

URDI-10

NEVER THE SAME THING TWICE

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK®
Duchy of Urnst Regional Adventure

Version 1

by Daniel R. Thomson

Banditry is an accepted hazard when traveling the trade routes of any nation, and when that trade route borders other nations that risk increases. But near the small village of Thallin on the Nesser River, only empty caravans are attacked, perplexing those that travel this road.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK and RPGA are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. LIVING GREYHAWK is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Scenario detail copyright 2001 by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without approval of the RPGA Network.

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

PREPARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SCORING

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

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

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

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

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

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

DETERMINING AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

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

- 1) Determine the character level for each PC participating in the adventure.
 - 2) If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e., animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
- | CR | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1/4 and 1/6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1/3 and 1/2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
- 3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure—round up.
 - 4) If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the

APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

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

If you are using a 591 CY adventure (campaign year 1) that uses the old Tiers, assume that the Tier multiplied by 2 is the APL suitable for that encounter.

IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Wild: You are living the wild as a nomad, or perhaps in a cave. You hunt and gather your own food, and your clothes consist of furs, leathers, or hand-woven garments. At times, food is scarce and you must go hungry.

You must pass a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 16) to survive with this lifestyle, if you fail you are **destitute** instead. You may take 10 on this check.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Rough: You live in the wilderness, either roaming a specific territory or living in a crude shack or tent. Your meals come from hunting and foraging, possibly supplemented by a few crops or herded animals. You barter for equipment and trade for coins when possible. You wear peasant clothing, leather, furs, or hand-woven garments.

You must pass a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 14) to survive with this lifestyle, if you fail you are **poor** instead. You may take 10 on this check.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring), nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier	
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Wild	14 sp	-2*
Poor	43 sp	-1
Rough	43 sp	-1*
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

* Reduced to -1 in rural interactions

** No penalty in rural interactions

Bard PCs who choose the Common, High or Luxury lifestyle may roll a Perform check at DC 20 to reduce their lifestyle costs by 25%.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

Overview

The characters arrive in the village of Thallin while accompanying a merchant along the trade route between Seltaren and Nellix. A cult to Syrul situated in an abandoned cabin in the woods outside the village, and with the help of a doppelganger, has been abducting traveling merchants, selling their wares and then sacrificing them to Syrul. The party has an opportunity to expose the cult and save the merchant from an unpleasant end on their sacrificial altar.

Introduction

The characters arrive in the village about an hour before dusk. They have an opportunity to ferret out information from the locals.

Encounter One

Some of the locals have gathered in the tavern. The PCs can talk to the locals and learn a bit about the recent problems in the area. They are approached by Beal the merchant, who asks the players to accompany him for the remainder of his trip.

Encounter Two

If the players accepted the merchant's offer, they will observe the merchant selling all of his trade goods the following morning, and making preparations to return home. Beal acts confused if his actions are questioned. He was replaced by a doppelganger the previous evening and if allowed to, he leaves the village without the PCs as escorts.

Encounter Three

If the party accompanies the false merchant, the cult's undead minions ambush them as they travel along the road. A trail can be located close by that leads back to the abandoned forester's cabin. Some of the attackers will be real undead while others will be illusionary. The undead are marked with the skull-and-scythe symbol of Nerull to direct suspicion away from the cult of Syrul.

Encounter Four

If the players did not accept the merchant's offer in Encounter 1, they learn later about his actions in town, and that he has left the village on foot. The bartender Sulgen provides further details of the village's troubles to the players. They will also be approached by two youths who claim to have seen an old cabin inhabited by corpses.

Encounter Five

The players make their way through the woods towards the cult's cabin hideout. On the way, they may well spring a trap or two.

Encounter Six

The players find the old cabin in the woods. Undead guardians attack as they approach. The doppelganger may return here, in the guise of an injured Sheriff Cern (from Thallin). He offers to lead them into the cabin.

Encounter Seven

The cultists attack anyone entering their cabin. Kisthien assists the party if he is present. He attempts to flee with the cult's *bolt of slaying* (*shapechangers*) at the end of the fight, but will fight a sufficiently weakened party if they attack him. The true Beal can be found tied up in the secret shrine to Syrul beneath the cabin.

Conclusion

With luck, the cult of Syrul will be defeated and Beal rescued, albeit somewhat the worse for wear.

DM'S BACKGROUND

The Events in Thallin

Approximately one month ago, cultists of Syrul set up a shrine to their fell goddess near Thallin. They are operating out of an abandoned forester's cabin in the woods outside the village. With the assistance of Kisthien, a doppelganger, the cultists have been abducting caravan masters that stopped over in the village for the evening. After each abduction, the doppelganger takes the appearance of the merchant and sells their wares (at a staggering loss) to a local agent of House Faeldon.

While this has certainly aroused the suspicion of the guards assigned to the caravans, the locals are for the most part unconcerned. One resident, Mistress Nayln of Faeldon has found the recent turn of events quite fortuitous, as it has served to increase her standing in House Faeldon.

However, all of this changed a few weeks ago. The day after yet another caravan master liquidated his possessions, one of guards returned to Thallin bloodied and near death. He told them a harrowing tale of his master leading them into an ambush, and of undead that resisted the considerable power of their cleric companion. [In point of fact, the cleric was more unlucky than powerless]. The caravan was slaughtered nearly to a man, with the guard surviving only by virtue of playing dead. The guard then accused Mistress Nayln of complicity in a plot to arrange the ambush and rob the caravan.

Sheriff Cern, the local arm of the law of Urnst, heard the charges but found no evidence of Nayln's involvement in any plot. He pointed out the guard's own admission that the caravan was bereft of goods, and that the sale of items by the caravan master the previous days had met with every requirement of the law. However, the events did arouse Cern's suspicions, and since that day he has made of point of being on hand whenever House Faeldon conducts major transactions.

To make matters worse, the bodies of other caravan masters have been found near the village, some dead of apparent suicide, others of horrific injuries. This combination of erratic behavior, unexplained attacks, and random deaths has caused many villagers to depart Thallin in search of safer lands.

The cultists are aware that they are risking discovery, and plan to leave the area within the week. Time enough to land one last fish...

The Conspiracy

A few months ago, Darmin Faeldon, minor member of House Faeldon and manager of their Thallin operations, discovered that a doppelganger was operating within his offices. He learned that he was to be the doppelganger's next victim, but sought the turn the situation to his advantage – for unbeknownst to House Faeldon, Darmin is a follower of Syrul, goddess of deception, and has been instructed by his superiors to destabilize rival merchant and noble houses. Darmin laid a trap for the creature and turned it over to his fellow cultists.

Using the doppelganger, Darmin has formulated a scheme to increase his standing in the cult of Syrul while enhancing his family's riches at the same time. He had received word that ongoing financial difficulties would necessitate the closing of his offices in Thallin, and made arrangements to be assigned instead to a small warehouse in the dock district of Leukish. He left the closing of his former offices to Mistress Nayln and a modest staff. Darmin then directed his fellow conspirators to set up operations in the woods near Thallin, where he would join them before leaving for Leukish.

Using trickery and guile, Darmin has convinced the doppelganger that the cult has placed an enchantment

upon it, allowing them to track it wherever it goes. He has ensured the doppelganger's cooperation through that threat and through a *slaying bolt* (*shapechangers*) that he left with the other cultists. With all the pieces in place, Darmin has since traveled to Leukish, leaving his allies to execute his plan.

The doppelganger and the cultists have begun sneaking into Thallin late at night and abducting merchants from their lodgings. The doppelganger is left in the victim's place, after first subjecting him to use of its thought-reading powers. Disguised as the merchant, the doppelganger has been selling goods to the trading office of House Faeldon at bargain prices, and departing with an empty caravan. The caravan is then led into ambush, with no quarter given. Only a single guard has managed to escape the cult's undead servants. The cult then reunites with their doppelganger ally, and relieves him of the gold obtained by sale of the goods. The cult disposes of their merchant prisoners as they see fit, killing some on their altar and staging fatal "accidents" for the rest.

While House Faeldon's sudden change in fortune has left the affected merchant houses suspicious (to say the least), investigations have turned up no overt evidence of wrongdoing.

The cultists are nearly ready to wrap up their operations in Thallin, and follow Darmin to Leukish. They have prepared "evidence" of the crimes for the authorities, and plan to leave it with the doppelganger's body once they've disposed of that final loose end. They trust that the investigations will end with this discovery.

INTRODUCTION

The players are traveling the trade road between Leukish and Nellix. If the players are unsure why they would be travelling this road, feel free to provide them with one of the reasons below:

- They are traveling to Nellix for pleasure (perhaps the Festival of the Fallen Knights), or business (The College of Sages and Sorcery for wizards, for example).
- They have heard of troubles with the Rhennee barge folk who ply their trade up and down the river.
- They have heard rumors of the recent attacks on caravans along the road.

