

COR4-14



# SYMPATHY FOR THE BAATEZU

## A One-Round D&D<sup>®</sup> LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>™</sup> Core Scenario

Version 1

By Chris Chesher

Circle Reviewers: Craig Hier and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

HQ Reviewer: Eric Cagle

Additional Greyhawk Source Material: Carl Sargent

Digging deeper into the dark alleys of Eastfair has cleared up some puzzles, but the sickly dust quickly settles to create new obfuscation. Perhaps it is time to step out for some fresh air. A favor for a favor, new friends may be able to help you help yourself and get to the bottom of this mystery. With the who's and how's covered, its time to gather up a motive. The pillows and linen are freshly changed, so head on over to The Whirling Dervish and get a good rest, you'll need it. An adventure for APL 2-8. Part Three of the "Running with the Baatezu" series.

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

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

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

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

Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. ©2004 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com)

For rules questions specific to this document and the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign email [rpgahq@wizards.com](mailto:rpgahq@wizards.com)

This adventure has been designed to be part of the RPGA DUNGEON & DRAGONS campaign LIVING GREYHAWK. Like all LIVING GREYHAWK adventures, it's recommended that parties undertaking its challenges have at least one arcane spellcaster, a divine spellcaster (preferably a cleric), a strong warrior, and a rogue. Parties missing these valuable adventuring components may find this very challenging, and the percentages of character death higher.

## RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

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

This adventure retires from RPGA sanctioned play on December 31, 2005.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com).

## PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure

as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

## PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR). After the adventure, fill out and give an adventure record to each player. This tracks their character advancement for the adventure.

## LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's

animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

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

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

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

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

## TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Core adventure, set in The Great Kingdom of Northern Aerdy. All characters pay two Time Units per adventure round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit.

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

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

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

## Source Acknowledgement

In the text of this adventure, sentences, paragraphs and ideas have been borrowed (and expanded on) from the sourcebook 'Ivid the Undying' by Carl Sargent.

The author of this adventure would like to express his thanks and praise to Mr. Sargent and acknowledge the original source material created by him.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

### The North Kingdom

The Great Kingdom of Northern Aerdy is ruled by His Righteous and Transcendent Majesty, the Overking of Northern Aerdy, Herzog Grenell the First, Prince of House Naelax (LE male human [flan-oeridian] Clr19 - Hextor).

This is a nation of tyranny and oppression. Outside of the large cities, feudal lords hold god-like power over their small fiefdoms, only paying heed to the more powerful liege above them in the social order.

Inside the city, nobles and the others who are lucky enough to be above the salt practice a lifestyle of hedonistic indulgences and cruelty at the cost of those poor souls who fall below the salt.

The vast majority of the warlike noble families pledge their spiritual faith into the many hands of the Scourge of Battle, Hextor. Cavaliers of the darkest hearts, shiniest armor and most bloodthirsty mounts are a somewhat common sight in these lands—be they the clerics of Hextor or the knightly lord of the local manor and village.

Though there are a number of small and rather ineffectual 'cults' of good (usually in a chaotic form) that preach and practice rebellion against the oppression of the government and society in whole, finding them is rarely easy, but when they are, an iron fist is used to crush them.

That is not to say there are no forces of good left within the North Kingdom. Once, not too long ago, this nation was a part of the truly Great Kingdom and the bastion of Oeridian culture.

Thus as Hextor is a part of that culture, so are gods of good and neutrality. Those who would rebel against the tyranny of the Lawful Evil society (such as Trithereon) have long since been purged to all but the remotest pockets. Followers of gods who would infer its worshipers to a more direct opposition (such as the Arch-Paladin, Heironeous) have been equally purged.

This leaves the followers of good (and neutral) gods who have found a way to work their dogma within the oppressive bounds of the state religion of Hextor. An example of this are followers of the Gentle Hand, Zodal, running orphanages or churches of the Shining One, Pelor, taking care of the poor and sick within the ever-swelling slums of the cities.

The Lawful Evil nature of the society allows these small churches of good who do not practice rebellion as dogma, to operate and take care of those (poor and sick) that the government do not want to waste time on. The thinking is, "if they want to waste their resources on those types, and as long as they obey our laws, then let them. Besides, it's fun to bully them too, from time to time."

There are some religions that are accepted because they play an important niche. Examples of this are the churches of the Money Counter, Zilchus and the Dweller on the Horizon, Fharlanghn, but the political influence of these sects is kept to a minimum. The only power they can express is that bought by coin and even that is limited.

Amongst the common people (with their heavily mixed Flan heritage) the Oerth Mother, Beory is worshiped for nature related issues and to a lesser extent, so are the Oeridian agricultural gods. Even the different evil gods such as the Reaper, Nerull and the Black Rider, Incabulos are given small prayers and appeasement to ward off their callings and hopefully push them on to their neighbor, but not them.

### Language

The peasants and serfs of the land all speak the Common tongue, with a heavy Oeridian accent usually mixing in many words and expressions of Old Oeridian, though this by no means guarantees that the serf speaker can actually communicate fluently in Old Oeridian.

The nobility, clerics, sages, elite servants and anyone with education speak Old Oeridian as their primary language, but the Common tongue is known to all. Religious and legal issues are dealt with in Old Oeridian, as well as anything that is the domain of those above the salt.

### Keeping a Low Profile

When the characters visit Eastfair in this adventure, they should not have too much of a problem with the authorities or the general population (most of which are LE, NE and N) as long as they keep their heads down and don't make a scene.

Those who worship Chaotic (of any morality) or Lawful Good gods and do not pass a Disguise check (DC 12) (made once for the whole adventure) or who reveal themselves, suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all Charisma based skill checks. This is negated if they are dealing with someone of their same ethos (a good worshiper meeting a good worshiper has no problems, etc), but this is left up to the DM to determine.

A special case is in store for worshipers of Heironeous, the archrival of Hextor. Since it is assumed that a proud worshiper of such a god would adorn himself with the marks and symbols of his divine patron, the Disguise check is DC15. This includes not slipping up and using sayings or dogma in speech. The price for being recognized is a -6 circumstance penalty to all Charisma based skill checks. Even if the character fails his skill check, this does not mean that every city guard

and cleric of Hextor automatically spot him in the streets. It's only for when he is up close and interacting with these Heironeous-Haters and those who play along out of fear.

Even then though, he only becomes the target of harsh ridicule. As long as the character keeps his cool and dignity, he can get out safe and alive.

If he ever forces the hand of the Hextorians, however "justice" will be swift.

The Hextorians feel no need to grant a foreigner any sort of honor duel, not in their own capital.

### Pets, Familiars and Animal Companions

Large and/or wild animals are not allowed to be brought into the city unrestrained and without a permit. Wolves, bears, any dire animal and other dangerous creatures must be leashed and muzzled or caged. Dire animals must be caged. A one-week permit costs 10 gp per size category of each animal (starting at Small).

Horses, trained dogs, birds and other common domesticated animals cost a copper each to enter the city, do not require any special restraints, but the master is responsible for any damage the animals cause.

### Crime and Punishment

The laws of the land are typically the same as one would find in another lawful kingdom, only much, much harsher. The people are coppered and silvered to death with special taxes and tariffs. Most commoners are considered property, either to their liege or to the government as a whole should they be a Freeman (an ironic term here).

Minor crimes and public disturbances bring about rough treatment from the town guards or from one's social superiors (with little chance for recourse). Thankfully, gold is an accepted solution to get the characters out of all but the most unforgivable crimes (usually those perpetrated against someone with rank and power). The laws have been somewhat softened (or just corrupted) from ten years ago. An influential man about town succeeded in plying the right people to lower the execution range on items from its original 500 gp to the new 1000 gp limit. Rumors have it he is the main backer of a new fledgling thieves guild. Thus these Guilders can pay the bribes required for getting caught for minor theft, instead of executed as in the past.

To give an example: If the characters cause the death of a commoner, they can discreetly pay their way out of punishment (the authorities make this clear with a wink and nudge) for the sum of 1,000 gp per dead commoner (or 100 gp for an orc).

Failure to pay this fee sentences the characters involved to 2d6 TU's worth of imprisonment (the sentence would normally be much longer, life even, but it's assumed the crafty adventurers can eventually get themselves out of the situation one way or another, along with all their gear but not gold. All coin is removed from the Adventure Record).

**Killing a tradesmen** or other such 'middle' class member of society is subject to a 2,000 gp fine. It doesn't

matter how the death was caused. Accidentally or premeditated, death is death. Failure to pay costs the characters 2d8 TUs. Otherwise, this is treated the same as the above entry.

**Killing a Nobleman** or other authority figure requires a Diplomacy check (DC 15), just to be allowed to make reparations or else be executed permanently. If the characters succeed in the apology, then they at minimum must pay the full cost to bring the person back from the dead (*raise dead* or *resurrection*) and then another 2,000-4,000 gp (Dungeon Masters discretion on severity) on top of that (this secondary amount can be reduced as stated below).

**Theft Over 1000 gp** is a death sentence. Those caught for this crime are almost always publicly executed as an example to the rest of the population. To even attempt to get out of this, requires a Diplomacy check (DC 25), then confiscation of the item, then a 5,000 gp bribe. Sad to say, few people have those sorts of resources, so permanent death becomes quite the deterrent. Philosophers have pointed out that the crime of theft is more harshly dealt with than the crime of murder and that speaks volumes on the mentality of the government and its people.

For lesser crimes:

**Insulting a Noble or a cleric of Hextor** (Diplomacy check (DC13) to be allowed to pay 200 gp, otherwise 1d4 TUs of imprisonment).

**Interfering with a Guardsmen** (50 gp or 1d4 TUs of imprisonment).

**Public Disorder** (50-200 gp, or 1 TU of imprisonment).

**Theft, Minor** (Half the value of the items and confiscation of the items or 1d3 TUs of imprisonment and confiscation of the items).

**Breaking and Entering** (50-200 gp or 2TU of imprisonment).

**Vagrancy** (a sound beating, then, 50 gp or 1TU of imprisonment and another sound beating).

DMs should use these as a guideline should they find their players getting into trouble. When in doubt though, err on the side of caution and leniency.

These minor crimes can usually be paid on the spot to guards or other authority figures. The more severe charges (like murder) usually take some time to process in the courts. Typically, paying 100 gp can speed it up to 2d6 hours, from 2d8 days (all included in the initial TU's paid for the adventure). This is nothing compared to the poor wretches who spend years in tiny cells awaiting a trial that may never come.

If the characters profess their innocence (whether they are innocent or not, it doesn't matter much) a representative for them all may make a single opposed Diplomacy check (DC 1d20+5)(per charge). The character may use Knowledge (Core) instead for this check.

If this is successful, then the cost in gold or TUs is reduced by 50% (round down). But if the check fails, the penalties are increased by 50% (round up).

Some exceptions to this are when the authorities hate the victims more than the characters. For example, killing a cleric of Tharizdun or Vecna doesn't bring about much reprisal (unless the characters committed a lot of other crimes in the process).

Also, the adventure text may list specific instructions on how to handle a crime or a trial. Always use the specific instructions in the adventure text over those listed above.

As stated previously, a typical commoner would expect a life sentence for very minor crimes, but the adventurers (with a few exceptions) are only penalized TU's, for it is assumed that they are able to get themselves out of the imprisonment much before the end of the expected sentence. A death sentence is the exception to this. Without specific instructions in the scenario, death becomes difficult to be paroled from but after most petty executions, the body can be recovered by resourceful adventurers.

Guard patrols and even their interest depends on what part of the city or (in the case of in rural area) whose land one is on.

In Eastfair, The New City is closely watched by both mundane and even magical means. Those committing crimes have a much higher chance of getting caught. In the Old City, guard patrols are fewer and petty crime is rampant, but the patrol sizes tend to be much larger with a higher chance of special support units (such as mages or brute squads), ready to tear a neighborhood apart till they get the people they are after.

Rural lands are under the jurisdiction of whichever noble owns that patch of land, which can have several layers of authority. These rural nobles have less firepower to back up an arrest then do the city guards against powerful adventurers, so they tend to be more lenient and willing to deal when they feel they lack the upper hand.

### Law Enforcement in Eastfair

The every day city watch duties are held by the Rakers, companies of elite soldiers from the northern border of the North Kingdom. They are much feared and rightly so. Should the need arise; the city has garrisons of church solders, squadrons of cavalry, mage detachments, and orc brute squads (though the orcs are generally kept in the Old City).

Ever the inventive and progressive city, Eastfair has established a system where citizens can pay to have a large bell (and additional smaller hand held ones) that can be rung to call forth a city guard patrol. These bells are specially marked by the Rakers and the authorities. Possession of non-sponsored bells without a permit is illegal. Due to the large fee, these signaling bells are mostly found in the hands of the rich.

Normal folk can still summon the guards per the traditional method of yelling or running up and tugging on sleeves, but the bells provides extra convenience when seconds count.

Patrols (both foot and mounted) of Rakers can be found all over the New City, both day and night. Their

response time is usually 2+1d4 minutes for a single patrol, with more patrols arriving within another 1+2d4 minutes. For problem cases, magical assistance both clerical and arcane can be called in but due to the monetary cost this is not used for insignificant cases.

#### **Typical Patrol (New City)**

Sgt Ftr3; 2d4 Troopers War2.

➤**Elite Patrol:** Lt Ftr3/Rog2; Sgt Ftr3; 2d8 Troopers War2; 50% of Evk3; 50% of Clr5 of Hextor.

➤**Typical Patrol (Old City):** Orc Sgt Bar2 or Ftr 2; 4d4 orcs war1; 1d2 ogres.

➤**Raker Patrol:** Vet Sgt Ftr4; 2d8 Troopers War2.

It should be noted that, unlike a typical city in the west, the city guard here are typically evil and uncaring. Good characters trying to turn in bad guys are just as likely to get trouble turned around onto themselves as well with money changing hands being the only way out. The Rakers of Eastfair can't be relied upon to solve all of the character's troubles.

### **Eastfair, The Granite City**

Within the high and heavily fortified outer granite walls of the city, are streets so clean and tidy that they put some high altars of Heironeous to shame.

Heavily worked maintenance crews keep the hard, stark and stern streets sanitary, as much as the elite units of Rakersmen (elite troops of North Province) keep the streets orderly as the town guard.

While it has a reputation for urbanity, ordinary folk in the city work hard and need to in order to compensate for the heavy taxation and cruel red tape. One must pass through the second ring of city walls and into the Old City, in order to get to the interior of the city and to see its true seedy underbelly. Here, the poor and the wretched eek out an existence shut away from the outside, only allowed to exit via special permits or by wearing badges sewn to their vests.

In the last decade or so, this poor interior has turned from poor-man's quarters, though kept almost as orderly as the New City, into a true slum (much to the chagrin of the authorities). This has been caused by the ever-increasing migration of refugees into the city. If you can pay the entrance fee you may enter Eastfair but if you are not a skilled tradesmen or rich, you are shunted to the Old City.

Once there, you can't legally leave without a permit of some sort. This has been causing quite a bit of increased hardship and chaos. The uncaring government's answer is to send in brute squads of orcs and ogres to thin out the population of troublemakers, but never so much that they'll cause a general revolt. Cycles of famine and diseases keep the population levels of the Old City down as well.

Behind its orderly mask, the population of the city is prone to hedonistic pleasures. Eastfair has always attracted the most debauched and degenerate nobility and merchants of North Province. If you have the money

to pay for it, the Nine Hells itself can be yours to experience.

Eastfair attracts wealth. Those riches are either inherited, or obtained by the best merchants, that is, the most unscrupulous, swindling, money grabbing ones. Given this, it is not surprising that Eastfair's rich like to spend their money on depraved and immoral activities.

Eastfair has a considerable number of truly exceptional craftsmen and artisans within its city walls. These numbers have swollen by the people seeking refuge in the Granite City from more troubled lands and cities. Now, truly, Eastfair is a city where one can buy almost anything – if one has almost limitless supplies of gold.

When the sun sets and the streets fill with flickering shadows, it's the poor and common men that pay for the vileness of the riches' entertainment, not to mention all the other hidden evils in the city.

In a nutshell, the common people have very few rights and the government enforces itself on the lower class brutally, but usually overlook the vileness that befalls the common man, as long as its done quietly and doesn't disturb the order of the city.

Something one does not see walking the streets of the city are fiends. Baatezu and especially Tanar'ri are not generally accepted by the church of Hextor. Part of this has to do with their god residing on Archeron, and not the Nine Hells. Though fiends are used for specific purposes (and present within the city), as a policy, the authorities don't want them to wander around within the general populace.

The same goes for undead, for they tend to cause a lot of disorder and public disturbance. Of course, there are always exceptions for those with power and the fact that there are several animus nobles in the city makes it a complicated issue. Having undead wandering the streets is an extravagance reserved for the most powerful and connected. Anyone else will find their minions destroyed and themselves held accountable.

It should be noted that, though mostly just rumors, good outsiders have made temporary homes in this large city. They have been called to do good and help the crusading good minority fight the powers of evil. When these beings are discovered they are routed out with extreme prejudice and any mortals found to be supporting them (and even those not) are punished brutally, usually by having an ogre pay them a social visit to discuss the implications of the transgression.

### **Rise of the Thieves Guild**

For generations, Eastfair has not had a Thieves Guild. The authorities of the time would crush without mercy any attempt to organize. Visible crime and disorder to society would not be tolerated.

Around ten years ago, there started a large and steady influx of refugees to the city of Eastfair. Some were displaced by the Greyhawk Wars, others by the civil infractions with Ahlissa, and still others driven out by orcs from the Bone March.

Those with talents or money found sustenance within the New City. Those of the poor unwashed and huddling masses that were not so well off, were marched directly into the Old City—a district surrounded by walls and streets that end at them.

As the inhuman conditions worsened within the Old City (and more people arrived), violence and thievery became commonplace. Where in the New City, the city watch could quickly crush such disorder, the slums and crowded streets of the Old City proved difficult to police. Many units of Rakers just gave up even trying, sticking to their barracks rather than bring evil tyrannical order to those who desperately needed it to survive (since freedom and mercy were not on the menu).

Then one day, a rich former adventurer came to Eastfair and he made some deals with those with the power to make small changes to the laws. With bribes in the right place and slight amendments to the laws, organized Guilders started to rise up from the multitude of street gangs.

Those in the government are split on the issue. Some feel it's a good thing to allow the Guilders to operate for it provides bribes and some modicum of control on the population of the Old City. Others see it as an affront to the authority of the Herzog and want every single street criminal wiped out. But as long as the crime stays off the streets of the New City, those factions within the government will continue to debate it. Should the Guild ever become a public embarrassment, then heads will roll. In the meantime, orcs and their kin are used as brute squads to keep the poor in line and the Guild underpowered.

Besides, with the influx of refugees and decrease in the amount of resources of control the government has, the criminal element of the population is going to increase; just human nature or at least the clerics of Hextor claim.

Now, the government and society hates disorderly crime, but seems to look the other way to stuff that doesn't make it self seen. That is to say, beggars on the streets are a big no-no, but shadows and wraiths haunting a poor neighborhood is not much of a concern. Peasants protesting an injustice are quickly brutalized, but a vampire cultist going out at night and kidnapping a person without money or connections would not interest the authorities much.

It's this apathy that allows the Guild to recruit new members to replace the many it loses to risky ventures. Some street gangs are known to be recruiting fronts for the guild, while some rumors claim that all of the street gangs are controlled pyramid fashion by the Guild, as their own fiefs.

What is known for sure is that the street gangs are often hard hit. The authorities wipe them out as brutally as they wipe each other out. The gangs of the Old City are as chaotic as they are cruel.

While junior members handle petty street crime, the more senior members seem to easily gain contracts for

lucrative jobs within the New City and beyond. It gives the junior members something to aim for.

Others have wilder theories, things like devils control the guilders, or that the city Nobles control the street gangs, or that the Herzog himself is the head Guildmaster.

Whatever the true story, the Thieves Guild of Eastfair is far more complicated than it lets on.

### Locations in Eastfair

The following is a quick explanation for places within the city that either is discussed with the characters (but not expected to be visited by) or are locations that the characters need to visit as listed in the encounters. A more detailed description can be found within the Encounter dealing with that location.

Eastfair is divided into Old City and New City. The Old City was built circa 80 CY, and the city greatly expanded in size during the third century when New City began to grow outside the original walls.

The Old City is now mostly the province of the poorer people, save for the complex of buildings known as "The Cyst," while New City contains the homes and workplaces of the well off.

For characters approaching Eastfair, their first sight of the city should give them an impression of grandeur. Huge granite walls confer an air of invulnerability, and the stone spires and slate roofs of the buildings inside crowd together like a phalanx of powerful defenders. Great Gate, bearing its mighty shields of Hextor and North Province, is a forbidding entrance to this majestic city.

### The Great Gate

This gate is powerfully defended, with ballista platforms flanking the 30 ft. high granite walls and a pair of huge (22 ft. high) stone statues of Aerdi warriors standing on either side of them. These statues can be animated as massive stone golems (271 hp each) by a cleric of Hextor who stands special watch as part of the gate detail, to fight in defense of the city.

➤ **Greater Stone Golem:** 271 hp; see *Monster Manual* page 136.

An entrance toll is charged of 1 sp a person (1 gp a merchant or freesword, with extra charges of 1 sp to 1 gp for each horse, wagon, etc.). The main gates are opened for wagons and horse, with men on foot using smaller side doors at the base of the ballista towers.

Within Great Gate, the broad boulevard known as The Full Path stretches into the heart of the city and on to Newgate and Spider's Gate. Just beyond Great Gate, the extraordinary sight simply named "Waterfall" greets the visitor; 20 ft. high, 10 ft. long standing waves of water lie either side of The Full Path, a permanent magical reminder that Eastfair lies just north of the headwaters of the Flanmi.



### The Fisherman's Gate

The north gate of the city is much smaller than the Great Gate, and receives only visitors on foot or on horse in small numbers.

Originally, this was the gate used by humbler tradesmen, hence its name, but in a reversal of history this gate now opens into the richer areas of the city and merchants are sent to Great Gate if they seek entry.

Though this gate has not the powerful defenses of Great Gate, the gatehouse here contains a minor magical artifact which, if the right command word is activated, can shield the gate in a *wall of stone* which is 90% resistant to any attempts to dispel it, save by use of the same artifact used to create it.

Once the trouble starts in the countryside, this gate is magically sealed (as above) and only opened for use by the most powerful of the city. The characters have no chance in getting it open.

### The Cyst

The Cyst comprises three sets of buildings located behind iron railings protected by priests of Hextor and squads of Rakersmen all in the Old City. None can enter without an invitation, granted pass, or the summons of the Herzog himself.

The central building here, the Herzog's Palace, houses Grace Grenell and the hierarchy of the priesthood of Hextor, together with the most senior city officials (Chancellor, city architect, Commander-General of the Watch, etc.). To the right of the Palace are the barracks of the Rakersmen, with some 600 troops and a dozen of their most senior commanding officers.

Unless the characters really act up, they should never need to go here. If the situation warrants them going here and getting inside they are not coming back.

### The Whirling Dervish

Nested in the Streets of Delight, the Whirling Dervish is a hostelry offering entertainments marginally less depraved, and more varied, than most establishments around it.

The proprietor, Clinorus Kradner, dresses in Baklunish robes and a turban, even though he's never been west of Edge Field in his life. To someone who is from the Baklunish West or has visited them, it is obvious that Clinorus has dressed to the descriptions of embellished stories, not to mention the man is not Baklunish, more of a dark flan-oeridian mix.

