



AS HE LAY DYING

A Two-Round Continuous D&D Core LIVING GREYHAWK™ Adventure

version 1

by Erik Mona

An ambassador from the Duchy of Urnst needs adventurers to transport her cousin's cursed corpse from the City of Greyhawk to their ancestral home in Leukish. She's hired a barge, complete with its superstitious crew, to carry the party from city to city, but the dangers of river travel and the specter of an ancient curse will stand in the way of success. An adventure for characters level 4-10.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Most sanctioned events delegate a four-hour time block for each round of this scenario, with actual playing time will around three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and reward distribution and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

PREPARATION

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

Read this entire adventure at least once before running the event. Familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

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

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

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

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

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

Text that appears in shaded boxes is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in sidebars contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and nonplayer character (NPC) statistics are pro-

vided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh your memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

2-Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.

3-Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

- 1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.
- 2) If characters bring animals that have been trained for combat (usually war horses and riding dogs), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e., animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single character may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 and 1/6	0	0	0	1
1/3 and 1/2	0	0	1	1
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

- 3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.
- 4) If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as

challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

- 1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- 2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.
- 3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Miale, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Core adventure, set in the City of Greyhawk. All characters pay two Time Units to participate in the adventure. Adventure's Standard Upkeep costs 24 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 100 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 200 gp.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

As He Lay Dying is the second scenario in the “Absolute Power” series of Living Greyhawk Core adventures. This series will play out over several years, eventually leading to an epic struggle in which the characters must thwart an evil plan with repercussions that could topple seats of power throughout the Flanaess.

It is not necessary to have played the first adventure in this series, *River of Blood*, to enjoy this installment, and, in fact, the two may be played completely independent of each other and may be played in any order.

Threads introduced in both adventures will come into play much later in the campaign. Don't be afraid to let your players know this is a part of a series before you begin playing. Try to avoid the impression that *As He Lay Dying* represents a “one-off” game by encouraging the players to take notes, telling them that their discoveries here might lead to treasures or revelations much later in the series.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

As He Lay Dying begins in the cosmopolitan city of Greyhawk, with the characters paying a visit to the aide of an ambassador from the Duchy of Urnst, one of Greyhawk's strongest allies. This woman, Jaziadeen, explains that her family has recently suffered a grievous loss with the recent death of her cousin, an adventurer named Ramel Kem. She explains that one of her ancestors, a tomb robber named Garaban Kem, once fell victim to a powerful, mysterious curse. This curse stipulated that so long as the Kem family existed, the bodies of their dead would be denied a peaceful rest.

In the hundreds of years since the curse first made itself known, she explains, her family was able to construct a sanctified mausoleum in Leukish, the port capital of the Duchy of Urnst, where the bulk of her family is situated. Jaziadeen hires the party to accompany her cousin's corpse on its journey to this safe haven, offering them a fair reward if they ensure that his body makes it to safety intact.

There is one additional complication to her offer. Since Jaziadeen wishes her cousin's body to avoid any of his enemies from his former life as an adventurer, she has contracted a Rhennee sail barge to take the characters to Leukish via the Selintan River and the Nyr Dyv, the so-called Lake of Unknown Depths. She doesn't trust the nomadic Rhennee folk, whom she considers to be of ill breeding. She warns the charac-

ters that they will need to keep an eye on the barge-folk throughout the travel. At the end of the journey, the characters are to bring the crate containing Ramel Kem's body to her uncle, Valesh Kem, a merchant in Leukish.

Though the job may seem like an easy way to make some coin, everything is much more complicated than it initially appears. For starters, the cursed ancestor Garaban Kem is an elaborate fiction. There is no curse on the Kem family, and Ramel's body is in no supernatural danger.

It is, however, in a great deal of “ordinary” danger. Jaziadeen, Ramel, and “uncle” Valesh belong to a shadowy organization known as the Scarlet Brotherhood. The Brotherhood espouses the superiority of the Suel branch of humanity above all others, and uses guile, assassination, and a complicated form of martial arts to achieve positions of influence within the power structure of the Flanaess. As the Duchy of Urnst happens to have a largely Suloise population, the secret order is particularly powerful in that country.

On a recent adventure in an ancient, abandoned city in the Suss Forest, the Brotherhood agent Ramel Kem came upon some important information about the Octychs, mysterious items of magical power currently sought after by the Brotherhood and a number of other organizations throughout the Flanaess. The adventuring agent was never able to reveal his information to his contact, Jaziadeen, since he was murdered in an apparent street robbery in the River District the night after his arrival in Greyhawk. The ambassador's aide knows only that Kem had discovered information vital to the Brotherhood's search for the Octychs, and that something as trivial as death shouldn't stand in the way of the order gaining this information.

The murder of her associate troubled her, however, and so Jaziadeen decided Greyhawk was “too hot” a locale in which to perform the ceremony (she also lacked the resources to pay for his *resurrection*). Other powers clearly sought the Octychs. If they were to get to Kem's body, a simple *speak with dead* spell or a *raise dead* combined with a regimen of gruesome torture might reveal what he had learned, and all the Brotherhood's efforts to discover the whereabouts of the Octychs would be lost.

To avoid this, Jaziadeen set upon the idea of hiring a band of tight-lipped, unsuspecting Rhennee and a group of transient (and hence likely expendable) adventurers to ferry the corpse to Leukish, away from the threats of the open road.

That leads the characters into the hands of the Rhennee. The voyage will take nearly two weeks. In that time, the characters must deal with the prejudices, tempers, and superstitions of their bargefolk hosts, the dangers of the Lake of Unknown Depths, and the attacks of a cleric of the evil god Iuz, who seems to have more than a passing interest in the corpse of Ramel Kem.

On the priest's ship, the characters might learn about Kem's affiliation, at which point they must decide what to do with the body, and what to do with their contacts in Greyhawk and Leukish.

INTRODUCTION

The city of Greyhawk is a bustling metropolis of some 70,000 folk. Situated along the Selintan River at a point that could adequately be described as the "geographic center" of the Flanaess, Greyhawk benefits from a healthy trading economy. The nearby Cairn Hills are the site of hundreds of tombs from several ancient cultures, and while much of the riches to be found there were plundered ages ago, the hills remain a beacon to those who seek coin in exchange for dangerous exploration. The legendary Castle Greyhawk, abandoned former home to the allegedly insane (and certainly rich) archmage Zagig Yragerne, has long tempted the greedy and desperate with its gilded, trap-filled halls. Accordingly, Greyhawk's population is bolstered by a number of transient adventurers. The protagonists of this scenario, the player characters, are culled from the ranks of these adventurers.

Before you begin play, allow each player to determine why his or her character has come to the Free City of Greyhawk. Perhaps they are visiting a relative or friend. Perhaps they're just passing through, or perhaps they've come to stay for a while, eager to try their luck in some dark, forgotten cairn.

Whatever their reason, at some time in the last three days, each member of the party has met Jaziadeen, second adjunct to Count Reichart Petrides, the ambassador of the Duchy of Urnst. Their encounters have been brief, usually a short conversation at one of the Foreign Quarter taverns frequented by adventurers. The adventurers remember Jaziadeen as extremely charismatic, though a bit rushed, her mind apparently preoccupied with her work at the embassy. When the woman learned the character was an adventurer, she invited him or her to visit her at the duchy's embassy, in the High Quarter, on Starday morning. She has a job, she explained, that requires special attention.

The seven flags flying above you snap with a loud rustling in the cold winter air of the Plain of Greyhawk. The largest, a green banner depicting a brown bear standing upon its hind legs, marks the building over which it flies as property of the Duchy of Urnst, one of Greyhawk's strongest trading partners. You stand before the flags, and before the large Garden Quarter structure, with a handful of somewhat shady characters who have the look of adventurers about them.

You recently made the acquaintance of Jaziadeen, a fair woman with a bright smile contrasted by a furrowed brow. After chatting briefly in one of the countless taverns that dot the Free City like boils on a stray dog's back, Jaziadeen asked you to come to her place of work, the embassy of the Duchy of Urnst, to help her with a private matter. Though talking your way past the vigilant guards at the gate into the quarter took some doing, you finally arrived only a few minutes late, weaving your way through a mazelike growth of shrubs to come to a large oaken door at the head of a small stone stairway.

At this point, allow the characters to explain what they look like to each other. The door has not opened, and does not open if anyone attempts to knock. Some players will wish to take the opportunity for a little in-character roleplay—don't discourage them! Finally, when things begin to die down or when someone suggests that perhaps they've been stood up, continue with the following:

The large door opens soundlessly, and out steps Jaziadeen, the woman you met only recently. In the morning light, it's possible to make out more details than when you last saw her. Standing about five and a half feet tall with the sleek, bony features common to those of Suloise ancestry, Jaziadeen's long blonde hair is pulled up in a bun secured by a delicate metal lacework tiara. She wears a fine dress of deep green, with mustard accents and an elaborate knotwork pattern of subdued blues. A small ivory badge depicting a sword and sparrow rests upon her breast.

"I'm sorry to have kept you waiting," the woman says with an apologetic smile. "The Count asked me to go over some important documents, and I simply lost track of time. Rather complicated matters of mining rights along the eastern Abbor-Alz—boring stuff, I'm afraid, but I've managed to become rather engrossed in it."

"But where are my manners? Come in, come in. We've much to discuss."

Assuming the characters assent to her invite, the young adjutant leads them down a short hallway, resplendent in the green and browns of Urnst. After a

brief walk, the group arrives at a small sitting room decorated with suits of armor and a detailed map of the border between Greyhawk and Urnst in the Cairn Hills hanging upon one of the walls. A wooden table with several chairs dominates the center of the room. Jaziadeen casually takes a seat at the head of the table and motions for the characters to take a seat around her.

"You'll have to forgive me if I seem a bit distant, today. It's been a difficult week for me, dealing as I have with such a terrible loss..." Jaziadeen trails off, studying the surface of the table as if hoping it contains the right words. *"I never could communicate well with your class—with adventurers, I mean. It's not my world. My cousin, Ramel, now he was the adventurer."* She shakes her head sadly. *"And look where it got him."*

"My cousin, Ramel Kem, is dead. He was killed two days ago while chasing skirts and spirits in the River Quarter, having recently returned from one of his grand adventures. The watch seems to think it was a robbery, and I've no reason to disbelieve them. One of my jobs here in Greyhawk is to keep track of Urnstan nationals who die in the city, and believe me, there are a lot more murders in Greyhawk than the Oligarchy would like you to believe."

Jaziadeen puts her left hand to her hairpiece, tucking a loose blonde strand behind a silver tine. *"You've probably never heard of the Kem family, but we're fairly well known in Urnst. I don't expect you to agree to what I'm going to offer without hearing it, but I would request that you keep what I'm about to tell you to yourselves, if only for the sake of my family."*

When she gets a sign of assent from everyone in the room, she continues.

"Our family, though respected merchants in Leukish, the capital of Urnst, are not particularly well off. I cannot afford to have Ramel resurrected, so I'm afraid that his death will be permanent. That, unfortunately, is the least of my family's worries."

"Decades ago, an ancestor named Garaban Kem plundered the wrong tomb in the Bandit Kingdoms, and brought a terrible curse upon our family. Few of us know the exact details of who Garaban crossed or why, but we do know that any member of our family who dies arises from the grave as an undead creature three weeks after dying."

Jaziadeen furrows her brow. *"I want my cousin's rest to be final. Generations ago, my family constructed a special magical mausoleum in Leukish, a magically protected structure where bodies could be interred without fear of the curse. There are other options, of course, but our family ties are*

strong, and it would mean a lot to us to see Ramel returned to our family's resting place."

"Overland travel is out of the question. Ramel gained more than a few enemies in his years as an adventurer, and news of our family curse isn't exactly a secret among those who go looking for weapons to use against us. I'm afraid the road east to Urnst is untenable."

"I've arranged with a 'family' of Rhennee bargefolk, who have agreed to take my sensitive cargo from Greyhawk to Leukish. Their bargelord, Mariakos, drives a hard bargain, but I've paid him fairly for his discretion and his silence on the matter. I haven't told him the specifics of what's inside the crate that was loaded into his barge yesterday, and I see no reason why he need ever know the particulars."

"The Rhennee are wild, untrustworthy wanderers. They value coin as much or more than you or I, but their customs are strange, and it's impossible to know for sure whether Mariakos and his crew will honor the agreement. The barge leaves at dawn tomorrow on a twelve-day journey. I've informed him that I'll be sending my own agents to accompany the barge and guard the cargo. I propose that you people act as those guards."

Jaded players will immediately assume that Jaziadeen is setting up the characters for some sort of terrible betrayal. While in a certain sense that's true, it's important to review a few facts before playing out this encounter:

1—Jaziadeen is lawful neutral, and does not trigger detect evil spells, or any similar magics that reveal the presence of an evil creature.

2—Jaziadeen genuinely distrusts the Rhennee (in fact, careful discussion on the matter reveals that she finds their entire race distasteful, and is nonplussed that they seem to present the only option of getting her "cousin" to safety. Her primary goal is to hire adventurers to guard the cargo, exactly as she claims.

3—Jaziadeen belongs to the Scarlet Brotherhood, a sinister secret organization that dedicates itself to the advancement of the Suel breed of humanity over all else. Though Ramel Kem is not in fact her familial cousin, the organization's hierarchy is built such that members refer to each other as "cousin" or "uncle" depending upon ranks within the organization. So, when Jaziadeen says that Ramel is her cousin, she's telling the truth, from a certain point of view.

4—Jaziadeen is one of the brightest Scarlet Brotherhood agents currently operating in the city of

Greyhawk. She achieved her current position by being an excellent liar (which conveniently makes her an excellent diplomat). Jaziadeen's Bluff score differs based on the chosen Encounter Level for the adventure, but in any case it is formidable, and should be more than a match for untrusting characters with a maximized Sense Motive score. Her full statistics appear in Encounter Twelve.

In any event, the adjutant attempts to deflect any questions regarding her trustworthiness as nervousness and unfamiliarity with dealing with adventurers and the sensitive nature of her family's curse. If called on her behavior further, she confides in the characters that she's concerned that Ramel may have crossed the mysterious Horned Society, which is in fact true.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL SHE REVEAL HER AFFILIATION TO THE CHARACTERS!

5—She suspects, but does not know for sure, that her “uncle,” a Brotherhood agent posting as a merchant named Valesh Kem, will do something nasty to the characters at the first sign that they could upset the Brotherhood's plan. It is Jaziadeen's hope, however, that that won't ever happen, and that the delivery will go off without a hitch.

The following information will help you flesh out the encounter with Jaziadeen, answering many immediate questions the characters may have. Use the information presented in the rest of the adventure to flesh out answers for additional questions as they come up.

Jaziadeen offers each of the characters a small immediate payment (a tremendous show of faith in a city as riddled with charlatans and fakes as Greyhawk). She's sent magical communications to her uncle in Leukish, asking him to hand over an additional payment once Ramel's body has been delivered. The exact sums vary according to the chosen encounter level: APL 4: 100 gp/300 gp; APL 6: 200 gp/500; APL 8: 400 gp/800gp; APL 10: 500 gp/1,500 gp.

- Mariakos's barge leaves Greyhawk's harbor about two hours after sunrise tomorrow. If the characters are late, he'll leave without them.

- The trip should take about 12 days. The first four will consist of river travel up the Selintan. Thereafter, the barge will travel on the surface of the Nyr Dyv (Lake of Unknown Depths), probably in sight of the shore, until reaching the har-

bor of Leukish. The Rhennee make this trip regularly, and it should be free of most danger, though pirates and lake monsters are always a concern.

- Mariakos is the equivalent of a minor noble within Rhennee society, and should be treated with the same respect the characters might afford the captain of a real ship. Each Rhennee barge generally holds fewer than a dozen sailors, including a wise-woman, or “veth.”

- Ramel's body has been placed within a rectangular crate that already has been delivered to the Rhennee barge. Jaziadeen has managed to pay a cleric to cast *gentle repose* upon the corpse, so decomposition should not be an issue. The Rhennee are *not* to be told of the contents of the crate under any circumstances. They've been well paid not to ask any questions.

- Jaziadeen is happy to provide directions to Mariakos's barge as well as directions to the place of business of her uncle, Valesh Kem, who owns a small garden and winery within the city of Leukish.

- After delivering the crate to Valesh Kem and picking up their payment, they're free to do whatever they please, and are released from service. Her uncle will let her know via magic if they have successfully laid Ramel to rest.

Assuming all goes well, Jaziadeen happily puts in a good word about them to Count Reichart Petrides, the politically powerful and extremely popular ambassador of the Duchy of Urnst. “Who knows where that could lead?” she says, hinting at future employment

What Jaziadeen Really Wants

The Scarlet Brotherhood has for some time been on the trail of the Octychs, eight triangular metal minor artifacts that they believe will open certain doorways to paths of immense magical power. The history of these items is tied to the history of the Suel migrations across the Flanaess following the great magical devastation of their empire more than 2000 years ago. The fanatical Brotherhood believes that the Octychs are their imperial birthright, and has been hunting them since before the Greyhawk Wars.

Ramel Kem, a monk in service of the Brotherhood, was one of the organization's foremost experts on the Octychs. About a month ago, while meditating in a special chamber below an ancient pre-migratory Suel outpost in the Suss Forest, Kem received a vision from the goddess Syrul that revealed the location of one of the Octychs. Unfortunately, before he was able to relate that information to his contact in the city of Greyhawk, Jaziadeen, he was murdered by an agent of the Horned Society, who plumbed the secret of the Octych's location from his shattered mind.

Unable to return Kem to life through magic and unwilling to allow a cleric to speak with his corpse about the Octychs, Jaziadeen has arranged transport to Leukish, where she believes Ramel will be *resurrected* and will have a chance to make a full report.

opportunities.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Since characters have an evening to spend however they wish before departing, canny adventurers may wish to trawl the city's taverns and streets using the Gather Information skill. Here are a few subjects about which they might inquire, broken down by the quality of the Gather Information roll. In general, a given attempt reveals the information associated with the listed DC, and with all lower DCs, as well.

Jaziadeen

DC 15: Jaziadeen works with Count Reichart Petrides, who seems to think very highly of her.

DC 20: She came to Greyhawk just prior to the Greyhawk Wars, and specializes in the many (for the most part friendly) border disputes in the Cairn Hills mineland along Greyhawk's eastern border.

DC 25: Jaziadeen once made quite a scene in the Black Dragon Inn about three years ago. Some drunken yahoo attempted to make an unwanted advance upon her, grabbing her somewhere she didn't want to be grabbed. To the astonishment of the crowd, the diplomat whirled around on the ball of her left foot and kicked the man so hard with her right foot that it shattered his arm at the shoulder.