Once the players are ready to begin play, give them the following introductory information:

You are a few days from Nellix, travelling through a light forest not far from the banks of the Nesser. The weather has been favorable, no rain and cool temperatures, allowing you make better time than you had anticipated. If the conditions hold, you should make Nellix well ahead of schedule.

You have met with other travelers along the way, and have elected to journey together. One of the travelers is a man named Beal, a merchant from Nellix returning from Leukish with a wagon loaded with wares. He talks incessantly to you about his

wife and family, constantly reminding you about his newborn son (of which he is quite proud). Traveling with him is Jerom, a large, brutish and entirely mute guard who could give a half-orc a run for his money.

The others with you are mixed bag of travelers, including several other adventurers. No doubt your group's numbers and strength have kept any bandits at bay. Ahead you can make out a break in the forest, opening onto the village of Thallin. With night fast approaching, this would be a good place to stop for the night.

At this point, have the players in the group briefly introduce their characters to each other. When the players are ready, continue with the introduction.

Thallin is a hamlet on the trade road between Nellix and Leukish. It has obviously seen better days. Most of the buildings are cramped and in need of repair, and some have obviously been abandoned. Only a single building is immune to the malaise that has afflicted the rest of the village. It sports a fresh coat of pale blue paint and an elegant fenced-in courtyard. A large storage shed and a family crest prominently displayed above the gate indicate this is likely the local quarters of a merchant house.

Desirous of a hot meal and a soft bed, you make your way to the community's only inn, a one story ramshackle structure bearing a weather-beaten sign depicting a mule with its hind legs kicking out: The Kicking Mule. A new-looking board of wood has been tacked next to the door, declaring in block letters "NO MAGIC ALLOWED".

The following information can be gleaned from a Knowledge (local) check (DC 20), a Profession (Merchant) check (DC 15), or simply by questioning Beal about the village:

- House Faeldon owns the trading compound, as evidenced by the device on the gates (a silver pine).
- House Faeldon is a minor merchant house specializing in the import and export of wood products (furniture and raw and finished lumber) as well as leather products. The head of house Faeldon is Lord Kerwin Faeldon.
- House Faeldon has major offices in Leukish, Nellix and Pontyrel. They have lesser offices in Goldplain and Seltaren, and a small presence in a variety of minor communities along the major trade routes.
- Faeldon is not an overly rich house. They are also relatively new as an independent house (less than a century old).
- The Greyhawk Wars forced House Faeldon into dire straits, as their markets in Nyrond dried up during the conflict.

If either skill check attained DC 25 or higher, the following additional information (not known to Beal) can be obtained:

- House Faeldon's finances are extremely tight, as the financial crisis in Nyronde has prevented their sales from recovering now that the Wars are over. They have been closing some of the offices recently to conserve funds. This office was one of the ones slated for closure (which should strike the player as odd that this office has a fresh coat of paint and is in obviously good repair).

➤ **Beal, male human (Suel) Exp3:** CR 2; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6; hp 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10 (touch 10, flat-footed 10); Atk +2 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +8, Handle Animal +9, Listen +7, Knowledge (Geography) +9, Knowledge (Local) +9, Profession (merchant) +11, Sense Motive +9, Spot +6; Speak Language (Common, Nyronde, Flan, Elvish, Rhopan); Alertness, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Profession).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, dagger, pouch containing 50 gp.

➤ **Jerom, male human (Flan) Bbn2:** CR 2; HD 2d12+4; hp 23; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14 (touch 11, flat-footed 13); Atk +6 melee (1d10+6/x3, greataxe) or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SA Rage (1/day, 7 rounds); SQ Uncanny dodge (never flat-footed); AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Jump +8, Listen +4, Spot +4; Cleave, Power Attack

Possessions: Studded leather armor, greataxe, shortbow, 20 arrows, pouch containing 10 gp.

ENCOUNTER 1: A MYSTERY REVEALED

The inside of The Kicking Mule is not much more appealing than the exterior. The furniture has seen better days, and the decoration is Spartan. Only about half of the available chairs are occupied

The patrons all look up briefly when you enter then return their drinks amid hushed conversation. Most appear to be farmers or woodsmen, judging from their dress.

At a table near the back sit a man and woman, engrossed in conversation. He wears worn leather with a sword strapped at his hip, while she is dressed in fine clothes of pale blue, with matching cloak. Embroidered on the back of the cloak is the device of the trade house.

The merchant excuses himself from the party to obtain a room and hot meal, as well as to arrange overnight storage

for his wagon and wares with Lady Nayln at the trade house. Jerom remains outside with the wagon.

Costs for rooms and meals are provided with the lifestyle cost of any character of Poor means or above, and conversation with the folk around the bar is of course available.

If any of the characters would like to eavesdrop on the conversation in the room, have them make a Listen check at DC 15. Success gives them snatches of conversation about banditry, attacks on small caravans, and speculation that Beal will be the next victim.

The man and lady at the back are Sheriff Cern, the local constable, and the Lady Nayln, representative of House Faeldon.

Alquina and Therine (two of the Syrul cultists, see Encounter Seven) are also in the Tavern in the guise of woodsmen. They leave inconspicuously shortly after the arrival of the players and the merchant, heading to their cabin to fetch Kisthien and arrange the abduction of the merchant.

Talking with the Villagers

The villagers are a touch standoffish, but not rude or overtly impolite. They are convinced the town is under a curse, and are distrusting of any obvious spellcasters (-2 circumstance penalty to social interactions from such characters). They prefer the company of warrior-types and folks of simple means.

A successful Gather Information check (DC 15, with a +2 circumstance modifier if at least 2 gp is spent on drinks) reveals some or all of the following information (DM's discretion, one piece of information, plus one additional piece for each point above DC 15 the check was made by is a good rule of thumb):

- The village has been hit by hard times. Trade caravans have been bypassing Thallin in favor of larger communities like Stillwater. The dearth of coin-rich merchants and caravan guards has prompted many of the villagers to leave in search of greener pastures.
- House Faeldon was preparing to leave the village as well, but has hit upon a streak of good fortune. Several merchants have arrived wishing to liquidate their cargoes, and the house has been more than happy to oblige. They have been able to acquire goods at bargain prices, greatly increased their profits when they sell them.
- Sheriff Cern has found no evidence of foul play on the part of House Faeldon, and has declared that their purchases were honestly obtained.
- Some of the empty caravans were attacked and destroyed by bandits after leaving Thallin, judging by wreckage that was found not far down the road. There has been no word of the other caravans, although that's hardly unusual.

- They believe that the village is under curse. The local druid of Phyton left the village, supposedly for a few days, but that was over a month ago. They believe the curse claimed him, and that the rest of the village is next. [The priest actually died from an unrelated accident while out in the forest, and his superiors have not yet noticed his absence]
- The curse is a sign of the disfavor of the gods. Use of magic offends them, which is why the druid was claimed first. They warn the party against using magic while in Thallin.

Additionally, the recent discovery of the bodies of some of the merchants is on everyone's mind. Anyone who purchases a drink for one of the patrons of the bar receives a variant of one of the following stories (feel free to embellish, the last body was found a week ago, the first two weeks ago):

- A merchant's body was found in out in Meern's field (Meern is a local farmer). He had died in a great fall; his limbs were all broken and twisted.
- Koril, a woodsman, found the body of a female merchant deep within the woods. She was hanging by her sash from a tree, a suicide.
- Another body was found floating in Thallin's Run, lodged up under the bridge. The waters of the stream have been fouled ever since. [The water isn't actually fouled, but all the villagers believe it is]

Talking with Sulgen, the Innkeeper

Sulgen the innkeeper can provide much the same information as that listed above, a Diplomacy check (DC 10) can loosen him up. He can also provide the following pieces of information:

- Most of the merchants who sold their goods to House Faeldon had been previously talking about shipping their wares to a different final destination.
- He found it odd that they changed their minds and sold their wares here. Maybe they had a sudden change of heart. They all left in a hurry.
- He does not allow the use of magic in his inn. He doesn't want to drive off what little clientele he has left.

