

The Uninvited Guests

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Regional Adventure set in the Kingdom of Nyron

Version 0.3

by Jason Clark and George Rowland IV

Circle Reviewer: John Jenks

Triad Reviewers: Tom Kee

Playtesters: Tiffany Glenn-Hall, Bruce Higa, David Monson, Art Severance

The city of Midmeadow has existed in relative obscurity since the disastrous events of three years past, but recent rumors hint that it is slowly becoming a notable trading hub, luring merchants and travelers from far and wide, and suggesting that the city has the potential to recover from its turbulent history. There are those, however, who view stability and the presence of outsiders as a hindrance to progress and evolution, and who further believe that to nurture true growth one must be willing to accept a certain degree of volatility and sacrifice. This one-round Nyron regional scenario is part one of the *Transformations* series and is recommended for prudent PCs of levels 1-15 (APL 2-16) who know when to speak and when to forever hold their peace.

Resources for this adventure include NMR3-03 *Blind Faith*, *Muted Voices* [Nicholas K. Tulach], NMR5-08 *Fighting the Headwind* [Rene Ayala], WGR4 *The Marklands* [Carl Sargent], and the Nyron web site *Gazetteer* (nyron.org) [various].

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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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 rulebooks: *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 Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session 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.

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

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round normally 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.

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 Kingdom of Nyrond. Characters from the Kingdom of Nyrond pay one (1) Time Unit per round, while all other characters pay two (2) Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp 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 that 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 DC 20 Survival check, 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

Following the bizarre and destructive events in Midmeadow during early CY 593, the arguably sluggish response of King Lynwerd in addressing the crisis allowed Midmeadow to deteriorate into a self-contained wasteland with no central governing body, either religious or otherwise. Various eyewitnesses placed the Valorous League's Zylinchin and his followers in and around the city during the latter months of CY 593, but by the time Lynwerd was prepared to address the

situation, Prince Sewardt's Imperium had taken over. Midmeadow has lay neglected since then, waiting for someone to nurture its withered roots.

Throughout these last few years, the clergy of Pholtus has maintained a presence in the city, ministering from their gleaming temple to those who would listen. Though it was ideally suited to cater to the thousands of Tenha refugees displaced from their homeland by Iuz and the Ether invasion of CY 592, the temple now sees few devout worshippers, as most of the Tenha returned to their former Duchy after the Duke's return and the "liberation" by Palish forces in CY 594. This fact, coupled with the rigid nature of the Pholtan religion itself and the infamy surrounding more extremist Pholtan adherents such as the Valorous League of Blindness, has made the Pholtan presence in Midmeadow an awkward one at best. By keeping its conversion attempts to a minimum and reluctantly resisting the temptation to meddle in the fractured lives of the populace, Midmeadow's residents did not seem to mind the Pholtan presence, but then no one had the temerity to ask them to leave, either.

This delicate coexistence persisted through the brief reign of the Nyrond Imperium in CY 595. Once Sewardt was decisively overthrown, many in the revitalized Kingdom rejoiced, but there were also those for whom civil war was not only profitable but preferable. One such war-monger was a certain human mage, whose private lair lay deep within the vast Gamboge Forest. Having long ago mastered the arcane arts, the mage was easily bored and derived pleasure and satisfaction only in the suffering and manipulation of others. Brooding for months in misanthropic rage upon Sewardt's defeat and the intolerable peace that followed, the mage ultimately gave up on the world of men. A select number of minions were sent out across the Flanaess to retrieve specific items necessary for a special project. These minions soon returned successfully from their errands, with one agent from Nyrond informing the mage that an adept and item broker in the city of Midmeadow would be able to produce the final necessary item within two weeks. This agent—a highly capable spy—was advised to remain in Midmeadow until then, gathering what information he could on the current state of the Kingdom.

Once a hub in years past for itinerant traders en route to Nyrond's larger cities and the County of Urnst, Midmeadow during the two years preceding the Imperium saw very little trade, as the legend of that disastrous eve in CY 593 grew to fantastic proportions. When Lynwerd reclaimed the throne, word again spread across the land and Midmeadow gradually evolved into an important stopover for merchants and their caravans; while this led to more business being conducted outside the city walls than within, as the "town" of carts, wagons, horses and mules replaced the "tent town" of the now-departed Tenha refugees, eventually a dedicated handful of professionals, sages and historians settled within the city, drawn by the absence of an oppressive church presence or any Royal bureaucracy, Imperial or otherwise.

One of these professionals was a female human adept named Rowena Livingston who specialized in the crafting and brokering of magic items; though past the prime of her youth, she became involved in a tempestuous affair with an acolyte from the Pholtan Church of the Bright Path ten years her junior named Penrys Bonchal. Despite already being in a relationship with her, Penrys's wandering eye was soon caught by a lovely young elf from the Gamboge named Faith, who had rebelled against her racist tribe and fled to Midmeadow to live among humans and other demihumans in the city's new relaxed, communal environment. Overwhelmed with ungoverned emotion for this idealistic girl, Penrys could think of nothing to do but abruptly terminate the affair with Rowena in favor of his (relatively, in elf years) younger lover. It was a tactless and insensitive maneuver, but since his relationship with Rowena had been kept secret from the public (and especially from his Church superiors), she was the only one hurt by the news. Penrys then publicly announced his engagement to Faith, sending the city into a joyous uproar, as this sort of formal celebration was just the thing needed to bolster morale, establish a stronger sense of community, and fill the awkward void left by the abrupt withdrawal of General Zylinchin. The date was set, invitations sent, and Rowena closed her shop and left town to nurse her emotional wounds.

While away in Rel Mord deep in sorrowful contemplation, she cursed the capriciousness of her former lover, lamenting among other things her advancing age and the fact that she had yet borne no children. One evening, slightly inebriated and muttering aloud in her reminiscence, Rowena was overheard by a sympathetic female bard named Sastrine. Gaining Rowena's confidence, Sastrine hinted at certain underworld contacts of hers that could perform particular favors if the price was right. In her jealousy, Rowena hatched upon a crude plan to teach Penrys a lesson in loyalty and commitment; she conspired with Sastrine to discredit him on his wedding day.

Utilizing her powers of suggestion, Sastrine would attend the wedding, subtly manipulate Penrys's mind, and get him to abandon his young elven bride on the altar (via her *suggestion* ability); outside the city gates, Sastrine's contacts would ambush Penrys and load his unconscious body onto a caravan bound for the most distant destination available. There, brooded Rowena, he could ponder how he had truly strayed from the path. The social stigma for this seemingly callous behavior would forever stain his reputation, or so she hoped, so that no woman would ever be able to trust him. Though Rowena bore no malice toward young Faith, her wounded pride convinced her that if she herself could not have Penrys, then no woman would. The plan was rather foolish and not a little illegal, but in itself innately harmless, a ruse born of simple jealousy. Both women underestimated the racism of Faith's former tribe.

Zealously desiring to return Faith to her tribe, even against her will if necessary, her immediate family members pleaded with their tribal elder, a powerful wild

elf druid whose fearsome abilities had secured the tribe's existence for generations. This druid, a vehement racist, agreed that no child of his tribe would ever live among humans, especially those in the accursed city of Midmeadow, where they had rightly presumed the girl had fled. A spy was soon sent to the city to confirm Faith's presence there before sending a group of elves to "persuade" her to return; this wild elf spy began asking pointed questions around town about Faith and was observed by several residents before learning that she was not only living contentedly in Midmeadow but planning to marry a Pholtan priest as well. The spy sent a message back to the forest detailing the date of the ceremony and its accompanying rehearsal dinner. The druid-elder was enraged; Pholtans had years before ventured into the forest and successfully converted some irresolute members of his tribe to their despicable faith.

The druid was convinced that the priest (Penrys) had somehow manipulated Faith's mind and convinced her to remain in Midmeadow for his own ends; the druid ordered his tribe to remain in their camp and decided to address the matter personally. Threatening a particularly vicious group of forestkith goblins to create a small diversion at the rehearsal dinner, the druid smuggled them into the city three nights before the wedding and allowed them to arrange themselves in their *tree shape* form around the intended dining area. He then cast a *greater scrying* spell on one of them, assumed the form of a large owl, and waited in the nearby trees.

Walking the streets of Midmeadow in the days before the ceremony, Sastrine happened upon a dashing young man who instantly charmed her with his worldly ways and knowing smile; in a spate of pride she carelessly boasted of the plan to discredit the Pholtan priest without specifically mentioning Rowena. The young man, Narinn Kirr, who was actually the mage's agent in town to secure the final item from Rowena and to gather information on Midmeadow's happenings, initially found the plan simply amusing and failed to make a connection. However, when he visited the adept later that day, she offered profuse apologies: she had suffered a personal crisis and left town to address it, with her workload subsequently suffering as a result. If he could stay in town until after the wedding she would have the item for him. Upon hearing this, and keenly observing her agitated emotional state, he realized with dread that Rowena was indeed the jilted lover; though she had not been informed as to the purpose of the item she was procuring, the mage had made it quite clear to his agents that secrecy was of the utmost importance. Narinn concluded that if Rowena was emotionally unbalanced and focused on her petty plan of revenge instead of on her work, then she might conceivably mention the project to someone else, perhaps Sastrine. Thus, Rowena was a risk, and Narinn began to watch her movements and associations very closely.

As previously noted, while the majority of Midmeadow's residents were tolerant of the Pholtans' presence, no one had asked them to leave. Events in *Tenh* and in the *Headwinds* series (NMR5-03, 5-05 and 5-08)

changed that, drawing Lynwerd's gaze north to the Pale border and Midmeadow. The city's temple of Pholtus was originally erected by the Valorous League; when those fanatics were forced out of in late CY 595, both the Church of the Blinding Light (Nyrond's version of the Pale's Church of the One True Path) and the Church of the Bright Path (the less rigid Almorian Pholtan church, essentially a splinter sect considered pagans and heretics by other Pholtans) moved to fill the vacuum, as neither had ever secured a foothold in Midmeadow. Thus, Midmeadow was blessed with not one but two distinct churches of Pholtus, both of whom were antagonistic toward one another. Their joint occupation of Midmeadow has lasted for just over a year, but after *Headwinds*, Lynwerd had had enough and ordered both Churches to withdraw. In addition, he demanded that the New Dawn Camp outside the city be demolished, instructing both Churches to cooperate in the task, as its presence was an unpleasant reminder of times—and attitudes—past.

While many might think a schism would result from such a mandate, especially given that the Church of the Blinding Light is the more intolerant of the two sects and that the clergy of Pholtus have rarely relinquished their foothold on anything, such was not the case. Rumor has it that the high priest of the Church of the Blinding Light appealed to King Lynwerd: for their willingness to depart Midmeadow and tear down the New Dawn Camp, would not the King at least permit the Church of the Bright Path to remain in the city, ministering to those who had grown accustomed to and were still receptive to its pagan dogma?

Realizing that the clergy of Pholtus, regardless of their independent views, did indeed provide necessary services to a willing segment of the populace, and that their lawful rigidity was also a deterrent to criminal activity, and that the Bright Path sect was the more popular of the two churches, Lynwerd decided that a minimized Pholtan presence would better serve Midmeadow than no presence at all, at least for the time being, until some sort of permanent governorship of the city could be established. As it was historically the Church of the Blinding Light that maintained formal relations with the Church of the One True Path in the Pale, and that it was the Pale church which was ultimately responsible for the Valorous League of Blindness, Lynwerd agreed to the high priest's offer; with the arm of the Church (and its dogma) most likely to aggravate Midmeadow's citizens out of the way, he reasoned, the city might actually flourish. Thus, the high priest and his disciples made a very public show of agreeing to the King's demands and withdrawing from Midmeadow; outside town, destruction of the New Dawn Camp commenced, with many startled onlookers whispering amongst themselves at the Church's unprecedented lack of resistance.

The Prefect of the Church of the Bright Path, meanwhile, elated at the graciousness of his counterpart and the King's willingness to allow his church to remain in Midmeadow, lifted the ban of martial law that had

originally been placed upon the city by the Valorous League at the end of NMR3-03 *Blind Faith, Muted Voices* and opened the doors of the Pholtan temple to non-Pholtans for the first time; orders soon came from deeper within the Kingdom, transferring him to Mithat while a new Bishop named Talpin Thorea was sent to replace him. "Out with the old, in with the new" were the words echoing through the vaulted halls of the temple in Midmeadow.

One month after the withdrawal of the Church of the Blinding Light and the institution of the new "open door" policy of the Church of the Bright Path, news of the impending wedding of a Bright Path acolyte to a young Gamboge elf provided Midmeadow's residents with precisely the positive public event needed to reinforce their sense of community. Bishop Thorea publicly embraced the union of Penrys and his demihuman bride; while historically the Pholtan clergy had been known to look down upon the non-human races, the Bishop informed residents that the Church's new degree of tolerance was in keeping with the open-minded environment embodied by Midmeadow itself.

Some, however, can only handle open-mindedness in small doses, and the Pholtans were unprepared for what was happening in the different sections of Midmeadow. The city had evolved into four distinct districts: the Pholtans and the more upscale merchants occupied one such district; elves and artisans occupied the city's largest park; dwarves, gnomes and halflings congregated in a third district; but it was the fourth district, which sprawled over the eastern third of the city and contained half-elves and half-orcs (among others) living and working together in harmony, that would challenge progressive minds, had they known of the threat that lay within it...

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The city of Midmeadow has recovered impressively from the disastrous events of CY 593 detailed in NMR3-03 *Blind Faith, Muted Voices*. The slow response of King Lynwerd in addressing the crisis and absence of leadership, coupled with the interruption of his reign by Prince Sewarndt's Imperium, has allowed the city to evolve on its own with limited governmental and church interference into a multifaceted commune where the residents live contentedly without any such authority. Rumors of Midmeadow's recovery have attracted many traders and merchants, and along with these travelers have come professionals and itinerant priests of different faiths, some of whom have elected to remain in the city as permanent residents. Because of this, the populace has essentially everything it needs and has not had reason to appeal to the restored Nyrond throne for supplies, leadership, or religious sponsorship.

The one conspicuous faith in town, that of Pholtus, which has been a presence in Midmeadow since before the events of NMR3-03 *Blind Faith, Muted Voices*, has failed to establish any kind of dominance due to infighting between two of its sects—the Church of the Blinding

Light and the Church of the Bright Path—each of which views the other as heretical. Their bickering has deterred many residents from wholeheartedly embracing Pholtus, despite the fact that the one remaining sect (the Bright Path) occupies the only permanent temple in town. While a portion of the populace still worships one of the two sects, most residents are content with the other new faiths in town or none at all.

When the PCs arrive in Midmeadow, its one obvious characteristic should be that of community. The absence of any official city guards, Nyrondese troops, or even a new mayor should suggest that this is a rare place, apparently unspoiled by the intrigues of politics or religion. Here, demihumans and humans—including a small contingent of Flan refugees—dwell in peace amongst one another. They are a peace-loving group of people who, more than anything, are glad that the conflict between Lynwerd and Sewardt is over. Although the troop movements past the city as Lynwerd builds more military encampments along the Pale border is somewhat disturbing to them, the troops have left the city alone so far.

PCs will be welcomed with a rustic zeal and sense of promise that seem almost too good to be true. Whatever their initial reactions, after exploring the city (especially its eastern recesses) the PCs may ultimately have to decide how strongly they feel about the role—and indeed the necessity—of authority in an organized society.

Introduction: The PCs hear rumors that Midmeadow has become a notable trade hub, with varied foreign merchants offering exotic wares from distant lands. To investigate these rumors, or to explore the city for (perhaps) the first time since the infamous events of early CY 593, the PCs journey to Midmeadow. Arriving at the main gate during mid-afternoon, they confirm that the rumors are indeed true. As they converse and absorb the scene, a merchant caravan arrives and one passenger disembarks: an affable priest of Fharlanghn who introduces himself to the PCs. Shortly thereafter, a group of festively dressed gnomes and halflings accost and inform the PCs that they are just in time for a rehearsal dinner later that evening. The PCs are quickly given ticket-invitations for the dinner, along with convoluted instructions on what to wear, and a list of gifts appropriate to the groom, a young priest of Nyrond's Church of the Bright Path, and are further reminded that the wedding itself is in two days. They then hurriedly depart, leaving the PCs to absorb what they have heard. The PCs may introduce themselves to one another, if they have not already met or done so. From here, they may explore the trading bazaar or enter the city-proper.

Encounter One: The PCs have a chance to explore the traders' bazaar outside the city gates; they may also explore the formerly glorious city and gather information on its residents, its religious presence, the merchant activity outside the gates, the wedding, and finally the dinner and their duties at it. The PCs may also shop for

gifts and appropriate attire. During this encounter they discover that much has changed since the events of NMR3-03 *Blind Faith, Muted Voices*: though it lacks its former sociopolitical infrastructure, the city has evolved naturally into a functional commune, with no central governing political or religious presence. Residents here, though far from affluent, exist in peaceful harmony with one another, although the city itself is largely run down and in a fluctuating state of disrepair. Despite their efforts, the PCs are unable to locate the groom, bride, or the halfling who handed them ticket-invitations. They have until sundown to explore, at which time they are expected to appear at the rehearsal dinner.

Encounter Two: Under a canopy of stars and surrounded by floating lights and ornate shrubbery, the PCs attend the rehearsal dinner in the city's largest park and finally meet the wedding couple: an Oeridian acolyte of Pholtus and his bride-to-be (a young wild elf). The PCs also meet other key Midmeadow residents whom they would not have had a chance to encounter during the afternoon. During this extended roleplay encounter, the PCs have a chance to question the wedding couple on their very unusual (for Pholtans) marriage as well as the elf's origins and her views on the Pholtan religion, and may follow up on any rumors heard while gathering information earlier. Also present at the dinner is a female bard intently observing the acolyte's behavior. The PCs may note several empty chairs, as certain individuals—most notably a local merchant—have been invited yet declined to appear. This encounter ends with the wedding couple departing just before sundown to attend evening prayers, followed by a brief bit of dancing before the surprise attack in Encounter Three.

Encounter Three: The rehearsal dinner is violently interrupted as several of the small, decorative shrubs bordering the dining area transform into wild-eyed forestkith goblins and attack everyone in sight. The goblins are from the Gamboge and were smuggled in the night before; they have been posing as decorative shrubs using their *tree shape* ability and are working for the racist druid-elder of Faith's former tribe. To delay pursuit while he abducts her (see Encounter Three-A, below), the goblins attack all innocent bystanders, including the PCs, with humans being their primary targets. The female bard attending the dinner looks more surprised than anyone at the chaos that follows; preventing her from fleeing could provide the PCs with an important clue about the attack. PCs that can see invisible creatures may notice an older Baklunish female observing the scene from a discreet distance in absolute horror.

Encounter Three-A ("Abduction," off-screen): As the goblins attack, the druid-elder of Faith's former tribe attempts to abduct her while she and Penrys return to the temple of Pholtus for evening prayer. The druid plans to whisk Faith away southwest to divert suspicion from any Gamboge inhabitants before doubling back toward the

Gamboge Forest. If the PCs dispatch the goblins quickly enough, they may hear the screams of local residents following the druid's attack and realize that the goblins were a diversion. Though they have little chance of stopping the abduction, witnesses can provide the PCs with key details.

Encounter Four: After defeating the goblins, the PCs will likely hear screams in the distance (see Encounter Three-A, above) and wish to investigate. The NPC clerics on hand at the dinner offer to heal any injured guests while the PCs rush to investigate the screams. Following the sound to its source, the PCs are led to the temple of Pholtus, where several dozen residents are gathered. There, they learn from onlookers that (if the druid was successful) Faith has been abducted by a large air elemental that flew south out of town; Penrys lies unconscious in the street. Several residents soon begin arguing over who is likely responsible for the attack, with the interracial marriage being labeled a bad omen. During the ensuing confusion, the PCs should easily note both the lack of a definitive authority figure and the danger of a mob mentality overtaking residents. No one approaches the PCs to do anything about the situation, and it is up to them to realize that perhaps their assistance in the investigation is the best wedding present they can offer. The female bard, if detained, can be intimidated into revealing vague details about an unsavory plot designed to discredit and humiliate Penrys, but which had nothing to do with Faith. PCs who noticed the older female observing the dinner may seek her out for questioning, though she proves elusive; astute questioning of the other dinner guests reveals that one of the missing invitees is a local merchant and adept. This brief investigative encounter should end with the PCs agreeing to track the elemental, either immediately or first thing in the morning.

Encounter Four-A ("Annihilation," off-screen): The mage's Midmeadow agent, who was not invited to the rehearsal dinner but was at a local tavern gathering information on the newly-arrived PCs, happens to spot the druid changing form into an elemental and immediately contacts his master (via magic) with news of the attack on Faith. The mage quickly realizes what has happened and, for reasons known only to him at this time, uses his mighty arcane power to pinpoint the location of the druid's elven encampment within the Gamboge. He then travels there, arriving shortly after the druid returns, and lays waste to the entire tribe, efficiently killing everyone and leaving behind clear evidence that a powerful arcanist was responsible. If Faith was successfully abducted during Encounter Three-A, she is found here safely encased in a magic sphere. The mage positions several of the dead elves throughout the forest, providing a crude trail straight to the elven camp. He then travels back to his lair, presuming his involvement in these affairs to be complete.

Encounter Five: The PCs attempt to track the air elemental; at higher APLs they may possess the resources to pursue immediately; at all APLs, however, the PCs may easily be fooled and begin tracking in the wrong direction, away from the Gamboge. Using the Gather Information skill to question travelers on the road can compensate for this. Eventually, regardless of APL, the PCs should venture into the Gamboge Forest in search of their quarry. Upon entering the forest from the west, the PCs soon come across one of the slain elves positioned by the mage; using Survival and/or the Track feat, the PCs find more elven corpses and make their way to the elven encampment. There, they behold a ruthlessly efficient massacre, as the entire tribe—including the druid and his animal companion—has been slain, victims of a mighty arcane assault. Evidence of powerful magic is easily found everywhere, clearly indicating to the PCs that a mage of the highest order is involved. Inexplicably, Faith (if abducted) lies unconscious and unharmed, safely protected within a magic sphere. As the PCs try to unravel the mystery behind the attack, they may attempt Listen and Spot checks to note the surreptitious arrival of an elven scouting party from deeper within the Gamboge. These new elves, while friendly toward the restored Kingdom of Nyronnd and antagonistic toward the druid's tribe, were drawn to the area by sounds of battle, and are initially skeptical at seeing a band of adventurers standing amidst a clearing of slain elves. The PCs must utilize Diplomacy to convince the scouting party of their innocence. Once the PCs successfully explain their mission and situation, the scouting party leader suggests the PCs accompany them back to their village to tell their story to the tribal elder; if the PCs fail miserably at the Diplomacy check and combat erupts, the elves attempt to subdue the PCs and bring them to the village anyway.

Encounter Six: On the way to the village of the elven scouting party, forest predators that have been tracking the scouting party, which has strayed outside its usual patrol route to investigate the mage's attack, ambush the elves and the PCs. The PCs might be blindfolded for this journey, as the elves wish to protect the secrecy of their village. Thus, when the predators attack, the PCs will have to act quickly and may even be trapped in the predators' snares as combat begins. A skilled gang of forest troll rangers then viciously attacks the PCs and elves; this combat is designed to establish a bond of comradeship between the elves and the PCs, as they fight together to repel their attackers.

