

YEO2-04



HEIR UNAPPARENT

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Yeomanry Regional Adventure

Version 1

by August Hahn

RPGA HQ reviewers: Christopher Lindsay and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

The town of Jemison is in an uproar. A young man, the heir to a large plot of good farming land, has declared that he will not be seeking citizenship when he reaches the age of majority. Now, he has gone missing as well. Can you discover why the boy, the last in a long line of successful military men in the area, wishes to give up his birthright? Or is the truth, like the heir, unapparent? An adventure characters level 1-8.

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

PREPARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Text that appears in ***bold italics*** is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in appendixes contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and nonplayer character (NPC) statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end

of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh your memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.

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

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

3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.

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

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

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that

either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.

2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. Characters who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is usually a free action (see DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide Chapter 2: Characters) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Miale, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to join them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure set in the Yeomanry. All characters playing in region pay one Time Unit to participate in the adventure. Adventures' Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp. Characters playing out of region pay double these amounts.

ABOUT THE YEOMANRY

The Yeomanry is situated in a valley between the Jotens and the Tors in the southwest corner of the Sheldomar Valley. The moderately sized realm is nearly surrounded by the Crystalmists and its spurs, though its eastern border with Keoland is generally regarded as the eastern bank of the Javan across from the county of Cryllor. Its border continues south to where the great river enters the Hool marshes and the lands of the Sea Princes. The climate is hot nearly year-round in the central valley, though the temperature moderates as one approaches the foothills, particularly in late fall and winter. The Yeomanry is a land populated primarily by freemen Farmers, who are mostly a Suel-Flan mix.

The Yeomanry is one of the few representative democracies in the Flanaess. Any citizen of majority who has carried a spear for the nation, either now or in the past, is eligible to elect spokesmen on his behalf from his community that serves in the Council of Common Grosspokesmen in Loftwick.

The people of the Yeomanry are rural, cloistered folk with little exposure to either foreigners or magic. They are religious and superstitious, yet reservedly friendly to travelers.

IS THIS A 'MILITIA MODULE?'

As the defense of the homeland is imperative in this module, members of the Yeoman militia may count this adventure toward the twelve TUs they must serve per year for the Yeoman League.

IS THIS A "DUSTDIGGER MODULE?"

As this adventure also involves artifacts and magic of an unknown origin, students in the Academy of Lore also may count this adventure toward the 20 TUs they must spend per year in study.

"THE QUAKE"

Year Two of Yeomanry Living Greyhawk adventures (CY 592) centers around a large earthquake that takes place at the beginning of the year. While the epicenter was almost directly under the town of Hardwick, its effects could be felt as far east as Longspear. Soothsayers and self-proclaimed prophets espouse that the earthquake was an ill omen of things to come in the Yeomanry. While the damage was great and hundreds of lives were lost due to the tremor and its aftershocks, other activities in and around the Yeomanry have been far more alarmng. In the weeks following the quake, heavy humanoid, ogre, and giant activity has been detected throughout the mountains. Reports of strange sounds, disappearing townsfolk, and screams in the night have been heard in Dark Gate, causing people to fear that something has emerged from Slerotin's Tunnel. There is a feeling of dread that is slowly spreading throughout the land. People are afraid that the soothsayers might speak the truth....

JEMISON

Nestled at the foot of the Little Hills, Jemison (population 850) is an unwallled medium-size town that survives on farming from the south and the quarrying of marble and quartz in the hills to the north. It serves as the seat of the Blanche District. The Grosspokesman of the region is Ely Droullin an aging merchant who has decided to step down once the current term is complete. He has three grown children, two sons and a daughter, all of who are married. Most of the citizens worship Phyton, and they have erected a large temple to him in the center of town. Three notable inns are in Jemison as well: the Hungry Halfling, the Spinning Wheel, and Maiden's Lament. The latter of these is popular with the military presence in town, and is rumored to be a safe house for escaped slaves and refugees from the Sea Princes.

Jemison's most notable resident is Gunther Goldman, a sage known for his skills as an herbalist and alchemist. He is in his early fifties and knows the cures, and causes, of poisons and concoctions that many people have never heard of. He has devised potions that have improved the productivity of crops in the region, and as such he is very popular in town. He resides in a modest cottage to the west of town.

TROLLSFOOT

Located in the center of the southern Little Hills, Trollsfoot perhaps is the most racially mixed town in all of the Yeomanry. While the population of the town is relatively small, the town can claim humans, halflings, gnomes, dwarves, and elves among their populace in sizeable numbers, none with a majority. They have found a common cause in defending the town from occasional kobold and goblin raids. They even repelled a marauding band of ogres in 566 CY. Trollsfoot purposely has no Grosspokesman, as they don't want anyone of any one race to represent the entire town. One particular inn in Trollsfoot, the Hill Hole, is run by a cheerful half-orc named Frutt. The Hill Hole serves the best potato soup in the land.

The Landstraat has changed the town drastically, however. Many of the buildings, large and small, have been destroyed. In fact, the village has virtually been reduced to rubble. Trollsfoot's citizens have begun the rebuilding process, but it may be some time before business returns to normal.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The town of Jemison is a peaceful one for the most part, nestled into the south end of the Little Hills and an easy ride away from Nighford and the Javan beyond. Known for its fine woolen goods, Jemison has never been the source of any trouble or scandal in the Yeomanry, a reputation the town is justly proud of.

In the wake of the Landstraad (what most Yeomanry folk call the earthquake that struck at the end of 591 CY), Jemison's militia has been mobilized to the nearly destroyed town of Trollsfoot. Buried under rockslides caused by the Landstraad, Trollsfoot is now the rallying point for relief efforts throughout the Little Hills. Militia from High Fell, Pendoylan, and Jemison are working tirelessly to dig out the town and rescue everyone they can.

Help from a surprising source has unexpectedly aided these efforts; gnolls migrating south have offered to lend their tremendous strength and endurance to the task. Normally seen as monsters and enemies by the people of the Yeomanry, the gnoll's aid comes at a desperate time, desperate enough to be accepted... for now.

The tense situation has occupied the attention of many of the militia forces at Trollsfoot, keeping troops on alert until the humanoids prove their good intentions or, as it is assumed, revert to their expected savagery. Incidents like the ravaged corpses of militia patrols being found near Trollsfoot have not helped the gnolls' position at all. This has kept relief forces from cycling out as they normally would, leaving their hometowns relatively defenseless.

This uncomfortable time has prompted a wave of pro-militia support through towns like Jemison, bringing out many people who would normally forgo citizenship, or seek it through craft guilds or other means. Wearing the red tabard and lifting the spear has never been more prevalent, nor has Yeomanry patriotism been so high.

That is why an event that would have been little more than a curious note in the past has become such a stir in the quiet town of Jemison. Alayn Brennan, the 10 year old heir of Yeoman Captain Caswyn Brennan, officially declined to join the militia when he comes of age and defied his dead father's request that he join the military. In the Yeomanry, the only way to inherit property or purchase land rights is to be a citizen. The only road open to most families for citizenship is a three-year service period in the Yeoman Militia. With the Brennans of Jemison, militia service is more than a route to citizenship; it is a family tradition dating back to the days before the Yeomanry's split from the empire of Keoland. It is also the only way for the Brennan family to retain its ancestral lands.

Every male of the Brennan line has been a militia member, often achieving high rank like Captain Caswyn. Jemison has always been proud of their militia families, even holding seasonal rallies to boost membership with parties, festivals, and free markets for militia troops. For a Jemison native to close the door on militia service is nearly unthinkable. A Brennan boy doing it is practically blasphemy.

Members of the town council have beseeched Alayn's only living relative, his uncle Garril Brennan, to make the boy reconsider. He has had little luck, however, reporting back that the boy is still grieving for his father's loss and blames the militia for Caswyn's death. Captain

Caswyn was the commander in charge of the patrol found slain near Trollsfoot.

Even worse is the news that the pressure to join the militia and the unmasked scorn from Jemison's townsfolk have forced young Alayn to flee his home and run away into the Little Hills.

The characters enter Jemison in the wake of this disgrace, getting swept into the events of the heir unapparent...

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON

Very little in Jemison is what it seems. It is true that Alayn Brennan did rescind his militia enlistment, and he did do so because of grief over his father's loss. However, his uncle Garril has been playing on his sympathies, suggesting that if his father hadn't been a militiaman, he might still be alive. The young, impressionable boy has been filled with an intense hatred for the militia, the Yeomanry, and everything it stands for.

Why would his uncle do this? He would do it for the inheritance of course. By Yeomanry law, only citizens can inherit, and other relatives cannot step in and take over property while a living heir exists. Since Caswyn was the eldest Brennan child, he inherited the family home and lands instead of Garril. Once Caswyn had a son, Garril saw any hope he had of seizing that land disappear. The close nature of the Jemison townsfolk ensured that Garril could never openly strike at his brother and nephew with impunity.

The Landstraad changed things. The 'famous' Captain Caswyn and his troops had to leave the safety of Jemison and travel to Trollsfoot through the Little Hills. The Hills were known to be dangerous, but the possibility of a hazard was not enough for Garril. Through his association with the most important family in Jemison, he was able to secure the use of a pair of exotic monsters and a handler capable of ensuring that the beasts were in the right place at the right time. When Caswyn made camp near Trollsfoot, his brother's final gift was lying in wait.

When word of Caswyn's death reached town, he feigned heartbreak and cloistered Alayn, ostensibly to "help him through his grief". In reality, he was programming the poor youth to hate the horrible Yeomanry that had taken his father from him. Garril fully intends on dealing with the child as he must, but he cannot do it too quickly. If both father and son die without some time passing between the deaths, it would look suspicious.

The plan continued to work perfectly, with Alayn taking immediately to the hateful words his uncle provided. He refused his birthright without regret, renouncing everything Yeoman in front of a town militia rally. He even took to remaining locked away at home, which was perfect for Garril's purposes. Eventually, he thought, he would be able to do away with the boy and no one would question his story that the disturbed youth took his own life.

Unfortunately, Alayn's utter disdain for the Yeomanry has gone farther than even Garril intended. Under cover of night, Alayn ran away into the Hills that

claimed his father. Leaving a note behind for his uncle, the youth disappeared into the wild.

Garril would love nothing more than to rest assured that his nephew has died, but he cannot take the chance that the boy might somehow survive. For him to be secure, Garril must be certain his nephew meets the same fate as his brother, brief, bloody, and final.

Another wrinkle he did not foresee was the dedication the town of Jemison has to its own, even discontented children like Alayn. The boy also left a note with his best friend in town. Without consulting Garril, the alerted town hires adventurers (the characters) to track down the runaway and bring him back.

With the complications mounting, Garril turns back to his associate Jalab Kreshin for more aid. Publicly, Jalab plays the concerned town elder supporting the characters in their search for Alayn. Privately, he sells Garril the services of his handler and more monsters to hunt down the heroes and the hapless heir.

Encounter 1 – The characters arrive in Jemison, summoned by “a concerned citizen” to solve a town dilemma. They learn of the missing boy, the circumstances of his departure, and are offered a substantial reward for finding him.

Once the characters agree, they are directed to the boy’s distraught uncle for more information. They get a brief tour of the town on the carriage ride to the Brennan farm.

Encounter 2 – Garril Brennan meets the characters and welcomes them into his home. He expresses genuine concern for finding the young Alayn before he gets hurt out in the Hills (which is true; Garril wants the boy dead, not just hurt).

He permits a search of the house, the boy’s room, which he suggests, since he wants the characters to waste time while his hired beasts track down Alayn, and even the farm. The more time he can surreptitiously get the characters to spend here, the better. Eventually, however, he has to play the concerned uncle and insist that they depart.

Encounter 3 – The characters are loaned the use of Cestus, the Brennan family’s fellhound, to aid in tracking down Alayn. They are led through some rough terrain north into the hills, where they come across signs of the boy’s passage. Indications of others coming this way and a struggle of some sort are also discovered.

After a full day’s trek, the characters track Alayn to a small cave and confront a bizarre group of cultists in the midst of a ceremony honoring “the blessed blight” that has come to the Yeomanry.

Encounter 4 – After defeating the cult members, the characters rescue Alayn and begin the journey back. Cestus provides a moment’s warning before the monsters Garril has purchased attack. The beast’s keeper Rhiane also attacks, doing her best to avoid directing her shots against Alayn (The keeper is a killer, but she can’t bring

herself to murder a child. She intended to get the boy out of the country and claim he was killed and eaten).

