

YEO4-06

By Brick and Mortar

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

Version 1.1

by Rich Oliver

Reviewer: Yeomanry Triad

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A rediscovered tome hints at the final resting place of the infamous Archlich Asberdies, tyrant of the Yeoman people. Now that journal has been stolen out of the grasp of the Council of High Magic. You have been summoned in utmost secrecy to the University of Loftwick. A Yeomanry regional adventure for APLs 6-12.

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

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For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at beldred@midsouth.rr.com. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

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

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

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on

running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the *Appendices*.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

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

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

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

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

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 Crystalists 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 the spear for the nation, either now or in the past, is eligible to elect a spokesman on his behalf from his community who 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. Many Yeomen have served in the militia and are stout defenders of their homes.

You can learn more about the Yeomanry at its official website: <http://www.yeomanry.org>.

LOFTWICK

The capital of the Yeomanry League, Loftwick stands high above the Yeoman Valley, at the southernmost end of the High Crag, a spur of the Jotens. Surrounded by high walls, and by higher peaks, Loftwick is a commanding presence in the western dales of the Yeoman Valley. Loftwick serves as a trading center for the western League, and extensive dock works line the edge of the Wick River, some few miles south of Loftwick.

Loftwick is divided into numerous wards and neighborhoods, including the Leatherworkers, Goldsmiths and Masons wards, identified by the major guild in the ward, and other residential neighborhoods including High Cross and Low Cross, Five Points, and Death's Privy. Among Loftwick's well-known landmarks are the Gnome Clockworks, Blacksun Tower, the High Church of Heironeous, and the Fellcrack.

In the cold weather of midwinter, Loftwickers have donned their woolen coats and cloaks, or furs, although

visitors from other parts of the Flanaess might scoff at what Loftwickers call “cold weather.” In addition, Loftwickers in the Needfest spirit wear garlands of evergreen and winter rose draped across their shoulders, or pinned to their hat or cloak. Along the streets, more garland, green wreaths and ribbons of red, yellow, and blue hang around windows, over doors and atop fences. While Loftwickers don’t have to endure the cold climes and heavy snows of the neighboring lands to the north, they enjoy Needfest just as much, shown by their preparations for the week of festivities.

NEEDFEST

Of the four festivals throughout the year on Oerth, none are more cherished than Needfest at Midwinter. Throughout the Flanaess, men of all sorts hang evergreen garland and brightly colored ribbons from thresholds, windows and fences, symbols of life in the otherwise bleak heart of winter. Among children, especially, Needfest is anticipated for months. In the Yeomanry, many of the non-human cultures present have adopted similar celebrations.

As with other festivals, Needfest is celebrated over seven days. Traditionally, Needfest Day itself falls on Godsdays, although in some lands, it is celebrated on Freeday. The days leading up to Godsdays are spent in preparation for services on Needfest Day, while the following days are viewed as days of rest, recuperation from the past year’s events, and anticipation of the coming year’s joys. Generally, each day can be referred to numerically, i.e. First Needfest, Second Needfest, etc. Several days are named, including the night before Needfest begins (Needfest’s Eve), as opposed to the night before Needfest Day (Needfest Eve). The last day of Needfest is called Needfest’s End, or sometimes Last Needfest.

Although the offices of the government of the Yeomanry do not quite close during Needfest, it is difficult to find workers at work. In the otherwise industrious Yeomanry, Needfest is seen, with the anticipation of the coming religious services, and the preparation for the coming year, as more important, especially the desire to make one’s self right with one’s god.

Gift giving is common throughout Needfest, although customs vary according to culture or society. Among the older lands in the Flanaess, daily gifts are the tradition. In these lands too, Needfest Day is usually held on Freeday, following the prior week’s gifts, each of a more extravagant, or intimate, nature than the last. In the Yeomanry, smaller gifts are given throughout Needfest, but the “main” gift, sometimes called the sentiment, or the “true gift,” are exchanged on Needfest Day, held on Godsdays in the Yeomanry, following services. These smaller gifts might be toys for children, small tools, expensive chocolates or candies, and other smaller items no less dear for their size. Of the sentiment, or true gift,

many bravos have gifted their lady friends with a ring at Needfest in anticipation of a spring handfast, a merchant might give his wife a portrait of their children, or other equally meaningful gifts.

Of all the traditions surrounding Needfest, the most enduring is the acknowledgement that winter is failing, and spring is coming. Reminders of green and growing things abound throughout the Flanaess, especially in those areas which receive a greater portion of snow.

BOLTHOLES

In the times before during and after his reign over the Yeomanry, the archmage Asberdies created and maintained dozens of boltholes throughout the Wick Valley. Better known today as a safehouse, the boltholes were designed and intended to be used in time of emergency.

Although the designs varied – some located in a building in a city, most buried underground – the overall purpose was the same: remain safe, secure, hidden, and above all else, accessible.

Each bolthole could be reached via *teleport*, with a room created to cushion Asberdies’ arrival if he should be injured. In addition, the room would be reachable if he should, for whatever reason, not have access to spells.

Without exception, the boltholes were designed to be secure against interlopers and burglars. Both traps and servants kept the boltholes secure. And there were riches to be secured in addition to the safety the bolthole represented. Asberdies stored many items, and a great deal of coin, in the boltholes to aid him when in trouble. Over time, some have been discovered and their riches— as well as their traps ... well, some of their traps— plundered.

BACKGROUND

During a routine, end-of-year inventory of the library at the College of High Magic, an ancient journal was discovered missing from the special holdings vault a week past. Eram, a young mage who had been given permission to study the journal had also gone missing, but several of his personal items were left behind on the desk he’d been using.

The journal had no copy, but its contents were known to be an account of the time before and after the rise of Asberdies in the Yeomanry, written by an unnamed companion of the dread lord. Although of interest to scholars, there is nothing valuable in the book, or so it was thought. Actually there were two items in the journal when it was found. One was a letter, which detailed a strange circle of standing stones. The other, a ring, remained hidden in the thick binding of the book until it was accidentally dropped by the young mage studying the journal. Of course Eram was doomed from the moment he put the ring on his finger.

In actuality, Asberdies had created the journal nearly 800 years ago as a trap. Unfortunately for the archmage, the journal lay moldering in the library with few readers, and fewer still curious enough to investigate the unusual binding. Once activated however, the ring has influenced Eram to reread the journal, while muttering a simple word to himself — the trigger word for the *secret page* spell which obscured the true nature of the journal: a trap to lure the unwary. After reading the journal, Eram wasted no time leaving Loftwick.

The following day, the journal and student were discovered missing by the Chief Librarian Haladaras. The Dean of Tomes, Melaktured, and the Chief Librarian quickly mounted an expedition. Unfortunately, the expedition ended in complete disaster, and the two were unable to keep the situation under wraps any longer. Having had no word from the expedition in the past week, Melaktured and Haladaras were forced to go to Grossspokesman Jalandri Silbrendas.

When Silbrendas had finished with the two academics, he summoned Captain Nuce of the Loftwick Guard. Quickly the four realized that another expedition was necessary. This time, however, the expedition would be led by someone who was qualified.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Introduction:

PCs are in Loftwick for Needfest.

Encounter 1:

The PCs encounter a young student from the University of Loftwick, Falged, while taking their Needfest Eve meal at the Pig's Eye tavern. There, Falged conveys a request from the Chief Librarian for a meeting, although he doesn't know what the meeting is about. The PCs are cautioned to keep knowledge of the meeting private.

Encounter 2:

At the University of Loftwick, the PCs meet with not just the Chief Librarian, but also Captain Nuce and Grossspokesman Silbrendas. After introductions, the captain demands the silence of the PCs before he will speak further, citing the delicate nature of the information. Any PCs that do not agree are finished with the adventure. For those who remain, Haladaras explains the situation, answers any questions the PCs have and gives the PCs several avenues of investigation. Only very reluctantly will they reveal that there was another expedition.

Encounter 3:

In the College of High Magic, the PCs investigate Eram, speaking with his friends, colleagues and instructors, and finally searching his rooms in Forge Ward. Following their interviews, the party should know

of Eram's brother, Agen, a Dustdigger. During the course of their investigation of Eram, the PCs should find that he is well regarded. A former adventurer, Eram has dedicated himself to magic and has sworn off the adventurer's life. Eram is so well known for his complaints about the lot of an adventurer that people believe he must have been kidnapped.

Encounter 4:

Eram's brother, Agen, is found by the PCs in the Boiling Ward of Loftwick— rather down and out for a Dustdigger. Agen is on “academic leave” for “overzealous pursuit of artifacts from a restricted area.” He will not welcome attention from adventurers, and must be coaxed to give them any information. He saw Eram a bit over two weeks ago, knew he was upset, but not about what, and told Eram to be careful whatever was going on. After Eram went missing, he was denied permission to lead a Dustdigger team to find him. Funny thing, though, just after that several adventurer types came and asked about Eram, same as the PCs are.

Encounter 5:

At this point the PCs should have enough information to pursue Eram, (the journal recollections, the letter, the previous attempt), but there may be more questions they want to ask around Loftwick. If the PCs should return to the University, they will see the infamous Blacksun Tower—the Tower of Asberdies—brooding over their path.

Encounter 6:

As the PCs reach the standing stone circle mentioned prominently in the letter, a Nimblewright, an intelligent construct, attempts to stop their progress.

Encounter 7:

The standing stone circle is well known to the Dustdiggers. Because it is only active during Needfest is has remained a simple and (presumed) non-magical curiosity. The circle consists of seven stones, six smaller surrounding a large central menhir. The central menhir has seven faces, each carved with runes in Ancient Suloise. Each rune, save one (danger), is replicated on the flat top of the smaller stones. The circle is trapped so that a small stone gives a shock unless the central stone's unused rune is facing it. Stepping on any other stone will turn the central menhir, with the danger rune, and deliver the shock. Stepping on the small stone that the rune is already facing will activate the stone, making it glow, and turning the menhir to face the next stone. After the final stone is activated a portal will form.

Encounters 8 - 10:

Stepping through the portal, the PCs arrive at the Tomb of Asberdies. In fact, the “tomb” is a bolthole to facilitate Asberdies' escape from danger. The bolthole consists of four levels: a spherical reception room suitable

for teleportation, and three square rooms above, each with windows showing fantastic and impossible (magical) views. The PCs must work their way up through the bolthole overcoming a falling stone trap and deadly constructs.

Encounter 11:

In the sigil room, they find Eram himself, attended by a shield guardian, this is the PCs' final battle of the adventure. By this time, the ring and book placed by Asberdies have driven Eram completely mad. Before dying, Eram will destroy the book, in a sort of "final strike", rather than have it taken away.

Encounter 12:

Once the PCs defeat Eram, they can search for his treasure. Climbing the other set of stairs from the upper window room will take the party to the top of the bolthole, where they will find a typical Yeomanry home. They must then find a way out of the bolthole, most likely through one of the magical views on the levels below. Returning below and stepping through a window will teleport the PCs to the view seen, safely. They must then make their way back (uneventfully), to the University of Loftwick.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Is This a Military Adventure?

As the defense of the homeland is imperative, at least to some extent, members of the Yeoman military may count this adventure towards any annual TU requirement for their branch of the military.

Is This a Dustdigger Adventure?

This adventure involves sites of archeological and historical significance to the Yeomanry. As such, students in the Academy of Lore count this adventure towards their Academy TU requirement.

Is This a University of Loftwick Adventure?

Since much of this adventure involves the University, especially in terms of the University's reputation, and may prove necessary to the future of both the University and the Yeomanry, students at the University may count this adventure towards any annual TU requirement for the University.

Is This a College of High Magic Adventure?

Members of the College are expected to act in the defense of the Yeomanry and to promote the interests of the College. As such, members can count this adventure toward any annual TU expenditures required by membership in the College.

Is this a Promotion Worthy Adventure?

Heroic deeds in the name of the Yeoman military are possible in this adventure, and as such, the possibility for promotion exists. In order for a PC to be considered for promotion at the end of this adventure, the PC must do the following:

1. The DM and all Yeomanry military PCs present at the table must **unanimously** agree that the PC has performed an action and behaved in a manner that would make them a good leader of men in their unit. There must be at least two other military PCs playing the adventure besides the PC up for advancement. Only one PC can be nominated for advancement per adventure.
2. The player so nominated must then gather the names and email addresses of all Yeomanry military players and the DM at the table.
3. The player must then submit a small summary of what happened in the adventure and why he or she should be considered for promotion. Emailing this information to yeomanry-triad@yahoogroups.com.
4. The Triad will then discuss your promotion and determine whether promotion is granted. You will be notified via email, and a promotion certificate will be sent to you via snail mail.

In order to be considered for promotion, the Yeomanry military character must have spent a minimum of one year of real time at the rank below that being applied for. So in order to be considered for Sergeant, the player must have spent one full year as a Yeoman, and one full year below that as an unranked soldier.

Notes on Pronunciation

Many of the NPCs appearing in this adventure have unusual names. The following gives the correct pronunciation. Note that "g" is always hard, and "c" is sibilant, pronounced as an "s." Emphasis is indicated by capital letters.

Falged	fall-gehd
Haladaras	huh-LAD-uh-rus
Nuce	noose
Jalandri Silbrendas	juh-LAN-dree SIL-bren-dahz
Eram	EH-ram
Agen	AY-gen
Melak	muh-LAK
Figen	FI-gen
Truude	trood
Havred	HAV-red
Nuri Bamble	NER-ee BAM-bul

Construct Contagion

This magical curse causes the eventual transformation of humanoids into constructs. Created by the archlich Asberdies to swell his ranks at little or no

cost to himself, the contagion has continued to change various humanoids, humans, orcs, elves and the like, even without the presence of Asberdies to direct it.

Unfortunately, the contagion now creates what are called the Altered, who, although they do eventually transform into constructs, sadly retain their intelligence and personality. They know full well what they were before their awful change. The Altered are creatures (primarily humanoid) that have been infected with the Construct Contagion. This magical disease alters the victim's body in several horrendous ways. The Altered resemble half-golems, but where a half-golem's limbs have been replaced rather than regenerated or healed in another way, the Altered's limbs (and possibly other body parts), have been transformed by the curse and given properties similar to the original infectious construct. As such, an altered will take on the appearance of wood, stone or other material in the affected areas.

Because the contagion is a magical curse, there are no "cures" which will reverse it. This curse can currently only be removed by a *remove curse*, *break enchantment*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell from a caster of 17th level or higher. However, there may be other means to remove this curse that may be discovered in future Yeomanry adventures.

A Spellcraft check may reveal some valuable information about construct contagion:

- DC 10 It's a magical curse, not a disease.
- DC 15 It's a powerful curse that can't easily be removed.
- DC 20 Extreme damage passes the curse to a victim.
- DC 25 Extreme damage advances the curse to its next phase.
- DC 30 The archmage Asberdies created the curse.

A humanoid creature is the only creature type susceptible to the contagion; constructs can carry it, but they do not change as a result of being "infected" with it. Creating an Altered is a gradual process, which begins in an encounter with a construct that carries the contagion. The curse is transmitted in any of several ways, all involving critical damage to the victim. The creature suffers a serious blow (one that was a critical hit, one for massive damage, or one that put the creature's hp total below zero) from an "infected" construct, and thus is vulnerable to the curse (it is not a disease, despite the name and use of the word infected). When the infection event occurs, the victim gets a Fort save (DC 20 + the APL this adventure is played at) to avoid receiving the curse.