Encounter Seven: After defeating the forest trolls, the party continues to the elven village. There, the PCs tell their story (perhaps via a retried Diplomacy check) of the city attack, the arcane massacre, and the conspicuously laid trail of slain elves to the tribal elder. Upon hearing the news (and if their Diplomacy check is successful), the elder agrees to aid the PCs in their investigation. If the Diplomacy check is unsuccessful, the elder declines to

aid the PCs in their investigation, citing her responsibilities to the tribe and the fact that the situation seems to have resolved itself. The PCs are left to return to Midmeadow and pursue any relevant leads.

Encounter Eight: The PCs return to Midmeadow and investigate Faith's attack; this eventually leads them to the adept, Rowena Livingston. Once confronted by the PCs, especially if they have successfully intimidated the bard Sastrine, she remorsefully admits her guilt about the plot to kidnap Penrys but professes to know nothing about the plot to kidnap Faith. She is willing to submit to justice, but the method by which the PCs get her to submit—brute force, subtle threats or earnest diplomacy—directly affects their standing with the residents of Midmeadow for the duration of this series. She may also be persuaded to reveal details of her most recent project: procuring an exotic item for a reputedly wealthy client, whose agent is already in town waiting for it. While she does not know the purpose of the item or for whom it is intended, she can identify the agent for the PCs; the PCs may use their varied Knowledge skills to speculate on the item's purpose, but exceptionally astute PCs may sense a connection between the item and the arcane massacre witnessed during Encounter Five. Whether by force, coercion or entreaty, Rowena agrees to accompany the PCs to any higher authority of their choosing, with the notable exception of any Pholtan church; to that particular faith she refuses to submit. As they leave her shop, the mage's agent, who immediately informs his master that the project has likely been compromised, observes the PCs. The mage decides to eliminate Rowena and the meddlesome PCs, sending a strike force to deal with them.

Encounter Nine: In broad daylight upon Midmeadow's cobbled streets, the mage's minions, who arrive to silence her for drawing attention to his project and to slay the meddlesome adventurers, intercept Rowena and the PCs. Keeping Rowena alive during this combat dramatically improves the PCs' reputations in the eyes of Midmeadow's residents. At the end of this encounter it should be clear to the PCs that the kidnapping and the nature of the enforcers indicate that the mage who slew the elves in the Gamboge (and rescued Faith) may be more of a threat than they initially suspected. Whatever his intentions were to the PCs before the rehearsal dinner, they now clearly label the mage as a brazen, cunning, and fearsome enemy.

Conclusion: After defeating the mage's minions, the PCs must make a choice: either allow Rowena to go free or escort her to a higher authority of their choosing. If they choose to turn her in, they must further decide which higher authority is most appropriate. Their choice has a direct effect on the subsequent chapters in this storyline. In any event the wedding is indefinitely postponed. For defeating his minions, the mage takes an active interest in the PCs' immediate future and begins

devising a way to enact his revenge. In the meantime, the PCs may be awaiting word from the Gamboge elves on the success of their investigation. Finally, though they have not had time to focus on it as yet, the PCs may be forming opinions on the conspicuous attitude of tolerance espoused by the Church of the Bright Path. Residents hail the PCs as heroes for defeating the mysterious minions (and for rescuing Faith, if applicable), but there will be an uneasy tension lingering in the city, as if some kind of evil seed is gestating just below the surface of perception, ready to burst forth...

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Take note of any Pholtan PCs, especially if they are members of applicable Nyronid meta-orgs or the Theocracy of the Pale's faction of the Church of Pholtus (the Church of the One True Path), as conflicts could arise between such PCs and some of this scenario's NPCs, who might view each other as "heretics," "pagans," or worse. Additionally, any elven PC who specifically claims to hail from the Gamboge Forest may have a keen interest in the development of this scenario; the elves from Encounters Five, Six and Seven will prefer to address such PCs during any negotiations. Finally, any PCs who actually played NMR3-03 *Blind Faith*, *Muted Voices* may recall specific NPCs, details, and areas of the city from that scenario. It is to be noted that many of the NPCs from that scenario have moved on and no longer really exist in Nyronid. If they do not appear in this scenario and the PCs specifically ask about them, simply have a local say they left years ago and have not been heard from since. Should they wish to revisit such people or places, especially during Encounters Two and Eight, do your best to keep them focused on the present scenario; ad lib as necessary, emphasizing the importance of the rehearsal dinner and the *faux pas* of declining the invitation.

Before play begins, roll eight Reflex saves for Faith (for her attempted abduction during Encounter Three-A). Next, have each player roll two Spot checks (for Encounters Five and perhaps Six) and two Listen checks (for Encounters Five and Six); it is also advisable to preroll the Hide and Move Silently checks for the elves in Encounter Five, along with the Hide checks for the foes in Encounter Six. Also, have the players list their characters' Sense Motive modifiers and secretly roll two checks for each PC (Encounters Two and Eight). Finally, roll a Bluff check for Narinn Kirr, so that his movements might seem more natural at the beginning of Encounter Nine.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Though many of the following NPCs are intended to appear throughout the series, the PCs will be very busy during this scenario and will likely not have time for extended roleplay with all of them.

☛ **Dalis Mirivan:** This Suel cleric of Fharlanghn arrives in Midmeadow just after the PCs and is intended as an amiable companion as they explore the city. He is more interested in the diversity of faiths within the city and the stories traveling merchants have to tell than in the history or evolution of Midmeadow itself, but his good looks, diplomatic charm and affability can be assets for any such PC deficits.

☛ **Penrys Bonchal** (“PEN-riss bon-SHAL”): This Oeridian acolyte of Pholtus in Nyronnd’s Church of the Bright Path is unwittingly at the center of every tumultuous event in this story. His wandering eye and capricious nature cause him to spurn his adept-lover Rowena Livingston in favor of a much younger (relatively) elf; this leads to Rowena’s scheme of retribution, which ultimately draws the mysterious mage’s attention to Midmeadow, as Penrys’s wedding announcement (partially—and secretly—designed to divert attention away from his affair with Rowena) actually attracts Faith’s former tribal elder, who sends goblin berserkers as a distraction while he attempts to kidnap and return her to the Gamboge. Penrys is insensitive, inexperienced, prideful, unfocused, and lacks the courage and tenacity that are necessary components of a trustworthy leader and lover.

☛ **Faith:** This young Gamboge wild elf deserted her racist tribe and came to live in Midmeadow six weeks ago. Penrys briefly courted her and they now plan to wed. However, their very public wedding announcement has attracted two types of scrutiny: first, her former tribal elder, a powerful and vengeful druid, plans to abduct her from the humans he believes have seduced her to Midmeadow; secondly, the marriage of a human Pholtan to a “lesser” race has become, outside of Midmeadow, the subject of much gossip.

☛ **Valandril:** This wood elf ranger is the first contact the PCs will have with the Inanilae elves of the Gamboge. Though the circumstances of their first encounter are highly suspicious and unfavorable for the PCs, it is the PCs’ earnestness and diplomatic intentions that could help to establish a lasting friendship with him and his tribe.

☛ **Tess’inene-ilae:** This young female wood elf is the acting chief of the Inanilae tribe. Persuading her to assist with the investigation into the attack on Faith could serve to strengthen the relationship between Midmeadow and the elves of the Gamboge.

☛ **Talpin Thorea:** This Oeridian priest of Pholtus is the new Bishop of Midmeadow’s Church of the Bright Path. He has been here less than a month and is likely to raise PC eyebrows with his attitude of tolerance and openness, especially with regard to demihumans and other faiths. PCs used to more rigid, intolerant Pholtan priests may find him a notable curiosity; even more

curious is his refusal to be goaded into hostilities by a vociferous Peloran cleric who seeks to lure worshippers away from the Bright Path Church.

☛ **Knight-Captain Talbrith Hemerenn:** This female human paladin of Pholtus is the head of the Pholtan Knights Valorous, Order of Celene, and is assigned to Midmeadow to minister to the populace as best she can, as well as to monitor the city and mood of its residents for any disturbances arising in the wake of the expulsion of General Zylinchin and the Valorous League.

☛ **Knight-Captain Quenthe Ilerrio:** This male high elf from the Gamboge forest is the second-in-command of the Order of Celene, and is an accomplished archer and wizard. He and the other Knight-Captain are currently renovating the former barracks of the Valorous League of Blindness to house its new occupants, whoever they may be.

☛ **Callidan Estani:** This half-elf/half-Rhenee priest of Pelor has made it his mission to lure all worshippers of Pholtus in Midmeadow away from that faith, whose clergy and sects he believes to be corrupt, devious, and untrustworthy. He is often found at sundown near the temple of Pholtus publicly decrying its clergy, but rather than trying to convert residents to Pelor, he simply wants them to cease worshipping Pholtus. Despite his unbridled and defamatory slander, members of the Bright Path have not challenged him.

☛ **Hinnad:** This Oeridian priest of Merikka was drawn to Midmeadow by vague rumors of agricultural trade. His initial shock at their veracity was soon overshadowed by an even more unbelievable rumor: that one man was somehow responsible for the agricultural revitalization of the city. He has never seen this mystery man but has met the eerie priestess rumored to be protecting him, and knows that residents in the area could not have achieved their current level of organization without guidance. That unseen hands guide the agricultural district has unnerved Hinnad; residents there welcome his presence and assistance but seem to require neither. An inexplicable mixture of curiosity and apprehension keeps him here, and he has become a kind of public liaison between these people and the Pholtans, who have—in his opinion—foolishly dismissed the rumors of the mystery man and his companion as fanciful folktales.

☛ **Kirelle:** This high elf priestess of Corellon is one of Midmeadow’s original residents and was here during the infamous events of CY 593. She remains out of loyalty to the other elves who still call the city home, and also to keep a vigilant eye on the Pholtan church. PCs should find her a terse and aloof pacifist, but not entirely unsympathetic, especially if they are artists or require healing. Still, she has seen enough bloodshed and betrayal to last several human lifetimes, and wants now

only to minister to those peace-loving artists who reside within Blackwater Park.

♣ **Jerod of Ull:** This Baklunish commoner came to Midmeadow on a merchant caravan in CY 594. He is something of a local man-about-town; most residents know and like him, and his effeminate manners and very specific notions about etiquette are often the subject of much good humor. When Dalis Mirivan is not around, Jerod is a suitable alternate for a trustworthy PC confidant.

♣ **Rowena Livingston:** This middle-aged Baklunish adept and magic item crafter/broker is the jilted lover of Penrys Bonchal. Her jealousy over being spurned for the comparatively younger Faith has caused her to devise a crude plan—with assistance from a notable bard—to discredit and kidnap Penrys on his wedding day. When Faith is attacked instead, the resulting chaos so unnerves Rowena that she retreats to the safety of her shop, fearing she will somehow be blamed for it. Discovering her plan and persuading her to submit to justice ultimately draws the mysterious mage's malevolent attention to Midmeadow and the PCs.

♣ **Sastrine:** This mixed-blood human bard offered solace to Rowena Livingstone when the jilted adept fled to Rel Mord to drown her sorrows. Suggesting that her underworld contacts could help if the price was right, Sastrine accompanied Rowena back to Midmeadow to enact the adept's crude scheme of vengeance. When this scheme is upstaged by an attack on the young lover of Rowena's former paramour, Sastrine quickly sobers, wondering what she has gotten herself into and whether it is wise to remain in town. Preventing her from fleeing during this attack could provide the PCs with valuable information.

♣ **Narinn Kirr:** This dashing and charismatic Oeridian spy is in the employ of the mysterious mage, and is in Midmeadow to collect a package for his master from the adept, Rowena Livingston. At his master's request, he has spent the last two weeks in town gathering information and observing a great deal about the city and its inhabitants, but due to complications in her personal life, Rowena has had to delay the acquisition and preparation of this package, so Narinn is waiting until after the wedding to collect the package. When the PCs investigate the attack on Faith, they will likely be led to Rowena, at which time Narinn relays his concerns to his master, who then takes an active interest in the PCs' destruction. Narinn is intelligent, charming and above all inconspicuous. When he joins the fight against them during Encounter Nine, the PCs will realize that they have seen him around town, and must then contend with the fact that perhaps not everyone in Midmeadow is as they appear.

♣ **Aricyn Maquillan** ("AIR-i-sin ma-KWEE-an"): This half-elf/half-Suel itinerant priestess of Bralm stopped in Midmeadow some months ago on her way to visit a fey colleague in the Gamboge. She was immediately drawn to the efficiency evident among residents of the Silk Plateau, and soon learned of the district's unofficial figurehead: the Brown Recluse. When these two half-elves finally met, their mutual attraction and sense of purpose was undeniable. Aricyn has remained in Midmeadow and secretly oversees the agricultural and textile development of the Silk Plateau, reveling in the self-reliant industriousness of its residents while concealing the existence of her lover from the city's Pholtans, whom she distrusts.

♣ **The Brown Recluse (off-screen):** This enigmatic half-elf is single-handedly—though secretly—responsible for the evolution of Midmeadow into a social commune. He covets neither fame nor accolades, but his dangerous philosophy keeps him in the shadows and high cornstalks of the Silk Plateau, where he directs its development through his lover and protector, Aricyn. If they hope to meet him, the PCs will need to prove their worth not only to Aricyn but to the residents there as well, who have embraced his philosophy and also help to preserve his near-mythical status.

♣ **The Mage (off-screen):** This reclusive arcanist was content to ignore Midmeadow, but the meddlesome actions of the PCs in exposing a transaction he had negotiated with Rowena Livingston cause him to treat them—and her—as threats to his privacy and future plans.

INTRODUCTION

Word has spread among the larger cities of the Nyron'd meta-region that the city of Midmeadow has recovered from the infamous events of its recent past and become something of a notable trading hub, drawing exotic merchants from the distant corners of the Flanaess. For some, these rumors and the promise of a healthy trading environment are worth exploring; for others, the legend of Midmeadow's Night of Terror in CY 593 and news of the city's recovery deserve the casual scrutiny of a brief visit; for others still, who were perhaps there on that ill-fated eve, the rumors are too good to be true and demand investigation, discreetly or otherwise.

Arriving outside Midmeadow's main gate in mid-afternoon, one can see that the rumors about trade, at least, are emphatically true, perhaps even understated: where once an unsightly rash of filthy brown tents housing the displaced Flan refugees from Tenh covered the northern and southeastern approaches to the city, there are now pristine fields of dazzling yellow sunflowers taller than most dwarves and resplendent in the summer sun. For several hundred feet around the north gate, where

the road to Starkwall stretches off to the horizon, the sunflowers have been removed to accommodate a staggering array of wagons, carts, kiosks, and mules, all of which bear an indescribable amount of boxes, sacks, crates, and cargo nets filled with goods.

The summer air still carries a chill and is disturbingly ripe with the mingled scents of sunflowers, exotic spices, wet animal fur, roasting pork, and human sweat. Nearby, Midmeadow's walls loom innocuously, even vulnerably, as the merchants haggle on, heedless of the tumultuous history to which those natural ramparts have borne witness. Amid the cacophony of financial disputes, incensed counteroffers, braying beasts of burden, hoarse demands for "more ale!" and the clash of weapons from arms merchants, a distinct voice can be heard, as a ruggedly handsome Suel man in worn traveling clothes alights from a sizable, newly arrived caravan. Giving thanks to its master, he gently clutches a brass amulet around his neck, bows, and absorbs the scene. Spotting your group, he smiles and strides casually in your direction...

The PCs should take a moment to introduce themselves to one another if they have not already done so. Their reasons for visiting Midmeadow may be shared or varied. If rumors of free trade or the recovery of the city are not appealing to a particular PC, players may of course provide their own reasons for being here. Try to be accommodating without revealing the plot to come; other possible adventure "hooks" include loyal Nyrond PCs investigating the state of the city; or, pro- and anti-Pholtan PCs could be here investigating the area following events in NMR5-08 *Fighting the Headwinds*. In any event, news that the Church of the Blinding Light has withdrawn from Midmeadow, and the fact that the city has evolved into a commune should NOT be common knowledge, as yet; those two specific pieces of information should be more appropriately learned via a Gather Information check during Encounters One, Two or Eight.

PCs may attempt Knowledge checks to recall specific information about the infamous events from NMR3-03 *Blind faith, Muted Voices* (the Night of Terror): PCs succeeding at a DC 25 Knowledge (history) check, a DC 20 Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) check or a DC 25 Bardic Knowledge check should be given *Player Handout 3*.

The man who has just alighted from the caravan is an itinerant priest of Fharlanghn named Dalis Mirivan. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check correctly identifies his brass amulet as the holy symbol of his deity, which he wears openly over a well-worn, dun-colored traveling cloak and finely-crafted studded leather armor. He carries a quarterstaff and appears to be in his early thirties.

Dalis hails the PCs and introduces himself; he is a first-time visitor to Midmeadow and, perhaps like the PCs themselves, was lured by the trade rumors. He is an affable fellow and would be honored to accompany the PCs while they are in town, should they think to ask him.

He admits to being short of coin, as material wealth to a lonely, traveling priest is the equivalent of painting a target on one's back for highway brigands, but he has found that exchanging clerical services—especially healing—proves a suitable substitute for hard currency. He has traveled here with a rug merchant from the County of Urnst and is simply looking to explore Midmeadow—about which he knows very little, beyond wild public rumor—and to gather any interesting stories for future travels.

☛ **Dalis Mirivan:** male human (Suel) cleric 7 (Fharlanghn); hp 49; Appendix 1.

Dalis is intended as an ally for the PCs; for higher level parties he may prove merely amusing, but for lower level parties his amicable nature and good looks may be assets where PC knowledge and/or Diplomacy are lacking. The PCs are not obligated to allow Dalis to accompany them while in Midmeadow, but if they do, he proves to be a trustworthy and friendly companion. After the PCs have conversed with him for a few moments (if they choose to be sociable), or especially if they seem intent on moving to explore the trading area, read or paraphrase the following:

As the Suel priest introduces himself, a frenetic group of gnomes and halflings emerges from the city's north gate. They are festively attired in white servants' outfits trimmed with lavender—both the color and the plant. One of the halflings, a female, clutches a small bundle of paper. They pause and studiously scan the traders' bazaar before their gaze settles on your group. The halfling holding the bundle says something to her companions and then, like one large, colorful and curious looking insect with many legs, they hastily move in your direction...

The gnomes and halflings are part of the catering staff for a rehearsal dinner to be held just before sundown. The female halfling holds a bundle of ticket-invitations to the dinner; she looks over the PCs once again and begins distributing the tickets to them while the other gnomes and halflings hastily sketch the PCs and approximate their measurements—from a distance—with small tape measures. The female halfling hurriedly explains that the PCs have arrived just in time to help fill chairs at the rehearsal dinner later that evening; she scarcely gives the PCs a chance to speak, providing convoluted instructions on what to wear, along with list of gifts appropriate to the groom, a young priest of Nyrond's Church of the Bright Path (the judge and players can work out the list as they feel necessary; it is not provided in the scenario). Upon the tickets are printed in Common the words: "Rehearsal, Blackwater Park, Guest," along with a hand-drawn holy symbol of Pholtus.

She reminds the PCs to bring their tickets to the dinner, which is in roughly three hours. She and the

others then quickly depart, leaving the PCs to absorb what they have heard before disappearing inside the north gate and being utterly unresponsive to any pleas for further explanation. Dalis confidently speculates that perhaps more information is to be had within the city. From here, the PCs are free to explore the traders' bazaar or enter the city-proper.

ENCOUNTER 1: URBAN RENEWAL

The PCs are offered two areas of interest to begin exploring, both of which are detailed below:

THE TRADERS' BAZAAR

The traders' bazaar is situated slightly to the west of the main gate and is ideally visited before entering the city, but it can be visited or revisited at any time during this adventure. Exploring the bazaar even for a few moments is enough to establish the indisputable fact that, short of live slaves and evil artifacts, just about anything can be had here for a price. There are currently around fifty merchants in the bazaar, nearly all of whom have their own wagons or carts; fewer have homemade kiosks while fewer still have ridden in on horseback or mule to peddle or trade their wares. PCs will quickly realize that bargains are more important here than gossip; unless the PCs have some hot, inside tip on how to obtain a lower price on a given item, they are briefly regarded with a mild mixture of annoyance and suspicion. Consult DM Aid: Gather Information Results if any PCs wish to use their Gather Information skills within the bazaar.

Wandering through the bazaar, the PCs will easily note the crests and symbols from many different regions. Appropriate Knowledge (local) rolls may be attempted to specifically identify those of Ket and the Sultanate of Zeif (Tusmit, Fals and the Volverdyva Trade Route, DC 20), Geoff (Sheldomar Valley, DC 20), the Bright Desert (Core, DC 15), and the Archbarony of Ratik (Nyrond and Her Environs, DC 15), indicating that merchants do indeed come from all over the Flanaess and that the bazaar is more popular than rumor suggests. Due to the diversity of merchants, the gp cap is higher in the bazaar than it would normally be for a city of Midmeadow's size, and is set at 20,000 gp. PCs with Any, Regional, or Meta-Regional (Nyrond and Her Environs) access to selected items should be able to find them here. While metal armor and magical upgrades may be purchased here (with the correct access), these particular items will not be available until the end of the mod, as they will take time to craft. Additionally, all PCs who emerge from the bazaar without being branded a Shady Dealer (see below) are entitled to a favor: Access to the Traders' Bazaar, as noted on the Adventure Record.

PCs that succeed at Gathering Information learn that the selection of goods within the bazaar is superior to that available in town (though the quality may be lacking). Should any player express interest in

purchasing a wedding gift to take to the rehearsal dinner later that evening, give them *Player Handout 1* (which details "appropriate" gifts, though some may seem less than appropriate). Prices on this list may seem somewhat exorbitant to the PCs, but they must remember that these merchants have traveled far and are expected to demand higher prices for their wares. However, no bazaar would be complete without a shrewd bargaining expert.

If the PCs seem hesitant to surrender their hard-earned coin for gifts intended for two total strangers, allow them to overhear nearby commoners haggling for a better price, then hint that perhaps semi-famous (or infamous) adventurers might have some sway with the merchants. Any PC who then wishes to haggle with a merchant for a better price on any item from the gift list must make an unaided Diplomacy check to influence the attitude of a prospective buyer. Success—modified by the PC's race, home region, and experience—allows a percentage of negotiability. As the merchants have come from all over the Flanaess, a PC's reputation and race can compensate for a lack of diplomatic skill.

NOTE: Players should NOT be made aware of the mathematical dynamics and racial modifiers behind this check. Furthermore, once the first PC has attempted to bargain for an item, the other PCs will know a Diplomacy check is involved; if any PC attempts to use his or her Diplomacy skills to bargain or purchase an item for ANOTHER PC, this constitutes a violation of the traders' bazaar. Should this happen, allow the offending PC to continue, even repeatedly if desired, but once the PCs leave the bazaar, have the traders make a Gather Information check (+2 modifier; DC 20 minus the level of the offending PC). If the check succeeds, the traders' network learns of the PC's unscrupulous business ethics and brands that PC as a Shady Dealer, as noted on the Adventure Record; the PC suffers a -3 penalty to all Charisma-based skills for EACH such instance of "bargaining" for another PC; this penalty lasts for the duration of this series, effective at dawn the following day, once word has had a chance to spread. Do not reveal this to the offending PC, but make a note for future NPC interactions; the PC will learn of the penalty at the end of the scenario.

