

VER4-09

Wicked Three

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

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A dryad in the Gnarley Forest has learned a powerful prophesy that speaks of the evil operating in the Viscounty. She seeks an escort away from her home, so she can give the prophesy to an old friend...Viscount Langard. A one-round adventure for APLs 2 to 8.

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.

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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.

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

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, the Family, and any Gnarlley Forest Influence.

Adventure Background

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. The other is a master of disguise, impersonating one of the Nobles of Verbobonc. The other is a dwarven assassin. The first two villains are the focus of other Verbobonc scenarios. This scenario focuses on the activities of Obmi, Iuz's dwarf assassin in Verbobonc.

Obmi has led a colorful and evil career in the service of Iuz. He is old but a still-powerful fighter/rogue/assassin. His beard is gray and he wields a powerful magical

hammer. Obmi has a tendency to mock his victims before killing them, and he has very little patience.

Many forces of good have arrayed themselves against Iuz's machinations. One of these has imparted a prophecy about the three evil agents (called the Wicked Three, or Old Wicked's Three) to a dryad in the Gnarley Forest. This dryad, named Elespeth, befriended Viscount Langard during his days living in the Gnarley Forest years ago. Both Elespeth and Langard occasionally think about their friendship, but they haven't seen each other in years. Each assumes the other has forgotten their once-close relationship. In this scenario, the characters will escort Elespeth from the Gnarley Forest to Viscount Langard, in order to inform him of the prophecy she bears.

Roleplaying Elespeth: Elespeth the dryad is in a sad situation. She is normally a curious, fun-loving tree-spirit, but is bearing the heavy weight of the prophesy that she sees everywhere she looks. When the prophesy overcomes her, as it does several times a day, it leaves her feeling weak and scared. Elespeth calls her prophecy "The Message." She's unsure where it comes from, but she is absolutely convinced that it is true. She should be roleplayed as manic-depressive: gleefully happy and curious one minute, but sad and confused when she sees something to remind her of the Message (which could be patterns in the clouds, a stand of trees, or the patterns in the hide of an animal). Anything that shows up in "threes" is likely to send her into her gloomy state, as well. Furthermore, whenever anyone begins the Message with "I see...", she recites the entire Message without stopping. When happy, she is curious about the world away from her tree ("A 'road'? What's that? What's it for?" "The world just seems to go on and on...why is it so big?") and a little bit flirty with high-Charisma male PCs.

Power of the Message: Elespeth bears a message of importance to deliver to Viscount Langard. Whether this message comes from Ehlonna, the Oak Father, or another mystical source entirely isn't clear. The mystical source strongly opposes Iuz and his minions, and has imparted (or cursed) Elespeth with the Message. This also gives Elespeth two powerful abilities: for the three days of the full moon, Elespeth will not sicken if taken away from her oak. Also, during that time, she can *transport via plants* one time (caster level 6th). Elespeth will use this ability to return to her oak at the end of the three days of the full moon, so she doesn't die.

A note on Elespeth's help: If necessary, Elespeth can use her spell-like abilities to help the characters in

combat. This shouldn't be done lightly, however, since it isn't fair for an NPC to be shouldering much of the duty in combat. Elespeth will only intervene if the characters ask her to, and if she thinks there is great need. In any combat where Elespeth is a big help, award only half XP for that encounter.

Adventure Summary

As the characters explore the Gnarley Forest, they come upon the dryad Elespeth. She bears an important message that she feels compelled to give to Viscount Langard, and has been granted the ability to leave her tree. The characters escort her to Verbobonc City.

Along the way, the characters encounter river alligators, and innocent travelers along the River Road to Verbobonc City. Before they arrive at Verbobonc City, the characters are attacked by agents of Obmi, the Hammer of Iuz. Obmi threatens them by letter but, fortunately for the characters, he is called away before he can attack them in person.

Once the characters arrive in Verbobonc City, they must use their connections or their wits to locate Viscount Langard. He is attending services at the Temple to St. Cuthbert, along with Bishop Haufren. Doppelganger infiltrators (more agents of Obmi) take the opportunity to defeat Elespeth and the characters. By defeating these infiltrators, the characters prove themselves before Viscount Langard and the Church of St. Cuthbert, and allow Elespeth to deliver her message to Viscount Langard.

Before Play

Have the players introduce their characters to each other; they have been traveling together for a day or two. They have been hunting orcs together, without success, in the Gnarley Forest for the past day.

The characters left on their expedition from the town of Eglath. If any character has Influence with the Peasants of Eglath (from *VER3-05 Something's Rotten in Eglath*), then the alchemist Dalerond has given that character a vial of antitoxin, a sunrod, and a thunderstone, in hopes they come in handy. Add these items directly to that character's MIL; they do not count toward the gp cap of this scenario. Other characters are given only hearty thanks and best wishes from the earnest townspeople of Eglath.

This scenario begins fairly early on the first day of the full moon; keep careful track of the passage of days in this scenario.

Encounter One: Elespeth the Messenger

Not a single orc.

Two days ago, your group answered a call from the hard-working commoners of Eglath, a small town on the Low Road near the Gnarley Forest. Some of them had seen orcs moving around in the woods. Orcs are common in the Gnarley Forest, but not so near the edges of that deep wood.

*As brave and aspiring adventurers, the group of you agreed to look into the orc movements. Now, a day later, you have scouted deeper and deeper into the Gnarley, without seeing a single orc. (If any character in the group has the Track feat, add: **Your tracker(s)** assure you there are signs of recent humanoid activity, but nothing in the past few hours.)*

Bright sunlight in the forest ahead marks the presence of some form of clearing. An enormous oak tree blocks your vision, but you hear some animal noises in the clearing. Perhaps there will be clues there.

Allow the characters to make any sort of preparations they'd like before moving forward into the clearing. A DC 15 Listen or Knowledge (nature) check reveals the "animal noises" are insects, crows, and other small carrion-eaters.

In the clearing are the remains of an orc camp, with tents and supplies for about forty orcs. The forty orcs are also here, but all of them are dead. They have been dead for a few hours, and are just starting to smell. Forest scavengers and insects are only now beginning to discover the bodies (these creatures are the source of the noise).

In the center of the carnage stands a small, elf-sized woman with green eyes and rich brown skin. Her hair spreads like a crown of leaves above her head. She's looking around at all the bodies, as though confused.

This woman is a dryad named Elespeth (show her picture from Appendix Four). Her oak is the large tree blocking the view of the clearing. She is currently in the throes of

the Message, and she does not notice the arrival of the characters. When the characters make themselves known to her, she gives a terrified jump. Her first words to the characters are the Message; read **Player Handout #1**. Elespeth can repeat her prophecy upon command, so you can give the handout to the players if they'd like to hear her repeat it.

Elespeth's story: About a week ago, a small bird came to Elespeth's tree, with a message from the Oak Father. The Oak Father is an ancient, powerful fey force in the Gnarley, and all the dryads venerate him. He told Elespeth that she should watch the clouds for signs about an old friend. Elespeth was looking at the clouds the next day, and she saw the Message in the patterns of the clouds. Now she sees the Message everywhere, and she's consumed with the desire to give the message to Viscount Langard in Verbobonc City. She's not sure how to get to Verbobonc City, however, since she's never left the area around her tree. She knows that the Message has given her the power to leave her tree, and to return to it, but only for the three nights of the full moon.

Four days ago, a gang of orcs came into the clearing, and started to make camp. Elespeth hid in her tree, waiting for them to go away. Elespeth knew she would have to leave when the full moon came, and didn't like to think about sneaking off through an orc camp. Then, last night, Elespeth heard the sounds of fighting and orcs screaming. This morning, she came out of her tree, to find all of the orcs killed. She's not sure why.