After becoming infected, each time the victim is struck with a critical hit, a blow for massive damage, or has his hp total reduced below zero, they must make a Fort save (DC 12 + the APL this adventure was played at).

If they fail the save, this indicates the contagion has advanced in intensity, transforming more of their body into a construct (although they do not assume the construct type yet). Each advance further affects the abilities of the cursed victim.

In this adventure, all constructs carry the iron version of this contagion. Its first stage (initial infection) grants a +2 natural armor bonus and a -2 penalty to Cha. Second stage is a -2 penalty to Dex. Third stage is a -10 ft. penalty to Speed. Fourth stage is that all healing spells cast on this PC are only half as effective with regards to curing hp damage. The fifth stage is the final one, the victim becomes a construct (an Altered).

PCs infected by Construct Contagion receive the **Curse – Construct Contagion** effect on the Adventure Record. Those reaching the final stage are transformed into an Altered and are removed from play; contact the Yeomanry Triad for details.

INTRODUCTION

It's been a tiring week for you and your companions. Although the festival week of Needfest begins only tomorrow, you started celebrating early after several weeks out in the "wilds" of the Yeomanry following your last adventure. Catching up with friends or family, or taking care of business here in Loftwick, you've gathered together again in the Pig's Eye to decide on your plans for after the Needfest holidays.

At this point, the players may introduce their PCs to each other.

ENCOUNTER 1: IN THE PIG'S EYE

The Pig's Eye is well known among adventurers. Even for those just out of the wilds, a place can be found to relax over a drink or two, to gather your strength, your wits, or even both.

Located near the southern gate of Loftwick, the tavern also caters to people from the neighborhood, and an occasional merchant or even a grosspokesman can be found here. The Pig's Eye doesn't turn away many, although the smellier you are, the closer to the door you remain. The old tavern was built not long after the Arch-Mage Asberdies was driven out of the Yeomanry, and it shows in the thick, old timbers, the aged and yellowed plaster cracking in places, and the well-worn floorboards.

The Eye has changed hands many times over the years, and each owner has expanded or improved the tavern. It received its latest name when the former owner lost it in a card game, exclaiming "In a pig's eye!" when he was shown the winning hand.

The sounds of pots clanking and clouds of flour and smoke wash out of the kitchen. After fetching your drinks and a hearty meal of beef stew and hot fresh bread, the serving wench leaves you to your meal.

Over several mugs of warm, spiced grog you have all put forth various ideas; escorting caravans, delving into ruins or caverns, even one wild idea concerning the capture of dozens of humanoids in order to transport them into Keoland to their "freedom." Your laughter slowly dies away as you realize that a visitor has stopped by your table.

Standing near your table, obviously not wanting to interrupt your meal on the coming festival week's eve, is a young man dressed conservatively. On the breast of his tunic you see the tome and scroll that identifies him as a librarian from the University of Loftwick.

"Good eve, gentlemen, ladies. My name is Falged."

The young man seems nervous and ill at ease in the smoke-filled atmosphere of the Pig's Eye, but, he forges ahead as if he were rebuking the vilest undead or turning aside a giant's charge. "I see that you are gathered for your Needfest's Eve meal. I apologize for interrupting."

Read or paraphrase one of the following three paragraphs, depending on the make-up of the party of adventurers. Remember that Falged has been told to keep a low profile while gathering up an adventuring party. He will not speak overly loudly, nor shout or carry on. If he should be in danger, or restrained, he will attempt to escape and locate a more congenial group of adventurers.

If the party does not include a wizard or sorcerer:

"By chance, are you a group of adventurers? I don't mean to pry into your affairs. I only ask because I have been sent by my master, Haladaras, Chief Librarian at the University of Loftwick, to find a suitable band of adventurers."

If the party includes a wizard or sorcerer:

"By chance, are you the (wizard / sorcerer) known as [PC's name]? I was sent by my master, Haladaras, Chief Librarian at the University of Loftwick to find a suitable band of adventurers, preferably one with a wizard or sorcerer of some standing in it."

If the party includes a Student of the University of Loftwick, the Academy of Lore, or the College of High Magic:

"Would one of you perhaps be [PC's name], a student at the (University of Loftwick / Academy of Lore / College of High Magic)? I have been sent by my master, Haladaras, Chief Librarian at the

University, and the Dean of Tomes, Melaktured, to find you and bring you back to the University. If you were with adventuring companions, I was to ask them to come along as well.

If the PCs should ask why they are being asked to see Haladaras, Falged responds:

"I'm afraid I don't know what you've been summoned for, but I must say that master Haladaras has been very agitated for these past three days."

If the PCs can't or won't meet with Haladaras immediately, read the following:

"Master Haladaras said you might balk at interrupting your festivities. He told me to offer you 5 gold each, if you'll come tonight, but if not, you will be welcomed at the University tomorrow morning, two hours after sunbreak. My thanks to you all."

With that, unless the PCs prevent him, Falged will leave to report back to Haladaras at the University, with or without the PCs.

Treasure: If the PCs insisted on payment to see Haladaras tonight, they each received 5 gp.

ENCOUNTER 2: MEETING HALADARAS

The short wait before you are shown in to master Haladaras' office must mean that the situation—whatever it is—must be terribly important. Falged knocks quickly on the highly polished door, and, opening it, stands aside to let you pass.

You realize just how important it is when you find not just Master Haladaras waiting for you, but two other men as well. Haladaras, surely the oldest of the three, stands beside his desk on the right.

"Please, gentlemen, ladies, take a seat," Haladaras gestures across the desk to a tall, thin man dressed in leathers and a chain shirt rising from an overstuffed chair. You can sense his air of authority. "I'm sure you know Captain Nuce, of the Loftwick Guard. Mmm ... perhaps not."

"This of course is Grosspokesman Jalandri Silbrendas," the man seated behind the desk considers each of you thoughtfully. Though seated, he is a large fellow, perhaps a fighter gone to seed, as he is somewhat jowly. A single hank of dark black hair has been combed over an otherwise bald pate. He wears expensive and immaculate clothing, and several rings glitter on his fingers.

"And I am master Haladaras, Chief Librarian of the University." Haladaras himself is of average height, and dresses in trousers and a tunic that have

obviously seen better days. In fact, the chief librarian seems somewhat distracted and tired. At this, each of the men sits, waiting perhaps for you to introduce your selves.

At this point give the PCs time to introduce themselves, or question why they were asked to come to the University. Allow the PCs to speak as long as they wish. The three leaders will merely wait for a free moment to speak, watching the PCs bemusedly.

"Ah, the enthusiasm of youth."

All the leaders chuckle, and Captain Nuce stands to speak to the PCs. "I must ask that you keep the following information confidential. Revealing anything of what we tell you could cause problems throughout the Yeomanry."

"As of now, those of you with ties to the University, or to the Dustdiggers, the Militia or the Army can consider yourselves activated and under orders."

Each of the men looks at you in turn, and Captain Nuce continues ...

If any party member is not affiliated with a Yeomanry institution, or is a foreigner, read the following:

"For those of you who are not from the Yeomanry, or who have chosen not to serve the Yeomanry, we must make certain of your... intentions. We will require your word that you will not reveal what we tell you. If you have any question, this is for the protection of our land, as well as yours."

If all PCs are serving in a Yeomanry metaorganization that is mentioned above, (or another metaorganization, such as the Church of Seven Faiths), read the following:

"We will require your word, as (Dustdiggers / Militia / etc.) that you will not reveal what we tell you. If you have any doubt, this is for the protection of the Yeomanry."

If the PCs agree to keep the information confidential, the briefing will continue, otherwise, the PCs will be excused, and the adventure will be over for them.

"Thank you. Your help will be more important than you can know. Haladaras?" Captain Nuce turns back to the chief librarian.

"Yes, thank you, captain," with a glance at the grosspokesman, Haladaras turns to you and continues, "Some ten days ago now, during a routine inventory of the special holdings, we discovered a book was missing. A journal, really. It was in my catalog, but not on the shelves."

Now, the special holdings room has wards and alarms. All of which were still in place. There was no sign that anyone had broken in.

In addition, the student mage who was directly involved in translating and studying the journal has also gone missing."

Haladaras exchanges another glance with the grosspokesman, "It's clear that both the journal's and the student's disappearance are connected in some way. What that is, remains to be seen."

Haladaras, Captain Nuce and Silbrendas can offer the following information, not in any particular order:

- Information in the journal dates back nearly 1,000 years, making it contemporary with the Archmage Asberdies.
- The journal itself is more likely 500 to 800 years old, most likely a copy of the original.
- The journal is constructed of parchment, bound with gold chased leather, and gold fasteners.
- The journal is written in an old dialect of Suloise (Ancient Suloise).
- Attempts at magical study of the journal proved fruitless, and the journal cannot now be located or studied via magical means.
- The journal was written by a contemporary of Asberdies during their association together.
- The journal covers in some detail a period when Asberdies was creating many small "dungeons" throughout the Yeomanry, used for various purposes.
- Several locations in particular were to be used by Asberdies as "boltholes" in case of emergency; these locations were never specified.
- One location was to be the Tomb of Asberdies; it is thought that this place may be what was pointed at in the journal.
- A love letter was found with the journal, signed by a Wesendahl, thought to be a name used by Asberdies (Haladaras provides *Player Handout #1*), which was not with the journal when it was lost.
- The university student was Eram, a former adventurer with rooms at the Split Anvil in the Forge Ward.
- Eram has a brother, Agen, who is a Dustdigger.

As you make ready to leave, Grosspokesman Silbrendas rises from behind the desk. He leans heavily on an ebony cane with a snarling hag's head

grip. Slowly he steps around the desk to face you, and you can see his leg is swollen with gout. His voice is low and tired as he speaks for the first time, "Remember. Your efforts are to be kept in strictest secrecy. We stand before an unplowed field. Anyone who questions you about your activities may be a rock, set in place to turn you aside. Mothers have frightened their children for ages with tales of the fell lord Asberdies, without ever believing in him. Keep close counsel."

If the PCs seem at a loss regarding the letter (Player Handout #1), Librarian Haladaras will take the most likeable of the PCs aside (or the PCs can return to see him later). Read or paraphrase the following:

My young friend, you seem... troubled. I see that you keep looking at the letter we've given you. Perhaps you know a Dustdigger that could help you with it? Something Eram said makes me think they might know where this hollow is. Take help where you can find it, [PC's name].

Depending on the direction taken by the party, proceed to either Encounter 3 or 4.

ENCOUNTER 3: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

If the PCs investigate Eram, they can speak with several more people at the College who knew him, and they also can easily find his rooms at the Split Anvil Inn.

Use the following list to give the PCs information about Eram. This encounter is purposely open-ended:

- Melak, a friend of Eram's, knows that he was acting normally when he disappeared, despite what the "higher-ups" would like to believe.
- Figen, a classmate, knows that Eram was once an adventurer, but didn't like the life, or to discuss his adventures.
- Truude was once Eram's roommate, and knows that he had dedicated himself to magic and had refused to join his brother Agen on a recent venture.
- Havred, an instructor, knows that Eram was so opposed to the adventuring life, that he is certain Eram must have been kidnapped.
- All others know that Eram was considered a model student at the University, and well regarded by all, especially for his magical talent. Many are concerned for his safety.

The Split Anvil is located in the Forge Ward of Loftwick. Numerous foundries and smithies fill the air with the smell and taste of iron and a haze of smoke and errant sparks.

You've made your way to the Split Anvil, a small inn and tavern in the Forge Ward of Loftwick. This part of Loftwick has many foundries and smithies, and the smell of iron in the air makes you think of blood on the battlefield.

The building before you stands three stories tall, and is set some ways back from the road, as if trying to move from between the buildings on either side. Buildings which loom over the small, thin inn as if they were trying to crush it.

Beside the low stairs at the front door is an anvil, old and rusted. The anvil is indeed split and cracked, as if a giant had tried to prize something out of its center.

Inside the inn, you are greeted by a short man, fat enough that he seems almost round.

"Greetings and welcome to the Split Anvil. I am Nuri Bamble. Can I get you some ale to wash the ironworks out of your mouth?"

The innkeeper waves the PCs further into the common room, where only a few tables are occupied. Although he has had offers, Nuri has not rented Eram's rooms, and he insists that no one has been in the rooms since then.

While Nuri is not keen on letting the PCs ransack Eram's rooms, he will cooperate if they reveal that they are on official business. Make note if the PCs reveal the nature of their mission.

If the PCs attempt to break into Eram's rooms, make a Listen check for Nuri (Listen +4) to detect anyone approaching the upstairs rooms. Once the party has gained entry, and depending on whether or not they have sufficient time to investigate, they can find out the following information:

- The rooms are somewhat messy, i.e. bed unmade, clothes thrown over a chair back, in other words lived in.
- There is no sign of struggle or of a destructive search.
- The wardrobe and chest of drawers have only a few items of clothing in them; probably half their capacity.
- Checking the windows, with a Search check (DC 15 + APL) will show signs of entry (jimmied lock, boot prints, etc).
- A strongbox, concealed under the floorboards, can be found with a Search check (DC 20 + APL). It is empty, except for one gold and four coppers.

- Any Wizard PCs recognize that the size of the strongbox is large enough to hold a single (large) spellbook.

If the PCs should get caught entering the rooms without permission, Nuri will summon the guard. The PCs will have to explain themselves to the guard (not the catastrophe that they might think), or escape before they arrive, perhaps assaulting Nuri in the process. If they should attack or injure Nuri, they will have to explain themselves to the guard at the end of the adventure, resulting in a possible loss of influence points and/or additional TUs.

ENCOUNTER 4: GETTING TO KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU

When the PCs investigate Agen, they can locate him in the Boiling Ward. Unlike most other wards, the Boiling Ward is outside the walls of Loftwick, to the East along the edge of the High Crags, mostly to keep the noxious fumes associated with the leatherworking and dyeing crafts out of the city.

You find Agen in a small house outside the walls of Loftwick proper. The acrid smell of the tanneries in the Boiling Ward fills the air. Agen's house is set back from the road, surrounded by a low, dilapidated fence. A porch crosses the front of the house under a sagging roof, and you can see Agen sitting in a chair, enjoying the remainder of the morning. Unlike many of the buildings throughout Loftwick, homes and businesses alike, Agen's house is not decorated for Needfest with garland and brightly colored streamers.

Before the PCs can confirm that this is indeed Agen, or ask to talk to him, read the following:

"Yep, I'm Agen. Been wondering when y'all would come around. Come on up, and we'll talk."

At this point, the PCs will most likely introduce themselves to Agen. If they do not, or are in some other way rude, adjust Agen's attitude accordingly; Agen is neutral to the PCs to begin with. He is expecting a visit from the Dustdiggers and has mistaken the PCs for them. Although he knows his brother has gotten mixed up in something, and he's not ready to turn on him, neither will Agen defend his brother beyond reason.

He gestures, "Make yourselves comfortable."

After you've gathered around, he looks at each of you. "So, who might you all be? Sent by the Academy, I'd say. And to tell me that I 'must with all haste present myself before the Board of Oversight' again? Thanks all the same, but I'll see those buffoons again when Pelor dims. Or, d'you want somewhat else with me?"