Additionally, no comprehensive list of trader-NPCs has been provided for this encounter; instead, DMs are encouraged to invent their own unique NPCs, keeping in mind that merchants have come from all over the Flanaess. Furthermore, try to emphasize the worldly experience of any trader by asking each PC from where he or she hails. To initiate the Diplomacy check, first determine the race of a random buyer by rolling a d6 and consulting the following table (note that a desired item from the list must be specified BEFORE the Diplomacy check is made):

- 1=human
- 2=elf
- 3=dwarf
- 4=gnome

- 5=mixed race (half-elf, half-orc, halfling)
- 6=other (“other” here refers to any race not listed in 1-5 above: orcs, goblins, kobolds, asherati, etc. Centaur NPCs are considered “other” for the purposes of this roll)

Once the buyer’s race has been determined (this must be re-rolled for each PC, as they will be forced to search for another buyer; no two PCs may attempt to negotiate with the same buyer. PCs attempting to “piggyback” on the successful Diplomacy roll of another PC, hoping to catch the buyer in a good mood, should be shooed away by that buyer; any reason is sufficient: the buyer needs a lunch break, has to use the bathroom, water his camel, has a more important client, etc), have the PC attempt a DC 25 Diplomacy check to shift the buyer’s attitude from “Indifferent” to “Friendly”, with the following modifiers:

- PC race same as the buyer: +4
- PC race different from the buyer: -2
- PC home region is Nyrond: +3
- PC is from one of the Urnst states: +1
- PC is from outside the Nyrond Meta-Region: +2
- PC home region is the Theocracy of the Pale: -2 (the buyer was regarded with undue suspicion and treated as an unscrupulous outsider when last visiting to peddle wares)
- PC has a visible familiar: +1
- PC has a visible curse: -1
- The player can produce Adventure Records proving that his or her PC has visited a minimum of 5 (five) regions OUTSIDE the Nyrond Meta-Region: +4

If the Diplomacy check falls short of DC 25, the PC simply has to purchase the desired item at full price. If the Diplomacy check succeeds, then for each point by which it exceeds DC 25, the PC is entitled to a 10% reduction on the item’s listed price. Dalis Mirivan, if present, will also select something from the list, but this should be one of the most exotic and inexpensive items. Once the PCs have explored the bazaar to their satisfaction, they may enter Midmeadow itself.

THE MIDMEADOW COMMUNE

Midmeadow has evolved, in the absence of any dominant, centralized religious or governmental authority, into a sort of utopian commune; many areas of the city have been torn down, bricked over, or so completely modified that they defy familiarity to adventurers who have been here before. The PCs are free to explore the city and gather information on its residents, its status as a commune, its religious presence, merchant activity outside the gates, the impending wedding and, finally, the rehearsal dinner and their duties at it. NOTE: PCs attempting to enter Blackwater Park (see below) will be politely shooed away until the rehearsal dinner (Encounter Two), as it is still being

decorated; consult DM Aid: Gather Information Results should PCs wish to make Gather Information checks.

Residents are generally amiable, but not so awed by adventurers as to be distracted from any activities or discussions in which they might be engaged. Once the PCs have completed their Gather Information checks, show them the map of Midmeadow (DM Aid: Midmeadow Map, Circa CY 596). As noted on the map, while the outer walls of the city have not changed much since CY 593, the interior has changed dramatically. With the former mayor’s mansion having been demolished, the dominant visible landmark is now the temple of Pholtus.

While most permanent residents do not consider themselves part of any specific social group, there are still four major geographical subdivisions that have evolved which are delineated by topography rather than by any conspicuous racial composition: The Promenade, Downtown, the Silk Plateau, and Blackwater Park. These areas are described briefly below, in case PCs wish to visit any or all of them. From here, the PCs may go where they wish, but keep them focused and provide gentle reminders that the rehearsal dinner occurs just before sundown. Should PCs wish to visit one of the specific districts, read or paraphrase the appropriate read-aloud text below, then consult DM Aid: Prominent NPCs by Subdivision for a list of each district’s notable NPCs:

1. The Promenade

This long boulevard, which spans the width of the city between the northern and southern gates, combines the austerity of a religious sanctuary with the casual bustle of an upscale marketplace. Though the cobblestones, which pave the walkway, are far from clean, and though the addition of a few evenly spaced trees would contribute to the ambience, it is clear that the clergy and merchants who work in this part of the city have made some small effort to beautify their surroundings.

At the midpoint of the Promenade is the temple of Pholtus, easily the most (perhaps ONLY) recognizable structure in town. Its fifty-foot walls tower over the surrounding shops and buildings, and convey a sense of stability amidst the ramshackle surroundings of Midmeadow’s other districts, though such stability could just as easily be interpreted as insular resolve. Its massive doors stand open to the public, with several strolling citizens partaking of the temple’s hospitality.

Flanking the temple along nearly the entire span of the Promenade is a respectable collection of merchant shops, small taverns, and private residences. These one- and two-story structures appear to be of sturdier construction than that evidenced in other parts of town, and most exhibit clear evidence of extreme remodeling. There is more activity in and around these shops than around the temple, but certainly nothing approaching the frenzied level of the bazaar. Indeed, it is as if this is a

more refined business district, catering to the elite rather than the desperate, though appearances are often deceiving.

2. Downtown

This district contains several single-story brick structures centered around a large open area, at the center of which is a massive hole in the street. What looks like an enormous glass cylinder mounted on a flat, bottomless, wheeled cart has been positioned over the hole. On closer inspection, the open area is actually a large depression, like an impact crater from a giant boulder. Inside the glass, a bright orange flame burns steadily. Around the lantern are a number of unevenly spaced, two foot-high structures that look like benches or tiny chimneys; the entire open area looks like the sagging roof of a dilapidated building.

Many small folk can be seen in the area, all engaged in one task or another—here, some dwarves are firing bricks in a large kiln; there, some halflings are painting decorative motifs upon some of the brick bench-chimneys; finally, a group of grubbily dressed gnomes are on their hands and knees under the wheeled cart, each clutching a sharp stick and peering intently into the massive hole as the bright orange flame burns above them. Looking around, it becomes apparent that no one in this area measures above five feet in height, though the level of toil and industry evidenced here suggests that this district's denizens have concerns and responsibilities indirectly proportionate to their size.

3. The Silk Plateau

The entire eastern third of the city has been transformed into a lush agricultural area. A small hill dotted with stone ruins dominates this district, clearly visible from anywhere else in the city, with luxurious rows of cornstalks and climbing vines trailing from it like a maiden's tresses. In the fields below, a crude yet effective mill delivers water from the city stream by way of sluices and an elaborate water-driven bucket/pulley system up onto the hill, and while someone or something must be responsible for overseeing it all, no movement can be seen on the plateau itself.

A diverse array of races is found within the lower reaches of this district, with half-elves, Flan, and half-orcs most notable among them. All are engaged in one predictable task or another—tending small gardens, planting seeds, or harvesting fruits and vegetables—but others still are occupied in more exotic activities: marking patterns on large pieces of cloth, mixing natural dyes, hanging silken garments to dry in the breeze, sharpening tools and, most curious of all, standing in circles of three to six members, eyes closed, humming softly and with hands enjoined.

Residents here smile and nod at your approach, but none offer a word of greeting, and the silence is conspicuous. One still hears the sounds of nature—water turning the mill, birds chirping—and distant sounds from elsewhere in the city, but residents here seem to be making a conscious effort not to speak, as if spoken words were not be wasted. As you absorb the scene, a large, muscular half-orc wielding a painted glaive with many notches carved into the handle emerges from the cornstalks and moves in your direction...

4. Blackwater Park

The lush expanse of trees and grassy hillocks before you must be one of the largest parks in the city; within its shadowy confines, one can see many elves and humans idly lounging, reading books, tuning musical instruments, and painting on small canvasses. However, a small sign standing only two feet off of the ground proclaims that the park is "closed for dinner preparations." While you note the sign's proclamation, a nearly naked elf approaches from deeper within the park...

Midmeadow residents exist in relative harmony with one another and tend to cooperate on simple tasks, though the city itself is largely run down and in a fluctuating state of disrepair, largely as a result of the Night of Terror in CY 593 and most evident in two areas: along the southern walls, where repairs have been slow to effect due to the area immediately outside the south gate having developed into a sort of informal laundry-washing/refuse-disposal site (where the city stream empties outside of town); and in the southwestern area between Blackwater Park and the Promenade, from which lumber has been salvaged from abandoned structures that now stand gutted, unsightly, and uninhabitable.

If the PCs wish to search for suitable dinner attire or more appropriate gifts than those found in the bazaar, Dalis, if present, politely excuses himself, noting his curiosity to learn something about any religious presence in the city; he offers to meet the PCs at the entrance to Blackwater Park in three hours (any suitable excuse will do; find a way for Dalis to separate himself from the party for a little while). A DC 10 Gather Information check is sufficient to locate merchants where suitable dinner attire can be purchased, if the PCs do not already possess such clothing; a second DC 10 check reveals that something slightly more formal than "adventuring gear" would be appropriate, but PCs need not wear full formal regalia. Still, if any PCs insist on wearing heavy armor and/or weapons to the dinner, they are encouraged to at least peace-bond their weapons (if possible) and to throw a festive cloak over their armor. Despite their efforts, the PCs are unable to locate the groom, the bride, or the female halfling who gave them their ticket-invitations.

Development: Once the PCs have made their Gather Information checks, purchased attire, and questioned a few local residents, shunt them toward Encounter Two. When adjudicating the elapsed time, keep in mind that successful Information Gathering requires 1d4+1 hours, and that it takes roughly 45 minutes to an hour to walk across the east-west width of the city. When three hours have elapsed, proceed to Encounter Two.

ENCOUNTER 2: WEDDING CRASHERS

As sundown approaches, the PCs should begin moving toward Blackwater Park in the southwestern corner of the city. Many other people are also moving in that direction, each of whom holds a ticket-invitation similar to those given to the PCs (but with proper names instead of the word “Guest”), which suggests that this dinner and its accompanying wedding are incredibly significant to Midmeadow's citizens. Assuming that the PCs wish to attend the dinner and join the other invitees, read or paraphrase the following (note that the Park is now open, in case any PCs tried to gain admittance earlier and were denied entry by the dinner-preparation staff):

Walking along the tree-lined paths that lace this majestic park like a corset and hold its burgeoning serenity and natural splendor in taut reserve, it becomes clear that despite the neglect visited upon Midmeadow, this one tiny corner, at least, has flourished, unmarred by the intrusive hands and vanities of men. The main path meanders beneath a wash of early starlight filtering in from the evening sky, offering a measure of seclusion as boughs arc gracefully overhead. Grass grows thick and long here; several elves and Flan can be seen relaxing contentedly upon its plush blades. The path unfolds before a large, dark expanse of water whose curved, southern shore has been adorned with trappings befitting nobility.

Round tables covered with fine linen bearing a striped white-and-lavender motif have been positioned around a long banquet table laden with plates and trays of hot food. Halflings and gnomes, attired like those seen earlier in the afternoon, move from table to table filling earthenware goblets with clear water from large decanters. A border of small, decorative shrubs in clay pots has been placed around the dining area, as if to create the illusion of privacy. In such an insulated, festive environment, one might almost be tempted to forget his or her troubles, or those of the outside world. Perhaps mankind isn't ready to unfasten this corset quite yet.

Small saucers float on the pond, each giving off magical light and illuminating shadowy areas beneath the trees. A group of high elves and tallfellow halflings finish tuning their crude but unique instruments near the water and begin

playing a soft melody. Each table setting bears a folded placard with an individual name upon it. As the roughly fifty other guests take their assigned seats, gentle applause and the clinking of goblets signal the approach of the evening's likely host from deeper within the park: a young Oeridian man wearing shining white robes and a small holy symbol of Pholtus. On his arm, radiant in a flowing green gown and with her long tawny hair immaculately braided, is who can only be his intended bride. As they move to the head table, she turns to return someone's greeting and the illusion is rudely dispelled: this is no Pholtan nun or lesser Nyronnese noble on her way to the altar, but a full-blooded wild elf. As the unflickering lights bob gently on the water and the last rays of sunset begin to recede behind the western wall, the pond betrays its namesake, offering no reflections but rather a resolute and indifferent mask, perhaps intimating that some things must be looked or entered into blindly or on faith.

Once the PCs reach the dining area, they spot the female halfling who gave them their ticket-invitations. As they wait in line to present their tickets to her, Dalis Mirivan returns and greets the PCs. He has learned the following:

- Several faiths are represented in town in addition to (or perhaps instead of) Pholtus; Dalis is very excited by this discovery.
- A priestess of Corellon is said to dwell within this park and ministers to the elf population.
- A priest of Merikka is said to offer guidance and prayers to part of the Flan population, and to residents of the Silk Plateau; however, he is apparently only an advisor there, and the agricultural development is actually overseen by a mysterious priestess. Dalis was unable to learn anything more about her.
- There is apparently a young Peloran priest rumored to be quite vocal in his attempts to lure worshippers away from the Church of Pholtus; Dalis failed to locate him.
- Dalis heard a wild rumor that some kind of spiritual mystery man is responsible for Midmeadow's current evolution. This rumor is so incredible that Dalis has trouble believing it, though he can't stop thinking about it.

After a few moments the PCs reach the female halfling; she takes their tickets and points to their assigned seats, which are all at the same table (table #7), along with Dalis. Show the players DM Aid: Dinner in Blackwater Park Map and allow them to become familiar with the seating arrangements. This is a free-form roleplaying encounter in which the PCs have the chance to meet the intended bride and groom, other prominent Midmeadow NPCs, and a female bard visiting from Rel Mord. Allow the PCs to interact with the listed NPCs as they desire but keep them focused; five minutes per NPC is a good balance.

Once the PCs are seated, Penrys stands and thanks everyone for coming, noting that after desert is served, they will do a quick rehearsal before moving the tables to form an area for dancing (if the PCs think to ask, their participation as “live bodies” for the rehearsal is the real reason they were invited). He then blesses the meal and all attendees in the name of Pholtus. Once he sits, there is more gentle applause, and then dinner is immediately served, followed by a toast from Jerod of Ull to Penrys and Faith.

Several notable NPCs (summarized below) are in attendance that the PCs would not have had a chance to encounter during the afternoon due to their duties as Midmeadow residents. During the course of the meal and conversation, the PCs will easily note some empty chairs (and corresponding table placards) where certain invited guests have failed to appear (see Jerod of Ull below for details); DMs are encouraged to use their imagination in creating 1-3 Merchant NPCs who can offer information about business in the Promenade or the professional status of the absent adept-merchant, Rowena Livingston. Note that PCs who wish to speak to Penrys or Faith must succeed at a DC 20 Diplomacy check to get their attention: not only will other guests be attempting to do the same thing, but the wedding couple will also be making goo-goo eyes at one another and be politely but effectively distracted. In addition to a rehearsal, this dinner is also a sort of “coming out” party for Faith, as most Midmeadow residents (and none of the out-of-town invitees) have not yet met her. Pholtan cleric PCs gain a +5 ecclesiastical bonus on this initial Diplomacy check (any female PC with a Charisma score of 16 or more also gains a +5 bonus; the two bonuses stack for female Pholtan clerics):

🧙 **Penrys Bonchal:** LG male human cleric 4 (Pholtus); Heal +8, Knowledge (religion) +4, Sense Motive +5; hp 26.

Description and Personality: Penrys is twenty-five and of mixed Oeridian descent, with close-cut brown hair and wide, deep-set brown eyes; his family hails from Womtham. He has been stationed in Midmeadow for five months and though he is a devout (Bright Path) Pholtan, his whimsical inability to focus or commit guarantees he will never rise above the rank of Prior. PCs with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (religion) can tell he is less experienced than he lets on. He is willing to discuss the following (a female PC with a Charisma score of 16 or more who succeeded in getting his attention is allowed a Sense Motive check at DC 15 to realize that he is actually flirting with them while Faith sits naively beside him, suggesting a feeble level of commitment):

- He likes his new Bishop, Talpin Thorea, and admires his attitude of tolerance and openness, especially after the Blinding Light Pholtans and General Zylinchin. He doubts the former leader of the Bright Path Church, who was suddenly transferred to Mithat on some kind of important assignment

shortly before the new Bishop arrived one month ago, would have approved of his marriage. He isn't sure from where Bishop Talpin hails.

- He thinks it is fortunate that Lynwerd forced the Blinding Light Pholtans to withdraw from Midmeadow; his former Prefect, Bernysal, and the Blinding Light's high priest did not get along at all, and they constantly argued over doctrine, heresy, and authority.
- He met Faith five weeks ago when she came to the temple of Pholtus in search of food and guidance, and they have been inseparable since. He knows she hails from the Gamboge but not the name of her tribe or its racist proclivities. He feels “profound elation” for her but has already forgotten her true elven name.
- He likes the new direction his Church is taking, including the new open-door policy at the Temple and how efforts to beautify the Promenade area help attract worshippers.
- Two captains of the Pholtan Knights Valorous, Order of Celene, are here from the Pale to assist the Bright Path in restoring order to Midmeadow after the withdrawal of General Zylinchin and the Church of the Blinding Light. They can usually be found near the south gate or at the former barracks of the Valorous League of Blindness, effecting renovations. King Lynwerd has granted them “nominal authority” during their residence here.

🧙 **Faith:** N female wild elf commoner 2; hp 11.

Description and Personality: Her petite and somewhat frail physique mark Faith as the likely runt of her litter; she has light brown hair and green eyes, with high cheekbones and a small upper lip, giving her a radiant smile. She smiles constantly and has a quiet, low-key presence. She is scarcely eighty years old, making her affair with Penrys more of a potential scandal than his tryst with Rowena, though Faith does not (yet) know about that. She has been in Midmeadow for six weeks and first visited the Silk Plateau, though after a few days the eerie silence of the residents there made her uncomfortable, so she went to the temple of Pholtus in search of food and guidance, hoping that all Midmeadow residents weren't like those on the Plateau. She soon met Penrys and has since tried to embrace all things Pholtan and human, in an effort to distance herself from her tribe and her past; to that effect, and in order to please Penrys, she has adopted her trite but obviously non-elven name. The PCs have little chance of learning her real name short of a *detect thoughts* spell or enchantment magic, and indeed it is not relevant to this adventure (it will also be moot after Encounter Five). The PCs should find her charming if a tad naïve, especially when dinner guests talk about her in the third person while she looks on, oblivious to their lack of tact. PCs may even come to pity her, given Penrys's obviously superficial affection for her and his notable lack of chivalry, but her idealistic attitude

toward interracial marriage and community is genuine; she adores what Midmeadow has become (despite the eeriness of the Plateau) and her devotion to Penrys is absolute, for now. She prefers not to discuss her past and will not reveal the nature of her former tribe under any circumstances. When Penrys buckles under the pressures of leadership during Encounter Three-A, her faith in him will be shaken.

♣ **Sastrine:** CN female human bard 9 (Bluff +12, Diplomacy +9, Perform [wind instruments] +15); Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +9; hp 48.

Description and Personality: Sporting shoulder length brown hair and lively brown eyes, Sastrine is attractive in a nondescript way, ideally suiting her role as a nefarious underworld informant. She is twenty-eight and has no romantic attachments, but flirts at every opportunity and cannot resist making snide puns at others' expense. Though she herself is not evil, many of her contacts are (four will be waiting outside the south gate in two days to ambush Penrys). At some point, roll a secret Sense Motive check for each PC NOT interacting with her to notice Sastrine subtly observing Penrys (this is opposed by her Bluff score). A bard PC may attempt a Bardic Knowledge check (DC=20 + her level, minus the PC's level); if the check succeeds, the PC has heard of her and knows of her shady reputation, suggesting that her presence here bears scrutiny. She uses the same tactic on clearly law-oriented PCs, tailoring her speech as necessary:

- She hails from Rel Mord and is a performing flautist (true; she has her flute for proof).
- If asked why she is here, she leans forward and whispers conspiratorially "can you keep a secret?" She was invited by a local resident and is intended to..."entertain" at the wedding in two days, but she asks the PCs to keep it to themselves, as her performance is a surprise for the bride and groom (technically true).
- She has heard several rumors since arriving in Midmeadow two days ago: King Lynwerd is furious at the Church of Pholtus for some reason (partially true, though she does not know which sect of the Church); bandits are preying on the merchant activity around Midmeadow and must have a base nearby (she is lying here to get the PCs away from the city before the wedding, but this actually happens to be true: the bandits' activities simply haven't been discovered yet); finally, she mentions the giant hole in the Downtown district and speculates about the horrible undead remnants from CY 593 that must be lurking down there (this is totally false).

♣ **Kirelle:** CG female wood elf cleric 11 (Corellon); Heal +17, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local-Nyrond and her Environs) +14, Knowledge (religion) +15, Sense Motive +13; hp 55.

Description and Personality: With long, silvery-blond hair and piercing malachite eyes, Kirelle cuts a stately figure as Midmeadow's oldest resident. At just over two hundred years old, she has seen the worst that humans have to offer in terms of loyalty, manipulation and barbarism. It is her faith in Corellon and her love of the arts that keep her spirit grounded and prevent her from giving in to anger and the base tendencies of those she detests: namely, the Pholtans, whom she likens to an itch one cannot reach to scratch. A DC 15 Sense Motive check tells PCs that she is a reluctant attendee at this dinner. Kirelle will discuss the following only with non-Pholtan PCs:


- She is wary of the new "attitude" of tolerance espoused by the Church of the Bright Path: the open-door policy, lifting the martial-law ban, this wedding...it is one thing to work with poison, quite another to willingly imbibe it.
- Despite her invitation, she attends this dinner reluctantly and for the good of the community rather than any obligation to Penrys or Faith. The artists' enclave here in Blackwater Park is as good a setting as the temple of Pholtus.
- She finds the wedding highly suspicious...brief courtship, unseemly age difference, unusual elven sub race...wild elves and humans simply do not marry one another. She knows Penrys to be a muddled acolyte, and knows next to nothing about Faith; she does not see the mutual attraction, and it disturbs her.
- If asked about the pond, she replies that it has no name and that the park is essentially named after it. The water was once crystal clear and reputedly magical, but the death two years ago of a local elven seer caused it to darken. She senses that the pond is now cursed; she cannot explain exactly how, but sternly warns PCs against touching the water, for their own good. This is a healthy warning, as the pond is indeed cursed: merely touching the water necessitates a DC 20 Will save against a very potent *modify memory* spell; failure permanently erases a recent event from the mind of the PC, ideally an event from that afternoon; this effect is irreversible.

♣ **Hinnad:** LG male human cleric 7 (Merikka); Heal +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (religion) +12, Profession (farmer) +11; hp 43.