Ramel Kem

DC 15: Ramel Kem is not a "fixture" of the local adventuring scene. Almost no one has heard of him, and those who have say he's a silent drifter who visited the city maybe a couple times a year, never making much of an impression with his visits.

DC 20: Kem made something of an impression upon patrons of one River Quarter bar when he nearly got into a fight with a young mage who happened to have a raven familiar. The wizard merely wanted to have a private drink, but Kem insisted he leave, muttering something about ravens being spies of the "Horned Ones." This happened on the night he was murdered, and the young wizard hasn't been seen since. Most people think he's simply afraid of getting tied up in the murder investigation (an investigation that doesn't actually seem to have manifested—a common problem in the crime-plagued River Quarter).

DC 25: Ramel Kem was once a member of an adventuring band known as the Brazen Bulls. The Bulls adventured extensively in the western Duchy of Urnst, but came to grief in the dungeons beneath Maure Castle about ten years ago. Surviving members scattered throughout the central Flanaess.

Mariakos the Rhennee Barge Lord

DC 15: Mariakos is thought by many to be an agent of Iuz the Evil who ran supplies for the armies of the Old One during the Greyhawk Wars, and who really isn't welcome in most free ports along the Nyr Dyv.

DC 20: During the Greyhawk Wars, Mariakos was suspected of running supplies to Iuz's armies in the Shield Lands. He challenged a rival Rhennee lord, one Tamannik, to a knife fight in the heart of Shack Town for spreading such lies. Mariakos gutted Tamannik in ritual combat, which exonerated him in the eyes of his people.

DC 25: The combat wasn't enough to dissuade the city watch, however, who would not tolerate even a suspected traitor in their midst. The watch financed a series of divinations regarding Mariakos's loyalties, and discovered that he had never worked for Iuz. Tamannik, on the other hand, had. The watch posted a few messages to that effect around the harbor, but few citizens ever saw them, and Mariakos still lives under a cloud of suspicion.

ENCOUNTER 1: MEET THE CREW

This encounter ranges over the first four days of the journey, ending as the characters emerge from the Selintan River onto the surface of the Nyr Dyv, the dangerous Lake of Unknown Depths. During the trip upriver, the heroes will have a chance to interact with the Rhennee crew and fight off some of the strange creatures fleeing the lake. Much strangeness is afoot under the surface of the great lake, and its residents have become agitated—and extremely dangerous.

The appendix of this adventure contains a map of Mariakos's barge, drawn to a scale appropriate to 25-30 mm miniatures. While it is technically possible to run this adventure without miniatures, a great deal of tac-

tical movement and combat takes place on the barge, and it's in your best interest and in the best interest of your players to make things as clear as possible.

Once the players have decided to make their way to the harbor, proceed with the following:

While the louts of the River Quarter sleep off well-earned morning hangovers, Greyhawk's Harbor District is alive with activity. Hundreds of laborers swarm over dozens of deep-keeled merchant vessels, tied close to well-kept wooden docks. All sorts of folk pass you by, most carrying cargo of various descriptions. In the morning bustle, you make out elves, halflings, half-orcs, and all variety of humans, weaving around each other with a manic sense of urgency.

Following Jaziadeen's instructions, you turn north, leaving the core harbor behind you as you proceed to Barge End, a smelly, still backwater littered with dozens of Rhennee barges. Even in Greyhawk, melting pot of the central Flanaess, no one trusts a Rhennee lord enough to let him dock at a nearby berth.

Without too much effort, you come across what must be Mariakos's barge, an oversized flat-bottomed vessel of simple yet elegant construction. A squat wooden structure decorated with intricate carvings of intertwined linework stands at the back of the boat, surrounded by piles of cargo in the form of crates, barrels, and even a few small cages holding a half-dozen baby lambs.

Four strong Rhennee men weave around the barge, tying down cargo and preparing the vessel for travel. A door on the aft structure opens, and a bear of a man emerges, squinting slightly in the morning sun. He motions to the workers, barking in the cant of his people.

"Allesh! Allesh! We leave as soon as you're finished, whether the Suel tart's guards are here or not!"

This is Mariakos, the overbearing Rhennee lord and master of the barge. His status within his clan has dwindled somewhat since spurious claims about an allegiance with the Old One during the Greyhawk Wars tarnished his reputation beyond repair. He once controlled a much larger barge, with a much larger, more experienced crew. Now he does as best he can to get by on small commissions such as the one from Jaziadeen—ferrying materials (often illegal) across the Lake of Unknown Depths at outrageous prices to desperate folk without any better options.

He'll be pleased to see the characters, greeting them gregariously with hugs and handshakes. Once the heroes have gained the barge, Mariakos introduces himself and his four man crew, explaining that the barge's wisewoman (or "veth"), an old Rhennee woman known as Esinica, is very ill, and is resting

within the aft structure. Mariakos speaks almost reverently about the old woman, though he treats his crewmen like barely tolerated underlings, at least here in the harbor. Though Mariakos is the undisputed despot of the barge, it's easy to get the impression that he'd do just about anything Esinica told him to.

While aboard his barge, Mariakos explains, the characters are expected to help out in emergencies, but are welcome to keep to themselves for most of the day. Fishing on the Nyr Dyv is especially good this time of year, he says, and he'd appreciate it if the party would help with the daily lines, as it will mean better food for everyone. If it rains during the journey, which he figures it will, he expects the characters to help his crew cover the barge in a heavy tarpaulin, which ought to protect the cargo from water damage. In the unlikely event that the barge suffers attack from pirates or lake monsters, he says, he expects the characters to guard both his cargo and his crew, doing their part to protect the barge.

The crew's statistics do not vary based upon the chosen encounter level for this adventure. For lower-level parties, the crew represents able allies who may be more powerful than the strongest member of the party. For higher-level parties, the crew will be something of a liability.

Of course some sort of attack against the barge is inevitable. Generally, the crew does its best to protect the barge, and interacts very little with whatever assails the characters specifically. If things get really hairy for the characters, feel free to have Mariakos or one of the crewmen step in for a little last-minute aid, but don't allow weaker parties to look to the crew to bail them out of every bad situation. Of course, if the party is much more powerful than the crew, their enemies will be more than a match for Mariakos's men, and making sure the Rhennee aren't completely slaughtered might become an additional challenge for an already tricky encounter.

THE RHENNEE CREW

☛ **Mariakos:** Male human (Rhennee) Ftr4; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d10+8; hp 30; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 14 (touch 11, flat-footed 13); Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20, masterwork longsword), +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (Nyr Dyv) +3, Profession (merchant) +1, Profession (sailor) +5, Swim +10; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus

(Profession [sailor]), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +1 leather armor, masterwork longsword, masterwork light crossbow, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of endurance*, daggers (3).

A bear of a man, Mariakos does little to dispel the stereotype of the sexist, aggressive, fiercely protective Rhennee bargemaster. Every action makes it clear that this is *his* boat, that the crew and cargo are *his* responsibility. When talking with passengers, his eyes always scan the deck and the horizon, as if he's completely unwilling to let something slip him by.

The bargelord stands about six feet tall, has a powerful chest and arms, and wears thin leather armor tanned a deep brown. His hair and full beard are black peppered with the earliest traces of gray. He wears a colorful red and yellow sash like a belt around his belly; dangling from his belt are three daggers and a long, curved sword.

No stranger to the Greyhawk-Leukish route, Mariakos expects little trouble from the passage this time around. He loves fishing, womanizing, and gambling, in that order, and his eyes turn violent at the first mention of Iuz or any of his demon agents. He'll warn anyone accusing him of being in league with the Old One once. Further prodding along that line will result in a challenge to a knife fight. Mariakos has only his (tarnished) honor, and will protect it as fiercely as he is able.

Despite his boorishness and his biases, Mariakos is a generally good person who's merely going about his business. He views his relationship with the party as one of comrade mercenaries who happen to be working for the same boss. The only difference is, Mariakos has several pieces of cargo on board, and hence answers to several different employers.

He is not curious about the contents of Jaziadeen's crate and stops any attempt to tamper with it. "If she'd have wanted me to know what's in the box, she'd have told me. I'm paid not to care either way, so I respect her privacy," he says.

In fact, Mariakos would be very, very angry were he to find out the crate contains a corpse. The Rhennee have strong taboos against keeping dead bodies on their barges; were he to find out, he would immediately order the box thrown into the Nyr Dyv, and would keep the money paid to him by Jaziadeen as the cost of misleading him.

He would, of course, be willing to overlook tradition if Jaziadeen's agents, the characters, would be

willing to pay him a generous "inconvenience" fee (equal to 200 gp times the chosen encounter level for the adventure).

◆ **Esinica:** Female human (Rhennee) Sor4; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d4-8; hp 5; Init +6; Spd 30 ft; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/19-20/x2, dagger), +4 ranged (1d4-1/19-20/x2, dagger); AL NG; SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Heal +3, Knowledge (Nyr Dyv) +2, Scry +7; Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Spells Known (6/7/4): 0—*daze*, *detect poison*, *flare*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*; 1st—*charm person*, *endure elements*, *mage armor*; 2nd—*Tasha's hideous laughter*.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, daggers (2).

NOTE: Though a member of the vetha social class, Esinica possesses no levels in the veth prestige class as described in *LIVING GREYHAWK Journal* #2.

The elderly Esinica is a veth, a Rhennee wisewoman who offers her bargelord council on his journey and serves as the voice of wisdom and lore upon the barge. A woman of about sixty-eight years, Esinica has grown plump in her old age—she must once have been very beautiful.

These are far from her best days, however. For the past two days (ever since Jaziadeen's crate arrived on the barge, though she hasn't made the connection), she's suffered from terrible nightmares that leave her in a weakened condition, almost as if she had contracted some sort of wasting disease. Privately, she worries that she's losing her mind, and has told Mariakos that she suffers from an illness associated with a brush she had with a rival veth in Barge End a few weeks ago.

Esinica is convinced that the woman put her under the effects of an evil eye, a powerful vetha curse that eventually will be her undoing. She hopes that by getting away from Greyhawk and out on the Nyr Dyv, she'll stand a greater chance of making it out of the affair with her sanity, not to mention her life, intact.

Sadly, though her symptoms may be similar to a simple Rhennee curse, the actual cause of her lethargy and frailty is a great deal more sinister. For the past two nights, Esinica has suffered from the attention of a night hag in service to Iuz, who has been riding her back on the Ethereal Plane, tampering with her mind

and leeching off her strength as she dreams. Each night she suffers so, Esinica loses one point of Constitution. Already somewhat frail from old age, she has only six days left before she is reduced to a Con of 0, at which point she will die.

The night hag, a foul creature named Dark Meggala, came to the city of Greyhawk seeking Ramel Kem, who was known to be on the trail of the Octychs, which Iuz also seeks. By the time she found him, however, he was dead, and following his corpse led to Mariakos's barge and the tasty mind of Esinica. Meggala plans to ride the veth's back until she dies, at which point she plans to gather Ramel Kem's body and take it to her contact, a grim priest of Iuz named Renkus Rand, who's currently making his way to the Free City aboard a ship called *The Pride of Axeport*. The characters will cross paths with Rand as time goes by.

In the meantime, Esinica treats all of the Rhennee aboard the barge like members of her immediate family. She is the ship's healer as well as its font of wisdom, and she's become a sort of mother figure to the crew, who will protect her fiercely if they fear she's in any sort of danger.

It's likely that Esinica will be the friendliest of the crew, as far as the characters are concerned. She's genuinely interested in their stories, and will spend long hours talking to them of the Nyr Dyv and its tributaries, upon which she has lived her entire life. She is a kindly old woman, if a tad superstitious—a sort of “everygrandmother” figure, which should make her eventual death that much more touching.

It's possible, though unlikely, that powerful adventurers will discover what ails her. Most parties will at the very least attempt to cast *remove disease* upon her. She'll claim to feel better afterwards, but once she falls asleep for the night, the terrors return. It will take a stunning Diplomacy check (DC 20) to convince her to trust a character enough to tell him or her about her dreams, in which a foul old woman rides around on her shoulders, cackling madly and wearing her down with every step.

Powerful characters might venture into the Ethereal Plane to do combat with Dark Meggala, which will save them the trouble of fighting her in the company of an extremely powerful force later in the adventure. Though present in all difficulty levels of *As He Lay Dying*, Meggala only manifests on the Material plane in that encounter for parties playing the adventure at EL 10. Those who go looking for her regardless of their power level, however, get a chance to face her terrible wrath. If a combat should occur, Meggala's sta-

tistics appear in Encounter Five.

In any event, Esinica does not fight under any circumstances, and retreats to the aft structure in the event of a battle.

🗡️ **Bargemen (4):** Male human (Rhennee) War1; CR 1/2; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+1; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/19-20/x2, longsword), +2 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, light crossbow); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Nyr Dyv) +2, Swim +6; Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (light crossbow).

Possessions: leather armor, longsword, light crossbow, dagger.

Mariakos's bargemen are quiet seafaring folk who have an enormous number of responsibilities to keep the boat moving and afloat, and who don't have a lot of time to spend in idle chatter with mercenaries. Their days consist largely of manning the fishing lines and poling the barge along the Selintan, always watching the shore for signs of would-be pirates while at the same time keeping one eye on the water ahead in search of rocks, sandbars, or the tell-tale signs of an impending monster attack.

In battle, the bargemen do their best to protect the ship, arming themselves with heavy crossbows and spears. They are fiercely loyal to their lord and to the barge's veth, and brook no insult to either. Just as their captain, the bargemen are superstitious, chauvinistic, and quick to find grave insult in the most innocuous statements.

That's not, however, to say they're no fun at all. When the sun sets, travel on the lake or river more or less stops completely, and while the fishing lines remain a concern, things become much more lax on the boat. One of the Rhennee, a young man named Crochan, delights in playing the lute, and the entire Rhennee crew engages in several rounds of riversongs following the evening meal. Any foreigners who attempt to join in with the singing gain a greater respect from the bargemen.

All bargemen speak Rhop, otherwise known as Rhennee Cant, the language of the bargefolk of the Flanaess. Each speaks enough of the Common tongue to communicate, but the bargemen tend to have difficulty understanding complex or difficult topics unless they are discussed in their native language.

The Rhennee Barge

A 30 mm-scale map of Mariakos's barge has been included in the appendix (each square on the map represents a five-foot square in tactical combat). The barge is about 55 ft. from fore to aft, and about 35 ft. from port to starboard. The boat has a completely flat bottom, and bears a mast about twenty feet high near its center, for use when winds are particularly strong. The perimeter of the barge is ringed by a short wall about three feet tall, which helps to keep waves from adding too much water to the deck.

A decorated wooden structure at the aft of the vessel stands about six feet off the deck, and contains quarters for Mariakos (1) and Esinica (2). A small closet off the aft structure's internal hallway contains several cushions and rolled-up sleeping pallets, for use by the crew and the characters, who must sleep on the wooden deck (Mariakos never allows anyone else into the aft structure unless it's a matter of life and death). The barge lord keeps his entire personal treasure, 735 gp, hidden in a locked chest (DC 15) under his bed.

The fore half of the barge more or less "belongs" to the Rhennee bargemen and the characters for the duration of the journey. A large metal fire-pit has been built into the deck itself, near the anchor box (AB). A crank off one of the ends of the box controls the depth of the barge's heavy anchor. Because it's somewhat higher than the rest of the foredeck, the anchor box serves as a popular lounging spot on the barge, especially during mealtimes or after hours.

Four poles that extend about ten feet high mark the corners of the barge. A thick tarpaulin, stored in a large box with the rest of the cargo, can be affixed to these poles to provide a modicum of protection from the sort of heavy rains engendered by the unusual weather patterns of the Nyr Dyv. A special slit in the tarp allows it to wrap tightly around the barge's mast.

Several crates, cages, kegs, and other containers dominate the aft, tied tightly to the deck with a multitude of knotty rope. The six-foot-by-three-foot wooden crate containing Ramel Kem's body is marked on the map with an "R".

stands very close to the surface of the water, but as the party's travels bring them close to Midbay, where the Selintan opens on the Lake of Unknown Depths, the surrounding lands rise considerably. By the third day of their journey, the party will have entered the Gorge of Selintan, in which sheer cliff walls jut from the banks of the river to several hundred feet above.

The river's source is the Nyr Dyv itself, so a fairly slow current works against the barge during its journey. The attention of the bargemen is easily enough to counter this current, though if one or more of the bargemen should perish for whatever reason, a character must take the Rhennee's position to ensure forward progress.

Throughout the party's travel upriver, they pass several dozen ships of all varieties and descriptions. Most appear to be merchantmen flying the colors of Dyvers or Furyondy, but a few bear no distinguishing marks whatsoever. The vessel passes perhaps three to five different Rhennee barges a day, but the bargefolk exchange few pleasantries with other crews for any reason.

When the characters have met the crew and are ready to depart, read the following:

The river wind snaps your cloaks and tussles your hair as the Rhennee crew brings the vessel out of Barge End and into the Selintan River proper. Mariakos stands at the front of the barge, keeping an eye on the other ships making their way into and out of Greyhawk's great harbor. The four bargemen dip deep poles into the river, nudging the barge further and further from the free city. For a long while, no one speaks.

About fifteen minutes after departing, once the barge has made its way out of the main line of traffic to and from the city, the bargelord steps away from the fore and makes his way to the aft structure, opening the door and disappearing for a moment. He returns in the company of an older Rhennee woman wearing a loose-fitting dress marked with intricate linework. The woman looks very haggard, as if she's been sick for weeks, and the fact that Mariakos gently holds her elbow as she walks does little to dispel the idea that all is not well with her.

The bargelord leads the woman to the front of the boat, where she slowly gets down on her knees. She leans over the side of the barge, staring at the water's surface, and almost immediately gives a start. She whispers to the water, pausing occasionally as if listening to its response before looking at Mariakos, worry circling her deep-set eyes. The two speak to each other in hushed tones, and Mariakos's expression falls from one of supreme confidence to one of doubt. For the first time, the bargelord looks south, in the direction of Greyhawk,

ENCOUNTER 2: UP THE RIVER

The mighty Selintan River, one of the greatest trade byways in the entire Flanaess, enjoys a very deep channel from the City of Greyhawk all the way to the Nyr Dyv. Generally, the terrain surrounding the river

and the furrows in his brow give every indication that he's deep in thought, as if considering a return to the city.