Depending on the questions the PCs ask, Agen gives them the following information. If they somehow manage to convince Agen that they are not interested in harming Eram, but are truly trying to help him, he is more helpful and his answers more forthcoming. If the PCs mention what they learned from Eram's friends and associates at the University, Agen is more helpful. Coming right out and stating that Eram may need their help, or that someone is worried about him, will further improve his attitude to the PCs. Conversely, referring to Eram as a thief, or saying that the journal must be recovered no matter the cost (or similar statements; use your judgment), obviously does not please Agen.

Agen knows the following information:

- He asked Eram to go on an expedition with him and other Dustdiggers about three months ago. Eram refused.
- Agen got into some trouble with the Dustdiggers on that expedition, but he is unwilling to discuss it. He acknowledges that he's been suspended by the Dustdiggers, pending an investigation.
- Agen saw Eram briefly about a week or so ago, (maybe ten days, if pressed about it by PCs).
- He knew Eram was upset about something but not what about.
- *"Book? What book?"*
- He told Eram to be careful with whatever he'd gotten into.
- He spoke to another person about a week ago who was also looking for Eram. He was kind of strange, with a raspy voice.
- He talked to some of Eram's friends at the University after that visit.
- He's been denied permission to lead a Dustdigger mission to go after his brother.

If asked, Agen declines the party's invitation to join them; he's certain the Dustdiggers are watching him (and he's not sure he trusts the party that much anyway).

PCs may ask Agen for help in finding the hollow mentioned in the letter (*Player Handout #1*). He is more than willing to help, but in exchange he will ask the party to bring Eram home safely. He's certain that Eram is in over his head, but that it's not his fault.

When the party has finished talking with Agen, they may need to take some time to consider their options. If they express any interest in following up with previous avenues of investigation, they pass nearby the Blacksun Tower in Encounter 5. Otherwise, the most obvious direction is to find the hollow with the stone circle mentioned in the letter; go to Encounter 6.

ENCOUNTER 5: TAKE A MOMENT

At any time during the party's investigation of the journal, Eram, Agen and/or the University, they may backtrack, and wish to ask more questions or verify some answers. If they do so, read the following:

Your wanderings today have taken you back and forth across Loftwick, and through the various wards and neighborhoods. As you continue down a wide avenue, off to the side of your path you can see the white stone of the Tower of Asberdies, today the seat of the Yeomanry Council of Grosspokesmen, the Freeholder, and other government offices. When the evil mage ruled these lands over nine hundred years past, it was known as the Sunstealer. Indeed, among the people of Loftwick, it's now called Blacksun Tower.

As you come abreast of the tower, some of you make a small prayer to yourselves to no avail. As the sun is setting, the tower begins to blacken, far more quickly than any darkness dusk could bring. Rays of the day's dying sun seem to rush at the tower, which blackens even more, as it devours the light. Old wives' tales talk of these dark nights, known in whispers as a lichnight, when strange things roam until dawn, and the moons will not show their face.

Surprisingly as you watch, two of the four bastions of the tower erupt with a burst of arcane energy, swirling green in color and shot through with black, and produce a shower of elements: earth followed by wind, so that the shower of dirt is scattered before reaching the ground. Such spectacles are not unknown in Loftwick, but never have you heard of two bastions erupting at once!

With the coming of a lichnight, and now the bastions, it will be a strange and perhaps dangerous Needfest indeed.

Should the PCs wish to approach the tower, they are waved off by members of the tower guard. The tower is closed for the night (especially since it has turned black once more), and the party will not be allowed to enter the tower plaza, much less get close to the tower itself.

ENCOUNTER 6: IT'S ONLY A FLESH WOUND

After several days travel, the PCs find the land described in the letter, approximately halfway from Loftwick to Westburn, and westward toward the Sylvan Wood.

Several days travel to the South and West finds you amidst the broad slopes and gentle hollows described in the journal's letter. The fallen stones of an old building remain some distance from the road, overshadowed by ancient trees, and nearly

covered by vines of ivy. As you make your way South below a ridge in the upper part of the valley, you feel a sense of peace and a connection to the land.

As you approach the Northern end of the hollow that holds the circle of stones, you notice that the winds have fallen off, and the birds have gone silent. Suddenly, the peaceful air is shattered by the sounds of steel on steel. A solitary figure steps out from behind the trees.

The figure, a man of medium height, speaks in a low voice, raspy and worn as if he'd been weaned among the foundries of the Forge Ward in Loftwick. He seems to be wearing loose clothing over his armor, and wields two rapiers, held at the ready.

"Always flesh and steel, isn't it? Ah, well, come ahead then, but no shame in turning aside too. No need to leave the world without which you entered it, at least not today."

The Nimblewright waits for the PCs reaction, ready to fight if need be. If the PCs should ask what they entered into the world with, the Nimblewright chuckles and answers:

"Why, your life, of course."

The nimblewright has been charged with keeping the living away from the standing stones. While the nimblewright will not pursue the PCs if they retreat, or head back the way they came, it will not allow the PCs to continue on to the circle.

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Nimblewright:** hp 90; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 9)

➤ **Nimblewright Ftr1, 14 HD-Advanced:** hp 128; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Nimblewright Ftr1, 18 HD-Advanced:** hp 165; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 13)

➤ **Nimblewright Ftr2, 22 HD-Advanced:** hp 203; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: The nimblewright takes the time to cast *cat's grace* and *haste* on itself before joining the attack. Remember the combat-oriented feats that the nimblewright has, including Combat Reflexes, Spring Attack, and Improved Disarm. It will attempt to disarm opponents before killing them with its augmented critical.

Once the nimblewright has been defeated, the PCs can approach the circle of stones, Encounter 7, below.

Treasure: If they indicate that they are searching the area (stone circle itself non-inclusive), they may find

treasure which the nimblewright gathered from earlier victims.

APL 6: elixir of fire breath, pipes of sounding, silversheen.

APL 8: elixir of fire breath, pipes of sounding, silversheen, bag of holding type I, horn of fog, rope of climbing.

APL 10: elixir of fire breath, pipes of sounding, silversheen, bag of holding type I, horn of fog, rope of climbing, circlet of persuasion, stone salve, vest of escape.

APL 12: elixir of fire breath, pipes of sounding, silversheen, bag of holding type I, horn of fog, rope of climbing, circlet of persuasion, stone salve, vest of escape, boots of striding and springing, periapt of health, pipes of haunting.

ENCOUNTER 7: CIRCLE OF STONES

After dealing with the Nimblewright, the party can make its way to the hollow which holds the stone circle, a few yards further on. Refer to the DM Aid: Map of Circle of Stones.

A short distance onward you climb to the top of a low hill. On either side more hills form a low ridgeline. Before you lays a hollow formed by the hills, with a small stream trickling along the edge of the hills. A thick carpet of leaves covers the hollow despite the breeze which flows out of it. The hollow is somewhat dark, sheltered by the hills and trees all around you, but seems nonetheless inviting.

Peering up into the hollow, you can just make out what must be the circle of stones mentioned in the letter. It's getting on toward afternoon now, and you hurry forward, hoping to arrive before the sun sets.

Allow the PCs to make whatever preparations they desire. If it helps the atmosphere, you can occasionally mention that the sun is closer to setting, but the party should arrive at the stones in time to see them catch the last light of the sun (shining into the hollow along the stream's path).

As you come to the outer edge of the circle of stones, the sun finally reaches the horizon. The surface of the stream seems to ignite, and great swaths of the sky burn in varying shades of yellow and orange. As the sun passes below the horizon, the sky finally fades, first red then magenta, darkening on to purple.

Slowly you realize that there's more light in the hollow than there should be. Turning, you see the circle of stones has taken on the fires of the sun! The center stone, some twelve feet tall, has indeed been roughly planed with seven faces, and is black as pitch. On each face of the center stone are carved runes which glow as if liquid gold were fired from within.

Where the center stone is black as night, the six smaller stones surrounding it seem to glow with the flames of the sun itself, although they are cool to the touch. Each of the smaller stones has a flat top, is no more than two feet tall, and wide enough for a man to stand atop comfortably. On the top face of the smaller stones are more runes which correspond to those on the center stone save one.

Should any PC know Ancient Suloise or Ancient Baklunish (or make a DC 25 Decipher Script check), they can correctly read the runes on each of the outer stones: power, age, wisdom, paranoia, cunning, and innocence. The runes are distributed at random in the circle. The center stone has all six of these runes plus an additional rune: danger. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check gives the PCs the additional information that the extra rune really translates into "mortal danger."

The stone circle is a trapped portal, although the trap is quite simple. The smaller stones must be stepped on to transfer their arcane energy to the central stone. Initially, the central stone's danger rune will be facing one of the smaller stepping stones, roll a d6 to determine which one. If that stepping stone is not stepped on, the central stone will rotate to face whichever stone is stepped on, and the PC will take damage as below.

While there is no specific order of runes in which this must be done, PCs can be damaged if the stones are not understood: Should a PC stand on a small stone when the danger rune is facing it (safe), the stone's glow flows into the center stone, and the corresponding face begins to glow. Should a PC stand on a small stone when the danger rune is not facing it (trapped), the runes on the center stone will merge and flow until the danger rune is facing the PC (read the text below), whereupon he will take the following damage with no saving throw:

APL 6	2d6
APL 8	3d6
APL 10	4d6
APL 12	5d6

Note that the description below is different depending on whether or not the PCs know what the runes are, and especially the danger rune. If they do not know, be careful not to reveal this in the description:

You stand on the smaller stone, facing the great menhir inside the circle. Looking down, you wait to see the glow from the rune on the top of your stone flow into the great center stone, but it doesn't. With a sick feeling, you look up, trying to step off but somehow stuck fast, and see that the great central stone, the ancient menhir is changing. The runes carved deep into the stone are flowing, and sliding away from the face which you are looking at. Slowly, as if taunting you, the [unique, unknown or danger] rune swirls and twists into view. The rune is deeply

carved and the black depths of the stone seem to bore into your head.

At this point, the PC must step off of the smaller stone and then back on to properly activate the central stone. The PCs need not continue to stand on the smaller stone, and in fact, one PC can activate each of the stones in succession. Once the final stone has been stepped on, the central stone will be glowing on every face, except one: danger.

As you approach the seventh face of the central stone, the runes which warn of danger in Ancient Suloise and Baklunish [or, the unknown or unique runes] seem to move away from you, as if down into the stone, more and more quickly, until they are too small to see, and finally disappear altogether. Golden energy flows across the surface of the stone, falling into the still-black face which confronts you. The energy fades like sparks from a campfire rising into the night. Where the face of the stone once seemed solid, it now throws the echoes of your voices back at you.

On the far sides of the central stone, you can see the blackness emerging from under the glowing energy, as it splits and flows across the stone to the seventh face. Clearly a portal of some sort has opened before you!

If the party is in agreement to enter the portal, they can do so with no problem. Should they begin to discuss it, you should mark off rounds one by one—don't be overly harsh here—and let the players argue amongst themselves. As you mark off each round, you can make this as subtle or obvious as you wish. The portal becomes unusable in 12 rounds, two rounds per face of stone for the arcane energy to “flow across.” If the party exceeds, in your opinion, twelve rounds while they argue, the portal closes. While the portal will be openable again at sunset each day following, until the end of Needfest, let the players believe they are in hot water.

Once they have entered the portal, proceed to Encounter 8.

ENCOUNTER 8: IN THE RECEPTION ROOM

Stepping through the portal, the PCs arrive at the Tomb of Asberdies. This is actually a bolthole created by Asberdies during his reign over the Yeomanry hundreds of years ago. The bolthole consists of four levels, the first of which is the Reception Room. Refer to the DM Aid: Map of Tomb of Asberdies.

After stepping through the black maw of the portal, you emerge in mid-air inside a spherical room. Your fall is short, no more than five or ten feet, and you're able to twist your body and flail your arms as you fall to avoid landing on those who came

before you. A dull thud and a great cloud of dust rises as you land in piles of decayed pillows and blankets, obviously meant to cushion your (or someone's) landing.

Looking around, you can see that the room is a near perfect sphere, with the exception of a gaping square hole in the ceiling above and behind you, about 40' in diameter. The walls of the sphere are made by large, red bricks bound by an overflowing, reddish mortar. The hole above you, a passage really, opens into the sphere at approximately 45 feet up from the “equator” of the sphere.

The gentle, sourceless light that seems to fill the sphere doesn't penetrate far into the hole, and you can see only that it probably continues upward, also at a 45° angle.

Directly across from the square hole, but at the room's equator, is a large symbol, or perhaps symbols, embedded in the surface of the brick wall.

Written using Draconic, the extensive arcane symbols seem to spell out only “central.”

If PCs investigate the brick wall by magical means, give them a nice headache: the brick walls were created by enduring powerful magics. While it does not cause a PC to blackout, the aura is strong enough to give them an enduring headache. For PCs capable of detecting evil, the brick wall, specifically the mortar, radiates an old, moderate evil. Read the following paragraph to those who examine the brick wall by touch or magical means:

The brick wall is solid to the touch, and yet—the mortar feels strange, yielding, or perhaps gummy. As you run your hand along the wall, you would almost say that the mortar is sticky, no, that it seems to be grabbing your hand. When you look closer, you can see that the mortar does not move, and looks completely solid, but you can feel it flowing up over your fingers, slowly enveloping your hand, grasping your wrist—

With a yell, you snatch your hand back from the wall. A slight burning sensation covers your hand where the still motionless mortar seemingly flowed across your skin. You can see no redness or injury on your hand, but a vague nausea settles into your gut.

These feelings continue to stay with the PCs throughout their time in the bolthole, but there are no game effects associated with them.

Climbing the walls is relatively easy (DC 10 Climb check). If the PCs attempt to drive spikes into the wall to help their climb, however, they will find the brick and the mortar are unyielding; nothing less than *limited wish* will penetrate the wall. In addition, magical means for movement does not work in this extradimensional space. The PCs must climb the old-fashioned way.

There are no other exits from the sphere, including secret or concealed doors.

ENCOUNTER 9: UNDER A ROCK

Assuming that the party climbs upward through the exit passage, read the following paragraph:

Finally, you reach the lip of the exit passage. You see that it continues on upward, perhaps forever; you cannot see any end. What looked like a patch of light ahead, you're now certain is a trick of the mind's eye. The passage itself is also made of brick, and the overflowing mortar provides ample purchase for your climb.

While the climb is steep, it does not require any Climb checks to ascend.

If the PCs do not look for traps, or do not find the trap, read the following:

You've been climbing up the exit passage for several minutes, easily mastering the straddle arm and leg style of climbing. Suddenly, [person closest to the middle of the marching order] slide-steps upward, and you all hear a soft "click."

Allow the party to begin discussing the situation, and then continue:

After some seconds with no result, you all breathe a sigh of relief; the trap was a dud, or a ruse. As you make your first move to continue, you hear the soft scrape of rock on rock.