Description and Personality: This fortyish farmer-turned-priest has spent the last decade traveling the Nyrond meta-region, lending his expertise to local farmers and helping to improve agricultural conditions as best he can. He hasn't been this far north in Nyrond since investigating a bizarre corn epidemic years ago; while usually aloof with Pholtans, he has unwittingly found himself in the role of liaison between the Bright Path church and the Silk Plateau. The Pholtans' refusal to acknowledge the existence of the "mystery man" or his

female companion, coupled with their belief that it is Hinnad who has made the Plateau so successful has placed him in an awkward and untenable position. He knows much:

- He is unnerved by the hyper-efficiency seen in the Silk Plateau; residents there speak little, hum in groups, are totally self-reliant, and allow him to come and go as he pleases, as if he were a curious insect beneath notice.
- Trade in the Plateau is the best in the city; residents there grow or weave their goods, all of it natural, and then trade with other districts or in the bazaar for whatever else they lack.
- If PCs ask why no Downtown residents are present, Hinnad notes that he passed through the area on the way here. The Downtowners consider the wedding important but the dinner redundant, like doing the same thing twice, and they have more important things to do.
- His unofficial role as liaison with the Plateau has made him privy to certain oddities within the Church of the Bright Path; Bishop Talpin, for instance, is a conundrum. Hinnad has dealt with Pholtans from the Pale before, and was rebuked at his offer of agricultural expertise there due to his worship of a “pagan” god; Talpin is so un-Pholtan in his new policies that Hinnad has trouble deciding which deity’s dogma best describes him. Similarly, Penrys is another mystery: the acolyte is hardly in line with the Pholtans Hinnad encountered in the Pale; he is almost a lawless pacifist by comparison.
- He is uneasy admitting this, but Hinnad reveals that there may well be a “mystery man” somewhere on the Plateau. He has not seen this person, but the rumors and development in the area are too strong to ignore. He confirms that there is a female who is likely his companion: an intense half-elven priestess of Bralm whose mere presence is intimidating; he can give directions to where he saw her, but advises against seeking her out, as her manner of communicating mostly by gestures and stares is unnerving.

 **Jerod of Ull:** N male human commoner 5; Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +3, Knowledge (local-Tusmit, Fals and the Volverdyva Trade Route) +6; hp 27.

Description and Personality: His thin frame, dark complexion, coal-black eyes, and shock of black hair are a stark contrast to his confident smile and gleaming white teeth. Jerod came to Midmeadow on a merchant caravan during the early months of CY 595; Nyrond forces detained his master in the city for refusing to pay import taxes. After a month of waiting, Jerod’s conscience got the better of him and he quit the caravan, stating that he could no longer willingly serve someone who made things so difficult; the ego evident in a squabble over a few gold pieces reminded him of the strife in his

hometown. He has remained in Midmeadow since then and become a sort of recognizable public figure. He lives here in the Park, chiseling likenesses of random citizens into small rocks—of which there is no shortage in the city—and trading them in the bazaar for food and supplies. If the city had a mayor, it would be Jerod. He knows the following;

- Any Gather Information item from DM Aid: Gather Information Results (Midmeadow) of DC 15 or less.
- He can identify absent dinner guests by the names on the table placards. Rowena Livingston is a respected local adept (and fellow Bakluni) and well-known magic item broker; her shop is in the Promenade but has been closed for over a week, as Rowena is off procuring supplies. Callidan Estani is a local priest of Pelor; all the known clerics in town were invited (except the new Bishop, who is too busy to attend, according to Penrys) but Jerod can’t explain why Callidan isn’t here. Finally, Ragnis Halfpint, Finlay Seedspitter and “Rats” are all Downtown residents. As Jerod speculates on why they aren’t here, a filthy badger burrows up out of the ground near Jerod’s chair. In its mouth is a scroll tube, which it spits at his feet. Jerod opens the scroll and unrolls a note, which explains in no uncertain terms that “Rats”, Ragnis and Finlay send their apologies and will not be attending due to a “breakout” Downtown. No other explanation is offered. The badger sniffs the air and eyes the banquet table, then wrinkles its nose and scuttles back into its tunnel.

Development: This loosely-structured encounter is intended to satisfy any PC curiosity about the relationship between Faith and Penrys, the state of religion in Midmeadow, the Church of the Bright Path’s view on its clergy marrying demihumans, and perhaps even the nature of the pond. Additionally, if a PC casts *detect magic* in the area and focuses on one of the decorative shrubs, inform them that selected shrubs (20% chance that one of the shrubs is a forestkith goblin in *tree shape* form; see Map #2) radiate faint transmutation magic. No one at the dinner can explain this, but most speculate that one of the Park’s artisans used magic to sculpt designs into the shrubs. When things reach a lull after dessert, have Penrys initiate the wedding rehearsal.

This is very straightforward: tables are moved aside and dinner guests (including the PCs) are arranged as the real wedding guests will be in two days; finally, Penrys and Faith are led through their “official” movements by Jerod, who plays the part of the Bishop. The entire affair is essentially an exercise in footwork and etiquette, and takes all of fifteen minutes. Afterward, Penrys announces that he and Faith are departing to attend evening prayer at the temple; he thanks everyone and encourages them to enjoy themselves and dance; he and Faith will return in roughly thirty minutes (PCs who wish to accompany them to evening prayer should be encouraged to stay by other NPCs, but be prepared if the party decides to split

up). Five minutes after they depart, the *tree shape* ability of the forestkith goblins expires. They emerge from their shrub-form in the surprise round, at which time everyone should roll initiative.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

The musicians' playing screeches to an abrupt halt punctuated by a screaming coda as three of the small, decorative shrubs bordering the dining area transform before the eye into snarling, wild-eyed, axe-wielding goblins! These creatures quickly scan the assembled guests before emitting a shrill, discordant shrieking and then charging forward. As the goblins attack, innocent bystanders, members of the catering staff, and hapless musicians who promptly ditched their instruments all race for cover behind nearby trees. The bard Sastrine, playing the wallflower, slowly rises to her feet, mouth agape, eyes wide with terror, as it seems someone objects to the union...

Creatures: The three goblinoids are forestkith goblins from the Gamboge Forest that were smuggled in last night; they have been posing as decorative shrubs using their *tree shape* ability and are working for the racist druid-elder of Faith's former tribe. As the goblins charge into melee, the druid—currently in *wild shape* as an owl deeper within the park—alights from his perch and flies after Faith and Penrys. He plans to kidnap Faith by assuming the form of a large air elemental, absorbing her with his whirlwind ability, and then whisking her away southwest to divert suspicion on any Gamboge inhabitants before doubling back toward the Gamboge Forest. To delay any foolhardy pursuit and to mask the screams of Faith and Penrys, the goblins attack everyone in sight. The bard Sastrine looks more surprised than anyone at the ensuing chaos; preventing her from fleeing the scene could provide the PCs with important clues about the attack. Those PCs that can see invisible creatures notice an older Baklunish female observing the scene from a discreet distance in absolute horror.

APL 2 (EL 3)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 1; hp 10; Appendix 1.

APL 4 (EL 5)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 2; hp 20; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 7)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 4; hp 44; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 9)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 6; hp 66; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 11)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 8; hp 88; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 13)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 10; hp 110; Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 15)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 12; hp 144; Appendix 1.

APL 16 (EL 17)

👉 **Forestkith Goblin Berserker (3):** male goblin barbarian 14; hp 168; Appendix 1.

Tactics: The goblins target humans first per the druid's instructions. They are not tactical geniuses but work well together and utilize flanking where prudent; they also favor charging and do so if an opportunity arises. At higher APLs the goblins quaff their *potions of haste* and possibly their *elixirs of fire breath* before attacking. Defeating them quickly earns the PCs a favorable reputation among Midmeadow residents: each round that a goblin is left unchallenged, it attacks an innocent NPC commoner (AC 10, 4 hp) scrambling for cover; keep track of the number of commoners attacked. Once combat begins, each person within thirty feet of a shrieking goblin must succeed at a Will save (DC 9) or be shaken for 1d4 rounds due to their Discordant Frenzy ability (Commoners save at +1). This ability will have little or no effect at higher APLs, but it effectively masks the screams of Faith, Penrys, and other local residents as the druid attacks. The goblins fight to the death, fearing the druid's wrath more than any wounds sustained from PCs. While the fight rages on, the NPC clerics try to protect other guests.

👑 Treasure:

APL 2: Loot – 143 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

APL 4: Loot – 100 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each).

APL 6: Loot – 100 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 3 *potions of barkskin* (+2, 25 gp each), +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each).

APL 8: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 small greataxe (x3, 193 gp each), 3 *potions of barkskin* (+3, 50 gp each), 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each).

APL 10: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic -- +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 small greataxe (x3,

193 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 elixirs of fire breath (91 gp each), 3 rings of protection +1 (166 gp each).

APL 12: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 small greataxe (x3, 193 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3, 333 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 rings of protection +1 (166 gp each), gauntlets of ogre power (x3, 333 gp each).

APL 14: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic -- +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 mighty cleaving small greataxe (x3, 693 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3, 333 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 rings of protection +1 (166 gp each), gauntlets of ogre power (x3, 333 gp each), 3 elixirs of fire breath (91 gp each), amulet of health +2 (x3, 333 gp each).

APL 16: Loot – 20 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 studded leather armor of light fortification (x3, 764 gp each), +1 mighty cleaving small greataxe (x3, 693 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (x3, 750 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 rings of protection +2 (666 gp each), gauntlets of ogre power (x3, 333 gp each), amulet of health +2 (x3, 333 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: Potion of cure moderate wounds (faint conjuration), +1 studded leather armor (faint transmutation), cloak of resistance +1, +2 and +3 (faint abjuration), potion of barkskin (faint transmutation), +1 small greataxe (faint transmutation), ring of protection +1 and +2 (faint abjuration), potion of cure serious wounds (faint conjuration), potion of haste (faint transmutation), elixir of fire breath (moderate evocation), gauntlets of ogre power (faint transmutation), amulet of health +2 (moderate transmutation), +1 mighty cleaving small greataxe (faint transmutation and moderate evocation), +1 studded leather armor of light fortification (faint transmutation and strong abjuration).

Development: Once combat begins, Sastrine attempts to make a hasty departure; PCs who succeed on both a DC 15 Spot check and a DC 15 Sense Motive check suspect her flight has less to do with fear of goblins than some other, as-yet-unknown reason. Off-screen in Encounter Three-A, Faith has a slim chance to resist being absorbed into the druid-elemental's whirlwind (Reflex DC 16, her bonus is +2); if she succeeds, the druid tries again until he absorbs her (he is 16th level, and has eight chances). It takes the druid one round to fly and locate Faith on the street, and another round to wild shape into elemental form. Thus, the third full round of the goblin fight is the druid's first attempt to absorb Faith. If the PCs dispatch the goblins quickly enough, they may be able to hear Faith's screams from across town (Listen DC 5). After the goblins are defeated, any of the NPC clerics on hand heal injured residents; the PCs may assist if they wish, though they will be urged to investigate if the screams from Encounter Three-A are still audible.

ENCOUNTER 4: QUESTIONS OF FAITH

Following the goblin attack, the PCs should be guided toward the temple of Pholtus where the druid has just attacked Faith. If she resisted being captured, the PCs should be able to hear her screams; if she failed to resist, the druid will have already flown away with her. If so, have any NPC cleric on hand recommend that the PCs immediately notify Penrys or Bishop Talpin of the goblin attack; this will lead them to the temple.

The progression of this encounter depends upon several factors: whether the PCs noticed Sastrine behaving strangely, whether or not the druid abducted Faith, whether any PCs spotted the invisible human female observing the goblin attack, and finally how eager the PCs are (if at all) to pursue an elemental. Let them proceed as they will but do not let them get sidetracked in an exhaustive search of the city. Short of Faith succeeding on eight Reflex saves, the PCs should be unable to prevent her abduction by the druid.

When they arrive at the site of the druid's attack, just a few short blocks from the temple of Pholtus, the PCs will note the following: debris and chunks of masonry litter the street, several shocked residents are standing around talking excitedly with one another, and Penrys lies unconscious near the wall of a building while a surly looking priest of Pelor stands beside his body, arms folded in contempt. The people on the street are mostly patrons from the Topless Tavern (many with mugs of ale still in hand) who heard screams and ran out to investigate; they saw a large air elemental swoop down out of the sky and absorb an elf woman (Faith) before flying off over the south wall in a south-by-southwesterly direction. No one can explain how or why Penrys ended up in a heap on the street, but they all assume that he was defending Faith (this is actually not the case; Penrys is a coward and tried to flee to get Bishop Talpin; the druid snatched and flung him against a building out of spite).

One of the men on the scene is actually the spy Narinn Kirr, who was in the tavern gathering information on the newly arrived PCs and stays at the back of the crowd; thanks to his keen eyes, he actually witnessed the druid changing form and quickly extricates himself from the mob to contact his master with news of this unexpected attack. The Pelorite is Callidan Estani, who was busy shouting invectives at the temple of Pholtus when the druid attacked; he ran to investigate but Penrys was already unconscious. If asked why he hasn't revived his fellow cleric, Callidan curtly informs the PCs that "he's still alive."

Once they learn of the elemental's attack, astute PCs may correctly deduce that the goblins were a diversion. Such orchestration should leave them curious enough to get involved. The PCs are not obligated to pursue the elemental/druid; lower level parties may experience pronounced apprehension at the very idea. Moreover, PCs unsympathetic to the clergy of Pholtus may have no

interest in helping at all. Still, whatever they decide—ideally a brief interrogation of those NPCs on hand, followed by a heightened pursuit of the elemental—two things should be clear: an egregious lack of both leadership and a central authority figure among Midmeadow's residents, along with a growing sense of division among residents over the marriage; those divine casters who were at the dinner are quick to heal injured guests, but beyond that any sort of responsible initiative is utterly lacking. Feel free to convey this in any way that adds tension to the scene.

Penrys should be the natural authority figure here, as it was his betrothed who was taken, but if he is revived the young Pholtan seems completely befuddled: he is nervous, indecisive, disheveled, frantic and utterly overwhelmed by what has happened, and his only cognizant thought is to summon his superior, Bishop Talpin. Some PCs may feel that the Pholtan church taking a direct role in controlling the situation may not be a good thing. The PCs will undoubtedly have questions, especially for Penrys, but no one approaches the PCs or appeals to their heroism, and it has been too long since any of the residents needed to seek aid from a higher authority. They should appear helpless, waiting for someone decisive to take charge. It is up to the PCs to assume responsibility for rescuing Faith (if applicable).

Note that if the druid failed to absorb her he flees, leaving Penrys unconscious and a rattled Faith to relate details of the attack to the PCs. In order to question her, Faith must first be calmed (via magic or a DC 20 Diplomacy check); once calmed, she relates her suspicions: that the druid of her racist tribe is the likely culprit. She can provide vague directions to the tribe's camp within the Gamboge but is no wilderness expert, so the PCs will be unable to pinpoint an exact location (for teleportation or similar magic), and she further cautions them that the druid is very bitter and dangerous. At this point she reluctantly reveals the circumstances that caused her to abandon her tribe and relocate to Midmeadow.

This brief, investigative encounter should end with the PCs agreeing to track the elemental south out of Midmeadow, either immediately or the first thing in the morning, as their assistance in the investigation is perhaps the best wedding present they can offer. Key NPCs still on hand and what they are likely to reveal are summarized below:

- **Penrys (if revived):** Confused and scared; he knows of no one who bears him or Faith any ill will, but also does not know the full truth behind her tribal origins.
- **Sastrine:** If successfully detained, she can be intimidated into revealing an unsavory plot to discredit Penrys but which had nothing to do with Faith (she will not admit this in front of Penrys). If the plot is coaxed out of her, she tries to bargain, fearing Pholtan "justice" (thanks to rumors about

Zylinchin) and having her mind probed by them; she is willing to detail the plot in exchange for partial amnesty. If the PCs agree, she directs them to the Shining Star Trading Company (located in the Promenade district) and tells them to ask the proprietor for some *incense of obsession*. This will startle the proprietor, Rowena Livingston, as the adept reluctantly acknowledged the word "obsession" as the two women formulated their plan; only magic gets Sastrine to reveal Rowena's name. She does tell the PCs that she spoke of the plot to one other person in town (Narinn), and describes him if asked. If the PCs wish to arrest her, they learn that there is no official jail in town; only the temple of Pholtus comes close. If the PCs refuse her terms, she refuses to say anything more, leaving them to their own devices. If the PCs were unable to detain her, she gathers her minions at the south gate and flees Midmeadow, never to return.

- **The Mob:** Several dozen more residents soon congregate on the street and begin gossiping about the attack. Many are partial to the more conservative Pholtan Church of the Blinding Light and its views on demihumans, and they note that there was a strange male elf asking questions about Faith roughly a week ago. These residents are slightly biased against the wedding and do not know what "breed" of elf he was, but they assumed he came from the Silk Plateau ("where all the weird ones live"); and was simply curious about the wedding. These residents are quick to interpret the attack as a sign from Pholtus that the wedding between Penrys and Faith is a bad thing.
- **The Coherent:** Other more level-headed residents soon arrive and insist that any parallel drawn between the attack and the Will of Pholtus is fanciful at best. These residents are also quick to note that the revelation about the strange male elf is indeed odd; no one can remember any strange elves from the Plateau, as it is primarily mixed races that dwell there. As far as they know, Faith is well liked and has no known enemies.

Development: Some PCs may suspect a rogue tribe of Gamboge elves, but only Faith knows that this is indeed the case. A Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) check (DC 10) confirms the nature of the current relationship between the various tribes of Gamboge elves and the restored Kingdom of Nyrond as a peaceful one. PCs who noticed the Baklunish female observing the rehearsal dinner may inquire about her among other residents; her identity is confirmed as that of a local adept named Rowena Livingston, who is the only notable Baklunish woman in town; the PCs may get directions and visit her shop, but the doors there are locked and there is no response to knocks or entreaties. Rowena is actually invisible, spying on Penrys and Faith;

when Faith is attacked, Rowena panics, thinking that she might somehow be blamed for it, and decided to remain in hiding until things calmed down. She is afraid to trust anyone at this point, avoiding contact with the obviously heroic PCs, though further questioning of Midmeadow's residents could lead them to her shop during Encounter Eight.

The final outcome of this encounter depends upon how efficient the PCs were in defeating the goblins. As the PCs try to learn what they can about the elemental's attack and listen to the growing debate over the nature of Faith's marriage to Penrys, Kirelle, Hinnad and Dalis arrive from Blackwater Park with a small contingent of merchant guests. These people then relate the outcome of the goblin fight for those residents already assembled on the street.

If five or more dinner guests were attacked due to a sluggish response by the PCs, then Bishop Talpin is summoned along with both Knight-Captains from the Pale. The PCs are treated as little more than ineffective amateurs who just "happened" to be in the right place at the right time; the Pholtans assume responsibility for the investigation, and provisional martial law is reinstated, effective immediately. The PCs are free to leave town or else remain indoors until dawn; the assembled populace now looks to the Church of the Bright Path for guidance and authority, and the PCs earn an "Unfavorable" reputation, as noted in the Conclusion.

If one to four dinner guests were attacked, only the Bishop is summoned. He thanks the PCs for their efforts but informs them that the entire investigation must be turned over to King Lynwerd's authority, by whose grace his church was allowed to remain in Midmeadow. Bishop Talpin will dispatch an envoy to the King first thing in the morning. The proprietor of the Topless Tavern, "Mugs" MacGruber, tries to disperse the assembled residents by offering a free round on the house. The PCs earn a reputation of "Indifferent," as noted in the Conclusion.

If no dinner guests were attacked, then the PCs are lauded as heroes and urged to immediately pursue the elemental. No Pholtans are summoned, and in fact most residents prefer the take-charge attitude evidenced by the PCs at the rehearsal dinner. The PCs earn a reputation of "Heroic," as noted in the Conclusion. Whatever their reputation, the PCs should realize that attempting to rescue Faith is the morally responsible (not to mention heroic) thing to do. Meanwhile, off-screen in "Encounter Four-A," the mysterious mage has located the Gamboge camp of Faith's tribe and slain everyone in it, positioning bodies to provide an easy trail for rescuers to follow. If the druid failed to abduct Faith, he returns to his camp in fury and the mage still slays the entire tribe, allowing Midmeadow residents and the Church of the Bright Path (and all Pholtans) to believe they have a benefactor in the Gamboge. When the PCs are ready to pursue the elemental, proceed to Encounter Five.

ENCOUNTER 5: SHADOWS AND TALL TREES

During this encounter, which occurs in two stages, the PCs attempt to pursue the air elemental that abducted (or attempted to abduct) Faith. Once the PCs agree to track it, they must decide when to start: either shortly after the goblin fight or first thing in the morning. Some parties may not be fooled by the druid's south-southwesterly jaunt and may be able to pursue with little delay. If so, skip to "Stage Two: Inside the Gamboge," below. Other parties, however, may easily be fooled and begin tracking in the wrong direction, away from the Gamboge. If the PCs do not or cannot immediately pursue the druid, or if they need to rest for the night following the goblin attack, then proceed to "Stage One: Outside Midmeadow," below. Regardless of their actions, Dalis will not accompany the PCs in pursuit of the druid, noting that his clerical services are better employed here.

Stage One: Outside Midmeadow

Regardless of when the PCs pursue the druid, physically tracking him proves impossible. After attacking Faith he speeds over the south wall, flying southwest at full speed toward Borneven. After fifteen miles he turns east toward the Gamboge where his tribe waits impatiently. However, his progress through the night sky does not go entirely unnoticed, and using the Gather Information skill to question travelers on the road can compensate for the absence of an obvious trail. By cursory searching and diplomatic enquiry, the PCs can locate traveling merchants, bandits preparing for an ambush, or even local marchland residents who may have noted a strange rush of wind passing overhead (use discretion but be generous here: if a druid PC casts *Speak with Animals* on an owl while it is out hunting at night, by all means reward such creative investigation).

If the PCs pursue at night, they first need to locate someone to question. This is accomplished with a Gather Information check along the road south out of Midmeadow (each such check takes 1d4+1 hours); the base DC is 15. Results between DC 15 and DC 20 lead the PCs to a rural homestead whose occupants heard the elemental's swift passage overhead a short while ago. They recall that the noise it made changed pitch as they listened; any PC succeeding on a DC 20 Survival check may deduce that the pitch change indicates an abrupt change in direction. Searching around the homestead (DC 20) turns up a field of strewn debris leading east, roughly four hundred yards from the main house, suggesting the elemental flew toward the Gamboge Forest.

A Gather Information check of DC 21-24 leads the PCs to a small caravan stopped along the side of the main road to Borneven. These merchants fared poorly at the traders' bazaar that afternoon and seek to recoup their losses by offering "exquisite bargains" to late night

shoppers. To dissuade them from their sales pitch and get them to reveal what they know about any strange elemental sightings, one PC (and only one PC may make this attempt) must succeed at a DC 25 Diplomacy check (other PCs may assist); as an alternative for less diplomatic parties, a purchase or purchases from these merchants totaling 500 gp or more restores their faith in consumers, and they eagerly reveal that they both saw and heard something fast and loud fly south and then turn east a short while ago. The PCs may correctly deduce that it flew toward the Gamboge.