Talking with Sheriff Cern & Lady Nayln

Sheriff Cern and Lady Nayln can also provide most of the general information listed above, although they are bit less warm to strangers (Diplomacy check, DC 15, to engage either one in conversation). They can also provide the following information:

Sheriff Cern:

- A couple of weeks ago, one of the caravans that was attacked had a survivor. The survivor reported the caravan was ambushed by undead, and that the caravan master had led them into the ambush.
- The survivor believed that House Faeldon was behind the attack (because of the sudden, inexplicable sale of goods to that House the day before), but there was no evidence linking them to the attack.
- Since that time, Sheriff Cern made it a point to be on hand for any major transactions with House Faeldon.
- Most transactions at House Faeldon have been completely ordinary. The curious caravan liquidations happen at most once or twice a week.
- If any evidence of wrongdoing is found, he plans to report it to the lord governing the lands in this area (Lord Dyvas of House Panothal) who will make a final judgment on a course of corrective action.
- He has examined the bodies of the slain merchants, but has found no evidence that they were killed within Thallin, or by any of the villagers.

Lady Nayln of House Faeldon:

- It is true that House Faeldon was preparing to close the Thallin office, but with the sudden increase in potential sales the closure has been postponed.
- Business had not been strong enough to justify keeping the office open. They were doing some business, mostly with trapper and some woodsmen, but it was not sufficient to justify the costs of the operation. Most of the staff has already been pulled; all that remains is herself and a few clerks and laborers.
- Their changes in fortunes began about a month ago, and she has been charged to keep the trade house operating as long as business remains favorable.
- She was quite surprised by the odd behavior of the merchants, but has come to accept it.
- She has come to the conclusion that the merchants are either in debt or rebelling against their merchant houses. She wagers most of them left the Duchy shortly after liquidating their goods, rather than face the wrath of their houses.
- The blue paint was obtained from one of the liquidated caravans. She took advantage of the opportunity to touch up the compound at a bargain

price. The actual painting was done by a few hired townspeople.

- Oddly, one of the merchants that wished to sell his wares was of House Faeldon. She refused to purchase his goods, and later sent a report of his actions to her superiors. She imagines he's been disciplined appropriately for his transgression.

The Merchant Beal

As the evening wanes, the merchant Beal approaches the party, a little worried. He has learned from the locals that bandit activity is on the rise, and would like to hire extra guards for the journey. If the party is willing to accompany him the rest of the way to Nellix, he will pay them 50 gp (total, not each) for their services. If they are interested, they are to meet him the morning at the Faeldon trading compound.

If asked about the odd behavior of the merchants, Beal brushes it off as being of no great concern to him. Also, if the party offers to guard Beal through the night, he politely declines, as he already has Jerom to guard his quarters.

Development: If the party accepts Beal's offer, proceed to Encounter 2. Otherwise, they will most likely be unaware of the events in Encounters 2 and 3, proceed on to Encounter 4, part A.

ENCOUNTER 2: THINGS ARE NOT AS THEY SEEM

Review Kisthien's entry in Appendix 1 before running this encounter. It contains important notes on the doppelganger's powers, as well as its statistics.

During the night, Kisthien the doppelganger infiltrated Beal's room with the assistance of Korgsh and Alquina. Jerom succumbed to Alquina's sleep spell, and after a hasty interrogation Kisthien was left in the merchant's place.

In the morning, disguised as Beal, Kisthien approached lady Nayln and sold off Beal's goods. The false Beal is planning to leave town and lure Jerom to his death. If the players accepted Beal's offer of employment, they can find the imposter at House Faeldon's compound, completing his transactions.

As you enter the offices of House Faeldon you see Beal talking with Lady Nayln while Sheriff Cern looks on. The two shake hands as Lady Nayln hands over a large pouch of coins and a piece of parchment. Beal nods rolls up the parchment, and motions at Jerom to follow as he prepares to leave.

If the PCs do not stop Beal, he leaves immediately for Nellix on foot, having sold everything (even his wagon and horses) to house Faeldon. A successful Spot check (DC 15) allows a character to notice that Jerom looks

quite worried and perplexed. If the party does not approach Beal, he leaves town and leads Jerom into an ambush about a mile down the road.

If the PCs do approach Beal, he will seem somewhat taken aback by their presence. Make secret Will saves for each party member, and adjust his Bluff check appropriately for those who fail ("Beal" has already learned much about the party from the real Beal, so he can keep up a fairly convincing act regardless). After a brief hesitation, Beal breaks into a smile and asks them what he can do for them. If the players begin to question him about why he has suddenly decided to sell the wares he was bring to Nellix, he responds smoothly:

"My wares? Oh, oh yes, my wares. Well, I was thinking, do I really want to haul all this stuff back to Nellix, and then try and sell it all, at a possible loss? Nah, best to be rid of here and now. Maybe take up a new career; maybe even travel a bit before settling down. I hear things are looking really good, maybe I should settle down and raise a family."

Should the players ask Beal what he means by "settling down and raising a family" when he already has one, he quickly covers his tracks and replies:

"Why the one I have back home of course. Take them with me I will. I'll not leave them in Nellix. No sir."

If the players ask about the offer of employment, Beal pauses for a moment, then answers:

"Yes, yes, of course the offer still stands, I have this full pouch of coin to protect now don't I? Of course you are welcome to join me. Let us leave at once."

"Beal" will then check himself over, as if ensuring he has everything, and will then prepare to leave.

"Well, I'm off." He turns to Jerom. "Well boy, are going stand there all day, or are you coming with me? Huh? Well?" He scowls at Jerom for a moment, and then turns on his heels, and with a loud 'harrumph' begins to walk down the road towards Nellix. Jerom looks at you and shrugs before turning and hurrying after Beal.

If the players travel with Beal, they find him a bit withdrawn and preoccupied. Proceed to Encounter Three. Otherwise, proceed to Encounter Four, part B.

If the Party Uncovers the Ruse

As a GM, make every effort to divert suspicion away from Beal. It should be clear that he is different, but the doppelganger's substantial Bluff and Disguise skills make penetrating the deception exceedingly difficult. Should a party manage to pierce the disguise or otherwise decide to attack, Kisthien focuses on escape first.

If Jerom realizes that his master has been replaced (an unlikely prospect), he attacks Kisthien will full intentions of slaying him on the spot. He can be talked

out of it if he is reminded that Kisthien may be the only hope for returning his master alive.

If questioned, the doppelganger reveals that it was working for a band of brigands. It will not name or describe the cult of Syrul, as it fears their magical wrath. He is, however, more than willing to provide the party with the location of the cabin the "brigands" are using as a headquarters.

Sheriff Cern is more than happy to take custody of the doppelganger. Unfortunately, he is unfamiliar with magical creatures, and Kisthien will be able to easily escape custody.

In the event that Kisthien is killed, proceed with encounter Four, part B, and adjust other encounters appropriately.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE AMBUSH

The mood is more subdued than it was the day before. The merchant Beal, lost in thoughts, is not his usual talkative self. Jerom, of course, is as silent and solemn as ever.

At this point have the players make both Spot and Listen checks (DC15). Those that are successful notice movement in foliage, seconds before a band of undead breaks out of the bushes and attacks. Players that succeed at either check receive a partial action during the surprise round, as do the undead.

Beal has been expecting the attack. He screams in surprise and bolts for the opposite side of the road during the initial round. Once he is out of sight, he uses his *wand of silent image* to generate the semblance of more undead coming out of the woods. He maintains this illusion until he's certain the battle is won (one way or the other), then makes his way through the woods towards the cabin of the cult of Syrul (about a half-mile away).

APL 2 (EL 3)

Kisthien will create a *silent image* of three additional zombies (not included in the numbers below).

👉 **Skeletons (3):** CR 1/3; hp 6 (each); see *Monster Manual* page 165.

👉 **Zombies (3):** CR 1/2; hp 16 (each); see *Monster Manual* pages 191-192.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Kisthien will create a *silent image* of three additional zombies (not included in the numbers below).

👉 **Skeletons (6):** CR 1/3; hp 6 (each); see *Monster Manual* page 165.

👉 **Zombies (6):** CR 1/2; hp 16 (each); see *Monster Manual* pages 191-192.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Kisthien will create a *silent image* of two additional ogre zombies (not included in the numbers below).

👉 **Ogre skeletons (6):** CR 1; hp 13 (each); see *Monster Manual* page 165.

👉 **Ogre zombies (4):** Large zombies; CR 1; hp 29 (each); see *Monster Manual* pages 191-192.

If the bodies of the undead are searched or examined after the fight, symbols of Nerull (the skull and scythe) can be found etched onto each corpse and skeleton.

Beal does not return after the battle. Characters with the Track feat can attempt a Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) to locate his trail leading off through the woods, otherwise a successful Search check on far side of the road (DC 18) reveals indications that someone left in that general direction. If Jerom survived, he motions (the DM will have to pantomime the actions) to the party that he is going back to the village to seek help. If he's offered writing materials, he'll take them so he can bring back a message, but he cannot read or write.

ENCOUNTER 4, PART A: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

This encounter occurs only if the players refused Beal's offer of employment in Encounter one.