Partway up the exit shaft is a trapdoor that drops loose bricks into the passage. These bricks slide down the corridor, creating, in essence, a 'mini-avalanche' that the PCs must deal with:

APL 6 (EL 3)

↗ **Falling Bricks Trap:** CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +10 melee (4d6, bricks); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 8 (EL 4)

↗ **Falling Bricks Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +10 melee (4d6, bricks); multiple targets (all PCs in the passage); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 10 (EL 5)

↗ **Falling Bricks Trap:** CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +15 melee (4d6, bricks); multiple targets (all PCs in the passage); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 12 (EL 6)

↗ **Falling Bricks Trap:** CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +15 melee (6d6, bricks); multiple targets (all PCs in the passage); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

In addition, those who are hit by the bricks must stop themselves from sliding back down the shaft; a Balance check (DC 8 + APL) prevents this. Failure means the PC has fallen a further 40 feet to the floor of the Reception Room and must once again ascend. The party spends one half hour per APL to clear the debris to continue, unless they have magical means to assist them.

Climbing out of the exit shaft, the PCs find themselves in a brightly lighted room, 50 ft. square. Move on to Encounter 10.

ENCOUNTER 10: VIEW FROM THE, UH, MIDDLE

Depending on how long the party searched the reception room, whether or not they triggered the trap, and the trip up the exit shaft, they take from three to nine and a half hours to reach this room. Calculate the exact time as follows:

searched the reception room	30+ min.
climbed exit shaft	3 hrs.
cleared debris from trap	3 to 6 hrs.

The following text should be adjusted depending on when the PCs arrive in the "view" rooms. Remember, the party passed through the portal just after sunset. Note any extra time they take beyond that outlined above.

After climbing the precarious slope of the smooth shaft for approximately three hours, you find yourself in a large, brightly lighted room. The shaft up from the spherical room opens in the middle of a 50 ft. square room.

To the left and right through arched doorways are wide stairs going up. Ahead of you and behind you are arched windows, three to a side. The windows are flanked on either side by columns, and have an iron railing at waist height.

While the walls are the same, red brick and red-tinted mortar, the floor of the room is cut, squared flagstone.

Peering through the windows ahead of you, you can see a massive fortification, embraced by stone.

PCs with Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) can recognize (DC 10) the fortification as Fort Crag, located approximately ten leagues to the north of Loftwick. Modify the below text if they don't recognize the fortification.

A massive stone gatehouse stands along each of the east and west walls of Fort Crag, stained with rust from the iron bands which binds them. A smaller gate can be found in the southern wall, easily seen to be far more protected, which must connect with the Crag Road leading north out of Loftwick. While the view encompasses the entirety of the fortification, you can make out details with no problems. By concentrating, you can even see guards walking the walls.

In the windows behind you is a bizarre scene. Looming close on the right is the Clock Tower built by the gnomes, which is located near the center of Loftwick. It seems to be no more than a stone's throw away. Beyond, near the bottom of the window, you see the Wick River, and the Dockward of Loftwick, with several barges and river ships loading or unloading cargo at the Yeomanry's capital.

Strangely, you can see beyond the walls of Loftwick, far to the south across miles of farm and ranch land, to the walls of another city. It sits atop a low, rocky bluff, using the craggy cliff as additional defense. Below, a wide slow river winds along, bustling with barge traffic. An early morning mist covers the fields and pastures surrounding the city. Again, by concentrating, you can see great detail in the view.

PCs with Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) can recognize (DC 10) the city as Westburn, located some 30 leagues south of Loftwick.

Looking toward the edges of the view, the PCs see only distortion; the view wraps or curves back to the edges of the windows. If the PC should concentrate on a particular part of the view, it seems to enlarge or zoom up in front of them (others will not see this).

At this point, if the party holds the Ring of Asberdies (see Encounter 11), they are able to step through the window to the destination itself (either Fort Crag or Westburn in this case). Although Loftwick appears in the southern window, it cannot be reached this way.

The stairs to the left and right each lead upward. No matter which stair is taken, the PCs end up in the center of another 50 ft. room. The stairs are straight and rise approximately 100 steps.

The stairs rise straight ahead of you, each step seeming to hang without support in a clear blue sky. After a moment of vertigo, you stumble, falling toward the side. At the edge of the stairs, the air grows thicker, preventing you from falling off. Far above, you see a dark shape against the blue sky; an archway to another room which seems as brightly lighted as this one. Looking back, you see that your archway also hangs in midair, with no visible support. As you take a step upward, you hear the sound of stone grating on stone.

Stepping away from the center window on the north side are two women, each readying a gleaming bastard sword. The bright colors of their robes stand in stark contrast against the cool gray of their... skin?

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ Caryatid Columns (2): hp 60 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ Caryatid Columns Ftr1, 10 HD-Advanced (2): hp 98 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ Caryatid Columns Ftr1, 14 HD-Advanced (2): hp 135 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ Caryatid Columns Ftr1, 14 HD-Advanced (4): hp 135 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: Generally speaking, the caryatid columns use their Improved Sunder feat to disarm opponents, while moving to flank and attack. Note that the caryatid column has Hardness 8, which must be overcome to damage them.

The caryatid columns attack in the lower window room. They will separate from whichever columned window works best for challenging the PCs. At APL 12, the caryatid columns will attack in two waves, two in the lower window room, and two in the upper. It is possible if the party runs, for them to become trapped between both waves on the stairs.

In the upper window room, the party again emerges from stairs in the center of the room. Here, the windows show east/west views, and the stairs exit the room on the north and south.

Emerging from the stairs, you find yourself in the center of a room nearly identical to the one below. It too, is 50 foot square, with windows ahead of and behind you, and stairs up on either side.

In the first view you see, ahead of you, a walled city rests high on a bluff overlooking a wide, deep river. River traffic is heavy, some docking at the city's port, others passing both north and south. Beyond this city you can see a fort near the river, and a small village.

Further on, across the river, you see an old forest. Green and growing, and yet incredibly dark and foreboding, the forest covers many miles, bordering the river as far as the eye can see.

PCs with Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) can recognize (DC 10) the city as Longspear, located on the Javan River. The forest beyond is the western edges of the Dreadwood.

In the windows behind you, you can see a mighty range of mountains. Centered in the windows is a smallish fort, guarding access to a pass leading up into the mountains. Some distance beyond the fort, a great mound rises, and sits astride the path near the top of the pass. Great clouds of smoke boil from the mound's peak, lit from below by the great swaths of lava which slowly bubble forth.

PCs with Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) can recognize (DC 10) Fort Kendeen, located in the westernmost portions of the Yeomanry in the lower reaches of the Crystallmist Mountains. Near the top of the pass stands the volcano which has closed the pass between the Yeomanry and the Dry Steppes.

There is nothing more of interest in the upper window room. If the party should compare the two exit stairs, they will notice a slight difference, but nothing they can name. Note that the stairs in the lower window room are exactly the same, and look the same, with no differences.

Climbing either stair brings the PCs to the sigil room (Encounter 11). Following Encounter 11, they may take the other stair to Encounter 12, but no matter which stairway the party climbs first, they will emerge in the sigil room first.

As the PCs begin their climb (again the stairs are 100 steps long), have them make a Spot check against Eram's weasel familiar, who is invisible (+40 bonus to Hide) and hiding at the top of the stairs. The weasel, of course, alerts Eram when the party closes in.

ENCOUNTER 11: FINAL STRIKE

As you wearily climb the stairs, you are careful to keep away from the edges of the steps in case whatever thickens the air should fail. You have the suspicion that you would spend eternity falling through gray nothingness if you did fall.

Looking upward, it is hard to make sense of what you see. There's a square opening standing in nothingness at the top of the stairs. You can see that there appears to be a room beyond, but the mixed up reversal of the square hole opening into a room, while all around it is empty space makes it hard to focus on what you see.

In the sigil room of the bolthole, the PCs find Eram waiting for them. If his weasel familiar is not spotted (see the end of Encounter 10), skip to the second read-aloud paragraph, otherwise, read the following:

At the top of the stairs, you suddenly see something—perhaps big or small, you're not quite sure—move as if it were crawling out of sight.

If the weasel was not spotted, read the following:

You emerge from the stairs through the opening back down into the gray nothingness, and look about you.

Before you stands an unusual suit of armor, constructed of iron, wood and stone. On the wall beyond is a great symbol drawn—no, incised—into the familiar red brick, and made up of smaller arcane runes and sigils.

You wonder absently about the breeze which is strong enough to move the suit of armor's arms, then you realize that there is no wind; it must be the armor that moves.

From behind comes the soft rustle of flipping pages, and you hear, "If you cannot understand that you are unwelcome, I will drive you out."

Turning, you see a somewhat short figure of a man, portly, with few remaining wisps of blonde hair. He wears a short tunic over loose trousers, and low boots. Although the tunic has seen better days, it is clearly rather elegant, with a line of arcane runes stitched along the edges.

In front of him an open book hangs in the air without support. A sickly green glow comes from the pages of the thick book, casting an evil mixture of light and shadow across his features, as he quickly flips back and forth from page to page.

You can see another great symbol on the wall behind him, again cut into the red brick. A quick look to the left and right confirms that these walls too hold a giant symbol. You can see no doorway or other means of exit. It seems you've reached your destination, and he matches the descriptions you've gotten of Eram.

Eram has been aware of the party for some time and has prepared for their arrival. When the PCs do reach the sigil room, he commands the shield guardian to attack, and casts slow on the party.

Note that the Book of the Binders is an intelligent item, similar to an intelligent weapon. The exact nature of the Book is not detailed here, as it will never be available to players. However, the Book confers certain abilities to its wielder (Eram) and can take actions on its own. It can and will act on its own to help defeat the party. The Book has the following abilities manifest during this Encounter:

- The book grants Eram use of the Sanctum Spell feat (Complete Arcane) without the requisite 3 months and 7 days. All of Eram's spells are prepared as sanctum spells.
- The book grants Eram complete immunity to Enchantment (compulsion or mind-affecting) spells and effects (excluding the book's powers).

- The book grants Eram a +4 enhancement bonus to Con.
- The book can counterspell every other round, using *greater dispel magic* at will, at Eram's Caster Level + 2.
- The book will *dimension door* Eram anytime he is grappled.

Tactics: Eram casts the following spells two minutes before the PCs arrive: *invisibility* (on weasel familiar), *touch of idiocy* (weasel familiar holds the charge), *protection from arrows* (on himself), *shield* (on himself), *mirror image* (on himself), *stoneskin* (on himself, APLs 8+), *Otiluke's dispelling screen* (hemisphere over the stairwell, APLs 8+), *mind fog* (other end of room, APLs 8+), *see invisible* (on himself, APLs 8+), *spell turning* (on himself, APL 12). Just as the PCs arrive, he casts *displacement* (on himself) at APL 6 or *haste* (on himself) at APLs 8+.

As the party emerges from the stairs, Eram makes his speech and casts *slow*. He directs the shield guardian to cast its stored *confusion* spell and initiates the guardian's *shield other* ability. Eram directs his familiar to attack a spellcaster (order of preference - arcane, divine, bardic, other) with the *touch of idiocy* spell it carries.

In the second round of combat, Eram casts an area effect spell on party: APL 6 – *deep slumber*, APL 8 – *crushing despair*, APL 10 – *rainbow pattern*, APL 12 – *forcecage*. Eram directs the shield guardian to guard him. If successful with the *touch of idiocy* spell, the weasel attacks another (lightly armored) PC; otherwise, it continues to attack with the *touch* spell, followed by its attack ability.

In the third round of combat, Eram casts an area effect spell on party: APL 6 – *fireball*, APL 8 – *cone of cold*, APLs 10 and 12 – *chain lightning*. The shield guardian attacks any PC nearing Eram, but it doesn't leave his adjacent square. The weasel continues to attempt the *touch* spell (if still active) and attack attacks.

In subsequent rounds, Eram singles out stronger looking PCs for spells such as *dominate person* or continues to cast area effect spells.

As the battle progresses, keep track of Eram's hp total (remember the shield other ability of the shield guardian). On his turn, if, in your judgment, he is unlikely to last another round, Eram tears the book asunder (see below). If Eram takes enough damage to die, he does not fall until his turn, is not dead or incapacitated, and can still act (his life maintained by the power of the book). Give no indication to the PCs that Eram will fall, other than the following: his movements become somewhat jerky and slow, his eyes become unfocused, his body begins to twitch, and he becomes unsteady on his feet.

As a final act of vengeance, the *Book of the Binders* directs Eram to tear it apart. Since this cannot (in game

terms), occur except on Eram's turn, the book will keep him alive and free to do so (this event must occur so adapt the end of the combat, as necessary, to allow it to occur).

On Eram's 'final' turn, read the following:

After a brief and sharp flash of light, you see Eram's muscles bulge with strength and effort. With a mighty roar, the once-slight mage takes the floating book in his hands and tears it apart.

When the Book of the Binders is destroyed, (as a sort of "final strike"), it will deal the following damage to those in range (DC 13 + APL Reflex save for half damage):

APL 6	10d6
APL 8	12d6
APL 10	14d6
APL 12	16d6

Note: For every five feet between Eram and a PC, the damage will decrease by 1d6, to a minimum of half the initial blast. Reduce the damage for distance and then apply saving throws.

After the blast, read the following to the players:

The horrendous crash of the book's destruction still rings in your ears. Looking about, you find yourself in a flurry of paper: partially torn, ripped, scorched, outright burned and even pristine pages from the book still flutter and fall to the floor. The body of Eram is nowhere to be seen, although there is a small scorch mark on the stones where he stood. Pieces of the shield guardian are scattered against the walls; it seems no opponent has survived the blast.

APL 6 (EL 10)

- **Eram:** Male Human Wiz6; hp 32; see Appendix 1.
- **Weasel, Eram's Familiar:** hp 16; see Appendix 1.
- **Shield Guardian:** hp 135; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 12)

- **Eram:** Male Human Wiz10; hp 53; see Appendix 1.
- **Weasel, Eram's Familiar:** hp 26; see Appendix 1.
- **Shield Guardian:** hp 135; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 14)

- **Eram:** Male Human Wiz12; hp 63; see Appendix 1.
- **Weasel, Eram's Familiar:** hp 31; see Appendix 1.
- **Shield Guardian, 23 HD-Advanced:** hp 195; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 16)

- **Eram:** Male Human Wizard; hp 74; see Appendix 1.
- **Weasel, Eram's Familiar:** hp 37; see Appendix 1.
- **Shield Guardian, 27 HD-Advanced:** hp 233; see Appendix 1.

Treasure: Eram's possessions are the main treasure here. PCs may also gather the surviving pages of the *Book of the Binders*. Those that do so receive the **Sheaf of Pages from the Book of the Binders** effect on the Adventure Record.

ENCOUNTER 12: LITTLE HOUSE IN THE MIST

Following the encounter with Eram above, the PCs can retrace their steps down to the upper window room. There, they may check the opposite stairway leading out (if the PCs begin looking for a way out of the bolthole, they eventually check the stairs). Read the following when the stairs are explored:

As you noticed, the stairs are different. Brighter for one thing; as you climb upward, you suddenly emerge from the gray mists as if you were high atop a mountain looking down at a fog bank in a valley. The stairs continue upward, with no visible support, to what appears to be the top of a tower.

In the center of the 50 ft. square tower sits a small house made of wood, about 30 feet on a side, with a thatched roof. Smoke curls lazily from the chimney, rising into the gray mists. It looks very much as if a giant hand plucked a typical Yeoman home from the countryside, and placed it here.

Circling the house, you take in the view: in the distance, to the north, west and south, you can see tall mountains rise above the mist. To the east, there is nothing but gray mist, although perhaps you can make out a dark smudge on the horizon.