A Gather Information check of DC 25 or more leads PCs off of the main road to a large campfire, around which sit six human males clad in black leather armor. When the PCs approach, these men reach for their weapons, but a second glance at the PCs causes them to look askance at one another and nervously sheath their weapons. The six men are bandits from Stoink who are preying on highway travelers, but they haven't attacked anyone in over a week because their last victims had not heard of them (note that these are NOT the bandits that the PCs may have learned about from Sastrine), and this fact has demoralized them to some extent. They believe they have given themselves a fearsome and catchy "bandit gang name," but their reputation isn't spreading as rapidly or as widely as they'd like. Thus, they have been strategizing on how to remedy the situation. Instead of attacking the PCs, they ask if the PCs have heard of them ("the Six from Stoink"); have the PCs make a Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) check (DC 30 minus APL). If the check succeeds, the bandits are elated and answer any questions the PCs have, noting that they did indeed hear the passage of something fast and large not too long ago, and it was definitely moving east; if the check fails and the PCs have not heard of them, the bandits are dejected but still answer questions and relate the news about the elemental's passage. However, in an effort to improve their reputation, since the PCs are OBVIOUSLY skilled adventurers if they're tracking elementals at night, the bandits insist on accompanying the PCs on their errand, "just to see how professionals do things." Any hostile PC action or a successful Intimidate check (opposed by their collective Hit Dice, which total 18) gets the bandits to back off.

All APLs (EL o)

🗡️ **Bandits (6):** male human rogue 3; hp 17.

If the PCs pursue on the morning following the goblin attack, the rural homestead described above is their only source of information; success in this case is automatic, as the field of debris is easy to spot. Once the PCs have a clear idea where their quarry has fled, proceed to "Stage Two: Inside the Gamboge," below. Note that it is roughly 48 miles from Midmeadow (and the pertinent Gather Information checkpoints noted above) to the druid's approximate point of entry into the Gamboge. Higher-level parties will likely be able to use magic to reduce the time spent in pursuit, but lower level parties face a long

journey on foot, even if they hustle. Horses may be rented in Midmeadow or from the traders' bazaar.

Stage Two: Inside the Gamboge

Have the PCs make two more Gather Information checks on their way to the Gamboge (both at DC 15) to confirm the elemental's passage across the countryside, keeping note of the elapsed time (1d4+1 hours per check). The time issue is important only if Faith was successfully abducted, as the majority of out-of-town wedding invitees will not have a chance to be notified that the wedding is postponed before they arrive in Midmeadow, and this will create a scandal among the Bright Path clergy. This news may make certain anti-Pholtan PCs pursue more slowly than normal, but the party should nevertheless be cognizant of the elapsed time. The western approach of the Gamboge is vast, but the druid's passage did not go unnoticed, so local residents are able to direct PCs to the approximate point of entry. Upon entering the Gamboge, the druid's path is still impossible to follow, but someone or something has made an auxiliary trail for curious interlopers. Once the PCs journey to within sight of the Gamboge, read or paraphrase the following:

Few established trails lead into the Gamboge Forest, but the one ahead should prove easy to follow, as it has been marked with the body of a dead elf whose limp form points east, deeper into the forest's murky interior.

The body is that of a male wild elf; more are strewn through the forest, all of whom were members of Faith's former tribe and slain by the mysterious mage, then positioned to provide an easy trail for the curious to follow. However, the mage is unaware—so far—that it is a group of adventurers and not a mob of angry Pholtans who have come to investigate. The elf-trail leads roughly twelve miles into the forest but there are no tracks to be found. A successful Survival check (DC 15) allows the party to locate the next dead elf "marker", all of which are spaced roughly one mile apart; each corpse has also been positioned to "point" in the proper direction. So long as the PCs do not deviate from this, they should reach the camp in about four hours while traveling east-by-southeast. Keep track of the elapsed time if Faith was abducted, noting that it takes one hour to retry a failed Survival check. Each corpse bears no weapon-caliber wounds of any kind, and all look to have been constricted to death. When the PCs are within fifty yards of the camp they will note the telltale odors of smoke and spent arcane spell components. The "trail" eventually leads into a clearing; if the PCs scan, scry or otherwise enter it, read or paraphrase the following (ad-lib if Faith was not abducted):

The trail of murdered elves ends—or perhaps begins—at a large clearing, clearly a permanent campsite. At the center of the clearing is a smoldering campfire; several of the surrounding

trees contain makeshift lookout canopies fashioned out of cured animal skins and blanketed in sticky webs; hundreds of arrows litter the area but give no indication of a central target, as if archers were shooting in several directions at once and unable to concentrate their bowfire. However, it is the carnage of a ruthlessly efficient massacre that truly arrests the gaze here: there are perhaps thirty corpses, mostly elven—though the identification of three or four small piles of ash could raise the body count—the victims of a mighty arcane assault.

There is unmistakable evidence that a mage of the highest order was here, and quite recently judging by some of the lingering effects: on one side of the clearing three elves hang limply within the clutches of Evard's infamous black tentacles; on the other side of the clearing two more elves lay dead, their bodies apparently drained of all moisture; finally, two elves with their bows drawn and their hands reaching for arrows have been turned to stone. In addition to the slain elves, the clearing also boasts the signature of the assassin: the charred carcass of a very large wolverine lies in what must have been a defensive posture before the body of a final, much older elf, this one apparently crushed to death by a massive object and very possibly the individual who attacked Faith. Inexplicably, however, on the far side of the clearing, Faith herself lies immobile yet safely protected within a translucent, floating sphere.

The PCs will obviously be on their guard here, as they should be; a powerful mage could still be lurking invisibly nearby, watching their every move. Allow the PCs to explore the camp and surrounding area in any way they desire; key elements to note here are that all of the elves are wild elves and except for Faith and the two turned to stone, they are all quite dead; additionally, there are no suspicious tracks to be found anywhere (only the everyday tracks of the elves themselves, and the druid's wolverine). The mage, who was flying at all times, has just teleported away again, having returned to leave a few final touches on the scene (like the extended Evard's which will disappear about two minutes after the PCs arrive).

The crushed elf is indeed the druid who attacked Faith, though the PCs may not be able to conclusively prove this. Furthermore, PCs who think to cast *detect magic* note several auras (faint conjuration from multiple *web* spells, moderate evocation from a lingering *prismatic spray* effect on the elf-statues (if they are turned back to flesh, they can only say that an invisible flying arcanist of some sort hit them out of no where and that it was over for them too quickly to relate anything else; also they will be able to tell their story to the sylvan elves and clear the PCs of any suspicion) and a lingering *Bigby's grasping hand* effect on the slain druid; finally, if Faith is here, moderate evocation from the *Otiluke's resilient sphere* in which she is encased, in addition to some of the elves' gear at higher APLs), but nothing registers outside the confines of the

camp. Have the PCs who are specifically NOT searching (especially if they or their animals/familiars are acting as perimeter guards) make Listen and Spot checks (use their pre-rolled checks) to detect the approach of an elven scouting party:

All APLs (EL 6)

☛ **Valandril**: male wood elf ranger 3; hp 18; Appendix 1.

☛ **Elven Scouts (3)**: male wood elf ranger 2; hp 14; Appendix 1.

Tactics: the PCs are being approached by a scouting party of sylvan elves, clearly identifiable as such and distinct from the wild elves of this campsite, who were drawn by sounds of battle and an undefined sense of disturbance within the forest. The leader of the scouting party is an exceptionally competent third level ranger named Valandril. These sylvan elves are sworn enemies of the wild elves in this camp, but screams demand investigation; thus, this party has deviated far off course from its regular patrol route, which lies to the southeast. If the scouting party fails to sneak up on the PCs, and if the PCs confront them, Valandril will be dubious and cagily ask if the PC(s) require(s) aid. Adjudicate based on the spotting/listening PC's reactions. However, if Valandril manages to sneak up on the PCs, he and his fellows will be extremely suspicious and have their bows drawn. Valandril's tribe is friendly toward the restored Kingdom of Nyrond, but a band of adventurers standing amidst a clearing of slain wild elves is highly suspicious.

At this point, though Valandril is not hostile to the PCs, one false move could provoke an unnecessary combat. Valandril tells his party (in elven) to stay alert but not to fire except on his command; he then, while warily eyeing the PCs, identifies himself and asks which of them is in charge. Whichever PC accepts the mantle of being "in charge" must make a Diplomacy check (and ONLY this PC, though others may assist) at DC 30 (the elves are currently "Indifferent" and must be moved to "Helpful"; this DC may seem high, but these are very suspicious circumstances; even if the PCs fail, they will have a chance to try again following Encounter Six) to assure the scouting party that the PCs are not responsible for the carnage here and are innocent of any wrongdoing. If the PC making the check is a Wood Elf, a member of the Nyrond Wilderness Alliance, or the Pale's Natural Order, they can gain a +5 circumstance bonus for each. If the check succeeds, the PCs secretly gain an Influence Point with Valandril's tribe, as noted on the Adventure Record; if the check fails, the PCs do not gain the favor at this time, but in either case Valandril invites them to come and explain all of this to his tribal chief.

At higher APLs Valandril's party could easily believe that the powerful PCs could have wrought the devastation here. Don't let the Diplomacy check come down to a dull die roll; even a charismatic wood elf bard with a Diplomacy check of +30 should be given a hard time as Valandril mulls over the PC's explanation with a

suspicious “hmmmm.” Remember that while Valandril and his party are hardly a challenge to higher level tables, play them as mighty woodsmen who could decimate the PCs at a moment’s notice; presence, not attitude, should be the signature of this scouting party; they are cautious, not belligerent.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot – 88 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 *potions of cure light wounds* (4 gp each).

APL 4: Loot – 90 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 3 *potions of cure light wounds* (4 gp each).

APL 6: Loot – 104 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 4 *potions of cure light wounds* (4 gp each).

APL 8: Loot – 135 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 4 *potions of cure light wounds* (4 gp each).

APL 10: Loot – 100 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each).

APL 12: Loot – 9 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 *darkwood composite (+3) longbow* (227 gp each).

APL 14: Loot – 9 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 *darkwood composite (+3) shortbow* (218 gp each).

APL 16: Loot – 7 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 *darkwood composite (+1) seeking shortbow* (705 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: *potion of cure light wounds* (faint conjuration), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (faint conjuration), +1 *darkwood composite (+3) longbow* (faint transmutation), +1 *darkwood composite (+3) shortbow* (faint transmutation), +1 *darkwood composite (+1) seeking shortbow* (faint transmutation and strong divination).

Development: Even more inexplicably, the mysterious mage left the elves’ gear untouched, as noted above. Roughly one-quarter of their gear survived his arcane onslaught and is salvageable as treasure. The PCs are now intended to accompany Valandril back to his village to explain the situation to his chief; if Faith was rescued, Valandril suggests bringing her along (once the *sphere* expires or is dispelled). If the PCs failed miserably at the Diplomacy check and attack Valandril, the elves attempt to subdue the party and bring them to the village anyway; thus, the PCs still have a chance to retry their Diplomacy check on the chief, albeit with a penalty. If the PCs slay the scouting party, they earn the enmity of Valandril’s tribe, as noted on the Adventure Record. Assuming the PCs succeed on their Diplomacy check and choose to accompany Valandril, proceed to Encounter Six.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS FOR HUMANKIND

During this encounter the PCs accompany the elven ranger Valandril to speak with his tribal chief. Whether or not the PCs were successful during their Diplomacy check in Encounter Five, Valandril explains in all seriousness that the location of his village is a secret, as there are many vicious predators lurking within the

Gamboge. To preserve this secrecy, he asks the PCs to let themselves be blindfolded for the journey. Naturally the PCs will be skeptical, but this is now their turn to have faith; if they outright refuse, the encounter is over and Valandril leaves with his companions, noting the regrettable lack of trust among adventurers; the PCs may then return to Midmeadow (proceed to Encounter Eight, skipping Encounters Six and Seven). If they are merely skeptical, Valandril explains that he understands their apprehension; he informs them that he and his companions are all pure of heart (all four rangers detect as “good”). To further assuage them, Valandril invites them to travel with weapons unsheathed or with any necessary spell components in hand; animal companions and familiars also need not be blindfolded (or otherwise unable to see the journey). PCs who wish to Sense Motive learn that he is sincere; if anything, he seems worried about crossing paths with the mage responsible for slaying the wild elves, or worse.

Assuming the PCs agree to be blindfolded, the journey lasts roughly two hours as Valandril leads them south-by-southeast back to their patrol route; he allows the PCs to march in any order they desire. Sneaky PCs may use Sleight of Hand to circumvent the blindfold; such attempts are opposed by the elves’ Spot checks. PCs who manage to do so, or those who succeed at a Zen-like, blindfolded DC 25 Survival check note that the elves are dutifully guiding them in a diamond formation: one is on point thirty feet ahead; two flank the party ten feet on either side; Valandril is on drag twenty feet behind the PCs.

The elves will answer questions as they walk but attempt to keep conversation to a minimum; their tribe is called Inanilae, and they greatly admire their chief, whom they describe as a “mighty ranger and teacher.” After allowing the players to be tense for a few minutes, have Valandril and the elf on point make a Spot check to notice the predators below hiding amid the trees (opposed by their Hide checks). If either Spot check is successful (note that a PC who has successfully “peeked” from beneath a blindfold is entitled to a Spot check as well, albeit at a -5 penalty), the elves yell at the PCs to remove their blindfolds, and that the party is under attack, at which time everyone should roll initiative.

If both Spot checks fail (and assuming the PCs remove their blindfolds to react to the sounds that follow), read or paraphrase the following:

The rustling of leaves, a sound like a whip crack, and startled cries in elven signal that something unexpected has happened. The forest then echoes with the unmistakable growling of wolves, followed by excited, deep voices in a guttural dialect. Those of you who remove the elven blindfolds spot a number of the elves and your companions dangling from rope snares tied to branches high overhead, while a green humanoid blur charges forward.

Creatures: The party is being attacked by one or more forest trolls and, at higher APLs, their animal companions. The trolls came across the tracks of Valandril's group, as the elven ranger and his companions strayed far outside their regular patrol route to investigate the massacre at the wild elf camp and crossed into the trolls' patrol area. Though they know the location of the wild elf camp, the druid-elder was powerful enough to make the trolls think twice about a direct assault; they do not know the location of Valandril's village. Thus, to stumble across sylvan elf tracks so far north made them drool at the potential for an ambush; these trolls are smaller and more cunning than their larger cousins, and have backtracked, covered their own tracks, and set this trap in hopes that the elves would retrace their steps back to their own part of the forest. As the PCs entered the Gamboge from the west, the trolls are unaware of them, so the blindfolded PCs are an unexpected perk of this ambush.

At APLs 2-4 the trolls have laid non-magical rope snares to trap the elves (with assistance from their classed superiors, who are setting an ambush at a different location); at APLs 6-8 the trolls have laid non-magical snares themselves; at APLs 10-16, the snares are magical, per the ranger/druid spell *snare*. The elves are scanning the forest for threats, hoping their brief detour has gone unnoticed, but are unable to search for traps; thus, their Spot checks (and those of the PCs, if applicable) determine the onset of the attack. If the trolls were spotted, they immediately emerge from hiding and attack; in this case there is no surprise round, but the elves and PCs are only ten feet away from the field of snares (see Map #3). If no Spot checks were successful, some elves and PCs will automatically be ensnared.

When triggered, a rope snare encircles the foot of the individual stepping into it and yanks them thirty feet overhead. If the snares are set off, 1d4 elves (determined randomly, but Valandril is always number "4") and 1d3 PCs (also determined randomly, but count any animal companions of small size or larger as PCs for determining this; if any creature/companion with four legs of size Large or larger is indicated as having stepped in a snare, the snare automatically fails due to the creature's weight). Snares may be cut or shot from below, but ensnared PCs risk 3d6 points of falling damage. There are a total of seven snares. The troll(s) are hiding fifty feet away from the snare-field, as indicated on Map #3, but at the sound of anyone caught in a snare, or if they are spotted, the trolls emerge to attack.

🔥 **Non-magical snare (APLs 2-8):** 1 in. thick; hardness 0; hp 2; AC 7; Break DC 23.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🔥 **Forest Troll:** hp 55; Appendix 1.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🔥 **Forest Troll (2):** hp 55; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🔥 **Forest Troll Stalker:** male troll ranger 1; hp 66; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Forest Troll Sniper:** male troll ranger 1; hp 66; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Forest Troll Shaman:** female troll druid 2; hp 77; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Thrasher (wolf animal companion):** hp 13; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Guard, Stay, Seek, Track).

APL 8 (EL 10)

🔥 **Forest Troll Stalker:** male troll ranger 3; hp 88; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Forest Troll Sniper:** male troll ranger 2; hp 77; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Forest Troll Shaman:** female troll druid 2; hp 77; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Thrasher (wolf animal companion):** hp 16; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Guard, Stay, Seek, Track).

🔥 **Forest Trolls (2):** hp 55; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Magical snare (APLs 10-16):** 1 in. thick; hp 5; AC 7; Break DC 23.

APL 10 (EL 12)

🔥 **Forest Troll Stalker:** male troll ranger 6; hp 121; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Pixiestyx (advanced wolf animal companion):** hp 32; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Forest Troll Sniper:** male troll ranger 4; hp 99; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Charger (wolf animal companion):** hp 16; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Charge, Defend, Down, Seek, Stay, Track).

🔥 **Forest Troll Shaman:** female troll druid 4; hp 99; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Lockjaw (dire weasel animal companion):** hp 18; Monster Manual 65 (Tricks: Attack, Come, Down, Fetch, Seek, Stay, Track).

🔥 **Forest Trolls (2):** hp 55; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 14)

🔥 **Forest Troll Stalker:** male troll ranger 8; hp 143; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Miss Vicious (wolverine animal companion):** hp 33; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Seek, Stay, Track).

🔥 **Forest Troll Sniper:** male troll ranger 6; hp 121; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Charger (advanced wolf animal companion):** hp 32; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Forest Troll Shaman:** female troll druid 6; hp 121; Appendix 1.

🔥 **Lockjaw (advanced dire weasel animal companion):** hp 30; Appendix 1.

✦ **Forest Troll Skirmisher (2):** male troll ranger 3; hp 88; Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 16)

✦ **Forest Troll Stalker:** male troll ranger 10; hp 165; Appendix 1.

✦ **Miss Vicious (wolverine animal companion):** hp 33; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Seek, Stay, Track).

✦ **Forest Troll Sniper:** male troll ranger 8; hp 143; Appendix 1.

✦ **Charger (advanced wolf animal companion):** hp 32; Appendix 1.

✦ **Forest Troll Shaman:** female troll druid 10; hp 165; Appendix 1.

✦ **Lockjaw (advanced dire weasel animal companion):** hp 42; Appendix 1.

✦ **Forest Troll Skirmisher (2):** male troll ranger 5; hp 110; Appendix 1.

✦ **Wolf animal companion (2):** hp 16; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Heel, Seek, Stay, Track).

APL 16 (EL 18)

✦ **Forest Troll Stalker:** male troll ranger 12; hp 187; Appendix 1.

✦ **Miss Vicious (advanced wolverine animal companion):** hp 33; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Seek, Stay, Track).

✦ **Forest Troll Sniper:** male troll ranger 10; hp 165; Appendix 1.

✦ **Charger (advanced wolf animal companion):** hp 32; Appendix 1.

✦ **Forest Troll Shaman:** male troll druid 12; hp 187; Appendix 1.

✦ **Lockjaw (advanced dire weasel animal companion):** hp 54; Appendix 1.

✦ **Forest Troll Skirmisher (3):** male troll ranger 6; hp 121 Appendix 1.

✦ **Wolf animal companion (3):** hp 16; Monster Manual 283 (Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Heel, Seek, Stay, Track).

Tactics: The forest trolls are not foolish and display advanced tactical sense when attacking; adventurers visit the Gamboge frequently and possess certain exploitable characteristics. Elves and PCs (in that order) not caught in the snares are the primary targets. Note that the trolls want to kill the elves and PCs quickly, so spells such as *entangle* that hamper movement are avoided. Removing a blindfold is a partial action.

At APLs 2-4 the trolls hurl javelins then close for melee. At APLs 6 and above the senior trolls are classed, with the Stalker being the leader. PCs who speak Giant can overhear the trolls barking tactics to one another, which remain constant at successive APLs unless otherwise noted. The trolls quaff potions of *magic fang*

where prudent before attacking, and launch tanglefoot bags to keep non-snared targets stationary.

At APL 6 the Shaman casts *magic fang* before sending her wolf to charge and trip foes; she then casts *shillelagh* and closes for melee; the Sniper readies his bow against an obvious spellcaster, hoping to disrupt Concentration; he prefers to concentrate fire on one target. At APL8 the Stalker may quaff one of his potions before attacking; the two normal trolls are hiding behind a nearby rock and move to aid the Stalker with tanglefoot bags to immobilize non-snared foes.

At APL10 the Stalker casts *magic fang* and sends his wolf to trip foes; he then uses his Spring Attack feat on the party (until cornered): if his target has reach he uses his longspear; otherwise he uses his poisonous bite, hoping to cripple a foe; the Sniper releases his wolf and applies a readied flask of *oil of flame arrow* to his ammunition; he concentrates fire and uses his Rapid Shot feat on a spellcaster or another archer; the Shaman casts *magic fang* before releasing her animal companion, which at this APL and above is a vicious dire weasel; she then seeks to cast *warp wood* on any elf or PC archer, then follows that with *flaming sphere* before closing for melee. The trolls at this APL and above use their potions of *fire resistance* only if the PCs employ fire attacks.

At APL 12 the Stalker gains a third attack and may close for melee if the odds seem favorable; he quaffs his *potion of haste* before attacking; at this APL and above one of the Skirmishers is hiding twenty feet up in a nearby tree and tries to drop a net on a non-snared PC or elf before drawing his bow firing at ensnared party members; he jumps to the ground on the Stalker's command.

At APL 14 the Stalker seeks to slay ALL elves in the party with his enchanted longspear, *Nature's Lament*, before focusing on non-elves; he closes for melee after the first Spring Attack; the Shaman casts *freedom of movement* or *stoneskin* on herself after releasing her weasel; the two Skirmishers also have wolf companions at this APL, which are hidden roughly one hundred feet away; the Skirmishers whistle for these creatures immediately, with the wolves arriving and attacking on the third round of combat.

At APL16 there are three Skirmishers (two in the trees, one behind the rock); the Shaman reserves a *mass bear's endurance* if the party is resilient, and also favors *rusting grasp* if she is directly engaged; she has no reservations about using her *transport via plants* spell (especially with the Stalker) to escape if necessary; finally, the Stalker has cast *tree shape* and is immediately adjacent to the snare-field as the party approaches; once combat begins, he steps out and full-attacks the nearest non-snared foe before whistling for his wolverine (which arrives on the third round of combat) and attacking any elves.

Due to the limited number of snares (there are only seven, as the trolls did not know about the PCs), it will be impossible to trap all of the PCs and the elves, so this battle could be fought on two fronts. PCs or elves caught in snares will be yanked violently upward and must

succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid having random items dislodged from their person; if the save fails, roll a d8, ignoring results that do not apply to a particular PC or elven scout (1=melee weapon, 2=ranged weapon, 3=arrows/ammunition, 4=potion or scroll, 5=spell component pouch or holy symbol, 6=wand/rod/staff, 7=coin pouch, backpack, haversack, or something similar, 8=familiar or amulet). Such PCs may still fight normally with spells or ranged weapons in lieu of cutting themselves down; items that fall to the ground may be used by anyone. The trolls fight until slain, as they plan to eat everyone after this combat; if no one was ensnared, they try to force foes into the snare field. Valandril, who urges the PCs to hurry to his village for safety, frowns upon tracking them back to their lair.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot – 8 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 4: Loot – 17 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – none.

APL 6: Loot – 95 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), 2 potions of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure light wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp each).

APL 8: Loot – 121 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), 2 potions of magic fang (4 gp each), 2 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), wand of cure light wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each), potion of barkskin (+3, 50 gp each).