After a brief moment, he shakes his head and speaks almost apologetically to the old woman. She nods, perhaps a bit sadly, and shuffles back to the aft structure. Mariakos approaches your group.

"That was Esinica, our veth. You might call her a wise-woman. A powerful woman indeed is Esinica, though I fear her best days are now behind her."

"The veth have a way with the lake and her tributaries. Esinica reads the waters, coaxing from them their secrets that we might gain a safe journey to our destination." Mariakos brings his right hand to his forehead and exhales deeply.

"Esinica says that the lake is angry, that spirits long undisturbed near the lake's heart have awakened, sending waves of disquiet even as far as Greyhawk. Esinica believes we should wait for a more fortuitous time, but I do not know. We've been paid well by many to take this cargo to Leukish, and it's money we well need. I don't dare defy the lake, or Esinica, for that matter, but this cargo must make Urnst before two weeks are out."

"We brave the lake. I ask that each of you keep on the strongest possible guard. When the Nyr Dyv is upset, the best thing we can do is try to stay out of its way."

Mariakos doesn't really understand why the lake is "upset," and neither does Esinica. Were the vetha to speak plainly instead of shrouding their visions in mystery, Esinica might say that something near the center of the Nyr Dyv has been sending waves of negative energy that has made travel difficult and that has greatly upset the lake's numerous inhabitants (some of them quite large and dangerous).

The disturbance involves new activity in the long-sunken Isles of Woe, but the exact nature of this activity is beyond the scope of this adventure, and will be revealed in future LIVING GREYHAWK scenarios and special events. These distant happenings do, however, have wide-ranging consequences that very much play a role in *As He Lay Dying*.

The disturbances at the center of the lake have upset many of the Nyr Dyv's monstrous inhabitants, a few of which have responded by swimming down the Selintan, looking to put as much distance between themselves and whatever's happening near the Isles of Woe as possible. The creatures fear this malevolent force, and hence monsters that might ordinarily avoid the Rhennee barge will instead treat it as a threat—something to be destroyed before it destroys them.

Three times per day (once for morning, afternoon,

and evening), roll a d10. If the result is a 1-3, the party will experience one of a handful of random encounters. If they have not yet endured a random encounter battle by the fourth day, choose one of the combat encounters (appropriate to the party's level, of course) to happen on that day, at a time of your choosing.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

If the party is due a random encounter, roll a d6 and consult the chart below. If you roll the same combat encounter twice, simply roll again until you get something else.

There are two distinct combat encounters for each encounter level, broken down arbitrarily into (a) and (b). In all cases, the monsters are enraged and fight to kill.

D6

Roll Encounter

1 Heavy Rain: The skies open, pouring heavy, obscuring rain onto the barge. For the next three random encounter opportunities (d10 rolls), visibility is reduced by half, resulting in a -4 penalty to Spot and Search checks. Unprotected flames are automatically extinguished, and protected flames (such as lanterns) dance wildly and have a 50% chance of being extinguished. Ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks are made at a -4 penalty.

2 Battle Encounter: The barge crosses paths with a dangerous lake creature or creatures swimming angry and scared in the deep waters of the northern Selintan. Use Battle Encounter (a).

3 Flotsam: The characters are passed by the wreckage of a merchant vessel floating downstream. A couple bodies float alongside the detritus, apparently the victims of some savage attack.

4 Battle Encounter: The barge crosses paths with a dangerous lake creature or creatures swimming angry and scared in the deep waters of the northern Selintan. Use Battle Encounter (b).

5 Shore Problems: The barge passes a building on the shore that has been flattened, gutted by fire, or in some other way spectacularly destroyed. Mariakos urges that they ignore these structures, but anyone or shore making a Wilderness Lore check (DC 10) can easily determine that something huge slithered from the river, destroyed the build-

ing, and slithered back. All ruins have already been looted, and nothing of value can be gained from them.

6 Something Hit Us! The barge is rocked violently as something huge brushes up against the bottom of the vessel. Anyone standing on deck must make a Balance check (DC 15) or fall heavily to the ground, suffering 1d6 points of damage. Those who fall within 5 ft. of the edge of the barge must make another Balance check immediately (DC 20) or tumble headlong into the Selintan. Remember that armor heavily encumbers would-be swimmers. Whatever it was that hit the boat moves on, troubling the characters no more.

ENCOUNTER BREAKDOWNS

APL 4

Battle Encounter (A): The underlake disturbances to the north have frightened a lone sea lion that seeks safety down the Nyr Dyv. Enraged and frightened to the point of insensibility, the creature swims at the boat with great speed, propelling itself onto the front of the barge with a powerful thrust of its tail. Allow anyone specifically watching the waters ahead to make a Spot check (DC 15) to notice a fast-moving disturbance in the water approaching the barge at breakneck speed. At least two of the Rhennee (assuming they're still alive) get a chance; they make Spot checks at +0. Those who notice are not surprised by the sea lion's attack.

➤ **Sea Lion:** hp 51; see *Monster Manual* page 159.

Tactics: Once on board, the sea lion attempts to rend to death any creatures it can see. It will not flee for any reason save magical coercion; members of the crew can make a Knowledge (Nyr Dyv) check and characters with similar nautical Knowledge skills can make a check against DC 10 to note that, while fierce and extremely territorial, sea lions very rarely climb aboard barges.

Battle Encounter (B): One of the disturbances at the center of the lake opened a massive portal to the Elemental Plane of Water. As a result, several clutches of tojanidas now roam the Nyr Dyv, hungry and more than a little curious about the strange and alien environment of Oerth.

Tojanidas prefer to slake their curiosity by eating. The lone adult encountered here thinks the barge might make a good meal. It swims under the craft and attempts to take a huge bite out of it, well out of sight

of anyone on deck.

➤ **Tojanida, adult:** hp 45; see *Monster Manual* page 177.

Tactics: With no warning, the barge lurches severely, as if it's run into a rock. The characters have one round to grab hold of something stable before the tojanida grabs hold of the deck and tips the barge to the point at which it's almost perpendicular to the surface of the river.

Everyone on board must make a DC 20 Balance check or go tumbling into the waters of the Selintan. Those holding onto something solid (the tarp posts or masts, for instance, may apply a +10 circumstance bonus to their roll. (The baggage and anyone inside the aft structure are safe—the cargo because it's tied down and the structure inhabitants because they've nowhere to fall).

Anyone who falls into the river must make a Swim check (DC 15) to stay afloat. Characters suffer a –1 penalty to this check for each 5 pounds of gear worn or carried. Review page 85 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* for rules on drowning.

On its next action, the tojanida releases the boat and begins to attack characters that fell into the water. If no one fell overboard, it attempts to snatch and grab a character in the boat with one of its powerful talons. It's so hungry that it will stick around in an attempt to glutton itself on the entire party, rather than wisely grappling one character and swimming away.

APL 6

Battle Encounter (A): This encounter is functionally identical to EL 4, Battle Encounter (A), except that there are two sea lions (a mated pair).

➤ **Sea Lion (2):** hp 51, 49; see *Monster Manual* page 159.

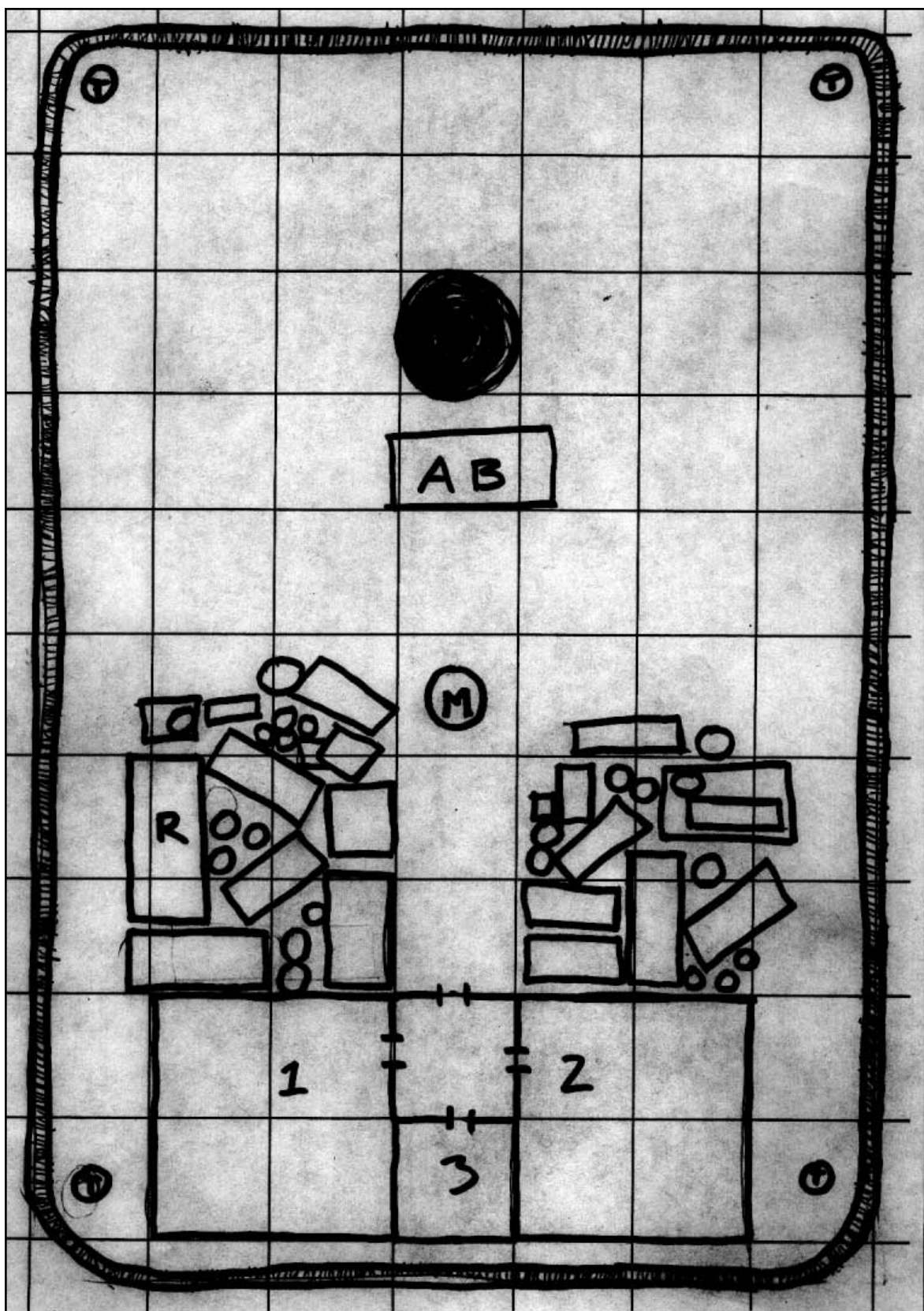
Battle Encounter (B): This encounter is functionally identical to EL 4 Battle Encounter (B), save that one tojanida holds the boat perpendicular to the surface of the Selintan while the other attempts to eat the characters who fall into the river.

➤ **Tojanida, adult (2):** hp 45, 45; see *Monster Manual* page 177.

EL8

Battle Encounter (A): This encounter is extraordinarily difficult, even for this encounter level, so before proceeding, check to make sure that there is a 7th-level or higher cleric at your table. If not, choose the other encounter of the appropriate encounter level, instead.

Map 1: The Barge



Who Was Ramel Kem?

Given the curiosity of most adventurers, it's reasonable to assume that sooner or later, at least one member of the party is going to crack open Jaziadeen's crate to see what exactly it is she's shipping to her uncle in Leukish.

The crate's lid has been hammered shut with eleven nails. Unless extraordinary precautions have been made, any attempt to force the lid gives everyone on the barge a free Listen check with a +5 circumstance bonus. Generally, this check is made against DC 10, but if the players are being exceptionally crafty, you might allow the Listen checks to be made against opposed Move Silently or even Disable Device rolls.

Kem's body, fresh as the day it was killed thanks to a high-level *gentle repose* cast upon it, was stripped of its material wealth in the "robbery" in which Kem was killed. Kem's skin is an opalesque white, as is his hair. Only his beautiful (even in death) blue eyes give him away as something other than an albino. He appears to have been about 32 years old.

The only wound on his body is a deep cylindrical cut at the base of his neck, going upward into his brain. The edges of the wound festering with a black goo that evokes thoughts of insect pupae. (In fact, an insectoid creature in service to the Horned Society poked him in the brainstem in a successful attempt to steal his knowledge of the Octychs, which killed him instantly).

Kem is lawful evil, and hence receives a Will save against attempts to communicate with his corpse via *speak with dead*. As a 10th-level monk with a high

Wisdom, Kem's Will save is +10.

If the characters should happen to open a line of communications with his corpse, use the following questions and answers, as appropriate.

Who are you?

Ramel Kem.

Whom do you serve?

I serve my uncle, Valesh Kem, of Leukish. [He emphatically does not answer "The Scarlet Brotherhood," here.]

Do you serve the Scarlet Brotherhood?

Yes.

Who killed you?

I don't know.

Who do you think killed you?

An agent of the Horned Society.

Why would the Horned Society want to kill you?

Perhaps they seek the Octychs.

What are the Octychs?

Eight magical keys that will open a gateway to incalculable power that the world has not known since the glorious days of the righteous Empire of the Suel. [Kem does not give any more information about the Octychs, for any reason.]

How were you killed?

I remember coming out of the Green Dragon Inn, in Greyhawk. Something sharp hit me in the back of the head, and everything went black.

Would you like to return to life?

Very much so.

er and assistant) about 60 feet away. Though the distance is too great to make out any close detail, the boat jerks about wildly at the center of the river, as if there's some kind of commotion on board.

What's happening is this: About ten minutes ago, a fisherman and his young son were attacked in the middle of the river by a harpy, who flew to the boat from a stand of trees about a mile away to the east (this is clearly visible from the river). She'd been waiting in ambush for easy prey, and the little boat offered her a good opportunity for such. She hadn't, however, counted on the disturbances in the Nyr Dyv and the resulting preponderance of lake creatures infesting the river.

Shortly after she finished off the two humans, an amphibious variant of the standard chaos beast emerged from the river, touching her skin and befouling her with corporeal instability. The harpy was badly wounded by the attack, but managed to wound the chaos beast, as well, who now lurks several feet below the boat, confused and not sure what to do next. Enter the characters.

As the barge approaches, the harpy continues to suffer from the form-changing attack of the chaos beast. Anyone viewing the scene through a spyglass or some other means of making out something seen from a distance can see the image of an ugly, winged woman struggling to stand up straight. Her arms seem to bend like melting plastic, and her wild undulations rock the little boat too and fro. Those viewing the scene from afar with some sort of aid can make a Spot check (DC 10) to notice that much of the boat's interior is covered in blood. Anyone who rolls a 15 or higher spots a lifeless human hand sticking just over the lip of the boat's railing.

The characters have two rounds to act before the chaotic harpy takes matters into her own hands. At normal speed, they're about 10 rounds away from the boat. If the entire crew paddles at the same time, the boat's speed can be doubled. When two rounds have elapsed, the shattered harpy does the only thing she can remember how to do. She sings.

And what a song! All creatures within a 300 ft. spread (which includes all the characters) must make a Will save (DC 15) or become utterly captivated. (This is a sonic, mind-affecting charm.)

A captivated victim approaches the harpy, taking the most direct route possible. This most likely means diving into the Selintan for a brisk swim—swimmers must make Swim checks (DC 10) to ensure that they can move forward and that they don't sink (see page

This encounter works best if used while the characters are poling their way up the river. It's been hours since they last saw a boat, and everything seems to be going well for them. Then, they turn a bend in the river, and see *something* up ahead. Allow everyone on deck to make a Spot check (DC 10) to observe a small fishing boat (about large enough to hold a single fish-

74 of the *Player's Handbook*). Captivated swimmers take a full-round action to move at half their speed. Non-captivated swimmers may move a quarter of their speed as a move-equivalent action. Other than to swim or defend themselves, captivated creatures can take no action. The chaos beast must make a save, too. Note that this might very well bring it out of the water, floating near the boat listening dumbly to the harpy's song.

The players most likely will get worried at this point, but they've little to fear from the harpy, who has her own problems. She'll sing for three more rounds, at which point her Wisdom reaches 0 and she becomes a chaos beast herself (with fully restored hit points as a transformational bonus). Canny characters might try to kill her before her transformation is complete, which certainly makes the encounter a good deal easier.

The original chaos beast, on the other hand, is another matter entirely. Unless captivated, it lurks underwater below the boat, noting any aquatic disturbance as captivated swimmers jump from the barge into the river (some of the Rhennee bargemen will almost certainly fail their saving throws).

The beast has a Swim speed of 20 and a land speed of 5 (note that this is different from the standard land-based chaos beast), which should be more than enough to overtake any but the fastest swimmer. It attempts to attack a creature until its victim has succumbed to its corporeal instability attack and then move on to another victim (note that chaos beasts possess the Mobility feat, which helps them move in and out of combat).

Creatures suffering from corporeal instability while in the water immediately begin to drown, and cannot take any action other than attacking blindly (see *Monster Manual* page 35). They cannot cast spells, activate magic items, or do much of anything. Such victims can save themselves if they're already wearing some sort of activated magic item that will save their hides or have a supernatural ability (such as the harpy's song) that can save them. Otherwise, they're at the mercy of their companions' ability to haul them out of the Selintan while avoiding the attentions of a rampaging chaos beast (possibly two of them).

In order to run underwater combat, you'll need to refer to the underwater combat rules appended to this adventure (*Water, Water Everywhere*, from *Dragon Magazine* #291). Keep this appendix handy—you'll be using it later.

➤ **Harpy:** hp 27; When the characters encounter

the wounded harpy, she's suffering from corporeal instability and has a Wisdom of 3 (giving her an effective Will save of +1). See *Monster Manual* page 117. If allowed to reach Wisdom 0, the harpy becomes:

➤ **Chaos Beast, Aquatic:** hp 44; see *Monster Manual* page 34.

➤ **Chaos Beast, Aquatic:** hp 28; wounded by the harpy, this is the original chaos beast who started the entire affair.

Battle Encounter (B): This encounter is functionally identical to APL 4, Battle Encounter (A), except that there are eight sea lions (an enraged pride).

➤ **Sea Lion (8):** hp 62, 59, 57, 55, 51, 51, 49, 45; see *Monster Manual* page 159.

APL 10

Battle Encounter (A): This encounter is functionally identical to APL 8 Battle Encounter (A), above, save that both chaos beasts are at full strength.