When the PCs enter the house read the following:

You are greeted by the warm sounds of the crackling fire when you enter the house. The inside is all one large room. Ahead of you is the fireplace, and to one side a small kitchen area, with a small desk opposite. The floor is covered by a thick rug, and against the right wall is a bed, enormous by the standards of the Yeomanry. A small wardrobe stands in the corner. A sitting area, couch, chairs and low table, are to your left, placed with an eye toward the open window. Below the window sits a large, iron-bound chest. While the hasp is thrown, there is no lock.

Treasure: This is Eram's lair. Much of the contents of the room are mundane. After a diligent search, the party will find treasure cached here from various areas of

the bolthole. The *Ring of Asberdies* can also be found here; anyone placing it on their finger is subject to the **Cursed Item – Ring of Asberdies** effect on the Adventure Record.

APL 6: *Ring of Asberdies, hat of disguise.*

APL 8: *Ring of Asberdies, hat of disguise, chime of opening.*

APL 10: *Ring of Asberdies, hat of disguise, chime of opening, minor ring of spell storing.*

APL 12: *Ring of Asberdies, hat of disguise, chime of opening, minor ring of spell storing, decanter of endless water.*

CONCLUSION

Once the PCs defeat Eram, they must find a way out of the bolthole, most likely through one of the magical views on the levels below (PCs must have the *Ring of Asberdies* in their possession to use the views).

When the PC holding or wearing the ring steps through the window, he and any allies within 5 feet wishing to accompany him are transported safely to what is seen in the window. A Spellcraft check (DC 20) reveals the ring's connection to the windows, while a DC 25 check indicates that close proximity to the ring is required when stepping through the window.

Stepping through a window will teleport the PCs to the view seen, safely. They must then make their way back (uneventfully), to the University of Loftwick to report what they have found. When they do so, they receive the **Favor of Grosspokesman Jalandri Silbrendas** and **Favor of Chief Librarian Haladaras** effects on the Adventure Record.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 6

Defeat the nimblewright

APL 6: 180 xp.

APL 8: 240 xp.

APL 10: 300 xp.

APL 12: 360 xp.

Encounter 9

Survive or disarm the trap

- APL 6: 30 xp.
- APL 8: 30 xp.
- APL 10: 30 xp.
- APL 12: 30 xp.

Encounter 10

Defeat the caryatid column

- APL 6: 240 xp.
- APL 8: 300 xp.
- APL 10: 360 xp.
- APL 12: 420 xp.

Encounter 11

Defeat Eram and his guardian

- APL 6: 270 xp.
- APL 8: 330 xp.
- APL 10: 390 xp.
- APL 12: 450 xp.

Discretionary roleplaying award

- APL 6: 180 xp.
- APL 8: 225 xp.
- APL 10: 270 xp.
- APL 12: 315 xp.

Total possible experience

- APL 6: 900 xp.
- APL 8: 1,125 xp.
- APL 10: 1,350 xp.
- APL 12: 1,575 xp.

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

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

coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

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

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

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

Encounter 1:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 0 gp.

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 0 gp.

Encounter 6:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *elixir of fire breath* (92 gp), *pipes of sounding* (150 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *elixir of fire breath* (92 gp), *pipes of sounding* (150 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp), *bag of holding type I* (208 gp), *horn of fog* (167 gp), *rope of climbing* (250 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *elixir of fire breath* (92 gp), *pipes of sounding* (150 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp), *bag of holding type I* (208 gp), *horn of fog* (167 gp), *rope of climbing* (250 gp), *circlet of persuasion* (375 gp), *stone salve* (333 gp), *vest of escape* (433 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *elixir of fire breath* (92 gp), *pipes of sounding* (150 gp), *silversheen* (21 gp), *bag of holding type I* (208 gp), *horn of fog* (167 gp), *rope of climbing* (250 gp), *circlet of persuasion* (375 gp), *stone salve* (333 gp), *vest of escape* (433 gp), *boots of striding and springing* (458 gp), *periapt of health* (617 gp), *pipes of haunting* (500 gp).

Encounter 11:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp), *ring of protection +1* (167 gp), *minor ring of spell storing*

(1,500 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *metamagic rod (maximize, lesser)* (1,167 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp), *ring of protection +1* (167 gp), *minor ring of spell storing* (1,500 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *metamagic rod (maximize, lesser)* (1,167 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *bracers of armor +2* (333 gp), *ring of protection +1* (167 gp), *ring of blinking* (2,250 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *metamagic rod (maximize, lesser)* (1,167 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *bracers of armor +2* (333 gp), *ring of protection +1* (667 gp), *ring of blinking* (2,250 gp), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *metamagic rod (maximize, lesser)* (1,167 gp).

Encounter 12:

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *hat of disguise* (150 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *hat of disguise* (150 gp), *chime of opening* (250 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *hat of disguise* (150 gp), *chime of opening* (250 gp), *minor ring of spell storing* (1,500 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: *hat of disguise* (150 gp), *chime of opening* (250 gp), *minor ring of spell storing* (1,500 gp), *decanter of endless water* (750 gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 3,355 gp – Total: 3,360 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 4,230 gp – Total: 4,235 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 7,909 gp – Total: 7,914 gp (2,300 gp).

APL 12: L: 0 gp, C: 5 gp, M: 10,734 gp – Total: 10,739 gp (3,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

☛ Favor of Grosspokesman Jalandri Silbrendas

In reward for your risk of life and limb in discovering and countering the recent threat to the Yeomanry, this PC has earned the favor of Jalandri Silbrendas, Grosspokesman of Loftwick.

For one calendar year from the date on this AR, this PC enjoys the following benefits while in Loftwick: free Rich upkeep and a 10% discount to purchases of mundane equipment from the *Player's Handbook*.

☛ Cursed Item – *Ring of Asberdies*

This PC took the ring of Asberdies and placed it on her finger, so that her party could escape the bolthole. Sadly, the wearer of this ring is now an unwitting agent of Asberdies. This ring is cursed, and the wearer can only remove it after a *remove curse*, *break enchantment*, miracle, or *wish* spell is cast upon it by a caster of 17th level or higher. Until then, this PC may find themselves used as a pawn by the powerful Archmage. Also, this PC suffers a -2 penalty to all saves against mind-affecting spells and effects while wearing the ring. A small benefit from the ring is that the wearer gains a +1 deflection bonus to their AC.

☛ Sheaf of Pages from the Book of the Binders

This PC recovered a sheaf of pages from the Book of the Binders. When the book was sundered, these pages were left behind. They are torn, ripped, scorched, and outright burned in places, reducing their value considerably. The pages are covered in arcane runes and magical writings. A PC that can read magic or Decipher Script (DC 30) can read what remains of the pages. The book, created by the Archmage Asberdies, was such a powerful item, that even the sheaf of pages this PC recovered are tainted by its evil; this PC radiates a faint evil aura as long as he carries this sheaf, even if it is in an extradimensional space.

If this PC studies the sheaf for four unbroken hours, he gains a +5 insight bonus to their next Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) check. The sheaf can be studied again after the bonus is used to gain another bonus; each bonus requires four hours of unbroken study.

If this PC is an arcane spellcaster, studying the sheaf leads the PC into new insights of spell research. This PC, after each new level gained as an arcane spellcaster, may choose an arcane spell from the Limited list in the LGCS and gain it (if a sorcerer or bard) or scribe it into their spellbook at half the normal cost (if a wizard). The PC may gain a maximum of three new spells this way, mark the spells gained below: _____, _____, _____.

☛ Curse – Construct Contagion

This PC suffered a serious blow (one that was a critical hit, one for massive damage, or one that put the PC's hp total below zero) from an "infected" construct and has been cursed with construct contagion (it is not a disease, despite the name and use of the word infected). The constructs in this adventure cause the iron version of this infection. The initial infection causes random parts of this PC's body to transform into bits of iron metal. This first stage grants a +2 natural armor bonus and a -2 penalty to Charisma.

Each time this PC is struck with a critical hit, a blow for massive damage, or has his hp total reduced below zero, they must make a Fort save (DC 12 + the APL this adventure was played at). If they fail the save, check one of the boxes below; this indicates the contagion has

advanced in intensity, transforming more of your body into a construct (although you do not assume the construct type yet). Each advance further affects the abilities of the curse victim:

☐ Second Stage: -2 penalty to Dexterity.

☐ Third Stage: -10 ft. penalty to Speed (-5 ft. penalty for Small PCs).

☐ Fourth Stage: healing spells cast on this PC are only half as effective with regards to curing hp damage.

☐ Final Stage: PC becomes a construct - contact the Yeomanry Triad (see below).

If the curse progress through all four check boxes, this PC is completely transformed by the curse. At that point, your PC is removed from play until you receive documentation for the completed transformation from the Yeomanry Triad.

This curse can currently only be removed by a *remove curse*, *break enchantment*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell from a caster of 17th level or higher. However, there may be other means to remove this curse that this PC may discover in future Yeomanry adventures.

Favor of Chief Librarian Haladaras

For your efforts in helping the Library of the University of Loftwick, this PC has earned Chief Librarian Haladaras' favor. On any adventure set in the Yeomanry where the PC has time to visit Haladaras in Loftwick, this PC can call on Haladaras, and his vast knowledge of the holdings in the Library, to assist the PC in researching a question in any area of knowledge or profession. The research, which takes two hours of time in the Library, grants this PC a +10 circumstance bonus to the Knowledge or Profession check for which this PC was researching. This favor may be used three times (check the boxes as used) before the favor is consumed:

☐ ☐ ☐.

Item Access

APL 6:

- *Elixir of Fire Breath* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Hat of Disguise* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Metamagic Rod, Maximize, Lesser* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Pipes of Sounding* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Ring of Spell Storing, Minor* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Silversheen* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)

APL 8 (APL 6 Items plus):

- *Bag of Holding – Type I* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Chime of Opening* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Horn of Fog* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Rope of Climbing* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)

APL 10 (APL 6, 8 Items plus):

- *Bracers of Armor +2* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Circlet of Persuasion* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Ring of Blinking* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Stone Salve* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Vest of Escape* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)

APL 12 (APL 6, 8, 10 Items plus):

- *Boots of Striding and Springing* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Decanter of Endless Water* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Periapt of Health* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Pipes of Haunting* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Ring of Protection +2* (Adventure, Dungeon Master's Guide)

APPENDIX 1 – NPCS

ENCOUNTER 6

APL 6

Nimblewright: CR 7; Medium Construct; HD 10d10+20; hp 90; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24, touch 17, flat-footed 17 (+7 Dex, +7 natural); BA/Grp +7/+11; Atk +11 melee (2d6+4/15-20, rapier-hand); Full Atk +11 melee (2d6+4/15-20, 2 rapier-hands); SA tripping thrust, spell-like abilities, Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., augmented critical, construct traits, SR 27, vulnerabilities; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 24, Con –, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 19. *Monster Manual* 2, page 162.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Jump +19, Tumble +22; Combat Expertise^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *alter self*, *cat's grace*, *entropic shield*, *feather fall*, *haste*. Caster level 10th. Save DC is Cha-based.

Tripping Thrust (Ex): A nimblewright's rapier-hand attacks are powerful enough to push over creatures its own size or smaller. An opponent who is the target of a successful critical hit from a nimblewright must make a Reflex save (DC 19) or be knocked prone as if tripped.

Augmented Critical (Ex): A nimblewright threat range for its rapier-hand attack is 15-20. On a successful critical hit, its foe is subject to a tripping thrust attack.

Vulnerabilities: A cold effect slows a nimblewright for 3 rounds, and a fire effect stuns it for 1 round.

Languages: Common, Elven, Dwarven.

Description: Nimblewrights are rapier-wielding constructs that disguise themselves as living humanoids. They often serve as hired bodyguards, but many are employed to infiltrate organizations and secret societies or spy on individuals. Unlike most constructs, a nimblewright is created with intelligence and a distinct personality that allows for intuitive thinking and responsiveness. Like a golem, a nimblewright is a powerful creation that combines awesome magic with elemental forces. Its animating force is a spirit from the Elemental Plane of Water. The process of creating a nimblewright binds the unwilling spirit to the artificial body and binds it to the will of the creator. An undisguised nimblewright appears as a nondescript, steel colored, mechanical human. When disguised, it wears clothes and uses spells to hide its true nature. In this way it can appear as almost any Medium-sized humanoid it wishes to become. In battle, it brings to bear all of its special fighting skills to deprive opponents of their weapons before running them through. If a nimblewright has ample warning of a fight, it enhances its combat skills with *cat's grace* and *haste* before joining melee. The monster fights with two rapiers that are actually parts of its body. These rapiers are treated as

natural weapons. When not in use, the weapons fold into its forearms. A nimblewright can fully deploy both rapiers as a free action.

APL 8

Nimblewright Ftr1, 14 HD-Advanced: CR 9; Medium Construct; HD 14d10+1d10+20; hp 128; Init +10; Spd 40 ft.; AC 27, touch 20, flat-footed 17 (+10 Dex, +7 natural); BA/Grp +11/+17; Atk +21 melee (2d6+6/15-20, rapier-hand); Full Atk +21 melee (2d6+6/15-20, 2 rapier-hands); SA tripping thrust, spell-like abilities, Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., augmented critical, construct traits, SR 27, vulnerabilities; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +14, Will +8; Str 22, Dex 30, Con –, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 18. *Monster Manual* 2, page 162.

Skills and Feats: Balance +29, Intimidate +7, Jump +25, Tumble +29; Combat Expertise^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Whirlwind Attack^B.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *alter self*, *cat's grace*, *entropic shield*, *feather fall*, *haste*. Caster level 14th. Save DC is Cha-based.

Tripping Thrust (Ex): A nimblewright's rapier-hand attacks are powerful enough to push over creatures its own size or smaller. An opponent who is the target of a successful critical hit from a nimblewright must make a Reflex save (DC 27) or be knocked prone as if tripped.

Augmented Critical (Ex): A nimblewright threat range for its rapier-hand attack is 15-20. On a successful critical hit, its foe is subject to a tripping thrust attack.

Vulnerabilities: A cold effect slows a nimblewright for 3 rounds, and a fire effect stuns it for 1 round.

Languages: Common, Elven, Dwarven, Ancient Suloise.

Description: Nimblewrights are rapier-wielding constructs that disguise themselves as living humanoids. They often serve as hired bodyguards, but many are employed to infiltrate organizations and secret societies or spy on individuals. Unlike most constructs, a nimblewright is created with intelligence and a distinct personality that allows for intuitive thinking and responsiveness. Like a golem, a nimblewright is a powerful creation that combines awesome magic with elemental forces. Its animating force is a spirit from the Elemental Plane of Water. The process of creating a nimblewright binds the unwilling spirit to the artificial body and binds it to the will of the creator. An undisguised nimblewright appears as a nondescript, steel colored, mechanical human. When disguised, it wears clothes and uses spells to hide its true nature. In this way it can appear as almost any Medium-sized humanoid it wishes to become. In battle, it brings to bear all of its special fighting skills to deprive opponents of their weapons before running them through. If a nimblewright has ample warning of a fight, it enhances

its combat skills with *cat's grace* and *haste* before joining melee. The monster fights with two rapiers that are actually parts of its body. These rapiers are treated as natural weapons. When not in use, the weapons fold into its forearms. A nimblewright can fully deploy both rapiers as a free action.

