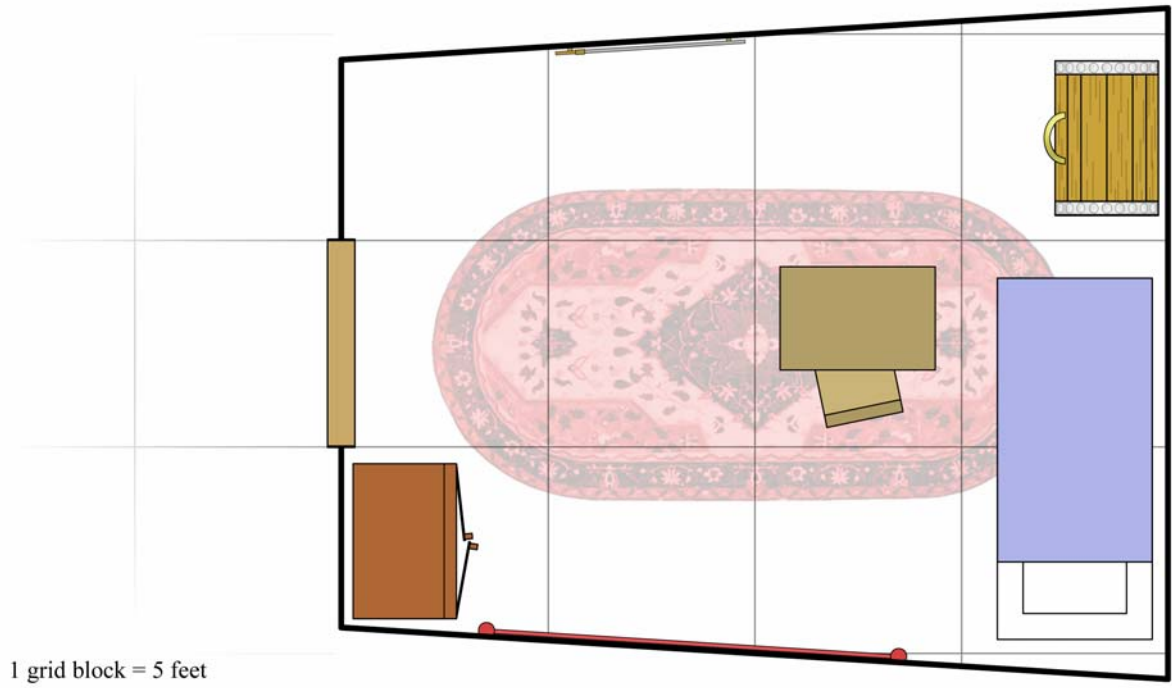
DM AID – MAP #3 – THE TRUELIGHT TEMPLE



DM AID – MAP #4 – CAPTAIN STEL’S ROOM



DM AID – MAP #5 – CAPTAIN SADRA’S ROOM



**PLAYER HANDOUT 1 – PERSONAL LETTER FROM CAINLAN
RASHEDRA**

My dear friend,

It would appear that once more I find you in Pellak just when I am in need of assistance. A friend has asked me for a favor, and to fulfill it I must ask one of you. Please assemble a team of adventurers, and meet with me as soon as possible at the headquarters of the Bissel Free Companies. The nature of this errand requires me to send you on your way as quickly as possible, so please do not keep me waiting.

My page will await your answer, and can provide you with directions, if needed. However, I do not expect that you will need them.

I will understand if you cannot meet with me, but I will be greatly disappointed.

Cainlan Rashedra

PLAYER HANDOUT 2 – LETTER FROM BARON RASHEDRA

[Insert PC name],

Based upon the recommendation of your commanding officer, and the convenience of your being in Pellak, you have been selected for a mission of utmost importance.

You are hereby ordered to assemble a team of reliable adventurers, and meet with me as soon as possible at the headquarters of the Bissel Free Companies for briefing. The nature of this errand requires me to send you on your way as quickly as possible, so do not keep me waiting.

My page will await your response, and can provide you with directions, if needed. I will be greatly disappointed if you cannot meet with me.

Baron Cainlan Rashedra

PLAYER HANDOUT 3 – LETTER FROM CAINLAN RASHEDRA

Dear [Insert PC name],

Through word of mouth and a few mutual friends, your name has found its way to me. Based upon such words of praise, and the convenience of your being in Pellak, I would like to request a favor.