Clinorus is, in fact, a cleric of Olidammara as well (Clr4), with a strong tendency to good alignment. This is a closely kept secret.

This location is visited in the Introduction Encounter.

### The Merchant Quarter

The Merchant Quarter contains the better markets of Eastfair and the homes of many ordinary merchants. At the center of the entire quarter is the main Temple of Zilchus for the city.

This quarter is also home to an enclave (subsection) of merchants who specialize in exotic goods: silks, spices, peppers, rare herbs, alchemical goods, tropical hardwood furnishings, Ketite rugs and carpets, and all manner of unusual items. This square is sometimes referred to as 'Little Bakluni Town'.

Nearby to these shops of Exotic section is the walled compound of the Zilchus Western Company. This is the major supplier to these particular shops of western goods, though they by no means hold any monopolies on Baklunish trade. This just happens to be the sister headquarters of an order of Zilchus clerics that operate this company.

A small part of this quarter is visited in Encounter 1.

### The Old City

The houses here are those of laborers, serfs (including church serfs), and unskilled workers. This is the new slum district for Eastfair, though it has only formed in the last ten years.

The houses here are dilapidated, and people live in very overcrowded homes, with a fair amount of violence and drunkenness. However, this is the best place for anyone wishing to lie low in Eastfair.

Racketeer landlords rent a bare room for a copper or two a day per person, and the town guard (Rakersmen) patrol the streets rarely unless there has been a recent bout of worse than usual street fighting.

To keep the newly forming slum-like conditions in check, orc and ogre brute squads smash any shantytowns or tent districts that occasionally form out of desperation. The more vocal troublemakers also get the occasional courtesy call from the brute squads— Nothing like an ogre to change your opinion in a philosophical debate.

Good churches and clerics tend to the unwashed masses as best as they can with the limited resources they are allowed, though they are often victims of the brute squads themselves. Some of the more charismatic clerics have made contacts within the guardsmen and/or authorities (gold is usually involved) and get some special consideration from that.

### The Orc Quarter

Part of the reason for the overcrowding in the rest of Old City is this district, which is walled off from the rest of the Old City (but still inside the Old City). The 3,000 troops of the Euroz Angry Army have settled into barracks here and have made it their own.

At the present, the town guard tries only to patrol the outskirts of this zone, but the orcs have taken to kidnapping ordinary people in Old City (the orcs have secret ways out of the district) and taking them back to their barracks for supper (as it were) or just to torture and kill them out of boredom.

The orcs also act as jailers in the city prison directly opposite Spider's Gate, which allows them some opportunity for indulging their sadism and brutishness.

The orc warlord, Snaggrip Grekk, swaggers about Eastfair as if he owned the place, and there are many humans in Eastfair who would like to have the general



population rise up and slaughter him and his men – no matter how many casualties might be suffered.

The situation is very tense, and Grenell knows that while the orc leaders want to be in Eastfair to have a very definite presence in Grenell's capital city, their soldiers often grow rebellious and irritable, needing the fresh stimulus of battle. Brawls and drunken rebellions when out in the countryside are happening with more and more frequency. Usually once the rampaging orcs run out of beer and/or troops are sent out to rein them in, everything settles down again.

A few orc ringleaders (and often their human officers) are severely punished, but the orc regiment is put right back to what ever it was doing before, as if nothing happened.

Though the city has a standard garrison of 3,000 orcs, usually about 1,000 of those orcs are farmed out to nearby garrisons or for special projects (usually as hard laborers).

In this adventure, such a regiment of 600 orcs work and garrison the Holim ruins east of Eastfair.

## THE PREVIOUS PLOT

### *COR3-17 When Orcs Attack*

In the beginning of this series, the characters were recruited by Afronindius the Holy Clerk of the Zilchus Western Company- Eastfair branch. This recruitment was facilitated by Clinorus Kradner proprietor of the Whirling Dervish and friend of the family. The characters were needed to discreetly investigate the ritual-like murder of Afronindius's son, Dantoni. This investigation was quickly interrupted by an incident involving rioting orcs among the countryside.

Finding themselves sidetracked with a mission to rescue the endangered orphanage, the characters come to realize that a twist of fate has brought them into contact with the perpetrators of the murder. Information soon comes to light that these two thugs are really just dupes and the real mastermind is still at large and even more the mystery.

### *COR4-09 A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!*

The characters have returned to Eastfair to continue the investigation into the forces behind the murder of Dantoni, son of the Holy Clerk.

As this adventure reveals, the dreaded Opaquer is actually a Fish Monger named Darrien 'The Knife'. He arrived in the city two years ago and purchased a fishmongery. He then fought quite hard and expensively to gain the contract rights to supply and deliver fish to feed the orc workers at the just started Holim ruins dig site. He then used his access to the site to journey there alone without his usual laborers. There is something there that interests him greatly.

Over the two years, Darrien has been collecting the hearts of various people, many of them minor clerics of different churches, to use the hearts in a undisclosed ritual. Dantoni was his last victim.

Dantoni was working as an Honest Deal Mediator, and Darrien, being paranoid about his secrets suspected

Dantoni might know too much. So using his two witless thugs, Darrien had the young cleric killed and his heart removed. After which, Darrien skipped town with most of his gear. He left his wererat cohort in charge of his fish mongery and the shrine to Vecna below it. Yes, Vecna. Darrien and his cohort are part of a cult of Vecna up to no good.

It's up to the characters in this adventure to track down the last days of Dantoni's life and find out what prompted someone to murder him, then follow that lead.

To add to the characters troubles, Darrien has hired a southern assassin called the Dawn Tiger to hunt them down. Luckily for the characters, a representative from the local Guild has reasons of her own to tip the characters off to the impending assassination.

## What's Happening in *COR4-14 Sympathy for the Baatezu*

Now that the characters stirred up the nest, the plot lines start to appear.

Eastfair is always a complicated web of intrigue and nefarious plots. The air around this scenario series is no different. The characters begin to understand that what they've gotten themselves involved in goes far beyond the simple murder of a young and inconsequential cleric of Zilchus. In addition, they start crossingpaths with other intrigues that have their own destinations and travelers.

Octreth the young Honest Deal Mediator cleric of Zilchus fell in love with a girl who sells flowers, as is the thing to do in spring. Perhaps that makes all of this Atroa's fault, so blame it on the Atroa.

Octreth needed to change his assigned nightshift for a day shift in order to court his new love before another moved in. His roommate, Dantoni, had such a day shift to trade, but the trade had to be kept secret to avoid the displeasure of their strict superiors.

Thus Dantoni met up with Darrien the Knife, a fishmonger by day, but a cleric of Vecna by night. Vecna clerics tend to be paranoid, and so poor Dantoni soon found himself as a target for murder. While his roommate was giving his heart away, Dantoni was having his cut from his torso.

The murder of Dantoni was investigated by Captain Falentia the Rakersmen. This was a half-hearted investigation to begin with, but then those superior to Falentia started to scheme now that an opportunity had fallen into their laps.

Dantoni's father is Holy Clerk Afrondious of the Zilchus Western Company. The Holy Clerk managed to pay for the required resurrection, but he feared for his son's continued life. The reasons for his murder was still a mystery—so Dantoni was sent to the far Baklunish west. Meanwhile, despite direct orders from his superior, Afrondious started to put out feelers for adventurers to do what the city guard seemed to be botching.

Many adventurers started to arrive in the city, all taking up the Holy Clerk's under-the-table charge. While they all did it for different reasons, none of them had any

solid clues to start with. That is until, some miles away outside the city, an orc finished downing his twentieth brew and took a sudden disliking to the nose of his human officer.

The resulting wave of orcs rampaging across the countryside brought those adventures into contact with a cleric of Pelor who required their immediate help in saving an orphanage stranded in the midst of the orcs.

At that orphanage was the one witness to the murder of Dantoni, as well as the two culprits trying to silence that witness. But as it turns out, the two thugs with bloody hands were just dupes for a mastermind—one who still needed to be identified and caught.

Word got around that the adventurers were on the trail of mastermind, one Darien the Knife. So he called in some favors and had an allied assassin come into Eastfair from down south to quickly silence the adventurers or at least cover Darien's escape from Eastfair.

The involvement of an assassin foreign to the city brought about the attention of the Eastfair Thieves guild, a particular faction called the Smiling Ones. But the Smiling Ones are not what they appear to be. Behind their snarling facades are hearts of gold (or silver at least).

The Smiling ones have their own mission within Eastfair, but the plight and quest of the adventurers piqued their interest, so they intervened mildly just to test the true intent of the adventurers. They were pleased, but have no intention of revealing their own mission or nature to the adventurers.

The Smiling Ones have their own rivals within the Eastfair ruling class. One who has his own cravings for dark power and goes about trying to gain it with cloak and dagger operations. This person is Prince Poxquand the Undying of House Naeleax. Such an item was obtained by a Zilchain agent within the Holim ruins. It would have been handed over as agreed, but the Smiling Ones decided to interfere. But in the end, no one came out with the item as it mysteriously disappeared.

The Zilchian agent served the Zilchus Western Company, and thus their order is blamed by the nemesis of the Smiling Ones. In rage, Prince Poxquand swore a blood vendetta, if his desired item did not turn up.

As this adventure opens, a certain powerful figure within the Eastfair ruling class is using the below-board actions of Holy Clerk Afrondious to strike a blow against the Zilchus Western Company. Certain members of the ruling class of Eastfair formed an agreement with Prince Poxquand to crush the Zilchian Order for fun and profit. As long as they have a motivated Prince Poxquand leading them, they cannot fail. If they lose his interest then they will be hard pressed to make victory profitable and easy.

The front man for this cadre of corruption is Captain Falentia of the Rakermen. He is preparing to arrest the Holy Clerk on the grounds of interference into an official investigation, in order to stir up the Order. But, Falentia has been given strict orders not to harm or hinder the adventurers involved. It seems someone on the evil side has also taken to keeping watch on the advancements of the adventurers and is interested in what they are

uncovering. This might have something to do with the adventurers having revealed a connection between Darien the Knife and the Holim ruins.

At the same time, the Smiling Ones are battling in their own secret war with Prince Poxquand and his minions. But they've lost one of their top agents to the ranks of the creatures of the nights. The Smiling Ones have urgent business to complete as their grand mission is so near to completion, but they need the help of the adventurers to settle the hash of their turned agent and retrieve a valuable item needed for the mission. More will be revealed on this in the next installment.

Thus star crossed adventurers have gotten themselves into more than they realize and the Holim Ruins hold not only the answers to some of those secrets, but it also holds the key to pacifying the rage of Prince Poxquand and saving the Zilchian Order. Once all this easy stuff is completed, the destinies of the adventurers start to get complicated.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**Darien the Knife/The Opaquer:** This flannan doesn't actually appear in this adventure, but he is referred to. He is the local leader of the Footman of the Spider Throne, a cult of Vecna. As of the last scenario (COR4-09) he has fled Eastfair.

**Clinorus Kradner:** This is the man who first approached the characters into taking on the quest to solve the murder of Dantoni and the mysteries behind it. He is also the proprietor of the Whirling Dervish Inn, where the characters are also invited to stay at when in Eastfair. Clinorus also has some secrets of his own (see Introduction for more details).

☛ **Clinorus Kradner:** Human Male (Flan-Oeridian) Brd4/Clr4 of Olidammara; CG; +11 Will Save; 46 hp; *undetectable alignment* always cast; speaks Ancient Baklunish (poorly).

**Holy Clerk Afrondious:** This man is the sergeant-major of the local temple of the Zilchus Western Company. While he'll never be an officer of the order, he's well respected and well connected. It was his son that was murdered and made the difficult decision to defy his Exchequer and involve adventurers. During this scenario, he is arrested and hauled off to the Eastfair prison with fate unknown.

☛ **Afrondious, Holy Clerk:** Human Male (Oeridian) Exp4/Clr4 of Zilchus; LN; 46 hp.

**Prince Poxquand the Undying of House Naeleax:** Though he has been mentioned, he has yet to make any personal appearances. He is not a man (creature? —ed) to be sought out easily, and cannot be during this adventure. He is known as a source of power but rather anti-social. Almost like an affectation, he's also known for his dark naga cohort—Slithers.

**Captain Falentia the Rakermen:** This power-grubbing control freak would be even more powerful if not for his addiction to rageahol. By day, he is one of several guard captains of the Rakermen that act as the city watch. Little Bakluni town falls within his

jurisdiction. By night, he is the ring-kissing servant of several powerful mover and shakers within Eastfair.

His masters have ordered him to take down the Zilchus Western Company and he's glad to do it because he has a petty grudge to settle with Afrondious. Then again, this is a very petty man. His temper is only kept in check by his fear of his masters.

☛ **Captain Falentia the Rakersmen:** Human Male (Oeridian) Ftr10; LE; 82 hp.

**Exchequer Davot Wirken:** The head of all the branches of Zilchus Western Company is the Chancellor of the Exchequer located at the main branch elsewhere. As per dogma, each branch head symbolizes the flow of money of that branch. Thus, they are titled Exchequer. Davot is such a branch head. He is not the head of the main temple of Zilchus in Eastfair (Though they are allied) nor is he high in the main church of Zilchus' hierarchy (those the Chancellor is). Davot is strict but not cruel. He does what his beliefs guide him to do.

In this adventure, Davot is not ready cash out for his foes. While he certainly does desire an outcome that would mean minimal loss for all, he's still prepared to give them a run for their money. He has contingency plans should his foes try to force him into a merger with a knife. At that point, the adventurers are starting to look like a safe investment instead of the risky one they were.

☛ **Exchequer Davot Wirken:** Male human (Suel-Oeridian) Clr12 of Zilchus; hp 71.

**Octreth Acting/In Training Holy Clerk:** When the characters first met Octreth, he was just a minor Honest Deal Mediator. But now, Afronidious has taken him under his wing to train him as a Holy Clerk. This gives the young cleric more resources now that he plans to marry and start a family.

But as this adventure starts, Octreth is being thrown into the big chair sooner than he'd like. With Afronidious being carried away, it's going to fall on Octreth's shoulders to carry the fiscal and clerical burden's of the office of the Holy Clerk. Too bad he's not fully trained. But as the scriptures of Money Counter says, "Sometimes you must throw your new coins into a tub of water, just to see what they're made of".

☛ **Octreth:** Male human (Suel-Oeridian) Clr4 of Zilchus; hp 27.

**Vault Keeper:** Not every servant of the Money Counter is human, or even humanoid. As other religions have sacred sites and god-sent protectors, so does the Money Counter. The main Vault of a temple of Zilchus a sacred place indeed. It is magically augmented and protected (some more than others) and a few even have special keepers. Known only by his title, this Axiomatic Guardian Naga has no sense of humor, only devout to the rituals and intent of his god. While he could certainly use a touch of humility, he does not have any actual malice, only getting angry when his books are out of order.

Few are granted an audience with the Vault Keeper (he's not a spectacle to gawk at) as he spends almost all of his time within the magical main vault. In this adventure though, influence is used to make an exception but it also makes the Vault Keeper grumpy.

It should be noted that the Vault Keeper is not a high enough ranking servant to qualify for 'Meeting an Agent of One's god' for the purposes of the Contemplative prestige class.

☛ **Vault Keeper:** Male Axiomatic Guardian Naga; Clr5 of Zilchus; LN.

**Aerak:** This youth is another tragic tale from the interior of Eastfair. He has yet to buy a sword, steal a horse or try to run, but it could just be a matter of time. For now though, he's content to nurture his ill-gotten kitten.

☛ **Aerak:** Male human (Oeridian); CG; hp 1; Com1.

**Malaya the Sub-Boss:** She came to Eastfair ten long years ago with her companions. She was bright eyed and full of hope and expectation about changing the ways of Eastfair from the inside. She trusted her leader completely and imitated him in their disguise as evil Guilders. A lot has changed in ten years. Now its up to her to complete her long mission and the stress and casualties are starting to mount, though a lesser would have cracked, and have. But soon it shall all pay off.

The characters first probably encounter Malaya when she came to warn them about an assassin on their tail in COR4-09.

☛ **Malaya:** Female human (Suel) Ftr6/Rog4; CG.

**Ecnal Tugim:** The second in command of the Eastfair gang—the barons of the blades. He's a cleric of Kelanen, but he's also LN, which makes him a bit of a sore point among the gang. Though he's considered a bit of a jerk (because of his rigidity) the gang leader (also a cleric of the Lord of Swords) feels he has potential and can be reformed.

It was Ecnal that led the counter attack against the vampire horde that attacked his gang's arena hideout. As long as the characters tow the line, they'll get on fine with Ecnal.

☛ **Ecnal Tugim:** Male human (oeridian) Ftr1/Clr6 of Kelanen; LN.

**Stylus Rel:** This is the gang leader of the Barons of the Blades. He's a true blue neutral cleric of Kelanen (the way they're supposed to be). He likes to quote scripture and swing sword. He also leads the sect of Kelanen that believes their god has some mortal connection to Eastfair or the area around it. This view is not shared by other Kelanenites, but the sect is slowly growing and spreading with each new convert.

With the shrine as proof, Stylus is always looking for worthy converts. For those that can prove that worth, he'll have both an atonment spell and access to a tattoo made from the shrine oil and an advanced holy symbol.

☛ **Stylus Rel:** Male human (Oeridian) Ftr3/Clr9 of Kelanen; N.

**Jirwelt:** Not to long ago this man was a loving and joyful cleric of Lirr. He sung her praises and brought a little bit of guidance to every lost soul he encountered within the mean streets of Eastfair. But that was then and this is now. He's discarded his instrument of wood and taken up one of bleeding flesh. He's been turned to evil as a minion of the undead. Now he must be stopped before he can do his soul any more a disfavour. Oh, and he has some stuff that his ex-companions need, so have at him.

**Gryinanquil:** Not a lot can be said about this Pit Fiend—it's a secret. He's been trapped within his shadow prison for some time. He had a plan to escape but it was foiled when his would-be accomplices backstabbed him and stole his stuff. Now, he just wants a little pay back and the characters are going to get it for him, whether they know it or not.

**The Herzog:** For those wondering, this is the title Overking Greneel's is most commonly called within his realm. It's his title before he claimed the North Province to be its own kingdom.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The characters once again return to (or never left) the Whirling Dervish as they prepare for an eventual trip to the Holim ruins. But first, a message is passed to them that the Guilders need to talk to the characters deep within the Old City. Clothes are provided for the trip.

### Encounter 1: The Cost of Doing Business

If the characters decide to go visit their good friend the Holy Clerk, they find that he's being arrested. Here the characters interact with a representative of one of the evil factions vying against them. They also talk with the man in charge of this branch of the Zilchus Western Company. From him, they receive a quest to save the Order and perhaps themselves in the process. Interested characters stick around to deal with the Vault Keeper and cash in their Money Counter Notes (MCNs).

### Encounter 2: Of Kittens and Men

Traveling to the slums of the Old City, the characters are using the cover of looking to buy kittens (smiling ones at that) to clandestinely meet up with members of the Eastfair Thieves Guild. Once the meeting has commenced, the characters have a chance to get yet another quest, this one to save the Guilders, and possibly themselves in the process (a lot of that going around I hear). They just have to bring back someone's head and a gold half circle.

### Encounter 3: First Blood

What do you get when you take a gang of crazy kelanenites and a horde of vampires and put them in an arena? I don't know, but tell me when you find out. Because this is where the characters are heading in order to track the head and golden trinket they've been sent after. They just have to go past the Shrine of Kelanen and maybe take a dip. To top it all off, they get the chance to convert by the sword.

### Encounter 4: Shedding Some Light

Once the characters kill some vampires, taken some heads, and returned the stolen golden trinket, the Guilders are ready to answer some questions. Now the characters learn just enough information to endanger

themselves. Plus, they now have a sure way into the orc infested Holim ruins.

### Encounter 5: Holim Ruins

There are several ways in but only two ways out—dead or alive. The characters gain access to the supply depot of the Fishmongery where a secret door can be found leading to a crypt. As well, curious characters wander around asking questions trying to put the pieces together.

### Encounter 6: The Crypt of Shadow

This leads to several chambers. The chamber the characters are most likely to interact with is the one filled with shadow asps, shadows, corpses and a magical lock device that unseals another chamber.

### Encounter 7: A Baatezu Put Aside

The PCs have a long, revealing talk with a pit fiend, trapped in the Plane of Shadow, and disguised like a human. The PCs learn the answers to many of the questions encountered in this series of adventures.

### Encounter 8: Like a Bat Out of Baator

Remember when the guy from the fishing village tried to tell you about a black flying thing in the night sky? Well, turns out he was sober after all. The characters have the choice of either trying to fight it in its shadow pocket lair (to their disadvantage) or using special trinkets to lure it outside for a more even battleground. The good news is, that the shadow dire bat has in its belly some of the quest items the characters need.

### Conclusion

It's time to wrap up all the side quests. Do you have the book to save the Zilchians? Do you have the head of the shadow bat to please the Kelanenites? What about the head of the Herzog? All these can be cashed in (or kept) to gain cash and prizes.

## REMINDER TO THE DM

In this adventure, the box text represents the in-game word usage of the NPCs when referring to the names of gods. Due to the reverence (and sometimes fear) of these most divine and powerful beings in the North Kingdom, the NPCs do not use the true names of the gods in vain during idle conversation. Only when the god's power is truly being invoked (though not necessarily by a spell) is the true name used. It's a firm belief that to use the gods' true name invokes that being's attention.

For instance, when the NPCs in this scenario wish to refer to Nurell, they say, "The Reaper," in an attempt to avoid his attention. The same is true for all gods both good and evil.

For reference refer to Zilchus as "The Money Changer"; Hextor as "The Herald of Hell" or "The Scourge of Battle"; Fharlanghn as "The Dweller (on the horizon)"; Pelor as "The Shining One"; Zodal as "The Gentle Hand";

Vecna as the 'The Whispered One'. Though these gods have other names, these are what they are most commonly known as in and around Eastfair.

To give some examples of blessings and curses, to say, "Fharlanghn Rules the Roads" is a blessing, invoking the god's attention. To say "Zilchus be poor" is profanity.

## IMPORTANT NOTE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The text of this adventure in many of the encounters lists example questions that trigger certain responses from the NPCs. These are by no means meant to be what the players must ask verbatim. As the Dungeon Master, you will need to judge the intent of the question and decide if it's reasonable to trigger the listed response. The intent of this method is to stop NPCs from blurting out all they know, regardless of the context, in an adventure that is designed to be a mystery investigation (of sorts).

In addition, there is much information that can be passed on to inquisitive characters. Not all of this information is vital in the successful completion of this adventure, but much of it gives insight into the Series as a whole. For players that like to cut to the chase, they can do so, provided they ask the right line of questions. For players that like to absorb the whole experience, that has been provided as well. You should not read all the material if the characters are not asking for it or seem stuck. In addition, different parties getting different topics of non-crucial background information makes for varied adventure play.

## INTRODUCTION

**Note:** For characters (and especially entire parties) that did not participate in the previous adventures in this series (*COR3-17 When Orcs Attack* and/or *COR4-09 A Tiger? In Ahlissa?!*), there is a small alternative/supplementary introduction after this encounter, but it still loops back to this primary one requiring some adlibbing on the Dungeon Master's part depending on the situation.

*Welcome back to Eastfair, The Granite City.*

*Clinorus Kradner, the proprietor of the Whirling Dervish says someone needs to see you, offering a gift to go along with the invitation.*

*Located in among the Streets of Delight in the New City, you make your way to the Whirling Dervish around 10 in the morning.*

*The friendly and welcoming atmosphere of this lifts away the shroud of oppression and fear that hangs over the rest of the city.*

### The Whirling Dervish

Nested in the Streets of Delight, the Whirling Dervish is a hostelry offering entertainments marginally less depraved, and more varied, than most establishments around it.