Examining the Corpses: A DC 10 Heal check reveals that all of the orcs are dead from a single bludgeoning blow, like from a warhammer. A DC 15 Heal check reveals that each orc was slain by a single hit to the skull, face, or back that ruptured a vital artery and killed within seconds. Any character with the sneak attack ability can confirm that the attacker was probably an exceptionally skilled rogue. The killer left no tracks that can be followed into or out of the clearing.

If the characters want to loot the camp, they can find a few masterwork axes and several loose coins. A DC 25 Search check reveals that the killer didn't take anything of value from the orcs.

What Happened Here: Days ago, Old Wicked's Three received word from Iuz himself that someone in the Gnarley Forest is capable of revealing his three agents in Verbobonc. Magical divinations indicated the location of this prophet (this clearing), but the nature of the prophet was shrouded and unknown. Obmi, the dwarf assassin, was dispatched to deal with this threat. When he came

upon the clearing last night, he assumed the orcs were involved, and killed every one of them. Obmi made a mistake; the orcs had no idea about the prophecy, and the dryad was safely within her tree at the time, so Obmi didn't know she was there. By now Obmi has realized his mistake, but he's already left the Gnarley Forest for other evil activities in Verbobonc City.

All APLs

☛ **Elespeth the Dryad:** hp 18; see *Monster Manual*.

Development: Elespeth won't come out and ask for help getting to Verbobonc City, but she makes it clear she doesn't know the way and is afraid of a long journey. A DC 10 Sense Motive check will reveal that she is afraid, yet committed to delivering what she thinks is an important message.

If the characters express disbelief that the Viscount will take the time to see a fey creature, Elespeth hints that she knows Langard from his long-ago days in the Gnarley Forest. A DC 15 Sense Motive check will reveal that Langard and Elespeth were much closer friends than Elespeth is letting on.

Since the coming night will be the first night of the full moon, Elespeth is ready and anxious to leave immediately.

Treasure

Search the orc camp for loot.

All APLs: L: 59 gp; C: 8 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter Two: Full Moon Journey

DM Map #1 shows the likely route of travel for this journey; it is unlikely at these APLs that the characters have any form of teleportation magic or speedy overland travel. If they do, and wish to go right to Verbobonc City, skip ahead in this scenario to whatever point they'd like (but realize that they'll be missing out on the experience of travel).

From Elespeth's tree to the River Road is 10 miles. The first two miles are through the Gnarley Forest, and then the characters have to cross Imeryds' Run, a wide and slow river. The remaining trip to the River Road is a lightly-forested, civilized area. Farmhouses are common, and most people here owe fealty to Lord Drenton Vaswell or Lord Milinous (technically, though, this land belongs to neither noble. It belongs to the Viscount).

Once on the River Road, the characters have a 30-mile trip to Verbobonc City. The River Road (sometimes called the Low Road) is well-traveled and quite pretty. It follows the mighty Volverdyva River for most of the trip. Barge traffic up and down the Volverdyva is common.

This journey is usually easy and safe, but the characters are on a very tight time limit. They have only three days to reach Verbobonc City. If they take longer than that, Elespeth will not have the time to *transport via plants* back to her oak before she sickens and dies. Elespeth will have to return to her oak at dusk on the third day of this scenario.

Here are some common things to keep in mind when planning out the party's journey:

- The adventure begins in the morning of the first day of the full moon. It is still early, unless the characters spent an unusually long time examining the orc camp and talking with Elespeth.
- Keep in mind that the party moves as fast as its slowest member, and that excessive encumbrance will slow movement.
- Even if the characters own mounts, they left them in Eglath, as the Gnarley Forest is often thick and twisted with undergrowth. Going to Eglath to get them will take them five miles out of their way, and five miles back again.
- Overland movement rules are found on page 164 of the *Player's Handbook*, and have been used to compute the following:
 - A character moving at a **speed of 30 feet** will take 80 minutes to get out of the Gnarley Forest (this is considered trackless forest). Once the characters have crossed over the River Road, they have another 38 miles to travel, at 3 miles per hour.
 - A character moving at a **speed of 20 feet** will take 2 hours to get out of the Gnarley Forest (this is considered trackless forest). Once the characters have crossed over the River Road, they have another 38 miles to travel, at 2 miles per hour.
 - A character moving at a **speed of 15 feet** will take 2 hours and 40 minutes to get out of the Gnarley Forest (this is considered trackless forest). Once the characters have crossed over the River Road, they have another 38 miles to travel, at 1-1/2 miles per hour.

Troubleshooting: If Time Runs Out

If the three nights of the full moon pass, and the characters have not yet made it to the Temple of St. Cuthbert in Encounter Eight, Elespeth will head for the nearest tree and *transport via plants* back to the area around her oak. Before she goes, she will repeat the Message to the characters as often as they need, to help them memorize it. She begs them to take the Message to Viscount Langard. Once Elespeth is forced to return home, the rest of the scenario plays out as written (but without Elespeth, obviously).

The travel through the Gnarley Forest is without incident, other than Elespeth marveling at every new thing she sees.

Encounter Three: Across the Run

Once the characters break free of the Gnarley Forest, read:

The Gnarley Forest has thinned out noticeably in the last half hour, and now you have come to its western edge. You stand atop a grassy hill, descending forty yards to Imeryds Run. The river is wide and slow, but dark. Rushes grow high on either side of the Run, and large insects buzz in the air. You look north and south along the Run, looking for pirates that are rumored to ride Imeryds Run, but there is no sign of life.

Use **DM Map #2** for this Encounter. The characters are free to cross the river with Elespeth however they can. The most common method will be swimming. As the Run is slow-moving, the Swim checks to navigate it is only a DC 12.

Elespeth marvels at the river, as it's more water than she's ever seen in one place. She asks the characters what a river is, and what it's for. Once the characters explain that they have to cross it, she simply uses *tree stride* to cross.

Have characters with Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (local: Velderdyva Trade Route) make a DC 15 check. If they succeed, they remember that Imeryds Run is infamous not only for pirate traffic, but for crocodiles. True to form, large crocodiles lurk in the water here.

If the characters look for danger, have them roll Spot checks, with a +2 bonus if they are looking specifically for crocodiles in the water. There is also a -1 penalty to Spot checks per 10 feet of distance between the characters and the crocodiles. The DC to spot crocodiles is 31, and the DC to spot giant crocodiles is 25 (they are taking 10 on their Hide checks).

The characters may go upstream or downstream, but they will only discover other crocodiles instead.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🐊 **Crocodiles (2):** hp 22 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 5)

🐊 **Crocodiles (3):** hp 22 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 7)

🐊 **Giant Crocodiles (3):** hp 59 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 9)

🐊 **Giant Crocodiles (6):** hp 59 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: These crocodiles move to attack the second person to enter the water. If it looks like no characters are going to enter the water (the characters are using *jump* or *fly* spells, or the like), they come out of the water to attack the last person remaining on the east side of the Run. These crocodiles are ferocious, but not very committed. A crocodile tries to flee underwater if reduced to 10 hit points or less, or if it grabs a character. The crocodiles will **not** attack Elespeth under any circumstances.

Once the characters have successfully crossed Imeryds' Run, they have eight leisurely miles of cross-country travel before reaching the River Road. Go on to Encounter 4.

Encounter Four: River Road Travelers

This encounter is a free-form roleplaying encounter, designed to introduce the characters to a few groups traveling the busy River Road. These encounters are not entirely valueless, however, as they can provide the characters with aid or interesting information.

Unless they've taken pains to hide her, Elespeth is an unusual sight, and these travelers take notice of her. Even if disguised, Elespeth tries to strike up a conversation with any group of travelers, which could make the characters nervous.

This encounter should last as long as you and the characters have fun with it.

Pilgrims

(Note: this group is the most significant to the plot, as they reappear in Encounter Nine.)