Please assemble a team of reliable adventurers, and meet with me tomorrow morning at the headquarters of the Bissel Free Companies, and I will tell you what I can. The nature of this errand requires me to send you on your way as quickly as possible, so please do not keep me waiting.

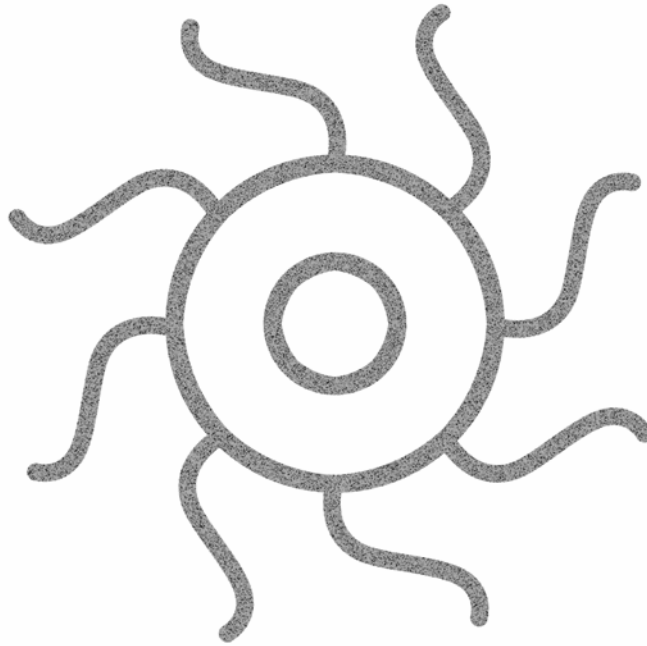
My page will await your response, and can provide you with directions, if needed.

I will understand if you cannot meet with me, but I will be greatly disappointed.

Baron Cainlan Rashedra

PLAYER HANDOUT 4 – DRALTHUS' SKETCH

This is a sketch of the symbol Dralthus saw on the person of the cleric leading the Nightwatch patrol he encountered:



PLAYER HANDOUT 5 – LIST OF THE PATROL CAPTAINS

Ashseri Buran

Turnther Polenth

Alelye Redmond

Adel Sadra

Tyran Stel

PLAYER HANDOUT 6 – PELORITE SECRET SOCIETIES

After studying the history, you have learned the following about the five major Pelorite societies at the temple:



Order of the Murky Chalice – A secret society in the purest sense of the word, the members of the Order of the Murky Chalice believe that they alone know what it means to be a follower of Pelor. Efforts to pierce the veil of secrecy have mostly failed, but it is known that aspirants to the order drink wine from a sacred chalice just before their ordination. It is also known that members grant unusual significance to natural bodies of water – it is thought that viewing Pelor's light as it is reflected off the surface of the water is somehow meaningful to such clerics. Members of the Order of the Murky Chalice do not symbolize their membership through ornamentation.



Seekers of the Endless Sky - The Seekers of the Endless Sky are a loose, but sizable, affiliation of Pelorites that search for an ideal known as the 'Endless Sky'. However, the exact nature of this ideal is a much debated topic amongst their number. To some, the Endless Sky is a state of mind – most likely one of pure reflective thought. To others, it is a physical location – possibly a demiplane of air and positive energy. Regardless of the correct answer – if there is one – the Seekers spend much effort trying to learn what they can about their faith, so that they may taste nirvana. Many seekers identify themselves by wearing a circular disk of clear crystal behind their holy symbols.



Seers of the Unclosing Eye – The adherents of the Unclosing Eye take the metaphor of Pelor watching over the world to an extreme: they believe that His light is the light of clarity, and He keeps knowledge of everything it touches. The self-styled 'Seers' practice many obscure divination rituals. Some Pelorites believe that this knowledge is not meant to be known. As such, few of the Seers of the Unclosing Eye will admit to their membership in this fraternity, but most carry with them a pendant that looks like a stylized symbol of Pelor with an eye, rather than a face – tradition says that Pelor can see through the pendants, even into the darkest of shadows.