Rhiane is subject to a *geas* not to reveal information about Kreshin, but she is more than willing to tell the characters about Garril if she is captured alive. Characters who question the keeper effectively can also learn of her last “job”, the attack on Captain Caswyn’s troops. If they don’t question her at all, the characters have no idea why they were attacked.

Alayn requests, probably loudly, that the characters escort him to Longspear where he can get passage out of the Yeomanry. He wants nothing to do with this “horrible place” ever again. If they do this, which Yeomanry Militia members should have a very hard time agreeing to, the scenario effectively ends. If the characters insist on returning to Jemison to set things straight, he unhappily agrees. If Alayn has been told of his uncle’s plots against him, he doesn’t say much of anything, as he is too stunned to think clearly.

Encounter 5 – This encounter largely depends on what occurred in Encounter 4. If the unwitting characters are returning an unwilling (or unconscious) Alayn to the farm, Garril greets them, thanks them, and promises to look after the boy more carefully. He rewards them, sends them on their way, and the scenario ends (badly for Alayn, but this occurs ‘off-stage’).

If the characters are wise to what happened between Alayn and his uncle, the meeting with Garril may go quite differently. If confronted with the truth, the villainous uncle attempts to talk his way out of combat with the obviously capable characters, even surrendering if the opportunity presents itself.

If combat occurs, Alayn pleads with the characters not to kill his uncle. While he may have learned some horrible things about Garril, Alayn still loves him as the only family he has left. Lawful and/or good characters should have a definite problem pressing the attack with both a sobbing boy and a surrendering opponent. Having Garril arrested by the authorities of Jemison, on the other hand, is a perfectly viable option.

Conclusion – If the scenario goes well and properly, the characters have returned Alayn to his farm, returned at least a little of his faith in the Yeomanry, and delivered Garril to justice. Other outcomes are discussed in this section, with resolutions suggested for each likely alternative.

INTRODUCTION

Travel has been difficult in the Yeomanry for the last few months. The tremors in the earth that claimed the entire town of Hardwick and ripped open the escarpment for another hundred miles south have echoed through the country for some time, shaking towns as far flung as North Reach and Whitehurst.

Even towns not directly hit by the terrible shaking of the land have been affected. As you neared the hill village of Jemison, you’ve heard from other travelers on the road that the

nearby town of Trollsfoot has been buried by rockslides. The conspicuous absence of militia on the trail would suggest that they have rallied north to offer aid.

Arriving in Jemison, this proves to be the case. The wood fort walls that would normally have a dozen men walking their heights have only a single lookout beside each open gate.

No other outsiders are in town at the moment and with the militia away, every inn except one has closed for the season. You find yourselves in the Ramble, wasting away the hot afternoon beneath the shade of ivy-covered eaves.

Let each player determine why their character has come to town. With the damage that most of the Yeomanry's roads have sustained, they may have been making their way north to Longspear, one of the Yeomanry's largest cities, through the hills or south to Nighford and past that to the Hool Swamp. In any case, Jemison has presented itself as a convenient place for lodging, resupply, or just a break from the dangers of the Little Hills.

Let the characters relax and introduce themselves, or not, as the individual character prefers, in the calm atmosphere of the Ramble's nearly deserted covered patio. The serving girl, a 14-year-old human named Arlen with long red hair and a warm smile, brings them whatever they order. Have her drop comments like, "You're the first strangers this way since the Landstraad" or "Eat all you want; there's more than enough right now with all the men away".

Make sure the characters understand by the end of this introduction that the roads around here aren't much traveled right now and that nearly all of the town's militia is up north tied up in the rescue efforts at Trollsfoot.

Once this has been made clear, move to encounter one by reading or paraphrasing:

A tall older man in a scarlet jerkin steps up onto the patio with you. Arlen nods at him and gestures to your table. She smiles over to you and whispers; "You are in luck, good sirs and ladies, if you are here looking for work. Spokesman Cairenn seems to be in a hiring way."

She steps out of the man's path as he approaches. His hand outstretched, he walks up to you and says, "Hail and good day, strangers. It's good to see travelers in town for a change. I am Jard Cairenn, and I represent the citizens of Jemison."

He takes a chair without missing a beat and sits down. "On behalf of Jemison, I have a matter of some import and with all hands up north a piece, I must burden you with it if you're amenable."

With a smile, he catches his breath and concludes with, "What say you? Will you hear me out?"

Keep in mind that this introduction is not a straightjacket; feel free to bring the characters into the plot of this scenario by whatever means you wish. You can have Garril Brennan come into town and notice the characters, bypassing Cairenn and Kreshin's involvement altogether. Do whatever you like, within reason, to further the plot and make the scenario enjoyable for the players.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE HOOK

Synopsis: The characters hear the Spokesman's offer and, if they accept, are sent to the Kreshin estate to speak with Squire Jalab. After learning what they can, they are directed to Garril Brennan at the Brennan farm.

If the characters do not let the Spokesman finish his proposal, he nods understandingly and apologizes for his interruption of their meal. He pays for their tab and bids them have a good stay in Jemison. As DM, you can either end the scenario there or have Kreshin make a personal appeal for them to visit him on his estate through a messenger if you wish to continue the round. Assuming they do accept, proceed with the following:

"Excellent!" Spokesman Cairenn beams delightedly and snags a fried wedge of rhubarb off a lunch tray Arlen brings to the table. "Thank you for taking the time to listen."

After eating the wedge, Jard sips from a glass of water the serving girl also supplied. "I have been asked by one of our finest citizens to send stout backs and keen minds his way for an important task. If he wants what I think he does, a life might be at stake and there is little time to waste."

Jard finishes the glass of water and stands again. "I know he is willing to pay well when he needs help, so it would do you good to meet with him. If you are interested, follow me and I will lead you to Squire Kreshin."

With that, he grabs a handful of slivered pickles and eats them as he walks away. "Come! It will be well worth your time!"

Of course, the characters are free to do as they like, but everything Jard Cairenn has said is true and he does not intend any deceit. His alignment, if checked for, is Lawful Good and he is thinking of the best interests of a young boy and is proud of Squire Kreshin for being so supportive of the townsfolk in this time of need.

If any characters are Yeomanry Militia members, they are activated on Jard's authority and charged with the successful completion of the mission given to them by Jalab Kreshin. This scenario now counts as a Militia scenario for Time Unit and upkeep purposes.

If the characters follow him, he leads them to the north side of Jemison and brings them to the front gates of a veritable mansion. Read or paraphrase the following:

Jard stops outside the gates and nods to one of the guards there, a man dressed in a fine mail shirt and a tabard with a black hawk crest nods back and opens the way for you. With a quick smile, Spokesman Cairenn points to the massive white stone house in the distance and says, "There you go; Squire Kreshin's estate. He'll see you inside immediately. Just knock at the front door and his servants will show you in. Thank you again, fine folk."

With a quick bow, he turns and leaves the way you came in. The guards close the black iron gates behind him and turn to

face you. One gestures to the house. "The master does not like to be kept waiting."

Everything here, from the guards in livery to the manicured grounds should speak money to the characters. Take a moment to describe the lush landscape, the gardeners hard at work trimming the walls of a hedge maze, and the massive alabaster seal over the mansion's doors featuring the Kreshin crest, a hawk in flight. No expense seems to have been spared in the construction or grounds of this mansion; gleaming brass graces every hinge and lamppost and real cut glass is in every window frame.

Once the characters have an idea of the kind of place they are in and knock to enter, continue reading the text below. As always, character actions supersede boxed text and you may have to interpret reactions as they occur:

Your knock resounds through the oak door and echoes inside. After a few moments, a man in a black shirt and hose wearing a blue waistcoat answers and shows you in.

"You must be the strangers in town. Cairenn sent you. Yes?"

Without waiting for an answer, he motions for you to follow him and he leads you inside.

Inness, Jalab Kreshin's manservant, has no patience for unwashed ruffians and is pointedly more polite to people who look cultured and of good breeding. This is a good chance for characters to see a difference in reaction based on their lifestyle cost and Charisma scores.

As long as no one is rude enough to Inness to warrant being thrown out, the characters are eventually shown in to see Jalab. He has informed Inness that his business with the strangers in town is important. As such, the manservant makes every effort to tolerant even 'crude savages' long enough to see them safely upstairs to the Master's afternoon study.

Of course, if the characters are rude and abusive, they are shown out or threatened with the house guard if they do not remove themselves from the premises. Hopefully this I is not necessary, but Inness does not tolerate foolishly crude behavior and it can result in the scenario ending before it truly begins.

Any character that actually attacks Inness (a 3rd level Expert) or a guard (Kreshin employs 10; each is a 1st level Fighter as listed in the NPC section of the DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide) is breaking the law and should be dealt with directly. Characters stupid enough to do this are committing an evil act and should be removed from the game for doing so.

As long as nothing that foolish occurs, the characters arrive at Jalab's study as follows:

The manservant shows you to a finely engraved ashwood door and taps lightly. From within, you hear "Show them in, Inness."

The door is opened, revealing a well-appointed room with burgundy and umber furnishings and a large cherry wood desk. Seated at it is an older man with gray hair and broad shoulders.

He looks up from a sheaf of parchment and waves for you to enter.

"Greetings. I am Jalab Kreshin, and I have a matter of grave import to discuss with you. Please, take a seat."

From here, the majority of the encounter is conversation between the characters and Kreshin. Just keep the guidelines below (as noted in *The Deal*) in mind and run the dialogue, keeping in mind that Jalab wishes to be as pleasant and as accommodating in this affair as he can be, since he doesn't want to be implicated in any of Garril's schemes.

Jalab views alignment checks dimly and if he notices any spellcasting, he requests that the offending caster refrain from working magic in his home before the spell can be finished. If the casting character insists on continuing, they are escorted outside. Jalab is Lawful Evil, but he does not intend any harm or malice toward the characters. He is at the moment exactly what he claims to be, a concerned citizen who wishes to help his hometown and retrieve an errant young member of the community. Jalab is a very careful man and avoids actually lying at all times. He has mastered the art of the half-truth.

Note: Ask if any of the players have been through the Yeomanry scenario, YEO1-02 *Throwing Stones*. If they have, they recognize Jalab Kreshin as the rival Grosspokesman candidate they worked against. Some characters may have actually worked for him. If this is the case, he deals with them as he deals with anyone else, though some conversation may have to be run differently. Adjudicate as you see fit. He recognizes them too, but he simply says that a young boy's life is more important than any ill will he might harbor against them. Again, he is telling the truth.

If Jalab's thoughts are probed, his intentions prove to be genuine if self-serving. Secretly, he wishes the young heir returned because he believes the malleable boy is easy prey for manipulation. With a kind word here and a bit of financial support there, Jalab fully expects to own the Brennan farm in a few years.

The Deal: Jalab tells the characters the following:

"There are many proud families here in Jemison, but few have served with as much distinction as the Brennen line. Aside from my own, of course, the Brennen family has perhaps the best reputation of integrity and loyalty to the Yeomanry of any folk I know."

"That's why the tragedies that have befallen the Brennen household have been so painful. In the last generation, I have watched the finest of their blood cut down in giant attacks, humanoid raids, and border service along our many contested fronts."

"Just this last month, Captain Caswyn Brennan was slain by a cowardly attack that claimed the life of his entire unit on its way up to Trollfoot. He left only his son Alayn and his brother Garril to succeed him. That's how far the line has fallen, good folk."

"Alayn is a good boy and he is the image of his father, and no one in Jemison has had any reason to think the line deceased. He was to assume his father's responsibilities and join the

militia as every inheritor in his family has done for generations."

"You will note, my friends, the term 'was'. The boy has rescinded his militia enlistment, denounced his inheritance, and now, when we Jemisons had assumed he could do no more, run away from home into the same hills that claimed his father."

"Garril Brennan, the sole member of the family remaining, is beside himself and has begged for my aid. Under normal circumstances, we would dispatch the militia to search for the distraught child, but as you have surely noticed we are woefully short-handed."

"No matter your duties or allegiances, I am certain you can agree with me that the child must be found at once. I am willing to pay each of you 100 gold for your time and trouble if you will help us. Even if you are militia, I insist you accept payment as a gesture of my good will in this endeavor."