APL 10

Nimblewright Ftr1, 18 HD-Advanced: CR 11; Large Construct; HD 18d10+1d10+30; hp 165; Init +9; Spd 40 ft.; AC 27, touch 18, flat-footed 18 (-1 size, +9 Dex, +9 natural); BA/Grp +14/+28; Atk +24 melee (3d6+10/15-20, rapier-hand); Full Atk +24 melee (3d6+10/15-20, 2 rapier-hands); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA tripping thrust, spell-like abilities, Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., augmented critical, construct traits, SR 27, vulnerabilities; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +15, Will +10; Str 30, Dex 29, Con –, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 18. *Monster Manual* 2, page 162.

Skills and Feats: Balance +32, Intimidate +7, Jump +33, Tumble +32; Combat Expertise^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (rapier-hand), Whirlwind Attack^B.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *alter self*, *cat's grace*, *entropic shield*, *feather fall*, *haste*. Caster level 18th. Save DC is Cha-based.

Tripping Thrust (Ex): A nimblewright's rapier-hand attacks are powerful enough to push over creatures its own size or smaller. An opponent who is the target of a successful critical hit from a nimblewright must make a Reflex save (DC 33) or be knocked prone as if tripped.

Augmented Critical (Ex): A nimblewright threat range for its rapier-hand attack is 15-20. On a successful critical hit, its foe is subject to a tripping thrust attack.

Vulnerabilities: A cold effect slows a nimblewright for 3 rounds, and a fire effect stuns it for 1 round.

Languages: Common, Elven, Dwarven, Ancient Suloise.

Description: Nimblewrights are rapier-wielding constructs that disguise themselves as living humanoids. They often serve as hired bodyguards, but many are employed to infiltrate organizations and secret societies or spy on individuals. Unlike most constructs, a nimblewright is created with intelligence and a distinct personality that allows for intuitive thinking and responsiveness. Like a golem, a nimblewright is a powerful creation that combines awesome magic with elemental forces. Its animating force is a spirit from the Elemental Plane of Water. The process of creating a nimblewright binds the unwilling spirit to the artificial body and binds it to the will of the creator. An undisguised nimblewright appears as a nondescript, steel colored, mechanical human. When disguised, it wears clothes and uses spells to hide its true nature. In this way it can appear as almost any Medium-sized humanoid it wishes to become. In battle, it brings to bear all of its special fighting skills to deprive opponents of their weapons before running them through. If a

nimblewright has ample warning of a fight, it enhances its combat skills with *cat's grace* and *haste* before joining melee. The monster fights with two rapiers that are actually parts of its body. These rapiers are treated as natural weapons. When not in use, the weapons fold into its forearms. A nimblewright can fully deploy both rapiers as a free action.

APL 12

Nimblewright Ftr2, 22 HD-Advanced: CR 11; Large Construct; HD 22d10+2d10+30; hp 203; Init +10; Spd 40 ft.; AC 28, touch 19, flat-footed 18 (-1 size, +10 Dex, +9 natural); BA/Grp +18/+32; Atk +28 melee (4d6+10/15-20, rapier-hand); Full Atk +28 melee (4d6+10/15-20, 2 rapier-hands); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA tripping thrust, spell-like abilities, Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., augmented critical, construct traits, SR 27, vulnerabilities; AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +17, Will +11; Str 30, Dex 31, Con –, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 18. *Monster Manual* 2, page 162.

Skills and Feats: Balance +37, Intimidate +10, Jump +37, Tumble +37; Combat Expertise^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Elusive Target*, Improved Disarm, Improved Natural Attack (rapier-hand), Improved Trip, Mobility, Power Attack, Power Critical (rapier-hand)^{B*}, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (rapier-hand), Whirlwind Attack^B. *Complete Warrior.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *alter self*, *cat's grace*, *entropic shield*, *feather fall*, *haste*. Caster level 22nd. Save DC is Cha-based.

Tripping Thrust (Ex): A nimblewright's rapier-hand attacks are powerful enough to push over creatures its own size or smaller. An opponent who is the target of a successful critical hit from a nimblewright must make a Reflex save (DC 35) or be knocked prone as if tripped.

Augmented Critical (Ex): A nimblewright threat range for its rapier-hand attack is 15-20. On a successful critical hit, its foe is subject to a tripping thrust attack.

Vulnerabilities: A cold effect slows a nimblewright for 3 rounds, and a fire effect stuns it for 1 round.

Languages: Common, Elven, Dwarven, Ancient Suloise.

Description: Nimblewrights are rapier-wielding constructs that disguise themselves as living humanoids. They often serve as hired bodyguards, but many are employed to infiltrate organizations and secret societies or spy on individuals. Unlike most constructs, a nimblewright is created with intelligence and a distinct personality that allows for intuitive thinking and responsiveness. Like a golem, a nimblewright is a powerful creation that combines awesome magic with elemental forces. Its animating force is a spirit from the Elemental Plane of Water. The process of creating a nimblewright binds the unwilling spirit to the artificial body and binds it to the will of the creator. An undisguised nimblewright appears as a nondescript, steel colored, mechanical human. When disguised, it wears clothes and uses spells to hide its true nature. In this way it can appear as almost any Medium-sized humanoid it

wishes to become. In battle, it brings to bear all of its special fighting skills to deprive opponents of their weapons before running them through. If a nimblewright has ample warning of a fight, it enhances its combat skills with *cat's grace* and *haste* before joining melee. The monster fights with two rapiers that are actually parts of its body. These rapiers are treated as natural weapons. When not in use, the weapons fold into its forearms. A nimblewright can fully deploy both rapiers as a free action.

ENCOUNTER 10

APL 6

Caryatid Column: CR 6; Medium Construct; HD 6d10+20; hp 60; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +9 natural); BA/Grp +4/+9; Atk +12 melee (1d10+9/19-20, +2 *bastard sword*, two-handed) or +9 melee (1d4+7, slam); Full Atk +12 melee (1d10+9/19-20, +2 *bastard sword*, two-handed) or +9 melee (1d4+7, 2 slams) or +12 melee (1d10+7/19-20, +2 *bastard sword*, one-handed) and +4 melee (1d4+2, slam); SA Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., break weapon, column form, construct traits, hardness 8, magic weapon; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will -3; Str 20, Dex 16, Con -, Int 6, Wis 1, Cha 1. *Fiend Folio*, page 30.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy -3, Sense Motive +4; Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)^B.

Break Weapon (Su): A caryatid column is imbued with a supernatural defense against weapon attacks. Whenever a creature strikes a caryatid column with a melee weapon, the weapon must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 13) or break and become useless, dealing no damage to the caryatid column. As usual, a magic weapon uses either the wielder's save bonus or its own save bonus, whichever is better. Nonmagic ranged weapons automatically shatter upon hitting the caryatid column, dealing no damage. Magic ranged weapons receive a Fortitude save (DC 13) to resist this effect.

Column Form (Ex): When at rest (not commanded, or waiting to fulfill a command), a caryatid column takes the form of a simple column of stone. This column is about two feet in diameter, and it extends up to the ceiling of the chamber or to a height of 25 feet, whichever is less. Unless commanded otherwise, a caryatid column remains in this form until attacked, and it even allows creatures to climb it (Climb check DC 15).

A caryatid column in its column form looks like a pillar in most respects. It does not radiate magic, and true seeing does not reveal its humanoid form. Careful examination of the column (Search check DC 25) reveals very faint and distorted lines that make the pillar resemble a woman with a sword. Anyone who successfully makes a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 12) notes that the column serves no structural purpose since it bears none of the ceiling's weight. A close examination of the top of the column (Search check DC 15) or a keen eye (Spot check DC 20)

shows that the column is not cemented or joined to the ceiling. Dwarves and other creatures with stonecunning receive a free Search check as if actively looking when they pass within 10 feet of a caryatid column. Changing forms is a free action, and a caryatid column can change once per round.

Hardness (Ex): Like an animated object made of stone, a caryatid column has a hardness of 8.

Magic Weapon: A magic weapon is incorporated into a caryatid column at the time of its creation. This weapon, usually a +2 *bastard sword*, functions in all respects like a normal magic weapon of its type, with one exception: Whenever it is out of the caryatid column's hands, it reverts to stone and becomes a nonmagical sculpture. Should the caryatid column then pick up the weapon, it regains its normal form and magical qualities. If a caryatid column needs both hands free, it can stow its weapon by simply pressing it against its side; the weapon then merges with the caryatid column's body and can be retrieved by the caryatid column as any other character would draw a weapon.

Languages: none (incapable of speech).

Description: A caryatid column looks like a simple stone pillar until an unwary creature violates the strictures given to the construct by its creator. In the blink of an eye, the caryatid column becomes a silk-draped, beautiful female that wields a deadly magic weapon.

APL 8

Caryatid Column Ftr1, 10 HD-Advanced: CR 8; Medium Construct; HD 10d10+1d10+20; hp 98; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 15, flat-footed 19 (+5 Dex, +9 natural); BA/Grp +8/+16; Atk +19 melee (1d10+14/19-20, +2 *bastard sword*, two-handed) or +16 melee (1d4+12, slam); Full Atk +19/+14 melee (1d10+14/19-20, +2 *bastard sword*, two-handed) or +16 melee (1d4+12, 2 slams) or +19/+14 melee (1d10+10/19-20, +2 *bastard sword*, one-handed) and +11 melee (1d4+4, slam); SA Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., break weapon, column form, construct traits, hardness 8, magic weapon; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will -1; Str 26, Dex 20, Con -, Int 6, Wis 2, Cha 3. *Fiend Folio*, page 30.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy -2, Intimidate -3, Sense Motive +9; Combat Brute*, Improved Bull Rush^B, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)^B. *Complete Warrior.

Break Weapon (Su): A caryatid column is imbued with a supernatural defense against weapon attacks. Whenever a creature strikes a caryatid column with a melee weapon, the weapon must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or break and become useless, dealing no damage to the caryatid column. As usual, a magic weapon uses either the wielder's save bonus or its own save bonus, whichever is better. Nonmagic ranged weapons automatically shatter upon hitting the caryatid column, dealing no damage. Magic ranged weapons receive a Fortitude save (DC 15) to resist this effect.

Column Form (Ex): When at rest (not commanded, or waiting to fulfill a command), a caryatid column takes the form of a simple column of stone. This column is about two feet in diameter, and it extends up to the ceiling of the chamber or to a height of 25 feet, whichever is less. Unless commanded otherwise, a caryatid column remains in this form until attacked, and it even allows creatures to climb it (Climb check DC 15).

A caryatid column in its column form looks like a pillar in most respects. It does not radiate magic, and true seeing does not reveal its humanoid form. Careful examination of the column (Search check DC 25) reveals very faint and distorted lines that make the pillar resemble a woman with a sword. Anyone who successfully makes a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 12) notes that the column serves no structural purpose since it bears none of the ceiling's weight. A close examination of the top of the column (Search check DC 15) or a keen eye (Spot check DC 20) shows that the column is not cemented or joined to the ceiling. Dwarves and other creatures with stonecunning receive a free Search check as if actively looking when they pass within 10 feet of a caryatid column. Changing forms is a free action, and a caryatid column can change once per round.

Hardness (Ex): Like an animated object made of stone, a caryatid column has a hardness of 8.

Magic Weapon: A magic weapon is incorporated into a caryatid column at the time of its creation. This weapon, usually a +2 *bastard sword*, functions in all respects like a normal magic weapon of its type, with one exception: Whenever it is out of the caryatid column's hands, it reverts to stone and becomes a nonmagical sculpture. Should the caryatid column then pick up the weapon, it regains its normal form and magical qualities. If a caryatid column needs both hands free, it can stow its weapon by simply pressing it against its side; the weapon then merges with the caryatid column's body and can be retrieved by the caryatid column as any other character would draw a weapon.

Languages: none (incapable of speech).

Description: A caryatid column looks like a simple stone pillar until an unwary creature violates the strictures given to the construct by its creator. In the blink of an eye, the caryatid column becomes a silk-draped, beautiful female that wields a deadly magic weapon.

APLs 10 or 12

Caryatid Column Ftr1, 14 HD-Advanced: CR 10; Large Construct; HD 14d10+1d10+30; hp 135; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +11 natural); BA/Grp +11/+27; Atk +25 melee (2d8+20/17-20, large +2 *bastard sword*, two-handed) or +22 melee (1d6+18, slam); Full Atk +25/+20/+15 melee (2d8+20/17-20, large +2 *bastard sword*, two-handed) or +22 melee (1d6+18, 2 slams) or +25/+20/+15 melee (2d8+14/17-20, large +2 *bastard sword*, one-handed) and +17 melee (1d6+6, slam); SA Construct Contagion

carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., break weapon, column form, construct traits, hardness 8, magic weapon; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +0; Str 34, Dex 18, Con –, Int 6, Wis 3, Cha 3. *Fiend Folio*, page 30.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy -2, Intimidate -3, Sense Motive +13; Awesome Blow, Combat Brute*, Improved Bull Rush^B, Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)^B.
*Complete Warrior.

Break Weapon (Su): A caryatid column is imbued with a supernatural defense against weapon attacks. Whenever a creature strikes a caryatid column with a melee weapon, the weapon must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 17) or break and become useless, dealing no damage to the caryatid column. As usual, a magic weapon uses either the wielder's save bonus or its own save bonus, whichever is better. Nonmagic ranged weapons automatically shatter upon hitting the caryatid column, dealing no damage. Magic ranged weapons receive a Fortitude save (DC 17) to resist this effect.

Column Form (Ex): When at rest (not commanded, or waiting to fulfill a command), a caryatid column takes the form of a simple column of stone. This column is about two feet in diameter, and it extends up to the ceiling of the chamber or to a height of 25 feet, whichever is less. Unless commanded otherwise, a caryatid column remains in this form until attacked, and it even allows creatures to climb it (Climb check DC 15).

A caryatid column in its column form looks like a pillar in most respects. It does not radiate magic, and true seeing does not reveal its humanoid form. Careful examination of the column (Search check DC 25) reveals very faint and distorted lines that make the pillar resemble a woman with a sword. Anyone who successfully makes a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 12) notes that the column serves no structural purpose since it bears none of the ceiling's weight. A close examination of the top of the column (Search check DC 15) or a keen eye (Spot check DC 20) shows that the column is not cemented or joined to the ceiling. Dwarves and other creatures with stonecunning receive a free Search check as if actively looking when they pass within 10 feet of a caryatid column. Changing forms is a free action, and a caryatid column can change once per round.

Hardness (Ex): Like an animated object made of stone, a caryatid column has a hardness of 8.

Magic Weapon: A magic weapon is incorporated into a caryatid column at the time of its creation. This weapon, usually a +2 *bastard sword*, functions in all respects like a normal magic weapon of its type, with one exception: Whenever it is out of the caryatid column's hands, it reverts to stone and becomes a nonmagical sculpture. Should the caryatid column then pick up the weapon, it regains its normal form and magical qualities. If a caryatid column needs both hands free, it can stow its weapon by simply pressing it against its side; the weapon then merges with the caryatid column's body and can be

retrieved by the caryatid column as any other character would draw a weapon.

Languages: none (incapable of speech).