The morning after your arrival, Sheriff Cern approaches you table as you are breaking fast in the Kicking Mule tavern. "That merchant friend of yours must like to get an early start. He demanded to meet with the Lady Nayln at the first light of dawn and sold all his goods, even his horses and wagon. Then him and that mute guard of his set off for Nellix quick as could be.

"Figured I'd let you know, seeing as how you were traveling together." He then turns to leave.

The players can question Sheriff Cern if they wish. He answers all questions honestly, to the extent of his knowledge of the situation. He can provide the following information:

- Beal approached Nayln early that morning wishing to sell his goods.
- Besides his desire to sell his goods as soon as possible, he seemed a little distracted, like he was preoccupied about something.
- It's probably for the best that the players didn't accompany him, what with all the merchants being attacked out on the road lately.

If the party heads out after Beal and Jerom, they find Jerom lying dead a mile down the road, along with a pair of long dead bodies (formerly zombies). Character with the Track feat can attempt a Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) to locate his trail leading off through the woods, otherwise a successful Search check on far side of the road (DC 18) reveals indications that someone left in that general direction

If the party does not follow up this lead, or loses the trail, proceed to Encounter 4, part B.

ENCOUNTER FOUR, PART B: OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS TWICE

If the players stay in Thallin (or return to Thallin after having exhausted other leads), they will be approached by a pair of youths who observed them entering the village the night before, and also eavesdropped on any conversations they might have had with Sheriff Cern. They are village lads, around twelve years of age. They speak to the party in hushed tones, looking over their shoulders as they speak, as though fearful of inviting trouble:

If the party spoke with Sheriff Cern:

"Excuse me sirs and ladies, we couldn't help but overhear yus talking to the Sheriff 'bout yer friend. We think we know where he's gone off to."

If they didn't:

"Excuse me sirs and ladies, but you look like the heroes we get told tales about. We saw yer friend leave town, we think we knows where he's gone off to."

They wait a few seconds for the players to reply, and then continue:

"The other day me and Fillen's 'ere, I'm Corgin by d'way. Anyways, we wus out in da woods, an' we saw one of dem merchant folks out wanderin' in the woods. We 'membered seeing her de day before back at de village cus she was a right pretty lady, looked almost like a noble riding on her horse when she came into de village an all."

The lad Fillen then interjects "Yea, she sure acted like a noble an all, complainin' 'bout the mud and what not on the road. Pretty tho."

Corgin jabs Fillen in the ribs, hushing him "Yea, so anyways, we thought that it was kinda odd, how the day before she didn't like bein' dirty an all, and here she wus, walking through the woods, covered in leaves, and dirt and stuff, and didn't seem ta care. We followed her for a bit, and she went into an old cabin out in the woods, but as we wus gittin closer, a bunch o' skeletons and ghouls and more jumped up outta da woods and started ta chase us, so we ran. I'd never been so scairt in all my life."

His story over, Corgin sits back, his arms crossed on his chest. Fillen then takes this moment to lean in towards you. "Aye, so wes figgeren' maybe your friend was headin' there too."

If the players ask them any questions they can obtain the following additional information:

- The location of the cabin. The youths point the party in the right general direction, and tell them where to find the trail to the cabin.
- No, they didn't tell anyone else about this. No one would believe them anyway, and they'd just get a whipping for telling tales, bothering travelers, and sneaking off into the woods alone.

If the party elects to not intervene, proceed to the Conclusion. The body of the doppelganger is eventually found by Sheriff Cern, explaining the strange behavior and disappearances of the merchants. Otherwise, continue with Encounter Five.

ENCOUNTER 5: INTO THE WOODS

DM's Note: Choose two of the traps from the four below. Parties that insist on exploring the woods around the cabin may well encounter all four (DM's discretion).

As the PCs make their way along the trails in the woods towards the old cabin, they will encounter various traps set up to scare off any locals who may venture out into this area of the woods.

Depending on the amount of time left to complete the adventure, the DM can decide to place more than just the two traps may be appropriate to place in the PCs path (remember to leave approximately 45 minutes game time for the final encounter).

Read the following to the PCs after they have traveled down the trail for a while.

The sunlight streams down through the thick canopy overhead to mark the trail ahead with dappled light. Ahead, the trail is marked with small piles of stones one atop the other. It appears these small piles continue all the way along the trail.

The piles of stacked stones that mark the trail are harmless enough. If the players stop to investigate the stones, they will find nothing untoward about them. The piles can be found every few feet along the trail.

Additionally, each character should make a Listen check (DC10); those that succeed will notice a faint and always present 'clack-clack-clack' sound that seems to come from all around. The source is from small rocks tied in pairs to thongs hanging from the trees about 30 feet up. A Search check (DC 25) is required to notice them.

Once the PCs have traveled down the path about another 50 feet, choose one of the following traps and continue.

The next trap is just over 100 feet from the first. Any additional traps are no closer than 100 feet together; the last trap will be at least 400 feet from the cabin.

Select a trap from the list below, or roll randomly:

- 1 Spiked pit trap
- 2 Arrow trap
- 3 Hail of needles
- 4 Scything blade trap

Trap 1: Spiked Pit Trap

If the PCs are searching for traps, then a successful Search roll (DC 20), will detect that a pit trap has been constructed in this area and hidden with a wicker top covered with soil, leaves and stones.

If it is not successfully detected, the lead PC blunders into the trap and suffers the consequences.

APL 2 (EL 2)

☞**Spiked Pit Trap (10 ft. Deep):** CR 1; no attack roll necessary (1d6); +8 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4+2 points of damage per hit); Reflex Save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

APL 4 (EL 2)

☞**Spiked Pit Trap (20 ft. Deep):** CR 2; no attack roll necessary (2d6); +10 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4+4 points of damage per hit); Reflex Save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

APL 6 (EL 4)

☞**Spiked Pit Trap (20 ft. Deep):** CR 2; no attack roll necessary (2d6); +10 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4+4 points of damage per hit); Reflex Save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). The spikes have been treated with greenblood oil (Fort save DC 13; 1 Con/1d2 Con damage; saves required for each spike that hits).

Trap 2: Arrow Trap

If the PCs are searching for traps (DC 20) and succeed, they will detect that a small wire has been strung between two piles of stones. Triggering this trap causes a crossbow tied to one of the surrounding trees to fire down the trail.

APL 2 (EL 1)

☞**Arrow Trap:** CR 1; +10 ranged (1d8/x3); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). *Note:* 200-ft maximum range, target determined randomly from those in the line of fire.

APL 4 (EL 2)

As above, but using a heavy crossbow (damage 1d10/x3) and a bolt treated with greenblood oil (Fort save DC 13; 1 Con/1d2 Con damage).

APL 6 (EL 4)

As for Tier 2, but the bolt is treated with large scorpion venom (Fort save DC 18, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str damage).

Trap 3: Hail of Needles

If the PCs are searching for traps (Search DC 22) and succeed, they detect a small wire strung between two piles of stones. Triggering this trap launches a hail of needles (formerly embedded in a wooden board) across the path.

Note: The same variety of trap has also been set up off the trail to catch those attempting to approach the cabin without using the trail. The Search DC for these traps is 25, as the triggering mechanism is harder to find.

APL 2 (EL 1)

☞**Hail of Needles:** CR 1; +20 ranged (2d4); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22).

APL 4 (EL 2)

Two sets of needle traps are set up, each firing from opposite sides of the path. Two Disable Device checks are required to disable the trap, one for each device.

☞**Hail of Needles:** CR 2; +20/+20 ranged (2d4); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22, both traps must be disarmed to negate the trap completely).

APL 6 (EL 4)

As above, but the needles are envenomed with giant wasp poison (Fort save DC 18; 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex damage).

Trap 4: Scything Blade Trap

If the PCs are searching for traps (DC 21) and succeed, they notice a small wire strung between two small bushes on either side of the trail. Triggering this trap causes a scythe blade to slash out from one of the bushes on the side of the trail (determine which side randomly), catching at least one PC in its path.

APL 2 (EL 1)

☞**Scything Blade Trap:** CR 1; +8 melee (1d8/x3); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

APL 4 (EL 2)

☞**Scything Blade Trap:** CR 2; +10 melee (2d4+3/x4); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

APL 6 (EL 4)

At Tier 3, blades sweep out from both sides of the trail, crossing in the center. A character in the center of the path is exposed to both blades; characters walking on

either side are exposed to only a single attack. Two Disable Device checks are required to disable the trap, one for each blade.

✦ **Scything Blade Trap:** CR 4; +10/+19 melee (2d4+3/x4); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20, both traps must be disarmed to negate the trap completely.