Talk out the details now with the characters. However, he does not negotiate the price. He would rather use one of his agents, Moira or Rhaine (See Encounter 4 and Appendix I: NPCs for details on Rhaine. Moira appears in an upcoming scenario) to ferret out the boy for him and make up good stories for his rescue than pay more than that.

Once payment has been agreed upon, he sends them on to the Brennan farm for more information. Move to Encounter 2 once the scene is over. In all, this encounter should not take more than 30 minutes to run. There are at least 2 full combats in the later scenes and enough time must remain in the gaming slot to accommodate for them.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE LINE

Synopsis: The characters meet with Garril Brennan and are told the rest of the story regarding Alayn's estrangement and disappearance. They are given the chance to search the farm and begin their hunt for the missing boy.

This encounter likely begins with the characters arriving at the Brennan farm northwest of town. About a half hour's walk from Jemison proper, there is enough time for the characters to talk among themselves and discuss what they are doing. Encourage in-character conversation before reading or paraphrasing the next section of text:

The farm is a cozy-looking place, with a large wood and stone main home, a trio of barns, and smaller outbuildings scattered over several dozen acres of arable land. The long green leaves of crops close to harvest wave in the early evening breeze.

A man sitting on a front porch swing eyes you as you approach. With a wave, he gets up, sets down a pipe, and walks over to open the front fence door for you. "Good eve. What can I do for you folks?"

This is Garril, and he already knows what the characters are here for. A swift runner sent by Jalab has informed him of their involvement and advised him on Kreshin's behalf to cooperate fully. Time, he has been cautioned, is

on their side and acting rashly can only bring ruin to them both.

As such, he greets the characters and welcomes them to his farm. Once they inform him of their business, he plays the grateful host and invites them inside to discuss his nephew. Garril is 5 feet, 9 inches tall and has green eyes, blonde hair, and a handsome look about him.

Describe the fine, if rustic, country furnishings of the Brennan home, mentioning the oak doors, the hickory tables and chairs, and the dark walnut and polished steel accents. White plaster on the walls, a feature normally found only in rich houses like the Kreshin estate, shows the wealth the Brennans have built up over generations of loyal service to the Yeomanry.

Once everyone is inside and seated, Garril continues. You do not have to read the entire next section verbatim, as some of it could come out via character questions. Keep in mind that Kreshin has counseled him personally and he avoids direct lies at all costs.

"I have to accept some of the blame here. It isn't any secret that Alayn and I have felt the same way for some time, but I should never have let him know how much I miss my brother. He is young and impressionable and I can't help feeling that my bitterness over Caswyn's loss has just gone and sparked his rebelliousness."

"Still, I never meant it to go this far. I wanted him to think about his options, true, but I couldn't imagine he'd do something like this. He's renounced his inheritance and run away for gods alone knows where!"

"I would have gone after him myself, and indeed I started to, but going through the fields made me face an ugly truth. I've got hundreds of bushels of rhubarbs, beets, and turnips to bring in before they rot in the earth. Without spare hands to help, it's just me here. I know Caswyn would want his son found, but he'd also want this farm to feed the country he loved so much."

"With the Landstraad having shaken us all so much, pardon the play on words, every last acre of land has to do its share to keep us all going. That's why I owe Squire Kreshin so much for hiring you fine folks on my behalf."

"Please, find my nephew and bring him back home. I can't offer much more than a warm meal and a comfortable night's sleep for your trouble, but you'll be welcome here any time if you'll just go rescue Alayn."

Again, everything said above is true. Garril really does want Alayn found and he can't go search for him himself. There is a wealth of other information he can provide the characters, as detailed below. It is best from a scenario point of view for the following to come out during questioning or during a guided search of the house, as Garril insists on showing the characters around.

- Alayn is 4 feet, 1 inch in height, light build, with tan skin, sandy blonde hair, and green eyes. *"The young image of his father, if I do say so."*
- Alayn packed a leather satchel that used to belong to his father with all the food he could carry, a change of clothes, a pouch of gold and an emerald from the family safebox, a walking staff, and a fine Emberton

steel dagger from the weapon cabinet in the living room.

- He also took Gauntlet, a female fellhound (see the Appendix for more information on this uniquely Yeoman breed), with him for protection.
- Alayn was trained well by his father and knows the lay of the land from here all the way to Mid Fell. Garril suspects that is where the boy is trying to head.
- Garril does not think Alayn wants to stay in the Yeomanry. In Mid Fell, Alayn can catch a coach ride to Longspear and head north to Cryllor with the money he took. Garril shows the characters the note Alayn left to back up this theory (Player Handout 1).
- Without a skilled tracker, the characters have little chance of finding Alayn. Garril volunteers the services of the family's other fellhound for this task. Cestus has always been very fond of Alayn and should be able to track his scent without any trouble.
- It is imperative that the characters find Alayn as soon as they can. Well skilled or not, the boy is just that; a young boy, alone out in the Little Hills.
- The north fence has had a section of wood slats slipped out of their post and replaced. The fence is still sturdy, but the discoloration of the slat ends from sun bleaching is pretty obvious, only requiring a successful Spot check (DC 10) to notice.

Let the characters take as much time as they wish searching the house and grounds, with Garril growing more and more insistent all the while. He never actually loses his patience, but he should become increasingly nervous about the safety of his "beloved nephew" with all the terrible dangers out in the Little Hills.

Of course, he knows all about those dangers. In fact, he has one of those dangers searching for Alayn right now. An outlaw in the service of Jalab, Rhaine, has been on retainer to Garril since she took care of his brother Caswyn for him. A self-styled "monster trainer", Rhaine, or as she prefers to be called, 'Rhaine o' the Razor,' provides trained creatures to Kreshin and other buyers. She also moonlights as a keeper for those creatures when they are needed for difficult work. Work like taking out an entire Yeoman squad.

Still answering to Garril until Jalab tells her otherwise, she is following orders and is tracking Alayn when the characters leave the Brennan estate. Kreshin's messenger was supposed to tell her to leave Garril's service and return to the mansion, but she left before he could get here.

In any case, when the characters are ready to leave the farm, Garril walks them to the fence, opens it in the same place Alayn did, and wishes them the best of luck. Proceed to Encounter Three when the party is ready.

ENCOUNTER 3: THAT SINKING FEELING

Synopsis: The characters track Alayn through fen-infested hills. They find him about to be sacrificed by an insane cult of rot-worshippers and have a hideous battle amid diseased bones and putrid undead. They free the boy and begin an exhausted walk home.

The characters are now on the trail of Alayn, having likely just left the Brennan estate. If Cestus the fellhound is with them, just roll tracking checks for him (DC 10). Characters trying to track the boy on their own take two hours and have to make checks against a DC 15 twice and a DC 20 once. Any failure in these adds an hour to the search time before the set of rolls can be attempted again. This simulates the difficult terrain and Alayn's attempts to elude pursuers.

Read or paraphrase the following to describe the conditions of the characters search:

For about a mile past the edge of the Brennan farm, sparse trees cover the rolling landscape. Small hills quickly give rise to larger ones, with tall grasses obscuring the ground and sections of old rock replacing the occasional trunk or shrub. You are in the Little Hills now, and travel here is arduous and tiring.

After a few tracking checks, introduce the characters to one of the Little Hill's more subtle dangers, leeseide fens. The high rock content of the hills can cause rainwater to stand in stagnant pools at the base of certain hills until the mud and run-off grows too thick for the water to evaporate. These thick mires become covered in wind-blown grass seed, which takes root and obscures them from sight. Unable to bear any true weight, the mud pools act like cloying quicksand and can be quite fatal if someone blundering into them does not have outside help to escape.

Any character with Knowledge (local) from the Little Hills area of the Yeomanry (DC 5) or Knowledge (geography) (DC 15) should be warned of the possibility of these swamps before one occurs, though they may still fall victim to one if they do not take precautions against them.

If any character has actually declared that he or she is searching for hazards as they travel, let them make a Search DC 20 check to spot the leeseide fen before it catches someone. Otherwise, the person in the lead of the group (likely Cestus and anyone up with him, or a ranger or someone else using the Track feat) will fall into the mire and immediately sink beneath the surface if they fail a Reflex save (also DC: 20).

Anyone caught in a leeseide fen must make an Escape Artist check (DC 20) or a Strength check at the same difficulty to fight his or her way back to the surface of the swamp. Once they have surfaced, they can make another check to reach the swamp's edge and pull free. If the victim does not successfully surface in three rounds, they must begin making Constitution check (DC 10) every

round in order to continue holding her breath. Each round, the DC increases by 1.

When the character finally fails her Constitution check, she begins to drown. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she drowns.

A successful Strength check (DC 30) (which can come from up to as many people as you can get on a rope) saves a victim from the swamp automatically, but it takes a Search check (DC 15) to find a submerged victim before they can be freed. Cestus cannot help in the Search check, but he is trained to aid in freeing people and he remains calm if people try to free him from the mire.

Once the characters encounter one leeseid fen, they are unlikely to fall victim to another one. Any method of probing the ground ahead of the party reveals the presence of a swamp before it can trap someone. Make sure the party discovers one or two more leeseid fens this way as a reward for their being careful. Of course, if they aren't careful, feel free to subject them as many leeseid fens as you wish. The south end of the Little Hills is fraught with them.

Something else is in the Little Hills with the characters as well, though this is not a native feature. Foreshadow the rest of this encounter by mentioning the following while the characters track Alayn.

At a nearby rock, you see what appears to be an etching of a circle with a line down it from top to bottom. Green paint has been daubed into the line and the interior of the circle has been covered in mud.

Those characters that search around the stone can find signs of old tracks leading off in lots of different directions. The most significant thing they find is the ring of dead grass and soil around the stone. Anyone with Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore can make a check (DC 5) to determine that nothing natural killed this grass and that soil is not viable any longer.

This mark is the symbol being used to note the passing of a new cult in the Yeomanry, the Blighted Ones. Originally just an isolated occurrence or two around the Escarpment, the Blighted Ones are spreading through the Yeomanry. Their growth is partially due to the visions being "gifted" to random people sensitive enough to psychic phenomena for an evil artifact called the Blightstone to contact.

This massive and ancient green jewel from the time of Vecna has, since its discovery due to the events of the Yeomanry scenario YEO1-03 *Blighted Winds*, been emanating subtle promises of power to any who would heed its call. These visions have driven hundreds of people mad and spawned cults around their communal derangements.

Generally, these little cabals are harmless. Though they gibber about despoiling the earth and laying waste to all around them, they lack the sanity and focus to accomplish these ends. A few groups, however, are led by charismatic individuals with strong enough psyches to withstand the power of the Blightstone's sendings.

These Blight Lords have recently developed new and terrible powers from their infusion with the Blightstone's energies and though they lair in secret now, they lie in wait of their day when their visions instruct them to lead their followers in glorious devastation.

One of these cabals has taken up residence in a hillside cave between Jemison and Trollsfoot. They have been able to elude detection by the authorities for months now. Their leader, a mad druid calling himself Bloodmange, has been waiting for a sign from the "Green Eye" that the Time of Rot is at hand.

Unfortunately for Alayn, his accidental discovery of their cave and his subsequent capture by the cultists has been taken as that sign. When Bloodmange found a large emerald in Alayn's money pouch, he saw it as a gift from the Blightstone and announced that the day of destruction had finally arrived.

The cult is preparing to sacrifice Alayn at sunset and set off in an attack on Jemison while the militia is away. Though they stand little chance of succeeding in their assault, the loss of life will be massive on both sides unless they are stopped before they begin.

The characters can track Alayn all the way to the cave of the Blighted Ones, where they come across the cult in the middle of their frenzied ritual. For the sake of drama, assume that regardless of Track rolls, the characters arrive here at sunset. The grass around the cavern is still healthy, mostly because Bloodmange is smart enough not to make the cult's lair too obvious to outsiders.

Use the map in the DM Aid for the Cavern of the Fetid Eye and the combat synopsis below, making adjustments if the conditions of the battle change. In any case, the inside of the cavern has been decorated to resemble the one the Blightstone was discovered in during YEO1-03 *Blighted Winds*. If any character took part in that adventure, make them aware of the resemblance if they make a successful Intelligence check (DC 10) if they do not pick up on it themselves.

Use as much of this text as you need to set the tone for the battle. Note that the two cultists near the cave entrance are alert for trouble and get Spot and Listen checks against intruders.

