

VER4-08

Beauty and Two Beasts

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK®
Verbobonc Regional Adventure

By Ron Lundeen, Mike Maenza, and Vernon L. Vincent

Circle Edit: Tim Sech

Lady Asbury asks for help from those that have helped her before. She has an important decision to make and she dare not make it herself. Her taxes did not make it to the Viscount so she must make other arrangements. She must barter the only thing of enough value that she possesses. She must marry, not for love, but for financial reasons. But which suitor will she choose? A Verbobonc Regional adventure for APLs 6-12.

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

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

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. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without approval of the RPGA Network.

Introduction

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

Preparation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out a reporting form. After the form is filled out it should be given to the senior DM.

Living Greyhawk

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

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

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the

number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- 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 the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

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

Time Units and Upkeep

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

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Areas of Influence

This adventure allows the use of the following influence points

for purposes of the Verbobonc Influence document: Viscount Langard, Noble Houses (all), Council of Abbots (all), Gentlemen of the Watch, the Wrinkle Academy, and the Family.

	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

Adventure Background

Note: This background reveals events from several other Verbobonc scenarios. Judges of this event should take care to keep their knowledge as players and their characters' knowledge separate.

After the Greyhawk Wars, Iuz the Evil sent three agents undercover into the realm of Verbobonc. These three agents have been behind much trouble in the region since the Living Greyhawk Campaign began. One is a hooded woman who leads the giant invasion of the Kron Hills. Another is a dwarven assassin. The third is a master of disguise named Ryjenis, who has been impersonating Lord Simon Milinous for the last eight years. The first two villains are the focus of other Verbobonc scenarios. This scenario focuses on revealing Ryjenis the Imposter for who he really is.

Common knowledge of the noble houses important to this adventure is found in Appendix Three. Those narratives are fairly common knowledge, so you should feel free to distribute that Appendix to the characters if they want to know more about the noble houses featured in this adventure.

It is common knowledge that Lord Milinous went to fight in the Greyhawk Wars in 583 CY. In 587 CY, he was captured, and his unit of knights wiped out. To hear bards tell it, Milinous languished in Iuz's prisons for weeks before he was ransomed by his father. Although his men returned to Verbobonc, Milinous remained at the front lines of the wars, killing every evil minion responsible for his embarrassing capture. After months of slaughter, the Greyhawk Wars ended, and Simon Milinous returned home. Those closest to him, particularly his former love Baroness Elinor Asbury, knew he was a changed man. His heart was now dark, and the horrors of war had made him hard and cruel.

The truth is far darker. While in Iuz's prisons, Simon Milinous was tortured and interrogated by Ryjenis, a human rogue in Iuz's service who, coincidentally, resembled Simon Milinous a great deal. Through magic and brutal interrogation, Ryjenis was able to adopt Simon Milinous's demeanor, and learned almost all of his past. Once he felt his disguise was complete, Ryjenis took over Milinous' identity and had agents smuggle the broken body of Simon Milinous back to Verbobonc. Ryjenis's agents hid the real Simon Milinous under a symbiotic plant in the Fens of Tor. Ryjenis wanted to keep Milinous alive, in case he should be needed in the future. With the skill of a doppelganger, Ryjenis became Lord Milinous. He remained fighting the wars in order to slay all of his evil comrades who might expose his ruse and to appear a hero to the good folk of Verbobonc.

At first, things went quite well for Ryjenis. His disguise went off virtually without a hitch, and he was able to amass further power as a tyrant in his role as Lord Milinous. He infested his House Guard with blackguards and villains. He introduced his dark-hearted vassals (such as Lady Kolgrim of *VER2-08 Griffon's Blood*) to the worship of evil. He encouraged violent action against the gnome rebellion, in order to further destabilize the Viscounty. He usurped the position of Provost Marshall of Verbobonc (the leader of the Viscounty's armies) once the former Provost Marshall, Baron Rollof Avgustin, had become too old to defend his title.

But things are starting to unravel for Ryjenis in his role as Lord Milinous. First, a group of adventurers were able to discover the real Simon Milinous' hiding place (in *VER3-08 Mirror in a Quagmire*), and returned him to the Temple of St. Cuthbert to care for his shattered mind. Skilled diplomats were able to pacify the gnome rebellion (in *VER4-07 Reunification*). Finally, some adventurers discovered that Lord Milinous was not who he claimed to

be (in *VTF4-04 Insidious Malfeasance*). Worst of all, a prophetess in the Gnarley Forest has been able to identify all three agents of Iuz (in the forthcoming *VER4-09 Wicked Three*). Ryjenis is getting desperate to keep rumors of his real identity in check, and amass as much personal power as he can.

Fortunately for Ryjenis, he has learned of a way. Simon Milinous was betrothed to Lady Asbury before the Greyhawk Wars. Lady Asbury refused to marry "Lord Milinous" after the Wars, however, citing that his heart had darkened and she no longer loved him. Even Simon's old love did not recognize Ryjenis as an imposter, but she would not marry him. Ryjenis tried to force the impoverished Lady Asbury to marry him for money several years ago (in *VER1-01 Noble Ambitions*), but a group of adventurers was able to return a lost treasure to her. Now, Lady Asbury's annual taxes have gone missing (due to the critical event summaries from *VER4-02 A Costly Gamble*), and she is again destitute. Lady Asbury must marry for money, to keep her people out of poverty. Ryjenis intends to marry Lady Asbury, giving him the largest holdings in Verbobonc (after the Viscount) and increasing his House Guard to the size of a small army.

This time, resistance came not from a band of adventurers, but from another noble of Verbobonc. Lord Ludovic Langmuir is a soft, cowardly man tyrannized by his evil mother, Lady Godelva Langmuir. Although Ludovic is the Lord of Langmuir lands, it's no small secret that Lady Langmuir rules through her simple son. Lady Langmuir was behind the plot to steal Lady Asbury's taxes (see *VER4-02 A Costly Gamble*), and her coffers are now bursting. She offered her son's hand to Lady Asbury, in exchange for the "gift" of the tax money Lady Asbury has lost.

Lady Asbury is at a loss what to do. She is willing to marry to save her people from poverty, but she doesn't love either man. Advice from her friends, family, and advisors has been mixed, and she doesn't know which man she should marry. To solve this problem, she intends to turn to those who have helped her so often in the past: adventurers of Verbobonc.

Adventure Summary

This adventure takes place entirely within Verbobonc City. The characters receive an invitation to meet with Lady Asbury, and she presents her dilemma to them. With her is the aged Armount, her trusted seneschal and closest friend. She asks the characters to dine with Lord Milinous and Lord Langmuir separately, to see if they can

discern their true hearts and determine who she should marry. They can go to either Lord first.

Lord Milinous is stern and demanding, and not at all polite. A half-dozen of his guardsmen are always present. He wants to determine if any of the characters have guessed he's an imposter. If the characters question him about his feelings for Lady Asbury, he feeds them a lie about loving her long ago, and the truth about wanting to increase his lands and power.

Lord Langmuir meets the characters under the watchful gaze of his evil mother. It's clear to the characters that he's a cowardly, soft man. He may actually like Lady Asbury, but he certainly isn't in love with her. Near the end of the meal, Lady Asbury enacts a clever ruse to make the characters think Ludovic really loves Lady Asbury, but observant characters see through this ploy.

As the characters are walking from Milinous's manor to Langmuir's (or vice versa), they are attacked by drunken half-orc thugs concealing tabards of House Milinous. This is actually another trick of Lady Langmuir's, trying to throw suspicion on Milinous.

After both dinners, on their way back to Jylee's Inn to report to Lady Asbury, the characters witness a man nearly beaten to death by vampires. They intervene and defeat the vampires, but the vampires are able to disperse into the mist if slain. The man they rescue is "Sigh" (the poor fellow rescued from under the plant in VER3-08 Mirror in a Quagmire). He insists that he is Simon Milinous, and must return to the Temple of St. Cuthbert, where he is being cared for. He asks the characters to escort him, and reveals the truth of his capture in the Greyhawk Wars. The real Simon Milinous is a caring and good man, who doesn't want to see Lady Asbury marry anyone else, but doesn't know what to do. He asks the characters to help him become reunited with Lady Asbury, his old love.

The characters eventually make their way back to Jylee's Inn, only to find Armount packing his things to leave. He explains that Milinous came to the Inn late at night (after his dinner with the characters), demanding that Asbury marry him at his manor immediately. When she demurred, he threatened to invade her lands and kill her people if she did not consent. Asbury had no choice but to go with the villain. Out of malice, Lord Milinous discharged Armount on the spot.

The characters race back to Milinous's manor, and burst in just in time to see Lady Asbury and Ryjenis about to be married by a priest of St. Cuthbert. If Simon Milinous

has not followed the characters this far, he bursts in just behind the party. Determined that he can still succeed at his plans, Ryjenis and his guards fight to the death. At lower APLs, the players will assist in holding back the guards while Milinous attacks the imposter. At higher APLs, a weakened Sir Simon Milinous is no match for Ryjenis; Simon faces off against some of the imposter's guards, while the characters must face Ryjenis and the remaining guards.

If players are successful, the real Lord Milinous drops to his knees, cradling Elinor Asbury's body. Fearing her for dead (due to the amount of blood in the room) he professes his sorrow for going to war and the loss of his only love. As he bends to kiss her limp body, she awakens. Looking in his eyes, she kisses him and they tighten their embrace. They inform the party that they need some time alone to sort things out. They inform the party that they should meet them at Jylee's in at high noon tomorrow. They also ask that they inform Armount of their impending arrival.

If the characters are defeated, Ryjenis takes Lady Asbury hostage and leaves with the remaining guards in his entourage. If this happens the Gentlemen of the Watch and clerics of St. Cuthbert arrive to sort out what has happened. They will take the body of Lord Milinous, if dead, so that they can perform a *raise dead*. Once Lord Milinous comes back he and the priests of St. Cuthbert will go to his lands to get his house in order, all the while attempting to track down Ryjenis. Players will be asked to give a full account of the events. The scenario ends on a down note with the potential for another run-in with Ryjenis

The scenario concludes with the real Sir Simon Milinous and Lady Asbury revealing that they plan to get married, that Lord Milinous will pay all her taxes and that upon marriage, their lands will become one. They thank the party and offer friendship and reward.