➤ **Harpy:** hp 51; as above, but she was a lot tougher to begin with and is less severely injured. She's still suffering from corporeal instability, however, and will become one of the chaos beasts detailed below if not killed within three rounds. If she is killed, only one chaos beast remains.

➤ **Chaos Beast, Aquatic (2):** hp 44, 41; see *Monster Manual* page 34.

Battle Encounter (B): This encounter is functionally identical to EL 4 Battle Encounter (B), save that the tojanida is a lot older.

➤ **Tojanida, elder:** hp 127; see *Monster Manual* page 177.

THE RHENNEE AND DEATH ON THE WATER

Should any Rhennee die during any of the above battles, their fellows immediately push their bodies into the river. Mariakos (or one of the other crew members, should he be the dead man) explains that the Rhennee believe that carrying a dead body across water is a grave insult to the spirit of the lake, who desires to collect that which is rightfully hers.

Should a character die, the crew will strongly advocate throwing his or her body into the lake (or river) as well. If the characters will not agree to this, the crew demands that they make an offering to the Nyr Dyv, either of something of great symbolic importance to the deceased or something of obvious material value (worth over 1,000 gp). The chosen item

must be thrown into the lake in place of the deceased.

ENCOUNTER 3: APPARITIONS IN THE FOG

Unless the characters stopped to heal their wounds or for some reason delayed their journey up the river, this encounter occurs on the fifth day of the trip. Read the following text aloud to your players:

The barge emerges from the mouth of the Selintan and into Midbay, where the great river meets the greatest of lakes. A thin fog hugs the surface of the Nyr Dyv as the barge emerges onto it, and as the day passes by, the fog gets thicker and thicker. You sense a nervousness in the crew, who spend most of the day peering into the fog, fingering the pommels of their longswords and nervously checking the strings of their crossbows several times an hour.

About two hours before dinner, allow any character on deck to make a Spot check (the crew make the check at +0) at DC 15 to notice a dark shape, perhaps a ship, floating in the distance several hundred feet away. The vessel seems to be completely dark and still, not moving in the slightest. Due to the fog, most of ship remains shrouded from the sight of the characters.

Anyone looking at the ship through a spyglass can determine that the hull of the cog has been heavily burned, and bears the legend: *The Pride of Axeport*. (As almost anyone with knowledge of the region knows, Axeport is a city in the Shield Lands that fell to the humanoid hordes of Iuz during the Greyhawk Wars a half-decade ago.)

If the characters alert Mariakos to the ship's presence (assuming he is still alive), he can instantly tell that there's no one at the helm—it's a ghost ship (he's only partly correct on that accord). If Mariakos is not present, one of the other Rhennee makes this observation.

The Rhennee are *completely* against exploring the seemingly abandoned ship. If Mariakos is around, he out-and-out forbids the characters from investigating the ship. "The lake's dead are her own," he says with forceful conviction. If any of his men have died on the journey upriver, he adds: "Besides, my crew has suffered enough on this journey. We are not meant to explore the corpses of the Nyr Dyv's dead."

Rhennee strongly consider "ghost ships" *extremely* ill omens (and remember that their culture is built

around such superstition). The crew pleads with the characters not to explore, telling them that with the increased monster activity on the lake, their presence on the barge is absolutely required. If, for instance, the ship was haunted, those exploring it might become trapped inside or worse—killed—leaving the entire barge crew in future danger due to their absence. Mariakos tells the characters that he will not bring the barge nearer the vessel, and that anyone who leaves his barge to investigate the ship is not welcome to ever return.

Of course, that's not likely to stop the most curious adventurers. The ship is a ghost ship only in that it contains numerous undead. It also contains the cleric Renkus Rand, who has been awaiting the characters ever since he received magical communication from Dark Meggala that the barge had departed Greyhawk. Thanks to the ineptitude of the undead piloting his ship, however, he came too close to the barge, and has ordered his entire crew belowdecks, counting on the superstitions of the Rhennee to ensure that he's not disturbed.

He isn't ready for the characters, just yet, and would prefer to take Ramel Kem's body by force further from the mouth of the Selintan. Should the characters investigate the *Pride of Axeport* despite the wishes of the Rhennee (who take such disrespect as a grave insult), proceed to Encounter Six, only the combatants who ordinarily would appear in Encounter Five are present on the ship, as well. Sometimes being brave leads to terrible consequences.

Assuming the characters assent to the discretion of the Rhennee, the barge passes by the ship, allowing fog and distance to swallow the *Pride of Axeport*.

For now.

ENCOUNTER 4: DEATH COMES TO THE NYR DYV

This encounter assumes that Esinica has survived up until this point (not always a safe assumption, frankly). If she is already dead, the sixth day of the journey passes by uneventfully. The Nyr Dyv fog doesn't let up, and throughout the day it brings strange sounds that might be the distant call of lake monsters, but those monsters don't seem to be interested in the barge.

If, on the other hand, Esinica has managed to survive this far, it's all been in vain. After several nights of losing Constitution to the depravations of Dark Meggala the night hag, the Rhennee wise-woman's

body simply gives out.

This isn't a foregone conclusion. It's possible that the characters have cast several *lesser restoration* or even *restoration* spells upon her, in which case you'll have to recalculate how many days the wise-woman has left. This encounter assumes she dies on the morning of the sixth day.

When Esinica's time has come, proceed with the following:

You awaken to a strange sight. Mariakos, usually the first to awaken, is nowhere to be seen. Just as you think to ask someone about what's happened to the barge's lord, the door to the aft structure opens slowly, revealing the captain's burly frame. He's carrying something heavy that takes a moment to recognize as the lifeless body of Esinica the wise-woman.

"She has finally succumbed. A Rhennee barge without its veth is a fateless vessel indeed," he says, his left cheek twitching involuntarily.

Mariakos brings the woman's body to the fore of the ship, laying it down respectfully and allowing the crew (and the characters, should they wish) to pay their final respects to the kindly, grandmotherly figure.

On the highly unlikely chance that Esinica is the first of the Rhennee to die, Mariakos explains that the Rhennee never allow a dead body to stay on their barge for more time than is absolutely necessary. Those who die upon the lake belong to the lake, and the fierce Nyr Dyv covets those who should be delivered to her bottomless embrace.

Any character with the Diplomacy skill can make a DC 5 check to determine that now would be a terrible time to tell the crew about the contents of Jaziadeen's mysterious crate. Should the barge lord find out that he's been misled all along at this already emotional juncture, he becomes irate, swearing up a storm about the "Suel cow" and her disrespecting the traditions of the Rhennee.

As before, he's willing to accept a bribe to flaunt the desire of the lake to have Ramel's body given up to her, but if it's gone this long he blames all of the barge's misfortune upon the corpse, and the cost will be high indeed. Mariakos dumps the corpse unless he is paid 300 gp times the party's chosen Encounter Level. The man is, above all else, a merchant.

After the crew has said their respects to the wise-woman (mostly spoken quietly in the Rhennee cant), they hoist her body (magic bracers and all) into the cold waters of the Nyr Dyv.

That night, Mariakos (or the Rhennee in charge) orders the boat further out into the lake, avoiding the rocky shore due to the added level of danger imposed by the thick fog.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE ATTACK

The middle of the moonless night of the seventh day brings the long-awaited attack from the forces of Renkus Rand. Gathering the dire power of the Old One to subjugate undead (and, at higher encounter levels, outsiders) to his will, he has sent a force from the *Pride of Axeport* to Mariakos's barge with a simple order—find the body of Ramel Kem and return it to the cleric's cog.

Rand is himself a minor expert in the Octychs. During the Greyhawk wars, one of his superiors, a dark wizard named Barrat Roshan, turned up one of the minor artifacts during the siege of Molag, then the capital of the Horned Society. (With the fall of that city, so fell the nation of the same name, though an insidious secret society made up of those who escaped the wrath of Iuz still infests the Flanaess.)

Desiring an Octych of his own to present to his wizardly superior in hopes of currying favor with Roshan and thus gaining a greater status within Iuz's empire, Rand plans to reanimate Ramel Kem and draw what he knows about the Octychs from him by force. Should such experiments lead him to an Octych, he plans to present the object to his master later this year, during a ceremony of divination (to determine more information regarding how the Octych may be used) known as the Revelation in Ichor.

Rand's confidante, the night hag Black Meggala, caught Kem's scent in Greyhawk, but by the time she found him, he was dead. Through magical communications, the hag managed to direct Rand here, almost within sight of the barge.

But seeing the ship is another thing, altogether. Even if the barge is illuminated magically, the fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. As per the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, due to the fog creatures within 5 ft. have one-half concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance).

The fog does not limit vision underwater, however, which is how the agents of Renkus Rand manage to find the barge.

The *Pride of Axeport*, at this point, is only about

eighty feet away from the barge, though it's unlikely that the characters will be able to determine this before all hell breaks loose.

The attack comes three hours after midnight. Allow anyone awake and on deck a Listen check (DC 15) to hear a light splash about ten feet to the west of the barge. The splash is that of a lake fish leaping from the water in an attempt to flee from the horrific creatures swimming toward the boat. It's not much to go on, but it ought to at least put the characters on watch on edge for what happens next.

What happens next, of course, depends upon the adventure's Level of Play.

APL 4

Allow anyone in the front half of the boat to make a Spot check against the Move Silently (+1) roll of the sea hag detailed below. Those who manage to beat her roll see a sickly yellow hand reach up from the lake to find a hold on the front rail of the barge as the disgusting woman pulls herself aboard. Those who do not see her are surprised.

➤ **Sea Hag:** hp 21; see *Monster Manual* page 115.

➤ **Ghouls (lacedons) (6):** hp 16, 14, 13, 13, 12, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

Tactics: The sea hag emerges from the water two rounds before the lacedons, hoping to lure most of the barge's inhabitants to the boat's fore. Her appearance is so horrifying that all who look upon her must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 11) or instantly be weakened, taking 2d8 points of Strength damage. She leads off with her Evil Eye ability for the first three rounds, favoring targets that appear to be the greatest threat to her. After she has used the attack three times, she fights with her claws.

Once she has the attention of at least a few members of the party, she begins cackling to herself, screaming wildly such phrases as "Who dares to disturb the Lake of Unknown Depths," "I shall cook your flesh in a kettle of fish," and whatnot. Anyone can make a Sense Motive check against her Bluff (+0) check to determine that she's obviously trying to call attention to herself.

What she's trying to do is draw the attention of the party away from the back of the barge, where four lacedons have emerged from the lake with orders to remove as the barge's cargo and toss it into the water. Two additional lacedons remain submerged below the barge, with orders to inspect each piece of cargo underwater for signs of Ramel Kem. The ghouls on deck make Move Silently rolls at +7, though the

splashes of the cargo as it hits the water grants anyone on deck a +2 circumstance bonus to Listen checks made to hear the commotion at the back of the boat.

If anyone goes to investigate the noises at the back of the barge, one or more of the lacedons attacks him or her (as convenient), throwing paralyzed bodies into the Nyr Dyv, where they will most likely drown.

If left completely undisturbed, the ghouls throw Ramel Kem's makeshift casket into the water on the seventh round after the hags emerge from the lake. Thereafter, all of them dive off the barge to the north—their splashes can lead the party in the exact direction of the *Pride of Axeport*.

Remember that during this fight visibility is limited to 5 feet. Party members hearing the screams of horrified friends fighting the sea hag probably won't know to cover their eyes until it's too late. Those on one side of the boat should have a great deal of difficulty knowing what's going on the other side.

APL 6

All situations at tactics are identical to above save that in this case two sea hags emerge at the front of the boat and six lacedons at the back. Two ghouls remain in the lake to inspect cargo, as above.

➤ **Sea Hags (2):** hp 21, 19; see *Monster Manual* page 115.

➤ **Ghouls (lacedons) (8):** hp 17, 16, 14, 13, 13, 12, 11, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

APL 8

As above, save that in this case a mohrg assists the ghouls unloading the cargo into the Nyr Dyv.

➤ **Sea Hags (2):** hp 25, 22; see *Monster Manual* page 115.

➤ **Mohrg:** hp 91; see *Monster Manual* page 137.

➤ **Ghouls (lacedons) (8):** hp 17, 16, 14, 13, 13, 12, 11, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

Tactics: As above. The presence of the mohrg complicates things significantly for those investigating the noises at the rear of the barge. The mohrg attempts to fend off investigators, leaving the lacedons to work on the cargo. In this case, the ghouls attack only in self-defense and remain wholly focused on their assigned task.

APL 10

Exactly as above, except that two rounds into the fight, Black Meggala the night hag jumps from the Ethereal

Plane to the Material, appearing in Esinica's bed. From there she polymorphs herself into the form of a lowly lacedon and emerges onto the deck, attacking anyone who appears to be a cleric (she's hoping to enjoy the look in the cleric's eyes when his or her attempt to turn a simple undead creature fails miserably).

➤ **Sea Hags (2):** hp 25, 22; see *Monster Manual* page 115.

➤ **Mohrg:** hp 91; see *Monster Manual* page 137.

➤ **Ghouls (lacedons) (8):** hp 17, 16, 14, 13, 13, 12, 11, 11; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

➤ **Black Meggala (night hag):** hp 45; see *Monster Manual* page 140.

Treasure: (special item) The nighthag Black Meggala carries a periapt known as a *heartstone*, which instantly cures any disease contracted by the holder. In addition, a *heartstone* imparts a +2 resistance bonus to all saving throws. The periapt shatters after it has been used to *remove disease* ten times (no matter how many different wearers have been cured) (1,350 gp).

Finishing the Encounter

When all foes have been dispatched, the actions of the characters may vary widely depending upon the status of the body of Ramel Kem. If the lacedons managed to throw it into the lake, the party likely will want to follow it. Ramel's "casket" floats, so the lacedons tugging it to the *Pride of Axeport* make a terrible, easy-to-follow racket all the way back to their ship (which of course is impossible to see due to the fog).

If all enemies have been killed and the casket remains onboard, a frustrated Renkus Rand sends a single lacedon (one of the two who remained underwater) back to the barge with a letter sealed in a waterproof bottle of green glass tied around its neck. The lacedon is given orders not to attack, simply to act as a messenger.

The letter is written in common, and reads thusly:

You have been betrayed. Ramel Kem is a member of the Scarlet Brotherhood, as is his associate who hired you in Greyhawk. I trust you'll forgive my intrusion, and I apologize for any grief my servants may have caused you. I only wish to retrieve the body of my hated enemy, Kem of the Scarlet Sign, so that it may be given its just punishment. Do not seek me out. I am very near, and very dangerous. Hand over the treacherous bastard's body to my delivery agent, and I shall deliver ten times what's in his pouch to you immediately. I swear this upon the honor of the Old One, Iuz, Most Infamous Lord of Dorakaa.

The lacedon bears a pouch containing 50 platinum pieces. Should the characters turn over the body, Rand

is true to his word, forking over an additional 450 platinum via the lacedon messenger, along with a hastily scrawled note of thanks and farewell.

Likely, however, the characters won't deal with Iuz. Likely, they'll take the fight to the *Pride of Axeport*.

End Round 1

ENCOUNTER 6: THE PRIDE OF AXEPORT

Whether he's communicated with them via his lacedon messenger or whether he's simply awaiting the return of his agents with the body of Ramel Kem in tow, Renkus Rand expects that the characters will be boarding his ship in short order.

He's scattered a handful of apparently lifeless skeletons on the deck of the ship, hoping that they'll reinforce the image of the *Pride of Axeport* as a vessel that befell some calamity and now ferries about its dead crew in aimless wanderings upon the surface of the Nyr Dyv. Rand himself remains secluded in his private chamber in the cog's sterncastle. The forecabin is home to a powerful servant of Iuz that's of late positioned itself as his ally. Rand's bizarre and grotesque operating theater, situated in the ship's hold, bears more than a few surprises of its own.

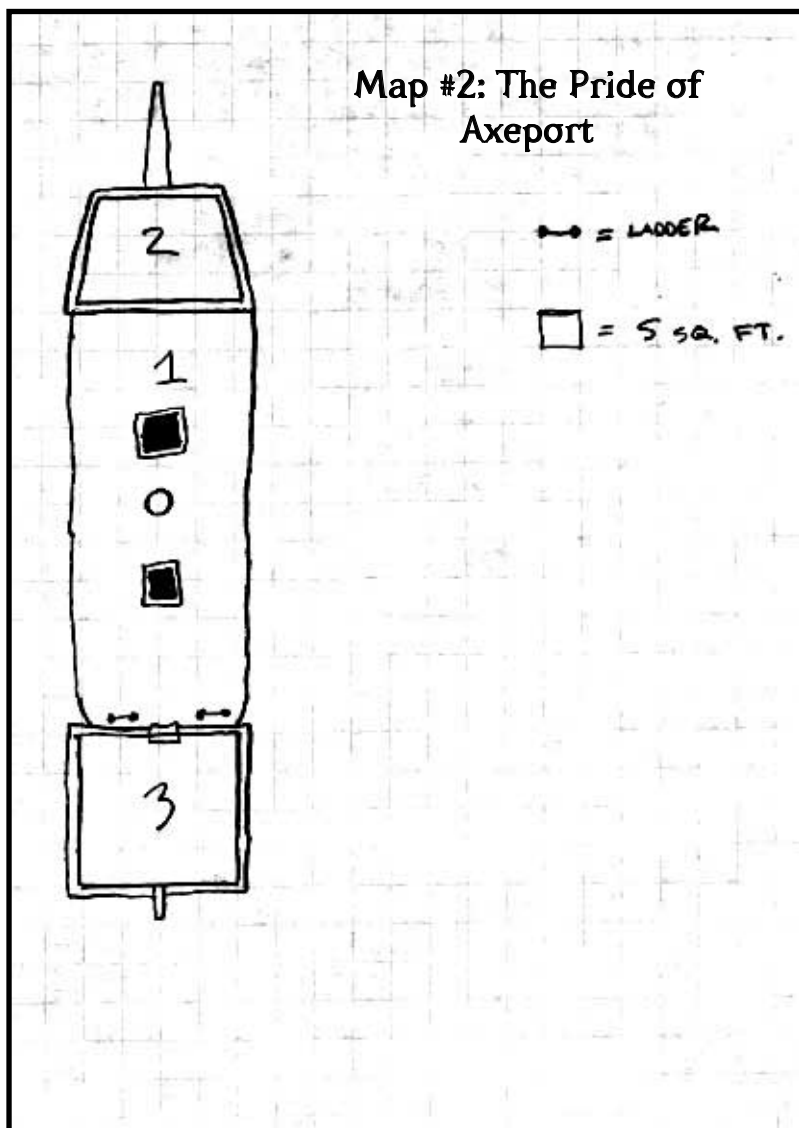
Regardless of how much they have suffered to this point, no member of the Rhennee barge crew will accompany the characters on an attack against Rand's cog. They will, however, remain in the area and await the party's return (unless it becomes obvious that the party isn't returning).