The dim, flickering light of several fires can be seen from this barren cave mouth. The smell of mold, burning blood, and other acrid things cling eerily to the air as you approach.

Looking into the cave mouth, you see a pair of humanoid figures dressed in simple brown robes. Muddy sackcloth cowls cover their faces, a thin line of green painted down the center of them. Both bear shortspears and seem alert for danger.

Once the characters get a clearer look inside the cave:

Near the back of the cavern, a large piece of chiseled rock serves as a makeshift altar. Several fat tallow candles gutter black smoke into the fetid air of the cave, casting their sickly glow over the motionless form of a child lying on the stone.

Behind the altar is a broad-shouldered figure in a dark brown tunic, slit down the front to reveal a bright green robe underneath. A full-head mask of dried mud obscures his face

with dead branches protruding from either side like antlers and a third eye painted green on the brow. Around his neck is a sizable emerald, bound in cords and glimmering in the candlelight.

To either side of him are men clad in robes like the other cultists in the cave. Instead of sackcloth masks, these wear shawls of mud-caked linen over their mouth and nose. All of their exposed skin is covered in festering boils and lesions.

All around the back of the cave, piles of rotting meat and the carcasses of several dead animals are stacked up along the walls. One of the animals, a fellhound with dripping flesh hanging off its exposed bones, is still moving...

Tactics:

Battle tactics for the Blighted Ones are fairly simple. The Plagueshooters stay at the back of the cave, using the altar stone for 1/2 cover if they can, and focus their fire on spellcasters while the cultists armed with spears make a wall formation and try to shield Bloodmange from harm.

As for the druid, he uses his spells to best advantage, casting combat magic as the opportunity arises. He is not afraid to go into melee combat, and many of his spells require it, but he casts *shillelagh* before doing so for the extra bonus. Until he can close into melee with an opponent, preferably weakened, he uses the altar stone for cover against attacks.

At APL 8 Bloodmange tries to get *flame strike* off as soon as he can, targeting the largest group of characters possible. Obviously agile sorts, those likely to have evasion, are skipped over unless they are in the area of effect with better targets, like spellcasters.

The zombie dog has no tactics and charges the nearest target as soon as one presents itself. Bloodmange has managed to raise the poor fellhound, but he has very little control over it. If the characters have a Fellhound with them, the zombie dog goes after it in preference to all other targets.

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛ **Blighted One Cultist:** Male human War1; hp 10; see Appendix I.

☛ **Blighted One Plagueshooter:** Male human Ftr1; hp 12; see Appendix I.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd4; hp 31; see Appendix I.

☛ **Zombie Dog:** hp 16; see Appendix I.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Blighted One Cultist:** Male human War2; hp 17; see Appendix I.

☛ **Blighted One Plagueshooter:** Male human Ftr2; hp 20; see Appendix I.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd6; hp 45; see Appendix I.

☛ **Zombie Dog:** hp 30; see Appendix I.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Blighted One Cultist:** Male human War3; hp 24; see Appendix I.

☛ **Blighted One Plagueshooters (2):** Male human Ftr3; hp 28 each; see Appendix I.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd6/Blighter2*; hp 59; see Appendix I.

☛ **Zombie Dogs (2):** hp 30 each; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Blighted One Cultists (2):** Male human War3; hp 24 each; see Appendix I.

☛ **Blighted One Plagueshooters (3):** Male human Ftr4; hp 36 each; see Appendix I.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd6/Blighter4*; hp 76; see Appendix I.

☛ **Zombie Dogs (2):** hp 30 each; see Appendix I.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If any of the Fetid Eye cabal are captured as opposed to killed, they can only be convinced to talk through Intimidation checks (DC 20) or by magical means. Bloodmange does not talk, preferring to be killed rather than betray the Blightstone in any way.

None of these cultists know where the Blightstone is, nor do any of them really remember their lives before joining the cabal. They are all utterly insane. If their insanities are somehow magically cured, they are just normal people with no recollection of where they are or what they have been doing.

What they can tell the character is the name of their cabal (The Fetid Eye), where the emerald came from (the boy's pouch), how they captured Alayn, and scattered images of glorious rot and death from the great green eye (be creative). None of the cultists, including Bloodmange, know the Blightstone by that name. To them all, it is the Great Fetid Eye.

With the Blighted Ones defeated, the characters can rescue Alayn and leave this fetid cavern behind. It might not be a bad idea to burn everything in the cave, but if this isn't done in a controlled way, it could catch the grass on fire and cause a blaze that sweeps over miles of the Little Hills before it can be put out. If this occurs, adjudicate as you see fit, but characters should get Wisdom checks to realize the potential for disaster here.

Even if the characters don't set the Yeomanry aflame here, they have another disaster waiting for them: Alayn himself. The apple may not far fall from the tree, but bruised fruit can sour quickly. Headstrong and brash, Alayn has been twisted by his uncle into a bitter, angry young man with little patience and no love for anything Yeomanry related.

He is grateful, though he won't say so, for the rescue and his capture by the Blighted Ones has not left him keen to travel alone again. He also misses his uncle and mourns the loss of Gauntlet (she was the zombie dog the characters just fought) and this has broken his adventuring spirit for the time being. Thus, he does not fight the characters when they try to take him home.

He won't fight them, but he does complain, argue, and generally becomes an annoying little pain in the

backside. The gods alone can help a character that insists on wearing a Yeomanry tabard or other sign of Militia service around him. He ridicules such characters mercilessly, calling them “mindless drones of the Freeholder” and “slaves of the red”. He goes on about his belief that Keoland is no better than here, but they are more honest about their monarchy. “At least there,” he’ll say, “They have the decency to call a King a King.”

Of course, he gets these ideas from his uncle, but he doesn’t want to say so. He has been told that his uncle would lose everything and probably be killed if his opinions were known openly. The true tragedy of this scenario is that Alayn loves his uncle as much as his uncle wants him killed.

Do your best as a DM to make the majority of the characters in the group as irritated with their young charge as you possibly can. He won’t ever be truly abusive, but he can be as acerbic and sarcastic as you like. If a character (preferably a female, as he hasn’t had a strong mother-figure in years) treats him kindly despite his sharp tongue, he warms up to her, but only if a true effort is made. Right now, Alayn is very hard to like.

Unfortunately, if the characters are to discover the real plot here, they need to question Alayn and learn why he has given up his birthright. Good diplomacy checks (DC 20) and cautious roleplaying (forceful behavior does not endear Alayn to his rescuers) may draw him out enough to admit the following:

“My... my uncle feels the same way, you know. He says this place is evil as the day is long. It took my father, and his father, and all my brothers. If I don’t leave, it’ll take me too.”

Alayn does not say more than that on the subject. Still, that comment alone should be enough to sow some doubt as to Garril’s “good intentions”.

Even if Alayn does warm up to some characters, he still viciously grills any others, and he does not talk civilly to anyone wearing the tabard of a Yeomanry militia member.

Move on to Encounter 4 after subjecting the characters to the worst adolescent insults, attitude, and jibes you can think of.

ENCOUNTER 4: WHEN IT RHAINES, IT POURS

Synopsis: After enduring their young charge’s barbed wit for some time, the characters are offered a chance to be rid of him... at the point of a viciously barbed whip-dagger. Rhaine o’ the Razor arrives to relieve the characters of their “burden”.

Let the players know that two hours of Alayn’s abuse have passed. Some characters may have chosen by now to cast *sleep* or something similar by now; this is perfectly acceptable. With only a few hours of nighttime left, unless the characters chose to make camp, in which case the following ambush occurs at their campsite, travel

through the Little Hills back to Jemison ahead of them, looks uneventful.

Looks can be deceiving. Rhaine o’ the Razor, the monster trainer that supplies Jalab Kreshin and other interested buyers with all sorts of fell beasts (like the gray ooze from “Throwing Stones”), has been tracking both Alayn and the party for some time now. She found him in the Blighter’s Cave, but she didn’t want to enter that foul place unless she had to.

Fortunately, the characters took care of that awful business for her. Rhaine isn’t evil, but she is quite neutral and very practical. In life, there is only her welfare, her creature’s welfare, and money to be concerned with, in that order, naturally. Truth be told, she has a soft spot for weak and helpless things, like monster cubs and children, but she would never admit it.

Now, unfortunately, she has the small matter of her contract with Garril to deal with. She tries to catch the characters in an ambush as noted below, but failing that, she attacks whenever she has the advantage of a weakened party or surprise.

By herself, Rhaine is impressive but not utterly deadly. She has some bolstering magic that she uses before beginning combat and she evens the odds with her companion creatures.

The ambush she has planned is not impossible to spot, but her monsters are hidden with an effective *Hide* of 25, as is Rhaine who also has the advantage of a *potion of invisibility*, already consumed. If Cestus is with the party, a sudden bark from him keeps the party from being surprised by the two beasts, but Rhaine still likely gets a surprise round from her hidden, invisible vantage point.

Rhaine is neither stupid nor foolish. If there is obviously no chance in the Nine Hells that she can take the party in an unfair fight (and she has been observing them for some time), she does not attack them. She knows that if they turn Alayn over to Garril, the boy will die. She is not above breaking the spirit of her contract and approaching the characters directly with what she knows.

It is a last resort play for her, since she isn’t sure what the characters want to do with her afterwards, but she cannot stand by and let the boy be taken to his death. When you are ready to spring her ambush on the party, read or paraphrase the following text:

Alayn’s vitriolic chattering has made the last two hours a nightmare. That and the dark, dangerous terrain of the Little Hills at night have everyone at least a little nervous. The fens are harder to avoid in the deep shadows. Even Cestus, who hasn’t left Alayn’s side since you found him in that rotted cave, is whining softly with apprehension.

Thirty feet into a low culvert, you hear what sounds like an animal snarl. It isn’t Cestus but something much, much larger. As it plunges toward you out of the darkness, an identical sound behind you shows that it isn’t alone either...

Rhaine, if she gets to choose the battlefield, is attacking from surprise up on the hillside beside the characters. Her creatures (which vary by APL) fight ferociously, but

she isn't truly interested in killing characters. If at all possible, her tactics range around clearing the characters away from Alayn, getting in close to him, and fleeing with him into the night. The characters aren't likely to let her do it, but some of them, especially the ones he has been roasting about their Militia slavery may be tempted.

Use this text to describe Rhaine as she makes her first attack:

As the creatures tear into you from both sides, a whistling crack erupts in the air beside [insert character first attacked by Rhaine]. As it echoes and fades away, a figure shimmers into view nearby.

A woman with spike-studded leather armor as black as night coils a long leather whip back into her hand. As she crouches to take another lash with it, the slim blade of glimmering steel at its end flashes in the moonlight.

Her left hand closes around a slender short sword and her long black hair whirls around her in a single long braid.

"Ditch the child and run fer yer lives if ya wish to see another sunrise!"

Run the battle intelligently, with Rhaine using cover and concealment to her best advantage. She isn't likely to offer surrender as an option unless there are characters who would obviously honor it (paladins, clerics of honorable deities), but if she falls below 10 hit points, she immediately calls off her beasts and surrenders herself with a cry of, "I've something to tell that you might want to hear! I'm no' the fish you need to catch! Stay your blades!" If the characters choose to press the attack, be sure to remind good-aligned characters that this is a callous choice.

This combat can be exceedingly deadly; do not kill characters unless they leave Rhaine no choice. She would much rather inflict a lot of damage as quickly as possible, grab Alayn, and flee before the characters can take her or either of her beasts down. Avoid killing the characters unless doing so is the only way for Rhaine to accomplish her objective. Rhaine is a killer by trade, but she doesn't like helpless slaughter. If the characters would be no match for her and her beasts, she may approach them openly about surrendering the boy to her and walking away with their lives.

If the characters sufficiently impress upon her their good nature and desire to see Alayn safe from harm, she may even share what she knows with them and refrain from taking him. Use your best judgment as a DM here, doing whatever is best for the story of the scenario and the enjoyment of the players.

APL 2 (EL 6)

✦ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng2/Ftr2; hp 32; see Appendix I.

✦ **Grish and Krotha (Worgs):** hp 35, 34; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 8)

✦ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng3/Ftr2; hp 39; see Appendix I.

✦ **Uthis and Colari (Winter Wolves):** hp 54, 52; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 10)

✦ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng3/Ftr2/Lasher3**, hp 60; see Appendix I.