The proprietor, Clinorus Kradner, dresses in Baklunish robes and a turban—although he's never ventured west of Eastfair in his life. It's obvious that Clinorus dresses in what he believes to be an accurate portrayal of Baklunish style. Clinorus plays this role to the hilt, added with a range of spells and stories that lend an air of the "exotic west."

When the characters enter the Whirling Dervish, read or paraphrase the following:

*"Greetings my infidel friends! I trust your visit here has not interrupted your attention in other ventures? As with last time, I have two matters to bring to your attention. The first is gifts, which await you in your suite. The second is an invitation for an urgent meeting from certain gentlemen who you have caught the eye of," says Clinorus as he seats himself at the secluded table.*

Clinorus is eager to discuss the events surrounding his summoning of the characters. A private table suitable for such discussion, yet still giving a good vantage point over the rest of the bar is reserved at the far end of the main room.

☞ **Clinorus Kradner:** Human Male (Flan-Oeridian) Brd4/Clr4 of Olidammara; CG; +11 Will Save; 46 hp; *undetected alignment* always cast; Speaks Ancient Baklunish (but very poorly).

The Whirling Dervish offers a number of entertainers. His dancers are the best trained in Eastfair. His other attractions include "Kumbli, the strongest man living outside Ekbir," and boas from Hepmonaland trained to curl lazily out of their wicker baskets when Clinorus plays a conch pipe. To round this all off, vividly colored liqueurs of brain numbing potency, dice game tables, and the like.

Clinorus is, in fact, a cleric of Olidammara (Clr4), with a strong tendency to good alignment. He is always interested in new visitors among his clientele, and if he spots like-minded people he goes out of his way to give them some tips on who, what, and where to avoid within Eastfair.

Clinorus deals with the Zilchus Western Company who supplies him with perishables from the Baklunish West. He is also good friends with Dantoni and would often regale him with wild stories of the west (though these are often rehashed stories Clinorus hears from more senior Zilchus Western Company members). As a friend of the family, the Holy Clerk agreed to use Clinorus as a middleman in dealings with the adventurers on the case. Clinorus is currently dealing with problems due to a sub sect of the local Thieves Guild, though he keeps this a secret. Clinorus offers the PCs his best suite and a table in the bar just for them out of appreciation for past efforts.

### The Invitation

Clinorus has an invitation to pass on to the characters, as well as a packaged gift for each character. These gifts are tailored for each individual character and await them on their assigned beds upstairs.

After a bit of small talk, Clinorus discusses the invitation. Read or paraphrase the following:

***"The invitation for you is again a ...sensitive matter. Certain gentlemen of a discouraged profession request your presence within the Old City. I believe it you should hear what they have to say."***

- Clinorus refers to a certain faction of the local Thieves Guild that he has had friendly dealings with in the past. This faction is lead by Malaya (the same female guildier that the characters may have encountered in their previous outing in Eastfair).
- Clinorus vouches that his associates mean no harm to the characters.
- Due to the sensitive nature dealing with the guild and the heavy handedness of the authorities, Clinorus is reluctant to reveal details, such as names, pasts or organizational structure (except where noted).
- Malaya approached Clinorus and informed him of the need for a confidential meeting with the characters. She is impressed with their handling of themselves and she needs some help from those outside of the goings on in this city.
- The meeting takes place at #5 Cobblestone Lane, a small, private residence in the heart of the Old City. Clinorus gives directions starting at the Spider's Gate. When the characters arrive, they need to say they are there to inspect the kittens for sale and are interested in smiling ones in particular.
- Clinorus recommends that the characters participate in this meeting and that they do it as soon as possible.

If the characters ask about the gifts, read or paraphrase the following:

***"Your gifts await each of you up in your suite. They are from the gentlemen of the Old City, and are intended to make your travels into that section of the city easier." Clinorus shakes his head as if suddenly recalling something. "My friends, I almost forgot. The Holy Clerk Afronidious has been hassled several times lately by the authorities over your involvement. It might be a good idea to speak with him as soon as you can. Just be careful of the authorities, they are more powerful than you think."***

- Afronidious has been reasonably patient with the progress on his son's murder investigation. He has managed to make few waves within the city bureaucracy and feels that the powers of the city may leave him be, as well as the Zilchus Western Company. It wasn't easy working outside the 'law' of the land, but it seems to have been all worth it (you adventurers are proof of that). That is until recently when the heat was suddenly turned up on him. That Rakersmen Falentia is back with a vengeance.

- Small groups of adventurers still filter in from time to time, all of who heard of the Holy Clerk's request for discreet help (mostly from other Holy Clerks, or from fellow adventurers). Some agree to help despite a lack of reward (as it has already been paid out to you), other say they may try to seek out others who are already on the mission, and most others just quietly leave forsaking for their own reasons. All those who wish to help my friend Afronidious are welcome at the Whirling Dervish.

If the characters ask any questions relating to gangs or activity within the old city, read or paraphrase the following:

- "Organized violent activity within the Old City has been mute of late, probably due to the 'Stompen Toms' gang being annihilated and their bodies put on display."
- "Prince Poxquand the Undying (of House Naelax) and his minions caused an uproar in the west end of the Old City. His minions destroyed several homes and killed several Rakersmen. The whole situation has been hushed up and swept off the docket. I wish they would stay in the New City and leave the suffering to experts."
- "There is very little noticeable Guild activity outside of the Old City and the authorities strive to keep it that way."
- "It is rumored that most, if not all, of the various small time gangs of the Old City are connected to the Guild. Though personally, I suspect the Guild is far less organized than it is given credit for. Rival factions abound, with some rather large differences in social and political outlooks."
- "Even with a high turnover rate for criminals within the Old City, the abhorrent conditions of poverty, overcrowding and enforced ignorance all but force the population of the slums into the criminal lifestyle. This provides a steady stream of new recruits into the gangs and the Guild."

If the PCs ask Clinorus to recount what he imparted to them the last time (During COR4-09), he tells them:

- The Holy Clerk of the Zilchus Western Company wishes to meet the characters at the Spice of Life Tavern at noon.
- Due to the sensitive nature of the politics behind the church of Zilchus and the government, and the less than above board nature of this investigation, Afronidious cannot afford to meet or discuss this business within the Zilchus Western Company compound. His lunch and dinner hour are far more suited for clandestine meetings.
- Afronidious had some documents to hand over, but Clinorus does not know the details of their contents, other than that they relate to records of Dantoni's last few days before his murder.
- As a small blessing, the ritual killings ceased since Dantoni and the character's apprehension of the two thug minions.

If Clinorus is asked to recount what he imparted to the characters the first time they investigated (During COR3-17), he tells them:

- Five days before he first talked to the characters, a young friend Dantoni, a cleric of the Money Counter and acolyte of the Zilchus Western Company, was murdered.
- The murder happened after Dantoni was on his way back home (the Zilchus Western Company compound) in the streets of the Merchant Quarter. He was somewhat drunk. His heart was cut out in a ritualistic fashion and the heart is still missing.
- Dantoni visited him often to be regaled of stories of the far west.
- The Zilchus Western Company is a trading organization run by an order of Zilchus Clerics.
- Thankfully, Dantoni was *resurrected*, but it took all the sums of money that his father and his friends (including a gift from Clinorus himself) could put together.
- The authorities and the Church of Zilchus are at a loss to figure out the culprits or even a motive. Dantoni only remembers being hit on the head and carried into an alleyway by two men before he completely blacked out. The authorities declared it a random murder and the Church of Zilchus is complaining through formal channels to little results.
- Dantoni's father, Afronidious the Holy Clerk for the Zilchus Western Company compound here in the city, suspects it maybe more than just a random murder. He suspects cult activity (which there is a fair amount of) and fears that they may strike again.
- Dantoni has been sent off west to recuperate and to stay protected if who ever killed him wants to take a second shot.

### The Bundles of Gifts

When the characters go to their suites, they find a bundle on each of their beds. Each bundle is a collection of outer garments tailor to fit the approximate size and build of the character. The clothing is designed to make the wearer look like a local to the Old City, yet functional enough that the wearer can discard it (as a standard action) to avoid hampering physical actions (such as combat). The required badges signifying that the wearer is allowed to enter and exit via the Spider's Gate during the day are sewn on the sleeves and vests.

In addition, the garments hold the badge that allows for the wearer to carry weapons (and armor) for personal protection within the Old Cit. These badges do not allow the wearer to enter or exit the Old City during the night. Nor does it guarantee them the right to pass. A city guard can still deny them passage if he so wishes (but rarely do they bother to involve themselves unless provoked, seeing the badge is usually enough).

**Development:** The characters have some choice in their next location to visit. They can stop in to visit the Holy Clerk (Encounter 1) or they can take advantage of

the daytime hours and pass through the Spider's Gate to meet with the Guild within the Old City (Encounter 2). There is no time limit present.

## ENCOUNTER 1: THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

### Part A: No Good Deed...

*It takes twenty minutes to reach the Exotic Merchant Quarter, also known as "Little Bakluni Town."*

*On the far side of the square are the walls of the Zilchus Western Company compound, and on this side, the Spice of Life Tavern. The smell of exotic dishes and spices once again waft from the humble looking tavern.*

*Near the center of the square, a commotion has attracted a crowd. Several mounted soldiers flank a core of heavy infantry in the process of an arrest. The lone cleric of Zilchus at the center of attention is giving little resistance.*

The cleric is Afronidious, Holy Clerk of the Eastfair branch of the Zilchus Western Company. He was strolling to the Spice of Life Tavern when the authorities sprang an ambush.

The men on horseback are a squadron of low ranking Hextorian cavalry, on loan to the town guard. The heavy infantry are Rakersmen lead by Captain Falentia, the same officer who ran the original official investigation into the murder of Afronindious's son, Dantoni. They are concerned only with bringing Afronindious to justice—dead or alive.

Afronidious vows not to let these cruel butchers an excuse to do more harm. He knows that to resist under these circumstances would only bring greater harm to his friends and his clerical Order. While he still lives; there is still hope for a reprieve via whichever medium, be it political or heroic.

Assuming the characters join the crowd of spectators witnessing the arrest, they see that Afronidious surrendered his hands to metal bindings (to limit spell casting) as well as had his weapon taken away. A nearby caged wagon awaits his escorted entry. Even while Captain Falentia booms out the prepared edicts, Afronidious scans the crowd for sympathetic eyes, specifically those of any of his adventurer co-conspirators. A slight shake of the head might be all he has to ward off any foolish rescue attempts.

*With metal shackles securing his hands, Afronidious of the Zilchus Western Company is being prepared for confinement in a nearby caged wagon. The leader of the soldiers booms loudly, reading from an unrolled scroll. "On the behalf of His Righteous and Transcendent Majesty, the Overking of Northern Aerdy, Grennell I, Grand Prince of House Naelex; through the will of the Judicial Council of Eastfair and delivered by their servant Captain Falentia the Rakersmen; You, Afronidious Holy Clerk of the Zilchus Western Company are charged with conspiracy and interference*



*with an official investigation. You shall be taken into custody while the need for broader charges is investigated and the depths of social disturbance sounded. Take him away."*

Afronidious is bound, and locked into the wagon. The crowd presses in closer, still wary of the soldiers, but they want to get a good look at this provided spectacle. It's from the line of this crowd (ten feet or so from the wagon) that the characters can take the opportunity to communicate with the Holy Clerk.

Screened by the jeering and gasping crowd, the guarding soldiers do not have much leverage to stop a halting conversation (or magical connections like *detect thoughts*). Once Afronidious makes contact with one or more of the characters, he has the following information to relay to them (be it through gestures, short sentences, facial expressions or magic).

#### Afronidious' Message

It is important to convey to the characters that discretion is paramount. Afronidious knows what could happen if the characters act out. If the characters start to mount an attack or rescue, read or paraphrase the following:

*"Cease my friends. Do not endanger yourselves. I beg of you, heed this wise old man this day." Afronidious glances around quickly and leans towards the bars. "The Vault! Seek the humblest jar to be last sorted from my duties. All will be answered if you do this."*

☞ **Afronidious, Holy Clerk:** Human Male (Oeridian)  
Exp4/Clr4 of Zilchus; LN; 46 hp.

Once Afronidious says all he needs to say, half of the soldiers split off and escort the wagon to the Eastfair Prison on the other side of the Spiders Gate. The remaining troops stay under the command of Captain Falentia, who discusses the events with an irate Exchequer Davot Wirken, the head of this branch of the Zilchus Western Company).

If the PCs make an effort to overhear the conversation between Captain Flauntier and Exchequer Davot Wirken, a Listen check (DC 15) allows them to get close enough to hear without drawing attention.

Read or paraphrase the following.

*"This is an outrage!" screams Wirken. "This merchant company is a respected economic group for this city. I shall lodge a complaint in tandem with our main temple over the treatment of one of our innocent clerics."*

*"I operate under the blessings of the Herzog and the Judicial Council," says Captain Falentia. "If you so much as raise an eyebrow the wrong way towards me, I'll have my troops embargo your compound and arrest any of your Order found in the streets. Any who resist arrest shall be slain. Then, if you still don't cooperate, I'll stand back and watch the Herzog's Own Regiment sack your*

*lofty compound. I'm anxious to see if those peacock troopers of yours die as pretty as they march."*

The Exchequer takes a moment to regain his composure. "Surely there is some sort of arrangement to end this matter. There is no need for bloodshed over what is clearly a misunderstanding," he says.

*"No deal," says Flauntier. "There's more at work here than you realize. I own these streets—the bread, the butter and the muck. I decide who bakes, who churns and who rakes. Your man was warned to leave this investigation to me, but he couldn't just leave it alone. He had to hire outsiders, sell swords, and muck rakers of his own."*

*"This isn't over," seethes the Exchequer. "My Order will, of course, cooperate fully with your investigation, if only to vindicate our man and to make an investment in good will."*

With that, the two men go about their separate business. Falentia stays about the square a little longer, while Wirken returns to the Zilchus Western Company compound.

**Development:** If the characters attempt to free Afronidious, it results in dire consequences for everyone involved. The NPCs attack the characters, additional patrols (as listed in the city description) would start to arrive in record time (one every minute)—and that is just the immediate results. The bloodshed would escalate throughout the city. By the end of the day, elite troops overrun the Zilchus Western Company would be over run by elite troops.

#### Part B: Oh Captain, My Evil Captain

The PCs may approach Captain Falentia to ask him questions. Speaking with the Captain is not too difficult—a Diplomacy check (DC 12) is enough to grant an audience.

Falentia has been ordered to avoid punishing the adventures for talking with Afronidious. Still, he's tense and irritated by the PCs presence. A Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals that he's holding back in his dealings with the PCs. However, if the PCs attack Falentia, he and his soldiers fight back.

If the PCs talk to Captain Falentia, read or paraphrase the following:

*"Muck Rakers. You reek of it. I have half a mind to throw you back into the privy you crawled out of. These are my streets, don't you ever forget that."*

Described below are some of the typical questions that the PCs may ask.

*"Surely we can come to some sort of arrangement of services?"*

*"I don't make deals! You would be wise to forget you've ever even heard of the Zilchus Western Company."*

**Note:** He slips when saying this. A Sense Motive check (DC 20) indicates that Falentia meant to say Afronidious instead of the Order he belongs to.

**“Where are you taking the Holy Clerk?”**

*“He is being taken to the Eastfair Prison where he stays until it is decided he may leave, in what ever condition we find suitable.”*

**“What are the charges?”**

*“Conspiracy and interference with an official investigation. That’s just for starters. We shall see what the investigation turns up and how far his nefarious web stretches.”*

**“How much are his fines?”**

*“There are currently no fines to be paid. This is a special investigation and he remains imprisoned until the rightful authorities determine it.”*

**“Are we in trouble as the ones he hired?”**

*“I’m feeling merciful. I’ll consider you to be ignorant dupes, foolish children who got lost along the way. Lets hope the next time our paths cross, you’ve matured to the harsh realities of this world.”*

**Note:** A Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals that he’s lying and trying to keep his temper.

**Development:** Captain Falentia is not prepared to answer much more than what’s listed above. In fact, he’ll leave the square with his troops (to save face) under the pretext that he’s done there. The PCs can know venture to the Zilchus Western Company or the Spice of Life Tavern.

☛ **Captain Falentia the Rakersmen:** Human Male (Oeridian) Ftr10; LE; 82 hp.

☛ **Rakersmen Sgt:** Human Male (Oeridian) Ftr3; LE; 28 hp.

☛ **Rakersmen(12):** Human Male (Oeridian) War2; LE, NE; 17 hp each.

☛ **Scourge Chaplin:** Human Male (Flan-Oeridian) Ftr3/Clr5; LE; 53 hp; mount on heavy warhorse.

☛ **Heavy Calvary(6):** Human Male (Oeridian) Ftr5; LE; 17 hp each; mount on heavy warhorses.

### Part C: Exploring the Buildings

There are two important locations here in the square—the Zilchus Western Company compound and the Spice of Life Tavern. Both are located in the heart of the Merchant Quarter.

#### The Merchant Quarter

The Merchant Quarter contains the better markets of Eastfair and the homes of many ordinary merchants. This is also home to an enclave of merchants who specialize in exotic goods: silks, spices, peppers, yarpick nuts, galda fruit, rare herbs, alchemical goods, tropical hardwood furnishings, Ketite carpets, and all manner of unusual items.

The shops are poorly stocked due to the looming war and trade interference in the Baklunish West, and the

merchants often gather at The Spice of Life, a noisy tavern run by a Ketite expatriate named Sumdaa Al’Firs. The walled compound of the Zilchus Western Company sits nearby.

☛ **Sumdaa Al’Firs:** Human Male (Baklunish-Oeridian); Com8; N; 20 hp.

#### The Spice of Life Tavern

When the PCs enter the compound of the Spice of Life Tavern, read or paraphrase the following:

*The smell of exotic dishes and rich flavorful spices waft over you as you open the door. The sounds of non-angry arguments and intense discussions in both common and Baklunish tongues pervade the air. A man with a Ketite accent asks you if you are here for a meal and offers to seat you.*

The Ketite is Sumdaa Al’Firs, owner of the tavern.

The patrons of the tavern witnessed the arrest in the square and all know the Holy Clerk. Despite the constant concern of being reported to the authorities, the various conversations turn to griping and the exchange of wild rumors. Listening in to the gossip (no Listen check required) of the patrons reveals the following conversation:

*“This sudden interest in the Zilchus Western Company by the cronies of the Herzog is most unsettling. I’ve heard that the Herzog has a secret plan in action to acquire himself something important hidden away back in Ket. By putting a noose around the Western Company, he uses them to infiltrate and accomplish his dastardly campaign. Of course most roll their eyes at this, claiming that there is better odds of Ket and Keoland forming a sudden alliance then a Herzog campaign in the far west.”*

*“I’ve heard that too. Something old, something lost, Oeridian in nature. Scares the Baator out of me to even think about.”*

*“You’ve got it all wrong. This is a plot to rid all other religions from the city. First the Money Counter, then the seasonal cults, and soon those Shining Ones! Machinations of a tyrannical mind...”*

*“I hear all about a personal score between Afronidious and Prince Poxquand the Undying from before the Greyhawk war. I think they used to be good friends, or at least friendly acquaintances, or at the very least, Afronidious did some bookkeeping for the Prince’s family.”*

Once the PCs hear this conversation, there is nothing else of interest here. You should let them know that the Zilchus Western Company still awaits.

#### Zilchus Western Company

When the PCs enter the compound of the Zilchus Western Company, read or paraphrase the following:

*This small compound sits on the far side of the square in an area known as "Little Baklunitown." The main gates are open, though the walls are heavily patrolled by feather-plumed, richly dressed pikeman common to the orthodox Zilchus. The guards look wary and suspicious, but do not stop anyone entering the gate. A sign posted next to the gate, written in both old Oeridian and Common proclaims: "The Zilchus Western Company."*

This is where Exchequer Davot Wirken went back to after his encounter with Captain Falentia. He's sent out runners to order the members of the Order either to return to the compound or lay low while matters are settled.

As long as the characters are polite and come up with a reasonable cause for entering the compound (such as to invoke a favor with the order or speak with someone specific, such as the Exchequer), then they may do so. The guards do not stop them, but eye the suspiciously.

Once the PCs enter the compound, read or paraphrase the following:

*The courtyard is filled with wagons and horses. Along the sides of the walls are small warehouses, offices and living quarters. At the far end of the compound is the temple itself.*

*Guards wearing decorated half-plate and sporting halberds line the entrance to the Temple. They wear a rather lavish livery of expensive materials.*

If the characters approach the temple entrance gate read the following:

*The temple's thick and sturdy looking double doors stand open. Above them, written in both old Oeridian and Common are the words, "Pray within my halls those who desire exchange."*

The double doors lead to the main chamber for public worship. This is where those dealing with the Zilchus Western Company go to give praise and thanks to Zilchus, or to meet with one of the clerics of the Order to arrange business matters. All the offices and vaults are secure within the temple.

This particular small temple is part of the Zilchus Western Company, an Order formed for the organization of trade investors and underwriters dealing in the Baklunish west. They also (for a fee) keep an eye on the interests of others in the western lands, for those as far away as the old Great Kingdom.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*Two soldiers flank the large ornate double doors leading into the Prayer Hall. An ornate clay vase, brimming with coins of different denominations, sits a few feet past doorway. A skinny blonde youth, wearing ill-fitting plate mail and the holy symbol of Zilchus about his neck, sits in a throne-like chair behind a heavy oak desk. The desk is covered with weights, measures, and scrolls. He stops his scribbling and looks at you with a smile.*

*"Greetings patrons, what business do you have with the servants of the Money Counter?" he says. Upon closer inspection, his smile turns to a frown. "It's you! This is a most terrible time for you to return. They arrested the Holy Clerk and the Exchequer is recalling all our members back. I fear a last stand if a deal is not made. Please, come in. But first, leave an offering in the urn to show your respect to Zilchus and this temple."*

This is Octreth, the new trainee for the Holy Clerk position—the PCs met him in a previous installment of this series. He's the new trainee for the Holy Clerk position, and is filling in for Afronidious during this troubled time. Octreth is friendly and willing to help out the characters, due to their previous relationship.

A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10) reveals that it's a grave insult not to leave an offering to enter the temple. that they must drop a coin to enter. Octreth politely refuses entrance to any PC that does not leave anything.

Once the PCs pay their offering and enter inside, he warms up considerably. Described below are some typical questions and answers that should come up during the conversation with Octreth.