In order to facilitate play, the ship has been broken down into specific encounter areas keyed to the map of the *Pride of Axeport* found in the appendix. Despite the fact that Rand, his ally, and the skeletons are listed in separate entries, it's entirely likely that the party will face them all at once due to loud noises, shouted warnings, or suchlike. It's probably best to familiarize yourself with the entire ship before running the adventure, spending some time thinking about how events in one part of the ship might affect happenings in another.

THE PRIDE OF AXEPORT

Renkus Rand's vessel is little more than a glorified cargo ship captured during the Greyhawk Wars and repurposed as his mobile laboratory and command center. It has a single mast supporting a square sail. About 80 feet long from bow to stern, the boat has a beam of about 20

Map #2: The Pride of Axeport



feet. In happier times, the ship might have supported a crew of some 20 men. Its cargo capacity is about 150 pounds, though the ship is no longer used for trade. Large fore and sterncastles mark the front and rear of the boat, serving as the private quarters for Rand and his unsteady ally.

The boat doesn't bear a particularly deep hull—its main deck stands about ten feet from the surface of the lake.

Heavy fog remains a concern at the time of the characters' attack. Refer to the previous encounter for information on how the weather affects visibility.

Area 1: Main Deck

Numerous bones, many in the form of skeletons ranging from Medium-size to Gargantuan, litter the cog's weathered deck. How many and which of these skeletons possess an animating force is largely a function of

the party's chosen encounter level. Allow anyone taking a careful look at the skeletons (even if from a distance) a Spot check (DC 10) to note that several of the most-intact skeletons are larger than Medium-size.

Regardless, tactics for the skeletons remain the same no matter the power level of the characters. They lay upon the deck in a jumbled, "lifeless" position, their skulls positioned to watch over the ship. The skeletons allow interlopers to reach the deck, but once a stranger sets foot on the deck (or is seen flying above it), the skeletons animate. One rushes to the mast, where a large gong has been placed for emergency situations. The others make battle with the characters.

Should a skeleton manage to ring the gong, the noise brings the forecandle inhabitant to the deck within one round, and Renkus Rand out of the sterncastle within three.

It's highly likely that clerics will make short work of the skeletons by turning them, which doesn't bother Rand in the least. He's always got time to create more undead servitors, and if he manages to defeat the party, he'll have no shortage of candidate bodies to use for the immediate future.

APL 4

➤ **Skeletons, Large (4):** hp 13, 13, 13, 13; see *Monster Manual* page 165.

APL 6

➤ **Skeletons, Large (9):** hp 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13; see *Monster Manual* page 165.

EL 8

➤ **Skeletons, Huge (8):** hp 26, 26, 26, 26, 26, 26, 26, 26; see *Monster Manual* page 165.

EL 10

➤ **Skeletons, Gargantuan (3):** hp 104, 104, 104; see *Monster Manual* page 165.

Area 2: Forecastle

Rand grudgingly gave up the Pride's forecandle to a "guest" from Dorakaa earlier this year, and he's still pretty bitter about it. Though the type of the creature in question varies depending upon the chosen Encounter Level, its mission does not.

Two months ago, Rand and the *Pride of Axeport* put in at Admundfort, the occupied Shield Lands city that serves as Iuz's regional capital on the northern shore of the Nyr Dyv. At the time, Rand had a handful of disreputable humans and orcs in his crew, and one of

them happened to mention in casual conversation at a dockside bar that his master was searching for a powerful artifact. This news trickled through the informational underworld of the city, and eventually found its way to one of Iuz's loyal agents. That agent made contact with his superiors, who contacted Renkus Rand on the eve of his departure from the city.

The agent praised Rand for his initiative, telling him that he had the support of the Old One himself in his current endeavor. In fact, the agent said, Iuz was so pleased to hear that one of his loyal subjects had a lead on an item that might be of great use to the Empire that he dispatched a special assistant aid his cause. The subtext lacked subtlety: Use the Octych to further the goals of Iuz or the monstrous agent will kill you. Violently.

Rand grudgingly accepted the "help" from the Old One, consoling himself only by murdering his entire crew and animating those he trusted as skeletons and those he didn't as zombies suffering endless torture in the ship's ghastly hold. Iuz's agent knows that Rand resents its presence, but it also knows that the cleric is too afraid of Iuz to do anything to harm it.

It also knows that Rand represents its best chance at rising in the eyes of Iuz, so the cleric's survival is tied intimately to its own future. Therefore, the creature fights to protect its "master," even though Rand does little to nothing to reciprocate the insincere affection.

APL 4

➤ **Minotaur:** hp 39; see *Monster Manual* page 137.

Tactics: A dull brute who nonetheless serves to threaten most of Rand's enemies into leaving him alone, the minotaur (Urthak by name) is fairly open about the fact that he's watching Rand as well as protecting him. Rand, for his part, hates the creature, and won't hesitate to target area spells that specifically include Urthak in their damage radii.

The moment he realizes something is amiss, Urthak charges out of the forecastle, barreling through any enemies he needs to in order to get Renkus Rand within sight. He'll fight his way to Rand's position, using Power Attack to savage interlopers with his powerful greataxe. If Rand is still inside the sterncastle by the time Urthak has made his way across the deck, the minotaur takes up a position five feet in front of the sterncastle door, allowing the cleric to occupy the square between the minotaur and the door when he emerges.

Urthak is aware that the lacedons and hags have

been dispatched to the Rhennee barge, and stands at the ready just inside his door, waiting to hear the first signs of commotion. Its scent ability means it can directly pinpoint enemies within 5 feet. Therefore, Urthak suffers no concealment-based miss chance when attacking foes in adjacent squares. His scent further allows him to detect nearby foes, as described in the *Monster Manual*.

APL 6

➤ **Lamia:** hp 58; see *Monster Manual* page 126.

Tactics: The female lamia Vestath grew up in the northlands of Iuz's kingdom, and pays homage to the father of the Old One, the demon prince Graz'zt (a pendant around her neck features a six-fingered hand, revealing her affiliation to anyone who makes a Knowledge (religion) check at DC 20). She knows that the hags and lacedons have left for the Rhennee barge, and remains in her quarters awaiting either their arrival or the arrival of the characters. She's bored a porthole in wall facing the deck, which she uses to observe the space directly outside her door. The fog precludes her from getting a good view of the entire deck.

The moment she determines something is amiss (because the skeletons begin to move, the gong is sounded, or she hears the characters sneaking about the ship) she uses her *mirror image* spell on herself. On the following round, she casts *major image*, creating an illusion of a blood-splattered male human cleric emerging from the forecastle, shutting the door behind him. The noise of the door opening and closing ought to attract the attention even of characters that cannot see the front half of the boat. Because the fog is so bad, she keeps the cleric close to the door, well within her sight.

Assuming the appearance of the cleric does not attract an interloper in and of itself, she makes the illusion speak, saying, "I am Renkus Rand! Welcome to my ship! This fighting is pointless. Come here, and we shall discuss what we can do for each other. I mean you no harm."

The latter, of course, is a terrible lie, but as the illusion is not a living creature (in fact, it looks nothing like the real Renkus Rand) the characters probably won't be able to detect such magically. Vestath is careful not to make her "Rand" give any impression other than that he wants to talk peacefully—she knows that if he's hit by an attack, the image will fade and the ruse will come to an end.

Her plan is to encourage at least one character to

approach the forecandle to get within range of her *suggestion* spell, which she'll quietly utter through the hole in the wall. Vestath's sultry-voiced *suggestion* targets one living creature within 45 feet (or preferably much shorter so she can be reasonably quiet about it). She mentions that the target could solve their current predicament by putting away his or her weapons and entering the forecandle for some conversation, shutting the door behind them to keep out the noise of those who foolishly continue to fight. Targets who make a successful Will save (DC 14) are free to ignore the *suggestion*. If the character fails, however, he or she must do exactly as Vestath suggests.

Once one or more characters have entered her quarters, the lamia attacks violently, preferring to use her Wisdom-draining touch but relying upon her dagger if things begin to get rough.

Vestath doesn't particularly care for Renkus Rand, so she's in no hurry to rush out onto the deck to run to his aid. She believes that her best course of action is to deal with the ship's enemies on her own turf, allowing the cleric and his distasteful undead to do most of the heavy hitting.

APL 8

➤ **Succubus:** hp 33; see *Monster Manual* page 41.

Tactics: At this Encounter Level, Iuz's agent becomes much more formidable. Perhaps the Old One has an inkling of the Octych's true power and use. Perhaps he sees something worthy of further observation in the ambitious Renkus Rand. For whatever reason, he's dispatched the succubus Tolanis to the *Pride of Axeport*, and though her job is to watch Renkus Rand, the cleric has spent much of the past month trying not to watch her.

An almost painfully beautiful demon conceived for the sole purpose of corrupting mortals into moral depravity, the succubus has been trying her best to wrap Renkus Rand around her fingers by attempting to seduce him, hoping to become the power behind his rapidly ascending throne. It hasn't worked so far, and isn't likely to. Rand is wise to her and keeps as much distance as possible.

She expects an attack from the characters, and has planned accordingly. Once she's aware of a character presence aboard the *Pride of Axeport*, she assumes the form of a young human woman dressed in torn naval gear. She decorates her rather pretty face with a number of bruises, and makes it appear as though someone on the ship has treated her roughly. Thereafter she lies down on the single bed in the forecandle and begins

weeping to herself (Bluff +11).

Tolanis hopes to put on the appearance of a "kept" woman, a leftover member of the ship's crew who has been allowed to remain alive to pleasure the servants of Renkus Rand. She hopes to play upon the "rescuer complex" of a male adventurer, and looks hopefully at the door through tear-stained eyes upon someone entering the forecandle. "Is it over?" she asks timidly, attempting to give the impression that she's deathly afraid of leaving the forecandle for fear of the creatures beyond.

Once it's become clear that the characters have saved her, she attempts to hug a male character (preferably one of the weaker ones, in terms of physical strength, and preferably if the group is somehow split up). Ask the player if he allows his character to be hugged. If so, the succubus plants a small kiss upon his cheek, which grants the character a negative level. As per the *Monster Manual*, the victim must make a Wisdom check (DC 15) to even notice that something bad has happened to them. Thereafter she attempts to cast *charm monster* upon the weakened character, convincing that character to protect her at all times.

If he refuses to be hugged, she attempts to kiss him anyway (to do so she must start a grapple, which provokes an attack of opportunity). See the *Monster Manual* for more details.

Should her ruse fail, Tolanis casts *ethereal jaunt* and bedevils the characters as they explore the ship by phasing in and out of the Material Plane as necessary, essentially engaging the characters in hit-and-run attacks. Should things get extremely grim, she will not attempt to summon a balor (she either wants the glory of victory for herself or is unwilling to let another demon know how close she's come to failure). Instead, she'll simply *teleport without error* to a predetermined place of safety, leaving the characters to explore the ship and abandoning Renkus Rand to his fate.

EL 10

➤ **Vrock:** hp 60; see *Monster Manual* page 41.

Tactics: Players experiencing the most difficult Encounter Level of this adventure get a chance to meet the most vile of Rand's possible assistants, a debased vrock demon named Gulletcrush.

Gulletcrush prepares for battle in the forecandle before emerging onto the deck to fight any interlopers. He casts *mirror image* upon himself before emerging onto the deck. Immediately upon doing so, he emits a stunning screech. Every creature within a 30-foot radius must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or

be stunned for 1 round.

He attempts to sneak around the fog by flying quietly about ten feet off the deck. If he sees a character, he unleashes his spore attack upon him or her before vanishing back into the fog. If he spies a particularly weakened or isolated character, he'll close for melee.

If threatened, Gulletcrush does not hesitate to summon aid from his fellow demons.

Area 3: Sterncastle

The sterncastle of the *Pride of Axeport* serves as the private home of Renkus Rand, the ship's current captain. Rand fancies himself an up-and-coming force in the Empire of Iuz. His interest in the Octychs has brought him to Ramel Kem, and his interest in Ramel Kem has brought the characters to his ship.

He fully expects the characters to visit him, but unless they utterly wiped out his hags and other agents in Encounter Five, he's not too worried about them. Supremely confident in his own abilities (too confident, in fact), he's not overly concerned even if the characters roundly defeated his weaker agents. The *Pride of Axeport* contains the strongest of his allies. Besides, it also contains himself, and he'll certainly win any battle he enters. It's been true for him so far in life, and he sees no reason for the trend not to continue.

Unless otherwise noted, Rand's tactics remain the same regardless of the party's chosen Encounter Level. He spends the first two rounds after being alerted to the presence of the characters preparing for battle by casting defensive spells upon himself (choose the best of these from his list of prepared spells) or drinking one or more of his extremely useful potions. Thereafter, he emerges onto the deck and attempts to dispatch as many foes as he possibly can. While doing so, he brashly orders around his "inferiors" as if showing off to his enemies that he is in command of the ship.

Renkus Rand is an overweight Oeridian man with dark brown hair cut in the style of a monk (an unsuitable, not particularly funny "joke" that Rand considers the height of irony). He wears blood-spattered off-white robes over a suit of chainmail and carries a mace tipped with a horned metal skull.

He will not surrender (especially if Iuz's spy remains alive) and fights to the absolute end. If he is killed, characters are free to confiscate his equipment. Even a cursory search of his quarters yields a handwritten note which, due to the fact that it sits on a desk next to a fresh inkwell and wet pen, appears to have

been written within about an hour or so. If the players discover this clue, give them a copy of Handout One.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Renkus Rand: Male human Clr5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+10; hp 32; Init +3; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +5 melee (1d8+1/20/x2, masterwork heavy mace), +3 ranged (by spell); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Knowledge (arcane) +8, Spellcraft +8; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

Spells Prepared (5/5/4/3; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance (2), light, resistance; 1—cause fear, command, divine favor, doom, protection from good*; 2—death knell, desecrate*, hold person (2); 3—dispel magic, magic circle against law*, water walk.

* Domain spell. Deity: Iuz. Domains: Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level); Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: +1 chainmail, masterwork heavy mace, potion of fly, potion of haste, potion of protection from elements (fire).

EL 6 (EL 7)

Renkus Rand: Male human Clr7; CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 7d8+12; hp 43; Init +3; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +7 melee (1d8+1/20/x2, masterwork heavy mace), +4 ranged (by spell); AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcane) +9, Spellcraft +9; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Spells Prepared (6/6/5/4/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance (3), light, resistance; 1—cause fear, command, divine favor, doom, protection from good*, random action; 2—death knell, desecrate*, hold person (2), silence; 3—dispel magic, magic circle against law*, magic vestment, water walk; 4—poison, unholy blight*.

* Domain spell. Deity: Iuz. Domains: Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level); Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: +1 chainmail, masterwork heavy mace, cloak of resistance +1, potion of fly, potion of haste, potion of protection from elements (fire).

APL 8 (EL 9)

Renkus Rand: Male human Clr9; CR 9; Medium-

size humanoid; HD 9d8+18; hp 58; Init +3; Spd 20 ft; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 15); Atk +8/+2 melee (1d8+1/20/x2, masterwork heavy mace), +5/+0 ranged (by spell); AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcane) +11, Spellcraft +11; Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance (3), light, resistance; 1—cause fear, command, divine favor, doom, protection from good*, random action; 2—death knell, desecrate*, hold person (2), shatter, silence; 3—dispel magic, magic circle against law*, invisibility purge, magic vestment, water walk; 4—poison (2), unholy blight*; 5—dispel good*, slay living.

* Domain spell. Deity: Iuz. Domains: Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level); Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: +1 chainmail, masterwork heavy mace, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, potion of fly, potion of haste, potion of protection from elements (fire).

APL 10 (CEL 11)

➤ **Renkus Rand:** Male human Clr11; CR 11; Medium-size humanoid; HD 11d8+22; hp 71; Init +3; Spd 20 ft; AC 17 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); Atk +10/+4 melee (1d8+1/20/x2, masterwork heavy mace), +7/+2 ranged (by spell); AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +6, Will +14; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcane) +13, Spellcraft +13; Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Spells Prepared (6/7/6/6/5/3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance (3), light, resistance; 1—cause fear, command, divine favor, doom, protection from good*, random action (2); 2—death knell, desecrate*, hold person (2), shatter, silence; 3—dispel magic (2), magic circle against law*, invisibility purge, magic vestment, water walk; 4—inflict critical wounds (2), poison (2), unholy blight*; 5—dispel good*, slay living, true seeing; 6—animate objects*, harm.

* Domain spell. Deity: Iuz. Domains: Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level); Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: +1 chainmail, masterwork heavy mace, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1, potion of fly, potion of haste, potion of protection from elements (fire).

Treasure:

APL 4: loot (69 gp), +1 chainmail (188 gp), potion of fly (113 gp), potion of haste (113 gp), potion of protection from elements (fire) (113 gp).

APL 6: loot (69 gp), +1 chainmail (188 gp), cloak of resistance [+1] (150 gp), potion of fly (113 gp), potion of haste (113 gp), potion of protection from elements (fire) (113 gp).

APL 8: loot (69 gp), +1 chainmail (188 gp), cloak of resistance [+1] (150 gp), ring of protection +1, (300 gp) potion of fly (113 gp), potion of haste (113 gp), potion of protection from elements (fire) (113 gp).

APL 8: loot (69 gp), +1 chainmail (188 gp), cloak of resistance +2 (600 gp), ring of protection +1, (300 gp) potion of fly (113 gp), potion of haste (113 gp), potion of protection from elements (fire) (113 gp).

Area 4: The Hold/Operating Theater

Two sets of trapdoors open to the *Pride of Axeport's* massive hold. The fore doors have been nailed completely shut, and will take a great deal of effort (not to mention a lot of noise) to open. The stern doors are unlocked and open easily, revealing a makeshift stairway leading down into darkness. Anyone opening either sets of doors is assaulted by a horrific stench of decay and rot coming from down below.

The hold consists of one room that essentially spans the entire length and width of the ship. A single beam of *continual light* shines from some magical source near the hold's ceiling, about twenty feet from the ship's bow. The light illuminates what looks to be a humanoid body (ranging in size from Medium to large, depending upon the Encounter Level) resting motionless upon a metal table. A small wooden rack holding several instruments of an apparently medical nature stands on the opposite side of the table.