✦ **Nolar and Laenah (Wyverns):** hp 60, 59; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 12)

✦ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng3/Ftr2/Lasher6**, hp 81; see Appendix I.

✦ **Dragis and Drolira (Dragonnes):** hp 78, 76; see *Monster Manual*.

The end of this encounter depends largely on whether Rhaine has escaped, defeated the party, or surrendered. The best outcome for the characters is for her to surrender and tell them what she knows, but anything could happen. If she is killed, try to do so in a way that makes her body unrecoverable by the characters, like sinking into a fen or falling out of sight past one of the hills. Jalab will have her raised, or even *resurrected* if he must later, as she is too valuable to lose.

In return for her freedom, the things she can tell the characters are:

- Garril sent her to find and kill Alayn. (The boy does not believe this and shrieks at her that she is a liar).
- She trains creatures for hire and sometimes sells their services to people in the Yeomanry and elsewhere. She has done so for Garril before.
- She admits to using her creatures to attack a band of Yeomanry guards north of Jemison, but avoids directly saying that it was Caswyn's troop. She isn't afraid to admit it, but she doesn't want to hurt the boy by saying so.
- She wasn't going to hurt Alayn. She only wanted to get him away from Jemison. She'll admit to not entirely being sure what she was going to do with him yet, as she hadn't gotten that far in her planning.
- She thinks that if the characters are going to do something about all this, it needs to happen soon. "Eventually," she'll tell the party, "Moira will get involved. If Moi shows, we are all history. Let's move."
- A *geas* keeps her from revealing any more information about Moira or mentioning any details about her working relationship with Jalab. If the *geas* is somehow broken, she loses all memory of Moira or having ever worked for Kreshin.
- To provide proof of her words, she provides an arming cap (a soft cloth cap worn under a helmet)

and a ring. The cap was given to her by Garril to track Caswyn, and the ring was taken from Caswyn's finger to prove the deed done. Both of these, she gives to Alayn without saying a word or looking him in the eye. He begins crying as soon as he sees the ring, as the truth of it all comes rushing in on him at once.

Rhaine tries to bargain the information above for her freedom and the freedom of her beasts, assuming any have survived the battle. She understands if the beasts have to be put down by the characters, but she runs rather than be put to the sword herself. Being turned into the authorities is acceptable though; she's escaped from prisons before...

The characters likely have some decisions to make now. Knowing that Garril is a deceitful murderer who would order the death of his own brother and nephew, they likely wish to confront him with this information. If not, they may wish to get the authorities involved.

Of course, characters being what they are, any number of plans may arise. The next encounter assumes they decide to go back to the Brennan estate to confront Garril. If they do something else, suggestions for adjudicating their actions are included at the end of the encounter.

If the characters did not get Rhaine's information, they do not likely know that anything is amiss. In that instance, they are going back to the farm unaware of the danger to Alayn. Alayn, for his part, begs the characters as they near Jemison to reconsider. He asks them to take him "anywhere else, just get me out of the accursed Yeomanry." He offers the characters the gold from his pouch, assuming the characters gave that back, or anything else he owns for an escort to Longspear.

It isn't likely the characters do so, but if they do, the scenario ends with them taking the boy north to leave the Yeomanry. It isn't a good ending, and it is a horrible footnote in Yeoman history, but if it occurs, let the players make their own decisions.

Assuming the characters stay the course to Jemison, for whatever reason, continue with the next encounter below.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE HORROR OF HOMECOMING

Synopsis: Garril awaits the characters return, preparing to flee with more of the family's riches if things turn poorly. If the characters do not know what has occurred by now, they may very well deliver Alayn to him and collect their reward, never knowing what they have done.

Keep in mind that the characters may never get to this point. This encounter assumes that they are bringing Alayn back to his uncle at the Brennan estate, either to return him or to confront Garril about what he has done. Also, the time of day may need to be altered if the characters have camped.

The early rays of morning limb the Brennan house in red-golden light, making the fields around it seem on fire. Even Alayn can find nothing harsh to say about the breathtaking sight and he walks the rest of the way home in silence.

Garril waits inside next to the back door, and it is not difficult for the characters to let themselves in past the gate and approach the house. The only likely way he has been warned that the party suspects something is if Rhaine is visibly with them, which she would prefer not to do, or has had her *geas* broken (Jalab has informed him of the broken *geas* if this occurs).

Packed bags wait slung over the saddle of a horse in the stable in case Garril has to make a quick getaway. Jalab has offered him safe passage out of the Yeomanry, but the offer is contingent on his reaching Nighford in one piece. Garril is not at all afraid to run if things look bad.

Refer to the Brennan home map in the appendix if the characters actions require knowing exactly where they are in relation to Garril. Any odd behavior around him, like the sound of people moving through the house without announcing themselves, causes the already panicked Garril to dash for the stables immediately.

If Garril is Still Unsuspected

Assuming he has not been warned, he greets the characters warmly at the front door and ushers them inside. He seems overjoyed and relieved at the sight of Alayn, and this relief is genuine, if misunderstood, though Alayn's reaction entirely depends on what the characters have learned.

If the characters and Alayn are unsuspecting, the encounter likely plays out like this:

With a tearful gasp of relief, Alayn throws himself at Garril. His smile is all the sign you need that he is as happy as his nephew. He stands there silent for a moment and returns the emphatic embrace.

"Thank you," he says after managing to pry the young boy free. "I can not thank you enough. I promise to look after my nephew more closely, and there'll be a stern reproach in this for him, I can assure you."

The boy looks admonished, but he seems grateful to simply be home. Taking a seat on a nearby chair, he speaks without looking up from the floor. "I am sorry if I've been a trouble to you all. I should never have run away. I am..."

Garril cuts him off with a swift word. "Hush. These people have been bothered enough by our family business. I imagine they are eager to go collect their reward for your return and leave us in peace."

He extends a hand and smiles again. "My thanks again, good folk. Please convey my appreciation to master Kreshin for hiring you."

From here, Garril gently but firmly tries to dismiss the characters. If they do not suspect anything, this should be easy to do. The players likely assume the scenario is at an end, and it essentially is.

Let the characters return to town, collect their reward from Jalab, and run the conclusion appropriate for this ending.

If Garril Has Been Revealed

If the characters do have a reason to suspect Garril, things go much differently. Even if he has been asked not to, Alayn instantly reacts very poorly when he sees his uncle if he has been told about Garril's part in his father's death. Read or paraphrase this reaction:

Alayn's face becomes a red mask of rage. Balling up both fists, he throws himself at his uncle. "How could you?!? How could you?!?" he screams at the top of his lungs.

Garril looks stunned at first, then perplexed. Shaking off the ten year old boy's ineffective blows, he starts to stammer denials.

Garril's denials are utter lies, and it is not likely that the party falls for them. Still, he does try to bluff the characters (Bluff +7) to convince the party of his innocence. This does not work on Alayn who, while holding his father's ring in his tight fist, keeps pounding on his uncle in heartbroken rage.

If Garril thinks the characters are going to attack him or do not seem convince of his innocence, Garril does the only thing left open to him; hold Alayn hostage. Read the following if this can occur:

Garril's pleading tone takes a sudden bitter edge as he slides his arm over Alayn's throat. "Back up, heroes! I'll snap his fool neck if you make any moves against me."

As he speaks, he backs up toward the open patio doors. "I'm going to the stables. If anyone tries to stop me, they'll answer to my nephew's corpse!"

Run this part carefully. Garril has a readied action prepared each round to inflict unarmed damage on Alayn. If the characters act against him, he likely kills the poor boy before they can succeed. It takes him 2 full rounds to get to the stables and a third round to mount up while carrying Alayn. Stress to the players that any visible action on their part risks Alayn's life. Any character that acts openly to attack Garril after getting this warning is performing an evil action.

At the very least, note this evil action of the offending character's Adventure Cert. You as DM are also authorized to pull his character entirely, confiscating his sheet and certs to give to the Triad until a ruling can be made on the matter. A reprimand may be all that is needed, but you can escalate to removing the character if you deem it necessary.

If Garril gets to his horse, he gallops off as fast as possible. The characters can give chase, but they have to be careful as the villain still has Alayn and gets a Spot check on any visible character.

Possible Encounter Ending

If Garril eludes the characters and is going to get away, use this ending if the characters have honestly tried to

save Alayn and been unable to succeed due to bad luck or bad circumstances.

Garril lashes the flanks of his horse furiously with his free hand, riding with his legs. Alayn, his eyes wide with terror, struggles against his uncle's grasp but to no avail. With a smirk back at you, he nears a bend in the trail and begins to disappear around it.

Three things happen, seemingly at once. Garril jerks upright, a black-fletched arrow buried into the back of his head. At the same time, Alayn lifts up out of his twitching arms and is set down gently on the side of the road. As his feet touch the earth, Garril's horse comes to a sudden stop, pitching the treacherous uncle's lifeless body and two heavy saddlebags past the trail bend and out of sight.

Alayn is frozen in horror, and the characters have to come get him. When they reach the bend in the trail, they'll find no sign of Garril except a dark stain on the path and the back half of a broken arrow. The body and saddlebags are gone.

This intervention is on Jalab's behalf, as Garril has proven himself too inconstant and treacherous an ally. If the characters search the nearby trees, a successful Search check (DC 25) allows them to discover where at least three figures were standing in the foliage cover nearby, but they seemingly vanished as no tracks lead away. A *detect magic* spell used at the site of the footprints catches lingering traces of magic too faint to identify clearly. The traces similarly fade out moments after being detected.

If The Authorities Get Involved

Bringing the authorities into things is not easy. What few militia and law enforcement figures remain in town do not believe the word of strangers over a trusted citizen without some proof. Rhaine has no status in town, so her word is not enough.

Alayn, if he can be convinced to talk with the authorities with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 20, if the character making the check has been kind to him, DC 25 if not) can convince them to at least accompany him back home to "ask Garril some questions".

The ring and arming cap get the same result if a character thinks to get Alayn to show them or takes them from the boy themselves.

If the authorities (two 1st-level warriors and a 1st-level ranger sheriff) accompany the characters and Alayn back to the Brennan farm, Garril is warned of their coming and reacts as noted in If Garril Has Been Revealed, including Alayn's reactions.

Other Occurrences

Characters being what they are, not every contingency can be planned for. If the characters do something off the wall, try to adjudicate it as best you can. Garril is no fighter and flees if at all possible. Keep Jalab's mysterious ambush in mind if he escapes the characters despite their best efforts.

If the heroes confront and kill Garril without any legal authority to do so, they may face serious

consequences. The Yeomanry is not a lawless society and if the characters cannot prove Garril's crimes and do not have Alayn willing to testify on their behalf, they have essentially committed murder themselves. Make sure that any character with Knowledge (law), access to the Law sphere, or of a Lawful alignment understands this before they take any action that would brand them as outlaws.

Do not be afraid to have Garril kill Alayn if the characters risk his life needlessly. At the same time, keep him alive if the characters try to protect him. As always, the ultimate end of this scenario should be determined by the choices the characters make.

Important Note

Alayn gratefully thanks the characters for bringing him home, hugging any character that he warmed up to. If the characters have helped him discover what really happened to his father, he is even more grateful. Cestus insists on staying with his young master, but with the loss of his mate Gauntlet, his puppies have to be given away to other breeders for safe care. A grateful Alayn offers to let his rescuers foster these fellhound pups and adopt them when they come of age.

Once way or another, Alayn has been brought home. His uncle may be alive and free, arrested for murder, or dead. All that remains is for the characters to collect their reward and conclude the scenario.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION: A TANGLED WEB

The most likely ending to this scenario is for the characters to come collecting their reward from Jalab Kreshin. That is dealt with in the text below. Any other ending has to be run off-the-cuff, but doing so should not be too difficult. Just keep in mind the nature of the characters involved and adjudicate accordingly.

You are shown in to Jalab's study by his manservant and asked to take a seat. Squire Kreshin gestures to several familiar high-backed chairs and smiles coolly.

"Please, report what occurred to you. I know of Alayn's return, and I am pleased, but I would like to hear the circumstances of his disappearance."

He listens carefully, betraying no personal knowledge of the events they speak of, which is quite true; he has had his own memory erased of any involvement he had with Garril. Once the characters are done with their report:

"You have done well and more than earned your pay. My staff is arranging your rewards as we speak. You can pick them up on your way out. I simply wanted to thank you personally for your excellent service."