ENCOUNTER 6: ALLIES AREN'T ALWAYS YOUR FRIENDS

This area of the woods is wild and untamed, with many low bushes occupying the forest floor. The trail is growing more difficult to follow, but you can just make out a small cabin in the woods ahead. It must have been abandoned for some time now, as the windows are boarded up and the roof is collapsing. If it weren't for an obvious trail leading right to front door, you'd believe no one had lived here in years.

As the players make their way closer to the cabin, undead burst from the undergrowth and attack. Have the players make both Spot and Listen checks (DC 15). Players that succeed at either check receive a partial action during the surprise round, as do the undead.

APL 2 (EL 2)

✦ **Skeletons (2):** CR 1/3; hp 6 (each); see *Monster Manual* page 165.

✦ **Zombies (2):** CR 1/2; hp 16; see *Monster Manual* pages 191-192.

APL 4 (EL 4)

✦ **Skeletons (6):** CR 1/3; hp 6 (each); see *Monster Manual* page 165.

✦ **Zombies (4):** CR 1/2; hp 16 (each); see *Monster Manual* pages 191-192.

APL 6 (EL 6)

✦ **Ogre skeletons (4):** CR 1; hp 13 (each), see *Monster Manual*.

✦ **Ogre Zombies (4):** Large zombies; CR 1; hp 29 (each); see *Monster Manual* pages 191-192.

If the bodies of the undead are searched or examined after the fight, symbols of Nerull (the skull and scythe) can be found etched onto each corpse or skeleton.

If Kisthien is still alive, it approaches the party while they are occupied battling the undead. It spends three rounds using his *detect thoughts* power. On the third round, make a Will save (DC 13) for each character in range. One it succeeds at scanning one of the characters, it will know how and why they came to the cabin.

After the fight, Kisthien takes on the semblance of a wounded Sheriff Cern using its *alter self* ability.

The cultists' cabin is far enough from the battle that they are unlikely to notice the fray. Make a Listen check, DC 25, for each cultist. Modify the check appropriately if the battle is exceptionally loud or prolonged.

AFTER THE FIGHT

As you fell the last of the undead, Sheriff Cern bursts out of the bush, his right arm hanging limp, his sword lost, and marked with a number of minor wounds. Gasping for breath, he looks at you and speaks:

"I didn't think I would be able to catch up with you. When I learned of where you going and what you might be up against, I rushed here as fast as I could, and blundered into a pit in the wounds. I'm still in one piece, but I won't be much use in a fight I'm afraid. Are you injured as well?"

Kisthien, disguised a Cern, hopes to determine the party's strength, and gauge their chances against the cultists in the cabin. If the party begins tending to their wounds, he requests healing for his wounds as well. He requests a weapon if his "wounds" are treated.

If the players question Cern about how he knew where to find them or any other relevant questions, he can offer the following (based on earlier events):

If Jerome is still alive:

He set out after the party this morning, concerned that there might be another attack. He met Jerom as that worthy soul was heading back to Thallin. Jerom gave him a note explaining the events, and he headed for the cabin as fast as he could.

If Jerome is dead:

He set out after the party this morning, concerned that there might be another attack. He found Jerom slain (or buried, based on his thought reading) a mile out of town, and followed a trail he found leading from the site of the battle.

If the party was directed here by the youths:

He spotted the party talking to the kids back in Thallin, and questioned the pair after the party left. When the children told him about the cabin, he decided to follow and offer what help he could.

If his attempts to detect thoughts failed:

He was out in the woods looking for clues to the attacks and spotted the party off in the distance. He tried to call to them, but they were already too far away to hear him. He stumbled into a trap following them, by the time he was able to climb free the party had already been ambushed.

Regardless of the story he tells, Cern offers his assistance and declares that he's eager to get to the bottom of these strange happenings once and for all.

At this point, remember that the doppelganger is most likely reading the surface thoughts of one or more of the party members. As a result, he is well equipped to

Bluff and lie his way out of the holes in his story. If any character tries to use their Sense Motive skill on him, the doppelganger receives a +4 circumstance bonus to his Bluff check if he is successfully reading their thoughts.

After Cern has answered any questions the party might have, he suggests a stealthy approach to the cabin. He also warns the adventurers that they can almost certainly expect a hostile response within, so everyone should stay on their toes.

Should the party elect to attack Kisthien, he defends himself while calling loudly for help from the cabin (DC 20 for them to hear him each round that he yells, reduced by 2 for every 30 feet closer to the cabin he gets). The cultists rush to his aid immediately if they hear him, they are 300 feet away in the cabin (see Encounter Seven).

ENCOUNTER 7: THE CULT OF SYRUL

A cursory search around the cabin reveals that it has only the single entrance, and that those windows that aren't boarded up are covered from the inside (preventing anyone from looking into the cabin, and presumably hindering anyone inside from looking out). The cabin itself is 300 feet away from the ambush.

When the party actually enters the cabin, read the following (modified as appropriate):

The door opens to reveal a large room with three people seated around a table. Two are women, one sitting facing, the other occupant is a dwarf. The woman facing you looks up and speaks in an angry tone, "Kisthien! It's about time you decided to re... Wait, you're not Kisthien!"

These people are cultists of Syrul, sent here from Leukish to prey upon the merchants traveling through the area. They had suspicions that Kisthien might flee or betray them, but the presence of heavily armed adventurers has caught them off guard.

The cultists refuse parlay and fight to the death if escape is impossible. They are fully aware that the secrets they carry are best carried to the grave. Alquina keeps an eye out for Kisthien – if she penetrates its disguise, she will take her next action to pick up the crossbow on the rear table, already loaded with her bolt of slaying.

All of the cultists have weapons close at hand that they can pick up or draw as a movement-equivalent action in the first round of combat (neither group has managed to surprise the other).

Tactics: In the first round of combat, Alquina casts a *shield* spell on herself, Therine casts *protection from good* (or *magic circle against good* at higher tiers), and Korgsh picks up and fires a loaded crossbow at anyone who has not yet acted (in order to get his sneak attack bonus). He prefers to fire at lightly or unarmored targets, believing them to be likely rogues or spellcasters. Therine and Korgsh then

take 5-foot steps to flank the entrance to the cabin and gain cover from those outside.

After the initial round, Therine and Korgsh remain flanking the door if possible, attacking any assailants that try to enter. Alquina focuses on using her magic against the most dangerous-looking opponents, preferring to use spells like *hold person* on fighter-types. Therine mixes magic and melee as appropriate, and will not hesitate to *inflict wounds* on heavily armored foes. A large group is a natural target for her *sound burst* spell at higher tiers.

Kisthien, if present, hangs back from the fighting as much as possible.

APL 2(EL 5)

➤ **Alquina, female half-elf (Suel human, wood elf) Clr2/Sor1:** CR 3; HD 2d8+1d4+3; hp 16; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +1 melee (1d6, light mace) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Half-elfen racial abilities; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +6, Search +1, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4; base DC = 13 + spell level):
0 – *cure minor wounds, detect poison, guidance, resistance*; 1st – *bane, cause fear, change self*, doom*

* Domain spell. Domains: Knowledge (All knowledge skills are class skills, all divinations cast at 3rd level) Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Sorcerer Spells Known (5/4; base DC = 12 + spell level):
0 – *daze, ghost sound, light, ray of frost*; 1st – *shield, sleep*.

Note: 10% arcane spell failure chance due to leather armor.

Possessions: Leather armor, light mace, crossbow, 10 bolts, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Syrul.

➤ **Therine, female human (Suel) Clr2:** CR 2; HD 2d8+2; hp 14; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 17); Atk +3 melee (1d8+2, heavy mace); AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Concentration +5, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +5, Spellcraft +5; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4; base DC = 12 + spell level):
0 – *cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, read magic*; 1st – *cure light wounds, doom, protection from good*, protection from law*.

* Domain spell. Domains: Evil (Evil spells cast at 3rd level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: Heavy mace, chainmail, large steel shield, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Syrul.

➤ **Korgsh, male dwarf Rog2:** CR 2; HD 2d6+6; hp 15; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +2 melee (1d6+1/19-20, shortsword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA +1d6 sneak attack, SQ Dwarf

abilities, evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Disguise +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +3, Spot +4, Tumble +8; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Leather Armor, short sword, light crossbow, 10 bolts, silver holy symbol of Syrul.

APL 4 (EL 7)

✦ **Alquina, female half-elf (Suel human, wood elf) Clr3/Sor2:** CR 5; HD 3d8+2d4+5; hp 27; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +3 melee (1d6, light mace) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Half-elven racial abilities; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Listen +4 Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (religion) +6, Search +1, Spellcraft +5, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds, detect poison, guidance, resistance; 1st – bane, cause fear, change self*, doom; 2nd – cure moderate wounds, detect thoughts*, hold person.