Note: Many of the NPCs the characters interact with in this scenario wear a *ring of mind shielding* (in an age of intrigue and magic, it's a must-have magic item). Be aware of the powers and limitations of this magic item. "Lord Milinous" (actually, Ryjenis the Imposter), Lord Langmuir, and Lady Langmuir each wear one of these rings.

Before Play

Find out whether any of the characters have close connections with Lady Asbury, Lord Milinous, or Lord

Langmuir. Pay particular attention to those who have played *VER4-02 A Costly Gamble* or *VTF4-04 Insidious Malfeasance*, as those characters may have rumors (but no proof) that some of the NPCs in this scenario are evil villains.

Let the players know that their characters have each received a discreet note asking them to meet with Baroness Elinor Asbury at Jylee's Inn in Verbobonc City at three o'clock in the afternoon, on the day this adventure begins.

Encounter One: Damsel in Distress

Jylee's Inn is perhaps the most extravagant inn in all of Verbobonc. A row of carefully pruned plum trees shelters the courtyard of Jylee's Inn from the dust of the road near the southeast district of Verbobonc City. The banners above Jylee's Inn flap in the wind, displaying the crests of the nobles and other ranking persons residing at the Inn. One of the banners, displaying a gem and a sword, proclaims Lady Asbury's presence at Jylee's Inn.

The guard at the entrance to Jylee's Inn is stationed primarily to keep the "riff raff" away from the establishment. He permits any character that has paid at least Adventurer's Standard upkeep to pass; the others (like those paying no Upkeep, or those living off the wild), he obstinately refuses admittance. Even if the characters protest that they're here to meet Baroness Asbury, this guard is unfazed, and grants entrance only to the "proper sort."

In the outer courtyard of Jylee's Inn, you could almost believe you are out in the countryside. The walls and high trees block the noise of the city, and the flowers provide a pleasant, pastoral scent to the air. You prepare to move to the doors of the Inn itself when an old man standing nearby discreetly waves a hand, drawing your attention.

Characters who have met Lady Asbury before (those that played *VER1-01 Noble Ambitions*, *VER1-06 Knocking on the Keep*, *VERIntro3-03 Teeth of the Storm*, *VERS4-01 Return to the Fens of Tor*, some players of *VER4-02 A Costly Gamble*, or characters that are members of the Asbury House Guard) or characters who succeed at a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check recognize Armount, Lady Asbury's seneschal and closest advisor. This man is very old, very proper, and has an obvious grandfatherly affection for Elinor Asbury.

"Good folk, please, here in the garden." the old man in stylish but out-of-date clothes begins. "Armount is my name, and I am Lady Asbury's advisor and friend. The Lady is taking some air beneath the plum trees just now, but I know that she is anxious to meet with you.

You want to freshen up, I'm sure, but in her state, my Lady won't notice a spot of mud or an uneven tunic." (Almost absentmindedly, Armount reaches over to straighten a character's shirt, and flick off some piece of dirt.) *"If you'll wait but a moment, I'll let the Lady know you've arrived."*

Armount hurries off behind a screen of trees, and returns only a moment later with Lady Asbury.

The seneschal returns, walking unsteadily, and leaning heavily on his arm is a beautiful young woman. She wears a simple but elegant dress with a brooch depicting the serene face of Rao. Her hair is in disarray, and her eyes are red and puffy. She discreetly wipes a sleeve across her face as she approaches you.

"Oh! I'm so glad that adventurers of such good name have heeded my call for help. Some of you I know, and others I know only by reputation. My name is Baroness Elinor Tregaurd Asbury, Ambassador to Veluna, and Lady of Verbobonc."

Lady Asbury gives a practiced curtsy, and waits for the characters to introduce themselves. She greets them warmly, as friends. If the characters have friends waiting outside the gate because the guard wouldn't let them in, Lady Asbury demands the guard admit them (which he does, acting fawning and servile to Lady Asbury).

"Some of my peers think those in your career are little more than bandits or pirates, but I've found that most adventurers are good and heroic. I wouldn't be in my fortunate position today without the aid of resourceful heroes years ago. I need some resourceful assistance right now. Although I don't doubt your combat abilities, I'm in dire need of allies skilled in diplomacy and investigation.

Perhaps I should explain my very serious predicament. I've long enjoyed the service of a master dwarven craftsman, named Thuldon Rockspitter. I think some of you have met him on many occasions. He keeps ties to his people, the dwarves of Clan Rockhall, high in the Lortmil Mountains. I have arranged to pay my taxes to Viscount Langard annually, and just this last year, I

offered to provide my taxes in a valuable ore, obtained from the Rockhall dwarves. A shipment of this ore would surely invite bandits or worse, but Thuldon came up with a clever idea: he crafted the metal into the form of a wagon axle, and we intended to drive it to Verbobonc City in the strictest of secrecy. Despite these secretive precautions, the wagon was stolen and has not been recovered. I am now more than one year behind on my taxes to the Viscount.

"Langard is a good man, but he isn't in a position where he can allow one of his nobles to go without paying a years' worth of taxes. I have to come up with the money. My people are hardworking, but still recovering from the depredations the Cult of Elemental Evil worked in my lands while I was growing up. I simply don't have it, and I can't borrow such a sum; it would ruin my people.

"I have two similar solutions, and I can't decide between the two. The other Lords of Verbobonc have heard rumors of my plight. I've received offers of marriage from two eligible Lords. Both have agreed that if I take their hand in marriage, they will pay my outstanding debts. For the sake of my beloved people, I have to choose one of these men.

"Lord Simon Milinous has persistently offered me his hand for the seven years since he returned from the Greyhawk Wars. We were very much in love before he left, and I waited anxiously for his return. I imagined that we would be wed once he returned, a hero, from the war. I heard that he had been captured, and cried myself to sleep for weeks. When he was ransomed, I knew he would then return to me. But he did not. He stayed at the front lines, leading another band of knights back into the fray, and it seemed his thirst for killing knew no bounds. After the wars were over, Simon returned and insisted upon my hand. But he was a changed man, hard and cruel. I knew as soon as I laid eyes upon him that I did not love this man any longer. He has tried to buy my heart back for years, and now I'm in a position where I cannot refuse him any longer.

"Then, only last week, Ludovic Langmuir offered me his hand, as well. I've known Ludovic since childhood, of course, but we've never been particularly close. He knew of my lost taxes, he said, and genuinely wanted to help me. But Ludovic is watched carefully by his hawk-like mother. He dares not make a move without consulting her. He wants to help me, he says, but his mother won't let him give away that kind of money without something in

return. She thinks I would be a fine match for her son, and agreed that Ludovic could part with the money only if I would marry him. I don't mind Ludovic; he is not brave like Simon, and nowhere near as handsome, but I feel that he has a kind nature.

"I must choose between these two men, and I don't know what to do. If I marry Simon, perhaps I can rediscover the love we once shared. If I marry Ludovic, perhaps I can bring out his kindness and make him a stronger man.

"Of course, all my friends, family, and advisors have their own opinions, even Armount. But I'm still unable to decide in my heart. I thought that if I could gather the opinions of goodhearted heroes, who don't face politics and intrigues every day, perhaps their counsel would show me wisdom.

"Will you help me choose my husband?"

Lady Asbury isn't looking for an immediate decision on which man she should marry, although characters are sure to offer. She's only asking for the characters to help her decide. The players might also suggest some novel solutions as well. Here is how to deal with them:

Don't marry either of them. If Lady Asbury doesn't marry, the Viscount will have to collect the taxes from her people directly, and that would bankrupt nearly all of them. She won't put her people in that hard position.

Marry the Viscount. Lady Asbury confides that she and Langard are good friends, but it's certainly nothing more than that. Furthermore, it would almost certainly damage Langard politically to marry an impoverished Lady.

Ask for more time. The Viscount has already been more than kind in allowing the extensions he has. His treatment of the situation is starting to look like favoritism, and some of the other Lords are starting to grumble. It might be politically unpleasant for Langard to wait any longer, and Lady Asbury doesn't want to hurt his position any more than she already has. She must pay soon.

Marry me! or I'll give you the money. Lady Asbury appreciates any offer of assistance, but her taxes are tens of thousands of gold pieces. She won't take it as charity, and doesn't want to marry someone she barely knows.

They're Evil! Characters may have reason to think, from other Verbobonc scenarios, that either Simon Milinous

or Ludovic Langmuir are evil villains. Lady Asbury dismisses such claims, stating, "I'm sure that's just a mistake, or a rumor. I can't see that Viscount Langard and the other nobles would let a truly evil man remain in power."

If the characters ask Armount about his preference, he sniffs and states that he'd "rather see the Lady with a simpering pup than with a bloodthirsty barbarian." But it's clear he isn't happy with either choice.

Once the characters have agreed to help Lady Asbury, she explains that both Lord Ludovic Langmuir and Lord Simon Milinous are staying in Verbobonc City (both of them have manor houses elsewhere in the city). She has arranged to send "representatives" to dinner with each of them. She'd like the characters to be these representatives.

Lady Asbury asks the characters to dine with each of the Lords, and get a sense of their feelings toward her. They will probably both be on their best behavior, but the characters should try to get at the Lords' true feelings. After both dinners, they should report back to her at Jylee's Inn. Whether they come back late at night or early tomorrow morning is up to them.

Armount provides directions to both manor houses. Lord Milinous's manor house is in the far south of the city (near the Wrinkle Academy of magic); it should take the characters fifteen minutes of walking to get there from Jylee's Inn. Lord Langmuir's manor house is near the west gate by the River Road entrance. It's about a half-hour from Jylee's Inn. The two manor houses are about a half-hour's walk from each other.

Dinner with Lords? Us!? The characters might think that armor-clad, weapon-wielding adventurers are hardly fit to dine privately with the Lords of Verbobonc. Lady Asbury assures them otherwise. Both Lords know that Lady Asbury has many friends among the adventurers of Verbobonc, so a "rugged" appearance and less-than-perfect table manners are acceptable. She cautions that each Lords' House Guard will certainly insist the characters surrender their weapons and spell component pouches at the door, and might also ask the characters to strip out of armor.

All APLs

♣ **Baroness Elinor Asbury:** human Brd12; Cha 17, NG.

♣ **Armount:** human Brd6; Cha 15, NG.