After a short pause, he continues as he eyes you all critically. "You know... there is another opportunity for you here if you folk would be inclined to help us again."

"With the greater part of our militia up north in Trollsfoot, the town is virtually defenseless. We could use competent people like you in the interim. I think you'd agree that an extra 150 gold each for what will likely be a month's leisure is more than fair."

Holding up a full coin purse, he raises an eyebrow and finishes with, "What say you, heroes of the hour?"

If the characters feel like they are making deals with a devil, they are more right than they can know. Still, the town is in need and Kreshin is asking them to help protect it. It would seem his interests and theirs are in accord, for the moment.

Each character receives from 100-250 gold for the rescue, depending on what was negotiated. If they agree to spend the next month in Jemison, they must spend an extra 4 time units to receive an additional 150 gold.

These 4 time units can count toward the TUs spent for Yeomanry Militia service if the character wishes. Jalab still pays these characters, as he doesn't care whom the characters serve as long as "his" town is kept safe. Upkeep does not need to be paid for these units, as Kreshin puts the characters up at the Ramble free of charge and handles their normal expenses.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 3: That Sinking Feeling

Defeat the Blighted Ones.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP

Encounter 4: When It Rhaines, It Pours

Defeat Rhaine and her creatures.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	240 XP
APL 6	300 XP
APL 8	360 XP

Encounter 5: The Horror of Homecoming

Save Alayn and thwart Garril Brennan.

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 2	300 XP
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APL 4	570 XP
APL 6	750 XP
APL 8	930 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minute per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (that is., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

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

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

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

TREASURE KEY:

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

Encounter 3: That Sinking Feeling

Defeat the Blighted Ones and strip them of their gear.

APL 2: L: 16 gp; C: 17 gp; M: 0

APL 4: L: 16 gp; C: 17 gp; M: *wand of contagion* (3 charges) (Value 116 gp per character).

APL 6: L: 46 gp; C: 17 gp; M: *wand of contagion* (8 charges) (Value 270 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 46 gp; C: 17 gp; M: *wand of contagion* (14 charges) (Value 473 gp per character).

Encounter 4: When It Rhaines, It Pours

Defeat Rhaine and her creatures and strip her of her gear.

APL 2: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

APL 4: L: 71 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

APL 6: L: 101 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

APL 8: L: 70 gp; C: 0 gp; M: +1 *short sword* (Value 345 gp per character).

Conclusion

Rescue Alayn and recover reward.

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: 139 gp

APL 4: 320 gp

APL 6: 534 gp

APL 8: 1046 gp

Note: In addition, there is the possibility of an additional 150 gp per character should they agree to spend 4 TUs for a month's work guarding the town of Jemison.

Instructions for the Adventure Cert: An entry on the adventure cert needs to be:

Fellhound Fosterage (Occurance: Adventure; Cost: 100 gold): This character has fostered a fellhound pup in the safe keeping of a militia animal trainer in Jemison. For eight months of real time after the date of this certificate, the character must pay 10 gold pieces to this trainer on behalf of the puppy.

If the fee is paid each month (or as larger sums in advance, as the character chooses), the character receives a fully-grown Fellhound nine months after the date on this certificate. The character may name his or her new Fellhound as desired.

The Fellhound's upkeep needs cost 5 gp above and beyond the character's normal lifestyle cost. The militia does not pay this extra fee for service time spent, though provisions for such an arrangement may be allowable at a future date.

Fellhound (Riding Dog): CR 1; Medium-size animal; HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +4 melee (1d6+4, bite); SA Trip; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +1*

*+4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a riding dog is up to 100 pounds; a medium load, 101-200 pounds; a heavy

load, 201-300 pounds. A riding dog can drag 1,500 pounds.

APPENDIX I: NPCs

THE CULT OF THE BLIGHTED ONES

These devotees of the Blightstone are all mad, driven that way by the corrupting dreams sent out by that fell artifact. Insane, utterly obsessed with rot and disease, and willing to kill or die for their cause, the Fetid Eye cabal is a typical example of these cults. The dangerous homicidal deranged druid Bloodmange, whose perverted natural powers are seen by his followers as proof of the Blightstone's divinity, leads this particular cult.

The majority of the Fetid Eye cabalists are warriors, trained in the militia to use their shortspears before their derangement by the Blightstone. These cultists fight to the death, hoping to spread the putrescence of the Blightstone with every drop of blood they shed.

A select few in the Fetid Eye come from the ranks of the Yeomanry's crossbow troops. Stealing their heavy crossbows and the best ammunition they could lay their scabrous hands on, these sharpshooters provide much needed ranged protection from the cult's enemies. The Fetid Eye plagueshooters have a nasty habit of picking at their oozing sores with the heads of their crossbow bolts. This can cause even a scratch to fester and turn deadly.

Lastly, Bloodmange himself is a dangerous man with druidical powers to enhance the lethal spread of his cabal. Like a cancerous growth, the Fetid Ones have grown in power alongside his advancement in his insane beliefs. At APL 6 and 8, Bloodmange actually possesses bizarre powers granted by his belief in the Blightstone and its fever-borne messages of decay.

APL 2 (EL 5)

➤ **Blighted One Cultist:** Male human War1; CR 1/2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, shortspear); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will -1. Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Jump +5, Listen +1, Spot +1; Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (shortspear).

Possessions: leather armor, shortspear, pouch with 10 gp.

➤ **Blighted One Plagueshooter:** Male human Ftr1; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +1 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d10/19-20, heavy crossbow); SA Diseased bolts*; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Jump +2, Listen +2, Spot +2; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow).

Possessions: leather armor, dagger, heavy crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts, pouch with 15 gp.

*Red Ache: Infection Injury; Fortitude Save (DC 15) avoids; Incubation 1d3 days; Damage 1d6 Str.

➤ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd4; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 4d8+8; hp 31; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +5 ranged (1d4+1, sling); SA None; SQ Nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +6, Diplomacy +6, Hide +5, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Spot +2, Wilderness Lore +9; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: quarterstaff, hide armor, emerald necklace "The Fetid Eye", pouch with 60 gold.

Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, guidance (2), purify food and drink (2); 1st – entangle (2), shillelagh, summon nature's ally I; 2nd – barkskin, charm person or animal, summon swarm.

*"The Fetid Eye" (The Blightstone): While wearing this stone, Bloodmange (and only Bloodmange) possesses an effective SR 18 only against Divination and Enchantment spells.

➤ **Zombie Dog:** CR 1/2; Medium-size undead; HD 2d12+3; hp 16; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 9, flat-footed 11); Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, bite); SQ Undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

APL 4 (EL 7)

➤ **Blighted One Cultist:** Male human War2; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 2d8+4; hp 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/x3, shortspear); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will -1. Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3, Jump +6, Listen +1, Spot +1; Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (shortspear).

Possessions: leather armor, shortspear, pouch with 10 gp.

➤ **Blighted One Plagueshooter:** Male human Ftr2; CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 2d10+4; hp 20; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d10/19-20, heavy crossbow); SA Diseased bolts*; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Jump +5, Listen +2, Spot +2; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload**, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow).

Possessions: leather armor, dagger, heavy crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts, pouch with 15 gp.

*Red Ache: Infection Injury; Fortitude Save (DC 15) avoids; Incubation 1d3 days; Damage 1d6 Str.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd6; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 6d8+12; hp 45; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +6 ranged (1d4+1, sling); SA None; SQ Nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape (2/day); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +6, Diplomacy +7, Hide +6, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Spot +2, Wilderness Lore +9; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

Possessions: masterwork quarterstaff, hide armor, emerald necklace "The Fetid Eye"*, wand of contagion (3 charges), pouch with 60 gold.

Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, guidance (2), purify food and drink (2); 1st – entangle (2), shillelagh, summon nature's ally I; 2nd – barkskin, charm person or animal (2), summon swarm; 3rd – cure moderate wounds, poison, summon nature's ally III.

*"The Fetid Eye" (The Blightstone): While wearing this stone, Bloodmange (and only Bloodmange) possesses an effective SR 18 only against Divination and Enchantment spells.

☛ **Zombie Dog:** CR 1; Medium-size undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 30; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 9, flat-footed 11); Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); SQ Undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Blighted One Cultist:** Male human War3; CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +5 melee (1d8+1/x3, shortspear); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2. Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3, Jump +7, Listen +1, Spot +2; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (shortspear).

Possessions: leather armor, shortspear, pouch with 10 gp.

☛ **Blighted One Plagueshooters (2):** Male human Ftr3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 28 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +3 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +8 ranged (1d10/19-20, heavy crossbow); SA Diseased bolts*; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Jump +6, Listen +2, Spot +3; Great Fortitude, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload**, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow).

Possessions: leather armor, dagger, heavy crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts, pouch with 15 gp.

*Red Ache: Infection Injury; Fortitude Save (DC 15) avoids; Incubation 1d3 days; Damage 1d6 Str.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd6/Blighter2**, CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 8d8+16; hp 59; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +8 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, sling); SA None; SQ Deforestation, burning hands, sustenance; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +14; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +6, Diplomacy +10, Hide +6, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +11; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

Possessions: masterwork quarterstaff, hide armor, emerald necklace "The Fetid Eye"*, wand of contagion (8 charges), pouch with 60 gold.

Spells Prepared (2/3/2/1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, detect poison; 1st – burning hands, inflict light wounds, ray of enfeeblement; 2nd – chill touch, death knell; 3rd – vampiric touch.

*"The Fetid Eye" (The Blightstone): While wearing this stone, Bloodmange (and only Bloodmange) possesses an effective SR 18 only against Divination and Enchantment spells.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

☛ **Zombie Dogs (2):** CR 1; Medium-size undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 30 each; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 9, flat-footed 11); Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); SQ Undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Blighted One Cultists (2):** Male human War3; CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6; hp 24 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +5 melee (1d8+1/x3, shortspear); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2. Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3, Jump +7, Listen +1, Spot +2; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (shortspear).

Possessions: leather armor, shortspear, pouch with 10 gp.

☛ **Blighted One Plagueshooters (3):** Male human Ftr4; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 4d10+8; hp 36 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger) or +9 ranged (1d10+2/19-20, heavy crossbow); SA Diseased

bolts*; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Jump +6, Listen +2, Spot +3; Great Fortitude, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload**, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow), Weapon Specialization (heavy crossbow).

Possessions: leather armor, dagger, heavy crossbow, 10 masterwork bolts, pouch with 15 gp.

*Red Ache: Infection Injury; Fortitude Save (DC 15) avoids; Incubation 1d3 days; Damage 1d6 Str.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

☛ **Bloodmange:** Male human Drd6/Blighter4**; CR 10; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 10d8+23; hp 76; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +9/+4 ranged (1d4+1, sling); SA None; SQ Deforestation, burning hands, sustenance, undead wild shape (2/day), speak with dead animal; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +15; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +6, Diplomacy +12, Hide +6, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +8, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +11; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

Possessions: masterwork quarterstaff, hide armor, emerald necklace "The Fetid Eye"*, wand of contagion (14 charges), pouch with 60 gold.

Spells Prepared (3/4/3/2/1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0 – detect magic, detect poison, inflict minor wounds; 1st – doom, burning hands, inflict light wounds, ray of enfeeblement; 2nd – chill touch, death knell (2); 3rd – vampiric touch (2); 4th – flame strike.

*"The Fetid Eye" (The Blightstone): While wearing this stone, Bloodmange (and only Bloodmange) possesses an effective SR 18 only against Divination and Enchantment spells.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

☛ **Zombie Dogs (2):** CR 1; Medium-size undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 30 each; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 9, flat-footed 11); Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); SQ Undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

RHAINE O' THE RAZOR

This black-haired ranger lives off the land as an outlaw, selling her services as an animal and monster trainer to any who meet her price. She has been in the employ of Jaleb Kreshin for two years now, sometimes being subcontracted out to people for individual missions or for set periods of time. Her current employer, Garril Brennan, has her employed indefinitely with a contract that binds her until his position as head of the Brennan estate is finalized. While she detests Brennan as a coward, she fulfills her duties as professionally as she can. If the going gets tough, she is not at all above

leaping astride one of her trained creatures and fleeing combat.