**"How have you been?"**

*"These are dark days indeed. I wish I had something meaningful to tell you, but I'm shamefully in the dark. I feel like I should have learned more in my new position, been more observant, more reliable, but alas I know little of recent events."*

**"Are you ready for battle?"**

*"I must admit that I've had very little combat experience. I've trained with the church battle master, and drilled briefly with the troopers. But when it comes time to defend this compound and my Order, I'll fight till the end."*

**"Why was Afronidious arrested?"**

*"Well, it's because of his recruitment of you. He was warned to leave the investigation into Dantoni's murder in the hands of the 'proper' authorities, but he did what he did. Despite what's happening now, I for one still feel he did the right thing. You have done wonders compared to what passes for law and order around here. May Zilchus fill your purses."*

**"Is there a hidden agenda behind the arrest?"**

*"That's very possible. Everyone knows that politics in this city is a blood sport. The senior clerics would understand it far better me, but putting a strangle hold on our Order would give the government leverage on the main church of the Money Counter in Eastfair."*

**"The Holy Clerk told us: 'The Vault! Seek the humblest jar to be last sorted from my duties.' Does that mean anything to you?"** *"Well he probably means the Main Vault below this temple. It's our main storage area, a very sacred site to us, only properly ordained clerics may enter*

*it. As for a Jar, well, the coin jar is the only Jar this job deals with.*

***"Where do the jars of assorted coins go?"***

*"The jar is taken to the Vault, where the Vault Keeper sanctifies the offerings with ritual and stores them. I have not learned the details of the ritual. I'm not even ranked enough to enter the vault—which better change soon if I'm going to be the acting Holy Clerk. Afronidious had to access the Vault all the time to perform his duties."*

***"May we see someone in charge? Like the Exchequer?"***

*"Of course. I'll fetch him right now."*

☛ **Octreth:** Male human (Suel-Oeridian) Clr4 of Zilchus; hp 27;

### **Part D: The Exchequer**

Octreth brings the characters to a private meeting chamber where they await the arrival of the local head of the Order, the Exchequer. Read or paraphrase the following:

***The door to the private lounge opens and an older man comes in. A scowl darkens his face. You recognize him as the same man that exchanged words with Captain Falentia in the square. "Greetings," He says pensively. "I am Exchequer Davot Wirken, the head local chapter of the Zilchus Western Company. I want to make it clear that my anger is not directed towards you. This entire situation is deplorable. If venom escapes from my tongue, it is because of that, and I apologize in advance," he says through clenched teeth.***

The Exchequer's anger is of course towards the aggressive nature of the city authorities and their corruption that feeds it. He knows that his compound and the people in his charge are in great danger. He knows full well that the arresting of the Holy Clerk is just a pretense to put him in a vulnerable position and understands that a certain member of the city council wants misguided vengeance (see below).

He's aware of the relationship between the adventurers and the Holy Clerk. Under more normal circumstances, he would never reveal to the likes of the party what he does. Keep in mind, that while he does not hate the characters, he does see them as meddlers in what is normally a smooth running machine.

Described below are typical questions and answers that may occur during the PCs conversation with the Exchequer. Read or paraphrase the following:

***"What is going on here?"***

*"Evil and tyranny. They refuse a fair deal, always wanting the lion's share. They demand rights and privileges for themselves, but would refuse and cheat them from others. I am honor bound by my beliefs and duty as to what I may tell you. But because you are catalysts in this accursed affair, I'll tell you what I can."*

***"You mean we're to blame?"***

*"I am not pleased with the involvement of adventurers in this complicated affair. I harbor no malice towards you,*

*but this is exactly what I wanted to avoid when I first forbade Afronidious from using the Order for anything but official channels. His emotion got the better of him. Now because of that misstep in this strategic game of power, we may lose everything."*

***"You didn't actually say what's going on"*** *"As I said, I'm limited to what I may tell you and in the forms that I may tell it to you in. Suffice it to say, a powerful man used our services here to broker the exchange of a special item. My agent did his duty and unfortunately paid the price of duty with his life. The item disappeared under mysterious circumstances within the shadow of Holim. The item was stolen on the road as it was being exchanged to an agent of its new owner. For the theft, our client was killed. I did what I could to try and appease him as per the contract limits, but blood is the only compensation he desires now."*

***"What was the item?"***

*The Exchequer stops and stares at you for a moment, as if pondering your fine print. "The contract is firm and we always uphold our end. The identity of the item must stay hidden. Though I'm sure there are others not held by our contract that know what it is. There is a better question for you to ask. But I can tell you that the item was being carried in a cloth that had the ink imprint of fiendish spiders in a circle design."*

***"Didn't you look for the item?"***

*"Of course we looked. We used all the resources the contract allowed us. But also, we had finished our part. It's the client's end who failed, yet he refuses to contemplate that. Wherever the item is now, by day it hides from our divinations, but during some nights, it comes out of hiding and travels around the countryside east of the city. As well, our divinations show it's no longer in the hands of the thieves."*

***"Who stole the item?"***

*"I don't know. Who ever it was must have acquired the information from a leak in our client's network, as our side was seamless. From what my agent told me, they were humans waiting in ambush and used both magic and stealth to quickly acquire what they wanted and escape again."*

***"Is there anything we can do to help?"***

*"I'm afraid our time is quickly running out. I have a few tactics left up my sleeves, but I don't see them being long-term solutions. In the end, it will be our blood or their item—and we have only blood to give."*

***"What will you give me if I bring you the item?"***

*"Do you taunt me? Do not mistake me for desperate. But as for exchange, I would forgive your involvement in the first place, and then I would offer you a reward befitting what was left."*

*'Afronidious said to us 'The Vault! Seek the humblest jar to be last sorted from my duties.' Does that mean anything to you'*

*"Yes. I'm sure it refers to the Main Vault, but as for the contents and descriptions, I'm sorry to say I'm bound from discussing it. That is not to say I do not want to help you. If you tell me what it is you want, I would be willing to let the Vault Keeper bring it forward under his supervision. I do require this though—do not make requests that disrespect the nature of our sacred vault. I do this as a favor to the Holy Clerk, not out of generosity."*

**"Bring us the jars of coins."**

*"Very well, I'll make the arrangements with the Vault Keeper, but may Zilchus Give You Alms should you cross the Vault Keeper."*

☞ **Exchequer Davot Wirken:** Male human (Suel-Oeridian); Clr12 (Zilchus); hp 71.

### Part E: The Vault

The vault is the most sacred place within this temple—the items stored here physically represent their dogmatic beliefs. Requests to view large amounts of different items makes the Vault Keeper angry. The Vault Keeper can be convinced to bring out one jar only, of the characters choosing.

The characters are taken to a Spartan stone chamber beneath the temple. The Vault Keeper comes to this room to interact with the characters. The Exchequer leaves once the characters enter the chamber.

*You wait alone in the dank underground chamber. Before long, two large double doors, open to reveal a bizarre, if beautiful creature—a large snake with a human face and golden-green scales. A golden frill runs its back, head to tail. The air around it smells of sweet flowers. "I shall do this one favor in the name of the Holy Clerk, but do not disrespect my nature" says the creature with a booming otherworldly voice.*

The characters are safe as long as they refrain from attacking or violate the sanctity of the vault. A Knowledge (religion) (DC 16) check reveals that a small number of similar creatures pose as the servants of Zilchus. A Knowledge (planes) check (DC 23) reveals the creature to be an Outsider from the Peaceable Kingdoms of Arcadia.

The Holy Clerk plunged the sealed scroll tube into the jar of copper coins—he knew that it would be safe within the confines of the Vault. When an offerings jar (the jar at the front of the temple doors) fills up, it is taken to the Vault, where the Vault Keeper subjects it to ritual blessings and prayers. During that process the coins are separated per denominations. To find the scroll tube, the PCs must ask the Vault Keeper to bring forth the most recently filled jar containing copper pieces.

Described below are the most likely questions and answers to come up in the conversation between the PCs and the Vault Keeper. Read or paraphrase the following:

**"So how does this work?"**

*"Tell me the item you want me to bring out to you, and I shall do it. You may then examine the item under my watchful eye. You may not keep or damage the item. I'll give you five minutes to examine the item. I believe the Exchequer mentioned something about you wanting a jar?"*

**"May I see more?"**

*"More? You may only select one item to examine."*

**"What can you tell me about the ritual?"**

*"The ritual process of the Offering Jars is sacred and is not open for discussion. But I will tell you the ritual involves a total of six jars."*

**"What does the Vault contain?"**

*"That is not for you to know. Do not ask again."*

### Finding the Scroll

What the Vault Keeper keeps hidden is the fact that there is a jar for each denomination of coin (five jars), along with the original jar (A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) reveals this fact). If the characters ask for the wrong jar, he brings it out and allows the characters to search it for five minutes, keeping a wary eye out for theft.

If the PCs search the jar containing the copper coins, they easily find the scroll tube buried just below the surface. The Vault Keeper allows the PCs to take the scroll without any hassles.

The mark of the Holy Clerk is scribed on the outside of the scroll tube. Inside is a letter intend for the characters.—give the players "Player's Handout #1."

Attached to the parchment is a ticket that can be redeemed by either the Vault Keeper or the acting Holy Clerk, who provides them with a packet of six potions of *cure moderate wounds* is given to the characters from the Vault.

Once the tasks are complete, the Vault Keeper collects everything he needs and slithers back to his precious vault.

### Money Counter Notes

There is an opportunity for the characters to put their Money Counter Notes to special use. The Vault Keeper possesses a small assortment of items that he "rents out" to the characters in exchange for giving up the Money Counter Notes. The Order owns these items (the Vault specifically), and each is embossed with the mark of Zilchus in a visible place. The Vault Keeper explains that these items magically return to the Vault after five days. He warns them that selling these items brings about the ire of the Zilchus. See below for the item list and cost in MCNs.

🐉 **Vault Keeper:** Male axiomatic guardian naga; Clr5 of Zilchus; LN.

**Treasure:** Hand in the ticket and accept the package.

**ALL APLs:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *cure moderate wounds*(x6) (25 gp each).

### Rent an Item

By spending Money Counter Notes (MCNs), the characters gain access to the listed items for five days (it is impossible to keep the item).

- **One MCN:** *Ring of protection +1*; Any two 1st level divine or arcane scrolls from *DMG* Tables 7-23 and 7-24 (CL 5th); *hand of the mage*, *hat of disguise*.
- **Two MCN:** *Cloak of elvinkind*, *ring of protection +2*; Two 3rd level divine or arcane scroll from *DMG* Tables 7-23 and 7-24; *+1 silver heavy mace*.
- **Three MCN:** *Shatterspike*, *rhino hide*, *periapt of health*.
- **Four MCN:** *+1 axiomatic bane (outsiders, chaotic) composite longbow*, *ring of protection +3*, *celestial armor*.
- **Five MCN:** *+1 fortification (moderate) half plate armor*, *heavy shield of bashing +2*, *cloak of the bat*.
- **Six MCN:** *Cloak of charisma +5*, *mithral chainshirt of invulnerability +1*, *+2 ghost touch shock halberd*.

If a rented item leaves the possession of the character for more than two rounds, it instantly *teleports* back to the safety of the Vault. Once there, the Vault Keeper uses the vault's magic to determine if the item was sold, stolen, or lost. If the item was lost because it was taken from the characters' possession (or lost from it), then the characters may retrieve it from the Vault Keeper up until the five-day limit. If the Vault Keeper determines the items were sold off, the Vault Keeper triggers a *teleport* spell that returns all of the items to the Vault.

**Development:** Once the PCs conclude their business with the Vault Keeper, they are quickly ushered by Octreth back to the main courtyard.

## ENCOUNTER 2: OF KITTENS AND MEN

If the PCs have not done so, remind them of their impending meeting with Clinorus' contact beyond the Spider's Gate (as described in the Introduction).

### Part A: The Spider's Gate

When the PCs approach the Spider's Gate, read or paraphrase the following:

*The old but sturdy stopgap known as The Spider's Gate controls traffic between the outer New City and the interior core called the Old City. You see that the Old City is a veritable slum, compared to the splendor of the buildings that make up the New City. A large number of guards verify that those who use the gate are those with permission.*

For those who simply don the disguises provided by Clinorus (see Introduction) and use a little discretion, there are no problems getting past the guards.

The PCs can move through the gate even if they lack the proper badges on their outfit, requiring a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15) and a 10 gp bribe for one-way passage per person. If a character fails the Diplomacy check by 5 or more, the guards begin asking pointed questions and bar entry any time the character is spotted.

The gate is closed after dark and only those with the proper identification (Clinorus did not provide such paperwork) can get through. Getting through at night without proper ID requires a Diplomacy check (DC 20) and a 20 gp bribe.

🐉 **City Guard (6):** Human Male (Oeridian) War2; LE, NE; 17 hp each.

**Development:** Once past the gate and inside the Old City, the characters are free to wander towards their destination.

### Part B: Kittens for Sale

By asking around, its not difficult finding Cobblestone Lane. It is located within a city block about five blocks away from the Spiders Gate.

*You stand before #5 Cobblestone Lane. The building is three stories tall and looks ready to fall over. A frail looking lad, no older than six, looks up at you with a dirty face. His running nose discredits his stern stare. He pats a lump in his pocket, when a tiny kitten's head pops out and meows loudly.*

The lad is Aerak (male human, Com1), the son of a dead guildier. In his pocket is a newborn kitten that he snuck out of the litter. For now, he acts as the eyes of this Guild faction safe house. Should bad things come this way, it's his job to give warning.

Aerak is shy and suspicious of the PCs. He answers any questions in as non-committal a way as possible. He admits that he lives in the house and that his mother lives inside. If the characters mention they are interested in "buying smiling kittens," he perks up immediately. Read or paraphrase the following:

*"The kittens for sale are inside. I'll let them know you're coming to buy some." With that, he goes up to the house door without opening it and yells, "Mother, people here to buy kittens!" He returns to his original spot, petting the kitten in his pocket.*

### Part C: The Sit Down

Aerak's mother, Aerann (female human Com2), the widow of Aker, a deceased member Malaya's Guildier faction, lets them in. She doesn't talk much and gives everyone a wary eye, but knows exactly what the characters are here for. She doesn't waste much time moving the characters on to the upstairs room with all the mewling kittens in it. Read or paraphrase the following:

*The woman leads you to a room upstairs "Your kittens are in through here," she says. The sound of newborn kittens fills the room before you. A other cat is half visible over the lip of some nested blankets in the corner. Tiny kittens scamper away as you approach. "These are the regular kittens. The smiling ones are in there," she says, gesturing to the next room. She turns and goes back down the stairs.*

Once the PCs walk into the other room, read or paraphrase the following:

*A rough looking woman sits at a table, the only furniture in the room. Her battle-scarred face shows that it would be unwise not to taunt her. In fact, her clothes show fresh damage and blood soaked patches, although her wounds appear to have been mended through magical means.*

*The woman stands and offers you seats with a gesture of her hand. "Perhaps you remember me. I am Malaya, a Sub-Boss for the Thieves Guild of Eastfair. I asked you here because I have another of favor to ask of you. It grieves me to do so, but circumstances require it." She blinks away a tear that wells up in her eye.*

Malaya (female human, Ftr6/Rog4) would love to tell the characters everything, if only to win them over or make their lives better, but she cannot. Her mission demands secrecy, deception and sacrifice. Wary of betrayal, Malaya is protected by both *nondetection* and *undetectable alignment*.

Many villains sit among the council of the city (a loose collection of powerful nobles). One such noble was behind the contracting of the Zilchus agent to acquire the wrapped up item. Like many of the nobles, this one had connections with the Guild and his secret slipped out to Malaya's faction. They stole the mysterious item that everyone is concerned about, but soon lost it to a ravenous shadow bat. Malaya hopes that the PCs can help her retrieve the item, which now sits in the hands of a former ally, turned enemy.

### **The Mission**

Described below are a list of the probable questions and answers that arise during the conversation with Malaya.

**"So what's the favor?"**

*"There are happenings in this city that we can not discuss with you. We all have duties to uphold. I do hope you understand that and get past it. Suffice it to say, we have our targets, nothing we can't handle, but we've had a true setback. Our dear friend and companion Jirwelt has fallen. And my heart craves to be the one to put our friend to rest, but we lack the time to do it in. You may remember Jirwelt from our last meeting. He was the good-looking one on my right. He helped you, now you should help him."*

**"So do we need to recover his body?"**

*"There is a powerful creature of the night that we have reason to do battle with. He is crafty and potent, something for you to stay far away from. But to strike at us as punishment, he claimed Jirwelt. He has been murdered and turned into a thrall of this night beast. You must find Jirwelt and put his soul to rest. As well, you must bring back to me his head in good condition. But there is a second objective just as important. Jirwelt should have in his possession a golden half circle about half a foot across. It's imperative that the item is recovered and returned to me. Please, don't ask me what the item is, for I would not be able to tell you. The presence of the item must be kept confidential. For your sake as well as ours."*

**"Is there a time limit?"**

*"Yes. It's very important that we gain the item and preferable Jirwelt's head before sundown. The more time before that, the better. Though I must admit, it's extra risk to us, not to you."*

**"So, he's a vampire?"**

*"Yes, Jirwelt turned into a blood sucking monster of darkness. If you knew Jirwelt like we did, you would know that there could be no greater crime or insult to his being."*

**"Do you know where he is?"**

*"We recently received a clue that pins down his location. This is part of our hindrance. He has been spotted at the old arena here in the Old City. By an inconvenient treaty agreement, we cannot go there for another two weeks. One of the many drawbacks to our guild's nature."*

**"What's the Old Arena?"**

*"When the Old City was the only part of Eastfair, a small combat area served the blood thirst of the population. Duels, gladiator games, and all manners of spectacle were presented there. This tended to attract those with lateral interests. But it has been many, many years since the Old City Arena was in use. It has suffered much damage from countless controversies and intrigues within its walls. And now with the new Arena in the New City nearly finished construction, along with all of the small private arenas, the old Arena is soon to be a ruin."*

**"Why can't you go to the Arena?"**

*"Another faction of our Guild, a gang called the Baron's of the Blades occupy it. Occasionally disputes are settled here. Normally the Baron's act as referees during duels, but some of their members like to pit themselves against others for no other reason than the combat. One of our more junior members got sucked into such a match and lost. Now the long and the short of the arrangement is that we can't enter upon their turf for a month (with two weeks left to go). To break that agreement would start a street war I cannot afford right now. And that is why I need you to go to the Arena. Just don't be suckered into one of their matches, and you'll be fine."*



***"So, he's just in the arena somewhere?"***

*"We think we know why Jirwelt gravitated to the arena. Our enemy of the night, merely a minion himself, but a powerful one, had interest below the arena. There are many tunnels and catacombs below the structure, most originally used for logistics for the spectacles. Most have been long since plundered. But we have learned of one chamber still contains treasure. There is a shrine to the Lord of Swords (Kelanen), one that the Baron's hold dear. But what they don't know is that one of the stone swords on the wall activates a secret door leading into another chamber. A chamber that was of minor interest to our quarry. I suspect in his new twisted frame of mind, Jirwelt would be drawn to that."*

***"So, Jirwelt is no real threat to you?"***

*"The creature that Jirwelt is now would not be much of a physical threat to us personally. But he has all the knowledge that he did in life, and that puts many people in danger. The quicker Jirwelt is put to rest, the safer everyone will be, including you all."*

***"So this guy is a push over, right?"***

*"I do not know how powerful Jirwelt will be when you face him. It all depends on how much torture his new master put him through during the change. Much of his life force could be gone, or perhaps only a little. As well, he might not be alone. If a nest has been set up, there could be many—another reason why time is critical."*

***"What are you going to be doing during all this?"***

*"We have a mission to complete, just as you, but ours is much longer and much more dangerous."*

**Subject: The Item in the Spider Cloth**

***"Do you know of an item that was stolen wrapped in spider print cloth?"***

*"Yes, I believe I know exactly the item you speak of. But first I need you to do what I asked. I need the head of Jirwelt and the golden half circle he carries."*

***"No, you tell me what I want to hear first or no deal!"***

*"Do not tease out my temper. These are not children's games I seek your involvement in. My friend has been turned and his soul is in misery. The evil that now taints his soul would use his knowledge to betray us all. To handle the matter ourselves, in a timely fashion, would jeopardize even more lives. If your stubbornness costs a single life, it will be yours that pays. Time is our mutual enemy so do not waste it. Bring me what I ask, and I shall help you in your own quest."*

***"We demand compensation for this."***

*"I shall compensate you with aid and information. But perhaps something else can be added, no promises though."*

**Development:** Its at this point the characters should go to the Old Arena and complete their task there. When

they return, they go on to Encounter 1 and get their questions answered.

## ENCOUNTER 3: FIRST BLOOD

When the PCs go to the Old Arena, read or paraphrase the following:

***The partially ruined arena takes up almost as much room as one of the Old City's housing blocks. Crumbling stone and collapsed pillars mark where battle raged. Several tunnels lead deeper into the structure.***

### Part A: The Barons of the Blades

A month ago, the PCS would have encountered a number of gladiators to contend with, but at this time, the Barons of the Blades have a bigger problem to focus on. Because of this, their normally antagonistic of provoking duels, just for the sake of honoring their blade, is lax.

Jirwelt came to the arena looking for something and he brought along many of his master's friends. During the night, a horde of vampire spawn infiltrated the lower regions of the arena and occupied both the Shrine of Kelanen and some deeper tunnels. Once at the Shrine, Jirwelt used his knowledge to gain entry into the secret chamber below. During his long stay there, became oblivious to the needs of his fellow spawn of the night still occupying the various chambers above.

When day came, the Barons of the Blades retaliated and managed to drive the horde down into a dead end network of chambers. The battle took many lives and the Barons know they need time to recover and now wait for reinforcements to arrive.

Read or paraphrase the following:

***Around the dirt and stone of the arena floor, wounded warriors and those tending them are everywhere. Each bare torso that is visible bares the tattoo of nine swords facing out of a circle. A man with the obvious bearing of leadership approaches you, keeping his hand on the hilt of his longsword. "What brings you to our arena?"***

After you read this, give the players "Player's Handout 2."

The man is Ecnal, cleric of Kelanen and acting leader of the Barons. Ecnal informed his superiors what transpired and how they successfully forced the creatures into a dead end trap. Ecnal has strict orders to wait until the gang boss arrives before making any new assaults.

Described below are some typical questions and answers that come up during the conversation between Ecnal and the PCs:

***"Who are you?"***

*I am Ecnal Tugim, Sub-Boss of the Barons of the Blades. This arena is our turf.*

***"What happened here?"***

*"Vampires, lots of vampires. The things overran the corridors and chambers beneath us. They even briefly*

took our shrine before we drove them out of it. Now we trapped them in a dead end set of chambers. We wait the return of our leader, Stylus Rel—boss of the Barons. We have strict orders not to press the final attack until he returns.”

**“Your group seems interesting. May we join?”**

“This is not the time. We must regroup. Though we are always looking for more people to wield the faith of the Lord of Swords, only our leader accepts new people in, and only after they’ve gone through the rites. If you’re serious about joining, come back another time, perhaps in a month or two.”

**“Can you help us attack right now?”**

“No. We forgo attacking again till our leader returns—several hours from now. Once he arrives, we meet the horde in glorious combat. You will have to leave when that time comes. This fight is ours and ours alone. This is our turf and the combat is sacred to us, so no outsiders. As well, once the battle starts, all that is taken from the vampires belongs to us. This is our turf, those are the rules we follow and you must follow them as well.”

**“What’s your battle plan?”**

“With skill of the blade and faith in swords, we routed the vampires from our sacred shrine as well as the entrance tunnels. We managed to drive them all into a few chambers with no other exits. We’ve managed to block them in for now, but it’s only a matter of time before they free themselves. We plan to finish the attack before that.”

**“So the Shrine of the Kelanen is safe to go to?”**

“Yes, we cleared it of vampires. If you wish to go pray and wash your blade in the sacred oil, that is acceptable. Just remember that it is the Lord of Swords who shall bring us all victory.”

**“So, if we kill some vampires now, you wouldn’t help, but I’d get to keep any loot?”** “Correct. Our orders and good sense keep us from attacking till our leader arrives. And since we are not involved in the battle (as yet) we would secede to you what ever your blade cut down is what you may keep. But on the other hand, we cannot allow you to penetrate our perimeter below. So you may not approach the third level where the vampires hide.”