Seven pilgrims are making their way from Dyvers to Verbobonc City. They are all worshippers of St. Cuthbert, and are excited to see the Temple there. Five of them are human, one is a half-elf, and one is a dwarf. All are male. The leader of this band is one of the humans, a stern man named Helfas Dorik. Helfas bears an oaken club that he does not hesitate to use on anyone who disparages St. Cuthbert. The dwarf, Brottor, is another cleric and as gruff as Helfas. The other five men are commoners, and much more likely to be pleasant to strangers. Since this group is traveling in the same direction as the characters, they might spend several hours with them until the pilgrims stop to take a long rest and prayer break, and the characters move on ahead. If the characters are wounded and get along with these pilgrims, Helfas and Brottor will heal them at no charge.

All APLs

☛ **Helfas Dorik:** male human Clr5 (St. Cuthbert): LN; Spot +8, Sense Motive +6.

☛ **Brottor:** male dwarf Clr3 (St. Cuthbert): LN; Spot +4, Sense Motive +4.

☛ **Other Pilgrims (5):** male human Com2: LN or LG; Spot +2, Sense Motive +2.

Farmers

Five farm children are bringing the very best of their crop in from local farmsteads to Verbobonc City for sale. There are three teenage boys, and a married couple (who are older teenagers), Anders and Sophia. All but one of the youths are human; the fifth is a large, stout halfling. In theory, Anders and Sophia are supposed to be chaperoning the other three boys, but all five youths are very excited about seeing the "big city." They have begged their parents for months to let them go, and saved up their silvers for three days in town. The youths drive a wagon heavily laden with fine wheat and turnips. Although Anders and Sophia are pleasant enough, the other boys are rowdy and obnoxious. These boys will happily flirt with any female characters, or with Elespeth.

☛ **Farm Youths:** male and female Com1: NG or N; Spot +3, Sense Motive +1.

Actors

While the characters are stopped for a meal or rest, a group of actors headed to Dyvers passes them on the road, and asks them to stop. There are three actors in this group: a male human named Coster, a female human named Faytey, and a female dwarf named Bregga. They want to practice a short skit they've been working on while walking and they beg the characters for ten minutes while they perform a quick rehearsal. Coster puts on a fake beard and Bregga wraps up in a black cloak. The play is about a dwarf trying to sneak in and kill the aged and feeble Baron Avgustin (played by Coster), but Baron Avgustin's brave kitchen maid chases off the dwarf with a frying pan. The play is actually quite funny, and the actors are very good. Knowing about Elespeth's prophesy, the characters may think this performance is ominous or portentous, but it's just coincidence. Elespeth, if she watches the performance, is more and more alarmed, and becomes terrified of the actors. She won't want anything to do with them.

Actors: male and female Exp3: NG or N; Perform (acting) +10, Spot +5, Sense Motive +8.

A Clever Ruse

If one of the players at your table is playing a dwarven male, take him aside at some point during these roleplaying encounters. Make sure the other players see you do it. Once you get him aside, make up some reason for doing so: either his character thought he heard the voice of a friend just around a bend, or he had to relieve himself. It turns out that the distraction was entirely harmless.

Once the characters get the Letter in Encounter Six, they may suspect that you had some ulterior motive for taking the dwarf player away. This may create suspicion among the characters, which can incite some fun roleplaying.

Other Encounters

Feel free to add other roleplaying encounters if time permits, such as a party of adventurers, a patrol of Mounted Borderers, or a noble traveling with his or her entourage.

When the characters are spending their last night on the road before reaching Verbobonc City, move on to the next Encounter.

Encounter Five: Attack in the Night

This Encounter happens on the characters' last night on the road before reaching Verbobonc City. They should be alone, and outside (either the inns are too far apart right at this point on the River Road, or they are already full of guests).

The Attack: Note the watch order of the characters. As soon as there are two or less creatures or characters on watch (including animals), the chokers attack. If there are at least three creatures on watch on every watch, the chokers attack just before dawn (on the last watch). Anyone on watch should make DC 20+APL Spot and DC 16+APL Listen checks. Success on either check lets the watcher act during the surprise round.

APL 2 (EL 3)

☛ **Choker:** hp 16; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Chokers (3):** hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Chokers (4):** hp 16 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Advanced chokers, 6HD (4):** hp 45 each; see Appendix 1.

EL Note: The EL of this encounter has been increased by 1 to reflect the advantages of a night attack by the chokers.

Tactics: These creatures start 30 feet away from any characters on watch. On the surprise round, the chokers move up and attack the watchers (thanks to their Quickness ability). They intend to silence characters on watch by choking them, and then constricting them to death. If they succeed, they will choke the rest of the characters to death while they sleep.

Development: These creatures have all been collected and trained by Obmi, the dwarf assassin. Normally, chokers live underground and hunt alone. Any character who makes a DC 13 Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (dungeoneering) check will know that this is a highly unusual attack for chokers; they are likely working for someone (or something) else.

The rest of the night passes without incident; move on to the next Encounter.

Encounter Six: A Friendly Letter

Early the next morning as you travel down the River Road, you reach a section of the road that comes quite near the Volverdyva River. A single Rhennee boatman is poling his small barge into a shallow section near the shore, and at the same time is waving wildly to you.

If you'd like, you can draw out the road, river, and barge on the battlemat. There is no combat here, but the players might appreciate a map of the layout (plus, it will keep them on their toes; players always expect a fight whenever you draw on the battlemat, and it's good to debunk this expectation from time to time). The barge is about 10 feet square and piled with odds and ends carefully lashed down. The road is about forty feet from the river here, and the barge is right next to the shore.

This Rhennee boatman is named Alfonse, and he met with Obmi about an hour ago. Obmi described the characters in great detail, and threatened Alfonse with serious harm unless he delivered a letter to the characters. As a result, Alfonse is eager to get Obmi's letter to the characters, even if he has to run up to the road to give it to them.

Alfonse hasn't read the letter, but he can describe the dwarf that gave it to him: he had a gray beard and carried a warhammer. He was very scary.

Alfonse is not one to pass up an opportunity to make a sale, so he also tries to get the characters near his barge to offer them some adventuring gear he has. He has the following items for sale (all items appear on the AR):

APL 2: *elixir of swimming*

APL 4: APL 2 items plus *hat of disguise*

APL 6: APL 2-4 items plus *ring of swimming*

APL 8: APL 2-6 items plus *glove of storing*

Alfonse will ask for 20% more than the DMG price for these items, but with a DC 12+APL Diplomacy check, he'll take the listed DMG price for them. Alfonse will charge no less than the DMG price. If the characters get belligerent, he will quickly pole his barge away.

Once the characters are done with Alfonse, he'll pole out into the river and drift away downstream.

☛ **Alfonse the Bargeman:** male human (Rhennee) Rog4/Exp3; N; Charisma 13; Diplomacy +13, Spot +10, Sense Motive +12.

The Letter

Once the character read the letter, give them **Player Handout #2**. Most of this letter is a pack of lies, intended to scare the characters.

- Obmi has neither been among the characters, nor has he spoken with them. He's trying to make them jumpy, and suspect some of the friends they've made on the road. He *has* spied on them for the past few days, but from afar. If you took a dwarf player to the side in Encounter Four, the player characters might even suspect him.
- Obmi actually intended to kill the characters before they got into Verbobonc City, whether they killed Elespeth or not. Fortunately for the characters, Obmi was recalled to the Kron Hills in a hurry, and will not reappear for the remainder of this scenario. Of course, the characters should have no way of knowing this.
- Obmi is not a reasonable fellow; he is cunning and cruel. He does not intend to afford the characters any future protection at all, even if they kill Elespeth for him.