Development: This scenario now diverges into two separate paths, depending on whether the characters

want to start with dinner at Lord Langmuir's manor, or Lord Milinous's manor.

If the characters **start with Lord Ludovic Langmuir**, go to **Encounter Two: Dinner with Ludovic**. On their way to Lord Milinous's manor, half-orc thugs attack the characters. Run **Encounter Four: After-Dinner Drunks**, then go back to **Encounter Three: Dinner with Simon**. After that, skip ahead to **Encounter Five: A Very Dark Alley**. These Encounters will be in the order 1-2-4-3-5.

If the characters **start with Lord Simon Milinous**, go to **Encounter Three: Dinner with Simon**. On their way to Lord Langmuir's manor, half-orc thugs attack the characters. Run **Encounter Four: After-Dinner Drunks**, then go back to **Encounter Two: Dinner with Ludovic**. After that, skip ahead to **Encounter Five: A Very Dark Alley**. These Encounters will be in the order 1-3-4-2-5.

Encounter Two: Dinner with Ludovic

Lord Ludovic Langmuir recently purchased a stately manor house near the Temple district of the city, on the east end. The manor itself is old, although it shows sign of recent restoration. The doors to the manor are flanked by two of the Langmuir House Guard, a human and a half-elf.

The House Guardsmen here are polite but firm. They ask the characters to leave their weapons, spell component pouches, and armor in a secure attached room (they have a Spot of +8 and a Sense Motive of +7, should the characters try anything funny). They summon a butler, who invites the characters into the manor house, and provides a private room for them to freshen up. He then sees the characters into the dining room, where Lord Langmuir and his mother are already seated.

The large dining hall of Lord Langmuir's manor is paneled in rich, dark woods. A low fire burns in an enormous hearth, warming the room but making it look even larger. At the high dining table sit two people. One is a pinched, sour-faced old woman wearing expensive clothes and elaborate jewelry. She scowls as the butler announces you, as though he's given her bad news. The other figure is a nervous, tubby man who leaps to his feet and approaches you anxiously.

"So very glad you could join us for this dinner. Any friend of Elinor's is a friend of mine, and I expect us to be much closer friends before too long. Elinor and I, I mean. I mean, more than friends." The man looks over his shoulder at his mother. She shakes her head disapprovingly.

She snaps, "Don't let my son's senseless enthusiasm tire you. I'm sure you have many questions, so we should start this dinner right away."

With that, servants bring in the first course while the butler shows you to your seats.

Over the dinner (greens, roast pheasant, and stewed potatoes), Ludovic Langmuir makes small talk, asking the characters about what sorts of things they've done and where they've been. He eats heartily Lady Godeleva Langmuir doesn't speak at all, and only picks at her food. She watches any conversation between her son and the characters very closely, and the characters should get the feeling that they are being constantly observed and assessed. Remember that both Lord Langmuir and Lady Langmuir wear *rings of mind shielding*.

If the characters begin some conversation topics, here's how these characters respond:

Any question to Lady Godeleva, she tries to ignore. If the characters persist, she snaps, "I believe you're here to interview my son, not me."

What do you think about Lady Asbury? Ludovic responds, "We've been friends for a long time. Since we were children, I've always thought well of her." A DC 20 Sense Motive reveals that this is the truth.

Why do you want to marry her? "Oh, I think a union of our houses would be a fine thing; very fine indeed. Our people, I mean hers and mine, grow a lot of the same crops, which means it will be good to combine forces and so on. Oh, and I also love her." A DC 15 Sense Motive reveals that Ludovic thinks the economic reason is the better one, and he's not being truthful about loving Lady Asbury.

Do you love Lady Asbury? "Umm...well, yes." A DC 15 Sense Motive reveals that this isn't really the case. If pressed, he adds hastily, "But I'm sure I could, you know. She's terribly nice, and very pretty." This is the truth; Ludovic hopes that they'll be happy after the wedding.

Do you know Lord Milinous is trying to marry her as well? Ludovic looks immediately dejected if the

characters bring up Lord Milinous, as he doesn't think he's got a hope at all against such a ferocious war hero. He doesn't know why Lady Asbury hasn't married him already, and Ludovic is certain that Lady Asbury is ultimately going to marry Lord Milinous instead of him. Of course, he only reveals this opinion in small pieces to inquisitive characters who press him on the topic.

You are a bad person. Ludovic looks confused and hurt if the characters accuse him of any treachery or wrongdoing. Have the characters make Sense Motive checks, but Ludovic genuinely feels he is innocent of any serious wrongdoing.

Your mother is a bad person. Ludovic cringes if the characters speak ill of his mother (particularly since she's right in the room), but mumbles, "I'm sure these are just rumors." A DC 20 Sense Motive reveals that Ludovic actually suspects his mother of several plots and conspiracies, but he's too timid to ever admit it. Lady Langmuir speaks up to add, "That's right dear. They don't have any proof of anything."

Where did you get enough money to cover Asbury's taxes as well as your own? Ludovic looks proudly at his mother. "My mother has made some very smart investments in some of our neighboring countries, and they've recently paid off. We just bought this mansion, you know." Lady Godeleva smiles back, but the grin doesn't reach her eyes. On DC 20 Sense Motive, the characters get a sense that Godeleva has fed this 'investment' lie to Ludovic. On a DC 30 Sense Motive, the characters get a sense that Ludovic knows it's a lie, and House Langmuir's recent gains are probably illegal, but doesn't want to admit that his mother might be guilty of anything.

Development: The Ruse: Lady Langmuir has hatched a plot to insure the representatives come away with a favorable impression of her son. After dinner there is a noticeable absence of servants to remove the dinner plates and serve dessert. Lady Langmuir looks clearly frustrated (a DC 35 Sense Motive reveals this is an act), stands and announces:

"Late in serving dessert again! Those servants are utterly worthless. I'm going to see what's taking them, and give them a severe tongue-lashing while I'm at it. Ludovic, entertain our guests, but don't you say a word while I'm gone!" Ludovic looks sheepishly down at his empty dinner plate as Lady Godeleva Langmuir storms out of the room.

As soon as Lady Langmuir is gone, Ludovic begins a carefully rehearsed speech.

Ludovic looks up at you as soon as Godeleva has left the dining room. He speaks in a hushed, hurried voice. "I'm so sorry. I'm miserable and pathetic, and I know it. I have to do whatever she says. I like Elinor a lot. I don't love her, but I know she's a strong woman. I think she can help me. I can help her with her taxes, and if she marries me, she might help me deal with my mother. Together, Elinor and I might be able to do some good for Verbobonc. Please help me by putting in a good word for me. Please?"

A DC 10 Sense Motive reveals that Ludovic feels guilty and naughty for saying these things, but he seems honest. If a character's Sense Motive roll beats a DC 20+APL, the character knows that the entire speech is rehearsed and probably a lie. If a character's Sense Motive roll beats a DC 30+APL, the character realizes that Ludovic doesn't actually want to marry Lady Asbury at all, for fear that his mother might subjugate Elinor the way she's completely subjugated him.

The characters don't have more than a minute or two to respond before Lady Langmuir returns. She is followed by chastised dessert-toting servants. After the dessert, Lady Godeleva announces that she and her son are going to retire. The butler shows the characters politely to the door, where all their things are returned to them.

Encounter Three: Dinner with Simon

Lord Milinous' manor is an old mansion in the south end of town. The arcane-minded among you know you are only a block away from the Wrinkle Academy of Magic. At the entrance to the manor stand four plate-clad guardsmen, standing at ease. They snap to attention as you approach, and one of them, the most senior among them, greets you.

"Lord Milinous has been expecting you, good men [and women, as appropriate]. I'm Guardsman Nels, and I'm to see you in to dinner. If you could leave your weapons and spell necessities with my companions here, I can assure you that they'll come to no harm."

Guardsman Nels is a serious but honest military-minded man. He has a lot of respect for Lord Milinous, but doesn't know of his darker dealings. He lets the characters keep their armor on, if they'd like, but he has a

keen eye for weapons or spell component pouches the characters may try to hide (Spot +10, Sense Motive +7).

Nels leads the characters into the manor, and right toward the dining room. The characters pass through a large empty salon on the way. He knocks briskly on the dining room door and, without waiting, opens the door and gestures the characters inside.

Lord Milinous' dining room is oppressive in its opulence. The floor is a dark wood, nearly black. The walls are paneled in dark wood as well, giving the room a gloomy, oppressive look. In contrast to this gloom, the table is laden with steaming meats and ripe fruits. A pleasant smell fills the room.

At the far end of the table, barely visible over the heaped dishes of food, lounges a large dark-haired man wearing a stylish tunic decorated with a black griffon. Three guardsmen stand on either side of him, clad in platemail and holding halberds out. Lord Milinous doesn't seem to notice his guards, and stands to welcome you. He spreads his arms over the banquet, gesturing to a dozen chairs around the table. "At last, the vaunted representatives are here," Milinous says gruffly. "I expected you some time ago, so you'll have to forgive me for having my table already set. Please, sit, and help yourselves."

Once the characters are seated, Milinous begins eating casually. The characters may suspect this feast of being poisoned or dangerous, but it is all entirely harmless and quite excellent. Remember that "Lord Milinous" wears a *ring of mind shielding* throughout this encounter.

Milinous gets right to the point. He genuinely feels he's the best match for Elinor, and no one can prove otherwise. He states, "I know that Elinor has sent the group of you to feel me out, and find out whether I would make her a good match. I assure you, there is no better match for her. What must I do to convince you of that?"

Milinous has a second agenda in his conversation with the characters. He wants to know whether any of them suspect him of being a duplicate of the real Simon Milinous. To do this, he brings up his time in the Greyhawk Wars (if the characters don't do it themselves), talking about the horrors of war and the disgrace of capture. He admits that he went on a killing spree after being ransomed, but he insists that many would have done the same in his place.

If the characters begin some conversation topics, here's how these characters respond:

Any question to the Milinous Guardsmen is entirely ignored, other than Lord Milinous smoothly saying, "Please don't bother my men. You're here to interrogate me, remember?" The half dozen guardsmen barely move throughout dinner, and do not speak. If the characters use detection abilities, half of them are faintly Evil and the rest are Neutral. These are some of Milinous' most trusted guardsmen: they do not know their Lord's nature, but they know he is more of a cruel schemer than he lets on to the public.