**“Which way to the shrine?”**

“I shall order a runner take you to the first level, where the shrine sits. You may pray in peace and as we’ll leave you to the privacy of communing with your sharp steel. Feel free to bless your blade at the Sword Lord’s feet, but do not disrespect the cutting edge within our walls.”

**“Tell me about the shrine?”**

“This shrine is a location known to be the site of a miracle performed by the pre-ascended Kelaren. It was in that chamber he restored to perfection 100 damaged and rusty blades, all within a day. He distributed these blades to his

followers and told them to travel to the far reaches of Oerth. Along the way, they should fight and bring balance. But above all, teach those who would learn. It is said that when the Lord of Swords ascended, the remaining swords grew in power.”

**“Any artifacts left in the shrine?”**

“There is the Trough of Swords. Though refilled as needed, it still contains traces of the original oil used by the Lord of Swords in the process to restore the 100 blades. Though no longer as pure, it still holds a touch of the Lord of Swords’ power and presence. Those who respect his ideals of the blade may pray and dip into the Trough.”

**“So Kelaren was once in Eastfair?”**

“It is our belief that the Lord of Swords not only visited Eastfair in the early days of the city, but in fact was mortal born within the city, or perhaps near it. There are other sects of the Lord of Swords who humbly disagree with us, but we believe that Kelaren is of the Oeridian pantheon, but he separated himself from it to show his followers his belief for balance. “

**“Do you know where I can find one of these 100 swords?”**

“No. They were scattered far and wide. I doubt many even remain in the Flanese or even this Plane of existence. But it is said that such a sword brought back to the Shrine can be forged again to give it the power to seek out final words from the Lord of Swords.”

**“Is there anything you can give us to aid in the battle?”**

“If you look closely at my blade, you see the Mark of Kelanen on it as well as the silver scar on the right flat of the blade. Along the other side, written in Old Oeridian are the words, ‘Have Sword, Will Travel.’ It and others like it were forged by Stylus Rel and finished up within the Shrine. They imbue the essence of Kelanen and allow for greater communing with him. For those willing to spread the Word of the Sword and the Lord who spoke them, Stylus Rel would be willing to commission such a blade.”

### Chatting with the Bladers

About 30 wounded Bladers sit on the floor of the arena, with another ten below ground. The characters can walk among them and speak with the common gang members as well as the two remaining acolyte clerics. The clerics are doing what they can to tend the wounds before it comes time to reenter the battle.

Described below are typical questions and answers that come up during the conversation between the PCs and the Bladers.

- “The battle was long and glorious. Those creatures do not tire, but they can be driven back. When killed, they just turned into a puff of smoke and it drifted away, obviously their soul preparing for punishment for forsaking blades over claws.”

- *"The creatures occupy several rooms on the lower levels warded by sentries and magic. This is a challenge against the Baron's of the Blades, we intend to finish this."*
- *"Ecnal Tugim is the second in command of the Barons' of the Blades. He can quote the teachings of the Lord of Swords well, and can certainly organize a duel, but between you and me, he's a real tight jerk. He's much too rigid. If it were up to me, I'd have regrouped and attacked the creatures again by now. But, the orders come from Stylus Rel, and we all respect him, so we shall follow his wishes."*
- *"Stylus Rel is off on a mission of faith. He's been informed of this breach of turf and is hurrying back. We expect him back before sundown."*

#### All APLs:

♣ **Ecnal Tugim:** Male human (oeridian) Ftr1/Clr6 of Kelanen; LN.

♣ **Bladers(20):** Male human (various mix) War2 of Kelanen; N/CN.

♣ **Sword Acolytes(2):** Female human (oeridian) Ftr1/Clr2 of Kelanen; N.

**Development:** Ecnal leads the characters to the shrine beneath the arena. True to his words, he leaves the characters in peace. The characters are in no danger from the vampires blocked away several corridors down. If the characters try to approach the battle lines on the levels beneath, sentries block them.

### Part B: Shrine of the Lord of Swords

When the characters arrive in the Shrine of the Lord of Swords, read or paraphrase the following:

*This room has a statue of a man holding a blade with a silver scar on his right cheek, a trough of oil sunk into the floor and many bas-reliefs of swords and blades on the wall. Blood splatters the floor and the walls. Two evenly spaced bloody handprints appear on one of the bas-reliefs. It looks as if someone with blood on his or her hands pushed against the blade and hilt portion of the carving.*

The statue represents Kelanen during the time he spent here in Eastfair. Written in Old Oeridian upon the blade are the phrases:

*"Have Sword, Will Travel"*

*"Eschew all Extremes"*

*"Mastery of the sword is the path to mastery of the self."*

Looking around the shrine, blood is everywhere, a clear sign that combat raged in and around this room. In fact, that is exactly what happened and it triggered a secret passage to open up. It should be noted as well, that the carving style of this sword is slightly different than the rest and the sword carving is set away from the other carvings. This is because it was carved long before the shrine of Kelanen was here. The shrine merely co-opted the space.

The rest of the walls are filled with depictions of the nine swords (as in Player Handout #2) holy symbol. In total, there are eleven such circles of swords (with nine

swords in each circle). The odd sword out makes for a total of one hundred. The sword carvings vary in size from one half a foot in diameter, to three feet in diameter.

### The Trough of Swords

The pool of oil is another special relic of the faith. It is said that Kelanen once restored 100 rusty and badly damaged blades right here in a 24-hour period. And the trough contains a small amount of the original oil he used, though it as been mixed with new oil to keep the levels up. This leaves the trough with some special properties. The Trough cannot be removed. Oil taken away from the trough loses any magical properties it once had. Drinking the oil causes 1 point of temporary Con damage.

Dipping a sword (any kind of sword) into the oil has a chance of giving it a temporary effect. Each time it is dipped, roll a 1d6 on the following table:

#### Oil of the Shrine of the Lord of Swords

d6	Effect
1 (or less)	The sword cannot be further magically enhanced in any way for the rest of this adventure, though it does not lose any enhancements it has normally.
2-4	No effect
5	The sword gains the <i>keen</i> enhancement for one hour, but no other spell or effect does anything to the weapon during this time.
6:	The sword gains the <i>defending</i> enhancement for one hour (treat as a +1 sword if no actual enhancement present).
7+	The sword gains the <i>speed</i> enhancement for one hour.

#### Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Cleric of Kelanen
+1	Worshiper of Kelanen
+1	True Neutral Alignment
-1	Previously tried to dip a weapon other than a sword
-4	Alignment two steps away from True Neutral
-2	Acted disrespectfully in the presence of the shrine

Dipping a sword in the oil multiple times provides no addition effect. The character dipping the sword magically becomes aware of the new properties of the sword, but not the time limit.

### Part C: The Vampire That Lirr Forgot

When the characters descend into the catacombs, read or paraphrase the following:

*Winding stairs lead some 30 ft. down further into the depths of the arena catacombs. The air is stale and*

*filled with the scent of death. The echo of insane ramblings filters up towards you.*

This is a long silent shrine to Erythnul The Many. Long ago, this place was raided and plundered. Each stone sarcophagus once held a vampire, but now each lid has been smashed inwards and the creature destroyed while still inside. No treasure remains.

Jirwelt came to this place seeking his own kind of redemption. In his living life, he was a dedicated cleric of Lirr the Lore Keeper. He rejoiced in her virtues of seeking out knowledge, beauty and delivering it to those who were oppressed. Now his soul rages in anguish. He hates himself for what he has become and hates his goddess for allowing it to happen to him. His good heart turned to dark evil. Using his knowledge, he sought out this shrine of Erythnul because of its nature towards his kind. This was once home to a vampire cult who suckled from the blood provided by the pool. Lirr forsook him, but in this unholy place, a place of blood, Erythnul accepted him. With a pledge and drinking from the blood pool of *atonement*, he rededicated himself.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*The chamber before you is dark with no light of its own. The echoes of ramblings give a small hint at the large size of the chamber. The smell of death and blood is strong.*

Entering into the room, the only light present is that which the characters bring with them. The room is 150 ft. by 60 ft. with a height of 10 ft.

When the characters enter, Jirwelt stands 90 ft. away from the stairs, in between the altar and the statue. At APL4, the second vampire spawn is at the pool of blood, drinking his fill. Because of the distance, characters probably won't be able to see the vampires (or most of the room) right away.

**Note:** At APL6 and APL8 there is a *desecrate* spell in effect. See the Tactics section for details.

When Jirwelt (or the second vampire, who informs Jirwelt) becomes aware of someone entering the room, he gets into an extra talkative mood. As they descend the stairs, read or paraphrase the following:

*"Ah, the pawns have arrived. Are you the ones they've sent to defeat me? It shows how little they care about me. They reap the rewards and you do all the slaving. Yes Sir, No Sir. March wherever they point you."*

*He pats one of his pouches. "Is this what they sent you for? Well its mine now. Blessed is he who takes something from a rival. I understand that now. It's all become so clear. Or wait. Perhaps it's not the trinket they want. Maybe its what they fear I might say. Fear of what I might tell you. I know something you don't know. While you do the dirty work, they prepare for all the glory. They'll sneak in to steal the child and its pups. Jirwelt pats his pouch again. "But they'll need this to pull it off. Do you think we should let them? What's in it for*

*us? I know what Malaya would say. She'd wax philosophical about my change in motivations. She'd say I've changed."*

#### APL2 (EL4)

➤ **Vampire Spawn:** hp 29; see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL4 (EL6)

➤ **Vampire Spawn (2):** hp 29 (each); see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL6 (EL8)

➤ **Jirwelt:** Male vampire; CE; hp 38; Clr4/Rog2 see Appendix 1.

#### APL8 (EL10)

➤ **Jirwelt:** male vampire; CE; hp 50; Clr5/Rog3 see Appendix 1.

**Tactics:** Jirwelt (and the vampire spawn at APL4) claimed this shrine as their new home. They sleep in the western most stone sarcophagi. They retreat to them if things go poorly.

The room has no natural light, so the characters must create their own to get around. The vampires don't have as big a disadvantage there.

At APL2 and APL4, Jirwelt is just a vampire spawn. At APL6 and APL8, Jirwelt still possesses his cleric levels and rededicated himself to Erythnul. At these two APLs, a *desecrate* spell (see below) is in effect centered on the altar (as cast by Jirwelt). He (and the other spawn) stays in its area of effect during the battle.

**Desecrate effects:** Within a 20ft radius of the altar; All undead within the radius benefit from a -6 profane penalty on turning checks; +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls and saves; +2 hit points per HD. None of these effects are reflected in the stat blocks and disappear and reappear when the vampire enters and exits the area of effect. The caster level for this spell is the same as the cleric level of the Jirwelt.

The vampires do not flee the combat area (only retreating back to their coffins if they must).

**Treasure:** Loot the vampire (spawn)

APL 2: L: 20; C: 30; M: Golden half circle (100 gp).

APL 4: L: 20; C: 30; M: Golden half circle (100 gp).

APL 6: L: 0; C: 0; M: Golden half circle (100 gp), chain shirt +1 (104 gp).

APL 8: L: 0; C: 0; M: Golden half circle (100 gp), chain shirt +1 (104 gp).

**Jirwelt's Pouch:** His pouch contains a gold half circle (*detect magic* indicates it has abjuration magic) that the Guilders want. In another pouch is 30 gp in coins and gear with a looting value of 20 gp.

**Development:** If the characters slay Jirwelt, they must take his head and the golden half circle in his pouch and return it to the Guilder safe house.

### **Part D: The Leader is Good, the Leader is Great**

Just before sundown, the leader of the Barons of the Blades, Stylus Rel (male human (oeridian) Ftr3/Clr9 of Kelanen) and his powerful entourage of elite Bladers (male human (oeridian) Ftr5) return to the arena. If the

characters are still present when Stylus returns, he'll ask them to leave as they prepare for the final fight with the vampires. If the characters insist on discussing things, he'll insist even more that they should come back another time.

Read or paraphrase the following when he arrives:

*"Greetings, outsiders. I am Stylus Rel, Blade Master, Leader of the Baron's of the Blades and the Cutting Edge of the Lord of Swords. Ecnal has informed me of your venture into the catacombs. I gather it went well. I must admit—you show merit. You should consider become disciples of the Lord of Swords yourselves. If you return in a few days, I can conduct the ritual of atonement for you. You would need to prove your worth though. Return with the head of a foe that has slain many. Your friends may help, but you must strike a solid blow during the battle. Once done, I shall convert you to worshipping the Lord of Swords."*

If the PCs insist on performing the ritual immediately, Stylus Rel refuses because of the upcoming battle. He asks that they return in a few days. Stylus Rel does not consider the head of Jirwelt worthy enough for this status. The characters are ejected from the arena and the Bladers prepare for battle. If this conversation takes place after the vampire battle, then skip right to the portion of the Conclusion encounter that deals with this topic.

**Development:** The bestowing of rewards for the bringing back of a suitable head are covered in the Conclusion encounter. Go to Encounter 4: Shedding Some Light, below.

## ENCOUNTER 4: SHEDDING SOME LIGHT

The characters went on the mission to retrieve two things—the head of Jirwelt and the magical golden half circle he had in his possession. The characters are rewarded depending on how many of the two they bring back. If they bring back one of the items (regardless of which one) to Malaya, she rewards them with the information and aid. If they bring back both items, the characters receive the information and aid as well as some treasure items.

Described below are some typical questions and answers that could come up during the conversation between Malaya and the PCs:

### **Subject: The Spider Print Cloth Item**

*"Tell us what is going on!"*

*"We have our reasons for doing what we did, but a certain individual on the city council wanted that item for his own purposes. We found out about it and tried to stop it. We did not harm the Zilchian agent. We did kill the agent of the evil noble. We did not have the item for long, for it was quickly and mysteriously retrieved from one of the agents who stole it. The battle took place in the countryside east of the city, and we discovered our*

*Guilder dead about a mile away. We suspect something carried him right off his feet because the claw marks were brutal. We know not the location of the item now".*

*"What is the item?"*

*"A book—one that can not be opened by the likes of us. It holds no magic within its, but secrets that could lead to magic."*

*"Where did the book come from?"*

*"We suspect the Zilchian agent acquired it from somewhere in the Holim ruins."*

*"Is this book part of your mission?"*

*"No, but it was simply too tempting to pass up."*

### **Subject: The Holim Ruins**

*"What are the Holim Ruins?"*

*"The Holim Ruins is a dig site several miles east of the city. From what I understand, the site was once Ur-Flan in nature before its destruction. The Oeridians co-opted the ruins, turning it into a Keep. That also was destroyed, first with an arcane pestilence then with extreme fire. Two years ago the land was gifted to a cousin of the Herzog (from the Herzog). At that point, an orc regiment (The Boyz of Richfest I believe) was made busy at hard labor and excavations began. The plan is to build a castle on the land once the research digs are complete."*

*"What does a Vecna cult want with it?"*

*"I honestly don't know. I can only guess at its ancient Ur-Flan nature. But I do know this; your run in with the Dawn Tiger is a direct result of it. We did some checking, and the contract out on you was not done through any channels. It was a personal job, and the Footmen of the Spider Throne gave the orders."*

*"Who are the Footmen of the Spider Throne?"*

*"I don't really know myself. I know that the Dawn Tiger was the student of another who was originally called the Dawn Tiger many years ago. And he has some disguised links to a cult of the Whispered One. That cult seemed to center itself out of the Rauxes area, but chances are it went up in smoke when Rauxes did. But then again, I could be totally wrong. There is just not much known on the Footmen of the Spider Throne."*

*"So we just go to Holim Ruins and look around: "That would not be a good idea. There are some 600 orcs and various other monsters there, as well as various humans. I know you are brave and powerful, but it would be a slaughter (yours). Either sneak in, or don't go."*

*"We have these unfinished passes. What can we do with them"*

*"Excellent. We can finish up those passes for you as we have access to the correct seals and expert forgers to put in the current date. We can supply you with a wagon and a load of cargo (fish) and that should get you in. Once in, you'll just have to stay frosty. If your discovered for what you are, you won't survive."*

**Note:** If the characters hand over the passes, they get them back, completed, the following day at the Whirling Dervish, completed.

***“What do we do now?”***

*“Give us your passes and we our people will complete them. We shall set the date for tomorrow. That gives you time to rest. We will have a wagon loaded with fish waiting for you. With everything that we shall have for you, you can safely make it from Eastfair to the Holim Ruins and inside to the depot there. Just don’t blow your cover.”*

**Subject: Who are you?**

*“We are a faction of the Eastfair Thieves Guild, called the Smiling Ones. We’ve been here since we first came to this city with our Guildmaster. Now we stay true, as our illustrious Guildmaster lost his way. But I am not bitter—the things he must do and the weight he must carry would crush the souls of most mortals.”*

**Treasure (Reward):** If the PCs bring back both the gold half circle and the head of Jirwelt, they might ask for something extra as compensation. If this happens, read or paraphrase the following:

*“Very well. First, these potions are my gift to you. Second, on behalf of our faction, I present to you this blade. Use it well, or sell it if you choose.”*

**Treasure:** Accept the gift once it is offered.

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *Potion of aid* (x6) (25 gp each), +1 *longsword* (193 gp each).

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each), +1 *longsword* (193 gp).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each), +1 *keen longsword* (692 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each), +1 *keen longsword* (692 gp).

**Development:** If the characters succeed in their negotiations, the finished documents they need (with a specific date on them) and a wagon with horses will be ready for them tomorrow. A minor Guilder will come around and collect them in the morning and pass off what is needed.

Of course, the characters do not need this Guilder assistance to infiltrate Holim ruins. They can use their own resources almost as well.

## ENCOUNTER 5: HOLIM RUINS

Once the PCs return to the Whirling Dervish, read or paraphrase the following:

*As promised, a young Guilder comes by the Whirling Dervish with the finished documents dated for today, along with a wagon carrying a load of fish. “With those papers and this wagon,” he says, “you should have no trouble getting to where you’re going. Just stay in character and don’t eat all the fish before you get there.”*

From this point, the characters use the wagon to leave Eastfair and travel the ten miles to the Holim Ruins. Those who wish to ride their own horses may choose to play the part of caravan guards. The papers are enough to satisfy typical authorities (such as gate guards).

Once the PCs get within a mile of the Holim Ruins, the Grynanquil amulets they are wearing (see below if they do not have such an amulet) become warm to the touch. When the PCs with the amulet get within visible range of the hill that the depot is backed on to, he sees a strange pillar of shadow rising out of hill.

*As you approach the gate for the dig site, two bored-looking sentries asked for you to stop. “Let me see your papers,” orders one of the guards. It’s obvious that this ritual happens at least ten times a day. The guard spends a few seconds reading the paperwork, hands it back, and waves you on. “Bring it in to your depot for unloading,” he says.*

The Darien Fishmongery has its own depot (among the other suppliers) set up. The structure is constructed so that it backs onto a rock ledge—partially hidden by an *illusionary terrain* spell. It is the amulets that show the way clearly to the door.

*Hundreds of orcs wander about the Holim dig site, working hard to excavate different sections of what appears to be hardened magma and rough glass. A sign that says ‘Darien’s Fishmongery Depot’ hangs on a small wooden palisade. Several vertical pikes, each holding up the body of what was probably an unlucky adventurer, line the pathway. They look chopped to bits. A bit farther away, a half-dozen orcs busily toss orc corpses into an open pit, while another shovels lime onto the stinking mass.*

Once inside the depot, the characters find it empty of workers, but reeking of fish. A silent worker helps unload the fish into a silo attached to the depot. Any PC that wears an amulet the depot sees a stone doorway in the cliff that makes up the back wall of the depot.

### Characters Without Amulets

If the characters don’t have the amulets, there are still some good clues. Characters searching around the inside of the depot can find footprints and numerous drag marks that lead from where the wagon usually parks, to the back cliff wall. These are several different marks made over two years. This is in comparison to the foot and drag marks that lead from the wagon area to the fish storage area. The PCs find the tracks with a Survival check (DC 10).

Once the tracks are found, a Search check (DC 20) reveals the illusion-disguised door. Once the door is found, opening it is easy, there is no locking device remaining on it (though there was one once). The door is automatically visible for anyone wearing the amulet.

## Snooping Around the Dig Site

The PCs may desire to leave the relative safety of the depot and snoop around amongst the orcs and their human overseers, asking questions.

Described below are the results of Gather Information checks the PCs may make while roaming the site. The DC results are cumulative. Possessing the languages Orc and Old Oeridian both add +1 to check each. PCs with 5 ranks or more in Knowledge (history) add a +2 synergy bonus to this check.

- **DC 5:** This is the Holim Ruins. It is ten miles west of Eastfair. It is garrisoned by 500+ Orcs of the Boyz of Richfest regiment. The lord of the Holim land is Lord Gregern of House Naelax as gifted to him from his cousin the Herzog.
- **DC 8:** Two days ago, a group of adventurers were caught snooping around, asking too many questions and seeming too out of place. Once the alarm sounded, every orc with a pickaxe or shovel within arm's reach came running. The adventurers fought bravely and killed many orcs and two human soldiers, dying in the end. The adventures identities are unknown, as well as their purpose there.
- **DC10:** The terrain in between the highpoints of the ring of hills is melted rock. Long ago, some sort of magic caused great destruction here. The early Oeridians occupying Holim did not stand a chance. The cause of it is a mystery the dig hopes to solve.
- **DC 15:** The dig started two years ago. There are in fact two layers of blasted earth. One near the top, and one farther below that indication resettlement over ruins that met a similar fate. Many Nobles and other power broker types have come by feigning only a casual interest, but everyone knows they are sniffing around, trying to figure out what it is that the Herzog has up his sleeve. The Herzog doesn't do anything that's not planned out several steps ahead, except for his temper. The orcs receive extra ale and rations to keep them happy. There is a bit of a moral problem—not enough combat.
- **DC 20:** Many small caches of valuable items were dug out reasonably intact. Jewelry, ceramics, coinage, fetishes and even some documents. Much of it is shipped back to Eastfair, though many pieces get skimmed as souvenirs by those with influence. It's the items from beneath the second magma layer that are most prized, but hardest to find.
- **DC 25:** It's true that the orcs are being given extra rations, but its not simply to keep a smile on their face. Several reports have been told of a giant shadowy creature in the night, along with missing orcs, human troops and turned over wagons. The creature appears out of nowhere, and that's only when it actually gets seen, even while it attacks. Those caught talking about it are punished for spreading rumors and dissent. The clerics and wizards agree that there is something about this place that is darkening the spirits of those who work here. They can't find the energy source, but some

suspect it's a leak with another plane, possible with a negative energy influence.

- **DC30:** The second magma layer covers Ur-Flan ruins, and it's a curse they put on the place that causes otherworldly forces to show up suddenly and melt it. But if the power source is found first in the dig, it can be used as a great weapon—all for the glory of the Herald of Hell.

## Getting the Natives Restless

Wandering about the dig site is fraught with risk. If at any time the PCs fail a Gather Information check by 10 or more, or a Disguise check by 5 or more (have them make disguise checks ever 30 minutes of game time), they draw the attention of some angry orcs. A squad arrives to deal with the PCs, with additional squads arriving every 2d4 rounds.

Eventually, the PCs should realize they are outnumbered and should flee or die in the process. The orcs fight to the death and do not take prisoners.

**Creatures:** A typical squad of orcs at Holim ruins consists of the following:

➤ **Orc Sargent:** male orc Bbr2; hp 11; see Appendix.

➤ **4d4 Orcs War1:** hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **1d2 Ogres:** hp 29 each; see *Monster Manual*.

## I Did It My Way!

The PCs may sneak into the ruins on their own, without the assistance of the Guilders. There are a number of ways in. The most obvious is using spells like *invisibility* or *change self* to make themselves look like workers.