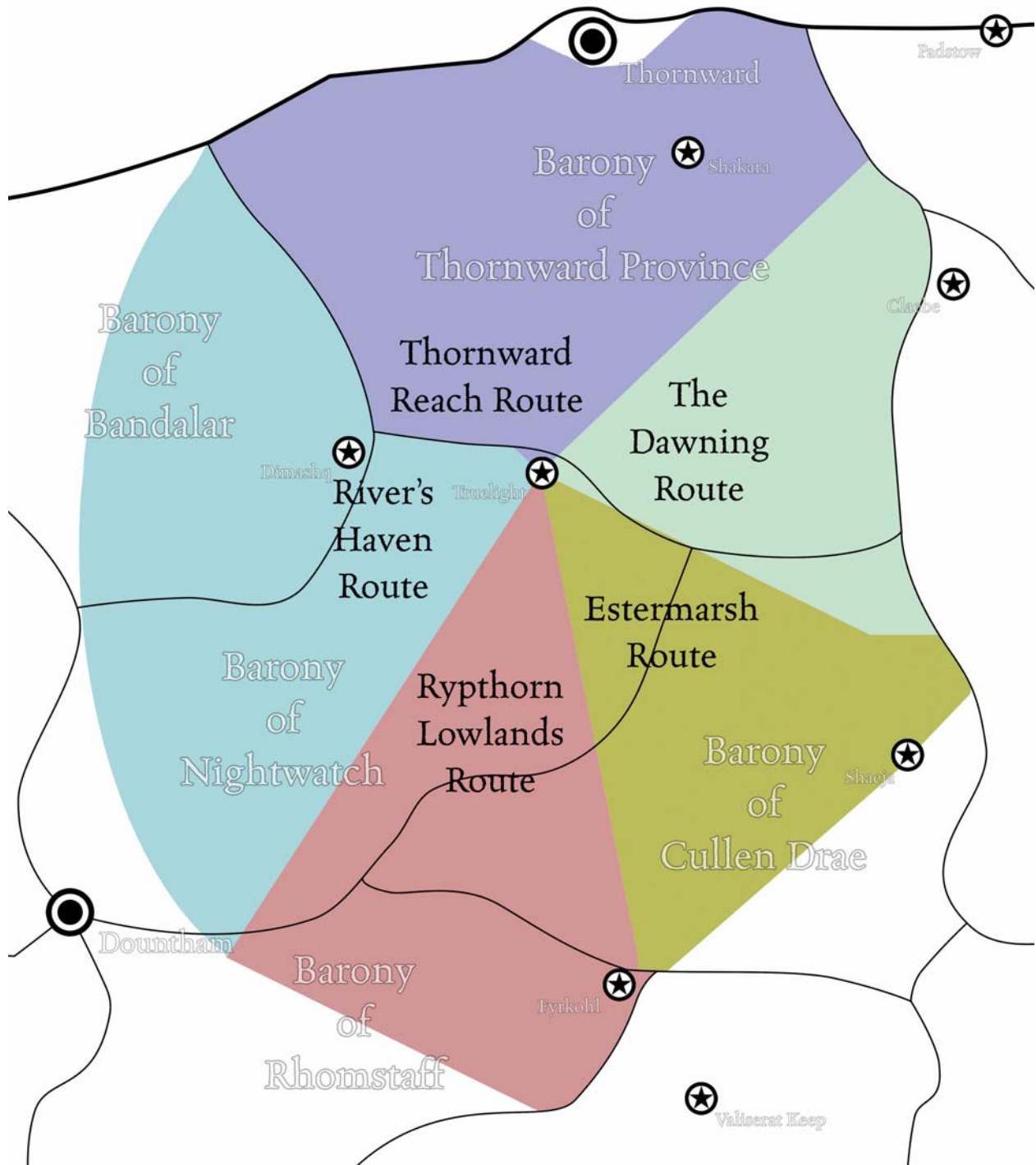
Sunwhisperers - The Sunwhisperers are a faction shrouded in secrecy. Their roots can be traced back to the early 500 CY time period, when a small group with the same name in the Tusmit converted from the worship of Azor'alq. To this day, the organization is still made up exclusively of Pelorites of Baklunish heritage. The secrecy surrounding their goals and motivations, they claim, is due to the hostile nature the March had towards the Baklunish in recent history. Critics claim that the mystery only validates claims of untrustworthiness towards the nationality. Sunwhisperers do not tend to identify themselves publicly.



Vigilant Flame - The label 'secret society' is a bit of a misnomer for the Vigilant Flame. This sect – popular with paladins and more militant clerics – espouses the virtues of taking the battle to the enemy, rather than waiting for him to attack first. They take their name from a passage in the *Pelorum Triumphus* scrolls, one of the oldest known Pelorite texts – '...and the true sword shall be the light, and the vigilant flame shall strike down the darkness'. Members of the Vigilant Flame have been known to sheathe their holy symbols in *continual flame* spells to advertise their brotherhood.