The scene is difficult to make out, however, as two-dozen human and orc bodies hang impaled upon hooks suspended by chains from the ceiling, here. Moving from the stairs to the operating table involves pushing one's way through several dangling dead bodies.

Worse, the bodies appear to be alive, after a fashion, as most of them emit low moans of pain, as if they can feel the sharp hooks transfixing them to the ceiling. These are the traitorous crewmembers who revealed Rand's mission to one of the Old One's spies in Admundfort, plus a few loyal crewmembers thrown in for good measure.

Technically zombies, the bodies will not attack anyone, existing only to feel pain. However, they do

count as 1/2 hit die undead creatures, and will soak up turning damage before it is applied to more powerful undead creatures, as described on page 139 of the *Player's Handbook*. As mentioned above, the hold contains 24 animated zombie hook victims.

All of this could very well be academic, however, since only in the EL 4 and EL 8 versions of this adventure is the creature on the operating table (the only real threat in the room) an undead creature (a mummy and a bodak, respectively).

Rand uses the hold as a bizarre operating theater. Should he get a hold of Ramel Kem's body, he'll bring it here in an attempt to perform an autopsy upon it with a specially enchanted scalpel located among the medical tools upon the rack. In the meantime, however, Rand has been practicing his stitching skills by putting together a full body suit of tanned human flesh for one of his most powerful servants. He's long wanted to costume his servitor in flesh, both for aesthetic purposes and because he hopes to trick enemy clerics into attempting to turn or control the creature, thinking it undead when it in fact is a golem (in ELs 6 and 10).

Tactics: Though the abilities of the creatures on the slab vary greatly depending upon their type, each deals with intruders in largely the same manner. Once it becomes aware of interlopers in the hold, it rises and attacks, leading with its most powerful special attacks and continuing to fight until either it has killed all of the intruders or until it is itself killed.

Treasure: Two items of interest can be recovered from this encounter. The first is a folded piece of parchment that Renkus placed upon the rack of instruments yesterday. The paper contains a list of possible questions to ask Ramel Kem, and is reproduced as Player Handout 2 in the appendix. DM Reference 1, also in the appendix, contains the same list of questions with Ramel Kem's answers, should the characters choose to put them to the corpse themselves. Remember to review the *speak with dead* spell carefully—if the characters interrogated Kem's body within a week of their most recent attempt, the spell automatically fails.

The second item of note is a scalpel of bone and metal (the *boneblood scalpel*—this is a special item listed in the Treasure Summary) that Renkus Rand uses to extract information from the bodies of the dead. Mixed in with other knives, saws, and items of less obvious nature, the characters will most likely need to cast *detect magic* to determine that this item is more valuable than the rest (750 gp).

EL 4

➤ **Mummy:** hp 42; see *Monster Manual* page 138.

EL 6

➤ **Flesh Golem:** hp 49; see *Monster Manual* page 108.

EL 8

➤ **Bodak:** hp 58; see *Monster Manual* page 27.

EL 10

➤ **Clay Golem:** hp 60; see *Monster Manual* page 108.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Once Renkus Rand's operation has been brought to the ground and the characters have had a chance to lick their wounds, they'll be faced with determining what to do next. Essentially, they have two choices: Return to the City of Greyhawk or continue to Leukish. This choice determines which of two outcomes the players will experience. Though similar, each conclusion offers different challenges and spins the ongoing story of the campaign in different ways.

Should the players choose to return to Greyhawk, continue with the next section. Should they instead decide to continue to Leukish, skip to Conclusion 2: Leukish.

CONCLUSION 1: GREYHAWK

The next few encounters assume that the characters head back to Greyhawk without first stopping at their original destination, Leukish. Assuming he is still alive, Mariakos will not join the characters—his livelihood depends upon getting his cargo to Leukish, and he's willing to make the journey alone if need be to ensure that he gets to Urnst within a week's time. If they wish to return to the city, they'll have to take the *Pride of Axeport*.

If the barge lord was killed during the adventure, on the other hand, his underlings happily abandon the doomed barge and join the characters aboard Rand's cog. Though their death-taboo makes them skittish about the ship, they've seen enough on the journey so far to scare them into doing just about anything.

If the entire Rhennee crew is dead, the characters can sell off the barge's cargo for a total of 500 gp once they reach a safe harbor.

Properly captained, the *Pride of Axeport* can make it back to Greyhawk in just two days of sailing (it could reach Leukish in a single day, were the characters inclined to travel there). The Rhennee have the skill needed to guide the ship correctly (as, no doubt, will a few characters). If the entire party lacks Profession (sailor) skills or the like, they'll be able to fumble their way to Greyhawk eventually, but the trip will take twice as long.

Though the journey back to Greyhawk contains more than its share of strange monster calls in the distance and mysterious thumps upon the hull of the ship, the party makes it back to the Free City with very little difficulty.

Since Jaziadeen suspects the characters have not even made it to Urnst, she hasn't even started to worry, yet, and is going about her daily routine. The characters arrive in Greyhawk at about three in the afternoon. Inquiries at the embassy of the Duchy of Urnst reveal that Jaziadeen left work early today after finishing her tasks sooner than expected, and that she probably can be found in the Green Dragon Inn, one of her favorite hangouts. If the characters ask, Ambassador Reichart Petrides is in a long meeting with the ambassador from Nyronnd, and is not expected out for another three hours. No matter who the characters are, the lesser functionaries at the embassy will not grant them access to Count Petrides. If the characters play up their need to speak with the Count as having major repercussions upon the fate of Urnst, the functionaries tell them that they will make sure the Count keeps some time open for them near the end of the day, after his current business is concluded.

Try to give the players the impression that no one available to them at the embassy is really qualified to hear their problem. Likewise if the characters go to the city watch—a young clerk takes down their story and places of residence (or where they're staying in town) and unconvincingly tells them that he'll pass it on to his superiors, and that the watch will “most likely” be contacting them within a week or two.

It should swiftly become clear that the characters will have to contact Jaziadeen on their own.

rivermen, smugglers, and other lowlifes who love the low prices and genuinely seedy atmosphere.

On the night the characters arrive, the bar is fairly quiet. Jaziadeen sits at a table near the center of the common room, her eyes engrossed in an oversized book resting upon her table and a mug of ale in her left hand.

When confronted by the characters, the woman's shoulders sink visibly. It's clear that she knows something's gone terribly, terribly wrong.

While many parties will want to go in guns blazing, do whatever you can to discourage such activity. Remind them that the other inhabitants of the bar (some two dozen adventurers and other assorted riff-raff) might take offense at a group of armed mercenaries barging into the bar to attack an unarmed, defenseless woman (little do they know. . .). For her part, Jaziadeen attempts to parley with the party even if attacked—she knows she has little chance of defeating the entire group, and figures she has a better chance of surviving if she keeps things relatively cool. Assuming she's confronted about being a member of the Brotherhood or if she's simply accused of using the characters, she spreads her hands apologetically and a genuinely sad look comes over her face. Read the following:

Jaziadeen shakes her head slowly. “I know you probably won't believe me, but I never meant for you to come to any grief. I simply wanted protection for Ramel, and you seemed to have the appropriate skills for the job. Judging by the fact that you're here leads me to believe that you may have been even more skilled than I originally anticipated.”

The woman pushes away from the table nonchalantly, as if getting up from a meal enjoyed with friends. “I'm willing to bargain for my life—but not with you. In the years since I came to Greyhawk, Ambassador Petrides has always treated me with honor and respect, even when unknown to him I was selling him out. If I'm to reveal myself to anyone, it will be to him. I give up. I am caught. Take me to Count Petrides, and I promise you I will help Greyhawk before I leave. If I know the count as well as I think I do, I suspect he will reward you for bringing my. . . affiliation to his attention.”

ENCOUNTER 7: GETTING EVEN WITH JAZIADEEN

The Green Dragon Inn is a popular drinking establishment situated in Greyhawk's boisterous River Quarter. It's a haunt of adventurers, thieves, Rhennee,

Of course the characters have the option of turning Jaziadeen over to the legendarily corrupt city watch of Greyhawk or to administer a little street justice. In the former case, the guard takes her into custody and asks the characters for their contact information, assuring them that they'll be contacted when the case goes to trial.

In this case the adventure is, essentially, over. Inquiries with the watch three weeks or more after Jaziadeen was turned over are met with the “sad” news that Jaziadeen was crushed when a workhouse acid vat broke free of its mooring. Regrettably, her case never will reach trial.

If the characters simply decide to off Jaziadeen without taking her up on her offer to spill her guts to her boss at the embassy, use the statistics for Jaziadeen as found in Encounter Ten.

Should the characters bring her to the Urnstan Embassy, however, proceed to Encounter Eight.

ENCOUNTER 8: PETRIDES

This encounter assumes that the characters have come to the Embassy of Urnst with the captured Jaziadeen in tow. You'll have to spend some time adapting it if Jaziadeen is already dead or if the characters manage to barge in on Petrides's meeting before capturing Jaziadeen.

Assuming the characters captured Jaziadeen at the Green Dragon Inn, she leads them to the embassy and speaks with one of the ambassadorial underlings, telling him that she has information of vital interest to the Count, and that he should be interrupted immediately. The functionary looks puzzled, but ventures upstairs to alert Count Petrides (apparently, Jaziadeen has more pull than the characters as far as interrupting her boss is concerned).

Petrides is a handsome Suel man in his late 50s. He wears stylish clothing cut in the latest fashion and oozes both respect and wealth (the rings on his fingers appear to be worth more than the combined wealth of the party, for instance). His short light brown hair tapers to a widow's peak, and he has powerful hazel eyes.

Despite his patrician appearance and noble upbringing, Petrides gives off a very warm, welcoming presence, especially toward adventurers. He adventured for a time in his youth, and had he not been asked by a former Duke of Urnst to take up the path of the diplomat he might still be out in the field.

In game terms, he is a Ftr7/Ari5. His alignment is lawful neutral.

When he comes downstairs from his meeting, his face bears lines of worry and puzzlement. He trusts that Jaziadeen would not interrupt him unless her news was important indeed.

He looks directly at Jaziadeen and asks “What is it?

What's going on?”

Jaziadeen replies by pointing at the characters. “These people have something to tell you. Before they do, I wish to tell you that I have genuinely enjoyed your hospitality and company during my time here in Greyhawk. I shall remember it forever.”

The count's face contorts in further confusion. “Well?” he asks the characters, “What's the news, then?”

As the characters tell him their story (Jaziadeen will not fill in any details and in fact wants to know how much they know), Petrides looks mortified that his organization could have been penetrated so effectively. When they have finished, he turns to his assistant and asks, “Is this true?”

Jaziadeen's only answer is a slow, almost apologetic nod. Then she speaks.

“I realize there's probably no way you'll allow me to leave the city in dignity, but there are ways that I could help you, ways that I could help Urnst. Valesh Kem, in Leukish, is a member of the Brotherhood—that much is obvious, and it would be foolish of me to deny it. There are others in the city, but I swear to you that I do not know their names.”

The woman purses her lips, as if considering her next move. “I do know, however, of a Brotherhood cell here in the City of Greyhawk. If you allow me to leave the city with a promise that I will not be tailed, I will reveal their names and location to you. I promise you this information is true. Breaking up a ring of traitors in the city would be a great victory for the Duchy of Urnst, and might lead to greater favor with the Directing Oligarchy.”

“I'm obviously speaking from self-interest, here, but I think it's in your best interest to accept my offer.”

Petrides looks deeply into his assistant's eyes, his face a picture of controlled rage. He sits silently for a full minute before continuing.

“I accept your offer. You served me well, despite your subterfuge, so I feel that I owe you a chance to survive this. Give me the names of the traitors, and I will release you with an oath that you will not be trailed or harmed.”

Petrides looks directly at you and your companions. “And I can assure you that you have little to worry about from these folks. They have done a great service to both Urnst and to Greyhawk, and I'm sure they've had enough of fighting over the past few days. They will be richly rewarded for their efforts,” he says, opening a small locked cabinet built into a wooden wall and removing a small velvet pouch. “And for their silence.”

The ambassador removes several small green gems from the pouch, one for each member of your group. “I trust these

will suffice. There's been enough blood shed over this already. Jaziadeen is discredited. She'll not be welcome in either Greyhawk or Urnst ever again. I don't believe that she intended for such grief to come to you, but she is a traitor, and I can stand her presence no longer."

The gems are worth 100 gp each. There are as many gems as there are characters in the game. Petrides reminds the party that, while within the embassy they stand on the soil of Urnst, and that he is a noble of that nation whose wishes should be respected. "The Oligarchy respects my orders regarding the affairs of Urnstan nationals in the city. You should, too."

He asks Jaziadeen to write the names and location of the Brotherhood spies on a piece of paper, and asks her to leave after he has glimpsed the names. He asks the party to remain in the embassy, asking them to tell him about themselves.

"I have many tasks which require men and women of your talents," he says, tapping the piece of paper with the name of the Brotherhood's Greyhawk agents. "Please let me know whenever you're in the city next, and we'll work something out. If you'll be around for a while, perhaps I can use you to solve our little Brotherhood problem."

"I want you to know I appreciate your discretion in this matter, and my doors are open to you at any time."

Essentially, the count is stalling to allow Jaziadeen to make her escape. If she was to be killed in the embassy it would create needless legal entanglements, and bringing her in to the watch would cause incredible diplomatic embarrassment to him and to the Duchy of Urnst. After he's stalled for a significant period of time by asking the party to talk about themselves, he rubs his eyes tiredly and asks them to see themselves out.

The encounter has the feel of a wrap-up—some of your players may assume that the adventure is over. Don't do anything to dissuade them from that belief until they've made it clear that they've left the embassy. Then, proceed to the following encounter.

ENCOUNTER 9: BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS

Later that night, as the characters wind down from their adventure (most likely at one of Greyhawk's numerous drinking establishments), they're contacted by a messenger wearing the green and brown colors of the Duchy of Urnst. The young man tells them

that their presence is requested at the embassy, and that they have been asked for by name by Count Petrides himself. Assuming the characters assent to the request, continue with the following:

The messenger leads you into the Urnst Embassy, where the entire Jaziadeen affair began days ago. The building's halls are cold and dark, lit only by a single candle. The messenger takes the candle from its sconce and turns toward you.

"The count awaits you in his office upstairs," he says. "I shall lead the way." He walks up an expensive marble stairway and down a short hall to a wooden door. He raps three knocks on the door, and you faintly hear the voice of the count say "enter" from the other side. The servant opens the door and motions you inside.

Several candles illuminate the large room. A tall stuffed bear standing upon its hind legs dominates one of the far corners, and the walls are lined with maps and bookshelves. Petrides sits behind a large oaken desk. The desk is mostly bare—what items it contains are meticulously arranged.

The count himself looks different than he did earlier in the day. He's changed clothes from a colorful outfit to a gray and black doublet. He looks at you with cold, calculating eyes and you note a conviction in his gaze that was lacking only a few hours ago. Once your entire group has entered, the servant closes the door quietly behind you, remaining in the hallway.

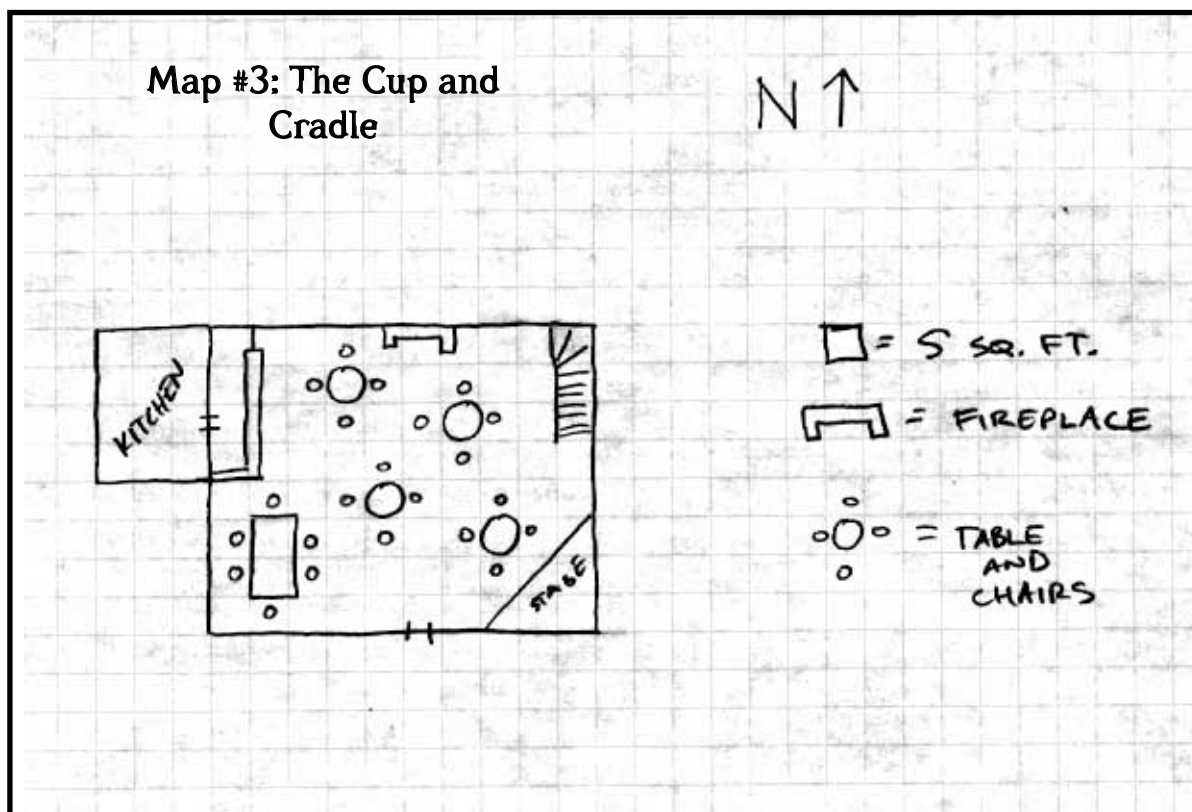
"Of course I cannot allow her to live," Petrides says calmly. "Jaziadeen is a traitor to both Urnst and Greyhawk, and belongs to one of the most insidious organizations the Flanaess has ever known. Officially, it is not within my capacity to order the execution of anyone, especially not within Greyhawk's walls."

Petrides takes a deep breath, exhaling slowly. "But Jaziadeen is no longer within the city walls. According to my spies, she and two companions left the city via the Marsh Gate two hours ago. She is a creature of habit, and I would be willing to bet that she spends tomorrow evening at the Cup and Cradle, a wayside inn on the way to Dyvers. I'd quite like you to find her and kill her for me."