Alternatively, the PCs may make use of the unfinished documents (from the AR of *COR4-09 A Tiger? In Ahlissa?*). Making the documents functional requires a Forgery check (DC 18) per copy. The documents are written in Old Oeridian.

**Development:** The point of this encounter is to infiltrate the Holim ruins and stay out of trouble. Once the PCs locate the secret entrance, go to Encounter 6: The Crypt of Shadows below.

## ENCOUNTER 6: THE CRYPT OF SHADOWS

Once the PCs enter the Crypt of Shadows (Area 2 on Map 3: The Crypt of Shadows), read or paraphrase the following:

*Inside the tunnels and chambers, the shadows seem darker, thicker. Your light sources do not seem to give off quite as much effect, or maybe it's just an optical illusion. The corridor opens up to a large chamber. To your left, you see a stone staircase leading down, and a door-shaped veil of darkness. Another door is situated in the wall to your right. Along the wall in front of you is a huge curtain of complete darkness, acting like some sort of wall.*



Energy from the Plane of Shadow is strong here—a sub-planar pocket is not far away. Though the lights do seem dimmer, there is no game effect unless it is specified (like in the shadow bat's lair). The stairwell was sealed at the bottom hundreds of years ago—it leads nowhere.

The corridor leads down into a dividing chamber. In one corner, stone stairs once led downward, but they have been completed sealed off for hundreds of years. Now there are only three exits from this chamber. The northern one is a sealed shadow door that leads to the prison of the pit fiend Grynanquill. The eastern opening is a large natural cave that is enveloped by a sub-planar pocket of the realm of shadow. Only those with the amulets may pass through the shadow barrier. The southern door leads to a room that has the controls for the northern shadow seal. It also has a minor shadow seal of its own that activates when the device is being tampered with. During that time, shadow asps (and friends) come out of the woodwork to attack.

This hidden section of dungeon (The Crypt of Shadows) is protected by powerful magic. Divination magic, such as *scry*, cannot penetrate the walls.

### Area 3: Why'd it have to be Asps?

At the end of the 25 foot corridor is a room. At the far end of this room is a round shadow disk floating in mid air. It's two dimensional, somewhat akin to a *portable hole*, but it is not moveable, nor is it an extra dimensional space (it's a quasi portal to the plane of shadow). Its purpose is to provide access for someone nimble of fingers to activate the mechanism that opens the shadow seal on the north prison door.

In this room are four bodies, all drained of life force. These are Vecna cultists who met with the fate of the shadow asps. At higher APLs, they join in as shadows. These cultists have unholy symbols and tattoo's reflecting their status. One still has a bundle of thieves' tools (though the rest seem to have been mostly looted already). They have been dead for about two months.

On the east and west sides of the room, are haphazard piles of wooden planks and other debris. These cover over small holes in the stone surfaces. These holes lead to small tunnels that the asps live in till roused. While in these holes, they are protected from area effects.

The asps do not come out of their layers until either the mechanism is being tampered with (they sense it), or someone starts to mess with their hidey-holes. The shadows (if present) stay below their respective body (in the ground) till the asps start to come forth.

### Starting Things Up

To set this encounter into motion, the characters need to enter the room and investigate the portal (about 2 ft. in diameter). Through the event horizon of the shadow portal is a complicated mechanism. It's filled with knobs and moveable arcane symbols, gears and crystals. The surface of the mechanism is two feet past the event horizon and a wall blocks all other directions. Light does not penetrate the event horizon of the portal, ie a character cannot look through it (but they can stick their

head through and see if they can magically thwart the darkness). Even if a character were to stick his head through, he would not see anything without magic, for it is magical darkness. A *light* spell entering the portal would last one round before being dissipated. A *daylight* spell would last three rounds (one round per spell level). These effects are regardless of caster level. An *everburning torch* has no effect on the darkness. These few rounds can give the PC the edge in solving the mechanism by feel (assuming he was looking inside when the light was shining).

### The Mechanism

The character doing the tinkering needs to reach inside and try and make some sense out the bizarre setup. For each round that the character investigates the mechanism in action, he gains +2 to his roll, up to a maximum +6. There are three ways to do this.

- By using the Disable Device skill, a character can try and figure out the system. This takes 2d4 continuous rounds of tinkering. APL2: DC 15, APL4: DC 15, APL6: DC 20, APL8 DC25. There is no risk or drawback with this method.
- By making an Intelligence check, along with a set of tools (like the ones on the corpse), a character can try to over load the system. Doing so takes 2d4 continuous rounds of tinkering. APL2: DC 15, APL4: DC 20, APL6: DC 25, APL8 DC30. Failure by five or more means the character takes 2d6 points of negative energy per APL range. (max of 16d6). Two such failures automatically short out the system gaining success.
- A character with one of the amulets can take it and insert it into a slot that fits it. Twisting the amulet defeats the mechanism. This takes a full round.

As soon as the characters start to fiddle with the device, a curtain of shadow covers the door to the chamber, followed by a loud boom. This only blocks light from passing through it—physical objects pass without effect. It does not affect light sources in the room, nor light sources carried through the barrier. The room only goes dark if there is no light source present in the room when the shadow curtain goes down over the doorway. The shadow layer stays until the mechanism is disabled.

If the PCs disable the mechanism, the asps (and shadows at the appropriate APLs) come out and attack.

**Creatures:** The following creatures are encountered here:

**APL2 (EL4)**

➤ **Shadow Asp (4):** 7 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

**APL4 (EL6)**

➤ **Shadow Asp (8):** 7 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

**APL6 (EL8)**

➤ **Shadow Asp, advanced (3HD) (4):** 22 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

➤ **Shadow(3):** 19 hp (each); see *Monster Manual*.

**APL8 (EL10)**

➤ **Shadow Asp, advanced (3HD) (4):** 22 hp (each); see Appendix 1.

➤ **Shadow(3):** 19 hp (each); see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Greater Shadow:** 58 hp (each); see *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** The snakes don't come out of their holes till the shadow curtain covers the door. The piles of wooden planks give the Tiny snakes half cover in that square. The snakes use their free action phasing abilities to get into the same square as the characters and attack. The shadows attack wherever they can get an adjacent square with no organized tactics.

If the characters leave the room, the creatures return to their hiding spots. However, if the shadow curtain vanishes, the shadows chase the characters out into the dividing chamber. They never move more than 100 ft. from their body. The asps return to their holes awaiting the characters to enter the room again before resuming their attack.

**Treasure:** Loot the woodpiles for the gem(s) and the corpses.

**APL 2:** L: 2; C: 10; M: 0

**APL 4:** L: 2; C: 20; M: 0

**APL 6:** L: 2; C: 40; M: 0

**APL 8:** L: 2; C: 80; M: 0

**Development:** Once the PCs defeat the mechanism, the shadow door to the prison cell opens with a loud bang (the displaced energy). Now the characters may enter and speak with the Baatezu. Go to Encounter 7: A Baatezu Put Aside, below.

## ENCOUNTER 7: A BAATEZU PUT ASIDE

When the PCs enter into the chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

*The chamber before you is filled with rolling shadow and displacement of your light sources—a swirling room of faux-reality. Furniture, decorations, books, food and other luxuries fade in and out as if on a whim. You find it impossible to read the titles of the books stacked on the tables. A pleasant voice rings out from deep in the darkness. "Come inside. I cannot come out. I cannot harm you. We have much to discuss and it's impolite to do it without being face to face. You must have much to ask."*

The speaker is the pit fiend Gryinanquil. Trapped within the shadowy prison the characters now stand before, he is incapable of harming the PCs. If the characters balk at the invitation, he tries to politely persuade them, but if they insist, he converses from a distance. He does not approach the door, which is part of his shadow prison. Gryinanquil takes on the guise of a pleasant elderly human male (Flan). If requested to, he reverts to his true form.

The pit fiend is willing to tell the characters a great deal, but reveals only what's necessary. His goal is getting revenge on Darien 'The Knife' and those of the Footmen of the Spider Throne, who stole his means of escape, lying and betraying him in the meantime.

This encounter is designed to fill in the gaps of the many questions the PCs have about the many events in this series of adventures. If the players do not ask some of the questions that you feel are vital, the pit fiend will offer them up freely.

Described below are typical questions and answers that come up between Gryinanquil and the PCs. Read or paraphrase the following:

**"Who are you?"**

*"You know that I am Gryinanquil of Baator. To you, I am a man of wealth and taste, but to the cosmos I am an Eternal servant of the Whispered One, and Keeper of The Secret."*

*"Over the centuries, I've had mortal allies come to me and do my bidding. It took many generations and many different attempts, but I had finally assembled what I needed to enact my escape. The pieces, the texts, and the regents—it all sat on the floor right where you are standing now. They sat there for a few more generations as I awaited those who could put them into action. Then finally came those who could do what I needed. The Footmen of the Spider Throne. Darien 'The Knife' was their mouth piece, their representative."*

*"They promised loyalty and success in exchange for my knowledge and the some of the few items that still covered these floors. Then once he had learned as much as he thought he was going to, he stole away all that I had, including my items of salvation and he abandoned me. But I shall strike at him still."*

**"Why are you here?"**

*"You know I was betrayed. Humorous, I know. I chuckle at my own expensive every once and a while as well. I will not get into the details, but suffice it to say, I know a secret that I will not reveal and my allies decided I was too dangerous to keep around. But the secret is too important to be destroyed. So here I am."*

**"What's the secret?"**

*"You know that I'll never tell."*

**"What was your escape plan?"**

*"The items I've mentioned were to be used in the manipulation of a specific geographic artifact. Within the See of Medegia, standing stones are forming. They are not ready yet, but soon. With their purpose, they bring power. My plan was to tap into that power and divert just a pinch to set me free. Now those ignorant fools think they can use that divergent power for themselves. They don't even know what they're going to use it for yet, but they're working on that."*

*"You could say that they have means, but not method nor single minded purpose. There are places for them to go before they head to Medegia. As well, the potential for power brings greed and dissent among allies. My presence here is proof of that."*

**"Why have people been murdered and their hearts stolen?"**

*"It is said that a devout man's connection to his god is through his heart. Even the darkest god is reached with an equally dark heart. With that connection comes power. If you possesses the right hearts and the right connections, well, secrets reveal themselves."*

***"How do you intend to strike at Darien?"***

*"Through you. Oh, don't shake your head so quickly. I know you're going to do it. You'll tell yourself its because of his evil nature, or he has done wrong, or he has power and wealth—but in the end, its my bidding you perform. Strike Darien down and crush the Footmen of the Spider Throne. Try to smile when you do it."*

***"Where can we find them?"***

*"South and east. Seek out the blue turrets on shifting sands. Darien remains there to confer with his allies among the Footmen. Once consensus has been reached, the method they seek is hidden somewhere in Rauxes. That city and the estates around it are the old stomping grounds of the Footmen of the Spider Throne."*

***"What is the real purpose of the stones in Medegia?"***

*"I'm not prepared to tell you that in full—this works to your advantage. I will say that if its perverted by the Footmen, then many will suffer. Many powers put aside differences and each put into the pot a little bit of influence. That by itself is Oerth-shattering if you knew them like I do. But there are rules on the higher planes, unspeakable covenants that would boggle your mortal minds. Let us just say that a certain Walker, he who traveled the roads before they were first paved, is starting to come full circle. Let us also say that there is a child involved, not too far from here actually. But it's not that child's time yet. There is still growing to be done. But the stones still need to be raised in preparation."*

***"When you say Walker, do you mean like in Fharlanghn clerics?"***

*"Hah! Those mortal fools are just pretenders. They take the name as a title in hopes of it connecting them closer to their miss-stepped god. You mortals always twist truths over time to suit your own fears and desires. In this case, it is a deception imposed by the Fharlanghni."*

***"Who are the Fharlanghni?"***

*"Just another group of meddling mortals who think far too much of themselves. But I know something they don't, nor will they know it until it's too late. Oh the pleasures of destructive secrets."*

***"What's an Opaquor?"***

*"Nothing. A silly name taken from a silly piece of fiction. It insults me to even think that an ally of mine used it to hide his identity."*

***"Did you just say you're a servant of Vecna?"***

*"And I shall always be his servant. Your mortal mind cannot comprehend our servitude to him."*

***"What is that big shadowy barrier to the east of here?"***

*"That is the lair of the Guardian of this place. It exists to punish plunderers and return what should remain buried. My amulets allow you to pass through the barrier both here and up above. But if you seek to slay the beast, I would advise you to avoid trying during the day when it stays in its lair. You would be at a severe disadvantage fighting it within its lair."*

***"How do you suggest we fight it?"***

*"The Guardian can sense the items stolen from the lower layer and seeks it out. He swallows it down and eventually deposits it on the floor of his layer. But that takes months. He's gathered quite the collection. But to answer your question, I would seek him out at night, in an open field or an abandoned farm. Lure it in with a few useless trinkets from the protected layer. It won't know the difference. There are some gems within the southern chamber. Put those in a bag and wave it about. Or, use my amulets if you possess them—the truly raise its ire. Keep in mind though, the Guardian knows enough to stay away from cities and occupied forts. It would rather wait a hundred years for the item to move, than risk itself to an accidental meeting with true power"*

***"Do you know about the Spider Cloth book?"***

*"Yes, I know the book. I doubt you could open it, but you would it would bring you nothing anyways. The book contains secrets, but nothing of true value. It is from the lower layer, so I gather those vagrants dug it up. Though if you must know, it's a cook book—of sorts."*

***"What can you offer us?"***

*"I offer you nothing now. Or can I? Do you trust me? Would this face lie? Either way, I offer you nothing now. It wouldn't be.. flattering. But, I promise you this—come back to me after you slay Darien and brought down the Footmen of the Spider Throne, and ask me that question again—I shall make it worth your while."*

***"What is the purpose of the machine in the other room?"***

*"This prison of mine stretches farther than you can comprehend. Many dimensions are being used within the same space to create the prison. When my first followers came to worship me, they accessed the control device by slicing through planar boundaries, thus interrupting the seal on my immediate chamber. While I remain trapped here, it does allow mortals to come visit me. But when Darien left, he reactivated the control device out of spite."*

**Development:** The pit fiend supplied the PCs with plenty of information to fight the shadow bat on their terms. Go to Encounter 8: Like a Bat Out of Baator below.

## ENCOUNTER 8: LIKE A BAT OUT OF BAATOR

The characters possess a choice—face the creature within its own lair, or lure it out into the night (as suggested by the baatezu). Luring it into the open works in favor of the PCs.

### The Shadow Bat Lair

Only those wearing the amulet may pass the shadow barrier leading into the lair. No energy or matter passes through it without the amulet (except for the bat and its possessions). This pocket barrier goes all around the cave, even if the rock walls are chipped away.

When the PCs enter the lair, read or paraphrase the following:

*You enter into complete darkness. Regardless of the method, nothing penetrates the gloom—you are completely blind in here. The echoes indicate you're in a large room or cavern. Stumbling forward, you kick aside unseen objects that clink away into oblivion. The air reeks of death and decay. After a moment, you hear a high-pitched squeak and the flapping of leathery wings.*

As depicted on Map #3: Crypt of the Shadows, the lair of the shadow bat is a large cavern 50 ft. high with a 40 ft. wide shaft in the middle leading outside. The air is foul and piles of processed trinkets, all recovered over the ages, litter the ground, some still valuable.

The shadow bat remains inside during the day, but leaves its pocket plane lair via an open shaft in the roof of his chamber. The illusionary magic that protects the door in the depot protects this chamber even more. It is a semi-real dome (made of shadow) that acts like the hilltop—allowing the bat to pass through without hindrance. A person wearing the amulet would fall right through it though (an 80 ft. drop).

The inside of the layer is without light and powerful magic maintains this darkness. No magical light source functions inside the lair. Even darkvision does not pierce the darkness. Due to this effect, the players must fight completely blind. Clever PCs that use a *silence* spell on the shadow bat forces it to fight on an equal level.

Once it locates intruders, it attacks until they die or flee. It never passes through the cave mouth leading into the dividing chamber. The creature fights to the death in the lair.

**Creatures:** A shadow bat lives in the eternally dark cavern:

#### APL2 (EL4)

➤ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (7HD):** 37 hp; see Appendix 1.

#### APL4 (EL6)

➤ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (13HD):** 83 hp; see Appendix 1.

#### APL6 (EL8)

➤ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (16HD):** 124 hp; see Appendix 1.

#### APL8 (EL10)

➤ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (22HD):** 158 hp; see Appendix 1.

### Fighting Outside

The characters have the chance to choose their battleground. There are several open fields nearby, in addition to an abandoned farmstead that works perfectly for creating an ambush (see Map#5: Abandoned Farmstead). The PCs must show caution in their choice of where to wage the battle—doing so too close to the Holim Ruins inevitably draws the attention of the orcs there. See that encounter for introducing waves of orcs that attack the PCs if they make too much of a scene. The PCs must draw in the shadow bat while it passes by—waving around the gems in the bag is enough to draw its attention.

**Tactics:** Once the shadow bat arrives, it attacks the PC holding the most number of trinkets (gems, amulet, etc), with the intent to swallow the items. The bat does not possess the snatch ability, so it cannot easily fly away with something in its claws or mouth. Because of this, it avoids picking up a living character and flying off with him. When the bat kills or incapacitates a character carrying trinkets (regardless of where they are on his person), it's considered that it scoops up all the trinkets in its mouth at the same time. Trinkets on the ground in the same square can be swallowed automatically with an attack action (which provokes an attack of opportunity).

The shadow bat then attacks the next PC possessing the most trinkets. Once it kills or incapacitates each trinket holder and swallowed all items present, the bat keeps attacking for another five rounds, looking for anything it missed. aggressive, but not particularly smart, the shadow bat responds to taunting or the bait of trinkets. At APL 6 and 8, if the shadow bat loses half or more of its hit points, it retreats for 1d6 rounds to use its fast healing ability, before resuming the assault.

The bat always retreats to its lair before sunrise. Magical light (such as *daylight*) does not fool it.

**Note:** For story atmosphere's sake, describe the shadow blend ability of the bat is not perfect, sometimes providing glimpses of its horrible shape (though for play purposes, its still considered full concealment). Allow the characters some clue that it is present (after it attacks if surprise is its goal).

### Fighting Another Day

If the PCs fail to kill the shadow bat the first night, they can attempt again on another night. They may obtain more trinkets from the Eastfair Thieves Guild, in exchange for one Influence Point. This trade gains two valueless items of palm size that work well as bait. The PCs can continue this tactic until they or the shadow bat is killed.

**Treasure:** There are two sets of treasure for this encounter. The first is what is inside the gullet of the shadow bat. The second is what can be found in the lair (assuming the characters possess an amulet to get themselves inside).

The wrapped book that the Zilchus Western Company needs to stop the siege sits in the gullet of the shadow bat, as well as some small gems and some old boots. The head of the shadow bat can be taken back to Stylus Rel of the Barons of the Blade to prove worthiness.

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 10; M: 0

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 20; M: *boots of elvinkind* (208 gp).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 40; M: *boots of elvinkind* (208 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 80; M: *boots of speed* (1000 gp).

#### In the lair

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.).

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.), *Gloves of arrow snaring* (333 gp each).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.), *gloves of arrow snaring* (333 gp), *vest of escape* (433 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.), *gloves of arrow snaring* (333 gp), *vest of escape* (433 gp), *Horseshoes of the zephyr* (500 gp).

## CONCLUSION

By this point, the characters hopefully answered many of their nagging questions about their quest. Described below are the objectives and results during this adventure. The characters just need to go check in for most of them and then cash out.

### Success

If the characters retrieve the book from the shadow bat, the Exchequer demands to get it back. This must be done within six game days of the start of the adventure.

Doing this allows the Exchequer to make a deal with the mysterious evil puppet master (one of many in Eastfair) to cool the hostilities on the Zilchus Western Company and the Church of Zilchus in general within Eastfair. This pleases the Exchequer and rewards the PCs as described below. However, the Exchequer does not free Afronidious—nothing short of violence changes this.

**The Exchequer's Policy:** Your efforts in saving the Eastfair branch of the Zilchus Western Company, brings you great favor. This character now has access to the *axiomatic weapon* enhancement for the standard cost.

### Failure

If the characters failed to return the book to the Exchequer after six days from the beginning of the adventure, they fail the mission. A bloody siege begins in the streets of Eastfair. Catapults move in, heavy infantry line the streets, and orcs begin to rain down death. Characters foolish enough to try and get involved are magically teleported away by the higher-ranking clerics of the order. This is done to make sure witnesses survive to tell the tale and possibly get revenge. The results of the battle are unknown to the characters at the end of the adventure, other than the compound fell.

Suffice it to say, the characters receive no reward from the Exchequer. But, the PCs still possess the book, they may hold on to it. Only one player's AR may have the book at the end. Cross it off if they did not keep the book.

**"Cook Book of Evil":** Only one character at a table may keep this. It cannot yet be opened and its contents are a mystery. The book seems mundane, but the magic keeping it shut detects as powerful.

### Friend of the Whirling Dervish

If the characters have made it this far, they've indubitably have pleased Clinorus by helping his friends of the Zilchus Western Company. But if the characters have returned the golden half circle to the Guilders (as requested) then he's extra pleased. Because of that pleasure, he makes a spur of the moment oath to the characters.

**Friends of the Whirling Dervish:** You earned your self a good friend, Clinorus, who allows you free room and board at the inn. Free upkeep upgrade when adventuring in Eastfair.

### Conversion by Sword

As promised, the leader of the Baron's of the Blades is willing to accept those honestly willing into his sect of Kelanen. This sect has beliefs on Kelanen's mortal origins that are not necessarily shared by other worshipers of the Lord of Swords. Thus, they need converts to travel outwards and spread the word of the sword.

For those who proved their worth by bring back the head of a foe that has killed many (the head of the shadow dire bat works fine), accepts the *atonement* (if a cleric) or oath (if not), and the tattoo of the Lord of Swords; will be made honorary members of the Baron's of the Blade.

They are of course not expected to stay in Eastfair, but should travel forth and make more conversions by sword, and seek the balance of their inner self through combat.

For non-clerics characters, the *atonement* is a roleplaying device and switches the characters patron god to Kelaren, Lord of Swords. They may decide to change their alignment as well (unless there is a previously existing game effect preventing this), but face the possible consequences as normal.

**Honorary Blader:** This character proved her worth and accepted *atonement* and conversion to this sect of the Lord of Swords. The tattoo proves it. As long as this god is worshiped, once per week, this character can make a Smite attack equal to their character level -3. Switching gods removes the tattoo.

In addition to the above reward, cleric characters undergoing these rites, the *atonement* allows them to switch their patron god to Kelanen, Lord of Swords, as well as their alignment to suit the god's requirements. As normal, the character loses access to his current domains and gains those of his new god (Travel and War).

Those who have gone through the *atonement* rites in good faith and accept Kelaren (and this sect) as their new dogmatic path, gain access to the following special holy symbol of Kelaren.

**Greater Holy Symbol of Kelanen:** This particular magical blade is forged in the Eastfair shrine of Kelaren.

The type of sword can be any martial sword. This *+1 sword* has the words "*Have Sword, Will Travel*" written in Old Oeridian on the blade. The sword can be used as a holy symbol of Kelaren. For the cost of 3 turn/rebuke attempts, it activates *keen edges* on the blade at the cleric's caster level. Only clerics of Kelanen may use this ability. This item can be upgraded as normal.

*Access:* Any; Caster Level 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *keen edges* or *weapon of the deity*, must be a cleric of Kelanen; *weight:* 4 lbs; *base cost:* 8000 gp.