What do you think about Lady Asbury? Or Why do you want to marry her? Milinous responds, "I loved her deeply before I went off to the wars. I admit that the horrors I saw defending the lands of Good from the forces of Evil have made me bitter and short-tempered, but I still love Elinor all the same. I wish to marry her as much now as I did then." A DC 20 Sense Motive reveals that this is a bald-faced lie. If the characters confront Milinous with the lie, he simply shrugs and admits, "Well, the less-perceptive public certainly believes that rubbish. To your more discerning senses, I should perhaps reveal the truth: I don't wish her any harm, as our lands together will be the largest in the Viscounty. With the Ambassador to Veluna wed to the Provost Marshal of Verbobonc's military, there's nothing the two of us might accomplish if we pool our authority under my capable direction." Have the characters make Sense Motive checks again, but this is the truth. "Lord Milinous" knows that to cement his power in Verbobonc, he must keep Lady Asbury alive and at his side...for now.

Do you know Lord Langmuir is trying to marry her as well? Milinous sneers, "That cowardly fop is just doing as his mother commands. Now, there's a woman with admirable ambition. But, no, Elinor's many assets would go to waste in that house. My prediction is this: no later than a week after the wedding, Lady Asbury would have some horrible accident, and her poor, grieving mother-in-law would have to move into Lady Asbury's lands to oversee them. Those coddled peasants will know true oppression then, I promise you." Lord Milinous thinks this is a very likely turn of events if Elinor marries Ludovic (and he might very well be right).

You are a bad person or You're not who you're pretending to be. If the characters question Milinous about his captivity in any suspicious detail, if they mention Sigh hidden under the Fens of Tor in *VER3-08 Mirror in a Quagmire*, if the mention finding the note in the Moathouse in *VTF4-04 Insidious Malfeasance*, or

even if they come right out and accuse Milinous of being a duplicate, he gives them a satisfied smirk and insists, "Of course, you have no proof of any wrongdoing, because I'm far more clever than any of you. Ah, well, if you suspect such wickedness of me, you couldn't possibly recommend me to Elinor, so this dinner is a waste of my time and yours. You may leave my manor immediately."

Where did you get enough money to cover Asbury's taxes as well as your own? Simon Milinous waves off this question with, "I came back from the Wars with a good sense of how to get the very most out of those who work for you." In truth, he has not only taxed his peasants harshly, but he indirectly controls several bandit gangs and black cults throughout the Viscounty. All this ill-gotten gain has flooded into House Milinous coffers. A DC 20 Sense Motive reveals that Milinous is keeping something back about the source of his funds, and that it's most definitely something shady.

Once Milinous has had the chance to question the characters about what they know, and reveal some of his intentions toward Lady Asbury, he calls an end to the dinner. Nels appears to escort the characters out, and returns all of their things to them. Nels wishes the characters a pleasant evening as they depart.

Encounter Four: After-Dinner Drunks

Run this Encounter when the characters are going from Lord Milinous's manor to Lord Langmuir's manor, or vice versa.

This encounter seems like the sort of "obligatory thug encounter" that appear in many adventures, but there is much more going on behind the scenes that the characters might discover. This is all a ruse by Lady Godelva Langmuir to try to implicate House Milinous in some violent wrongdoing. Here's a little background:

Last night, one of Lady Langmuir's spies discovered a gang of drunken half-orcs carousing around Verbobonc City and convinced them to pick a fight with some of Lord Milinous's house guard. The half-orcs won, and the agent convinced the half-orcs to strip the Milinous guards of their tabards and put them on. The half-orcs have been wearing them since, and they've put their cloaks over top of them.

Earlier tonight, the agent convinced the half-orcs that a few rich adventurers will be crossing town at a certain point tonight (it's on the route from Lord Milinous's

manor to Lord Langmuir's manor), and that they'd be a tough fight but laden with loot.

So the characters are about to get jumped by these half-orcs. The agent sees this as a win-win situation; either the half-orc thugs win, and Lady Asbury's heroes just "disappear," or the characters win and search the half-orcs to find...Milinous tabards!

You're walking from one of your dinner appointments this evening to the other, pondering what you just learned about [the Lord just visited]. You suddenly realize that this street is not well-lit, and virtually deserted. Four cloaked figures step into the weak light, brandishing greatswords. You're forty feet away, but you can smell cheap liquor. "That's them," one of the figures grunts, and they rush to attack.

Two figures rush up from behind the characters as well, making six foes total

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Half-orc Thugs (6):** male half-orc Ftr2; hp 20 each; see Appendix One.

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Half-orc Thugs (6):** male half-orc Ftr4; hp 36 each; see Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **Half-orc Thugs (6):** male half-orc Ftr6; hp 52 each; see Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 13)

☛ **Half-orc Thugs (6):** male half-orc Ftr8; hp 72 each; see Appendix One.

Tactics: These fighters start 40 feet away from the characters: four in front, and two behind. They flank tough-looking targets, using their Dual Strike feat when possible. They are half-drunk and foolishly brave. They fight until reduced to 8 hp or less, then they try to flee.

Note: Characters who played *VER4-01 So Things Come to Confusion* realize that these half-orcs seem very similar to the thugs that attacked the party in that scenario (they are outfitted similarly, and fight with the same tactics). They are in fact part of the same gang, but deeper truth behind their gang is beyond the scope of this scenario.

Development: Looting: As soon as the characters loot the bodies, they find Milinous House Guard tabards

under the cloaks of the half-orcs. This will implicate House Milinous, although there are two methods of finding out all is not as it seems here:

- If any of the half-orcs are questioned, they admit they aren't Milinous House Guards. Someone convinced them to beat up some Milinous House Guard, and take their tabards. They don't know the man's name, other than it was a human who was generous about buying them drinks. Come to think of it, they admit, that same human told them to attack the characters tonight. They don't know how to reach him, and they don't know he works for Lady Langmuir.
- Any character who succeeds on a DC 25 Knowledge (local) or Bardic Knowledge roll, or any character who is a member of the Milinous House Guard, knows that Lord Milinous particularly dislikes half-orcs, and there are very few of them in his House Guard (certainly, less than six). These half-orcs must be imposters.

Treasure

Defeat and loot the half-orc thugs.

APL 6: L: 135 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 360 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 186 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *breastplate* (x6) (112 gp per character each).

APL 12: L: 186 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *light fortification breastplate* (x6) (362 gp per character each).

Development: The Watch Arrives: About five minutes after the fight, the Gentlemen of the Watch (the Verbobonc City guard) arrive, and take any surviving half-orcs into custody, as they are wanted criminals. The Gentlemen of the Watch thank the characters for dispatching these dangerous ruffians.

Of course, neither Lord Milinous nor Lord Langmuir knows anything about these thugs. Both seem surprised that the characters would be attacked on the streets of the city. (Lord Milinous probably adds something like, "I'm glad you gave those half-breed curs what was coming to them.") Lady Langmuir knows about the attack, but of course she doesn't say anything about it. The characters cannot find her agent who urged the half-orcs to attack, as he is now long gone from the city.

From Here: If the characters continue to Lord Langmuir's manor, go to **Encounter Two: Dinner with**

Ludovic. If the characters continue to Lord Milinous's manor, go to **Encounter Three: Dinner with Simon.**

Encounter Five: A Very Dark Alley

This Encounter happens when the characters are on their way back from the second dinner (either to Jylee's Inn to report the results of their investigations to Lady Asbury, or to their own rooms). Read:

The night is beginning to get foggy. Strands of cotton-like mist trail across the city streets like festival streamers. Few souls are still on the streets, and all is quiet at this late hour.

Have the characters make Listen checks, and reward the highest roll (whatever it is) with:

From down a nearby alley, you hear a faint scratching.

When the character turns to look or alerts his companions, read on:

At the entrance to the dark passage, you see a large dark-haired man weakly scrabbling along the ground, inching toward the lights of the city street. Behind him, two thin forms walk slowly down the alley towards him. One is tall and straight, standing nearly seven feet high. The other is shorter and crouched in an awkward pose that reminds you of some insect. The tall figure is focused on the prone man, and speaks conversationally to its companion as it walks closer, "Thought he could get away, didn't he, Worthy Sir Pavel? No, he can't get away from us. I don't think he'll make it to the street, even if we let him have a head start."

The smaller one walks up one wall of the alley casually and chitters back, "Why, I do think we've been spotted at our sport, Worthy Sir Grym." The tall figure gazes at you, and you can see faint red light in the back of his narrow, pallid face.

"Be on your way, travelers. Our nocturnal activities are no concern of yours."

These two ominous characters are vampires. They are servants of Ryjenis, and he uses them only for "special" jobs out of the public eye. They have been waiting to catch the real Simon Milinous (the dark-haired man on the ground) out on the city streets at night, and tonight

they've caught him. They are toying with him, draining his levels, and enjoying their sport.

Pavel (the short one) and Grym (the tall one) are heartless killers who delight in causing fear in their foes. They aren't knights, of course, but call each other "Worthy Sir" to mock the genuine knights in Milinous' employ. They wear little other than tightly-wrapped cloaks.

Of course, any character worthy of the term "hero" won't just leave the man to these two killers. Pavel and Grym parley with the characters only long enough to try to *fascinate* them. If the characters move toward Simon, or start casting spells, they attack.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☠ **Pavel:** Vampire Rog4; hp 36; see Appendix One.

☠ **Grym:** Vampire Ftr2/Brd2; hp 39; see Appendix One.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☠ **Pavel:** Vampire Rog6; hp 54; see Appendix One.

☠ **Grym:** Vampire Ftr4/Brd2; hp 59; see Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☠ **Pavel:** Vampire Rog8; hp 72; see Appendix One.

☠ **Grym:** Vampire Ftr4/Brd2/Rog2; hp 78; see Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☠ **Pavel:** Vampire Rog10; hp 90; see Appendix One.

☠ **Grym:** Vampire Ftr4/Brd2/Rog4; hp 98; see Appendix One.

Tactics: These vampires have little fear of adventurers. In combat, they prefer to use their special abilities, such as *summoning swarms* and dominating fighter-types, over engaging in melee. If pressed into a fight, however, they drain levels as quickly and efficiently as possible, preferring to gang up on a single weak-looking opponent. If reduced to 0 hit points, their gear drops to the ground and they become gaseous forms that blend with the foggy air (they are a bone-white color, as is the fog, gaining a +20 circumstance bonus to their Hide checks). They move through the fog, unnoticeable, into cracks of buildings and through tiny gaps in walls. These two foes should be exceptionally hard to defeat permanently, and impossible to follow.