* Domain spell. Domains: Knowledge (All knowledge skills are class skills, all divinations cast at 3rd level) Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – daze, ghost sound, light, prestidigitation, ray of frost; 1st – shield, sleep.

Note: 10% arcane spell failure chance due to leather armor.

Possessions: Leather armor, light mace, crossbow, 10 bolts, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Syrul.

✦ **Therine, female human (Suel) Clr3/Ftr1:** CR 4; HD 3d8+1d10+4; hp 26; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 17); Atk +5 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Concentration +6, Heal +7, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6; Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, read magic; 1st – cure light wounds, doom, protection from good*, protection from law; 2nd – bull's strength, invisibility*, sound burst.

* Domain spell. Domains: Evil (Evil spells cast at 3rd level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: Longsword, chainmail, large steel shield, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Syrul.

✦ **Korgsh, male dwarf Ftr1/Rog3:** CR 4; HD 1d10+3d6+12; hp 28; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/x3, battleaxe) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA +2d6 sneak attack, SQ Dwarf abilities, evasion, uncanny dodge (never flat-

footed); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Disguise +4, Hide +8, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +4, Spot +5, Tumble +8; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot.

Possessions: Leather Armor, battleaxe, light crossbow, 10 bolts, silver holy symbol of Syrul.

APL 6 (EL 10)

✦ **Alquina, female half-elf (Suel human, wood elf) Clr5/Sor3:** CR 8; HD 5d8+3d4+8; hp 41; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 14); Atk +4 melee (1d6, light mace) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SQ Half-elven racial abilities; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Listen +5 Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Search +1, Spellcraft +6, Spot +5; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level, 16 + spell level for necromancy): 0 – cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, guidance, resistance; 1st – bane, cause fear, change self*, cure light wounds, doom; 2nd – ~~bull's strength~~ (already cast on Korgsh), cure moderate wounds, detect thoughts*, hold person; 3rd – bestow curse, nondetection*, prayer.

* Domain spell. Domains: Knowledge (All knowledge skills are class skills, all divinations cast at 3rd level) Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – daze, ghost sound, light, prestidigitation, ray of frost; 1st – mage armor, shield, sleep (2 1st level spells have already been used to cast mage armor, the 2nd one has one hour remaining).

Possessions: Light mace, crossbow, 10 bolts, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Syrul.

✦ **Therine, female human (Suel) Clr6/Ftr1:** CR 7; HD 6d8+1d10+7; hp 43; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (touch 11, flat-footed 19); Atk +8 melee (1d8+3/19-20, longsword); AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 14 (17 from bull's strength already cast on self), Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +9, Heal +7, Knowledge (religion) +9, Spellcraft +9; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/5/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – create water, cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, read magic; 1st – command, cure light wounds, doom, protection from good*, protection from law; 2nd – ~~bull's strength~~ (already cast on self), calm emotions, cure moderate wound, invisibility*, ~~magic vestment~~ (already cast on chainmail), sound burst; 3rd – invisibility purge, magic circle against good*.

* Domain spell. Domains: Evil (Evil spells cast at 3rd level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: Longsword, chainmail (enchanted to a temporary +2 with *magic vestment*), large steel shield, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Syrul.

➤ **Korgsh, male dwarf Ftr2/Rog5:** CR 7; HD 2d10+5d6+21; hp 52; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +8 melee (1d8+3/x3, battleaxe) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA +3d6 sneak attack, SQ Dwarf abilities, evasion, uncanny dodge (never flat-footed); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 13 (17 from *bull's strength* already cast by Alquina), Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Craft (trapmaking) +7, Disguise +5, Hide +10, Intimidate +6, Jump +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7, Tumble +10; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Mobility.

Possessions: Leather Armor, battleaxe, light crossbow, 10 bolts, silver holy symbol of Syrul.

After the fighting is over, Cern/Kisthien steps into the room and heads directly towards the table at the back of the room. He grabs the crossbow from the table, eases the string back, and then does his best to get back outside the cabin with bolt and crossbow. If the party hasn't uncovered his ruse, he plays along until he sees a good opportunity to escape once and for all. If he is attacked or detained, he judges the condition of the party, and does his best to kill them if they are weak.

The inside of the cabin is rather nondescript, furnished only with two tables (one round, one square), four chairs, and three cots along the left wall. Under one of the cots is a small chest, and a trap door is concealed beneath the table (Search check DC 10 to locate it). The trap door leads to the cellar of the cabin.

Inside the chest under the bed are 6 pouches of gold coin, each containing roughly 100 gold coins (576 gp in total). The pouches are marked with the device of House Faeldon. Also within the pouch is a note that Alquina had planned to leave in the cabin, to be found after their departure. The note (Player's Handout #1) reads:

Hulln:

Take the creature and the means of his destruction to Thallin. There, use his abilities to masquerade as others. Take the place of merchants and sell their wares to the local trading house. It makes little difference what you can get for the wares, as any amount will do, and will go a long way towards furthering our plans. When you think the time is right, slay the creature and return with your profits.

Lucor Baerglund of Nellix

While the note is 'signed' Lucor Baerglund (Baerglund being a noble merchant house), there is no Lucor associated with that House in Nellix, or anywhere else in the Duchy for that matter. This is merely another ruse, intended to further confound any potential investigation.

THE CELLAR

The open trapdoor reveals a large rough chamber with earthen walls. At the far end is what appears to a large slab of rock, surface stained brown and red. The air has a pervasive odor not unlike that of a charnel house. Opposite the stone slab is a wooden crate with a large rock placed atop it.

When the players enter the cellar, have them make a Listen check (DC15). Those that succeed hear muffled sobs and noises coming from within the crate. Opening the crate is a simple enough affair, as simple as rolling or lifting off the rock (which weighs 50 pounds) and prying off the top of the crate.

Within the crate is a familiar figure: the merchant Beal, bound and gagged, looks up at you with pleading eyes. Though bloodied, bruised, and clad only in undergarments, his eyes tear up with joy that he has been found at last.

The stone slab at the other end is a sacrificial altar dedicated to Syrul, the stains the blood of the cult's victims. The forked-tongue symbol of The Oathbreaker is etched upon its surface.

CONCLUSION

With the cult of Syrul broken, the PCs are free to return to Thallin with the evidence they have uncovered. Sheriff Cern will welcome any evidence he is given, and demands the return of any stolen goods (notably, the six sacks of gold coins from the basement).

The coins will be turned over to Nayln of House Faeldon, who will enter the information in her reports to her superiors back in Leukish. Any group attempting to keep the gold coins should be handled as though they had stolen an equivalent amount of valuable items, see the Treasure Summary for details. Be sure to note on the party's log sheets if they attempted to keep the coins, it may cause them difficulties in further adventures involving House Faeldon.

Cern sends word to Aldan's Watch to summon cleric to deal with the bodies of the undead (if he was made aware of them). After they have been blessed, they will be buried in consecrated ground, or burned in the case of monstrous undead. He also sends an accounting of the to Lord Dyvas Panothal, explaining in detail the (false) plot of House Baerglund and the cult of Nerull to discredit House Faeldon and bankrupt the village of Thallin.

Beal will have all of his wares returned to him by House Faeldon, as it is now apparent that the transaction was not a legitimate sale of goods. He is also given a handsome bribe to keep him from talking overmuch of the sordid affair. In addition, Beal is extremely grateful to have been saved from the sacrificial altar. He offers to "acquire" the equipment of the cultists at full costs (rather than the normal half costs), though he can not afford the *bolt of slaying* and will not buy their unholy symbols. He also pays the promised 50 gp to the party if they agreed to

guard him (even if his double left town without them) and promises to give his aid in the future, should it be needed. Award each player an influence point with the merchant Beal.

With that, Beal and Jerom (if he survived) set off down the road towards Nellix, looking forward to a long break from journeying.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter Four

Defeating ambush	75 xp
Jerom survives the battle	25 xp

Encounter Five

Encountering first trap	25 xp
Encountering second trap	25 xp

Encounter Six

Defeating undead	75 xp
------------------	-------

Encounter Seven

Defeating the Cult of Syrul	100 xp
Rescuing Beal	75 xp

Total experience for objectives	450 xp
Discretionary roleplaying award	0-50 xp

Total possible experience	500 xp
----------------------------------	---------------

TREASURE SUMMARY

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g. armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept

from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.

3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp, items that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms) and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter 2, 5 or 6

- *Wand of Silent Image* (3 charges when discovered by the PCs, value 25 gp per charge, negligible weight, Uncommon): Taken from the doppelganger Kisthien, this smooth piece of mahogany casts the *silent image* spell as cast by a 1st level sorcerer (save DC 11)
- *Amulet with Nystul's Magic Aura*. This small silver amulet is worth 5 gp.