**The End**

## EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

### Encounter 3: First Blood

Kill the vampires.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	320 XP

### Encounter 6: Crypt of Shadows

Defeat the mechanism **or** kill the asps

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	320 XP

### Encounter 6: Like a Bat out of Shadow

Defeat the shadow bat.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	320 XP

### Story Award

Staying undetected at the Holim Ruins.

APL 2	20 XP
APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	45 XP
APL 8	60 XP

### Good Roleplaying:

APL 2	70 XP
APL 4	100 XP
APL 6	135 XP
APL 8	165 XP

### Total Possible Experience

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,250 XP

## TREASURE SUMMARY

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

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10

minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

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

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

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

L = Looted gear from enemy.

C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables.

M = Magic Items (sell value).

### Encounter 1: The cost of doing business

**Treasure:** Hand in the ticket and accept the package.

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

### Encounter 3: First Blood

**Treasure:** Loot the vampire (spawn).

Jirwelt's pouch holds the gold half circle (magical, abjuration) that the Guilders want. In another pouch is 30 gp in coins and gear with a looting value of 20 gp.

**APL 2:** L: 20; C: 30; M: *Golden half circle* (100 gp).

**APL 4:** L: 20; C: 30; M: *Golden half circle* (100 gp).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *Golden half circle* (100 gp), *chain shirt +1* (104 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *Golden half circle* (100 gp), *chain shirt +1* (104 gp).

### Encounter 4: Shedding some light

**Treasure:** Accept the gift once it is offered.



**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *aid* (25 gp each), *+1 longsword* (193 gp).

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potions of *aid* (25 gp each), *+1 longsword* (193 gp).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 0; M: 6 potion of *aid* (25 gp each), *+1 keen longsword* (692 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 0; M: *Potion of aid* (x6) (25 gp each), *+1 keen longsword* (692 gp).

### Encounter 6: Crypt of Shadows

**Treasure:** Loot the woodpiles for the gem(s) and the corpses.

**APL 2:** L: 2; C: 10; M: 0

**APL 4:** L: 2; C: 20; M: 0

**APL 6:** L: 2; C: 40; M: 0

**APL 8:** L: 2; C: 80; M: 0

### Encounter 8: Like a Bat out of Baator

**Treasure:** There are two sets of treasure for this encounter. The first is what is inside the gullet of the shadow bat. The second is what can be found in the lair (assuming the characters have an amulet to get themselves inside).

Inside the shadow bat is the book that the Zilchus Western Company needs to stop the siege. As well, some small gems and some old boots.

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 10; M: “*Cook Book of Evil*” (1gp)

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 20; M: “*Cook Book of Evil*” (1gp), *boots of elvinkind* (208 gp).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 40; M: “*Cook Book of Evil*” (1gp), *boots of elvinkind* (208 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 80; M: “*Cook Book of Evil*” (1gp), *boots of speed* (1000 gp).

#### In the lair

**APL 2:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.).

**APL 4:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.), *Gloves of arrow snaring* (333 gp each).

**APL 6:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.), *gloves of arrow snaring* (333 gp), *vest of escape* (433 gp).

**APL 8:** L: 0; C: 100; M: *Chime of opening* (250 gp.), *gloves of arrow snaring* (333 gp), *vest of escape* (433 gp), *Horseshoes of the zephyr* (500 gp).

#### Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 2: 400 gp

APL 4: 600 gp

APL 6: 800 gp

APL 8: 1250 gp

#### Adventure Record Text

*Cross out the following if it does not apply:*

##### ALL APLs (if awarded)

**Old City Badges:** These outer garments and symbols allow you to carry arms and armor as well as cross the Spider's Gate with less hassle than most.

**Friends of the Whirling Dervish:** You earned your self a good friend, Clinorus, who allows you free room and board at the inn. Free upkeep upgrade when adventuring in Eastfair.

**The Exchequer's Policy:** Your efforts in saving the Eastfair branch of the Zilchus Western Company, brings you great favor. This character now has access to the *axiomatic weapon* enhancement for the standard cost.

**“Cook Book of Evil”:** Only one character at a table may keep this. It cannot be opened, yet, and its contents are a mystery. The book seems mundane, but the magic keeping it shut detects as powerful.

**Honorary Blader:** This character proved her worth and accepted *atonement* and conversion to this sect of the Lord of Swords, and receives a tattoo to prove it. As long as this god is worshiped, once per week, this character can make a Smite attack equal to their character level –3. This ability ceases to function if the character stops worshipping the Lord of Swords or gives allegiance to another deity.

**Greater Holy Symbol of Kelaren:** This particular magical blade is forged in the Eastfair shrine of Kelanen. Any martial sword suffices. This *+1 sword* has the words “*Have Sword, Will Travel*” written in Old Oeridian on the blade. The sword can be used as a holy symbol of Kelaren. For the cost of 3 turn/rebuke attempts, it activates *keen edges* on the blade at the cleric's caster level. Only clerics of Kelaren may use this ability. This item can be upgraded as normal.

*Access:* Any; *Caster Level* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, either *keen edges* or *weapon of the deity* spell, must be a cleric of Kelanen; *Weight:* 4 lbs; *Base Cost:* 8000 gp.

#### Items Found During the Adventure

*Cross off all items not found*

##### APL 2

*Chime of opening* (Any, DMG)

*Greater holy symbol of Kelaren* (Any, see above)

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

*Boots of elvinkind* (Adventure, DMG)

*Gloves of arrow snaring* (Adventure, DMG)

##### APL 6 (all of APL 2-4 plus the following)

*+1 keen longsword* (Adventure, DMG)

*Vest of escape* (Adventure, DMG)

##### APL 8 (all of APL 2-6 plus the following)

*Boots of speed* (Adventure, DMG)

*Horseshoes of the zephyr* (Adventure, DMG)

## APPENDIX 1: NPC AND MONSTER STATISTICS

### Encounter 3: First Blood

#### APL6

☛ **Jirwelt:** Male vampire Clr4/Rog2; CR 8; Medium undead (augmented humanoid [human]); HD 6d12; hp 38; Init +9; Spd 30 ft; AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +10 ranged (1d4+3/19-20, dagger) or +11 melee (1d6+3/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +8 melee (1d6+4, slam); Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+3/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +8 melee (1d6+4, slam); SA sneak attack +1d6, rebuke undead; SQ evasion, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 20, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +12, Climb +4, Concentrate +6, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +6, Disguise +6, Hide +14, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (planes) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +7, Sense Motive +6, Search +11, Spellcraft +6, Spot +14; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Finesse.

*Possessions:* 3 daggers, masterwork rapier, masterwork thieves' tools, *chain shirt* +1.

*Cleric Spells Prepared* (5/4+1/3+1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* (2), *light*, *mending*, *read magic* (2); 1st—*command*, *divine favor*, *doom* (2), *protection from law*\*; 2nd—*desecrate*\*, *hold person* (3).

Domains\*: Evil; All spells with the Evil modifier are +1 spell level. Chaos; All spells with the Chaos modifier are +1 spell level.

#### APL8

☛ **Jirwelt:** Male vampire Clr5/Rog3; CR 8; Medium undead (augmented humanoid [human]); HD 8d12; hp 50; Init +9; Spd 30 ft; AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +11 ranged (1d4+3/19-20, dagger) or +12 melee (1d6+3/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +9 melee (1d6+4, slam); Full Atk +12 melee (1d6+3/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +9 melee (1d6+4, slam); SA sneak attack +2d6, rebuke undead; SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 17, Dex 20, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +12, Climb +5, Concentrate +7, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +7, Disguise +7, Hide +14, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (planes) +6, Listen +15, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +8, Sense Motive +8, Search +11, Spellcraft +6, Spot +15; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Finesse.

*Possessions:* 3 daggers, masterwork rapier, masterwork thieves' tools, *chain shirt* +1.

*Cleric Spells Prepared* (5/4+1/3+1/2+1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* (2), *light*, *mending*, *read magic* (2); 1st—*command*, *divine favor*, *doom* (2), *protection from law*\*, 2nd—*desecrate*\*, *hold person* (3),

3rd—*blindness*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*\*.

Domains\*: Evil; All spells with the Evil modifier are +1 spell level. Chaos; All spells with the Chaos modifier are +1 spell level.

### Encounter 5: Holim Ruins

☛ **Orc Sergeant:** male orc Bbn 2; CR 2; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 2d12+4; hp 11; Init +1, Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2, Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (1d12+6/x3, masterwork greataxe); Full Atk +8 melee (1d12+6/x3, masterwork greataxe); SA Rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Jump +10; Intimidate +2, Listen +4; Weapon Focus (greataxe).

**Rage (Ex):** 1/day—hp 15; AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d12+9/x3, masterwork greataxe); Full Atk +10 melee (1d12+9/x3, masterwork greataxe); SV Fort +7, Will +2; Str 23; Con 18; Jump +12.

**Light Sensitivity (Ex):** Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or with int radius of a *daylight* spell.

*Possessions:* chain shirt, greataxe.

## **Encounter 6: Crypt of Shadows**

### **APL2 and 4**

☛ **Shadow Asp:** CR 1; Tiny magical beast; HD 1d10+2; hp 7; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 19; touch 17; flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -7; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d3-2 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA create spawn, poison; SQ darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal form, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +1; ABL Str 7, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +6, Hide +16, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Spot +7; Weapon Finesse.

*Create Spawn (Su):* A creature that has his strength reduced to 0 by a shadow asp's poison dies and rises as a shadow in 1d2 days. Such a shadow is considered uncontrolled, but it is bound to the area, usually a tomb or crypt, as a guardian, unable to stray more than 100 feet from the spot where it was first spawned.

*Poison (Ex):* A shadow asp delivers its poison (Fort DC 12 negates) with each successful bite attack. Initial and secondary damage are the same (1d6 Str).

*Incorporeal Form (Su):* A shadow asp can become incorporeal for up to 1 hour per day. It can activate this ability at will (a free action), and the time of use need not be continuous. While incorporeal, a shadow asp's Armor Class is 17 (+2 size, +5 Dex). The shadow asp cannot deal damage to corporeal opponents in this form. The creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, except for force effects or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. An incorporeal shadow asp can pass through solid objects, but not force effects, at will. Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, but deflection bonuses and force effects work normally against them. A shadow asp always moves silently while incorporeal and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be.

*Skills:* A shadow asp has a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks due to its natural camouflage, and a +5 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks due to its natural vigilance. Shadow asps also have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

*Description:* A darkly scaled asp about 4 feet long. As it moves, parts of it seem to be nearly translucent.

### **APL6 and 8**

☛ **Shadow Asp, Advanced (3 HD):** CR 3; Small magical beast; HD 3d10+6; hp 22; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 17; touch 15; flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp -1; Atk same; Full Atk +7 melee (1d4 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA create spawn, poison; SQ darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal form, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; ABL Str 11, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +8, Hide +12, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Spot +9; Alertness, Weapon Finesse.

*Create Spawn (Su):* A creature that has his strength reduced to 0 by a shadow asp's poison dies and rises as a shadow in 1d2 days. Such a shadow is considered uncontrolled, but it is bound to the area, usually a tomb

or crypt, as a guardian, unable to stray more than 100 feet from the spot where it was first spawned.

*Poison (Ex):* A shadow asp delivers its poison (Fort DC 13 negates) with each successful bite attack. Initial and secondary damage are the same (1d6 Str).

*Incorporeal Form (Su):* A shadow asp can become incorporeal for up to 1 hour per day. It can activate this ability at will (a free action), and the time of use need not be continuous. While incorporeal, a shadow asp's Armor Class is 15 (+1 size, +4 Dex). The shadow asp cannot deal damage to corporeal opponents in this form. The creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, except for force effects or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. An incorporeal shadow asp can pass through solid objects, but not force effects, at will. Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, but deflection bonuses and force effects work normally against them. A shadow asp always moves silently while incorporeal and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be.

*Skills:* A shadow asp has a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks due to its natural camouflage, and a +5 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks due to its natural vigilance. Shadow asps also have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

*Appearance:* A darkly scaled asp about 8 feet long. As it moves, parts of it seem to be nearly translucent.

## **Encounter 6: Like a Bat out of Baator**

### **APL2**

☛ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (7 HD):** CR 4; Large magical beast (augmented animal, shadow template); HD 7d8+9; hp 37; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +11; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, bite); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ blindsense, cold resistance 12, damage reduction 5/magic, dark vision 60 ft., low-light vision 60 ft., Shadow Blend; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 22, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +5, Listen +16, Move Silently +18, Spot +13; Alertness, Flyby Attack, Stealthy.

**Blindsense (Ex):** A dire bat uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 40 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against the bat unless it can actually see them.

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

### **APL4**

☛ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (13 HD):** CR 6; Large magical beast (augmented animal, shadow template); HD 13d8+39; hp 83; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +8; Grp +15; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4, bite); Full Atk +11 melee (1d8+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ blindsense, cold resistance 18, damage reduction 5/magic, dark vision 60 ft., evasion, low-light vision 60 ft., Shadow Blend, +2 luck bonus on all saving throws; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +16, Will +7; Str 17, Dex 22, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +8, Listen +17, Move Silently +19, Spot +14; Alertness, Diehard, Endurance, Flyby Attack, Stealthy.

**Blindsense (Ex):** A dire bat uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 40 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against the bat unless it can actually see them.

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

### **APL6**

☛ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (16 HD):** CR 8; huge magical beast (augmented animal, shadow template); HD 16d8+80; hp 124; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +10; Grp +25; Atk +17 melee (2d6+10, bite); Full Atk +17 melee (2d6+10, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA –; SQ Blindsense, cold resistance 20, damage reduction 5/magic, dark vision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 2, low-light vision 60 ft., Shadow Blend, +2 luck bonus on all saving throws; AL NE; SV

Fort +15, Ref +15, Will +7; Str 25, Dex 20, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +6, Listen +18, Move Silently +16, Spot +16; Alertness, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Stealthy.

**Blindsense (Ex):** A dire bat uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 40 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against the bat unless it can actually see them.

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

### **APL8**

☛ **Shadow Dire Bat, advanced (22 HD):** CR 10; Huge magical beast (augmented animal, shadow template); HD 22d8+110; hp 158; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +14; Grp +29; Atk +21 melee (3d6+10, bite); Full Atk +21 melee (3d6+10, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SQ blindsense, cold resistance 20, damage reduction 5/magic, dark vision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 2, low-light vision 60 ft., mirror image, shadow blend, +2 luck bonus on all saving throws; AL NE; SV Fort +18, Ref +18, Will +9; Str 25, Dex 20, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +9, Listen +19, Move Silently +17, Spot +17; Alertness, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack, Improved Natural Armor, Mobility, Stealthy.

**Blindsense (Ex):** A dire bat uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 40 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against the bat unless it can actually see them.

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

**Mirror image (Su):** The creature can use *mirror image* as the spell (caster level 5th) once per day.

## APPENDIX 2: PLAYER HANDOUTS

### Player Handout 1

A metal scroll tube with the markings of the office of the Holy Clerk holds a single sheet of parchment.

To my intrepid adventurer friends,

If you are reading this, then I am dead, or worse, desiring death. Either I've been cut down in the streets or I'm awaiting death behind the walls of the Eastfair prison. Neither are fates that I desire but I pray it is worth it in the end. That is where you come in. Please, do not let me die in vain.

I want to thank you for what you've done on behalf of my son. I'm glad that he is alive and well, safe in the west. I am glad that you have shown that there is no more threat to him. But I must ask more of you. My Exchequer warned me that my plans to involve heroes such as you would only rock the boat and bring down our sacred Order. It was my pride and arrogance that lead me to failure. I should have obeyed and trusted our policies like I always have in the past. My fault of character led you into danger and doomed my friends and family. I am a disgrace in the eyes of the Money Counter and surely will never get to see the insides of his great vaults or the vats of sacred black ink used to fill his many profitable ledgers.

I beseech you—keep on this quest. Find it in your soul what ever it is that motivates you, for I know you are all different. Do it for my son's continued safety. Do it for the well being of my Order. Do it to rid the land of the evil that you have discovered. Do it to stick a thorn into the side of tyrannical kingdom. Do it to fill your pockets with the loot that is sure to be found. Do it because you've started and won't sleep well till you've finished. Do it because you have nothing better to do. Do it for me, the Clerkster. And most importantly; if you don't stick with this till the end, so help me, I'll come back and haunt you!

This is the part of my letter where I wish I had some great wealth to bequeath to you, or a hidden away weapon that could solve all your woes with witty banter. But the only worthwhile possession I can pass on to you (for the rest comes under strict control of the Order during processing) is this collection of cure moderate wounds potions. I was saving them for a special occasion, but now they'll do me no good. Take the attached ticket and hand it to the new Holy Clerk who will collect the potions from the Vault Keeper (or hand it to the Vault Keeper directly).

In conclusion, I thank you deeply for this. Assuming I don't come back to haunt you, please be assured that I will be watching over you from what ever accounting cubical I get assigned to in the big Underwriter's Guild in the sky. I'll put as many positive notes in your margins as I can.

-Afronidious of the Zilchus Western Company: Eastfair branch.

Holy Clerk of the Temple

Faithful servant of the Money Counter

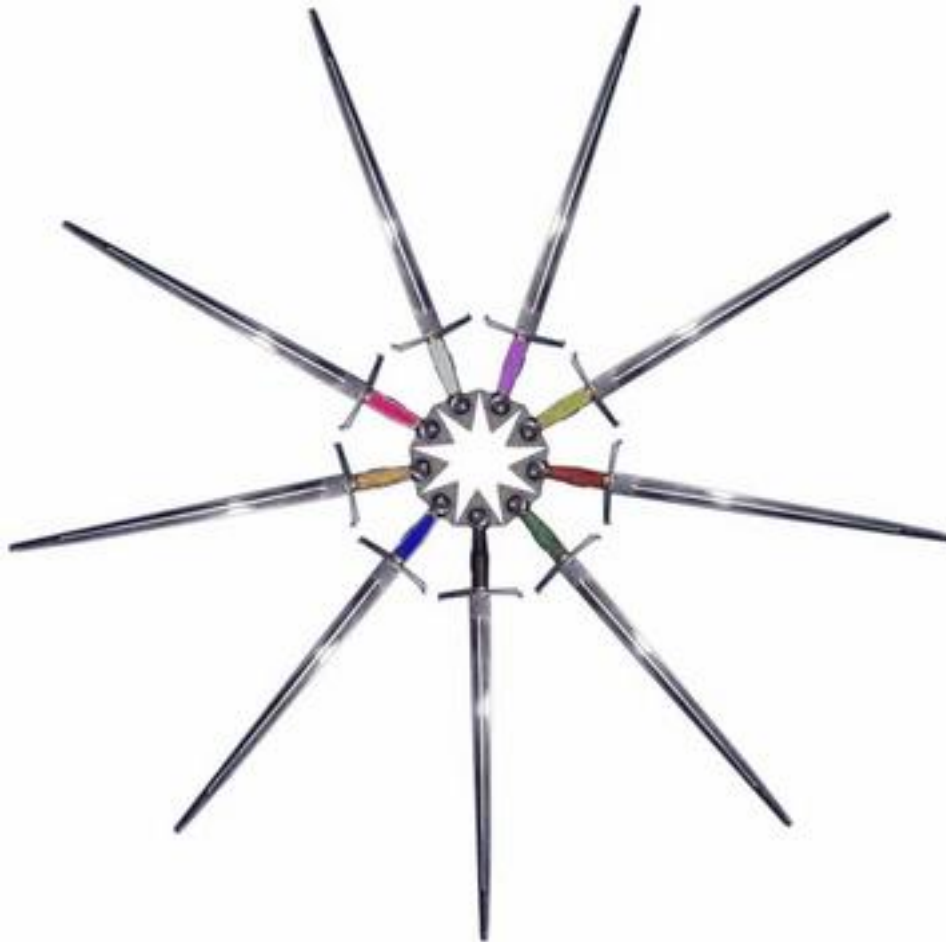
Proud Father

P.S. Whatever you do, don't taunt the Vault Keeper!

P.P.S. Remember those Money Counter Notes I gave you? Sometimes you need to spend your dividends.