Once they are free of the characters, Pavel and Grym return to their coffins beneath Lord Milinous's manor to rejuvenate. As long as they are able to get away, these two figures show up later in **Encounter Two.**

Development: Once the vampires have been defeated or driven off, the man in the alley stirs slightly. Characters that roll him over are in for a surprise: this man looks very much like Lord Milinous. He is thinner than Lord Milinous, and his skin is paler, but the two look very much alike. He stirs long enough to mutter, *"Got away. Good. Truly, you are heroes. Must get back to the temple, but can't walk that far by myself. Will you—even one of you—walk me back to the Temple of St. Cuthbert?"*

The man says little other than to insist that he be taken back to the Temple of St. Cuthbert, and resists as well as he can if the characters try to take him elsewhere. Simon lapses in and out of consciousness. The only information he gives to curious characters is that he is called "Sigh," which is short for "Simon."

Simon has been drained of ten levels (out of 11) has only 3 hit points remaining, has lost 8 points of Strength (from poison applied by Pavel while they were toying with him) and has taken 5 points of Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma damage (from a *touch of idiocy* scroll used by Grym while they were toying with him). He is in bad shape, and it's unlikely the characters can patch him back up themselves.

The walk to the Temple of St. Cuthbert passes without incident; move on to the next Encounter.

Encounter Six: Sigh's Secret

The Temple of St. Cuthbert, the state god of Verbobonc, is as stern and imposing as the deity worshipped within. The large doors stand open at this hour, but two burly cudgel-wielding priests stand guard, alert for visitors...and for trouble.

When these priests of St. Cuthbert see that Simon has returned, they immediately begin berating him (as he's not supposed to leave the temple, by order of Bishop Haufren). If the characters intervene, or point out Simon's poor condition, the clerics immediately begin tending him as well as they can. One of them rushes off to awaken Bishop Haufren. The clerics usher Simon and the characters to a private room near the rear of the temple. After ten or fifteen minutes, Bishop Haufren arrives.

The portly Bishop Haufren bursts into the room, his hair and robes in disarray. It's clear he's only just woken up. "I hear our guest decided he was well

enough to leave our care, despite my advice to the contrary." Evaluating Simon's condition, the bishop begins casting several spells. Almost immediately, Simon looks substantially improved. Turning his critical gaze on you, the bishop speaks with a tone of undisputed authority, "Tell me what happened."

Let the players explain as much of the evening as they wish to Bishop Haufren. If the characters are suffering from any detrimental effects, Bishop Haufren is willing to cast the spell needed to restore them, up to and including *resurrection*. However, he doesn't have expensive material components for these spells on hand, and insists that the characters provide them. Note that the *restoration* spell wipes away all negative levels, but has a cost of 100 gp.

Bishop Haufren should be roleplayed like a stern but caring grandfatherly figure.

After Bishop Haufren is done ministering to the characters, read:

*At last, the secret is starting to get out. This poor man has been under my care and protection for months. As some of you suspect, he is the real Lord Simon Milinous, captured in the Greyhawk Wars and replaced with a cunning and evil imposter. [Depending on whether characters present played VER3-08 Mirror in a Quagmire, insert *Some brave adventurers* or *Some of you*] rescued Simon here from his imprisonment in the Fens of Tor, and we've slowly nursed him back to health.*

Simon, now completely recovered from his attack, interrupts Bishop Haufren. "Old friend, I've uncovered dire news. This imposter has petitioned for Lady Asbury's hand in marriage, using some financial leverage I don't understand, and rumors say she will accept. I can't let the woman I love marry that—that—wicked man."

If the characters explain more of the situation to Simon, he is very grateful for the news. He is increasingly worried that the woman he loves should be so cruelly manipulated, and he encourages the characters to stop her marriage to either Lord. On a DC 15 Sense Motive, the characters can discover that Simon truly loves Lady Asbury still, and wants her to come to no harm.

Bishop Haufren rubs his chin thoughtfully. "This is quite serious. Events are moving quickly. Earlier this evening, Simon Milinous—or whoever is posing as Milinous—came here to the Temple. He demanded

the services of a priest. I refused him, but he knows the laws of our land, which require that a priest of St. Cuthbert be present at any marriage ceremony involving a noble of Verbobonc. He stormed out, threatening consequences, and I saw him speaking with a priest of Zilchus later."

Simon rises, crying, "A wedding tonight? I must stop them!"

Bishop Haufren gently eases Simon back into a sitting position, and motions you outside of Simon's small room. Once out of Simon's hearing, he addresses you. "You should return to Lady Asbury immediately. Do what you can to stop this wedding and uncover this imposter.

It might be good or ill to take Simon with you, but that's a choice that I'll let you make. He is eager, as you see, but it's clear that evil minions of this 'Lord Milinous' are hunting him. You may be taking him into danger. Can I trust you to look into this, and would you take Simon with you if you do?"

Whether the characters take Simon with them determines some events later in this adventure. Bishop Haufren gives him a voluminous clerical robe to use as a disguise, should the characters choose to allow Simon to accompany them.

All APLs

♣ **Bishop Haufren**, male human Clr13 (St. Cuthbert): LG; Spot +6, Sense Motive +12.

Encounter Seven: The Fired Servant

If the characters return to Jylee's Inn, they find Lady Asbury is gone and Armount is packing the last of his things into a cart.

What Happened: While the characters were otherwise occupied with Sigh, Ryjenis decided to make his move. First, he went to the temple of St. Cuthbert, demanding the services of a cleric on a pretext. Then, he presented himself at Jylee's Inn and insisted that Lady Asbury marry him this very night. Of course, Lady Asbury refused. Lord Milinous threatened her people, vowing he would send his soldiers and bandits into her lands to kill them all, and damn the consequences. Lady Asbury finally had no choice but to agree to marry "Lord Milinous." Gloating prematurely over his victory, Lord Milinous took Lady Asbury away in his carriage and fired Armount on the spot. All this occurred perhaps half an hour ago.

Read or paraphrase:

The obstinate guard at the gate to Jylee's Inn isn't very enthusiastic about admitting visitors at such a late hour. However, he seems to have vaguely remembered that you were to be admitted at any hour. With little fanfare he opens the gate. Within the tree-lined courtyard, you see a gaunt figure feebly lifting a few items onto a cart hitched to a mule. It seems a late hour for such a duty.

The figure is Armount, who looks more sad and broken than when the characters met him earlier today. He relates the story of Milinous's arrival in a fast coach, Milinous's insistence on the marriage, and his threats of violence in

Asbury lands if Lady Asbury would not immediately agree. Lady Asbury had no choice but to agree to an elopement. As they were leaving, Armount relates, Lord Milinous dismissed him from House Asbury's service saying, "The bride of the Black Griffon will have no need for a doddering old fool." Armount knows that Lord Milinous was taking Lady Asbury to his manor house here in Verbobonc City (the very place the characters met Milinous earlier in the evening).

Augmented Play: Pavel and Grym

If you feel that the characters have had an easy time with this scenario so far, and they seem fairly fresh for the final fight that is about to ensue, you may add two additional combatants to this fight. Assuming Pavel and Grym survived the fight with the characters in Encounter Five, they are here as well protecting Ryjenis. Add the following description:

Standing in the shadows near the imposter are two familiar cloaked figures. One is tall and gaunt, while the other is hunched over in an insectoid pose. They gaze at you across the room. The tall one raises an eyebrow at you, clearly feigning surprise. The shorter one hasn't noticed you; he is looking at Lady Asbury and licking his lips.

Use the same stats from **Encounter Five** for these foes. If defeated, these vampires assume gaseous form, slip through the ceiling, and try to escape into the misty night. Only include these vampire henchmen if you feel the party needs the challenge, and only if the vampires survived **Encounter Five**.

Developments

If Simon is with the party, and they introduce him to Armount as the real Lord Milinous, Armount is quick to believe them.

If Armount is shown Simon, or if he's told that "Lord Milinous" is a duplicate, he encourages the characters to stop the wedding at Milinous' manor house, rescue Lady Asbury from the evil imposter, and bring the imposter before the Viscount for justice.

If Armount is not told that "Lord Milinous" is a duplicate, he instead urges the characters to stop the wedding and then immediately go before the Viscount to reveal Lord Milinous's threats of violence.

If the characters have any Influence Points with Viscount Langard among them, they know they will be able to spend that Influence to get an audience with the Viscount. If none of the characters have any Influence with the Viscount (or if they don't care to spend it), Armount offers to go himself and beg for the Viscount's ear while the characters rush off to save Lady Asbury.

By the end of this Encounter, the characters should be rushing back to Milinous's manor house in southern Verbobonc City to stop the wedding. Before they leave Armount will drop to one knee and offer his blade to Lord Milinous.

Segue: Race to the Black Griffon

The players might have other means to travel to the Milinous manor house. Adapt and change the read-aloud text as appropriate.

With time of the essence, you race across the cobbled streets of Verbobonc City toward Lord Milinous' manor house. At every turn, however, obstacles threaten to delay your arrival as you push your way through the crowds of people. The minutes stretch out and a realization gnaws at the pit of your stomach that you may be too late to halt the ceremony.

Just as your legs feel like they're about to give, your objective comes into sight. Approaching the manor, you see two guards in the livery of the Black Griffon duck inside and start to close the doors. These poor foot soldiers are no match for you, however, as you drive through the doors, knocking the guards back, and enter a fairly large salon.

Standing at the far end of the room is a young priest of Zilchus flanked by Lady Asbury and the Imposter who calls himself Lord Milinous. Also present are a number of guards, whom you assume are the witnesses for this deplorable predicament. It seems that the ceremony has indeed begun.

The wide salon is sixty feet square. Several exits lead off in all directions, to smaller rooms and corridors of the mansion.

Encounter Eight: Will the Real Lord Milinous Please Stand Up

If the party *does not have* the real Simon Milinous in tow, read the following:

"How dare you barge into my home on such an important occasion? Do you know how many laws you just broke? Once I am finished here I will see to it that each of you forfeits your life! Guards, seize them!"