Encounter 6

- Leather armor, light mace, crossbow, 10 bolts, spell component pouch (56 gp total, sells for 28 gp).
- Heavy mace (Tier 1) or longsword (Tier 2), chainmail, large steel shield, spell component pouch (Tier 1: 187 gp, sells for 93.5 gp, Tier 2: 190 gp, sells for 95 gp).
- Leather Armor, short sword (Tier 1) or battleaxe (Tier 2), light crossbow, 10 bolts (56 gp, sells for 28 gp).
- *Slaying Bolt* (2282 gp, negligible weight, rare): Found in a cabin near Thallin, this bolt of black iron operates as a *slaying arrow* versus shapeshifters.
- Three silver unholy symbols of Syrul. This cannot be sold to anyone in the area, although they can be melted down and sold for metal value (5 gp per symbol, for a total of 15 gp).

Conclusion

- 50 gp if the party was hired by Beal in Encounter One, and he was rescued.
- If Beal was rescued, he is willing to buy the items from Encounter Six at full value, as opposed to half value. He cannot afford the *bolt of slaying*, and will not buy the unholy symbols.
- If the PCs rescue Beal, they each receive an Influence point from Merchant Beal.

APPENDIX 1: KISTHIEN THE DOPPELGANGER

GENERAL NOTES ON DOPPELGANGER ABILITIES

Kisthien must concentrate for three rounds to be able to read surface thoughts. When it does so, each targeted PC is entitled to a Will save (DC 13). A target that makes their saving throw does feel a brief tingling, but is not aware of the precise source or nature of the magic (see *Player's Handbook* page 150). **Do not** inform players which spell was used against them.

Kisthien will retry *detect thoughts* (when time allows) against targets it was unable to scan the first time, it must cease its existing *detect thoughts* and try again (another 3 rounds of concentration) to do so.

Also, although *detect thoughts* does require concentration, it is not readily apparent to others that Kisthien is doing so. Sense Motive checks against Kisthien's Bluff skill may indicate that it is focusing on something, but will not reveal what. Use the Concentration rules on page 151 and 152 of the *Player's Handbook* if Kisthien is attacked, violently shoved, or otherwise disturbed while focusing on *detect thoughts*.

Finally, a *detect magic* spell will reveal that it is under the effects of a spell of the Transmutation variety (the doppelganger's *alter self* power). If asked about this, Kisthien attributes the aura to an amulet he wears that hardens his skin against attacks. The amulet in question bears a *Nystul's magic aura* spell that makes it appear to be an *amulet of natural armor* (if *identify* is cast on the amulet, make the caster's Will save against DC 15). A powerful wizard in the service of Syrul prepared the amulet as a favor to Darmin.

APL 2 (EL 3)

Note that Kisthien's statistics are different than a stock doppelganger's; do not use the Monster Manual entry.

➤ **Kisthien, doppelganger:** CR3; Medium-size shapechanger; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +5/+5 melee (1d6+2, slam); SA *detect thoughts*; SQ *alter self*, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Disguise +12, Listen +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +8; Alertness, Dodge.

* When using *alter self*, a doppelganger receives an additional +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If the doppelganger can read an opponent's mind, it gets a further +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

Detect Thoughts (Su): A doppelganger can continuously detect thoughts as the spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 13). It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

Alter Self (Su): A doppelganger can assume the shape of any Small or Medium-size humanoid. This works like *alter self* as cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but the doppelganger can remain in the chosen form indefinitely. It can assume a new form or return to its own as a standard action.

Immunities (Ex): Doppelgangers are immune to sleep and charm effects.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, dagger, pouch containing 50 gp, *wand of silent image* (it will have 3 charges remaining when found by the PCs), amulet bearing a *Nystul's magic aura* (appears to be an *amulet of natural armor* +2).

APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Kisthien, doppelganger Rog2:** CR5; Medium-size shapechanger; HD 4d8+2d6+12; hp 39; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +6/+6 melee (1d6+2, slam); SA *detect thoughts*, +1d6 sneak attack; SQ *alter self*, immunities, evasion; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Disguise +14, Hide +9, Listen +12, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10, Tumble +9; Alertness, Dodge, Mobility.

* When using *alter self*, a doppelganger receives an additional +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If the doppelganger can read an opponent's mind, it gets a further +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

Detect Thoughts (Su): A doppelganger can continuously detect thoughts as the spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 13). It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

Alter Self (Su): A doppelganger can assume the shape of any Small or Medium-size humanoid. This works like *alter self* as cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but the doppelganger can remain in the chosen form indefinitely. It can assume a new form or return to its own as a standard action.

Immunities (Ex): Doppelgangers are immune to sleep and charm effects.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, dagger, pouch containing 50 gp, *wand of silent image* (it will have 3 charges remaining when found by the PCs), amulet bearing a *Nystul's magic aura* (appears to be an *amulet of natural armor* +2).

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Kisthien, doppelganger Rog5:** CR 8; Medium-size shapechanger; HD 4d8+5d6+18; hp 56; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 14); Atk +10/+10 melee (1d6+2, slam); SA *detect thoughts*, +3d6 sneak attack; SQ *alter self*, immunities, evasion, uncanny dodge (never flat-footed); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +17*, Disguise +17*, Hide +10, Listen +15, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +12, Spot +13, Tumble +16; Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (slam).

* When using *alter self*, a doppelganger receives an additional +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If the doppelganger can read an opponent's mind, it gets a further +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

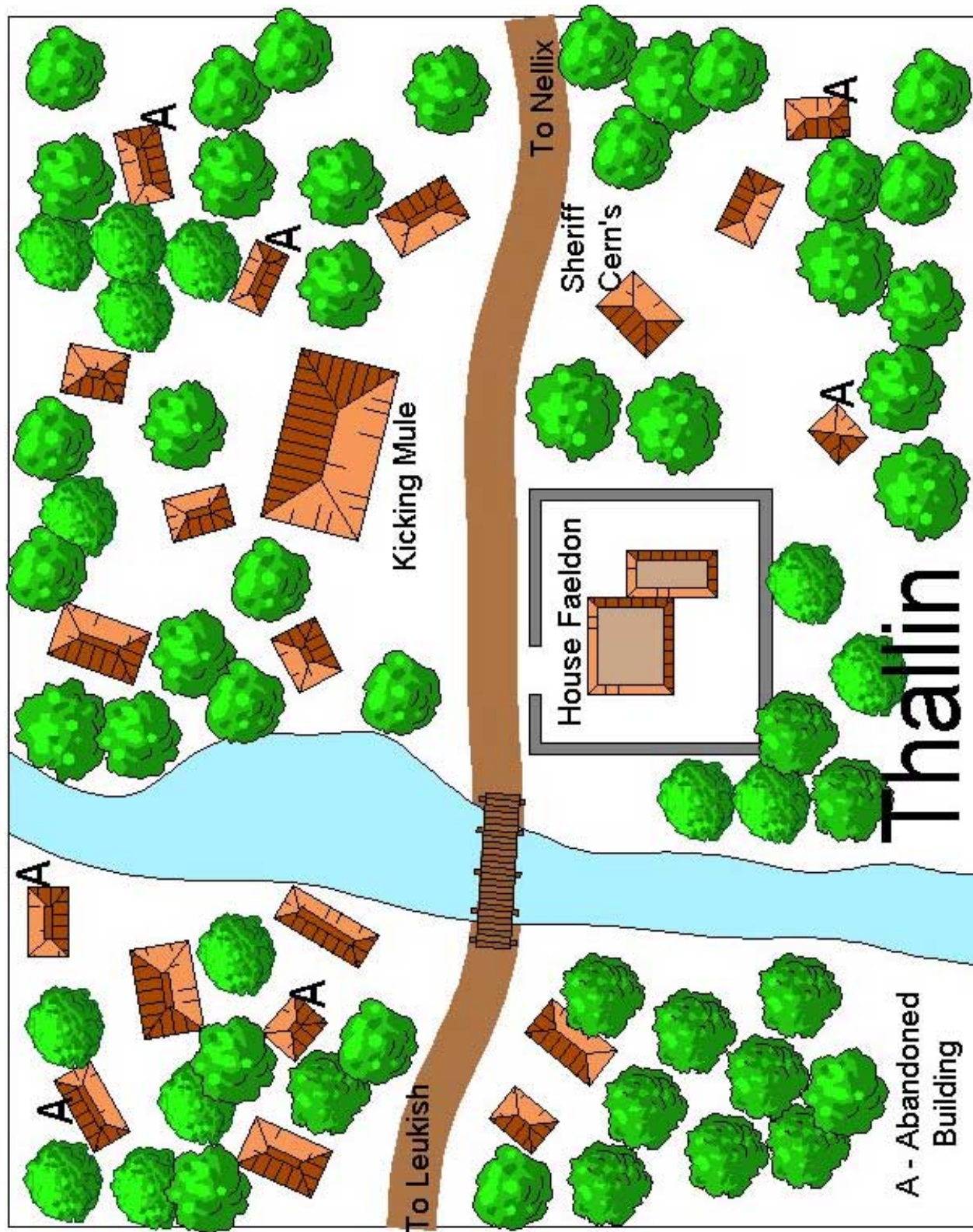
Detect Thoughts (Su): A doppelganger can continuously detect thoughts as the spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 13). It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

Alter Self (Su): A doppelganger can assume the shape of any Small or Medium-size humanoid. This works like *alter self* as cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but the doppelganger can remain in the chosen form indefinitely. It can assume a new form or return to its own as a standard action.