APL 10: Loot – 138 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 4 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure light wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 10 (25 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 20 (58 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each).

APL 12: Loot – 215 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure moderate wounds (375 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x5, 83 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 10 (25 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), 2 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 composite (+2) longbow (216 gp each), +1 cold iron longspear (359 gp each).

APL 14: Loot – 90 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure moderate wounds (375 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x4, 83 gp each), 2 potions of resist energy (fire) 10 (25 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 30 (91 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), 2 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), ring of protection +1 (x3, 166 gp each), +1 composite (+2) longbow (x3, 216 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (333 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), +1 cold iron shock longspear (859 gp each).

APL 16: Loot – 121 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 cold iron shock longspear (859 gp each), +1 mighty composite [+2] longbow (x4) (216 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp

each), cloak of resistance +1 (x4) (83 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (x2) (333 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x5) (62 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), potion of haste (x4) (62 gp each), potion of resist energy 20 (fire) (x3) (58 gp each), ring of protection +1 (x2) (166 gp each), ring of protection +2 (x2) (666 gp each), wand of cure serious wounds (937 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: Potion of cure light wounds (faint conjuration), potion of cure moderate wounds (faint conjuration), wand of cure light wounds (faint conjuration), wand of cure moderate wounds (faint conjuration), cloak of resistance +1, +2 and +3 (faint abjuration), potion of magic fang (faint transmutation), potion of resist energy (fire) 10, 20 and 30 (faint abjuration), oil of flame arrow (faint transmutation), potion of cure serious wounds (faint conjuration), potion of haste (faint transmutation), ring of protection +1 and +2 (faint abjuration), +1 composite (+2) longbow (faint transmutation), +1 cold iron longspear (faint transmutation), periapt of wisdom +2 (moderate transmutation), brooch of shielding (faint abjuration), +1 cold iron shock longspear (faint transmutation and moderate conjuration), gloves of Dexterity +2 (moderate transmutation), wand of cure serious wounds (faint conjuration).

Development: This encounter is designed to establish a bond of comradeship between the elves and the PCs as they fight together to repel their attackers. If the trolls are defeated and at least one of Valandril's elves survives, he (or they) regards the PCs with a newfound respect and takes back the blindfolds, apologizing for any doubts about the PCs' heroism and trustworthiness. Such noble spirits, the elves note, are welcome at their village anytime. With that, the group may proceed to Encounter Seven. If any PCs were slain, the surviving elves burn the trolls and rig a travois to drag PC victims. If Valandril's whole party is slain, the PCs can spend d4+4 hours searching the Gamboge for the village until a second elven patrol—sent to search for Valandril—finds and leads them to the village.

ENCOUNTER 7: INANILAE

During this brief roleplaying encounter the PCs are led to the village of the Inanilae tribe of Gamboge Elves. There, among hundreds of curious faces, the PCs are brought before the tribal chief, to whom Valandril (if alive) truthfully details the PCs' actions against the trolls, humbly emphasizing that the scouting party would likely not have survived without their aid. Many residents raise their eyebrows and murmur amongst themselves at hearing this, but so might the PCs upon discovering that the chief is a female who has yet to reach middle age. No boxed text is provided for this encounter.

She listens impassively to Valandril. As he finishes, bows, and steps back, the chief regards the PCs and asks how they came to be in the forest in the first place. One

PC should step forward and relate the pertinent details of their investigation; key points to mention should include the slain wild elves, the druid, Faith, the conspicuous trail of bodies, the arcane devastation, and especially how the PCs have come from Midmeadow. The story is lent more credence if Faith is actually here; if she is, and conscious, she clings to the PCs and calls them her “saviors,” clearly demonstrating that she is in a state of shock while the Inanilae eye her piteously. If the PCs do mention Midmeadow, it will be the chief’s turn to raise her eyebrows, as she has not heard the name since her father was younger, stronger, and still chief of the tribe.

To dispel any confusion, she explains that her father is very old and will soon pass from this world into the next, transforming from a mortal to a spirit of the forest; while he trances in anticipation of that event, she has been made the acting chief of the tribe. She reminisces while her tribe listens attentively, noting that when men first governed Midmeadow, attacks like the one described by the PCs could never have happened, as the humans were too vigilant. That vigilance gradually developed into a base possessiveness in which Midmeadow became more of a hoarded trinket than the glimmering jewel it was intended to be. This was ultimately the city’s undoing, as competitive and selfish human instincts allowed outside forces to exploit such weaknesses.

Her gaze drifts right through the PCs as she relates one of her father’s parables from her youth, in which he likened Midmeadow to a traveler in a swamp who has stepped into quicksand; the traveler struggles and struggles, only making things worse and sinking further, more concerned about his pride than his future. His calls for help would attract both allies and predators alike, so he says nothing and slowly sinks below the surface while no one notices. Midmeadow was a gift designed to teach humans about recognizing the value and potential of what they had, but it was a lesson lost on the vain minds that eventually governed the city. In the generations-long struggle to control it, the city was ultimately scratched and scuffed, and its value greatly diminished. Now few would be able to recognize its worth. She apologizes for the digression, noting that human politics are very much like quicksand to her, restricting her spiritual freedom the moment she dwells upon them.

An arcane threat within the Gamboge, however, especially one with such inexplicable morality, is important news. At this point the PCs should make a Diplomacy check; if they succeeded in doing so during Encounter Five, success here is automatic; if they failed, they may retry it now (DC 30) with a +10 bonus for their valiant efforts during Encounter Six.

If they succeed, she agrees that the Inanilae should aid the PCs in their investigation; the PCs gain an Influence Point with the tribe, as noted on the Adventure Record. The power of the arcanist (she speculates here that there could be more than one) is not to be denied, and the swift response suggests a potential lair within the forest; thus, since the elves are more familiar with the area and its inhabitants, she decrees that her tribe will

investigate the Gamboge. However, unless the mage had been watching Faith for some time, it seems suspicious that he or she learned of the druid’s attack so quickly and was able to act immediately. She suspects that the mage, for whatever reason, may have an agent in Midmeadow; she asks the PCs to return there and investigate that possibility. When the tribe learns something of note, an envoy will be sent to Midmeadow to contact the PCs. She thanks the PCs for their resourcefulness and candor, expressing pleasure at discovering heroes who are friends to Nyron and the residents of the Gamboge. The PCs are allowed to spend the night and recover from the troll attack.

If the PCs fail at the Diplomacy check—especially for the second time—then the chief is aloof and notes that her father’s condition demands her presence here. She suggests they return to Midmeadow and investigate the situation themselves, noting that if any mages attack her village, the tribe will attempt to deal with it. The PCs are allowed to spend the night here and recover, if they wish. More importantly, no envoy is mentioned; the PCs are now on their own.

🧝 **Tess’inene-ilae:** female sylvan elf aristocrat
2/ranger 9/sorcerer 3; hp 116.

Development: Assuming the PCs accept the chief’s terms, Valandril (if alive) offers to escort the PCs to the edge of the forest, should they require it, politely requesting that they keep their knowledge of the village’s location to themselves. The PCs are now free to return to Midmeadow and investigate any leads they deem worthy of ferreting out a potential spy. Depending on whether they got lost, camped, died, or spent the night in the elven village, the PCs could conceivably return to Midmeadow at any time; the choice is up to them. Remind them, however, that the wedding between Penrys and Faith was scheduled for two days after the rehearsal dinner.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE

The PCs return to Midmeadow and, either on their own or at the behest of the elven, investigate any leads concerning the attack on Faith. Based on the evidence they have witnessed and accumulated thus far, at some point their investigation should lead them to the Promenade and the shop of the adept, Rowena Livingston. If it hasn’t or if the scenario is running ahead of schedule, by all means allow the PCs to visit any city district or residents they wish, as this will be their last extended opportunity to do so during the adventure. During this time, have them eventually find the trail to Rowena. When they approach Rowena’s shop, read or paraphrase the following:

A sturdy-looking, two-story structure stands just off the Promenade, with impressive plate glass windows, darkwood trim, and a freshly painted exterior that suggest not only financial stability but recent construction as well, perhaps within the last two years. A blue, handcrafted wooden sign proclaims it as the “Shining Star Trading Company.”

The walls are of mahogany, and the door is larger than those of adjacent merchants—nearly six feet wide by eight feet high—further suggesting that objects of unusual size are traded or manufactured here. Looking closely at the door, a handwritten note has been hung upon the handle; in a very sketchy hand are the words “Shop Closed. Apologies for any inconvenience—all existing orders filled promptly upon return. Thank you.” The ink is still wet, the lobby of the shop is empty, but the door—while large enough to ride a horse through—is curiously ajar...

While it is possible that the PCs have already visited the shop prior to this encounter, they have likely not met its owner and proprietor, as she has taken pains to maintain a low profile since her return to Midmeadow. Peering through the plate glass windows, the PCs can see glass-and-wood display cases holding various items, a wooden counter with a large ledger, and two large mats alongside a bowl in the far corner of the lobby. There is an open door near the mats, presumably leading to the rear of the shop, though nothing more can be seen at this angle; a narrow staircase leads up, presumably to a private residence. There is no back door and the lobby is otherwise empty. Questioning adjacent merchants reveals little, as none of them recall seeing Rowena within the last two weeks; no one can explain why the door is ajar, but if PCs specifically mention the mats and bowl, all the merchants know that Jerod of Ull has a key to the shop and has been taking care of Rowena's two dogs while she is away.

If a PC casts *detect magic*, the entire building radiates multiple faint but lingering abjuration auras from *alarm* spells which have been recently dispelled. In addition, Rowena's two large pet dogs are sleeping in the rear ground floor room. If a PC enters the shop, allow the dogs a DC 10 Listen check; if a PC specifically attempts to Move Silently, oppose the roll with the dogs' Listen checks, which are at a -10 penalty. If the dogs hear the PCs, they quickly come to investigate.

Play this encounter loosely from here; if the dogs are woken, they start barking at anyone other than Rowena or Jerod of Ull but may be quelled with a DC 15 Wild Empathy check (to improve their attitudes from “Unfriendly” to “Indifferent”), or with appropriate magic. Note that if any PCs openly display either a holy symbol of Pholtus or wear appropriate insignia, the dogs cannot be quieted until such PCs leave the shop, as they have recently been trained to bark at Pholtans. Regardless, no one comes to investigate the barking dogs, which should alert the PCs that something may be wrong. The dogs are Misty and Digger, a pair of St Bernards whose bark is

worse than their bite. If the PCs manage to enter the shop undetected, the one thing of note for them to find in the lobby is a ledger entry dated two weeks ago (PCs must specifically state that they examine the ledger and succeed at a DC 20 Search check) detailing a purchase order for a small quantity of bonewood (five board feet). The entry is marked “paid,” though no amount is listed; indeed, none of the voluminous ledger entries contain monetary figures. A DC 20 Knowledge (local—Core) or DC 15 Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) check confirms that bonewood grows in only one place in the Flanaess: the forest of the same name in southern Ahlissa. If the PCs manage to sneak past the dogs (the room in which they nap is a workshop and contains nothing of interest to the scope of this encounter) and venture upstairs, read or paraphrase the following:

An open door at the top of the stairs leads into a well-appointed room containing lavish rugs and tapestries, an elegant four-poster bed with a silk canopy, several small statues on marble pedestals, and an ornate silver incense burner shaped like a light crossbow, where a burning stick of jasmine-scented incense takes the place of a crossbow bolt and pierces the room with its fragrance. Sitting on the bed with her arms wrapped around her knees is a middle aged Baklunish woman, whose body shakes with sobs as she cries openly, oblivious to your approach. Her awareness is most likely dulled by the obviously magical silence permeating the entire room...

The owner and proprietor of the Shining Star Trading Company is a Baklunish woman named Rowena Livingston. In addition to her status as an adept, she also crafts and brokers the sale of magic items between third-party clients. More importantly, she is the jilted lover of Penrys Bonchal and is responsible for a now-aborted plan to discredit him by kidnapping him from the altar on his wedding day. Since learning of the attack on Faith, she has suffered a crisis of conscience and withdrawn here to decide what to do next. While she recognizes the PCs from their efforts against the goblins, what she wants most right now is solitude. Her nerves are frayed and her emotional state is both agitated and vulnerable.

🗡️ **Rowena Livingston:** female human wizard 3/cleric 3/mystic theurge 6; hp 33; Appendix 1.

When the PCs finally get her attention, Rowena will jump, startled, and suppress the *silence* effect (which was cast from a surplus scroll and is centered on the holy symbol hanging from her neck). She tearfully tells the party that the shop is closed and that she can't quite remember what they ordered. The PCs should realize that she is distraught. Allow a visual Heal check here for a PC to note that she looks very tired, weak, and pale. What happens next is vital to the rest of this encounter; the method by which the party approaches and questions her

directly affects her starting attitude for any subsequent Diplomacy checks (they must shift her attitude to “Helpful”). By this point in the adventure, several pieces of evidence paint an unflattering portrait of Rowena: she has avoided contact with the party despite having been in town for at least two days, and she conspicuously failed to appear at the rehearsal dinner in Encounter Two. If the PCs managed to question and intimidate Sastrine, and if they recall her odd remark about *Incense of Obsession*, they might suspect that Rowena is the one responsible for plotting to kidnap Penrys, and if they discovered the curious ledger entry downstairs, their suspicions may be further heightened.

Regardless of what the PCs suspect, her plot to kidnap Penrys is the one crime for which she can be legally punished. Allow the PCs to proceed as they will, but any interrogation is subject to the following: if the PCs are respectful, sympathetic, or merely neutral, her starting attitude is “Friendly”, as she feels guilty and desperately wants someone to confide in at this point; however, if the PCs are belligerent, possessive, or threatening, her starting attitude is “Indifferent,” as her feelings of guilt do not overshadow her status as a respected merchant who believes herself innocent of any crime. A DC 12 Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) check here reveals that she is incorrect about this: plotting to abduct a member of a good-aligned clergy is a crime in Nyrond.

The goal of this encounter is to convince her to admit to her kidnapping plot and submit to justice. She is willing to do so, but the method by which the PCs get her to submit—brute force, subtle threats, or earnest Diplomacy—directly affects their standing with the residents of Midmeadow for the duration of this series. Though the PCs aren’t likely to sympathize with her actions, they should also realize that she isn’t evil or violent, just emotional and misguided. If treated with respect, she openly admits to the kidnapping plot; if the PCs are rude or threatening, only proof or corroboration (via Sastrine) will work. At some point during their interrogation, the PCs must succeed on a Diplomacy check (PCs may assist a key speaker) in order to convince her to admit her guilt and submit to justice. The difficulty of this check is dependent on how they have acted thus far, and is further subject to the following modifiers to the key speaker’s roll (Dalis Mirivan may assist, if present):

- For EACH obvious Pholtan PC: -2.
- For each worshipper of Mouqol: +4.
- For any PC with at least two ranks in Profession (merchant): +2.
- For asking about her health: +2 (She has been unable to pray or study lately due to “personal turmoil.” With such little sleep over the last few nights, she has also begun to feel weak; she has temporary Con damage, which a DC 20 Heal check confirms. She accepts healing from the PCs if they offer it).
- For harming her dogs downstairs: -4.

- If questioned about her holy symbol of Mouqol: (Knowledge [religion] DC 20 to identify it) +4 (she is truly remorseful about her ill-conceived plot to abduct Penrys, and has slept little since the rehearsal dinner. She has also been unable to focus and pray for spells, which has further unnerved her, as prayer usually has a calming effect on her. She worries that the Reciprocity aspect of Mouqol is dominating her actions, and is grateful to finally talk about it with someone).
- Fallout from the reputation gained (key speaker only) after the rehearsal dinner attack: Heroic=+2, Indifferent=+1, Unfavorable=-1.
- Successful Intimidation of Sastrine and/or mentioning *incense of obsession*: +4 (Rowena is grateful not to have to hide anymore, as it is not in character for her). She professes to know nothing about what happened to Faith.

If the PCs coax the truth from her about the kidnapping, they will likely be suspicious as to why she did it. Getting her to reveal that she is Penrys’ former lover requires a second Diplomacy check (at the same DC by which they got her to confess; otherwise, she will not reveal her role as his ex-lover under any circumstances short of a Will save against *detect thoughts*, *charm person*, *suggestion*, or similar magic). If successful, the PCs learn that while she sought to discredit Penrys in retaliation for spurning her affections and choosing to marry a much younger (in elf years) woman, all she intended was to rattle his nerves and teach him a lesson; she admits that her act was petty and senseless, but was led to believe (by Sastrine, whom she also identifies) that it was relatively harmless. What happened at the rehearsal dinner was a complete shock to her.

If questioned about the curious ledger entry, she reveals the details of her most recent project: procuring a small quantity of bonewood for a reputedly wealthy client, whose representative is already in town waiting for the order to be filled. She does not yet have the material, and while she does not know the identity of the client or the exact nature of its intended purpose, she can identify the agent in town (Narinn Kirr).

If the initial Diplomacy check succeeds, she agrees to submit to justice; proceed to Development, below. If the PCs do not wish to turn her over to any higher authority, proceed to Encounter Nine. If the Diplomacy check fails, the PCs have another option: if they are adamant about bringing her to justice, they may attempt to arrest her by force in the name of whatever authority they choose; she has no spells and is effectively unable to resist. Or, if the check fails, they may depart and report her to any authority of their choice, or hope that her conscience gets the better of her and compels her to turn herself in, though the fact that she hasn’t already done so suggests it won’t; proceed to Encounter Nine.

Development: Encounter Nine occurs as soon as the PCs leave Rowena’s shop, whether she is in their custody

or not. Whether by force, coercion, persuasion, or entreaty, if Rowena agrees to accompany the PCs to a higher authority, she reminds the PCs that there is no such authority in Midmeadow. The closest thing to a governing body is the Church of the Bright Path, and she refuses to be turned over to a church that cannot even agree on what is right and wrong within their own faith; she is nearly hysterical in this assertion, and a Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals that there may be a further reason for her resistance (Penrys) beyond the internal friction among the clergy of Pholtus. More importantly, this should underscore for the PCs the necessity of some kind of authority figure in Midmeadow; Rowena is at best a minor criminal, but a vicious gang or a more insidious villain could easily exploit the town. Possible alternatives to the Bright Path include any major Church in a larger Nyrond City, such as Borneven or Hendrenn Halgood; also, Rowena mentions that there is a Guild House of Mouqol in Rel Mord, where senior clerics of her faith can be found if the PCs are willing to escort her there.

If she is still conscious (and not subdued), she asks the PCs to at least inform neighboring merchants that she will be closing her shop (again) for a while. There is a tightly knit community of merchants and it is the professional thing to do (this is also a failsafe to trigger Encounter Nine, in case the PCs plan to teleport to a higher authority without leaving the shop). Additionally, in understanding that she may be unable to take care of her shop while incarcerated, Rowena asks the PCs to take a personal note to various contacts of hers with the Kingdom of Nyrond so that arrangements can be made to handle her affairs while she is away. She openly agrees that this request will take some additional time to accomplish. Each PC who agrees to do so earns an Influence Point with Rowena, as noted on the Adventure Record. This encounter ends with the PCs leaving Rowena's shop, either with or without her, but the PCs may not realize that they are being closely watched.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED

As the PCs leave the Shining Star Trading Company, either with or without Rowena, Narinn Kirr observes them and immediately contacts his master (via magic) with the news that the bonewood order has likely been compromised. The mage decides to eliminate the lippy merchant and the intrusive PCs in order to protect the secrecy of his project; he orders Narinn to delay the PCs until his key advisor, Tassita Fellhaven, *teleports* her champion to Midmeadow.

If Rowena is NOT with the PCs, Narinn openly approaches and introduces himself, noting that he saw them exit Rowena's shop and wondered if perhaps she was in, as he has some business to conduct with her. If the PCs seem suspicious, he attempts to Bluff them in order to move to an advantageous flanking position; his cover story is that he is having his scabbards magically

enhanced, and begins to draw his weapon in a non-threatening manner in case they wish to examine it. His Bluff is opposed by the PCs' pre-rolled Sense Motive checks. If they succeed, the PCs know he is maneuvering for tactical advantage and may act accordingly. If the PCs are highly suspicious and attack him outright, Narinn tries to hold out for two rounds until help arrives. His allies are on standby alert based on his previous reports about Rowena; take one round to assemble and one more to *teleport*, arriving precisely two rounds after Narinn introduces himself. Narinn is the willing subject of a *scry* spell and functions as a teleport-beacon.

If Rowena IS with the PCs, the scene unfolds as above except that Narinn greets Rowena formally and speaks directly to her, making polite chit chat before inquiring if perhaps his package is ready. Before Rowena responds she smiles and, under her breath, whispers to the PCs that this is the individual connected with the curious ledger entry. Again, a successful Sense Motive here (opposed by Narinn's Bluff) notes his carefully orchestrated body movements. Suspicious PCs may take any defensive measures they wish before this happens, even informing Narinn that Rowena is under arrest; he will of course milk this news for all he can, hoping to delay the PCs a bit longer. If Narinn successfully approaches (via Bluff), allow the PCs a Listen check (DC 25) to hear him whispering to Rowena ("My master requested one thing: discretion."). Narinn's allies arrive immediately afterward, teleporting in roughly 100 feet away, in full view of pedestrians and other merchants, and causing no shortage of panic; consult DM Aid: Rowena's Place Map and have everyone roll initiative.

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛ **Meryk, Blackguard Aspirant:** male human fighter 4; hp 46; Appendix 1.

☛ **Heavy Warhorse:** hp 30; *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Meryk, Blackguard Aspirant:** male human fighter 4; hp 46; Appendix 1.

☛ **Heavy Warhorse:** hp 30; *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 1; hp 30; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Meryk, Blackguard Aspirant:** male human fighter 6; hp 69; Appendix 1.

☛ **Heavy Warhorse:** hp 30; *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 2; hp 39; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Meryk the Forgotten:** male human fighter 7/blackguard 1; hp 92; Appendix 1.

☛ **Heavy Warhorse:** hp 30; *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 2; hp 56; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 13)

✱ **Meryk the Forgotten:** male human fighter 7/blackguard 1; hp 92; Appendix 1.

✱ **Heavy Warhorse:** hp 30; *Monster Manual*.

✱ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 2; hp 56; Appendix 1.

✱ **Shuna:** female human wizard 11; hp 55; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 15)

✱ **Meryk the Forgotten:** male human fighter 8/blackguard 3; hp 104; Appendix 1.

✱ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 5; hp 81; Appendix 1.

✱ **Shuna:** female human wizard 13; hp 65; Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 17)

✱ **Meryk the Forgotten:** male human fighter 8/blackguard 5; hp 136; Appendix 1.

✱ **Lesser Nightmare (fiendish servant):** hp 54; Appendix 1.

✱ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 7; hp 98; Appendix 1.

✱ **Shuna:** female human wizard 13; hp 65; Appendix 1.

✱ **Tassita Fellhaven:** female human cleric 13 (Wee Jas); hp 91; Appendix 1.

APL 16 (EL 19)

✱ **Meryk the Forgotten:** male human fighter 8/blackguard 7; hp 172; Appendix 1.

✱ **Lesser Nightmare (advanced fiendish servant):** hp 54; Appendix 1.

✱ **Narinn Kirr:** male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 9; hp 115; Appendix 1.