The Quandry

Few parties will choose to kill Elespeth out of hand (those that do not earn the "Nymph's Kiss" entry on the AR). Most groups will contrive to fool Obmi somehow, by leaving a dummy or disguised character out as bait. No matter what they try, nothing works; Obmi is long gone from the area. Let the characters attempt whatever ruse they contrive; it will probably worry them that their plan doesn't work.

Before long, the characters will continue down the River Road. When they reach the gates of Verbobonc City later in the day, go on to the next Encounter.

Encounter Seven: City Gates

The River Road runs north of Verbobonc City and enters the city from the north. As the characters approach, read:

The north gate of Verbobonc City is an impressive stone structure. Carved in stone centuries old are the words "Earth and Stone, Man and Gnome." Despite this motto, the tallest spires rising over the city walls are from buildings of elven manufacture, from the days before either man or gnome had come to the area. At a hill in the center of the city rises Castle Grayfist, stronghold of the Viscount of Verbobonc.

The Verbobonc City guard and police are the Gentlemen of the Watch. Four members of the Watch stand guard near the gate. One, an Oeridian woman of middle years, is walking toward you. One of her hands rests on her longsword, and the other is raised, palm forward, signaling you to stop.

The characters are the only ones entering or leaving through the north gate right now, and this is just a routine questioning. Due to events in recent scenarios, the Gentlemen of the Watch are on guard for Suloise troublemakers. This Cobwalker, Myra, asks all the characters who they are and their business in Verbobonc City. Any Suel character who succeeds at a DC 15 Sense Motive check realizes that Myra is paying particularly close attention to him or her. If any Suel character states his or her destination as the Bridgeforth Tavern (which is highly unlikely), Myra will report the character to Watch Captain Caleb once they've entered the city.

In any case, the characters are free to enter the city once they've answered Myra's questions. If Elespeth is not disguised, the Gentlemen of the Watch eye her curiously, but they won't question her.

🐉 **Cobwalker Myra:** female human Ftr5; LN; Spot +7, Sense Motive +7.

Encounter Eight: It's a Big City!

At some point, the characters will realize that they don't know where Viscount Langard is to be found in the city. There are several ways they can find out, but all will take them some time. A couple of likely options are listed below; feel free to roleplay any other directions the players invent.

Go to Castle Grayfist. There are a couple of obstinate Gentlemen of the Watch on guard near Castle Grayfist. They declare that they cannot allow the characters to enter Castle Grayfist and, in any case, Viscount Langard isn't in. He left earlier this morning with a minimal guard, and he isn't expected back for many hours. The Gentlemen of the Watch don't know where Langard went, and refuse to go ask. They suggest to the characters: *"Look, we don't know where His Noble Lordship is. Go ask around. The Viscount is a very public figure, and people are bound to have seen him."* No one at Castle Grayfist helps the characters; if they make trouble, members of the Knights of the Faithful Defender "escort" them away from the area and see to it that they don't return.

Use Meta-Org Connections. Let any character who is a member of a Verbobonc meta-org know that they can ask around for contacts in Verbobonc City to find out where the Viscount is. Refer to Appendix Three to find out who the character can meet, and what the contact knows. Reaching one of these contacts will take a couple of hours.

Just Ask Around. The characters can learn Viscount Langard's location with a successful DC 15 Gather Information check. This costs 2d4 gp per attempt, and by the time the characters eventually succeed (they are free to retry or take 10, but not take 20), several hours have passed.

By any course, the characters eventually learn that Viscount Langard is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert. When the characters go there, move on to the next Encounter.

Encounter Nine: Temple Infiltrators

Once the characters figure out that Viscount Langard is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert, read:

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, inviting all to enter and worship. No temple guards are present to obstruct your entry. Although you can hear voices raised in hymns within, you see no one else about.

The Temple of St. Cuthbert is typically guarded by club-bearing acolytes, but the acolytes on duty today have been replaced by doppelgangers working for Obmi. The doppelgangers have been mimicking the acolytes for weeks, and they know the Temple area well. These agents of the Hammer of Iuz have been biding their time, waiting to catch Viscount Langard alone in order to kill and replace him. Unfortunately, Bishop Haufren (the head of the Temple of St. Cuthbert, and a powerful cleric) accompanies Viscount Langard whenever he's at the Temple. Bishop Haufren is more than a mere bodyguard; he is Langard's trusted friend and closest advisor.

Yesterday, the doppelgangers received new orders from Obmi. Instead of targeting Langard, these spies must instead kill Elespeth the dryad and anyone accompanying her. Rather than ambush the party outdoors, where anyone could see, these doppelgangers decided to make their attack within the Temple.

The doppelgangers counted on the Temple being mostly empty. Once combat breaks out, they know that standard procedure is for Bishop Haufren to *word of recall* with Viscount Langard (which is exactly what happens; see the Tactics, below). This leaves the doppelganger acolytes alone with dryad and the characters, long enough to kill them. To the doppelgangers' dismay, however, Helfas Dorik and his pilgrims (see Encounter Four, above) have just arrived. This means the temple has about a dozen people inside...and the characters won't know who to trust.

Once the characters enter the Temple, read the following:

Your boots click on the polished marble floors of the Temple. The entry hall opens into a large, spacious area with an altar at the far end and rows of massive pillars along the sides. The pillars are covered with holy carvings and support a domed roof dozens of feet overhead.

The entire Temple of St. Cuthbert is covered by a *hallow* spell with *invisibility purge* tied to it. As a result, no form of invisibility functions in this area.

In this room are 11 men at APLs 2 and 6, and 13 men at APLs 4 and 8. Seven are the pilgrims the characters met in Encounter Four (Helfas, Brottor, and five other men). Viscount Langard is here (show the characters his illustration in Appendix Four), as is Bishop Haufren. Bishop Haufren is a short, paunchy man in his sixties, with heavy jowls and a piercing gaze. The other two (or four) men present look like stern, club-wielding men in acolyte's robes. These two (or four) acolytes are the doppelganger spies.

As the characters arrive, all these men are concluding a hymn to St. Cuthbert as Bishop Haufren pronounces a blessing on the Viscounty. Depending on how the characters enter, the men here react in different ways:

The characters try to sneak in. Make Hide checks opposed by Spot checks from the doppelgangers; the other participants are too occupied to notice the characters until they present themselves. However, as soon as she can, Elespeth runs up to Viscount Langard. This causes the doppelgangers to move forward and begin their attack. Go to The Surprise Attack, below.

The characters approach openly (but Elespeth is disguised or hidden). Helfas Dorik and the pilgrims approach the characters, intending to welcome them (or

shoo them out of the Temple, if the characters were rude to them in Encounter Four). The “acolytes” approach as well, and summon monsters as a surprise action. Go to The Surprise Attack, below.

The characters approach openly (and Elespeth is visible). Elespeth immediately runs toward Viscount Langard and embraces him; Viscount Langard looks surprised but returns the embrace. The doppelgangers immediately take advantage of this situation by summoning monsters as a surprise action, and moving to attack Elespeth. Go to The Surprise Attack, below.

ALL APLs

☛ **Viscount Langard:** male human Rog4/Ari4: AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 deflection); hp 54; NG; Spot +12, Sense Motive +12.

☛ **Bishop Haufren:** male human Clr13 (St. Cuthbert): AC 15 (+3 *magic vestment*, +2 deflection); hp 94; LG; Spot +6, Sense Motive +12.

☛ **Helfas Dorik:** male human Clr5 (St. Cuthbert): AC 15 (+5 breastplate); hp 33; LN; Spot +8, Sense Motive +6.

☛ **Brottor:** male dwarf Clr3 (St. Cuthbert): AC 14 (-1 Dex, +5 chainmail); hp 30; LN; Spot +4, Sense Motive +4.

☛ **Other Pilgrims (5):** male human Com2: AC 11 (+1 Dex); hp 9 each; LN or LG; Spot +2, Sense Motive +2.