Black Griffon guards draw closer, weapons on the ready. The Imposter kicks the perplexed priest, prompting him to continue, a grim smile growing across his face. "Please, do not let this minor complication spoil our happy moment. Continue... now." Looking confused and hurried, the priest intones, "And do you – ahem – Lady Elinor Asbury... ah...contract with Lord Simon Milinous to be your ... hmmm... lawfully wedded husband, sanctified by the... ummm.... rites set forth by the Lord High Enumerator..."

The rumble of footsteps behind you draws your attention, and a booming voice, like the sound of a thunderbolt, fills the room.
"STOP!!!"

Looking back, you see Simon standing in the doorway, windblown hair streaming behind him like a dark halo.

If the real Simon Milinous is with them, read the following:

This becomes even more evident when the 'Lord' barks "Quickly!" at the priest, kicking him for good measure. Looking fearful and nervous he intones, "And do you Lady Elinor Asbury contract with Lord

Simon Milinous to be your lawfully wedded husband, sanctified by the rites set forth by the Lord High Enumerator..."

Continued here, whether the characters brought Simon with them or not (as he is here now):

As he waits for his answer from Lady Asbury, the Imposter's gaze falls on you. The smirk and bravado that has been the trademark of his powerful presence drain from him. His eyes lock with 'Sigh's' and for one brief instant you see him acknowledge the situation. Before anyone can react, the Imposter shoves the priest of Zilchus away. Grabbing Lady Asbury by hair, he draws his blade as the guards moving to block your group.

"Welcome home Simon, so good of you to join us. Finally gotten over your war wounds?" A nervous chuckle escapes him, followed closely by his guards. "You're just in time to see me marry the tramp you fell in love with. Oh, and what a lovely wedding night we will have. She will scream in such exquisite ways. You know it was so easy to become you, to control all that you had. Your people feared you, the nobles distrusted you and the Viscount," – a smirk appears on his lips – "that pitiful Viscount did nothing to stop me. His lack of a spine only made it easier when I seized the military out from under feeble old Avgustin. My plan was perfect; in fact, BRILLIANT!" His glance falls on you and his eyes narrow, "And I would have gotten away with it, if it wasn't for these meddlesome ... heroes!"

Drawing Lady Asbury's hair tighter in his fist, he looks down at her grimaced face. "Finish it, my Lady. Say the words or die with your people." Her face contorted, eyes welled up with tears, she starts to force words out of her mouth. "Eyyyyyye dd...."

"NO!" shouts Simon as the ring of steel resonates in the room. Pointing his blade at the Imposter's heart, Simon's face is a mask of righteous fury. "Today I rescue the woman I love, take back my family name, and send you straight to hell!"

Simon rushes forward as the Imposter slams Lady Asbury to the ground, drawing his own blade in response. The battle is engaged!

Under no circumstances does the Imposter move more than 15 feet away from Lady Asbury, but he will never harm her...not here anyway. He considers her both meal ticket and life insurance.

The Imposter has the same stats at all APLs. At APLs 6 and 8, he attacks Simon, only attacking characters in order to defend himself, or if all the guards are dead. The characters have to contend with the guards in the room (and the vampires, if you've chosen to include them).

In APLs 10 and 12, Ryjenis attacks anyone that poses the greatest threat near him. He uses his proximity to Lady Asbury to keep the characters from dropping area-effect spells on him. He attacks anyone trying to get to Lady Asbury. At these APLs, three of the House Milinous guards rush at Simon, and keep him occupied throughout the fight. The characters must contend with Ryjenis and his guards.

APL 6 (EL 9)

♣ **House Milinous Men-at-arms (9):** male human Ftr3; hp 31 each; See Appendix One.

APL 8 (EL 11)

♣ **House Milinous Guardsmen (9):** male human Ftr5; hp 49 each; See Appendix One.

APL 10 (EL 13)

♣ **Ryjenis the Imposter:** male human Rog8/Ftr4; hp 111; See Appendix One.

♣ **House Milinous Guardsmen (6):** male human Ftr5; hp 49 each; See Appendix One.

APL 12 (EL 15)

♣ **Ryjenis the Imposter:** male human Rog8/Ftr4; hp 111; See Appendix One.

♣ **House Milinous Men-at-arms (6):** male human Ftr9; hp 88 each; See Appendix One.

Tactics: The guards are the most loyal supporters of "Lord Milinous." They suspect he's an imposter, but are so well rewarded by the evil Lord that they don't care. At APL 6 and 8, they interpose themselves between the characters and the Ryjenis/Simon fight. At APL 10 and 12, they join with Ryjenis in the fight against the characters. They fight intelligently, and to the death.

Ryjenis fights fiercely with his powerful sword, using his skills and magic items to best effect. If he is reduced to 25 or less hit points, he tries to flee as best he can. He knows several secret passageways throughout the manor, and with any kind of lead, he can escape the characters into the city.

Non-combatants: Both Lady Asbury and the priest are innocent non-combatants, and their presence should discourage area-effect spells. Lady Asbury collapses to

the floor once the fight begins, and the priest just cowers. If the characters have brought Armount along, he sings to inspire the characters and expresses concern for Lady Asbury, but does not join the fighting.

Simon's Performance: How well Simon fights in this battle mirrors the characters' performance. If the characters are overcoming the guards at APL 6, for example, then Simon is overcoming Ryjenis. If the characters are being badly beaten by Ryjenis and the guards at APL 10, for example, then Simon is having a hard time fighting off the guards on him.

Treasure

Defeat Ryjenis and his guard and take their gear. Note that most of the gear used by Ryjenis belongs to the rightful Lord Simon Milinous, and is not included in the loot.

APL 6: L: 1126 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatswords* (x9) (196 gp per character each).

APL 8: L: 1238 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 vicious greatswords* (x9) (696 gp per character each).

APL 10: L: 826 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 vicious greatswords* (x6) (696 gp per character each); *grim defender* (946 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 1 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 vicious greatswords* (x6) (696 gp per character each), *gauntlets of ogre power* (x6) (333 gp per character each), *+1 full plate* (x6) (221 gp per character each), *grim defender* (946 gp per character).

Conclusion A: The Characters Are Successful

If characters are successful, Simon tells his opponent just as the characters drop theirs. Simon immediately rushes to Lady Asbury, drops to his knees, and cradles her body. Fearing her dead (due to the amount of blood in the room), he professes his sorrow for going to war and the loss of his only love. As he bends to kiss her limp body, she awakens. Looking in his eyes, she kisses him and they tighten their embrace. They inform the party that they need some time alone to sort things out. They inform the party that they should meet them at Jylee's Inn at noon tomorrow. They also ask that they inform Armount of their impending arrival.

The scenario concludes with Lord Simon Milinous, (cleaned up and in possession of all his equipment) and Lady Elinor Asbury having an audience with the party. They share some insight into their relationship: they plan to get married, pay Asbury's taxes with funds from

Ryjenis's crimes, and that upon marriage, their lands will become one. They thank the party and offer friendship and reward.

The End

Conclusion B: The Characters Are Defeated

If the characters lose, they have probably all been slain or fled the battle. In this case, Simon is struck down by his foes and Ryjenis (if still alive) performs a coup de grace to kill him. Ryjenis takes Lady Asbury hostage and leaves with the remaining guards in his entourage. If this happens, the Gentlemen of the Watch and clerics of St. Cuthbert arrive to sort out what has happened. They take the body of Simon Milinous to perform a *raise dead*. Once Lord Milinous comes back, he and the priests of St. Cuthbert go to his lands to get his house in order, all the while attempting to track down Ryjenis. The characters are asked to give a full account of the events. The Church of St. Cuthbert will cast *raise dead* for any dead character, waiving the spellcasting price (the character needs only come up with the 5,000 gp material component). The scenario ends on a down note with the potential for another run-in with Ryjenis and the fate of Lady Asbury unknown.

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter Two: Dinner with Ludovic

Good roleplaying with Lord Langmuir:

APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	75 XP
APL 8	90 XP
APL 10	105 XP
APL 12	120 XP

Encounter Three: Dinner with Simon

Good roleplaying with "Lord Milinous":

APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	75 XP
APL 8	90 XP
APL 10	105 XP

APL 12 120 XP

Encounter Four: After-Dinner Drunks

Defeat the thugs:

APL 4 150 XP
APL 6 210 XP
APL 8 270 XP
APL 10 330 XP
APL 12 390 XP

Encounter Five: A Very Dark Alley

Defeat or drive off the vampires:

APL 4 180 XP
APL 6 240 XP
APL 8 300 XP
APL 10 360 XP
APL 12 420 XP

Encounter Nine: Will the Real Lord....

Defeat the Milinous imposter and his guards:

APL 4 210 XP
APL 6 270 XP
APL 8 330 XP
APL 10 390 XP
APL 12 450 XP

Roleplaying Award

Good problem-solving and combat heroics:

APL 4 60 XP
APL 6 75 XP
APL 8 90 XP
APL 10 105 XP
APL 12 120 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 4 675 XP
APL 6 900 XP
APL 8 1,125 XP
APL 10 1,350 XP
APL 12 1,575 XP

Treasure Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Encounter Four: After Dinner Drunks

Defeat and loot the half-orc thugs.

APL 6: L: 135 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 360 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 186 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *breastplate* (x6) (112 gp per character each).

APL 12: L: 186 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *light fortification breastplate* (x6) (362 gp per character each).

Encounter Nine: Will the Real Lord Milinous Please Stand Up

Defeat Ryjenis and his guard and take their gear. Note that all of the gear used by Ryjenis belongs to the

rightful Lord Simon Milinous, and is not included in the treasure here.

APL 6: L: 1126 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 greatswords* (x9) (196 gp per character each).

APL 8: L: 1238 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 vicious greatswords* (x9) (696 gp per character each).

APL 10: L: 826 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 vicious greatswords* (x6) (696 gp per character each); *grim defender* (946 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 1 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 vicious greatswords* (x6) (696 gp per character each), *gauntlets of ogre power* (x6) (333 gp per character each), *+1 full plate* (x6) (221 gp per character each), *grim defender* (946 gp per character).

Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 6:	900 gp
APL 8:	1,300 gp
APL 10:	2,300 gp
APL 12:	3,300 gp

Appendix One: NPCs

Encounter Four

APL 6 (EL 7)

Half-Orc Thugs (6): male half-orc Ftr2; CR 2; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 2d10+4; hp 20 each; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk +4 melee (2d6+4, greatsword) or +3 melee (1d4+3, dagger); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4; Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: greatsword, breastplate, locking gauntlet, dagger.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Half-Orc Thugs (6): male half-orc Ftr4; CR 4; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 4d10+8; hp 36 each; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (2d6+8, masterwork greatsword) or +8 melee (1d4+4, dagger); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8; Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: masterwork greatsword, masterwork breastplate, locking gauntlet, dagger.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Half-Orc Thugs (6): male half-orc Ftr6; CR 6; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 6d10+12; hp 52 each; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (2d6+8 masterwork greatsword) or +10 melee (1d4+4, dagger); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+8, masterwork greatsword) or +10/+5 melee (1d4+4, dagger); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10; Combat Reflexes, Dual Strike*, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: masterwork greatsword, +1 breastplate, locking gauntlet, dagger.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

APL 12 (EL 13)

Half-Orc Thugs (6): male half-orc Ftr8; CR 8; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 8d10+16; hp 72 each; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Grp +12; Atk +15 melee (2d6+8, masterwork greatsword) or +13

melee (1d4+4, dagger); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d6+8, masterwork greatsword) or +13/+8 melee (1d4+4, dagger); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12; Combat Reflexes, Dual Strike*, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: masterwork greatsword, +1 light fortification breastplate, locking gauntlet, masterwork dagger.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

Encounter Five

APL 6 (EL 8)

Pavel: CR 6; Medium Undead Rog4; HD 4d12; hp 36; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 18), energy drain, sneak attack +2d6; SQ alternate form, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 20, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +19, Hide +20, Intimidate +11, Listen +19, Move Silently +20, Search +15, Sense Motive +17, Spot +19, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +5; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: none.

Grym: CR 6; Medium Undead Ftr2/Brd2; HD 4d12+4; hp 39; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain, slam); SA bardic music, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 19), energy drain; SQ alternate form, bardic knowledge, countersong, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., fascinate, fast healing 5, gaseous form, inspire competence +1, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 17, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +19, Hide +11, Listen +18, Move Silently +11, Perform (dirge) +11, Search +9, Sense

Motive +16, Spot +18, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +11; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam).

Possessions: none.

Spells Known (3/2; Base DC = 15 + spell level): 0—*daze, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, message*, 1st—*cause fear, Tasha's hideous laughter*.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

APL 8 (EL 10)

Pavel: CR 8; Medium Undead Rog6; HD 6d12; hp 54; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 19), energy drain, sneak attack +3d6; SQ alternate form, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +12, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 20, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +21, Hide +22, Intimidate +13, Listen +21, Move Silently +22, Search +17, Sense Motive +19, Spot +21, Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +5; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam).

Possessions: none.

Grym: CR 8; Medium Undead Ftr4/Brd2; HD 6d12+6; hp 59; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grp +10; Atk +11 melee (1d6+9 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+9 plus energy drain, slam); SA bardic music, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 20), energy drain; SQ alternate form, bardic knowledge, countersong, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., fascinate, fast healing 5, gaseous form, inspire courage +1, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 17, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Hide +11, Listen +19, Move Silently +11, Perform (dirge) +12, Search +9, Sense Motive +17, Spot +19, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +12; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (slam).

Possessions: none.

Spells Known (3/2; Base DC = 15 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0—*daze, dancing*

lights, detect magic, ghost sound, message, 1st—*cause fear, Tasha's hideous laughter*.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

APL 10 (EL 12)

Pavel: CR 10; Medium Undead Rog8; HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +12 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 20), energy drain, sneak attack +4d6; SQ alternate form, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, improved uncanny dodge, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, trapfinding, trap sense +2, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +13, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 20, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +23, Hide +24, Intimidate +15, Listen +23, Move Silently +24, Search +19, Sense Motive +21, Spot +23, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +5; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam).

Possessions: none.

Grym: CR 10; Medium Undead Ftr4/Brd2/Rog2; HD 8d12+8; hp 78; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +12 melee (1d6+9 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+9 plus energy drain, slam); SA bardic music, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 21), energy drain, sneak attack +1d6; SQ alternate form, bardic knowledge, countersong, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fascinate, fast healing 5, gaseous form, inspire courage +1, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, trapfinding, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 18, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +22, Hide +13, Listen +21, Move Silently +13, Perform (dirge) +12, Search +11, Sense Motive +19, Spot +21, Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +12; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (slam).

Possessions: none.

Spells Known (3/2; Base DC = 15 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0—*daze, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, message*, 1st—*cause fear, Tasha's hideous laughter*.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

APL 12 (EL 14)

Pavel: CR 12; Medium Undead Rog10; HD 10d12; hp 90; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +7; Grp +12; Atk +12 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, crippling strike, dominate (DC 21), energy drain, sneak attack +5d6; SQ alternate form, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, improved uncanny dodge, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, trapfinding, trap sense +3, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +14, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 20, Con –, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +25, Hide +26, Intimidate +17, Listen +25, Move Silently +26, Search +21, Sense Motive +23, Spot +25, Tumble +18, Use Magic Device +5; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: none.

Grym: CR 10; Medium Undead Ftr4/Brd2/Rog4; HD 10d12+10; hp 98; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Grp +13; Atk +14 melee (1d6+9 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +14 melee (1d6+9 plus energy drain, slam); SA bardic music, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 21), energy drain, sneak attack +2d6; SQ alternate form, bardic knowledge, countersong, DR 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fascinate, fast healing 5, gaseous form, inspire courage +1, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 20, Dex 18, Con –, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +24, Hide +15, Listen +23, Move Silently +15, Perform (dirge) +12, Search +13, Sense Motive +21, Spot +23, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +14; Ability Focus (dominate), Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (slam).

Possessions: none.

Spells Known (3/2; Base DC = 15 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0—*daze, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, message*, 1st—*cause fear, Tasha's hideous laughter*.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

Encounter Nine

All APLs

Ryjenis the Imposter (as Milinous): CR 12; Medium Humanoid (human) Rog8/Ftr4; HD 8d6+4d10+60; hp 111; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; Base Atk: +10; Grp: +14 (but see possessions); Atk +16 (2d6+7/17-20 plus 1 Con, +1 *wounding greatsword*); Full Atk +16/+11 (2d6+7/17-20, +1 *wounding greatsword*); SA sneak attack +4d6; SQ DR 2/–, evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 14 (18), Dex 12, Con 16 (20), Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +3, Bluff +14, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +21, Forgery +12, Intimidate +15, Jump +11, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Ride +9, Tumble +14; Blind-Fight, Daunting Presence*, Deceitful, Improved Critical (greatsword), Iron Will, Pain Mastery*, Roll With It*, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: +1 *wounding greatsword, ring of mind shielding, ring of freedom of movement, amulet of health +4, belt of giant strength +4, cloak of resistance +3, grim defender*.*

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

APL 6 (EL 9)

House Milinous Man-at-Arms: male human Ftr3; CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d10+9; hp 31; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (2d6+5, +1 *greatsword*); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +1, Handle Animal +2, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +1, Ride +4; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: +1 *greatsword*, full plate, dagger.

* *New Rule.* See Appendix Two.

APL 8 and 10 (EL 11 and 13)

House Milinous Guardsman: male human Ftr5; CR 5; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d10+15; hp 49; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (2d6+7+2d6, +1 *vicious greatsword*); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +5 (+7), Knowledge (local: Velderdyva Trade Route) +1, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +1 (+3), Ride +7; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: +1 vicious greatsword, masterwork full plate, dagger.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

APL 12 (EL 15)

House Milinous Guardian: male human Ftr9; CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 9d10+27; hp 88; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +9; Grp +14; Atk +17/+12 melee (2d6+10+2d6, *+1 vicious greatsword*); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 18 (20), Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +9 (+11), Knowledge (local: Vilverdyva Trade Route) +1, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +1 (+3), Ride +11; Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness*, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: +1 vicious greatsword, gauntlets of ogre power, +1 full plate, dagger.

* See Appendix Two: New Rules Items

Appendix Two: New Rules Items

Daunting Presence [General] as presented in *Miniatures Handbook*

You are skilled at inducing fear in your opponents.

Prerequisite: Cha 13, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You may take a standard action to overawe an opponent. The opponent must be within 30 feet, have line of sight to you, and have an Intelligence score. If the opponent fails a Will saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Cha modifier), the opponent is shaken for 10 minutes. This feat has no effect on a creature that is already shaken.

Special: A fighter may select Daunting Presence as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Dual Strike [General, Fighter] as presented in *Sword and Fist*

Your combat teamwork makes you a more dangerous foe.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: If you and an ally both have this feat and are flanking an opponent you both get a +4 bonus on your attack roll.

Normal: The standard flanking attack roll bonus is +2.

Improved Toughness [General] as presented in *Complete Warrior*

You are significantly tougher than normal.

Prerequisites: Base Fortitude save bonus +2.

Benefit: You gain a number of hit points equal to your current Hit Dice. Each time you gain a HD (such as by gaining a level), you gain 1 additional hit point. If you lose a HD (such as by losing a level), you lose 1 hit point permanently.

Special: A fighter may select Improved Toughness as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Pain Mastery [General] as presented in *Savage Species*

Injuries send you into a fury, increasing your physical power.

Prerequisite: Con 20, Toughness.

Benefit: You take damage normally, but every 50 points of damage you take (if you survive the attack) automatically increases your Strength by +2. This bonus lasts until the end of the encounter, after which you are exhausted. See the Condition Summary in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for the effects of being exhausted.

Roll With It [General] as presented in *Savage Species*

You are adept at lessening the effects of blows.

Prerequisite: Con 20, Toughness.

Benefit: You gain damage reduction 2/-. This applies in addition to any damage reduction you have from other sources. Damage reduction cannot reduce the damage you take to less than 0.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times.

New Magic Item

Grim Defender as presented in *Book of Vile Darkness*

Once per day, the wearer of this +1 *breastplate* can transfer the damage dealt to him from a melee attack to another creature, other than the attacker, within 100 feet. If the other creature succeeds at a Fortitude save (DC 16), the creature takes no damage and the wearer of the grim defender armor takes double damage.