## Player Handout 2

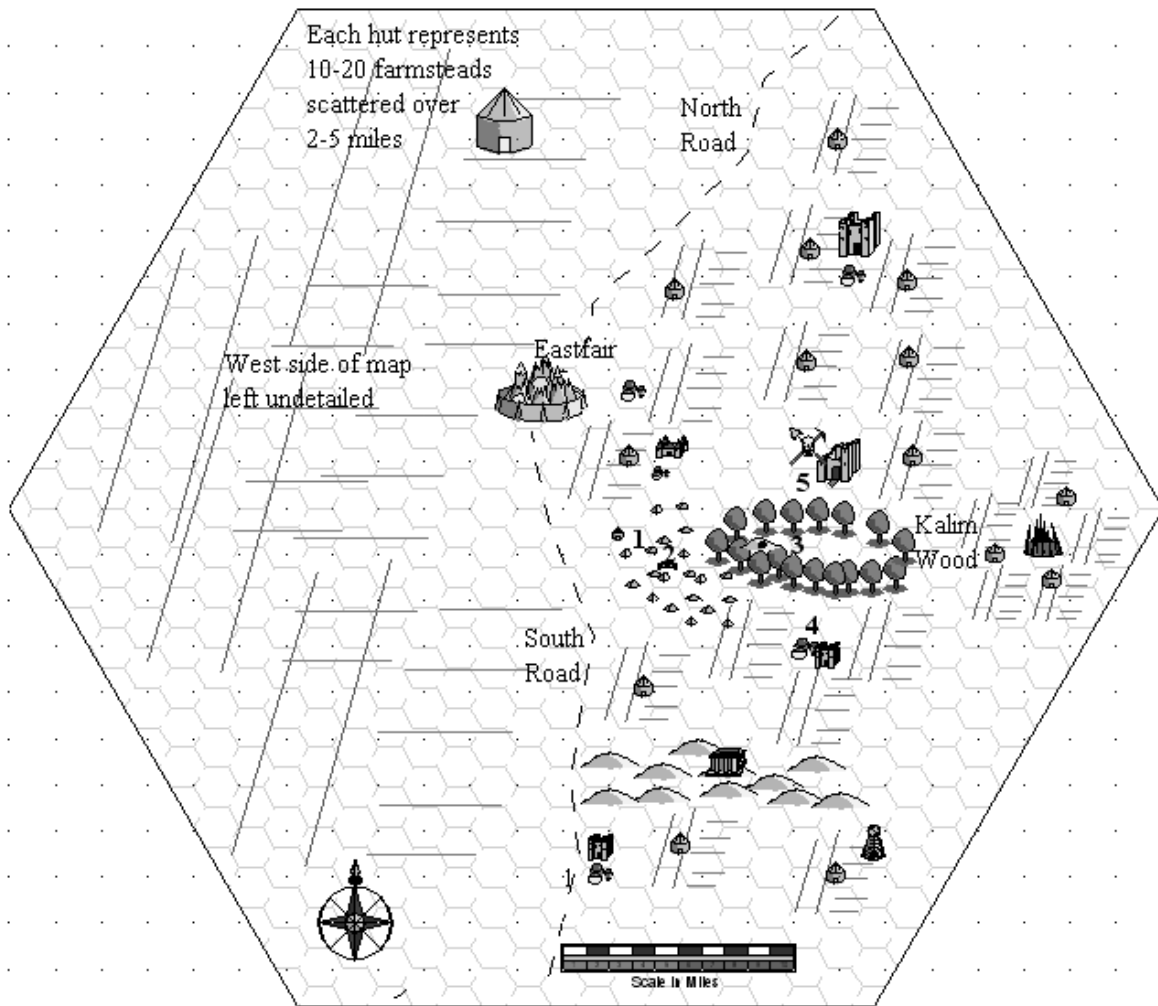
The tattoo of the Barons of the Blades



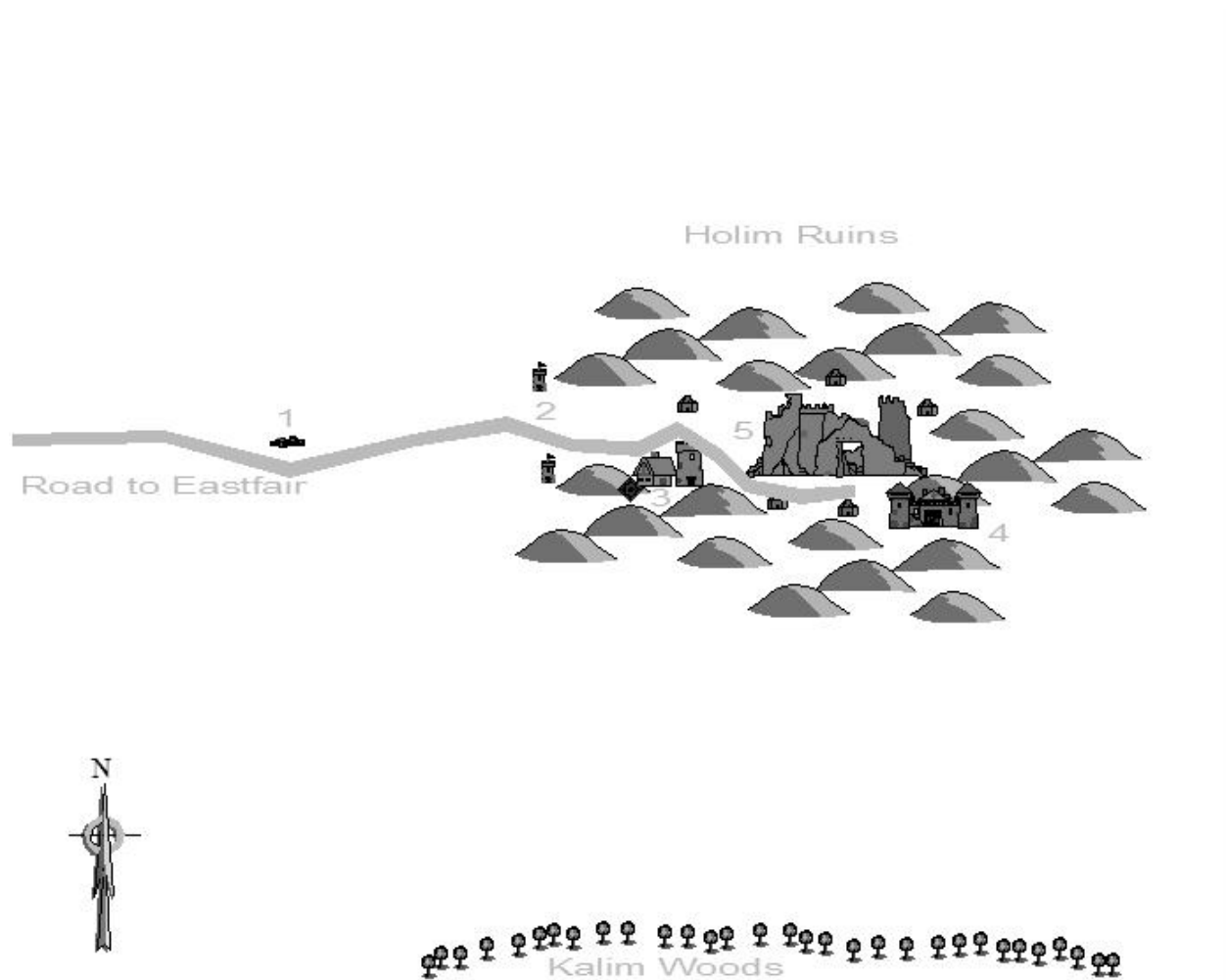
## APPENDIX 3: DM'S MAPS

### Map 1: Outside Eastfair

The countryside east of Eastfair. Item #5 marks the Holim Ruins. It is approximately ten miles via rural trail to Holim Ruins from Eastfair.



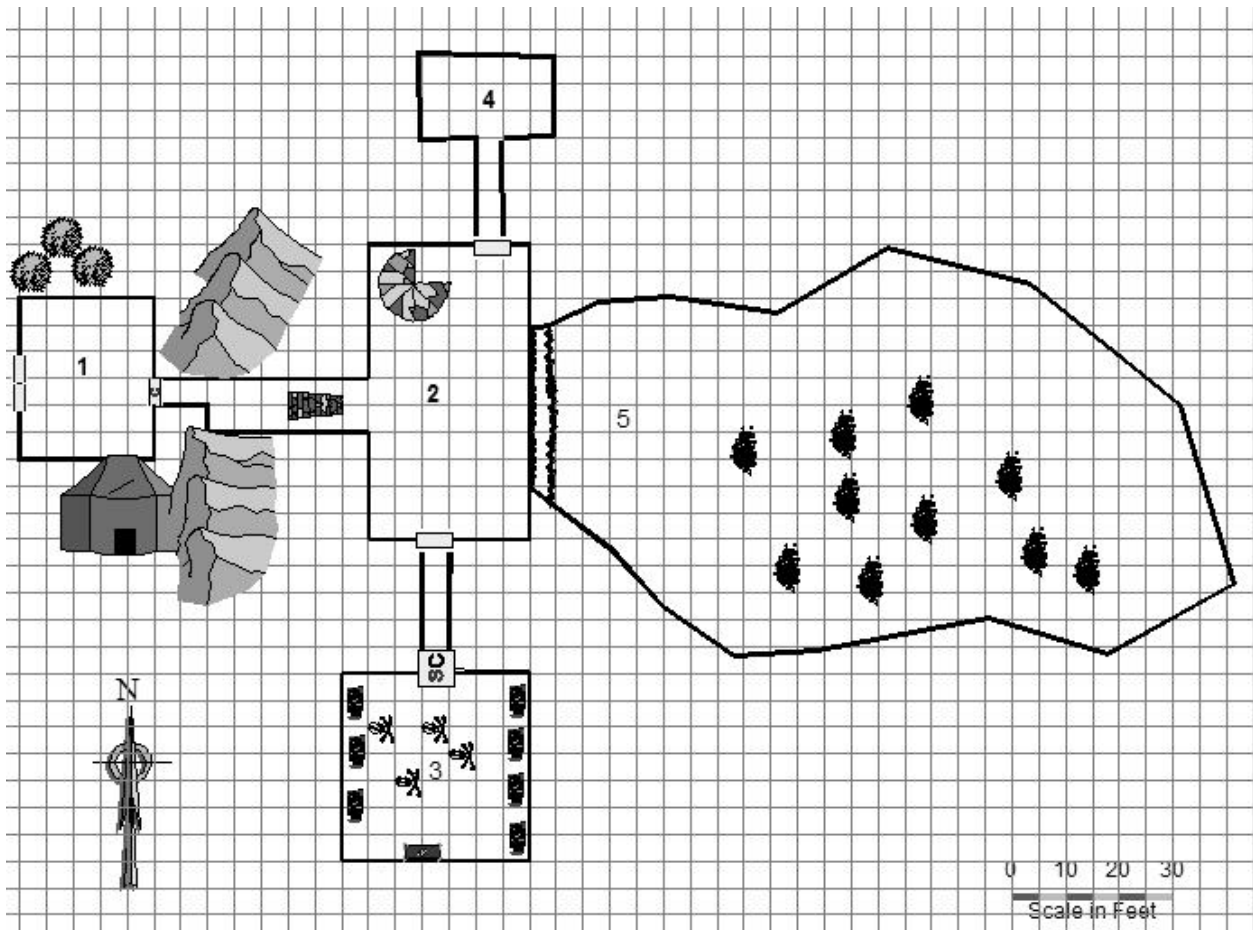
## Map 2 The Holim Ruins



- 1 Human peasantry and other workers.
- 2 Twin sentry posts for road into area
- 3 Supply depot and dig HQ
- 4 Military garrison
- 5 Dig area with orc camps and miscellaneous huts

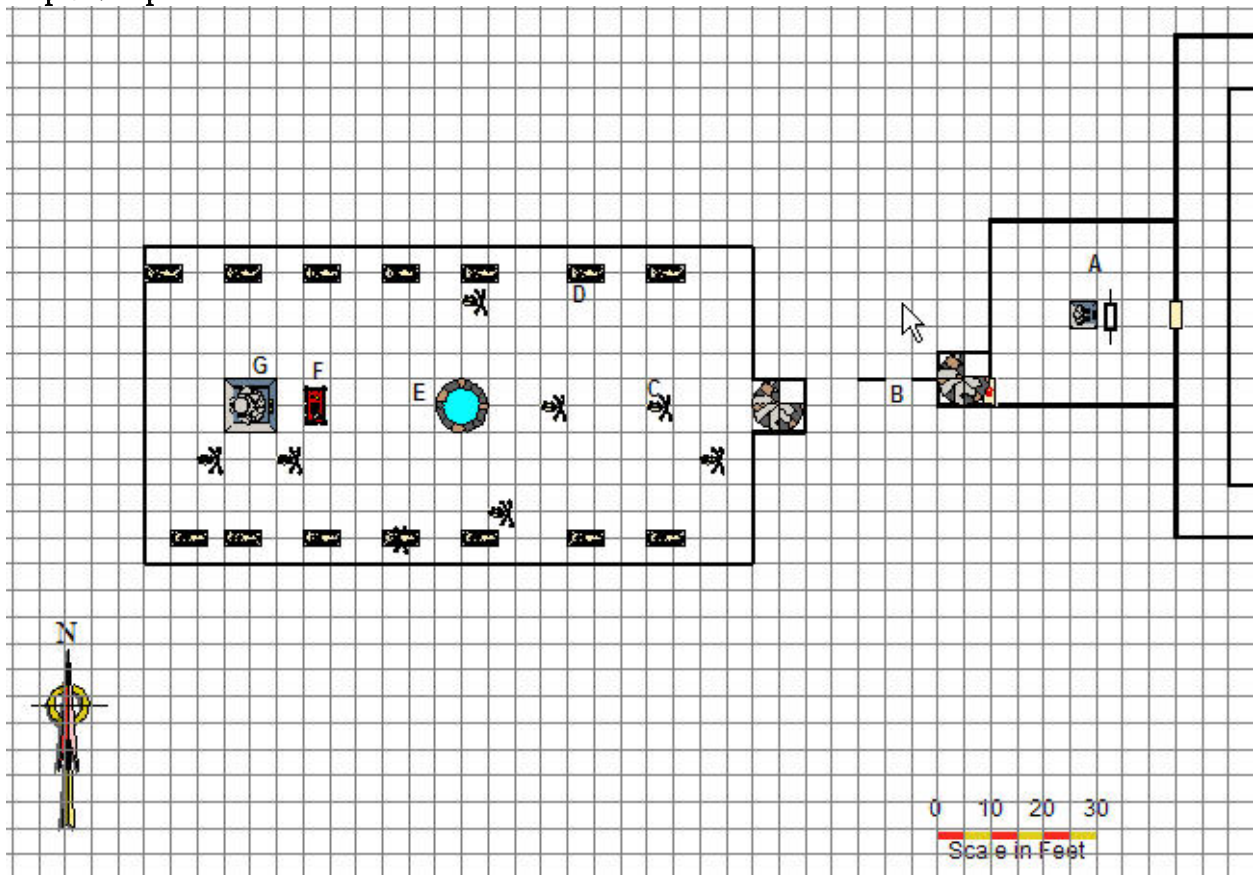


Map 3: The Crypt of Shadows



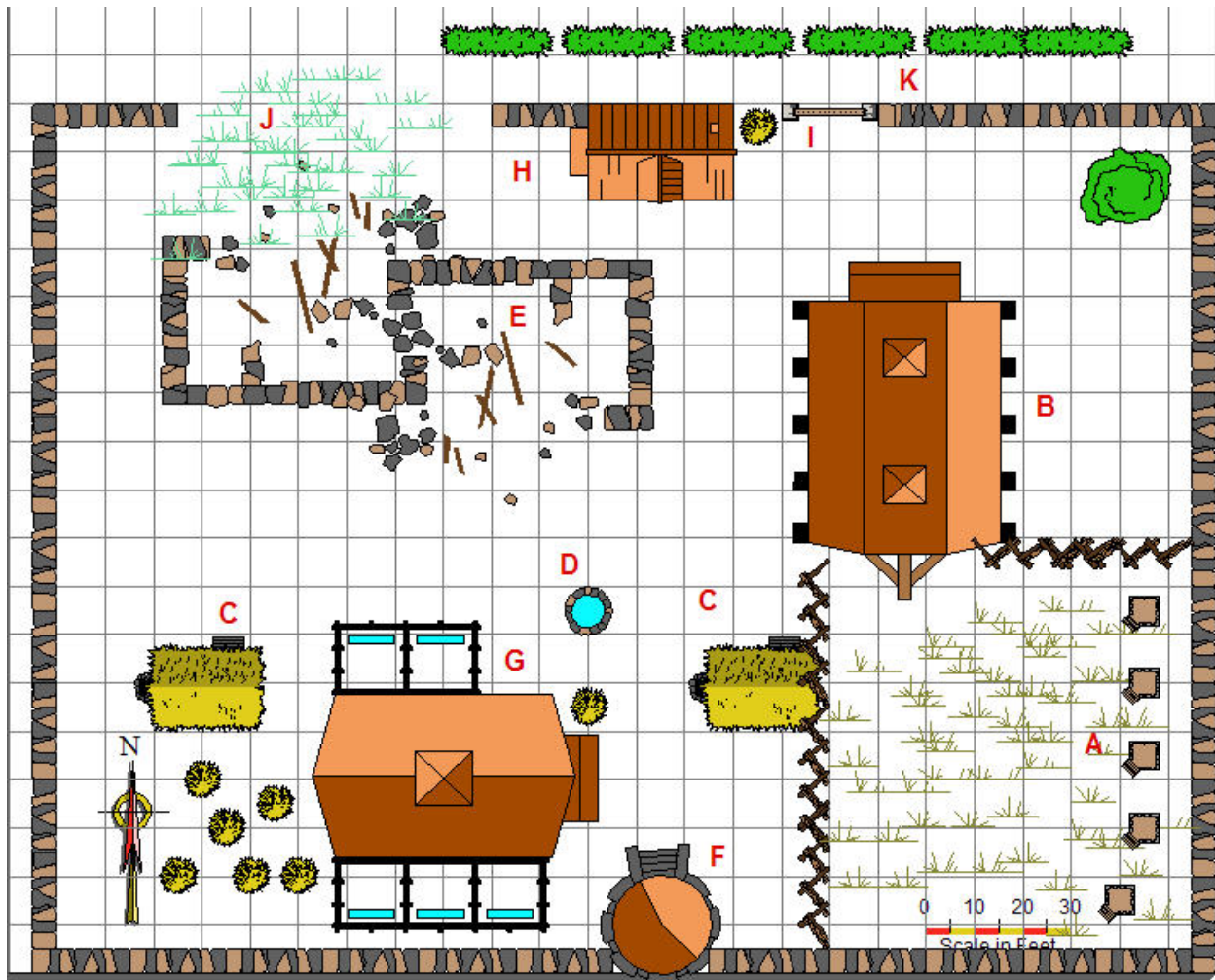
- 1 The depot
- 2 The Dividing chamber
- 3 The shadow asp chamber
- 4 The prison cell
- 5 The Shadow Bat's lair

Map 4: Vampire Shrine Lair



- A- The shrine of Kelarn
- B- The secret stairs top and bottom
- C- bone piles (treat as uneven terrain)
- D- Sarcophagi, stone, 3 ft. high.
- E- Pool of 'fresh' blood. 1 ft. deep.(replenishes, magical *atonement* effect)
- F- Shrine to Erythnul, altar, stone, 4 ft. high
- G- Statue depicting Erythnul, 10 ft. high

Map 5 An Example ruined farmstead



- A: Chicken coop and pen
- B: Barn with second story and roof access
- C: Single room cottages for serfs
- D: Water Well, 15 ft. deep. 5 ft. of water.
- E: Ruins of main house, little left standing.
- F: 20 ft. high wooden watchtower with rope ladder
- G: Horse stables, empty of animals and valuables
- H: Guard/Bunk house for male non-serfs
- I: Reinforced wooden gate attached to 5ft high stone wall that surrounds compound.
- J: Rubble and new plant growth among the smashed wall.
- K: 3 ft. high decorative hedgerow, leads to main overland trail.

## APPENDIX 4: NEW RULES ITEMS

### Shadow Creatures

(From *Manual of the Planes*)

Shadow creatures dwell on the Plane of Shadow, sometimes crossing into other planes where the barriers between dimensions are weak. Just as parts of the Plane of Shadow resemble a strange, distorted version of the Material Plane, shadow creatures superficially resemble creatures from the Material Plane. Shadow creatures are darker, more elusive, and spookier than their material counterparts. Grays and blacks are their most common colors, with white and yellow rarely seen. They are not to be confused with shadows (undead creatures that often dwell on the Plane of Shadow). Other creatures native to the Plane of Shadow exist that have stronger or weaker connections to the energies of that place (such as the shadow mastiff) and do not follow this template.

### Creating a Shadow Creature

"Shadow" is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "magical beast." It otherwise uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted below.

**Speed:** As base creature x 1 ½.

**Special Qualities:** A shadow creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following ones:

Cold resistance of 5 + 1 per HD, to a maximum of 20.

Darkvision out to 60 feet.

Low-light vision.

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

Shadow creatures also have one additional supernatural ability for every 4 HD they possess (minimum of one) chosen from the following list:

+2 luck bonus on all saving throws

**Cause fear (Su):** The creature can cause fear as the spell (caster level 5th) once per day.

**Damage reduction 5/magic**

**Evasion** (as the rogue class feature).

**Mirror image (Su):** The creature can use mirror image as the spell (caster level 5th) once per day.

**Plane shift (Su):** The creature may plane shift itself to or from the Plane of Shadow once per day as the spell (caster level 15th).

**Fast Healing 2.**

If the base creature already has one or more of these special qualities, use the better value.

**Skills:** Same as the base creature, plus Move Silently +6.

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature +1.

**Alignment:** Same as the base creature, although rarely good.

**Level Adjustment:** +2

### Shadow Asp

(From *Fiend Folio* page 152)

**Tiny Magical Beast**

**Hit Dice:** 1d10+2 (7 hp)

**Initiative:** +5

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares) climb 10 ft. (2 squares)

**Armor Class:** 19 (+2 size, +5 Dex, +2 natural), touch 17, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack / Grapple:** +1/+9

**Attack:** Bite +8 melee (1d3-2 plus poison)

**Full Attack:** Bite +8 melee (1d3-2 plus poison)

**Space / Reach:** 2 ½ ft / 0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Create spawn, poison

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal form, low-light vision.

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 7, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Skills:** Climb +6, Hide +16, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Spot +7

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse

**Environment:** Any tomb or underground

**Organization:** Solitary or clutch (3-12)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Treasure:** 50% coins, 50% goods, 50% items

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 2-3 HD (Small)

**Level Adjustment:** —

Shadow asps are dark versions of their more common reptilian cousins. They often guard the tombs of kings and other important members of royal families. Naturally observant, quiet, and capable of creating even more guards, they are perfectly suited to this task.

The length of the average shadow asp is 4 feet long. Its dark scaled body often seems nearly translucent due to the potential the creature has to become incorporeal. No pattern adorns its scales, making the creature nearly invisible in the gloomy surroundings it favors.

Thought to have originated on the Plane of Shadow, shadow asps quickly found a niche on the Material Plane as "watchdogs" at the tombs of pharaohs and other great leaders, which is where they're more often encountered. Clutches might also be found near portals to the Plane of Shadow or in out-of-the-way Underdark locales.

### Combat

Shadow asps are smarter than normal snakes, and anyone observing their tactics can easily see this. They use their ability to become incorporeal to mob intruders in the tombs they're set to guard, emerging to bite from the walls, floors and even ceilings. They prefer to bite and then flee, instinctively aware that their venom takes time to work, then returning to

strike and flee again. They are often accompanied in battle by the shadows of slain intruders of the past.

**Create Spawn (Su):** A creature slain by a shadow asp's poison rises as a shadow in 1d2 days. Such a shadow is considered uncontrolled, but it is bound to the area, usually a tomb or crypt, as a guardian, unable to stray more than 100 feet from the spot where it was first spawned.

**Poison (Ex):** A shadow asp delivers its poison (Fort DC 12 negates) with each successful bite attack. Initial and secondary damage are the same (1d6 Str).

**Incorporeal Form (Su):** A shadow asp can become incorporeal for up to 1 hour per day. It can activate this ability at will (a free action), and the time of use need not be continuous. While incorporeal, a shadow asp's Armor Class is 17 (+2 size, +5 Dex). The shadow asp cannot deal damage to corporeal opponents. The creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, except for force effects or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. An incorporeal shadow asp can pass through solid objects, but not force effects, at will. Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, but deflection bonuses and force effects work normally against them. A shadow asp always moves silently while incorporeal and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be.

**Skills:** A shadow asp has a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks due to its natural camouflage, and a +5 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks due to its natural vigilance. Shadow asps also have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

## Kelannen

*Hero-God of Swords, Sword Skills, Balance*

**Worshippers:** Unknown and commonly accepted across the Flanaess [This sect particular sect believes him to be of the Oeridian pantheon]

**Holy Symbol:** Nine Swords in a Star, pointing outwards.

**Alignment:** N

**Domains:** Travel, War

**Weapon(s):** Any martial sword (m)

**Weapon of the Deity spell:** +1 keen longsword

Of unknown race and origin, Kelannen (KEL-a-nen) is probably the best known and most popular hero-deity in the Flanaess. He may appear in any humanoid form, although he is traditionally shown as a man with a silvery scar on the right side of this face. Quiet and determined, Kelannen is obsessed with swords of all types and the preserving the balance between good, evil, chaos, and law. He has been known to work on the side of any of the alignments to push the balance of power back to the middle. His myths say that he discovered the resting place of three of the magical swords known as the *Pillars of Heaven*, and that he wrested the sword Fragrach the Answerer from an alien god. He created the legendary “final word” swords, from which his holy symbol (nine swords in a star shape, points outward) is derived. He cult is popular in the Hold of the Sea Princes and among the humans of the now Pomarj-controlled Wild Coast and neighboring lands.

**Dogma:** Mastery of the sword is the path to mastery of the self. Relentlessly practice your skills with all kinds of blades, until you are competent with them all. Eschew all extremes, for only when you are in the center are you truly balanced and at your best. Bring down those in power who carry too strongly the taint of the Four Dooms: Chaos, Evil, Good, and Law, for Balance is the true ideal.

**Clergy:** Kelannen's clerics spend much of their time practicing with at least one kind of sword, and many study at martial academies all over the Flanaess in order to master all styles of combat with their favorite blade. They adventure as a means of acquiring wealth to get more powerful and perfect weapons, and to restore the Balance. Few of his clerics are of alignments other than neutral, for such paths are seen as an intentional disregard for the teachings of Kelannen. It is a violation of the faith's code of conduct to use any sort of weapon other than a sword or crossbow.