The Surprise Attack

At some point (usually, as soon as Elespeth makes herself known), the doppelgangers attack. Once the attack begins:

- Bishop Haufren steps to Viscount Langard, casts *word of recall*, and they both teleport away to a safer part of the Temple.
- Helfas Dorik casts *sanctuary* on himself (Will save DC 14 to attack him) and tries to figure out what’s going on. He then goes on total defense and doesn’t attack anyone that doesn’t attack him or his pilgrims first. Mostly, he bellows at the other pilgrims to stay out of harm’s way.
- Brottor is completely innocent, but as the only dwarf present, some characters probably think he’s Obmi, or somehow an agent of Obmi. If the characters are suspicious of him, play this up; he moves near to Elespeth, or moves around like he’s going to flank one of the characters. In actuality, Brottor is just as confused as Helfas and the other pilgrims. Like them, he takes total defense actions. If attacked directly, he tries to flee out of the Temple.
- The commoner pilgrims draw clubs and move about cautiously; they take total defense actions and don’t attack anyone. They try to assess the

situation and generally get out the way (of course, at your discretion, they may accidentally get in the way).

- The doppelgangers, of course, fight the characters (and Elespeth) to the best of their ability. They remain in their acolyte disguises unless a good opportunity presents itself (for example, a doppelganger might step behind a pillar and change shape into Viscount Langard or Bishop Haufren). Further tactics as follows:

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛ **Doppelgangers (2):** hp 22 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: One of these doppelgangers wears a *robe of bones*, and the other has a *rust bag of tricks*. They use these items to produce creatures to fight on their behalf (the *robe of bones* doppelganger prefers to use the wolf skeletons) before entering melee (in a surprise round, if possible). As long as they remain in acolyte form, these doppelgangers attack with their clubs (+5 to hit, 1d6+1 damage). Note that undead creatures created from a *robe of bones* do not obey their creator, but just attack whoever the patch is thrown towards.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Doppelgangers (4):** hp 22 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: Two of these doppelgangers wear a *robe of bones*, and one other has a *rust bag of tricks*. The fourth doppelganger doesn’t have any magic items. The doppelgangers use these items to produce creatures to fight on their behalf (the *robe of bones* doppelgangers prefer to use the wolf skeletons) before entering melee (in a surprise round, if possible). As long as they remain in acolyte form, these doppelgangers attack with their clubs (+5 to hit, 1d6+1 damage). Note that undead creatures created from a *robe of bones* do not obey their creator, but just attack whoever the patch is thrown towards.

APL 6 (EL 10)

☛ **Doppelganger Rog3/Warshaper2 (2):** hp 77 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: One of these doppelgangers has a *robe of useful items*, and the other has a *rust bag of tricks*. They use these items to produce creatures to fight on their behalf (the *robe of useful items* doppelganger produces a pair of war dogs) in the first round (or in a surprise round, if possible). They use the summoned creatures to spring attack into flanking positions. Note that these

doppelgangers can use their slam attack even while in acolyte form.

APL 8 (EL 12)

☛ **Doppelganger** Rog3/Warshaper 2 (4): hp 77 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: One of these doppelgangers has a *robe of bones*, another has a *robe of useful items*, a third has a *rust bag of tricks*, and the last has a *tan bag of tricks*. They use these items to produce creatures to fight on their behalf (the *robe of bones* doppelganger produces a wolf skeleton, and the *robe of useful items* doppelganger produces a pair of war dogs) in the first round (or in a surprise round, if possible). They use the summoned creatures to spring attack into flanking positions. Note that these doppelgangers can use their slam attack even while in acolyte form.

Development: Once the doppelgangers are defeated, go to the Conclusion.

Treasure:

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of bones* (200 gp per character), *bag of tricks*, *rust* (250 gp per character).

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of bones* (200 gp per character), *bag of tricks*, *rust* (x2) (250 gp per character each).

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of useful items* (583 gp per character), *bag of tricks*, *rust* (250 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of bones* (200 gp per character), *robe of useful items* (583 gp per character), *bag of tricks*, *rust* (250 gp per character), *bag of tricks*, *tan* (525 gp per character).

Conclusion

Just as the last of your attackers falls, Bishop Haufren storms out from a side passage. The paunchy bishop is dressed like he was before, except now he is ten feet tall and glowing with a heavenly radiance. In his hands he wields a spiked oaken club. Viscount Langard trails behind him, darting from pillar to pillar, drawn rapier in his hand. Once the men see the situation here in the main temple area, Bishop Haufren exclaims, "It looks like you've got things well in hand here, I see."

If Elespeth is present and still alive, add:

Immediately Elespeth blurts out, "I see three wicked wolves prowling through the glades and hills of Verbobonc..."

Elespeth goes through the Message again, directing it to Viscount Langard. Afterwards, Viscount Langard and Bishop Haufren listen to what the characters have to say about their adventures. If any of the doppelgangers were killed, they resume their natural forms (and it's clear that they're doppelgangers). Otherwise, Bishop Haufren casts *true seeing* on himself and one member of the party (whichever character seems most like a paladin or follower of St. Cuthbert) to examine the doppelgangers in their true forms.

If questioned, the doppelgangers admit that they work for a grey-bearded dwarf named Obmi, and that they were assigned to kill the dryad and her companions before she could deliver an important message. Viscount Langard and Bishop Haufren listen carefully to what Elespeth says, what the doppelgangers say, and how the characters fit it together.

The doppelgangers don't mention that the reason they originally infiltrated the Temple of St. Cuthbert was to kill Viscount Langard, or that they've been hanging around spying in the Temple for weeks. They aren't fools. Viscount Langard has any surviving doppelgangers arrested and sent to Castle Grayfist.

If any of the characters are wounded, Bishop Haufren heals them at no charge. If any characters have been killed, Bishop Haufren offers to cast *raise dead* if the characters can provide the necessary material component.

Elespeth and Langard talk together in hushed tones, catching up on each other's lives. Elespeth explains that she has to return to her oak, and soon, but Langard promises to visit her there. The weight of the Message has been lifted from Elespeth, and she has returned to her friendly demeanor.

Viscount Langard, Bishop Haufren, and Elespeth thank the characters for all the assistance they have caused, and promise to help them however they can in the future.

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 Three: Across the Run

Defeat or evade the crocodiles:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP

Encounter Four: River Road Travelers

Good roleplaying with the travelers on the road:

APL 2	45 XP
APL 4	75 XP
APL 6	105 XP
APL 8	135 XP

Encounter Five: Attack in the Night

Defeat the chokers:

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP

Encounter Nine: Temple Infiltrators

Defeat the false clerics:

APL 2	150 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	300 XP
APL 8	360 XP

Story Award

Elespeth personally tells her message to Langard:

APL 2	45 XP
APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	75 XP
APL 8	90 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 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 One: Elespeth the Messenger

Search the orc camp for loot.

All APLs: L: 59 gp; C: 8 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter Nine: Temple Infiltrators

Defeat and loot the doppelgangers.

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of bones* (200 gp per

character), *bag of tricks, rust* (250 gp per character).

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of bones* (200 gp per character), *bag of tricks, rust* (x2) (250 gp per character each).

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of useful items* (583 gp per character), *bag of tricks, rust* (250 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *robe of bones* (200 gp per character), *robe of useful items* (583 gp per character), *bag of tricks, rust* (250 gp per character), *bag of tricks, tan* (525 gp per character).

Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 2:	450 gp
APL 4:	650 gp
APL 6:	900 gp
APL 8:	1,300 gp

Appendix One: NPCs

Encounter Five:

APL 8 (EL 9)

✦ **Advanced Chokers, 6HD (4):** CR 4; Small Aberration; HD 6d8+18; hp 45 each; Init +9; Spd 20 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 20 (+1 size, +5 Dex, +4 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d3+4, tentacle); Full Atk +9 melee (1d3+4, tentacle); SA constrict, improved grab; SQ darkvision 60 ft., quickness; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Climb +13, Hide +15, Move Silently +11; Improved Initiative (B), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Stealthy.