Caster level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield other*; *Market Price:* 11,350 gp.

Usage note: Ryjenis will only transfer damage to a player character if that character is obviously a frail rogue or arcane caster. If there is no good target, he transfers the damage to one of his minions, who voluntarily fails the saving throw.

Appendix Three: Common Knowledge about Noble Houses

House Asbury

House Asbury was founded in 438CY following the end of the Short War where the combined forces of Veluna and Furyondy drove back the Keoland invaders. During the fighting, a young Knight Ranger of the Gnarley Forest, Artimus Greensward, distinguished himself as the leader of a group known as the Flames of the Gnarley, after the sword wielded by their young leader. Operating behind enemy lines his command wreaked havoc upon Keoish supply lines.

Upon the cessation of hostilities, the Plar of Veluna granted him land and title in the Viscounty of Verbobonc. The grant, situated in the east-central part of the Viscounty, stretched from the Gnarley Forest near the Fens of Tor west for nearly 40 miles and north to south nearly 20 miles and included a parcel known as Asbury Meadow. A manor house was constructed within the Meadow and the house took its name from that location.

Artimus and his lady, Yvonne Greensward, Guide of Ehlonna and member of his company, established their household upon Asbury meadows in 440CY. The region was fertile and blessed with abundant rainfall, and during the 43 years Artimus and Yvonne ruled the holding, it developed a reputation for fair dealings and bountiful harvests.

House Asbury was blessed with the birth of three sons, all of whom followed their father's example with service among the Rangers of the Gnarley. The eldest, Gregory, fell while in that service, and though an occasion of great sorrow to House Asbury, it established the tradition that the sons of Asbury would each in turn serve the forest.

In 483 CY Markus Greensward, second son of Artimus, assumed the title of Knight Protector of Asbury. In 497 CY Artimus Greensward died and was buried in an unmarked grave within the Gnarley Forest, as he requested.

Each succeeding generation continued the close and abiding affection for the land that characterized the first Knight Protector of Asbury. Each male descendant of Artimus served amongst the Rangers of the Gnarley, no few distinguishing themselves in that service. It is rumored that Langard himself can claim men of House Asbury as kinsmen.

The untimely death of Simon Greensward in 566 CY while rescuing the Lady of House Milinous from bandits left House Asbury without a male heir for the first time in the short history of the holding. Aluna Greensward, a strong-minded Warden of Ehlonna returned to Asbury Manor to assume the duties of the holding.

The marriage of Kyllan Aldowayne Treguard to Lady Aluna Greensward of Asbury surprised many. Kyllan, an untitled adventurer rumored to be from Dyvers, took the family name of his bride in the wedding held at Asbury Manor. Kyllan was guided by the advice of Armount Andalarian, his longtime adventuring companion. Lady Aluna gave birth to Elinor Treguard Andalarian Greensward of Asbury.

Armount was appointed Elinor's tutor before she was able to walk. As the Temple of Elemental Evil's hordes descended upon Asbury Manor, Sir Kyllan entrusted Elinor's safety to Armount's care. Armount protested, but knew that with Mistress Elinor alive, the Asbury family could recover. With the majority of the Asbury landsmen and guard, Armount evacuated to Verbobonc City. Sir Kyllan, Lady Aluna, and twelve of Asbury's finest guard stood vigil at Whistler's Bridge. The battle of Whistler's Bridge was brief and costly. All that stood on that battleground died to give Armount and the others time to reach safety behind the massing troops that were to meet the hordes at Emridy Meadows under the banner of His Noble Lordship Wilfrick.

Armount, mindful of his duties, attended personally to Elinor's education, respectfully declining offers of assistance from His Holiness Bishop Hufren of St. Cuthbert and His Most Honorable Sir Alerick Milinous. Armount felt that Elinor must remain at Asbury Manor to learn as much from her people as from his tutelage. Elinor grew up working alongside the farmers, herdsman, and craftsmen of her holding, learning their hearts and earning their love. Armount tutored Elinor in history, music, and statecraft. She excelled in the arts of diplomacy and politics while keeping an ever-watchful eye on the faithful people of Asbury Manor. Elinor loved the arts and sponsored many bards and performers

with only a single favor asked in return, that being to teach her something new or unique, share a story of legend or gift her peoples with a performance.

The young mistress of Asbury with honey colored hair grew into a beautiful child blessed with compassion, knowledge, and the heart of Verbobonc. Such a resource was not overlooked by His Noble Lordship Viscount Langard. Elinor was recently appointed as Verbobonc's Ambassador to Veluna and given appropriate title. The stateswoman that captured the hearts of so many is now Baroness Elinor Treguard Asbury, Ambassador of the Celestial Circle, Mistress of House Asbury. Armount still stands by her side as a quiet source of strength. His teachings have led Baroness Elinor to the forefront of Verbobonc's nobility while his attention to her safety has provided Asbury Manor with a legacy.

Lady Asbury was once very much in love with Simon Milinous, and she was preparing to marry him before he left for the Greyhawk Wars. After his return from the wars, Elinor found Simon to be cold and cruel. She understands that the horrors of war can harden a man's heart, but nevertheless Lady Asbury has drawn away from the reclusive veteran. She sadly admits that Simon is not the man she once knew, and any dealings with him are a burden and no longer a joy.

House Milinous

His Most Honorable Sir Simon Milinous left Griffon Manor under the banner of His Most Honorable Sir Jacques Kolgrim in early CY 583 with a hundred Black Griffon Men-at-Arms to join the battle of the Greyhawk Wars. He left a shining example of a kind compassionate man very much in love with Lady Elinor Asbury. His betrothal to Lady Asbury earlier that spring resulted in many joyous festivals and performances from renowned bards at both Griffon Manor and Asbury Manor. Viscount Wilfrick gave his blessings and gave Simon leave of his duties with the Mounted Borderers to seek a position in the great wars to the north. By the end of his first year in battle under the flag of Furyondy, Sir Milinous was elevated in rank to Right Honorable Sir for gallantry in battle. Tragedy befell his unit as Sir Milinous fell protecting Sir Kolgrim in a battle that turned back a host of over 1,000 of the Old One's most decorated horde. Sir Milinous and Sir Kolgrim were captured and held for ransom.

The ransom for both lords, and their twenty surviving men, was paid by his Most Honorable Sir Kilgrave Milinous, Simon's father. Sir Kolgrim returned to Verbobonc with grave injuries. Right Honorable Sir Simon Milinous refused to return and continued to distinguish his unit with victory after victory. With each victory, Sir Milinous' unit sustained greater and greater losses, but still the young noble pushed forward. Sir Milinous returned to Verbobonc City only after killing the commander of the unit that captured him four years earlier.

Upon returning to Verbobonc, Lord Milinous returned to his duties as a Knight Captain of the Mounted Borderers. His disposition had changed greatly. Many said that he would come back into his own after the marriage and children. Lady Elinor was not pleased with his change of heart, the lack of tolerance and kindness causing them to separate further and further. Eventually, Lady Asbury denounced the betrothal and Lord Milinous sunk further into his solitude. He attempted to use House Asbury's debts to House Milinous as leverage to force the marriage, but this failed when Lady Asbury was able to recover her family's lost treasury with the aid of several kind adventurers and good luck.

Lord Simon Milinous is a very strong military leader, believing that might grants right and that nobility is won and maintained by the use of a sword. He has little tolerance of any race other than humans and disdains gnomes and elves. He loathes the forces of the Old One and will slay any orc on sight. He does not attack half-orcs immediately, for they have shown useful in combat with the right amount of discipline. To be weak in his presence is to be unseen forever. Warriors and some adventurers that believe in martial discipline are welcome in his camp as long as they show him complete loyalty. To break the trust and loyalty that House Milinous places in a warrior means death, immediately and without mercy.

Lord Milinous is a stern, dark-haired, broad-shouldered man who seems comfortable in the power he radiates. He stands well over six feet tall, and is intimidating although not thickly muscled. His eyes are as dark as his hair, and any man gazing in his eyes finds them hard and remorseless. Lord Milinous is rarely found without at least a half-dozen of his most loyal retainers, all of them wearing tabards and shields emblazoned with his crest, a black griffon.

House Langmuir

The somewhat paunchy and balding Ludovic Langmuir is nominal head of House Langmuir and its small parcel of lands right in the viscounty's heartland. The real power resides with Ludovic's mother "Iron Lady" Godeleva Langmuir, for whom the phrase "too mean to die" was coined (along with other darker whispers, but no sensible person pays them heed). Though in his late 30's, Ludovic is still unmarried, partly because his mother considers most candidates beneath him, partly because she enjoys using marriage prospects as a political ploy, but mostly because eligible noble ladies shudder at the prospect of marrying into that family. Rumors of Ludovic's dalliance with one of the maids ended with the poor lass's tragic fall down the stairs, and it's best to not discuss implications of such an inappropriate and scandalous topic further. Godeleva is currently tantalizing factions in Veluna with prospects of alliance, which makes her less than popular in many Verbobonc circles. Still, House Langmuir puts on a public face of support for Langard and pays its taxes to the viscounty in full and on time, which allows Godeleva a great deal of latitude in her actions. Godeleva is playing a dangerous game with objectives unclear to any but her, but she may just be shrewd enough to pull it off.

Appendix Four: Illustrations

You can use these illustrations for Lady Asbury and Lord Milinous. (Artwork by Anya Lyuksyutova.)



Map: Verbobonc City

This map shows the layout of Verbobonc City. Castle Grayfist is number 28 on this map, the Temple of St. Cuthbert is number 46, Jylee's Inn is number 58, and the Wrinkle Academy is number 53. (Map from the *Fate of Istus* product by TSR.)



Critical Event Summary

If you are playing this event prior to February 1, 2005, please send the answers to the following critical events to the Verbobonc Triad at poc@verbobonc.net. Please include the words "VER4-08 Critical Events" as the subject line.

1. Did the characters defeat Ryjenis the Imposter?
 - 1a. If so, what is his ultimate fate? (He was killed, he was turned over to the authorities, etc.)
 - 1b. If not, did he escape with Lady Asbury as a hostage, or alone?
2. Did the players fall for Langmuir's ruse?
3. Did you elect to use Pavel and Grym in the final fight?
4. Did Pavel and Grym survive this event?
5. Did the characters do anything strange that you think is particularly noteworthy?