Petrides drops a weighty pouch of coins upon his desk. "Unofficially, of course."

The pouch contains 10 pieces of platinum per character in the party. If they decline the offer, Petrides nods glumly, telling them that he will have to find other agents to do his admittedly dirty work for him. "I only asked you because I figured you had a right to get back at her for what she did to you," he says.

Petrides gives the characters directions to the Cup and Cradle, telling them that if they leave tonight and ride the whole night, they ought to arrive at the inn



just after dinner on the following day, arriving only a few hours after Jaziadeen.

He tells the characters that he will not admit to hiring them to anyone, and that he will not be able to assist them if their mission comes to grief. Any of Jaziadeen's possessions that do not directly relate to the welfare of the Duchy of Urnst, of course, are theirs to keep.

If the characters refuse to take the count up on his offer, the adventure ends here. If they do decide to get back at the woman who betrayed them, however, proceed to the next encounter.

ENCOUNTER 10: REVENGE

Refer to Player Map 3, in the appendix, for the lay of the land in the Cup and Cradle. The inn is typical of its type, containing a large common room, bar, and kitchen on the main floor and a small number of rooms on the single upper floor (not pictured). When the characters arrive, Jaziadeen and her two companions (other nonhuman agents of the Brotherhood who were active in the city and who have left it to ensure that she gets safely to Dyvers) are dining in the taproom. The only other customers are three merchants (Com1; hp 2, 3, 5) and the barkeep and his innkeeper wife (Com2; hp 4 and Exp1; hp 3 respectively).

None of the patrons or employees of the inn will fight unless they have to, and attempt to flee the inn at the first sign of danger. If Jaziadeen sees any of the characters, she knows exactly why they've come and immediately attacks, screaming to her associates to back her up.

Jaziadeen's associates appear human (whether due to their own abilities or to potions imbibed earlier in the day), but in fact are dangerous monsters. Both fight to the death.

Tactics for the battle are straightforward. Jaziadeen is not interested in bargaining for her life and believes that the only way she can survive is by killing her pursuers.

APL 4

➤ **Jaziadeen:** Female human (Suel) Mnk3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +5; Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, unarmed strike), +4 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 3/day (Fort save DC 12); SQ Evasion, still mind, deflect arrows; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Sense Motive +5, Tumble +7; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +1, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Doppelgangers (2):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual* page 60.

APL 6

➤ **Jaziadeen:** Female human (Suel) Mnk5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 40 ft; AC 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike), +6 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 5/day (Fort save DC 13); SQ Evasion, still mind, slow fall (20 ft.), purity of body; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Sense Motive +7, Tumble +9; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Doppelgangers (2):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual* page 60.

APL 8

➤ **Jaziadeen:** Female human (Suel) Mnk5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 40 ft; AC 16 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike), +6 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 5/day (Fort save DC 13); SQ Evasion, still mind, slow fall (20 ft.), purity of body; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Sense Motive +7, Tumble +9; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Osyluths (2):** hp 32; see *Monster Manual* page 48.

APL 10

➤ **Jaziadeen:** Female human (Suel) Mnk9; CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 9d8+9; hp 49; Init +5; Spd 60 ft; AC 17 (touch 15, flat-footed 16); Atk +8/+5 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike), +9/+4 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 9/day (Fort save DC 17); SQ Evasion, still mind, deflect arrows; slow fall (50 ft.), purity of body, wholeness of body, leap of the clouds; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9,

Knowledge (arcana) +12, Sense Motive +9, Tumble +12; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +3, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Osyluths (2):** hp 32; see *Monster Manual* page 48.

Treasure:

APL 2: bracers of armor +1 (150 gp), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (45 gp each).

APL 4 and 6: bracers of armor +2 (600 gp), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (45 gp each).

APL 8: bracers of armor +3 (1350 gp), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (45 gp each).

That's It!

After the characters have dispatched Jaziadeen, the adventure is effectively over. They may report to Reichart Petrides, who solemnly thanks them for the duty they have done for the Duchy of Urnst and tells them that he will contact them when their services are needed again. All characters who participated in confronting and killing Jaziadeen receive an Influence Point with Count Reichart Petrides.

CONCLUSION 2: LEUKISH

The next few encounters assume that the characters continue to their original destination of Leukish before seeking out Jaziadeen in Greyhawk. Assuming he is still alive, Mariakos is eager to get to Leukish—his livelihood depends upon getting his cargo to the city, and he's willing to make the journey alone if need be to ensure that he gets to Urnst within a week's time. The characters are free to continue the journey on the barge, or they may take the *Pride of Axeport*. If they choose to commandeer the cog, they can either go slowly alongside the barge to provide Mariakos extra protection or sail at a much faster speed to Leukish, leaving the Rhennee barge to finish its trade journey on its own time. Mariakos will not abandon his barge under any circumstances.

If the barge lord was killed during the adventure, on the other hand, his underlings happily abandon the doomed barge and join the characters aboard Rand's cog. Though their death-taboo makes them skittish about the ship, they've seen enough on the journey so far to scare them into doing just about anything.

If the entire Rhennee crew is dead, the characters can sell off the barge's cargo for a total of 500 gp once they reach a safe harbor.

Properly captained, the *Pride of Axeport* can make it to Leukish in a single day. The Rhennee have the skill needed to guide the ship correctly (as, no doubt, will a few characters). If the entire party lacks Profession (sailor) skills or the like, they'll be able to fumble their way to Leukish eventually, but the trip will take twice as long.

Because the characters are now a great distance from the disturbances at the center of the Nyr Dyv, their journey to Leukish is largely uneventful.

Valesh Kem, the Brotherhood "uncle" posing as a merchant in Leukish, runs a small storefront attached to a private vineyard enclosed by a tall stone wall. Kem caters to a highly specialized clientele willing to overpay wildly for his "specialty" wines. Though the vineyard is tiny (consisting of less than an acre of real estate) the fact that it exists at all within the city's walls means that most citizens of Leukish know where it is, even if they've never heard of Valesh Kem.

The "special mausoleum" to which Jaziadeen hoped the characters would deliver her "cousin" is an elaborate fiction. It does not exist.

Leukish, Urnst's capital, is a good deal smaller than Greyhawk, boasting some 22,300 inhabitants. Nestled among the rolling hills that make the northern duchy famous, the city features an impressive dockworks, a large castle, and thousands of crowded buildings. In contrast to those of Greyhawk, the buildings of Leukish appear tall and narrow, with pointy arches and square towers. Columns and pillars are everywhere. Roofs and tower caps are steeply peaked.

Once they've landed in the city, Mariakos bids the characters farewell, thanking them for their assistance during the difficult journey. He will not accompany the characters for any reason—he and his crew have had their fill of danger for the time being.

The characters essentially have two options—track down Valesh Kem in his lair or attempt to enlist the aid of the local authorities. If they choose the latter option, proceed to Encounter Eleven. If they choose to go straight to the home/business of Valesh Kem, jump ahead to Encounter Twelve.

ENCOUNTER 11: THE LAW

While it might be an overstatement to say that every member of the Leukish city watch is corrupt, there's no denying that the city is dominated by powerful merchant houses who bully the authorities with their financial brawn.

While the rank-and-file members of the city watch

are predisposed toward helping the city's inhabitants, their superiors are generally well paid to ensure that the status quo is maintained. The merchants know that Leukish isn't perfect, but it certainly is profitable, and anything that upsets its delicate balance might have an adverse affect upon the business community. Disruptions in business hurt the city itself, the merchants claim, and pay the higher members of the city guard very well to ensure that things remain largely as they were yesterday.

What this means to the characters is that, while a junior watch member will take notes excitedly about Valesh Kem and the Brotherhood cell in the city, he'll also ask the characters to remain in Leukish for a few days while his superiors review his paperwork and decide what to do next.

Predictably, they decide to do nothing next, leaving it up to the characters to deal with Valesh Kem. Kem has an associate in the watch organization, however. Should the characters wait more than a day after contacting the watch, he'll know that he's been discovered and will attempt to flee the city (with his associates acting as his personal guards). Proceed to the next encounter.

ENCOUNTER 12: VALESH KEM

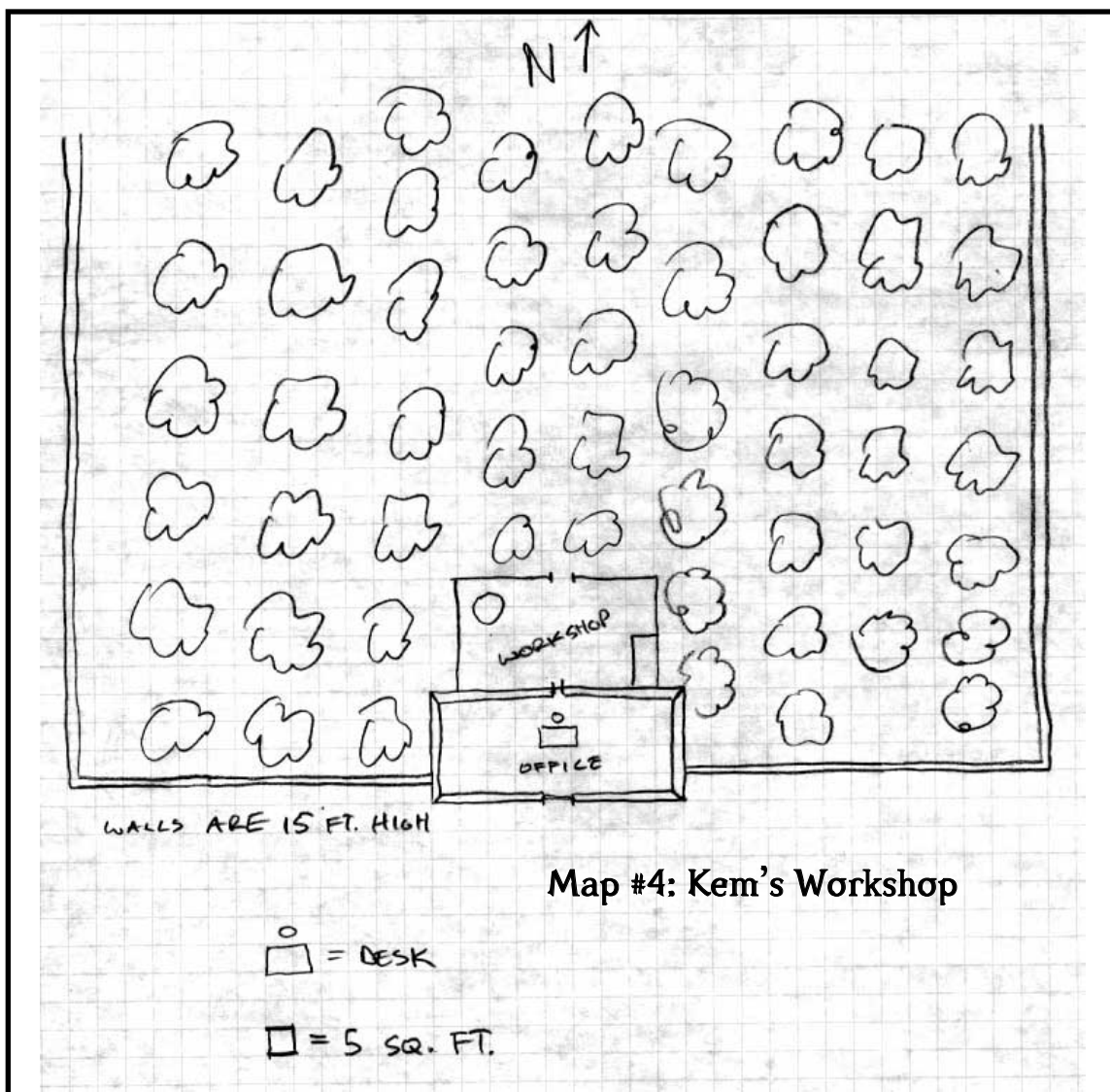
Consult the appendix for Player Map 4, which gives a general layout of Kem's workshop. Unless attempting to flee due to a tip-off from the city watch, he'll most likely be going about his merchant business when the characters arrive.

Valesh Kem is a lithe Suel man of about 50 years. He wears his long blond hair (flecked with gray) gathered in a braided ponytail. He dresses expensively in a tight shirt of valuable fabric and snug leather breeches. His face betrays a fair amount of arrogance.

Two associates, slightly overweight teenage boys who might be his sons, stock racks of wine along the walls as the characters arrive. In fact, the boys are monsters in service to the Brotherhood who have taken human form either by their own power or by imbibing a potion earlier in the day.

Kem expects the characters, and in fact has their payment ready in his desk drawer (refer back to Encounter One to determine how much money the party has waiting for them). If everything goes according to his plan, he'll simply pay off the characters in exchange for Ramel Kem's body.

Likely, however, things will not go as he hopes.



If confronted about being an agent of the Scarlet Brotherhood, Kem at first scoffs, telling the party they are lucky he doesn't bring them up on charges for such a spurious accusation. If presented with proof, however, he becomes somewhat glummer. He offers to give each member of the party 100 gp in exchange for them allowing him to leave the city freely. The only condition is that he needs some part of Ramel Kem's body. "I can't afford to be picky," he says. "Even a finger will do."

Needless to say, the scene will very likely erupt into a fight. In this case, both Kem and his monstrous assistants do everything within their power to destroy the characters.

APL 4

➤ **Valesh Kem:** Male human (Suel) Mnk3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +5;

Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, unarmed strike), +4 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 3/day (Fort save DC 12); SQ Evasion, still mind, deflect arrows; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Sense Motive +5, Tumble +7; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +1, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Dopplegangers (2):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual* page 60.

APL 6

➤ **Valesh Kem:** Male human (Suel) Mnk5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 40 ft; AC 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +5

melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike), +6 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 5/day (Fort save DC 13); SQ Evasion, still mind, slow fall (20 ft.), purity of body; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Sense Motive +7, Tumble +9; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Dopplegangers (2):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual* page 60.

APL 8

➤ **Valesh Kem:** Male human (Suel) Mnk5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 40 ft; AC 16 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike), +6 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 5/day (Fort save DC 13); SQ Evasion, still mind, slow fall (20 ft.), purity of body; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Sense Motive +7, Tumble +9; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Osyluths (2):** hp 32; see *Monster Manual* page 48.

APL 10

➤ **Valesh Kem:** Male human (Suel) Mnk9; CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 9d8+9; hp 49; Init +5; Spd 60 ft; AC 17 (touch 15, flat-footed 16); Atk +8/+5 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike), +9/+4 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Flurry of blows, unarmed strike, stunning attack 9/day (Fort save DC 17); SQ Evasion, still mind, deflect arrows; slow fall (50 ft.), purity of body, wholeness of body, leap of the clouds; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Sense Motive +9, Tumble +12; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Mobility.

Possessions: bracers of armor +3, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), sling.

➤ **Osyluths (2):** hp 32; see *Monster Manual* page 48.

Treasure:

APL 2: bracers of armor +1 (150 gp), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (45 gp each).

APL 4 and 6: bracers of armor +2 (600 gp), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (45 gp each).

APL 8: bracers of armor +3 (1350 gp), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (45 gp each).

Cleaning Up and Getting Out

The vineyard's wine can be sold for 200 gp. Within a month of the altercation, city planners in Leukish confiscate the property from the characters—it cannot be kept.

The body of Valesh Kem bears a much more valuable prize, however, in the form of an ivory badge that grants its wearer a limited amount of protection and reveals him as a Brotherhood sympathizer to other followers of the Scarlet Sign. See the Treasure Summary for more details.

ENCOUNTER 13: WHERE'S JAZIADEEN?

By the time the characters arrive in the City of Greyhawk, Jaziadeen is nowhere to be found. Inquiries at the Urnstan Embassy reveal that she left the city a few days ago, leaving absolutely no clue of where she went or why she left in such a hurry.

Assuming the characters tell Count Petrides about their exploits and about the affiliation of Jaziadeen, he thanks them for their efforts in Leukish but becomes very sad about his assistant's treachery. "So much makes sense, now," he says glumly.

The count promises to keep in touch with the characters, asking them to let him know the next few times they come to Greyhawk. "Important things are developing here in Greyhawk," he says. "Who knows what use I could have for a group of capable heroes such as yourselves?"

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 to each character.

Encounter 2 Up the River (Random Encounters)

Battle Encounter A

APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	210 XP
APL 10	300 XP

Battle Encounter B

APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	270 XP

Encounter 5: The Attack

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP

Encounter 6: The Pride of Axeport

Area 1. Main Deck

Defeat the Skeletons

APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	300 XP

Area 2. Forecastle

Defeat the "guest" from Dorakaa

APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	390 XP

Area 3. Sterncastle

Defeat Renkus Rand

APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP

Area 4. The Hold/Operating Theater

Defeat the slab creature

APL 4	90 XP
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APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	300 XP

Conclusion 1: Greyhawk

Encounter 10: Revenge

Defeating Jaziadeen and her associates

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP

Conclusion 2: Leukish

Encounter 12: Valesh Kem

Defeating Valesh Kem and his associates

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP

Bonus Experience Points

The following can be given to characters for good roleplaying, or acts of courage. The first value is the standard for you average good roleplaying, the following value is the upper limits of this bonus, which is usually give to one or two characters who achieved feat of daring or cunning during the adventure.

APL 4	80 XP/100 XP
APL 6	120 XP/160 XP
APL 8	160 XP/200 XP
APL 10	200 XP/220 XP

Total possible experience

APL 4	1,210 XP
APL 6	1,840 XP
APL 8	2,370 XP
APL 10	2,800 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 treasurer.

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 minute 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 piece 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 treasures from each encounter add it up and that is 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 Core adventure, taking place in a region not administered by a Regional Triad, characters cannot spend extra Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure, so this total is not be modified by other circumstances.

Introduction

The immediate payment for accepting the mission from Jaziadeen.