Possessions: none.

Encounter Six:

APL 6 and 8 (EL 10 and 12)

✦ **Doppelganger Clerics:** male doppelganger Rog3/Warshaper2*; CR 8; Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger); HD 4d8+3d6+2d8+36; hp 77; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +12; Atk +12 melee (1d6+5, slam); Full Atk +12 melee (1d6+5, slam); SA detect thoughts, morphic weapons, sneak attack +2d6; SQ change shape, evasion, immune to *sleep* and charm effects, morphic body, morphic immunities, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +7; Str 16 (20), Dex 16, Con 14 (18), Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +16*, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +16*, Hide +5, Listen +3, Knowledge (religion) +4, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +5, Sense Motive +8, Spot +3, Tumble +11; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Possessions: varies based on APL; see Tactics section in Encounter Nine.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Appendix Two: New Rules Items

WARSHAPER as presented in *Complete Warrior*

Most martial characters rely on manufactured gear such as a sword and a shield or natural endowments such as teeth and claws to survive on the battlefield. The warshaper finds those options sadly limiting, instead growing and evolving her own weapons and armor to suit the threat at hand. Blessed with the ability to change form at a moment's notice, warshapers delight in surprising their foes by growing massive claws, armored skin, or other unpleasant surprises.

Warshapers must have some ability to change their form, and many are shapechangers such as doppelgangers and lycanthropes. Wizards and sorcerers who know the polymorph spell can take levels in the prestige class, as can druids who have mastered the wild shape class feature.

Most warshapers can change their outward appearance in the blink of an eye, so they don't stand out among the ranks of their allies. It's not until the soldier you're fighting grows a tentacle and fangs that you know you have met a warshaper.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

To qualify to become a warshaper, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Any (but see below).

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Special: Must be able to change shape in one of the following five ways:

Change shape supernatural ability (aranea, hound archon, barghest, doppelganger, rakshasa, slaad).

Shapechanger subtype (lycanth opes, phasm).

Polymorph as a spell-like ability (astral deva, planetar, solar, couatl, marilith, bronze dragon, gold dragon, silver dragon, efreeti, leonal guardinal, night hag, ogre mage, pixie).

Able to cast the polymorph spell.

Wild shape or similar class feature (bear warrior*, druid).

The alternate form ability (possessed by quasits, vampires, and others) is insufficient to become a warshaper.

*Prestige class from this book.

Class Skills

The warshaper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the warshaper prestige class. The class features function only when the warshaper is in a form other than her own (which for doppelganger and phasm warshapers is most of the time).

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Warshapers gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Morphic Immunities (Ex): A warshaper is adept at distributing her form's vital organs around her body to keep them safe from harm. Warshapers are immune to stunning and critical hits.

Morphic Weapons (Su): As a move action, a warshaper can grow natural weapons such as claws or fangs, allowing a natural attack that deals the appropriate amount of damage according to the size of the new form (see Table 5-1 on page 296 of the *Monster Manual*). These morphic weapons need not be natural weapons that the creature already possesses. For example, a warshaper *polymorphed* into an ettin (Large giant) could grow a claw that deals 1d6 points of damage, or horns for a gore attack that deals 1d8 points of damage.

If the warshaper's form already has a natural weapon of that type, the weapon deals damage as if it were one category larger. For example, a warshaper who used wild shape to become a dire wolf (Large animal) could grow its jaw and snout, enabling a bite attack that deals 2d6 points of damage (as a for Huge animal), not the normal 1d8.

A warshaper can change morphic weapons as often as it likes, even if it is using a shapechanging technique such as the polymorph spell or the wild shape class feature that doesn't allow subsequent changes after the initial transformation.

Morphic Body (Su): At 2nd level and higher, a warshaper can use its precise control over its form to

make itself stronger and heartier. It gains +4 to Strength and +4 to Constitution.

Morphic Reach (Su): A warshaper of 3rd level or higher can suddenly stretch its limbs, neck, or other appendages outward, giving it 5 more feet of reach than the creature it's emulating. Unlike most creatures, warshapers don't appear to have a longer reach until they actually use it.

Morphic Healing (Su): At 4th level, a warshaper becomes able to change its form where wounds appear, creating smooth skin where once were wounds. The warshaper gains fast healing 2, and if it spends a full-round action and succeeds on a Concentration check (DC equal to the total damage it has sustained), it heals 10 points of damage.

Flashmorph/Multimorph (Su): A 5th-level warshaper gains one of two class features. If the warshaper has the ability to change form at will, such as from the change shape ability, the shapechanger subtype, or a polymorph spell-like ability, it gains the flashmorph class feature, allowing it to change form as a move action. If it casts the *polymorph* spell, has polymorph as a spell-like ability usable less often than at will, or has the wild shape class feature, it instead gains the multimorph class feature. Multimorph allows a warshaper to change forms multiple times during the duration of the spell, spell-like ability, or class feature that enables her to change form. For example, a wizard/warshaper could polymorph into a troll for 2 minutes, then change into a red dragon for 4 minutes, and then spend the rest of the spell's duration in the form of a hill giant. Each change requires a standard action, and only the first transformation heals the warshaper. If the warshaper changes into its natural form, the spell, spell-like ability, or of wild shape ends.

Level	Base				Special
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	
1 st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Morphic immunities / Morphic weapons
2 nd	+1	+3	+1	+1	Morphic body
3 rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Morphic reach
4 th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Morphic healing
5 th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Flashmorph, / multimorph

Appendix Three: Meta-Org Contacts

Use the following list to identify a meta-org contact in Verbobonc City. Looking up these contacts, catching up on meta-org news, and questioning them, takes a couple of hours, as the following narratives indicate:

Members of the **Church of St. Cuthbert** hear that Viscount Langard is in private prayers at the Temple of St. Cuthbert with Bishop Haufren (#46 on Map 3). However, it is best to give the Viscount some privacy in his worship; he often councils with the Bishop to discuss affairs of state. Perhaps it's best to arrive at the Temple of St. Cuthbert after an hour or two, when the services should be concluding.

Members of the **Church of Ehlonna** can ask at their shrine in Verbobonc City near the Ash Horn Stream (#49 on Map 3), where a service is in progress. Of course, the character is obligated to participate. After a couple of hours, feeling spiritually renewed, the character is informed that the Viscount is worshipping at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Church of Pholtus** know that a service is not scheduled for today; however, reliable sources reveal that Bishop Prosser himself (head of the Church of Pholtus in Verbobonc City) is preaching near the Inner Gate (#6 on Map 3). When the character arrives, Bishop Prosser takes the opportunity to set up a Socratic dialogue for the illumination of the masses. This dialogue takes a couple of hours, but Bishop Prosser is pleased at the assistance, and readily explains that the Viscount is worshipping today at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Church of Fharlanghn** are not at all surprised that no clergy are present at the Shrine to Fharlanghn in Verbobonc City (#26 on Map 3). However, the character knows that it is entirely appropriate to rest at the shrine, particularly after the long journey from the Gnarley Forest. After a couple hours of waiting and quiet contemplation, a few clerics return from wherever they had wandered off to—and they can inform the character that Viscount Langard is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Church of Heironeous** know that today is a holy day for the Archpaladin, and the Temple to Heironeous (#47 on Map 3) is quite crowded with worshippers. After renewing old acquaintances and reporting within the church hierarchy—as is

appropriate—the character learns that Viscount Langard is actually quite nearby, attending a more private worship at the Temple of St. Cuthbert. This information takes a couple of hours to acquire.