Just as dangerous as Rhaine is her mastery over her well-trained magical beasts. She cares for them greatly, more than she does people for certain. She tries not to get them killed in combat, and takes chances with her own safety to get them out of combat if she can. Even so, she does value her own life over that of anyone or anything else. If it comes down to a beast or her, she'll save herself every time.

At all APLs, Rhaine has imbibed a *potion of invisibility*, and at APLs 4 and higher, she has also quaffed a *potion of shield*.

APL 2 (EL 6)

☛ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng2/Ftr2; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 4d10+4; hp 32; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +7 melee (1d6/19-20, whip dagger) and +3 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword); SA Favored enemy (magical beast), whip sneak attack, close combat, wound, whip lash; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +5, Craft (leatherworking) +2, Handle Animal +5, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +2, Profession (hunter) +2, Ride +8, Swim +3, Use Rope +6, Wilderness Lore +5; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (whip).

Possessions: studded leather armor, short sword, whip dagger**.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

APL 4 (EL 8)

☛ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng3/Ftr2; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d10+5; hp 39; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +9 melee (1d6+1/19-20, whip dagger) and +4 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword); SA Favored enemy (magical beast); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +6, Craft (leatherworking) +2, Handle Animal +6, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Profession (hunter) +3, Ride +9, Swim +3, Use Rope +6, Wilderness Lore +6; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (whip).

Possessions: masterwork studded leather armor, short sword, masterwork mighty whip dagger (+1)**.

** See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

APL 6 (EL 10)

☛ **Rhaine o' the Razor:** Female human Rng3/Ftr2/Lasher3**; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 8d10+8; hp 60; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, whip dagger) and +8 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword); SA Favored enemy (magical beast), whip sneak attack, close combat, wound, whip lash, improved trip,

third hand, crack of fate; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +7, Craft (leatherworking) +5; Handle Animal +7, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Profession (hunter) +3, Ride +9, Swim +3, Use Rope +8, Wilderness Lore +6; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Off-Hand Parry**, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (whip).

Possessions: masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork short sword, masterwork mighty whip dagger (+1)**.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

APL 8 (EL 12)

☛Rhaine o' the Razor: Female human Rng3/Ftr2/Lasher6**; CR 11; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 11d10+11; hp 81; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d6+1/17-20, whip dagger) and +11 melee (1d6+2/19-20, short sword); SA Favored enemy (magical beast), whip sneak attack, close combat, wound, whip lash, improved trip, third hand, crack of fate, lashing whip, improved disarm; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +7, Craft (leatherworking) +5; Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +9, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Profession (hunter) +3, Ride +9, Swim +3, Use Rope +8, Wilderness Lore +6; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Improved Critical (whip), Off-Hand Parry**, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (whip).

Possessions: masterwork studded leather armor, +1 short sword, masterwork mighty whip dagger (+1)**.

**See Appendix 2: New Rules for more information.

APPENDIX II: NEW RULES

OFF-HAND PARRY [GENERAL] AS PRESENTED IN *SWORD AND FIST*

You use your off-hand weapon to defend against melee attacks.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3, Ambidexterity, Dex 13+, Two-Weapon Fighting, proficiency with weapon.

Benefit: When fighting with two weapons and using the full attack action, on your action decide to attack normally or to sacrifice all your off-hand attacks for the round in exchange for a +2 dodge bonus to your AC. If you are also using a buckler, its AC bonus stacks. You can use only bladed or hafted weapons of a size category smaller than you with this feat.

RAPID RELOAD [GENERAL] AS PRESENTED IN *SWORD AND FIST*

You reload a crossbow more quickly than normal.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +2, proficiency with the crossbow used.

Benefit: You can reload a hand crossbow or light crossbow as a free action that provokes an attack of opportunity. You may reload a heavy crossbow as a move-equivalent action that provokes an attack of opportunity. You can use this feat once per round.

Normal: Loading a hand or light crossbow is a move-equivalent action, and loading a heavy crossbow is a full-round action.

WHIP DAGGER [EXOTIC RANGED WEAPON] AS PRESENTED IN *SWORD AND FIST*

A character who takes an Exotic Weapon Proficiency in the whip is also proficient in the whip dagger. (You do not need to take a separate feat to use the whip dagger if you already have a feat for the whip.) The whip dagger is heavier than a standard whip and deals normal damage due to the barbs that run along its length and the dagger-like tip (which inflicts deep wounds when accelerated to strike by a proficient user). Unlike standard whips, armor bonuses and natural armor bonuses do not hinder its ability to deal damage. Although you keep it in hand, treat it as a ranged weapon with a maximum range of 15 feet and no range penalties.

Because the whip dagger can wrap around an enemy's leg or other limb, you can make trip attacks with it. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the whip dagger to avoid being tripped.

You get a +2 bonus on your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to keep from being disarmed yourself if you fail to disarm your opponent).

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Whip dagger	25 gp	1d6	19-20/x2	15 ft.	3 lb.	Slashing
Whip dagger, mighty						
+1 Str bonus	225 gp	1d6	19-20/x2	15 ft.	4 lb.	Slashing
+2 Str bonus	325 gp	1d6	19-20/x2	15 ft.	5 lb.	Slashing
+3 Str bonus	425 gp	1d6	19-20/x2	15 ft.	6 lb.	Slashing
+4 Str bonus	525 gp	1d6	19-20/x2	15 ft.	7 lb.	Slashing

BLIGHTER AS PRESENTED IN *MASTERS OF THE WILD*

When a druid turns away from the land, the land turns away from her. Some ex-druids make peace with this change; others seek to restore the bond. A few, however, become forces of destruction. These few, called blighters, leave their mark wherever they tread.

A blighter gains her spellcasting ability by stripping the earth of life. A swath of deforested land always marks her path through the wilderness.

The vast majority of blighters are nomadic loners constantly in search of green lands to destroy. Some are grim; others laugh at the destruction they wreak. Almost all, however, are friendless and mad. What puts them over the edge is the knowledge that nature gets the last laugh: To gain their spells, they must seek out the richest forests of the land, even if it's only to destroy them. Thus, even though they've turned away from nature, they must constantly return to it.

Only human ex-druids seem attracted in any number to the blighter's path. Legends say that a few elven druids have also turned to destruction over the millennia – a terrifying prospect given how much land they could destroy in their long lifetimes.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify as a blighter, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-good.

Special: The character must be an ex-druid previously capable of casting 3rd-level druid spells.

Class Skills

The blighter's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Profession (herbalist) (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Point at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day						
						0	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
1 st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Deforestation	2	1	0	-	-	-	-
2 nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Burning hands, sustenance	2	2	1	0	-	-	-
3 rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Undead wild shape 1/day	3	2	2	0	-	-	-
4 th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Speak with dead animal, undead wild shape 2/day	3	3	2	1	0	-	-
5 th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Contagious touch 1/day, undead wild shape (Large)	4	3	3	2	0	-	-
6 th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Animate dead animal, undead wild shape 3/day	4	4	3	3	1	0	-
7 th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Contagious touch 2/day, undead wild shape (incorporeal)	5	4	4	3	2	0	-
8 th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Unbond, undead wild shape 4/day	5	5	4	4	2	1	0
9 th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Contagious touch 3/day, undead wild shape (Huge)	6	5	5	4	3	2	1
10 th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Plague, undead wild shape 5/day	6	6	5	5	3	2	2

Class Features

Spells per Day: The blighter casts divine spells as a druid of a level equal to the total of her druid and blighter levels. At each blighter level, she gains spells per day according to Table 5–3. She does not, however, gain any other benefit that a druid of that level would have gained. She must choose her spells from the blighter spell list, below.

The blighter gains access to her daily spells through *deforestation* (see below). If she goes more than 24 hours without deforesting a wooded area, she cannot cast spells until she does so.

The default divine focus for any spell cast by a blighter is a desiccated sprig of holly or mistletoe. Any material component for a blighter's spell must have been dead for at least a day before use.

Deforestation (Sp): Beginning at 1st level, the blighter can kill all nonsentient plant life within a radius of 50 feet per blighter level as a full-round action once per day. If a potentially affected plant is under the control of another (such as a druid's *liveoak* or a dryad's home tree), the controller can make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + blighter level + blighter's Wisdom bonus) to keep it alive. Affected plants immediately cease photosynthesis, root tapping, and all other methods of sustenance. Like picked flowers, they appear vibrant for several hours, but within a day, they turn brown and wither. Except for plants saved by a controller, nothing can grow in a deforested area until it has a *hallow* spell cast upon it and it is reseeded.

Deforestation enables the blighter to cast her daily allotment of spells. This ability works in any terrain, but deforesting a sandy desert, ice floe, or other environment with only sparse vegetation does not empower the character to cast spells.

Burning Hands (Su): This ability, gained at 2nd level, functions like the *burning hands* spell, except that the blighter can use it as often as desired, turning it on or off as a move-equivalent action, and it does 1d4 points of fire damage per round.

Sustenance (Ex): At 2nd level, the blighter no longer needs food or water to survive.

Undead Wild Shape (Sp): At 3rd level, the blighter regains a version of the *wild shape* ability. *Undead wild shape* functions like *wild shape*, except that the forms available are those of undead creatures (specifically skeletons) formerly of the animal type. A skeletal animal has the statistics of a skeleton of the appropriate animal's size category (see the skeleton entry in the *Monster Manual*).

The blighter gains one extra use per day of this ability for every two additional blighter levels she acquires. In addition, she gains the ability to take the shape of a Large skeletal animal at 5th level, an incorporeal skeletal animal (see Incorporeality in Chapter 3 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*) at 7th level, and a Huge skeletal animal at 9th level.

Speak with Dead Animal (Sp): At 4th level, the blighter can converse with dead animals. This ability functions like a *Speak with Dead* spell cast by a cleric of a level equal to the total of the character's druid and blighter levels, except that it affects only corpses of animal creatures. It is usable once per day.

Contagious Touch (Su): At 5th level, the blighter can produce an effect like that of a *contagious touch* spell once per day. She gains 1 extra use per day of this ability for every two additional blighter levels she acquires.

Animate Dead Animal (Sp): This ability, gained at 6th level, functions like an *animate dead* spell, except that it affects only corpses of animal creatures and requires no material component. It is usable once per day.

Unbond (Sp): At 8th level, the blighter can temporarily separate a bonded animal or magical beast (such as an animal companion, familiar, or mount) from its master once per day. The target creature must be within 40 feet of both its master and the blighter. If the master fails a Will save (DC 10 + blighter level + blighter's Wisdom modifier), the bond terminates as if the servitor had died, though this does not cause experience loss in the case of a familiar. Normally hostile creatures attack their masters but are otherwise unaffected. The bond returns after 5 rounds per blighter level, restoring all benefits. Alternatively, the master can regain the servitor through the normal methods of acquisition.

Plague (Su): At 10th level, the blighter can spread disease over a large area. This ability functions like the contagious touch ability, except that no attack roll is required and it affects all targets the blighter designates within a 20-foot radius. Plague is usable once per day and costs one daily use of the contagious touch ability.

LASHER AS PRESENTED IN *SWORD AND FIST*

The lasher prestige class uses the whip as an extension of herself. A whip in the hands of a lasher is like unto a live thing, obeying the character's every command. Lasher training goes far beyond simple exotic weapon proficiency, and not all who take up the discipline survive to its end. Lashers prefer to use a whip or a whip dagger (exotic weapons, both). Their ability with the whip makes them deadly warriors to be reckoned with.

Fighters, ex-paladins, rangers, ex-druids and barbarians are drawn to the art of the lash, which transforms an interesting tool into a deadly weapon. Rogues, monks, and bardic lashers find the understated profile of a whip a plus in many of their activities. Sorcerers, wizards, and clerics are least likely to be drawn to the art of the lash.

As NPCs, lashers are individuals who love to display the crack and snap of their whip skills. Though they consider the use of the whip an art form, they recognize it is a martial art used primarily for combat.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

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

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Rope Use: 2 ranks.

Craft (leatherworking): 2 ranks.

Weapon Focus: Whip.

Exotic Weapon Proficiency: Whip.

Special: The lasher must own a whip or whip dagger (see Chapter 5). Usually, a lasher owns both types of whip (and, if wealthy enough, mighty versions of both types).

Class Skills

The lasher's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Spot (Wis), and Use Rope (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A lasher's weapon training focuses on the whip. Lashers are proficient with no armor and no shields.