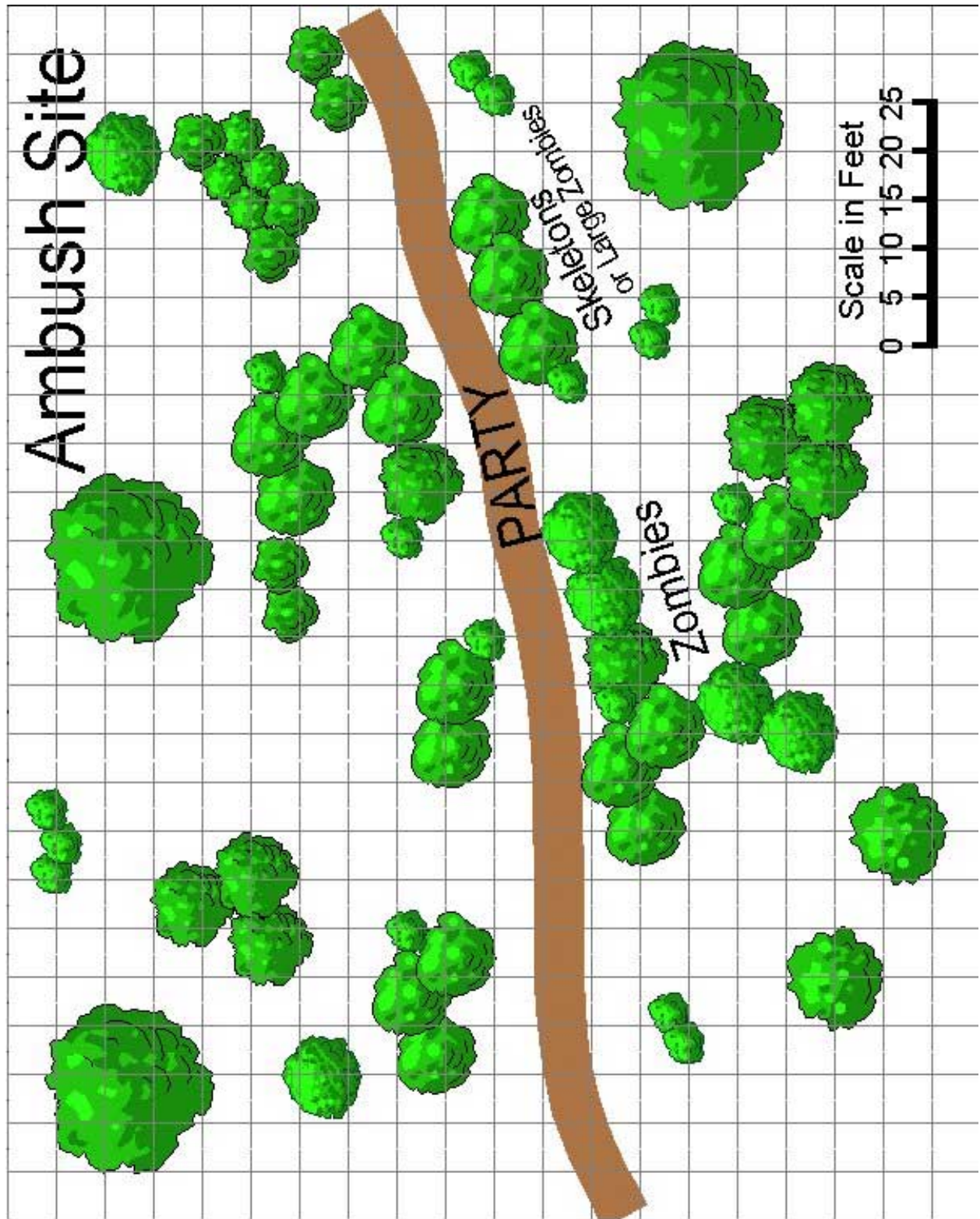
Immunities (Ex): Doppelgangers are immune to sleep and charm effects.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, dagger, pouch containing 50 gp, *wand of silent image* (it will have 3 charges remaining when found by the PCs), amulet bearing a *Nystul's magic aura* (appears to be an *amulet of natural armor* +2).

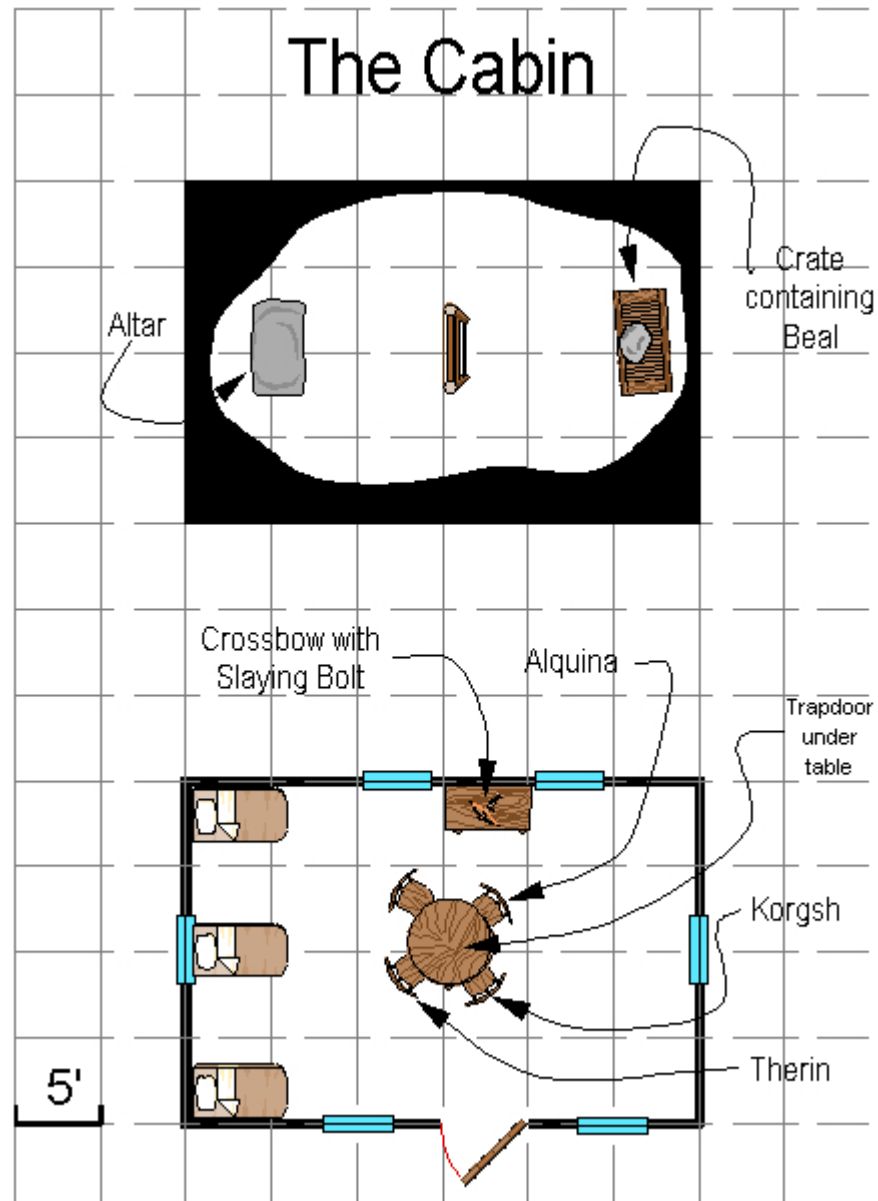
MAP 1: THALLIN



Map 2: The Ambush



Map 3: The Cabin



Hulln:

Take the creature and the means of his death to Thallin. There, use his abilities to masquerade as others and take the place of merchants and sell their wares to the local trading house. It makes little difference what you can get for the wares, as any amount will do, and will go a long way to helping our plans. When you think the time is right, slay the creature and return with your profits.

Lucor Baerglund of Nellix

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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