Members of the **Church of Old Faith** and **Gnarley Druids** are rarely found in Verbobonc City, but the character has heard that a druid named Alistair is secretly making a round of the stables of Verbobonc, determining the quality of each, and inflicting just punishment on abusive proprietors. After spending so much time in Verbobonc City, perhaps this Alistair knows something of the Viscount's schedules. After some discreet inquiries (occupying several hours), the character is able to identify a tired-looking hound outside of Hamstid's Stables and Horse Sales (#35 on Map 3). Behind the stables, this dog returns to the form of the druid Alistair and is able to provide two pieces of information: first, that Viscount Langard is probably worshipping at the Temple of St. Cuthbert; second, that Hamstid has an ill-tempered stableboy who kicked at the wrong dog earlier today, and will never kick another animal again.

Members of the **Church of Pelor** know of a Pelorite who recently left the church in order to pursue a career as an antiques dealer. Although no longer a cleric, this man has a widely-known passion for politics, and is likely to know where the Viscount is to be found. Inquiries lead the character to the Segemm's Store of Collectibles (#29 on Map 3), where the former Pelorite is engaged in some serious gossip about the Lord Mayor. After polite introductions, and answering requests for opinions on some urns, the character learns that Viscount Langard is worshipping at the Temple of St. Cuthbert today.

Members of the **Church of Rao** know of a Raoan diplomat from Veluna who is staying at the Bronze Unicorn Inn (#4 on Map 3). When the character arrives, the diplomat is out but the innkeeper, a man named Coldon, expects him back any moment. Hours pass, and the diplomat does not return; but out of sheer luck, the character hear the innkeeper's son, Unwal, yammering with a local. Unwal asks whether the Viscount would be at the Temple of St. Cuthbert later today, and the local says he saw the Viscount enter the Temple himself earlier today.

Members of the **Church of Trithereon** have heard that their church has bought one of the warehouses in the warehouse district of Verbobonc City (near #45 on Map 3), and are using it as a training ground to teach interested young people in the local populace how to

defend themselves. When the character arrives, the residents of the warehouse scatter—after chasing one of them down, the character learns that the warehouse is used for training, but also as a safe house for a couple of political dissidents fleeing from Keoland to set up a new life in Verbobonc City. All of the clergy involved in the “warehouse project,” then, are understandably jumpy, and the character gets the distinct impression that this isn’t the first set of anarchists relocated to the Viscounty by the Church of Trithereon. After taking some time to calm everyone down, the character learns that the Viscount is quite close; he’s worshipping at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Church of Zilchus** recall that a high-ranking member of their order is involved in ownership of the Spruce Goose (#3 on Map 3), possibly the finest inn in Verbobonc City. Surely this high-ranking priestess would know where Viscount Langard could be found. After making some inquiries at the Spruce Goose, and waiting for the currency of information to flow, the character is able to meet this priestess. She is quite busy, as is to be expected, but can relate that the Viscount is attending services at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Circle of the Prime** know that they can often meet members perusing the esoteric volumes at Betham’s Bookseller (#23 on Map 3). After spending some time there, a Verbobonc City resident, and member of the Circle of the Prime, enters the shop. After only a little small talk, this contact states with some authority that Viscount Langard is currently at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Dwarven Church** or **Dwarven Clans** know of a contact working with Barlonn, proprietor of Barlonn’s Stoneworks (#37 on Map 3). This skilled craftswoman is in the middle of a particularly delicate work of sculpture, but after a couple of hours, she is free to talk. The typical dwarven formalities are brief but pleasant. She has heard that Viscount Langard would be at the Temple of St. Cuthbert today.

Members of the **Elven Church** or **Elven Clans** know that the Elven Enclave in Verbobonc City is the largest concentration of the *olve* in Verbobonc outside of the Gnarley Forest. The character must ask in the proper political elven manner—with a great deal of hospitality yet a great deal of waiting—but eventually discovers that the Viscount is attending services at the state temple: the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Family** know that agents of their underground organization exist all over Verbobonc City. Making discreet inquiries can take some time, however. Finally, in a back room of Macor’s Merchant House (#7 on Map 3), a contact that owes the character a favor provides him or her with the information he seeks—that Viscount Langard is attending services at the Temple of St. Cuthbert. Except for the powerful Bishop Haufren, the Viscount is probably alone.

The **Gentlemen of the Watch** need only check in with the local watch station (several throughout the city). The Gentlemen there don’t know precisely where the Viscount is, but can quickly check with the other watch stations and find out. After an hour or so of delay, the Gentlemen of the Watch discover that the Viscount is currently attending semi-private services at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Gnarley Rangers know that Wyn, a ranger of some renown in the Gnarley, had traveled to Verbobonc City for his own business. Wyn is known to frequent the Harvester’s Theater occasionally (#20 on Map 3). Although he is marveling at a popular new performance (and thus takes some time to locate), Wyn is happy to take some time for the character. He mentions that he saw the Viscount earlier today, and that he was going to the Temple of St. Cuthbert with Bishop Haufren. Wyn suspects that he should be there now.

Members of the **Gnome Church**, **Kron Hills Gnomes**, **Kron Militia**, or **Mootsingers** all know that the greatest friends the gnomes have in Verbobonc City is “Prince” Jimm (#25 on Map 3). Jimm is always eager to meet with other gnomes, despite the fact that he’s recently acquired a whole slate of new responsibilities with the end of the Free Alliance of the Kron Hills. After only a couple hours’ wait, Jimm entertains his fellow gnome with local gossip—including the gossip that Viscount Langard is attending the Temple of St. Cuthbert today.

Members of the **Hardiggin League** are able to meet with a contact at Clotho’s Cheese House (#31 on Map 3). No one seems willing to provide the character any information until he or she has tasted, compared, and evaluated several different cheeses. After that pleasant relaxation, though, the character learns that Viscount Langard is at the Temple to St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Itinerant Faith** hear that similarly-inclined clerics are in the city, and they are involved in religious discussions at the Pond of the Hart (#48 on

Map 3). The only price for the information that the character is seeking is that he or she has to back one of these contacts in the religious debate, which takes a couple of hours. The contact then peevishly informs the character that Viscount Langard is frequenting the monolithic institution dominating worship in Verbobonc City—the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

It is unlikely that any **Knights of the Faithful Defender** are playing this scenario, they may inquire at Castle Greyfist (#28 on Map 3). After taking some time to report recent adventuring activity to his or her superiors, the character learns that Viscount Langard is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert, under the quite capable guardianship of Bishop Haufren.

The **Mounted Borderers** maintain several facilities in Verbobonc City; if these wandering deliverers of justice can call any place home, it is the barracks in the southeast corner of the city (near #56 and #57 on Map 3). Before the character can perform any serious questioning, a higher-ranked officer demands that the character ride to the Tavern of the Four Trails outside the city and return a Trooper overdue to return for duty. This chore is not difficult—the poor fellow spent longer than he should have reminiscing with an old friend—but it does take several hours. Ultimately, however, the character is able to discover that Viscount Langard is attending services at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of any **Noble House Guard** know that a relative of the noble they serve is staying at Jylee's Inn (#58 on Map 3), a secluded inn for nobility staying in Verbobonc City. Certainly, the nobles keep track of where the Viscount might be found. After pulling some strings to get in to Jylee's, the character discovers that Viscount Langard is attending services at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Protectors of the Iron Wood remember hearing that one of Lord Shannus' representatives would be in Verbobonc City this week, selling some rare spices from the Iron Wood at Kile's Spice Shop (#11 on Map 3). Although the character has to wait a while for this contact to conclude business, the contact knows that Viscount Langard is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Members of the **Riverwalk Society** rarely leave the town of Rhynehurst but this is no ordinary week. Lia Songbird, a quite talented singer and poet, is performing at the Players' Inn (#21 on Map 3) with her sister in a once-in-a-lifetime duet. Needless to say, many members of the Riverwalk Society have made

the trip to Verbobonc City (several of them consider this vacation to be “slumming it” in a town almost entirely devoid of culture) to hear the sisters perform. Luckily, the character was able to catch the last hour of this delightful act. Although not from this area, the bards of the Riverwalk Society tend to pick up loose bits of information here and there—and some of them are able to inform the character that Viscount Langard is attending services at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

The **Transcendent Order of the Arcane and Divine (TOAD)** is known to meet at a quiet café near the Castle Gate (#42 on Map 3). Upon arriving, the character is immediately drawn into a quite complicated discussion, and performs some logical wrangling in order to become extricated. After this discussion, the members of the Order here all agree that Viscount Langard is almost certainly at the Temple to St. Cuthbert.