✱ **Shuna:** female human wizard 15; hp 75; Appendix 1.

✱ **Tassita Fellhaven:** female human cleric 15 (Wee Jas); hp 105; Appendix 1.

Tactics: At all APLs it is Shuna who *teleports* the minions to Midmeadow. At APL 2 Narinn is not part of the fight and quickly attempts to Tumble away and get back to Shuna (use his APL 4 statistics); she and Narinn then immediately *teleport* away, leaving the party to fight Meryk and his steed. At higher APLs they all stay and fight. Keeping Rowena alive dramatically improves the PCs' reputation in the eyes of Midmeadow's residents, many of whom are on the street during this attack. As a further complication, Rowena's dogs jump through the shop window if they hear their mistress in danger; if the PCs also manage to keep both dogs alive, they earn a special favor as noted on the Adventure Record.

At APL 2-6 Meryk either uses Spirited Charge and Improved Sunder to destroy a visible PC holy symbol of any Lawful Good deity (if Rowena is not present, and

provided he can identify it), or he uses Ride-By and Power Attack on Rowena. If unable to reach her, he attacks any foe directly in her path. At APLs 4-6 Narinn stays to fight, quaffing his *potion of blur* as soon as possible. If able to sneak attack Rowena, he does so before tumbling to flank with Meryk.

At APLs 8-12 Meryk has coated his lance with Large scorpion venom (Injury, Fortitude DC 18, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str); this is intended for use on Rowena. Narinn uses his Dervish Dance, ideally targeting the same foe Meryk initially attacks; divine casters are his secondary targets. Shuna wastes no time and, having been specially tutored (see APLs 14-16) on how to negotiate with foes, leads off (at APLs 8-10) with *fireball* or *circle of death*, depending on her place in the initiative order (and taking pains to avoid Narinn with any necromantic effects). Depending on her liberal targeting, *circle of death* may kill several innocent bystanders. She was busy studying when Narinn contacted their master and does not have a full complement of combat spells prepared. Still, she next casts *see invisibility* and then moves closer to take advantage of her ranged attack feats. She attempts to *teleport* away if things go badly.

At APL 12 Meryk also rides a *phantom steed* provided by Shuna; in the event he stops charging to full-attack a PC, he also activates his *ring of force shield*. Meryk also cast *divine sacrifice* prior to teleportation, intending to dispatch Rowena; he reserves a Smite Good for any good-aligned PCs (based on their holy symbols). Narinn immediately starts his Dervish Dance on Rowena or any obvious cleric, hoping to make the most of his +1 *vicious scimitar* before it renders him a liability. Shuna's casts a *quicken shield* before doing anything else; her signature spell at this APL is her long-distance *empowered scorching ray*.

At APLs 14 and 16 Meryk's lance is coated with purple worm poison (Injury, Fortitude DC 24, 1d6 Str/2d6 Str), and his mount is a fiendish servant provided by the mysterious mage: a lesser nightmare. After the initial Ride-By attack, Meryk rides into melee to take advantage of his multiple attacks at which time his mount uses its Smoking Nostrils ability, hoping to distract foes. Narinn and Shuna employ roughly the same tactics.

At APL 14 and 16, the PCs are also allowed to bask in the presence of Shuna's tutor, Meryk's sponsor, and the mysterious mage's key advisor: Tassita Fellhaven. APL 16, Shuna's tutor is on hand to instruct her. Tassita is the true leader of this strike force, and she considers her presence here to be an annoyance at best. She is also a control freak and has a phobia about being touched. To that end, she carries spells to keep undesirables (essentially everyone) from laying hands upon her person. Since she believes the PCs to be little more than a nuisance, she hangs back during the fight and aids her charges with healing and buffing (*prayer, etc.*). However, she is nothing if not prudent, and leads off (at APL 14) with *freedom of movement* followed by *spell resistance*, but should any PC directly engage her in melee or specifically target her with any spell, her gloves come off: *destruction* or *slay living*, followed by *animate dead* if time permits. She is also

not hesitant in the least about combining *deathknell* with her Death Touch ability to eliminate a particularly bothersome PC. If things go badly, she abandons them on the spot and uses *word of recall* to return to the mage's lair.

At APL 16 both Meryk and Narinn use their respective Sneak Attack abilities and whenever possible, with Meryk wildly brandishing his *unholy lance* while Narinn immediately activates his *ring of blinking*. Shuna drops a *sunburst* and tries to eliminate as many foes as she can at one time; her *empowered cone of cold* also serves this purpose. Tassita's tactics remain the same but if Rowena is present her first spell cast is *dimensional lock*, since she knows that Rowena is aware of the bonewood and that she is also a mage of some power. She reserves her *sending* to inform the mage of her progress, and uses her scroll of *phantasmal killer* if time permits, ideally on a chaotic cleric. She barks derogatory tips to Meryk all the while on how to improve his tactics, repeatedly asking why this is taking so long.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot – 30 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each).

APL 4: Loot – 173 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each).

APL 6: Loot – 148 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each), +1 *lance* (192 gp each), *potion of blur* (25 gp each), *vest of resistance* +1 (x2, 83 gp each), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *scimitar* (192 gp each).

APL 8: Loot – 54 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each), +1 *mithril chain shirt* (175 gp each), +1 *lance* (192 gp each), *potion of haste* (62 gp each), *vest of resistance* +1 (x2, 83 gp each), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *scimitar* (192 gp each).

APL 10: Loot – 55 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each), +1 *mithril chain shirt* (175 gp each), +1 *lance* (192 gp each), *potion of haste* (62 gp each), *vest of resistance* +1 (x2, 83 gp each), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *scimitar* (192 gp each), +1 *dagger* (191 gp each), *bracers of armor* +2 (333 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp each), *ring of protection* +2 (666 gp each).

APL 12: Loot – 29 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each), +1 *mithril chain shirt* (175 gp each), +1 *lance* (192 gp each), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *vicious scimitar* (692 gp each), *vest of resistance* +2 (x2, 333 gp each), *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *dagger* (191 gp each), *bracers of armor* +3 (750 gp each), *ring of protection* +2 (666 gp each), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +3 (750 gp each), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp each).

APL 14: Loot – 53 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – 3 *potions of cure serious wounds* (62 gp each), +1 *half plate* (145 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each), +1 *mithril chain shirt* (175 gp each), +1 *lance* (192 gp each), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *vicious scimitar* (692 gp each), *vest of resistance* +3 (x2, 750 gp each), *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *dagger* (191 gp each), *bracers of armor* +3 (750 gp each), *ring of protection* +2 (x3, 666 gp each), *headband of intellect* +2 (x2, 333 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +3 (x2, 750 gp each), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp each), +1 *scimitar* (192 gp each), *amulet of health* +2 (333 gp each), *pearl of power* (1st, 83 gp each), *periapt of wisdom* +2 (333 gp each), *ring of mind shielding* (666 gp each), +1 *studded leather armor* (97 gp each).

APL 16: Loot – 30 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – *potion of cure serious wounds* (62 gp each), +1 *full plate* (220 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp each), +3 *mithril chain shirt* (841 gp each), +1 *unholy lance* (1525 gp each), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *vicious scimitar* (692 gp each), *vest of resistance* +2 (333 gp each), *vest of resistance* +3 (750 gp each), *ring of force shield* (708 gp), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *dagger* (191 gp each), *bracers of armor* +3 (750 gp each), *ring of protection* +2 (x3, 666 gp each), *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp each), *headband of intellect* +4 (1333 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +3 (x2, 750 gp each), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp each), +1 *wounding scimitar* (1526 gp each), *amulet of health* +4 (1333 gp each), *pearl of power* (3rd, 750 gp each), *periapt of wisdom* +4 (1333 gp each), *ring of mind shielding* (666 gp each), +1 *studded leather armor* (97 gp each), 2 *arcane scrolls of blink* (31 gp each), *dagger of venom* (691 gp each), *arcane scroll of phantasmal killer* (58 gp each), 2 *divine scrolls of cure critical wounds* (125 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: *Potion of cure moderate wounds* (faint conjuration), +1 *half plate* (faint transmutation), *ring of protection* +1 and +2 (faint abjuration), +1 *lance* (faint transmutation), *potion of blur* (faint illusion), *vest of resistance* +1, +2 and +3 (faint abjuration), +1 and +3 *mithril chain shirt* (faint transmutation), *potion of haste* (faint transmutation), +1 *scimitar* (faint transmutation), *cloak of charisma* +2 (moderate transmutation), +1 *dagger* (faint transmutation), *cloak of resistance* +1 and +3 (faint abjuration), *bracers of armor* +2 and +3 (moderate conjuration), *headband of intellect* +2 and +4 (moderate transmutation), *ring of protection* +2 (faint abjuration), +1 *vicious scimitar* (faint transmutation), *gloves of dexterity* +2 (faint transmutation), *ring of force shield* (moderate evocation), *brooch of shielding* (faint abjuration), *potion of cure serious wounds* (faint conjuration), +1 *scimitar* (faint transmutation), *amulet of health* +2 and +4 (moderate transmutation), *pearl of power* (1st and 3rd, strong transmutation), *periapt of wisdom* +2 and +4 (moderate transmutation), +1 *studded leather armor* (faint transmutation), *ring of mind shielding* (faint abjuration), +1 *wounding scimitar* (faint transmutation and moderate evocation), +1 *unholy lance* (faint transmutation and moderate evocation [evil]), +1 *full plate* (faint transmutation), *arcane scroll of blink* (faint transmutation), *dagger of venom* (faint necromancy), *arcane scroll of*

phantasmal killer (moderate illusion), 2 *divine scrolls of cure critical wounds* (strong divination).

Note: Shuna does not have her spellbooks with her and the PCs will not be able to access the books in this mod.

Development: Keeping Rowena alive during the attack directly affects the reputations of the PCs that were earned following Encounter Three. If she dies or is abducted by the mage's minions, the PCs' reputation is downgraded one category; if their reputation was already "Unfavorable," it is now reclassified as "Careless." If Rowena lived, the PCs' reputation is upgraded one category; if their reputation was already "Heroic," it is now reclassified as "Peerless." If the PC were victorious in defeating the mage's minions and managed to capture any of them or recover any of the bodies, the two Knight-Captains of the Order of Celene eventually hear about the attack and rush to investigate. They cite the limitations of their own nominal authority in Midmeadow but strongly suggest that the PCs take steps to notify King Lynwerd immediately of this unusual attack. If any residents were killed, no blame is assigned to the PCs so long as they made every effort to defeat the mysterious attackers. Rowena herself is horrified at the attack and hopes that this is the end of the recent turbulent events in Midmeadow.

CONCLUSION

After a certain amount of heroic adventuring a pattern emerges: evildoers are vanquished, authorities are summoned, and heroes are rewarded, but here in Midmeadow the pattern does not hold. When the dust settles, dozens of merchants and residents cautiously approach and thank the PCs for their efforts; the two Knight-Captains from the Order of Celene eventually hear of the attack and rush to investigate, arriving on horseback shortly after the combat ends; they are soon followed by Dalis (if not already present), Bishop Talpin, Hinnad and two half-orcs from the Silk Plateau, one of whom, Towk, the PCs may have already met. The half orcs carry their glaives on their shoulders and use them to support two large containers of purified water that they and Hinnad were delivering to the temple of Pholtus.

The two Knight-Captains quickly assess the scene; they then cite their own nominal authority granted by King Lynwerd and remind the PCs that no jail exists in Midmeadow; they also note that the closest thing to a nearby jail was General Zylinchin's New Dawn Camp just outside town, which is now being torn down by the Church of the Blinding Light. The PCs may be hearing this piece of information for the first time, but while they ponder it the Knight-Captains note that Borneven is the closest city with both a jail and Nyronese troops (although another alternative could be to deliver them to the troops stationed along the border or at Bestien's Tower). If the PCs wish it, the Knight-Captains will assume responsibility for any prisoners and will deliver

them to Borneven; otherwise they defer to the PCs. If none of the attackers survived, the Knight-Captains offer to dispose of the corpses (by burning them) outside the south gate; or, if the PCs wish to take any of the corpses to a higher authority as proof of the attack, Dalis offers to accompany them and provide as many *gentle repose* spells as needed. Finally, the PCs are encouraged by everyone to take the NPCs gear as a just bounty and in order to get any dangerous magic items off of the street (however, any items deemed "unholy" by the Knight-Captains, such as the unholy lance, will be confiscated by them).

If Meryk and his mount were killed, an examination of their corpses reveals trace amounts of soil within the mount's horseshoes; Hinnad identifies this as volcanic soil (at APLs 14 and 16 the PCs find small shards of glass instead). A DC 20 Knowledge (local—Nyron and Her Environs) check reveals that the only volcano—dormant or otherwise—within 300 miles lies deep within the Gamboge Forest (PCs may have ventured there before in NMR3-05 *Norebo's Luck and Bralm's Embrace*). This should be enough of a clue for the PCs to link Meryk and his allies with their probable master; the mage behind the wild elf massacre in Encounter Five.

The PCs may be in a quandary now, as the mage's initial benevolence at avenging (and perhaps saving) Faith is now heavily offset by this direct attack against them. As they ponder the incongruity of the mage's actions, a curious silence develops around the PCs:

Without warning, all talk concerning the defeated attackers ceases and a curious silence develops. Looking around, you see the faces of several dozen residents gazing at you with the same strange expression. The half-orc Towk lowers his water containers and, with glaive in hand, slowly approaches.

"You have done a good thing." He looks at the crowd before continuing, slowly but confidently: "I do not speak for all here, but perhaps you should stay in Midmeadow. With us. The city needs someone to look after it. Each of us has...rees...rust...responsibilities."

As he finishes, members of the crowd begin murmuring excitedly amongst each other, and though you may not be keenly aware of the change, you and your companions have transformed—at least in the eyes of Midmeadow's residents—from mere adventurers into something...more...

The End

Critical Events Summary

Answers to the following questions will provide valuable insight to the authors and help shape a more dynamic and fulfilling conclusion to the series; DMs, please take a moment to review these, then email the answers to eteignoir@yahoo.com

1. Did Faith resist the druid's attack or did the PCs find her in the Gamboge?
2. Did any of the PCs meet Aricyn Maquillan?
3. Did the PCs successfully interact with Tess'inene-lae, chief of the Inanilae tribe?
4. Did Dalis Mirivan participate in the combat outside Rowena's shop during Encounter Nine?
5. Did Rowena Livingston survive? If so, to which higher authority (if any) was she entrusted?
6. Which (if any) of the mage's minions escaped?

APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

Persuading Rowena to surrender without violence	
APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

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 3

Defeat the Forestkith Goblins

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP
APL 14	450 XP
APL 16	510 XP

Encounter 6

Defeat the Forest Troll Rangers

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

Encounter 9

Defeat the Mage's Minions

APL 2	150 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP
APL 16	570 XP

Story Award

Successful Diplomacy with the Gamboge Elves

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1125 XP
APL 10	1350 XP
APL 12	1575 XP
APL 14	1800 XP
APL 16	2025 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.

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

Encounter 3: Kith and Kin

APL 2: Loot: 143 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 75 gp – 3 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each).

APL 4: Loot: 100 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 366 gp – potion of cure moderate wounds (x3, 25 gp each), +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each).

APL 6: Loot: 100 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 690 gp – 3 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), 3 potions of barkskin (+2, 25 gp each), +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each).

APL 8: Loot: 20 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 1344 gp – +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 small greataxe (x3, 193 gp each), 3 potions of barkskin (+3, 50 gp each), 3 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each).

APL 10: Loot: 20 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 2262 gp – +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 small greataxe (x3, 193 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 elixirs of fire breath (91 gp each), 3 rings of protection +1 (166 gp each).

APL 12: Loot: 20 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 3738 gp – +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 small greataxe (x3, 193 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3, 333 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 rings of protection +1 (166 gp each), gauntlets of ogre power (x3, 333 gp each).

APL 14: Loot: 20 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 6510 gp – +1 studded leather armor (x3, 97 gp each), +1 mighty cleaving small greataxe (x3, 693 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3, 333 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 rings of protection +1 (166 gp each), gauntlets of ogre power (x3, 333 gp each), 3 elixirs of fire breath (91 gp each), amulet of health +2 (x3, 333 gp each).

APL 16: Loot: 20 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 10989 gp – +1 studded leather armor of light fortification (x3, 764 gp each), +1 mighty cleaving small greataxe (x3, 693 gp each), 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance

+3 (x3, 750 gp each), 3 potions of haste (62 gp each), 3 rings of protection +2 (666 gp each), gauntlets of ogre power (x3, 333 gp each), amulet of health +2 (x3, 333 gp each).

Encounter 5: Shadows and Tall Trees

APL 2: Loot: 88 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 8 gp – 2 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each)

APL 4: Loot: 90 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 12 gp – 3 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each)

APL 6: Loot: 104 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 16 gp – 4 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each)

APL 8: Loot: 135 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 16 gp – 4 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each)

APL 10: Loot: 100 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 25 gp – potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each).

APL 12: Loot: 9 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 227 gp – +1 darkwood composite (+3) longbow (227 gp each).

APL 14: Loot: 9 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 218 gp – +1 darkwood composite (+3) shortbow (218 gp each)

APL 16: Loot: 7 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 705 gp – +1 darkwood composite (+1) seeking shortbow (705 gp each).

Encounter 6: Giant Steps for Humankind

APL 2: Loot: 8 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

APL 4: Loot: 17 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

APL 6: Loot: 95 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 186 gp – 2 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), 2 potions of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure light wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp each).

APL 8: Loot: 121 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 402 gp – potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), 2 potions of magic fang (4 gp each), 2 potions of cure light wounds (4 gp each), wand of cure light wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each), potion of barkskin (+3, 50 gp each).

APL 10: Loot: 138 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 850 gp – 4 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure light wounds (62 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3, 83 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 10 (25 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 20 (58 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each).

APL 12: Loot: 215 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 1858 gp – 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure moderate wounds (375 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x5, 83 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 10 (25 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), 2 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 composite (+2) longbow (216 gp each), +1 cold iron longspear (359 gp each).

APL 14: Loot: 90 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 3946 gp – 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), wand of cure moderate wounds (375 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x4, 83 gp each), 2 potions of resist energy (fire) 10 (25 gp each), potion of resist energy (fire) 30 (91 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), 2 potions of cure

serious wounds (62 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), ring of protection +1 (x3, 166 gp each), +1 composite (+2) longbow (x3, 216 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (333 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), +1 cold iron shock long spear (859 gp each).

APL 16: Loot – 121 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic – +1 cold iron shock long spear (859 gp each), +1 mighty composite [+2] longbow (x4) (216 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x4) (83 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp each), oil of flame arrow (62 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (x2) (333 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x5) (62 gp each), potion of magic fang (4 gp each), potion of haste (x4) (62 gp each), potion of resist energy 20 (fire) (x3) (58 gp each), ring of protection +1 (x2) (166 gp each), ring of protection +2 (x2) (666 gp each), wand of cure serious wounds (937 gp each).

ENCOUNTER 9: No Good Deed...

APL 2: Loot: 30 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 170 gp –potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), +1 half plate (145 gp each).

APL 4: Loot: 173 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 361 gp – 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), +1 half plate (145 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each).

APL 6: Loot: 148 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 719 gp –+1 half plate (145 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 lance (192 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), vest of resistance +1 (x2, 83 gp each).

APL 8: Loot – 54 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic: 1481 gp –+1 half plate (145 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 mithril chain shirt (175 gp each), +1 lance (192 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), vest of resistance +1 (x2, 83 gp each), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp each), +1 scimitar (192 gp each).

APL 10: Loot – 55 gp, Coin – 0 gp, Magic: 3087 gp – +1 half plate (145 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 mithril chain shirt (175 gp each), +1 lance (192 gp each), potion of haste (62 gp each), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), vest of resistance +1 (x2, 83 gp each), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp each), +1 scimitar (192 gp each) +1 dagger (191 gp each), bracers of armor +2 (333 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp each), headband of intellect +2 (333 gp each), ring of protection +2 (666 gp each).

APL 12: Loot: 29 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 6275 gp – +1 half plate (145 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 mithril chain shirt (175 gp each), +1 lance (192 gp each), 2 potions of cure moderate wounds (25 gp each), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp each), +1 vicious scimitar (692 gp each), vest of resistance +2 (x2, 333 gp each), ring of force shield (708 gp), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp each), +1 dagger (191 gp each), bracers of armor +3 (750 gp each), ring of protection +2 (666 gp each), headband of intellect +2 (333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each).

APL 14: Loot: 53 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 11364 gp – 3 potions of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), +1 half plate (145 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +1 mithril chain shirt (175 gp each), +1 lance (192 gp each), cloak of charisma

+2 (333 gp each), +1 vicious scimitar (692 gp each), vest of resistance +3 (x2, 750 gp each), ring of force shield (708 gp), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp each), +1 dagger (191 gp each), bracers of armor +3 (750 gp each), ring of protection +2 (x3, 666 gp each), headband of intellect +2 (x2, 333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (x2, 750 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), +1 scimitar (192 gp each), amulet of health +2 (333 gp each), pearl of power (1st, 83 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (333 gp each), ring of mind shielding (666 gp each), +1 studded leather armor (97 gp each).

APL 16: Loot: 30 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 18293 gp –potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp each), +1 full plate (220 gp each), ring of protection +1 (166 gp each), +3 mithril chain shirt (841 gp each), +1 unholy lance (1525 gp each), cloak of charisma +2 (333 gp each), +1 vicious scimitar (692 gp each), vest of resistance +2 (333 gp each), vest of resistance +3 (750 gp each), ring of force shield (708 gp), gloves of dexterity +2 (333 gp each), +1 dagger (191 gp each), bracers of armor +3 (750 gp each), ring of protection +2 (x3, 666 gp each), headband of intellect +2 (333 gp each), headband of intellect +4 (1333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (x2, 750 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), +1 wounding scimitar (1526 gp each), amulet of health +4 (1333 gp each), pearl of power (3rd, 750 gp each), periapt of wisdom +4 (1333 gp each), ring of mind shielding (666 gp each), +1 studded leather armor (97 gp each), 2 arcane scrolls of blink (31 gp each), dagger of venom (691 gp each), arcane scroll of phantasmal killer (58 gp each), 2 divine scrolls of cure critical wounds (125 gp each).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Loot: 269 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 253 gp; Total: 522 gp (72 gp over cap)

APL 4: Loot: 380 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 739 gp; Total: 305 gp (469 gp over cap)

APL 6: Loot: 447 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 1,611 gp; Total: 2,058 gp (1158 gp over cap)

APL 8: Loot: 330 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 3,243 gp; Total: 3,573 gp (2,273 gp over cap)

APL 10: Loot: 313 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 6,224 gp; Total: 6,537 gp (4,237 gp over cap)

APL 12: Loot: 273 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 12,098 gp; Total: 12,371 gp (9,071 gp over cap)

APL 14: Loot: 172 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 22,038 gp; Total: 22,210 gp (15,610 gp over cap)

APL 16: Loot: 147 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 36,663 gp; Total: 36,810 gp (26,910 gp over cap)

Special

Shady Dealer: This PC has earned a degree of infamy among the merchants of the Midmeadow Traders' Bazaar for employing questionable bargaining techniques. The PC suffers a permanent -3 penalty (cumulative for each such instance) on all Charisma-based skills within the Bazaar and Midmeadow itself.