APL 4: 100 gp
APL 6: 200 gp
APL 8: 400 gp
APL 10: 500 gp

Encounter 5: The Attack

Defeating Black Meggala

APL 10: 1,350 gp

Encounter 6: The Pride of Axeport

Area 3. Sterncastle

Defeating Renkus Rand

APL 4: 596 gp
APL 6: 746 gp
APL 8: 1,046 gp
APL 10: 1,496 gp

Area 4. The Hold/Operating Theater

Finding the *bloodbone scalpel*

APL 8 and 10: 750 gp

Conclusion 1: Greyhawk

Encounter 8: Petrides

Accepting the gems from Petrides
All APLs: 200 gp

—or—

Encounter 10: Revenge

Defeating Jaziadeen and her associates

APL 4: 240 gp
APL 6 and 8: 690 gp
APL 10: 1440 gp

Conclusion 2: Leukish

Encounter 12: Valesh Kem

Accepting Valesh Kem's bribe
All APLs: 100 gp

-or-

Defeating Valesh Kem and his associates

APL 4: 240 gp
APL 6 and 8: 690 gp
APL 10: 1440 gp

Total Possible Treasure:

APL 4: 936 gp
APL 6: 1,636 gp
APL 8: 2,886 gp
APL 10: 5,536 gp

Night Hag Heartstone: Gathered from the body of the night hag Black Meggala, this periapt instantly cures any disease contracted by the holder. In addition, the heartstone imparts upon its wearer a +2 resistance bonus to all saving throws. The periapt shatters after it has been used to *remove diseases* ten times (no matter how many different wearers have been cured).

Caster Level: 6th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, *remove disease*; only a night hag can create this item; **Market Price:** 5,000 gp; **Weight:** 1/2 lb.

Boneblood Scalpel: The bone-handled metal knife is extremely sharp to the touch, and was created specifically to cut through skin and bone (though it's too small and unbalanced to be used effectively as a weapon).

When used to slice the brain of a deceased humanoid into four roughly equal parts, the boneblood scalpel allows its wielder to cast *speak with dead* as a 8th-level cleric. The ritual damages the dead creature's brain, making it necessary for a *true resurrection* to be cast in order to bring it back to life. The boneblood

scalpel may be used to commune with the dead but once per day.

Caster Level: 8th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *speak with dead*; **Market Price:** 5,000 gp; **Weight:** 1/2 lb.

Badge of Valesh Kem: Taken from the body of Valesh Kem, a spy of the Scarlet Brotherhood operating in the Duchy of Urnst city of Leukish, this ivory badge (about the size of a fist) confers a +1 resistance bonus to all saves made by its wearer. Additionally, it identifies the wearer as sympathetic to the goals of the Scarlet Brotherhood to other members of the order, who recognize its significance immediately upon sight.

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*; item must be created in the secret city of Hesuel Ilshar, located somewhere on the Tilvanot Peninsula; **Market Price:** 1,000 gp; **Weight:** 1/2 lb.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

The phrase "underwater adventure" usually conjures up images of sunken ships and fearsome monsters of the sea. That need not be the case, however. There is water nearly everywhere, especially in deep caves and dungeons where so many daredevils venture in search of glory and treasure.

Water can be a potent dungeon feature, and the clever DM can use it to make traps more fearsome (the water-filled pit and the flooding room are old standbys), and also to conceal treasure or to make combat more demanding—just how well will your characters do once the villain they're pursuing jumps into an underground river?

This article considers the basics of underwater encounters no matter where they occur, from subterranean pools to the deep blue sea.

Movement And Combat Underwater

Land-based creatures can have considerable difficulty when trying to fight in the water. Water affects a creature's attack rolls, damage, Armor Class, and movement. In some cases, a creature's opponents may get a bonus to attack the creature. The effects are summarized below:

Combat Adjustments For Water¹

CONDITION	SLASH OR BLUDGEON ATTK./DMG.	CLAW OR TAIL ATTK./DMG.	MOVE	OFF BALANCE?
<i>Freedom of movement</i> effect	Normal	Normal	Normal	No
Swim speed	-2/Half	Normal	Normal	No
Successful Swim check	-2/Half ²	-2/Half	Quarter or half ²	No
Firm Footing ⁴	-2/Half	-2/Half	Half	No
None of the above	-2/Half	-2/Half	Quarter or half ²	Yes ³

¹Water modifiers apply when wading in water at least waist deep, swimming, or walking along the bottom of a body of water.

²The speeds listed are standard for the Swim skill. You can move one quarter your speed as a move action or one-half your speed as a full-round action. To avoid the off-balance penalty (see note 5), you must make a Swim check (DC 5 + the DC for the water). The effects of a successful check last until your next turn. Making the Swim check is a move-equivalent action.

³Creatures without *freedom of movement* effects or swim speeds make grapple checks underwater at a -2 penalty, but they inflict damage normally when grappling.

⁴Creatures have firm footing when walking along the bottom, braced against a wall, or the like. You can walk along the bottom only if you carry enough weight to weigh you down. The amount of weight required depends on your size, as follows: Fine 1 lb.; Diminutive 2 lb.; Tiny 4 lb.; Small 8 lb.; Medium-size 16 lb.; Large 32 lb.; Huge 64 lb.; Gargantuan 128 lb.; Colossal 256 lb. The items you carry to weigh yourself down must be non-bulky and non-buoyant.

⁵Off-balance creatures lose Dexterity bonuses to Armor Class, and opponents gain a +2 attack bonus against them.

Other Water Effects

Water can effect everything from spells to vision, as noted below.

Fire

Non-magical fire (including alchemist's fire) does not burn underwater.

Magical Effects

Most spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities work normally underwater. Water does not block line of effect, except where noted below.

Spells or spell-like effects with the fire descriptor are ineffective underwater unless the caster makes a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15+spell level). If successful, the spell creates a bubble of steam instead of its usual fiery effect. Supernatural fire effects are ineffective underwater unless their descriptions state otherwise.

The surface of a body of water blocks line of effect for any fire spell. If the caster has made a Spellcraft check to make the fire spell useful underwater, the surface also blocks the spell's line of effect. For example, a fireball cast underwater cannot be targeted at creatures above the surface, nor can an underwater fireball spread above the surface.

Invisible creatures displace water and leave a visible bubble, though the creature still has half concealment (20% miss chance).

Ranged Attacks Underwater

Thrown weapons are ineffective underwater, even when launched from land or the air. Other ranged weapons suffer a -2 attack penalty for each 5 feet of water they pass through in addition to the normal penalties for range. (See the equipment section for specific exceptions to these rules).

Attacks from Land

Attacks tend to be deflected when they pass through the water's surface. Characters swimming, floating, or treading water on the surface, or wading in water at least chest deep have one-quarter cover against melee or ranged attacks from landbound (or airborne) opponents. Landbound opponents who have freedom of movement effects ignore this cover when making melee attacks. A completely submerged creature (no part of its body sticking above the surface) has one-half cover against attacks from landbound opponents unless those opponents have freedom of movement effects. Magical effects are unaffected, except for fire

effects, and effects that require attack rolls, which are treated like any other ranged attack.

In addition, attacks (both melee and ranged) also suffer a -2 attack penalty for each 5 feet of water they pass through. Attackers using reach to make melee attacks ignore this penalty of they have free action effects. Creatures with swimming speeds also ignore the penalty for melee attacks.

Ranged attacks from submerged creatures against opponents on land (or in the air) suffers the same penalties. That is, an opponent on land or in the air has one-half cover against attacks from submerged creatures and such attacks suffer a -2 penalty for every 5 feet of water they pass through. Waterborne creatures with ignore this penalty when making melee attacks.

Underwater Visibility

Submerged or swimming creatures may also again concealment from the water, depending on how clear it is.

Ocean water and water in glacial lakes and spring-feed pools is generally free of heavy silt, algae, or other visual impediments and is fairly clear. Even perfectly clear water obscures vision, even darkvision, beyond 200 feet. Creatures have one-quarter concealment at 50 feet (10% miss chance), one-half concealment at 100 feet (20% miss chance), three-quarters concealment at 150 feet (30% miss chance), and nine-tenths concealment at 200 feet have (40% miss chance). Beyond 200 feet, creatures have total concealment (50% miss chance and opponents cannot use sight to locate the creature).

Most freshwater lakes and rivers contains moderate amount of silt, algae, swirling sands, seaweed, or other visual impediments.

This turbid water allows less sighting distance, and creatures become completely concealed more quickly. The maximum sighting distance in turbid water is 100 feet or less (the more turbid the water, the less sighting distance). At half the listed distance, creatures have one-half concealment, at the listed distance creatures have nine-tenths concealment, and total concealment beyond the listed distance. For example, if murky water allows vision to 40 feet, creatures have one-half concealment at 20 feet, nine-tenths concealment at 40

Encounter Distance Underwater

To determine encounter distance underwater, use the steps outlined in Chapter 3 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, but use the following tables to determine the spotting distance.

UNDERWATER SPOTTING DISTANCE

Terrain	Distance*
Dense weeds	1d4 x 5 ft. (25 ft.)
Moderate weeds	2d4 x 10 ft. (50 ft.)
Light weeds	3d4 x 10 ft. (75 ft.)
Open Water	5d4 x 10 ft. (125 ft.)
Murky Water	Limit of sight**

*Double the spotting distance for aquatic creatures.

**Or the spotting distance allowed by the terrain, whichever is lower.

UNDERWATER SPOTTING DISTANCE

Circumstances	DC
Base	20'
Size	+/-4
Contrast	+/-5 or more
Stillness (not moving)	+5 per size category
6 or more creatures	-2
Moonlight*	+5
Starlight*	+10
Total darkness	Impossible ¹

DEPTH MODIFIER*

Clear water	+5 per 50 ft.
Turbid water	+5 per 35 ft.
Murky water	+5 per 10 ft.

¹It should be 25 if one side is hiding, and ignore size modifiers (see page 60 in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*).

*Give a +5 bonus to Spot checks if the spotter has low-light vision or if she has darkvision that extends far enough.

²Unless the spotter has darkvision that extends far enough.

³No depth modifier applies at depths less than the listed number. For greater depths, apply the modifier for each additional unit of depth or fraction of a unit. Ignore the depth modifier if the spotter has darkvision that extends far enough. If the spotter has low-light vision, double the unit. For example, a creature with low-light vision operating in clear water at a depth of 95 feet has no depth modifier for spotting.

APPENDIX

Triangulated Distances

(All distances are expressed in feet.)

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
5	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
10	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125
15	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130
20	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135
25	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140
30	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145
35	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150
40	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155
45	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160
50	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165
55	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170
60	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175
65	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180
70	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185
75	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190
80	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195
85	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200
90	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205
95	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210
100	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215
105	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215	220
110	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215	220	225
115	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215	220	225	230
120	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215	220	225	230	235

feet and total concealment beyond 40 feet.

Water in swamps, lagoons, and stagnant ponds may contain excessive amounts of algae, seaweed, mud, or other visual impediments. Such water is so murky that it allows vision to 5 feet or 0 feet.

Aquatic creatures can see twice as far through the water as other creatures (but twice 0 feet is still 0 feet).

Holding Your Breath

As noted in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, Any character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution score. After this period of time, the character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) every round in order to continue holding his breath. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the character finally fails his Constitution check, he begins to drown. In the first round, he falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he drowns.

Vigorous activity, such as fighting, strains the character, reducing the time a character can hold his breath to a number of rounds equal to his Constitution score.

Encounter Distance Underwater

To determine encounter distance underwater, use the steps outlined in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Use the following table to determine the

The Third Dimension

Because swimming creatures can move in all three dimensions, it's often necessary to measure distances between creatures at different depths, or to adjudicate movement upward or downward at an angle.

The table below shows distances between points at different heights; the values have been rounded off to the nearest multiple of 5 for convenience in game play. To use the table, find the horizontal distances between the two points (D₁) and then the vertical distance between them (D₂), the point where the column and the row cross is the actual distance. For example, if two creatures are 100 feet apart horizontally and 50 feet apart vertically, the actual distance between them is 110 feet. You also can use the table to determine how far swim in a turn if it also travels up or down. To do so, find the vertical distances the creature wishes to swim on left side of the table (D₂), then move right until you find the first number that equals the creature's swimming speed. The number at the top of the column is the horizontal distance the creature can move. For example, a creature with a swimming speed of 30 makes a double move (total movement 60 feet), and wants to rise 35 feet in the process. The creature moves 50 feet horizontally while rising the 35 feet.

Underwater Equipment

There are a few sundry pieces of equipment that can assist characters in their underwater adventures.

Crossbow: Crossbow bolts tend to perform better underwater than other projectiles, and suffer only a -1 penalty to attack rolls for each 5 feet of water they pass through (instead of the usual -2 penalty for 5 feet of water).

Most crossbows, however are fitted with winches or levers for cocking and loading, and these mechanisms can be difficult to use underwater. If the user does not have firm footing (see the combat section) the user must make a Swim check (DC 5+ the DC for the water) to successfully reload the crossbow. Hand crossbows and special underwater crossbows don't require a swim check to reload.

Goggles: These crystal lenses set into a leather mask allow for clear vision underwater. They allow non aquatic creatures to see one and half times as far as normal underwater (but one and half times 0 is still 0).

Javelins and Similar Weapons: Unlike most other thrown weapons, a javelin is effective when at a submerged target from the land or air. The target of the javelin attack still gains cover from the water and the attack also suffers the standard penalty of 1 -2 penalty for 5 feet of intervening water. Darts, spears, and tridents also share this characteristic.

Short-hafted Piercing Weapons: Weapons such as the morningstar and the pick, while capable of inflicting piercing damage, impose a -2 attack penalty and inflict only half damage when employed underwater without a freedom of movement effect.

Underwater Crossbow: Sometimes called a Sahuagin crossbow, this martial weapon has an ingenious system of levers and stirrups that make it easy to reload underwater, and you can reload the weapon crossbow normally without a swim check.

The sahuagin are infamous for their ability with these weapons and a sahuagin that makes a successful Swim check (DC 5+ the DC for the water) can reload a heavy underwater crossbow as a move equivalent action; this maneuver is only effective in water at least 3 feet deep.

Underwater Crossbow Bolts: These bolts are specially shaped for underwater use. When fired underwater, the suffer no penalties for the intervening water. The underwater bolts are of limited use above water. The crossbow's range increment is reduced by half and the bolt can be fired a maximum of 5 range increments.

Underwater Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight	Craft DC
Goggles	25 gp	1 lb.	15
Underwater crossbow, light	55 gp	6 lb.	15
Underwater crossbow, heavy	75 gp	9 lb.	15
Underwater crossbow bolts (10)	2 gp	5 lb.	12

PLAYER HANDOUT #1

The following text is scrawled in a tight, masculine script upon a piece of parchment discovered in the stern-castle of the Pride of Axeport, the personal quarters of Renkus Rand, cleric of Iuz.

Astakan,

I trust that this missive reached you without incident. How convenient that the bright gates of Admundfort now open for lacedon couriers. I smile as I write this, thinking of how the paladins of an earlier age might work themselves into a frenzy of indignation upon the discovery of a single undead creature within their walls. Now, the city crawls with them. Soon, the influence of the great and powerful Iuz, Lord of the Middle Lands, will spread south to Greyhawk, and from there, our conquest will be simplicity itself. As I've told you before, the Selintan River holds the key to the whole of the central Flanaess. The power that controls the trade flowing from north to south will, in time, command its neighbors through sheer economic force it by nothing else. It's a testament to the laziness and comfort of Greyhawk's fattened rulers that the free city hasn't truly realized this throughout its long history.

But that is neither here nor there, and the fools will soon know their folly when the "gem" of the Flanaess floats upon streets filled with blood.

I must apologize for taking such swift leave of you two months ago. I had looked forward to recounting our past victories in Molag, under the wise rulership of Barrat Roshan. Unfortunately, the loose-lipped among my crew managed to tell the wrong people about my current plans, and before I could meet with you my crew was "joined" by an unwanted "assistant" who I am told was sent to me by the Old One himself (though I frankly don't believe that to be true). I've been watching my ship's forecastle, where the creature lairs, for weeks, now.

The tonguewags who betrayed my mission have been dealt with. I killed my entire crew a week out of Admundfort and animated the lot of them. They're far more reliable this way, as they've lost the ambition to do anything but serve. If only all problems were solved so easily! I wish you were here to see what the least trustworthy among my crew now endure in the ship's hold, but suffice it to say their tortures are eternal (or, at any rate, will last until I tire of them, which shan't be for a long time indeed).

As for my mission? Do you recall the plain metal triangle that Roshan discovered in the vaults of the Hall of Dread after the siege of Molag during the Festival of the Blood Moon? I've since learned that the item is one of eight extremely valuable magical artifacts called the "Octychs," which together serve to open some sort of magical gate that leads to unimaginable power. Roshan believes he knows how to activate the Octychs, but he won't tell me anything more. I sense that he doesn't trust me, that he believes I'd sell him out in an instant if I knew the item's true power. He's wrong, you know. I respect Roshan more than anyone save yourself, and wouldn't think of hurting him unless I might be asked to join the Boneheart or the like by cutting out his heart (but which of us would not betray the other when offered such rich rewards, I ask?). No, instead I've determined to find an Octych for myself and to present it to Roshan at the upcoming Revelation in Ichor.

I know you are a great collector of books. Do you have a copy of the Poems of Thalac Jiwo? My research has suggested that the prophetic poet wrote a poem that obliquely references the Octychs, and I'd very much like to peruse a copy of it. If you (or someone appointed by you) could bring a copy to Molag on the eve of the Revelation, I'd greatly appreciate it and would reward you richly for your time. I don't believe Roshan knows about the poem, so I hope to curry favor by presenting it to him. I will, of course, credit your role in providing the book to me.

It's been far too long since we last saw each other. If everything goes according to my plans, I'll be performing one of my infamous surgeries within the hour (and upon a Brother of the Scarlet Sign, no less!). I shall use the special scalpel you gave me so long ago, and will think happy thoughts of you as I begin my beautiful work.

Until the Revelation, then.

--Renkus

PLAYER HANDOUT #2

The following text is scrawled in a tight, masculine script upon a piece of parchment discovered upon a rack of medical instruments in the hold/operating theater of the Pride of Axeport.

Questions for Ramel Kem (remember to divide the brain into four EQUAL parts)!

1. *How long have you been with the Scarlet Brotherhood?*
2. *Who is your contact in the City of Greyhawk?*
3. *Did you retrieve an Octych in your journey?*
4. *Where are the other Octychs?*
5. *What do the Octychs do?*
6. *Who killed you?*
7. *Why were you killed?*
8. *Who made the Octychs?*
9. *Who knows the most about the Octychs?*
10. *Who in I uz's organization is a plant for your pathetic organization?*

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☛ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☛ **Miale, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or –6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and –10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, sleep*.

Spellbook: 0—all of them; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I*.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☛ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☛ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or –1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref –1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level): 0—*detect poison, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*bless, protection from evil**, *shield of faith*.

* Domain spell; Deity: Pelor; Domains: Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.