The **Twilight Falls Academy of Combat Mastery** is not well-represented in Verbobonc City, but the character knows that one of their number serves in Gentlemen of the Watch as well. It takes some time to locate this contact in person, but he has heard that Viscount Langard would be at the Temple to St. Cuthbert today.

Members of the **Verbobonc Standing Army** know that locals hang out at Packard's Trough (#60 on Map 3), a tavern for soldiers. After taking the time to renew some old acquaintances, the character learns that Viscount Langard is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

The **Wanderers of Coldeven** meet, on occasion, at the Electrum Eel (#34 on Map 3), a fairly rough inn and tavern. When the character arrives, no fellow Wanderers are present, but the patrons expect a couple of them to arrive in an hour or so. Sure enough, a trio of fellow Wanderers eventually arrives. One has heard that Viscount Langard would be in semi-private worship at the Temple of St. Cuthbert today.

Students and instructors of the **Wrinkle Academy**, of course, need only go to the Wrinkle Academy itself (#53 on Map 3). However, the place is nearly abandoned, and after some confused searching, someone's dozing familiar indicates that the classes today were being held at the Shrine to Istus (#36 on Map 3). Apparently, Magister Har had planned some sort of field trip involving divination. At the Shrine to Istus, contacts in the Wrinkle Academy inform the character that the Viscount is at the Temple of St. Cuthbert.

Appendix Four: Illustrations

You can use these illustrations for Elespeth the Dryad and Viscount Langard. (Artwork by Anya Lyuksyutova.)



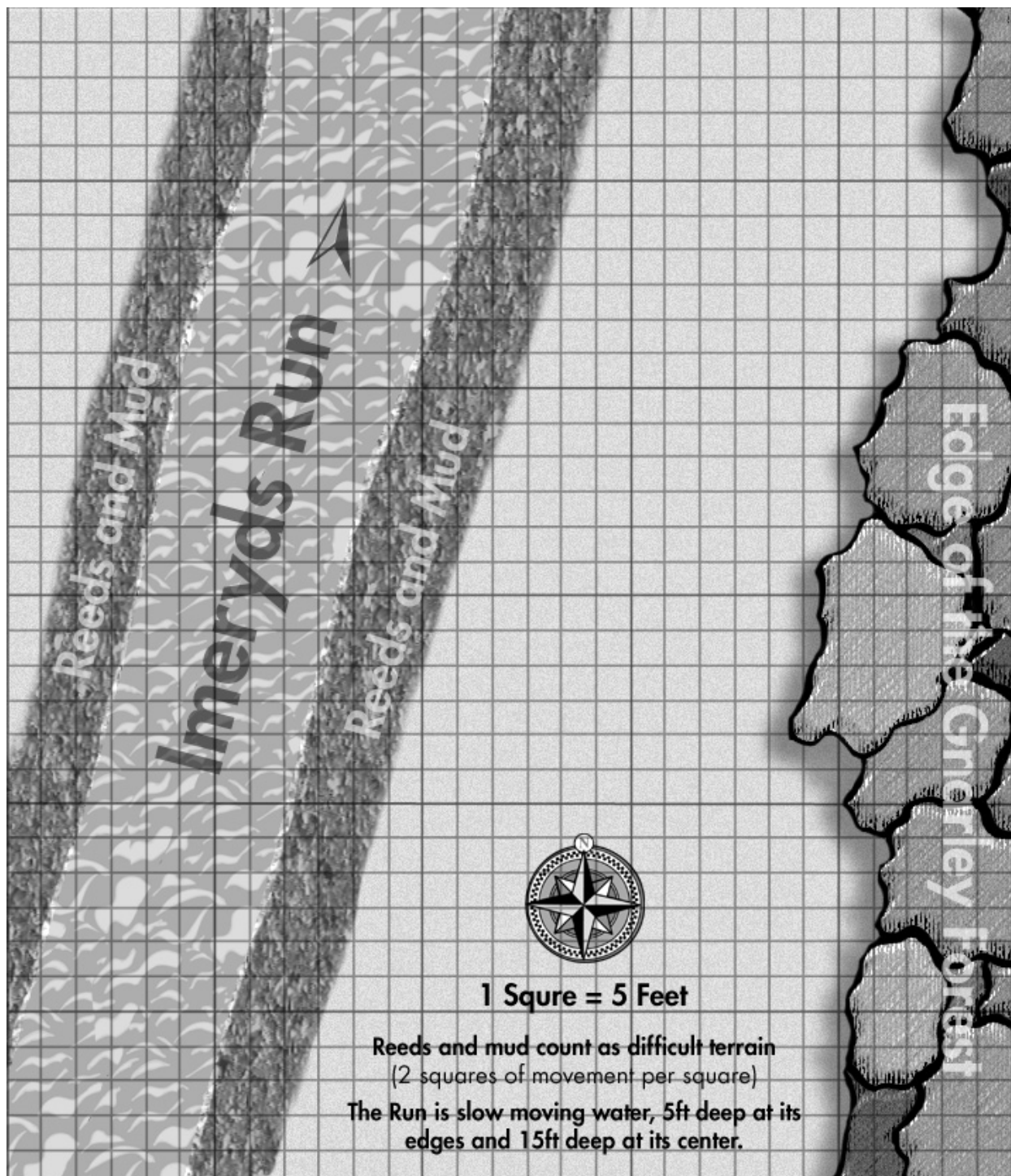
DM Map #1: Path of this Scenario

This map shows the path of the party from the Gnarley Forest to Verbobonc City. The white numbers represent Encounter numbers in the text. One inch is about 10 miles. (Map of the Viscounty by Russell Akred.)



DM Map #2: Imeryds Run

This map can be used for Encounter Three: Across the Run. (Map by Tony Mastrangeli.)



Map 3: Verbobonc City

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



Player Handout #1: Elespeth's Message

I see...

I see three wicked wolves prowling through the glades and hills of Verbobonc.

The Three were sent by the Wicked One after a great war many seasons ago.

These wicked three are these: the Imposter, the Cowled Lady, and the Killer.

The Imposter has taken the place of a great hero. His reach grows as he gathers authority.

The Cowled Lady works high in the hills. She is a master of magic, a master of strategy, and she commands an army of giants.

The Killer is cloaked in night shadow. He is short, but stout, and none can live whom he has marked for death.

These three have schemed for many seasons. They would hand all of Verbobonc to the Wicked One.

Ever has Langard been a friend of Verbobonc, and so now as its leader, he must know of these Wicked Three.

Player Handout #2: A Friendly Letter

Good Friends-

The dryad is fortunate in her choice of protectors. You are more..resilient than the orcs near Eglath. But you have been lucky. I have been watching you, and stalking you. I have been among you, and spoken with you. Your abilities and weaknesses are clear to me. If I mark you for death, you will die.

Yet I am a reasonable fellow. I will give you a chance to save your own lives. You see, the dryad knows too much about me and my two associates. Kill her by noon today, and leave her corpse to rot in the road. If you do this, I will place you under my protection, and I will never lift a hand against you. Fail me in this, and you will not live to see dusk. This I v ow.

--The Hammer of Iuz