Description: A caryatid column looks like a simple stone pillar until an unwary creature violates the strictures given to the construct by its creator. In the blink of an eye, the caryatid column becomes a silk-draped, beautiful female that wields a deadly magic weapon.

ENCOUNTER 11

APL 6

Eram: Male Human Wiz6 (Evoker); CR 6; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 6d4+18; hp 32; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +1 armor, +1 deflection, +4 shield); BA/Grp +3/+2; Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (weasel), complete immunity to Enchantment (compulsion or mind-affecting) spells and effects, prohibited schools (Conjuration, Necromancy); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4 (+6), Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12 (16), Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Listen +3, Spellcraft +14, Spot +3; Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item^B, Improved Initiative, Sanctum Spell^{B*}, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (Enchantment, Evocation). *Complete Arcane.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4+1/4+1/4+1/3+1; save DC 13 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat], DC 14 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat] for Enchantment and Evocation spells): 0 – detect magic, flare*, ray of frost*, read magic, resistance; 1st – charm person*, expeditious retreat, magic missile*, ~~shield~~, true strike; 2nd – ~~invisibility~~, ~~mirror image~~, ~~protection from arrows~~, scorching ray*, ~~touch of idiocy*~~; 3rd – deep slumber*, ~~displacement~~, fireball*, slow. *Evocation spell, **Enchantment spell. All spells are sanctum spells.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Draconic, Ignan.

Possessions: quarterstaff, bracers of armor +1, ring of protection +1, minor ring of spell storing (fireball), shield guardian amulet, potion of cure moderate wounds, metamagic rod (maximize, lesser).

Weasel, Eram's Familiar: Tiny Magical Beast; HD 6d8; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural); BA/Grp +3/-9; Atk/Full Ark +7 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA attach; SQ low-light vision, scent, alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +10, Concentration +9, Decipher Script +8, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (history) +5,

Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Hide +11, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +10, Spot +3; Agile, Weapon Finesse^B.

Skills: Weasels have a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks. They use their Dex modifier for Climb checks. A weasel can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dex bonus to Armor Class. An attached weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached weasel through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Shield Guardian: CR 8; Large Construct; HD 15d10+30; hp 135; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24 (-1 size, +15 natural); BA/Grp +11/+21; Atk +16 melee (1d8+6, slam); Full Atk +16 melee (1d8+6, 2 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., construct traits, fast healing 5, find master, guard, low-light vision, shield other, spell storing; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Find Master (Su): As long as a shield guardian and its amulet are on the same plane, the shield guardian can find the amulet wearer (or just the amulet, if it is removed after the guardian is called).

Guard (Ex): If ordered to do so, a shield guardian moves swiftly to defend the wearer of its amulet, blocking blows and disrupting foes. All attacks against the amulet wearer take a -2 penalty when the shield guardian is adjacent to its master.

Shield Other (Sp): The wearer of a shield guardian's amulet can activate this defensive capability if within 100 feet of the shield guardian. Just as the spell of the same name, this ability transfers to the shield guardian half the damage that would be dealt to the amulet wearer (this ability does not provide the spell's AC or save bonuses).

Spell Storing (Sp): A shield guardian can store one spell of 4th level or lower that is cast into it by another creature. It "casts" this spell when commanded to do so or when a predefined situation arises. Once this spell is used, the shield guardian can store another spell (or the same spell again). This shield guardian has a confusion spell stored (CL 7th, DC 16).

Languages: understand commands in any language but are incapable of speech.

Description: This massive conglomeration of stone, wood, and metal resembles a giant stick figure with stony appendages. If a shield guardian's amulet is destroyed, the guardian ceases to function until a new one is created. If the wearer dies but the amulet is intact, the shield guardian carries out the last command it was given.

APL 8

Eram: Male Human Wizard (Evoker); CR 10; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 10d4+30; hp 53; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +1 armor, +1 deflection, +4 shield); BA/Grp +5/+4; Atk +4 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (weasel), complete immunity to Enchantment (compulsion or mind-affecting) spells and effects, prohibited schools (Conjuration, Necromancy); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +5 (+7), Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12 (16), Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +16, Decipher Script +17, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +17, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +17, Listen +3, Spellcraft +19, Spot +3; Combat Casting, Craft Wand^B, Craft Wondrous Item^B, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Improved Initiative, Sanctum Spell^{B*}, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (Enchantment, Evocation). *Complete Arcane.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; save DC 14 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat], DC 15 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat] for Enchantment spells, DC 16 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat] for Evocation spells): 0 – detect magic, flare*, ray of frost*, read magic, resistance; 1st – charm person*, expeditious retreat, magic missile* x2, shield, true strike; 2nd – invisibility, mirror image, protection from arrows, scorching ray*, see invisible, touch of idiocy*; 3rd – deep slumber*, displacement, fireball*, haste, slow; 4th – confusion*, crushing despair*, Otiluke's dispelling screen^{CA}, ice storm*, stoneskin; 5th – cone of cold*, dominate person*, mind fog*. *Evocation spell, **Enchantment spell. All spells are sanctum spells. ^{CA}Complete Arcane.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Draconic, Ignan.

Possessions: quarterstaff, bracers of armor +1, ring of protection +1, minor ring of spell storing (fireball), shield guardian amulet, potion of cure moderate wounds, metamagic rod (maximize, lesser).

Weasel, Eram's Familiar: Tiny Magical Beast; HD 10d8; hp 26; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural); BA/Grp +5/-7; Atk/Full Ark +9 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA attach; SQ low-light vision, scent, alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master, speak with animals of its kind; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +10, Concentration +13, Decipher Script +13, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +13, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +13, Hide +11, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +15, Spot +3; Agile, Weapon Finesse^B.

Skills: Weasels have a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance and

Climb checks. They use their Dex modifier for Climb checks. A weasel can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dex bonus to Armor Class. An attached weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached weasel through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Shield Guardian: CR 8; Large Construct; HD 15d10+30; hp 135; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24 (-1 size, +15 natural); BA/Grp +11/+21; Atk +16 melee (1d8+6, slam); Full Atk +16 melee (1d8+6, 2 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., construct traits, fast healing 5, find master, guard, low-light vision, shield other, spell storing; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Find Master (Su): As long as a shield guardian and its amulet are on the same plane, the shield guardian can find the amulet wearer (or just the amulet, if it is removed after the guardian is called).

Guard (Ex): If ordered to do so, a shield guardian moves swiftly to defend the wearer of its amulet, blocking blows and disrupting foes. All attacks against the amulet wearer take a -2 penalty when the shield guardian is adjacent to its master.

Shield Other (Sp): The wearer of a shield guardian's amulet can activate this defensive capability if within 100 feet of the shield guardian. Just as the spell of the same name, this ability transfers to the shield guardian half the damage that would be dealt to the amulet wearer (this ability does not provide the spell's AC or save bonuses).

Spell Storing (Sp): A shield guardian can store one spell of 4th level or lower that is cast into it by another creature. It "casts" this spell when commanded to do so or when a predefined situation arises. Once this spell is used, the shield guardian can store another spell (or the same spell again). This shield guardian has a confusion spell stored (CL 7th, DC 16).

Languages: understand commands in any language but are incapable of speech.

Description: This massive conglomeration of stone, wood, and metal resembles a giant stick figure with stony appendages. If a shield guardian's amulet is destroyed, the guardian ceases to function until a new one is created. If the wearer dies but the amulet is intact, the shield guardian carries out the last command it was given.

APL 10

Eram: Male Human Wizard (Evoker); CR 12; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 12d4+36; hp 63; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +2 armor, +1 deflection, +4 shield); BA/Grp +6/+5; Atk +5 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); Full Atk +5/+0 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (weasel), complete immunity to Enchantment (compulsion or mind-

affecting) spells and effects, prohibited schools (Conjuration, Necromancy); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6 (+8), Will +9; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12 (16), Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +18, Decipher Script +19, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +19, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +19, Listen +3, Spellcraft +21, Spot +3; Combat Casting, Craft Wand^B, Craft Wondrous Item^B, Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment, Evocation), Improved Initiative, Sanctum Spell^{B*}, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (Enchantment, Evocation). ^{*}Complete Arcane.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4+1/5+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1; save DC 14 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat], DC 16 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat] for Enchantment and Evocation spells): 0 – *detect magic*, *flare**, *ray of frost**, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st – *charm person**, *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile** x2, *shield*, *true strike*; 2nd – *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *protection from arrows*, *scorching ray**, *see invisible*, *touch of idioy**; 3rd – *deep slumber**, *displacement*, *fireball** x2, *haste*, *slow*; 4th – *confusion**, *crushing despair**, *dispel magic*, *dispelling screen*^{CA}, *ice storm**, *stoneskin*; 5th – *cone of cold**, *dominate person**, *mind fog**, *telekinesis*; 6th – *chain lightning**, *disintegrate*, *flesh to stone*. ^{*}Evocation spell, ^{**}Enchantment spell. All spells are sanctum spells. ^{CA}Complete Arcane.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Draconic, Ignan.

Possessions: quarterstaff, bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1, shield guardian amulet, potion of cure serious wounds, metamagic rod (maximize, lesser), ring of blinking.

Weasel, Eram's Familiar: Tiny Magical Beast; HD 12d8; hp 31; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural); BA/Grp +6/-6; Atk/Full Ark +10 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1½ ft./0 ft.; SA attach; SQ low-light vision, scent, alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master, speak with animals of its kind, SR 17 (master's level + 5); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +10, Concentration +15, Decipher Script +15, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +15, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +15, Hide +11, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +17, Spot +3; Agile, Weapon Finesse^B.

Skills: Weasels have a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks. They use their Dex modifier for Climb checks. A weasel can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dex bonus to Armor Class. An attached weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached weasel through

grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Shield Guardian: CR 10; Large Construct; HD 23d10+30; hp 195; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +15 natural); BA/Grp +17/+27; Atk +22 melee (1d8+6, slam); Full Atk +22 melee (1d8+6, 2 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., construct traits, fast healing 5, find master, guard, low-light vision, *shield other*, *spell storing*; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 22, Dex 12, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Find Master (Su): As long as a shield guardian and its amulet are on the same plane, the shield guardian can find the amulet wearer (or just the amulet, if it is removed after the guardian is called).

Guard (Ex): If ordered to do so, a shield guardian moves swiftly to defend the wearer of its amulet, blocking blows and disrupting foes. All attacks against the amulet wearer take a -2 penalty when the shield guardian is adjacent to its master.

Shield Other (Sp): The wearer of a shield guardian's amulet can activate this defensive capability if within 100 feet of the shield guardian. Just as the spell of the same name, this ability transfers to the shield guardian half the damage that would be dealt to the amulet wearer (this ability does not provide the spell's AC or save bonuses).

Spell Storing (Sp): A shield guardian can store one spell of 4th level or lower that is cast into it by another creature. It "casts" this spell when commanded to do so or when a predefined situation arises. Once this spell is used, the shield guardian can store another spell (or the same spell again). This shield guardian has a *confusion* spell stored (CL 7th, DC 16).

Languages: understand commands in any language but are incapable of speech.

Description: This massive conglomeration of stone, wood, and metal resembles a giant stick figure with stony appendages. If a shield guardian's amulet is destroyed, the guardian ceases to function until a new one is created. If the wearer dies but the amulet is intact, the shield guardian carries out the last command it was given.

APL 12

Eram: Male Human Wizard (Evoker); CR 14; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 14d4+42; hp 74; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 18 (+4 Dex, +2 armor, +2 deflection, +4 shield); BA/Grp +7/+6; Atk +6 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (weasel), complete immunity to Enchantment (compulsion or mind-affecting) spells and effects, prohibited schools (Conjuration, Necromancy); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6 (+8), Will +10; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12 (16), Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +20, Decipher Script +21, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (history) +21, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +21, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +21, Listen +3, Spellcraft +23, Spot

+3; Combat Casting, Craft Wand^B, Craft Wondrous Item^B, Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment, Evocation), Improved Initiative, Sanctum Spell^{B*}, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (Enchantment, Evocation). ^{CA}Complete Arcane.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4+1/5+1/5+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/3+1/2+1; save DC 14 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat], DC 16 + spell level +1 [Sanctum Spell feat] for Enchantment and Evocation spells): 0 – *detect magic*, *flare*^{*}, *ray of frost*^{*}, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st – *charm person*^{*}, *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*^{*} x2, ~~shield~~, *true strike*; 2nd – ~~invisibility~~, ~~mirror image~~, ~~protection from arrows~~, *scorching ray*^{*}, ~~see invisible~~, ~~touch of idiocy~~^{*}; 3rd – *deep slumber*^{*}, *displacement*, *fireball*^{*} x2, ~~haste~~, *slow*; 4th – *confusion*^{*}, *crushing despair*^{*}, *dimensional anchor*, ~~Oiluke's dispelling screen~~^{CA}, *ice storm*^{*}, ~~stoneskin~~; 5th – *cone of cold*^{*}, *dominate person*^{*}, ~~mind fog~~^{*}, *telekinesis*; 6th – *chain lightning*^{*}, *disintegrate*, *flesh to stone*, *repulsion*; 7th – *forcecage*^{*}, *mass hold person*^{*}, ~~spell turning~~. ^{*}Evocation spell, ^{**}Enchantment spell. All spells are sanctum spells. ^{CA}Complete Arcane.

Languages: Common, Ancient Suloise, Draconic, Ignan.

Possessions: quarterstaff, bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +2, shield guardian amulet, potion of cure serious wounds, metamagic rod (maximize, lesser), ring of blinking.

Weasel, Eram's Familiar: Tiny Magical Beast; HD 14d8; hp 37; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +7 natural); BA/Grp +7/-5; Atk/Full Ark +11 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA attach; SQ low-light vision, scent, alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master, speak with animals of its kind, SR 19 (master's level + 5), *scurry* on familiar; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +10, Concentration +17, Decipher Script +18, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +18, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +18, Hide +11, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +20, Spot +3; Agile, Weapon Finesse^B.

Skills: Weasels have a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks. They use their Dex modifier for Climb checks. A weasel can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dex bonus to Armor Class. An attached weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached weasel through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Shield Guardian: CR 12; Huge Construct; HD 27d10+40; hp 233; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26 (-2 size, +18 natural); BA/Grp +20/+38; Atk +28 melee (2d6+10, slam); Full Atk +28 melee (2d6+10, 2

slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Construct Contagion carrier; SQ darkvision 60 ft., construct traits, fast healing 5, find master, guard, low-light vision, *shield other*, *spell storing*; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 30, Dex 11, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Find Master (Su): As long as a shield guardian and its amulet are on the same plane, the shield guardian can find the amulet wearer (or just the amulet, if it is removed after the guardian is called).

Guard (Ex): If ordered to do so, a shield guardian moves swiftly to defend the wearer of its amulet, blocking blows and disrupting foes. All attacks against the amulet wearer take a -2 penalty when the shield guardian is adjacent to its master.

Shield Other (Sp): The wearer of a shield guardian's amulet can activate this defensive capability if within 100 feet of the shield guardian. Just as the spell of the same name, this ability transfers to the shield guardian half the damage that would be dealt to the amulet wearer (this ability does not provide the spell's AC or save bonuses).

Spell Storing (Sp): A shield guardian can store one spell of 4th level or lower that is cast into it by another creature. It "casts" this spell when commanded to do so or when a predefined situation arises. Once this spell is used, the shield guardian can store another spell (or the same spell again). This shield guardian has a *confusion* spell stored (CL 7th, DC 16).