Whip Sneak Attack: If a lasher catches an opponent unable to defend himself effectively from her attack anywhere within range (up to 15 ft.), she can use a whip or whip dagger to strike a vital spot for extra damage (a lasher does not gain a sneak attack with other weapons). Any time the lasher's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), the lasher's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by a +1d6 points every fourth level (+2d6 at 5th level, and +3d6 at 9th level). Should the lasher score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied. This ability stacks with any other sneak attack ability.

With a regular whip (but not a whip dagger), the lasher can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage (see Wound below).

A lasher can only sneak attack living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Additionally, any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. Also, the lasher must also be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The lasher cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

If a lasher gets a general sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses to damage stack.

Close Combat: At 1st level, the lasher can attack an opponent in a threatened square with a whip or whip dagger and not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Wound: At 1st level, a lasher can use a normal whip to deal regular damage to an opponent, instead of subdual damage, at her option. This allows the lasher to inflict damage on creatures with an armor bonus of +1 or better or a natural armor bonus of +3 or better. If using the whip to deal subdual damage, it deals no damage to creatures with a +1 or more armor bonus or +3 or more natural armor (as usual). Lashers using a whip dagger always deal regular damage to opponents.

Whip Lash: The lasher can make attacks of opportunity with his whip or whip dagger against foes within 5 feet as if it were a melee weapon.

Improved Trip: At 2nd level, the lasher gains the Improved Trip feat, if using a whip or whip dagger to perform the trip. She need not have taken the Expertise feat, normally a prerequisite, before this.

Third Hand: At 2nd level, a lasher's precision with the whip or whip dagger allows her to use it almost like a third hand—a third hand at the end of a flexible 15-foot-long arm—as a standard action. Depositing a lashed object into your hand is a move-equivalent action. Note: A lasher generally uses a normal whip to perform abilities granted by third hand, because a whip dagger deals its damage to the object or individual grasped, while a regular whip does not. Sometimes, this is not a problem, especially if the item grasped has hardness, but other times inflicting damage by using third hand is a bad idea. Thus, most lashers carry two whips. A lasher successfully performs a task if her attack roll equals or exceeds the DC for a given task:

- Punch a button, snuff a candle flame, flick a coin lying along the ground, etc. as a move-equivalent action. Range 15 feet, DC 15.
- Retrieve an unattended object of up to 20 pounds, and deposit into your off hand as a move-equivalent action. Range 15 feet, DC 20.
- Firmly wrap the end of your whip around a pole, spike, or other likely projection up to 15 feet away as a move-equivalent action. The DC is 22. If used to wrap around a projection at the top of a wall, reduce the DC to climb the wall by 5. If the point of attachment is optimal on a ceiling fixture, you could swing over a chasm of up to 25 feet wide. You can also wrap items heavier than 20 pounds, but you cannot automatically flick them into your off hand (but you could drag them). You can unwrap the end of your whip from the entangled object as a free action.
- When the victim of a precipitous fall, you can give up your Reflex save in an attempt to use your whip to snag a likely projection, pillar, rafter, etc., within 15 feet of the edge of the pit, cliff, bridge, etc. Generally, an unattached item (such as a statue, table, etc.) must weight twice as much as you for you to arrest your fall, otherwise you merely pull it after you). You may attempt to snag a friend or foe standing near the edge of the precipice as you fall. You make a ranged touch attack against another creature's AC (the friend does not apply his Dexterity bonus while an unwilling friend or a foe applies their Dexterity modifier to AC). If you hit, you wrap your whip around the target, who must make a successful Strength check against DC 20 to arrest both you and himself. An unsuccessful Strength check sends both you and your target into the precipice. You can unwrap the end of your whip from the entangled object as a free action.

Crack of Fate: At 3rd level, a lasher can take one extra attack per round with a whip or whip dagger. The attack is at the lasher's highest base attack bonus, but each attack (the extra one and normal ones) suffers a –2 penalty. The lasher must use the full attack action to use crack of fate.

Lashing Whip: At fourth level, the lasher adds a +2 damage bonus to her whip and/or whip dagger. If using a whip, she adds +2 subdual damage or +2 regular damage, at her option. If the lasher has already gained weapon specialization from another class (fighter, for example), the damage bonus stacks.

Improved Disarm: At 6th level, the lasher gains the Improved Disarm feat, if using a whip or whip dagger to perform the disarm action. She need not have taken the Expertise feat, normally a prerequisite, before this. If the lasher successfully disarms a foe, she can attempt use her third hand ability to deposit the weapon of up to 20 pounds in her off hand if she makes the appropriate check, as a move-equivalent action. Treat the lasher's whip as a Medium-size weapon for purposes of disarming an opponent.

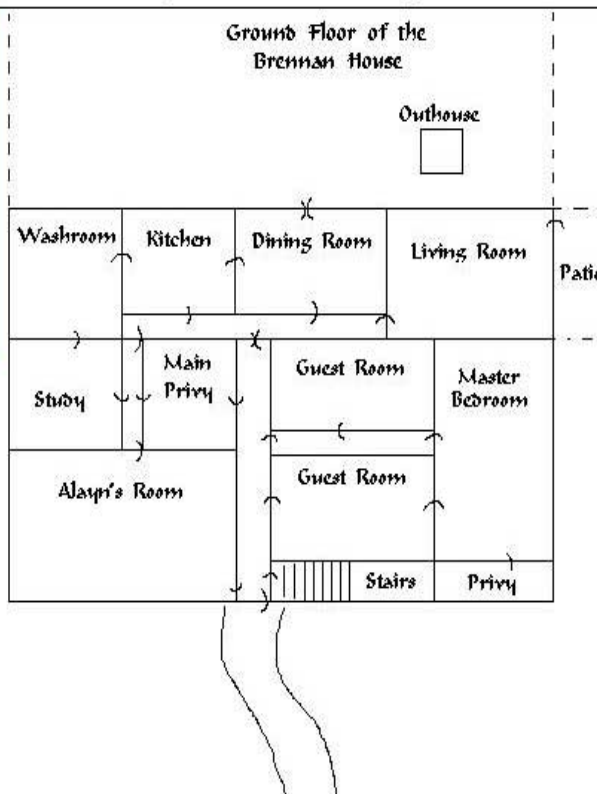
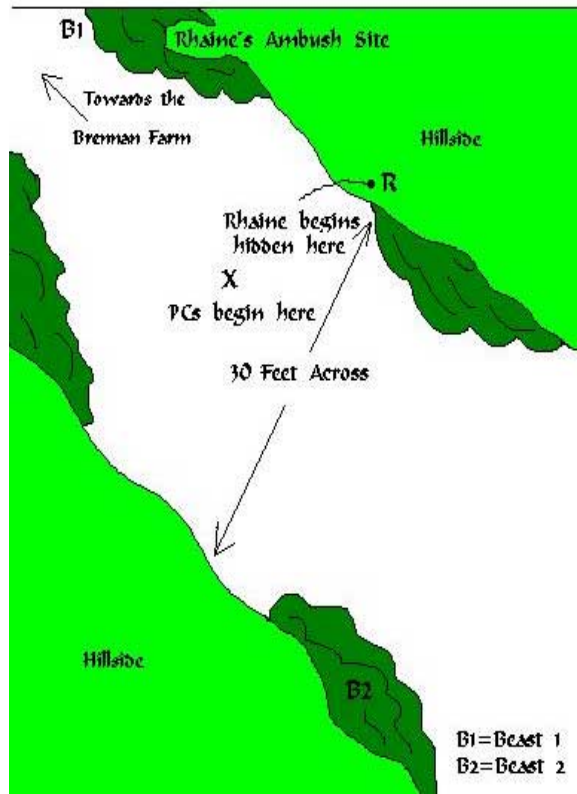
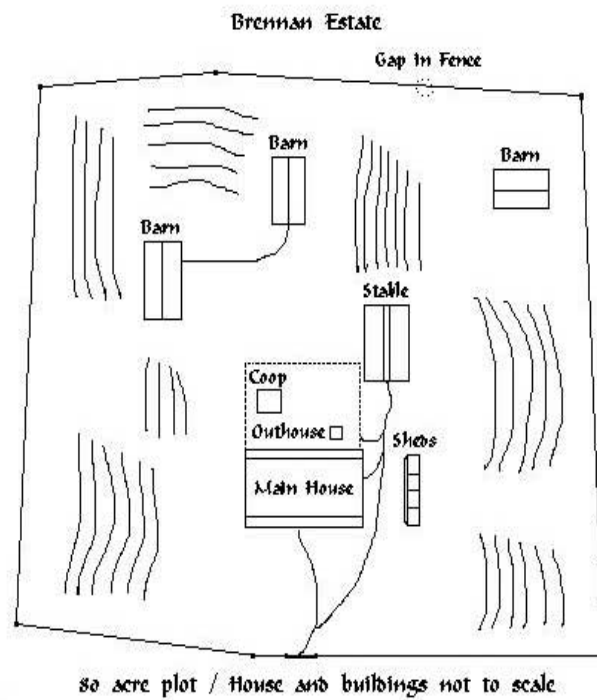
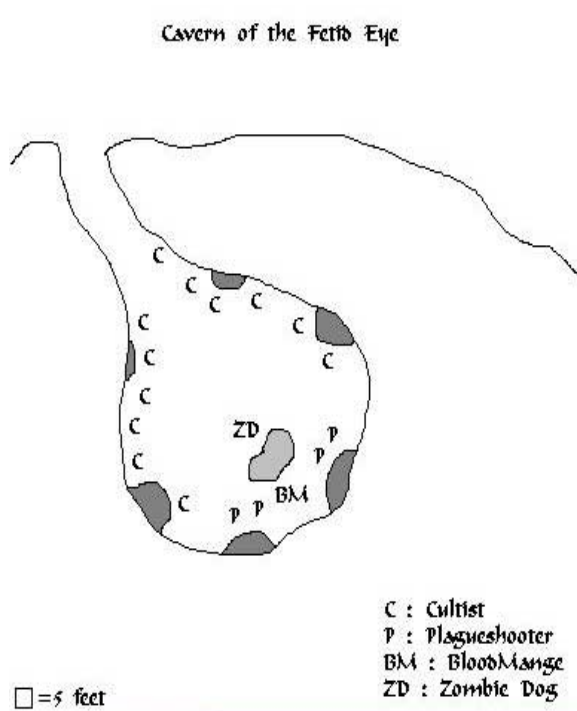
Stunning Snap: A lasher can use a whip or whip dagger to stun a creature instead of inflicting subdual or normal damage. The lasher can use this ability once per round, but no more than once per level per day. The lasher must declare she is using a stun attack before making an attack roll. (A missed attack roll ruins the attempt.) A foe struck by a whip or whip dagger must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + the lasher's level + Strength modifier), in addition to receiving normal damage (subdual or standard). If the saving throw fails, the opponent is stunned for one round. A stunned character cannot act and loses any Dexterity bonus to AC, while attackers get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against a stunned opponent. Constructs, oozes, plants, undead, incorporeal creatures, and creatures immune to critical hits cannot be stunned by the lasher's stunning attack.

Crack of Doom: At 8th level, a lasher can take two extra attacks per round with a whip or whip dagger. This ability supersedes crack of fate (the abilities do not stack). The attack is at the lasher's highest base attack bonus, but each attack (the extra one and normal ones) suffers a –4 penalty. The lasher must use the full attack action to use crack of doom.

Death Spiral: At 10th level, the lasher gains transcendental understanding of her whip or whip dagger. Once per day, she can spin the whip over her head with supernatural speed. All foes within a 15-foot radius of the lasher must make a

Reflex save against a DC equal to the lasher's attack roll. Opponents who fail are stunned for $1d4+1$ rounds. Stunned opponents must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 18) or become helpless for $1d4-1$ rounds (minimum 1 round). Allies (as selected by the lasher) in range are spared the effects of the death spiral. The death spiral is a supernatural ability.

DM AID: MAPS



PLAYER HANDOUT 1

Dearest uncle,

I am sorry to do this, but I cannot spend another day here. Everything about this house reminds me of my father. Please do not be upset with me. If there is any way for me to send you a letter when I get where I am going, I will let you know that I am safe.

Do not worry about me. I have ~~tra~~untlet with me and she will protect me if we meet anything scary in the Hills. Take care of the farm and the puppies. I do not want to leave but I just cannot stay.

Love,

Alayn

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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