PLAYER HANDOUT 7 – MAP OF THE PATROL ROUTES

This is a map of the territories covered by the five patrol routes starting from the temple in Truelight.



PLAYER HANDOUT 8 – HINTS FOR THE INVESTIGATION

You've been recruited to help solve a mystery, and it looks like you are stumped. Here are a few hints to get you going:

- The necromancer Dralthus encountered a Nightwatch patrol in Rhomstaff. If you can figure out which Patrol Captain led that group, you will have uncovered a link into whatever is going on behind the scenes.
- It is important that you complete your investigations quickly – the ritual must complete as planned.
- Archcleric Hissler will not let you search private quarters without just cause. Follow up on every lead, so that you may obtain that proof.
- Talk to everyone around the temple. You never know who might have valuable information.
- Keep track of everything you are told. Seemingly unimportant information may allow you to eliminate a suspect.
- Dralthus mentioned a particular symbol that the Patrol Captain bore. If you could identify this symbol, you might learn something about that cleric. Perhaps someone knowledgeable at the temple can help you with this.
- It might be helpful if you knew everything possible about the Patrol Captains. Ask everyone what they can tell you about them.
- Each patrol covers different ground in Northern Bissel. It would be helpful for you to identify the spot where Dralthus encountered the patrol. Perhaps someone in close contact with the patrols could tell you more.
- Each Patrol Captain belongs to a faction within the church. It could be helpful to learn more about these factions. Perhaps someone scholarly within the temple could help.
- If the Patrol Captains return to the temple, you might want to speak with them.

PLAYER HANDOUT 9 – PATROL CAPTAIN STEL'S JOURNAL

These are interesting excerpts from a journal found within Patrol Captain Stel's chambers:

20 Planting 595 CY (about 7 months ago)

I've been trying to wrap my head around what my master told me, and I admit that it's starting to make sense.

Before the war, there was little faith in the Sky Father in the March. As terrible as it was, however, it gave us a purpose, and gave people a reason to believe.

There are those within the temple that want to wipe the entire undead horde out, as quickly as possible. If we do that, he told me, we will eliminate our reasons for being here. The people won't need to believe in the faith any longer.

I think I've convinced myself. This must be done.

1 Growfest 595 CY (about 6 months ago)

I encountered my first necromancer today, since I agreed to the plan. I eliminated his foul minions, and almost took him down, too. I remembered, at the last minute, and led the patrol off the field. The men didn't seem to care much, – I just told them that our orders were to let him live, so he could put some scare into Evard.

My master was furious. He warned me to be more subtle, next time, lest someone figure it out.

27 Goodmonth 595 CY (about 3 months ago)

I think I've fully reconciled with the truth – we are doing the true work of the Sky Father. We are the true believers.

4 Brewfest 595 CY (about 2 months ago)

I think I've convinced Captain Sadra into helping out. He seemed skeptical, at first, and threatened going to the Archcleric. I told him that Hissler may BE the enemy, and he seemed moved by that. I think he will be a good asset.

28 Ready'reat 595 CY (2 days ago)

I am off for another patrol – I will be lucky if I can make it back in time for the ritual.

My master just sent us a note, but I'm already running late. I'll read it along the way.

PLAYER HANDOUT 10 – MESSAGE TO PATROL CAPTAIN SADRA

This note was found within Patrol Captain Sadra's room. The broken wax seal bears the symbol of Pelor.

28 Ready'reat 595 CY

Captain Adel,

Our efforts have been noble and fruitful, but they are not enough. The more we work for Pelor's interests, the more our enemies work against us. Desperate times call for desperate action.

I want you and Captain Stel to meet with me once you return from your patrols. Meet me in the Sun Gardens just before high noon. I must speak with you before the Rite of Clarity concludes.

I have decided that the Rite of Clarity is just a tool of those that would see our faith disappear from the March. We have no recourse but to make sure that it does not conclude as planned. We must also insure that it appears to work – the appearance will satiate the ignorant.

We will discuss the particulars when we meet.

Yours in His Light

BIS5-06 Vanity and Vexation - Critical Events Summary

- 1) Did the PCs interfere in the negotiations between Lady Saralind and Dralthus?
- 2) Did Dralthus convince Lady Saralind to grant his demands?
- 3) Was the Cardinal successfully unmasked?
- 4) Was the weapon successfully used?

If you run this event in December of 2005 or January of 2006, please e-mail the results from this sheet to a member of the Bissel Triad by February 1st, 2006, or have the Senior DM of your event do so.