Languages: understand commands in any language but are incapable of speech.

Description: This massive conglomeration of stone, wood, and metal resembles a giant stick figure with stony appendages. If a shield guardian's amulet is destroyed, the guardian ceases to function until a new one is created. If the wearer dies but the amulet is intact, the shield guardian carries out the last command it was given.

DM AID – NEW RULES

NEW FEATS

Combat Brute (*Complete Warrior*)

You employ strength and leverage to great effect in battle.

Prerequisites: Improved Sunder, Power Attack, BAB +6.

Benefit: The Combat Brute feat enables the use of three tactical maneuvers.

Advancing Blows: To use this maneuver, you must make a successful bull rush attempt against a foe. During the next round, all of your attacks against that foe gain a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls for each square your bull rush moved that foe. For example, if you pushed an orc back 10 feet with a bull rush, you would gain a +2 bonus on attack and damage rolls against that orc on the following round.

Sundering Cleave: To use this maneuver, you must destroy a foe's weapon or shield with a successful sunder attempt. If you do so, you gain an immediate additional melee attack against the foe. The additional attack is with the same weapon and at the same attack bonus as the attack that destroyed the weapon or shield.

Momentum Swing: To use this maneuver, you must charge a foe in the first round, and you must make an attack using your Power Attack feat in the second round. The penalty you take on your attack roll must be -5 or worse. Your attacks during the second round gain a bonus equal to your attack roll penalty x 1-½, or x3 if you're using a two-handed weapon or a one-handed weapon in two hands. For instance, if you choose to take a -6 penalty on your attack roll, you deal an extra 9 points of damage, or an extra 18 points if you're using a two-handed weapon or a one-handed weapon in two hands.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as a fighter bonus feat.

Elusive Target (*Complete Warrior*)

Trying to land a blow against you can be a maddening experience.

Prerequisites: Dodge, Mobility, BAB +6.

Benefit: The Elusive Target feat enables the use of three tactical maneuvers.

Negate Power Attack: To use this maneuver, you must designate a specific foe to be affected by your Dodge feat. If that foe uses the Power Attack feat against you, the foe gains no bonus on the damage roll but still takes the corresponding penalty on the attack roll.

Diverting Defense: To use this maneuver, you must be flanked and you must designate one of the flanking attackers to be affected by your Dodge feat. The first attack of the round from the designated attacker automatically misses you and may strike the other flanking foe instead; the attacking creature makes an attack roll normally, and its ally is considered flat-footed. If the designated attacker is making a full attack against you, its second and subsequent attacks function normally.

Cause Overreach: To use this maneuver, you must provoke an attack of opportunity from a foe by moving out of a threatened square. If the foe misses you, you can make a free trip attempt against this foe, and the foe does not get a chance to trip you if the attempt fails.

Power Critical (*Complete Warrior*)

Choose one weapon. With that weapon you know how to hit where it hurts.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus with weapon, BAB +4.

Benefit: When using the weapon selected, you gain a +4 bonus on the roll to confirm a threat.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take this feat, it may be with a different weapon or the same weapon. If you take it with the same weapon, the effects of the feats stack. A fighter may select this feat as a fighter bonus feat.

Sanctum Spell (*Complete Arcane*)

Your spells are especially potent on home ground.

Prerequisites: Any metamagic feat.

Benefit: A sanctum spell has an effective spell level 1 higher than its normal level if cast in your sanctum (see below), but if not cast in the sanctum, the spell has an effective caster level 1 lower than normal. All effects dependent on spell level (including save DCs) are calculated according to the adjusted level. A sanctum spell uses a spell slot of the spell's normal level.

Special: Your sanctum is a particular site, building, or structure previously designated by you, and no larger than 20 feet/level in diameter. The designated area must be a site where you have spent a cumulative period of at least three months. Though a sanctum can be designated within a larger structure, its special advantages do not apply beyond the

maximum area. Once designated, it takes seven days for a site to become a sanctum, and if you designate a new area to be your sanctum, the benefits of the old one immediately fade.

NEW SPELLS

Otiluke's Dispelling Screen (Complete Arcane)

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Energy wall whose area is up to one 10 ft. square/level, or a sphere or hemisphere with a radius of up to 1 ft./level

Duration: 1 min./level

Saving Throw: None

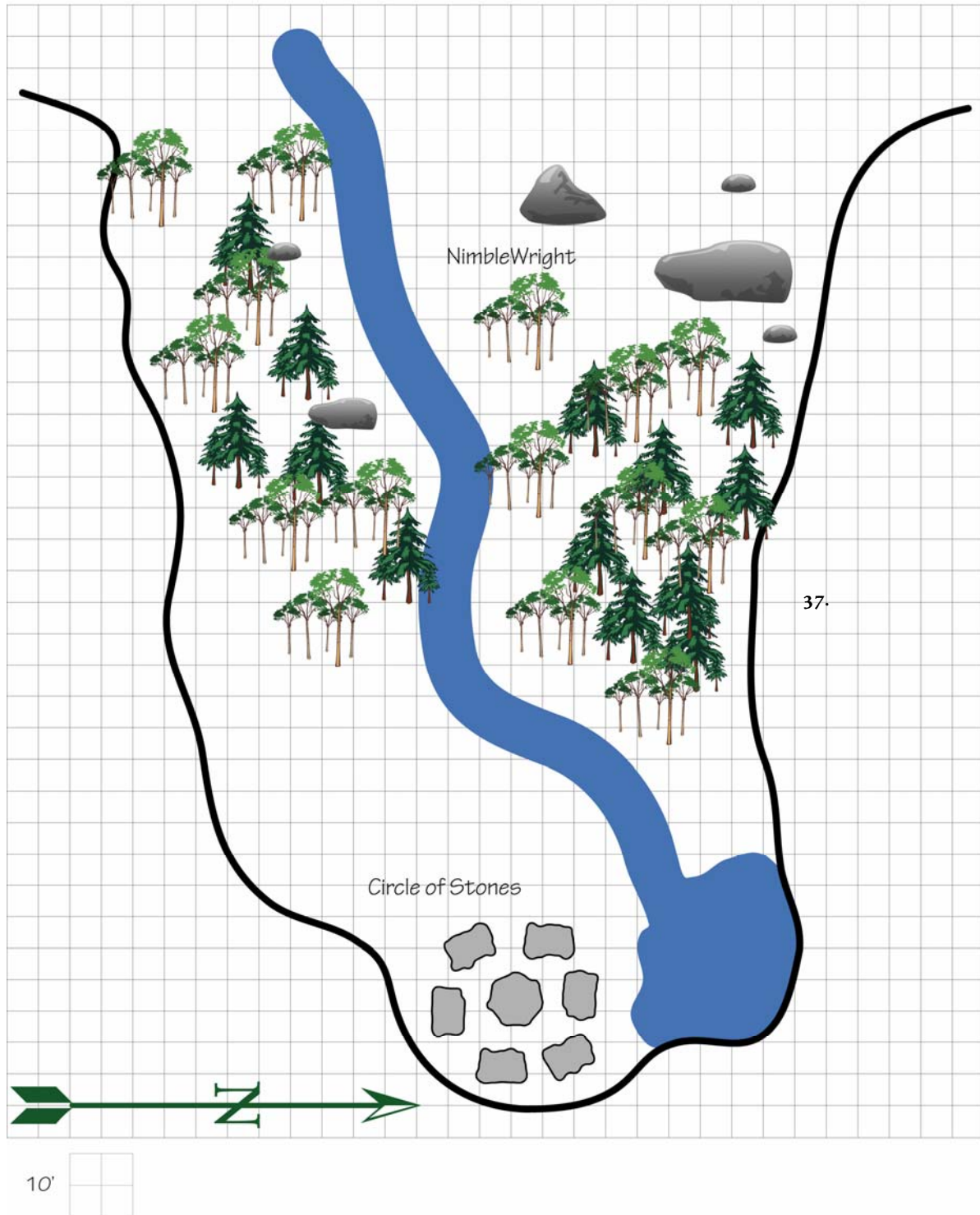
Spell Resistance: No.

You create an opaque, immobile, shimmering screen of violet energy. Any spell effect operating on a creature or unattended object that passes through the screen is affected as by a targeted *dispel magic* at your caster level. Attended items that pass through are not affected by the screen, which is the only way the screen differs from a normal targeted casting of *dispel magic* – attended items are essentially not targeted by the screen. Make a caster level check (1d20 +1 per caster level, maximum +10) to dispel spell effects (DC 11 + caster level) or suppress an unattended object's magical properties for 1d4 rounds (DC equal to the item's caster level). Spell effects not operating on objects or unattended creatures cannot pass through the screen. A *disintegrate* or successful *dispel magic* removes *Otiluke's dispelling screen*, while an *antimagic field* suppresses it.

Material Component: A sheet of fine lead crystal.

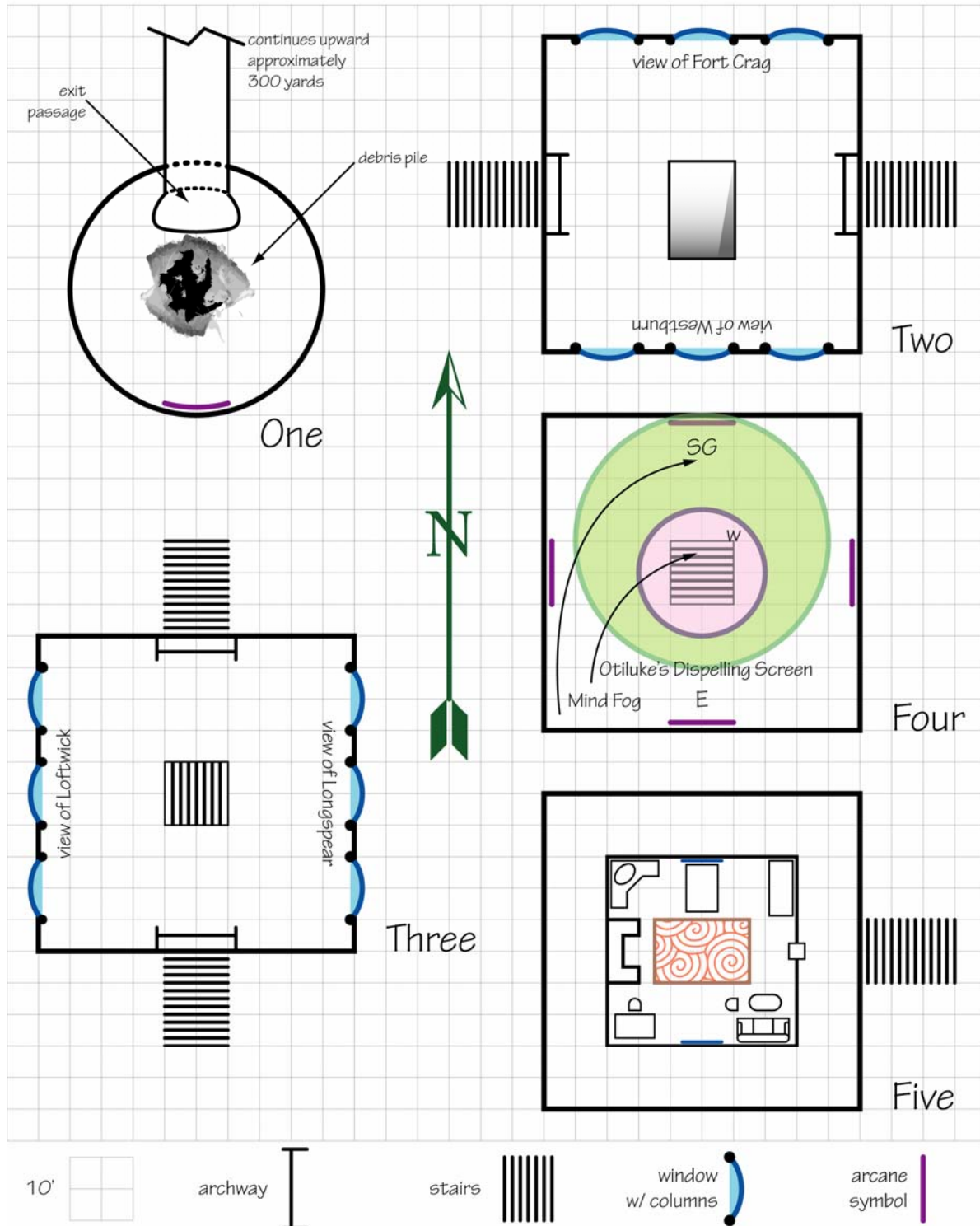
DM AID – MAP OF CIRCLE OF STONES

DM Aid #1: Circle of Stones



DM AID – MAP OF TOMB OF ASBERDIES

DM Aid #2: Tomb of Asberdies



PLAYER HANDOUT #1

6th Needfest, 5123

My Dearest Haloene,

Gods grant that this missive finds you healthful in heart and soul. I find that my injuries have left me weak, but I am nearly restored. Do not fret, Love, my health is assured by the clerics. Only my heart truly pains me, for it longs to see you, surely more so at Needfest. Needfest indeed.

I have, during my time here, secured for us land suitable for our home, and have engaged a pair of dwarven brothers to oversee and direct the building. They seem— my dear, I do not subscribe to the common viewpoint, you must remember. But, they seem as gruff and unhelpful as our people have always held. Nonetheless, they are well regarded as master builders.

While recuperating from my injuries, I took to roaming across our new demesne. You will be happy to see this gently rolled land of ours, Haloene. Everywhere there are broad slopes, suitable for all kinds of planting. And there, too, hollows where the folds of the hills meet.

I must tell you of one such hollow. In it, while wandering late one afternoon, I found myself confronting a wondrous sight: a circle of small, golden stones, six in number, surmounted at the center by one gigantic menhir. This stone, itself as black as night, had been smoothed to seven faces. On each glowed runes for power, age, wisdom, paranoia, cunning, innocence and danger, in our tongue, and strangely in the hated Baklunish as well. Reminders, indeed, of our heritage.

Most strange, Haloene, is what I found the next day, Needfest Morn. I had decided the night prior to sleep in the hollow. I awoke wrapped in my cloak at the touch of dawn, greeted by the same sight; the golden stones and their black master, but the runes were not where they'd been! And, Haloene, as I watched, and as the sun climbed from the horizon, the stones lost their colors, and faded to a more familiar gray.

I studied the stones during the morning, but could find no more about them, nor bring forth the gold and black of the stones. Needfest Night would be here, perhaps before I could return to the inn, and I could not dawdle any longer. I must return sometime after we have settled to look at this further.

I sit now before the inn's fire, Needfest End comes the morrow. You may chastise me, my dear, later, but I'm afraid I enjoyed my last Needfest Night meal as a bachelor rather fully, and find myself with loosened britches, and sleepy eyes. The inn's cooking, however, I'm sure does not compare with what I can look forward to from you.

I remain, as ever, Wesendahl, your devoted handfast. Gods grant this season passes quickly and we are in each other's arms once more before Growfest. Please tell my mother that your decisions on our wedding plans are final, indeed show her this missive if need be. However, I'm sure that if you can find it in your heart to consider her suggestions, it would make our beginnings much less troublesome.

I will see you soonest I can.

All my love,

Wesendahl