Influence point with the Inanilae: This PC has successfully befriended the Inanilae tribe of sylvan elves of the Gamboge Forest including their chief, Tess'inene-

ilae. The PC is welcome in their village and is aware of its secret location within the forest.

Enmity of the Inanilae: This PC has participated in the unprovoked massacre of an elven scouting party within the Gamboge Forest. The rest of the Inanilae tribe learns of this and brands the PC a hated enemy. Fallout from this disfavor may adversely affect the PC in a future scenario.

Influence Point with Rowena Livingston: You have agreed to deliver messages to her professional contacts within the Kingdom if Nyronnd while she is incarcerated. Rowena does not forget the kindness of this PC. Earning this favor costs 1 TU for Nyronnd PCs and 2 TUs for all other PCs.

Barking up the Wrong Tree: For saving the lives of her dogs, Rowena Livingston uses her professional reputation to influence Midmeadow's kennel master on the PC's behalf. This influence point will mature in a future chapter of this series.

Exile on Main Street: Based upon his or her actions during the recent turbulent events in Midmeadow, this PC has earned a reputation among its residents (circle one): Peerless, Heroic, Indifferent, Unfavorable, Careless.

Evil Eyes: For defeating his minions on the streets of Midmeadow, the mysterious mage of the Gamboge takes an active interest in this PC.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

APL 2:

- Darkwood buckler (Adventure; DMG; 215 gp)
- Darkwood shortbow (Adventure; DMG; 395 gp)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- Darkwood light shield (Adventure; DMG; 203 gp)
- Darkwood longbow (Adventure; DMG; 430 gp)

APL 6 (all of APLs 2-4 plus the following):

- Darkwood heavy shield (Adventure; DMG; 257 gp)
- Mithril chain shirt (Adventure; DMG; 1100gp)
- Darkwood composite (+2) shortbow (Adventure; DMG; 545 gp)
- Wand of cure light wounds (Adventure; DMG; 750 gp)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2-6 plus the following):

- Darkwood composite (+1) longbow (Adventure; DMG; 530 gp)
- Darkwood quarterstaff (Adventure; DMG; 640 gp)
- Vest of resistance +1 (Adventure; CA; 1,000 gp)

APL 10 (all of APLs 2-8 plus the following):

- Darkwood composite (+2) longbow (Adventure; DMG; 630 gp)
- Darkwood mandolin (Adventure; DMG; 130 gp)
- Elixir of fire breath (Adventure; DMG; 1,100 gp, limit 2)
- Ring of protection +2 (Adventure; DMG; 8,000 gp)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2-10 plus the following):

- +1 darkwood composite (+3) longbow (Adventure; DMG; 2,730 gp)
- +1 vicious scimitar (Adventure; DMG; 8,315 gp)
- Bracers of armor +3 (Adventure; DMG; 9,000 gp)
- Brooch of shielding (Adventure; DMG; 1,500 gp)
- Cloak of resistance +3 (Adventure; DMG; 9,000 gp)
- Gauntlets of ogre power (Adventure; DMG; 4,000 gp)
- Ring of force shield (Adventure; DMG; 8,500 gp)
- Vest of resistance +2 (Adventure; CA; 4,000 gp)
- Wand of cure moderate wounds (Adventure; DMG; 4,500 gp)

APL 14 (all of APLs 2-12 plus the following):

- +1 darkwood composite (+3) shortbow (Adventure; DMG; 2,620 gp)
- +1 mighty cleaving small greataxe (Adventure; DMG; 8,320 gp)
- Nature's Lament (+1 cold iron shock longspear); (Adventure; DMG; 8,310 gp)
- Cloak of resistance +2 (Adventure; DMG; 4,000 gp)
- Pearl of power (1st) (Adventure; DMG; 1,000 gp)
- Vest of resistance +3 (Adventure; CA; 9,000 gp)

APL 16 (all of APLs 2-14 plus the following):

- +1 studded leather armor of light fortification (Adventure; DMG; 4,175 gp)
- +1 darkwood composite (+1) seeking shortbow (Adventure; DMG; 8,470 gp)
- +1 wounding scimitar (Adventure; DMG; 18,315 gp)
- Nature's Lament (+1 cold iron shock longspear); (Adventure; DMG; 8,310 gp)
- Amulet of health +4 (Adventure; DMG; 16,000 gp)
- Bracers of armor +3 (Adventure; DMG; 9,000 gp)
- Headband of intellect +4 (Adventure; DMG; 16,000 gp)
- Pearl of power (3rd) (Adventure; DMG; 9,000 gp)
- Scroll of cure critical wounds (Caster level 15, limit 1) (Adventure; DMG; 1,500 gp)
- Wand of cure serious wounds (Adventure; DMG; 11,250 gp)

APPENDIX 1: ALL APLS

Dalis Mirivan: male human cleric 7 (Fharlanghn); CR 7; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d8+7; hp 49; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +1 def, +3 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +5;

Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6, masterwork quarterstaff);

SA—; SQ turn undead 6/day (at +2 due to Knowledge [religion]);

AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +11, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +1, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +1, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +1; Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common, Elven

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—create water, cure minor wounds, light, mending, read magic, resistance; 1st—comprehend languages, detect evil, endure elements, entropic shield*, sanctuary, shield of faith; 2nd—calm emotions, find traps, gentle repose, shield other*, status; 3rd—create food and water, dispel magic, prayer, protection from energy*; 4th—divination, freedom of movement*.

*Domain spell. Deity: Fharlanghn; Domains: Luck (reroll 1/day, before learning if the original roll was successful; must take the reroll even if worse than the original); Protection (generate a protective ward once per day, granting a resistance bonus to creature touched equal to your cleric level to their next saving throw).

Possessions: ring of protection +1, periapt of wisdom +2, scroll of cure serious wounds, masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork studded leather armor, brass holy symbol of Fharlanghn.

Physical Description: Dalis cuts a dashing figure among clerical figures. At six feet and two hundred pounds, with a stubbled jaw and deep-set blue eyes framed by his scruff of dirty blonde hair, he looks and acts more like a well-traveled bard than a practicing priest. He is genial, cordial, and attentive; his one character flaw is being easily distracted by tales from strangers.

Rowena Livingston: female human cleric 3/wizard 3/Mystic Theurge 6; CR 12; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8 plus 3d4 plus 6d4; hp 45 (currently 33 due to Con damage); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 def, +2 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +6; Grp +6;

Atk +6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff);

Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d6, quarterstaff);

SA—; SQ Turn undead 7/day (at +2 due to Knowledge [religion]);

AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10 (8), Int 21, Wis 20, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +12, Knowledge (arcana) +17,

Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Knowledge (religion) +14, Profession (merchant) +11, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +25; Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Practiced Spellcaster (cleric), Practiced Spellcaster (wizard), Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Skill Focus (Spellcraft).

Languages: Common, Ancient Baklunish, Draconic.

Cleric Spells Prepared (0/0/0/0/0/0; base DC = 15 + spell level): spells denied by deity; atonement required to regain spell access.

*Domain spell. Deity: Mouqol; Domains: Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are cleric class skills; cast Divination spells at +1 caster level); Travel (Survival is a cleric class skill; freedom of movement for 1 round/day per cleric level).

Wizard Spells Prepared (0/0/0/0/0/0; base DC = 15 + spell level): no spells prepared due to disrupted focus and Constitution damage; one week of uninterrupted bed rest required to regain mental equilibrium and focus.

Spellbook: 0—[cantrip, cantrip, cantrip, cantrip, cantrip]; 1st—[first, first, first, first]; 2nd—[second, second, second]; 3rd—[third, third, third].

Possessions: Headband of Intellect +4, periapt of wisdom +4, cloak of charisma +4, ring of protection +1, bracers of armor +2.

Physical Description: Rowena is forty-three years old and of Baklunish descent. She has long, dark brown hair streaked with fine tendrils of gray, which she combs meticulously each morning after praying to Mouqol for her spells. She stands a just over five feet in height and, while still attractive for a woman her age, has recently lost much of her pallor due to anxiety over some ill-conceived actions; she has also lost a great deal of weight and appears pale and somewhat thin, tipping the scales at 119 pounds. She dresses in robes of grayish-blue tinted with black stripes, which now hang very loosely on her thin frame. Her hands are her most appealing feature, as they do not reveal anything about her age; she spares no expense in obtaining the finest creams and age-defying ointments the black market has to offer.

Valandril: male wood elf ranger 3; CR 3; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 3d8; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Dex, +3 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, 19-20/x2, masterwork longsword) or +5 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow);

Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, 19-20/x2, masterwork longsword) and +4 melee (1d6+1, 19-20/x2, masterwork shortsword);

SA—; SQ SA—; SQ Favored enemy dragons +2, low-light vision;

AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Heal +4, Hide +5, Knowledge (geography) +1, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +1, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Search +1, Spot +7, Survival +8; Dodge, Endurance, Mobility, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Common, Elven, Giant.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather, masterwork longsword, masterwork short sword, masterwork composite (+2) longbow, quiver with 20 arrows, *potion of cure light wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Elven Scout: male wood elf ranger 2; CR 2; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 2d8+2; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +3;

Atk +6 ranged (1d8+1/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +4 melee (1d8+1, 19-20/x2, longsword);

Full Atk +4/+4 ranged (1d8+1/x3, masterwork composite longbow);

SA—; SQ Favored enemy giants +2, low-light vision;

AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +1, Heal +3, Hide +4, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +2, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +6, Survival +6; Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Track.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: Chain shirt, masterwork composite (+1) longbow, quiver with 20 arrows, masterwork longsword, buckler, *potion of cure light wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 1; CR 1; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d12+1; hp 10; Init +3; Spd 40 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +3 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp -1;

Atk +5 melee (1d10+3/x3, masterwork small greataxe) or +3 melee (1d4+2, bite);

Full Atk +5 melee (1d10+3/x3, masterwork small greataxe) and -2 melee (1d4+1, bite);

SA Discordant frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, rage 1/day, tree shape;

AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Hide +7, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Move Silently +4, Survival +5; Weapon Focus (small greataxe).

Languages: Understands Goblinoid.

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: masterwork studded leather, masterwork small greataxe, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Power-Up Suite: (Rag); HD 1d12+3; hp 12; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Atk +7 melee (1d10+6/x3, masterwork small greataxe) or +5 melee (1d4+4, bite); Full Atk +7 melee (1d10+6/x3, masterwork small greataxe) and +0 melee (1d4+2, bite); Str 19, Con 17; Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll: CR 4; medium giant; HD 5d8+25; hp 55; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +6;

Atk +6 ranged (1d6+3, javelin) or +6 melee (1d4+3, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+poison, bite);

Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+3, javelin) and +1 melee (1d4+poison, bite) or +6 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, scent;

AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5; Improved Initiative, Track.

Languages: Giant.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: 4 Javelins, 2 tanglefoot bags.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk, Blackguard Aspirant: male human fighter 4; CR 4; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d10+8; hp 38; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 50 ft.; AC 18 (+8 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +4; Grp +7;

Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/x3, masterwork lance) or +9 melee (2d8+6/x3, masterwork lance) or +9 melee (3d8+9/x3, masterwork lance);

AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Hide -2, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (religion) +1, Ride +7; Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance).

Possessions: Masterwork lance, silver dagger, great club, silver holy symbol of Wee Jas, +1 half plate, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, ~~*potion of bear's endurance*~~.

Power-Up Suite: (*potion of bear's endurance* quaffed prior to teleportation, 28 rounds remaining); hp 46; Con 18; Fort +8.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 2; CR 2; small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d12+2; hp 20; Init +3; Spd 40 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +2; Grp +0;

Atk +6 melee (1d10+3/x3, masterwork small greataxe) or +4 melee (1d4+2, bite);

Full Atk +6 melee (1d10+3/x3, masterwork small greataxe) and -1 melee (1d4+1, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, rage 1/day, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Hide +7, Intimidate +4, Jump +5, Move Silently +5, Survival +6; Weapon Focus (small greataxe).

Languages: Understands Goblinoid

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, masterwork small greataxe, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 2d12+6; hp 24; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Atk +8 melee (1d10+6/x3, masterwork small greataxe) or +6 melee (1d4+4, bite); Full Atk +8 melee (1d10+6/x3, masterwork small greataxe) and +1 melee (1d4+2, bite); Str 19, Con 17; Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll: CR 4; medium giant; HD 5d8+25; hp 55; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +6;

Atk +6 ranged (1d6+3, javelin) or +6 melee (1d4+3, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+poison, bite);

Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+3, javelin) and +1 melee (1d4+poison, bite) or +6 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, scent;

AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5; Improved Initiative, Track.

Languages: Giant.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: 4 Javelins, 2 tanglefoot bags.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk, Blackguard Aspirant: male human fighter 4; CR 4; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d10+8; hp 38; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 50 ft.; AC 18 (+8 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +4; Grp +7;

Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/x3, masterwork lance) or +9 melee (2d8+6/x3, masterwork lance) or +9 melee (3d8+9/x3, masterwork lance);

AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Hide -2, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (religion) +1, Ride +7; Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance).

Possessions: Masterwork lance, silver dagger, great club, silver holy symbol of Wee Jas, +1 half plate, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, ~~*potion of bear's endurance*~~.

Power-Up Suite: (*potion of bear's endurance* quaffed prior to teleportation, 28 rounds remaining); hp 46; Con 18; Fort +8.

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 1; CR 5; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 1d10+1; hp 30; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +1 def, +4 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +4; Grp +4;

Atk +6 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) and +6 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri) or +8 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) or +8 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

Full Atk +6 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) and +6 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

SA Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +8, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Knowledge (local-Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +8, Perform (dance) +4, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +5, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +6 (+8 scrolls); Combat Expertise, Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon.

Possessions: Mithril chain shirt, masterwork kukri, masterwork scimitar, sap, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *ring of protection* +1.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 4; CR 4; small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 4d12+8; hp 44; Init +3; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +4; Grp +2;

Atk +8 melee (1d10+3/x3, masterwork small greataxe) or +6 melee (1d4+2, bite);

Full Atk +8 melee (1d10+3/x3, masterwork small greataxe) and +1 melee (1d4+1, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, rage 2/day, trap sense +1, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Hide +7, Intimidate +6, Jump +7, Move Silently +5, Survival +8; Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe);

Languages: Understands Goblinoid

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a daylight spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, masterwork small greataxe, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of barkskin* (+2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 4d12+16; hp 52; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Atk +10 melee (1d10+6/x3, masterwork small greataxe) or +8 melee (1d4+4, bite); Full Atk +10 melee (1d10+6/x3, masterwork small greataxe) and +3 melee (1d4+2, bite); Str 19, Con 18; Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll Stalker: male troll ranger 1; CR 5; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 1d8+5; hp 66; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +9;

Atk +10 melee (1d8+7/x3, masterwork cold iron longspear) or +9 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +9 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+7/x3, masterwork cold iron longspear) and +4 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite) or +9 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Hide +8 (+10 in forest), Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Spot +5, Survival +5; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: Masterwork cold iron longspear, 4 flasks of acid, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of magic fang*.

Forest Troll Sniper: male troll ranger 1; CR 5; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 1d8+5; hp 66; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +6;

Atk +10 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +6 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +10 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +6 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Hide +11 (+13 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Spot +5, Survival +5, Use Rope +6; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: Masterwork composite (+2) longbow, arrows (20), tanglefoot bag, *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of magic fang*.

Forest Troll Shaman: female troll druid 2; CR 5; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 2d8+10; hp 77; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+4 Dex, +5 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +6;

Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, club) or +8 ranged (1d6+2, club) or +6 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, club) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +6 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, link with companion, low-light vision, nature sense, scent, share spells, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +9 (+13), Handle Animal +5, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +4, Spellcraft +6, Spot +4, Survival +6; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds*, *flare*, *guidance*, *resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *magic fang*, *shillelagh*.

Possessions: Club, tanglefoot bag, *wand of cure light wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk, Blackguard Aspirant: male human fighter 6; CR 6; medium humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 57; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 50 ft.; AC 18 (+8 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +9;

Atk +11 melee (1d8+6/x3, +1 lance) or +11 melee (2d8+12/x3, +1 lance) or +11 melee (3d8+18/x3, +1 lance);

Full Atk: +11/+6 melee (1d8+6/x3, +1 lance)

AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Handle Animal +5, Hide -1, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (religion) +1, Ride +7; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance).

Possessions: silver dagger, great club, silver holy symbol (Wee Jas), +1 lance, +1 half plate, ~~*potion of bear's endurance*~~, *vest of resistance* +1.

Power-Up Suite: (*potion of bear's endurance* quaffed prior to teleportation, 28 rounds remaining); hp 69; Con 18; Fort +9.

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 2; CR 6; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 2d10+2; hp 39; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +1 def, +4 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +5; Grp +5;

Atk +8 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) and +7 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri) or +10 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) or +9 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

Full Atk +8 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) and +7 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

SA Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +8, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +5, Knowledge (local—Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +8, Perform (dance) +4, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +5, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +6 (+8 scrolls); Combat Expertise, Mobility, Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon.

Possessions: Mithril chain shirt, masterwork kukri, masterwork scimitar, sap, *ring of protection* +1, *potion of blur*, *vest of resistance* +1, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 6; CR 6; small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 6d12+12; hp 66; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +4;

Atk +10 melee (1d10+4/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) or +8 melee (1d4+2, bite);

Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10+4/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) and +3 melee (1d4+1, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., improved uncanny dodge, light sensitivity, rage 2/day, trap sense +2, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +13, Hide +7, Intimidate +8, Jump +7, Move Silently +6, Survival +10; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*small greataxe*)

Languages: Understands Goblinoid

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, +1 *small greataxe*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of barkskin* (+3), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 6d12+24; hp 78; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Atk +12 melee (1d10+7/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) or +10 melee (1d4+4, bite); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d10+7/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) and +5 melee (1d4+2, bite); Str 19, Con 18; Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +6.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll Stalker: male troll ranger 3; CR 7; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 3d8+15; hp 88; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +11;

Atk +12 melee (1d8+7/x3, masterwork cold iron longspear) or +11 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +11 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+7/x3, masterwork cold iron longspear) or +11 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +6 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Hide +11 (+13 in forest), Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Spot +8, Survival +9; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: Masterwork cold iron longspear, 4 flasks of acid, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of magic fang*, *potion of barkskin* (+3), *cloak of resistance* +1.

Forest Troll Sniper: male troll ranger 2; CR 6; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 2d8+10; hp 77; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +7;

Atk +11 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +7 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +7 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +11 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +9/+9 (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +7 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Hide +12 (+14 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Spot +6, Survival +6, Use Rope +7; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their

own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: Masterwork composite (+2) longbow, quiver with 20 arrows, 5 flasks of alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of magic fang*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Forest Troll Shaman: female troll druid 2; CR 5; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 2d8+10; hp 77; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+4 Dex, +5 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +6;

Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, club) or +8 ranged (1d6+2, club) or +6 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, club) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +6 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, link with companion, low-light vision, nature sense, scent, share spells, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +9 (+13), Handle Animal +5, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +4, Spellcraft +6, Spot +4, Survival +6; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds*, *flare*, *guidance*, *resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *magic fang*, *shillelagh*.

Possessions: Club, tanglefoot bag, *wand of cure light wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Forest Troll: CR 4; medium giant; HD 5d8+25; hp 55; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +6;

Atk +6 ranged (1d6+3, javelin) or +6 melee (1d4+3, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+poison, bite);

Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+3, javelin) and +1 melee (1d4+poison, bite) or +6 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, scent;

AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5; Improved Initiative, Track.

Languages: Giant.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: 4 Javelins, 2 tanglefoot bags.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEEDS...

Meryk the Forgotten: male human fighter 7/blackguard 1; CR 8; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14 plus 1d10+2; hp 76; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 50 ft.; AC 18 (+8 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +11;

Atk +13 melee (1d8+6/x3, +1 lance) or +13 melee (2d8+12/x3, +1 lance) or +13 melee (3d8+18/x3, +1 lance); Full Atk: +13/+8 melee (1d8+6/x3, +1 lance)

SA—Poison use; SQ—Aura of evil, detect good;

AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Handle Animal +8, Hide -1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Ride +10; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*corrupt weapon*.

Possessions: +1 lance, dagger, great club, silver holy symbol (Wee Jas), ~~vial of Large scorpion venom~~, +1 half plate, ~~potion of bear's endurance~~, vest of resistance +1, cloak of charisma +2.

Power-Up Suite: (*potion of bear's endurance* quaffed prior to teleportation, 28 rounds remaining); hp 92; Con 18; Fort +11.

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 2; CR 8; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 2d10+2 plus 2d10+2; hp 56; Init +3; Spd 35 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +1 def, +5 armor, +1 dervish ability), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7; Grp +7;

Atk +10 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) and +9 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri) or +12 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) or +11 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+2, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) and +11 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) or +10/+5 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) and +9 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

SA Dervish dance 1/day, sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, fast movement +5 ft., movement mastery, slashing blades, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +10, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +9, Knowledge (local—Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +8, Perform (dance) +8, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +5, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +6 (+8 scrolls); Combat Expertise, Mobility, Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar);

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon;

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus when wearing light or no armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus applies to touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. The dervish loses this bonus when immobilized, helpless, or when carrying more than a medium load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a number of times per day (but only once per encounter). A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the character has. At the end of this dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (until the ninth level of dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies). While in this dervish dance, the dervish can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to full speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of five feet between each attack and cannot return to a square he or she just exited (though the dervish may return to that square later during the full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of the move. A dervish prevented from completing a move is also prevented from finishing the full attack.

A dervish may only wield slashing weapons while dancing, and gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls while doing so. This bonus is +1 at 1st level and increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level thereafter. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require stillness, such as Move Silently, Hide, and Search.

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is unaffected by adverse conditions that could hinder movement. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, the dervish may take 10 even if stress or distraction would prevent him or her from doing so.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, the dervish gains an enhancement to speed when wearing light or no armor, and while carrying less than a medium load.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Possessions: +1 Mithril chain shirt, masterwork kukri, +1 scimitar, masterwork scimitar, sap, *potion of haste*, *ring of protection* +1, *vest of resistance* +1, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 8; CR 8; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 8d12+16; hp 88; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 armor, +1 def), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8; Grp +7;

Atk +13 melee (1d10+5/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) or +11 melee (1d4+3, bite);

Full Atk +13/+8 (1d10+5/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) and +6 melee (1d4+1, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR1/-, improved uncanny dodge, light sensitivity, rage 3/day, trap sense +2, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Hide +7, Intimidate +10, Jump +9, Move Silently +6, Survival +12; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (small greataxe);

Languages: Understands Goblinoid.

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a daylight spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, +1 *small greataxe*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*, *elixir of fire breath*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 8d12+32; hp 104; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Atk +15 melee (1d10+8/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) or +13 melee (1d4+5, bite); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d10+8/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) and +8 melee (1d4+2, bite); Str 20, Con 18; Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +6.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll Stalker: male troll ranger 6; CR 10; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 6d8+30; hp 121; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 13 flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +14;

Atk +15 melee (1d8+7/x3, Masterwork cold iron longspear) or +14 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +9 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d8+7/x3, Masterwork cold iron longspear) or +14 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +9 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy fey +2, link with companion, low-light vision, scent, share spells, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Handle Animal +8, Hide +14 (+16 in forest), Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +6, Spot +11, Survival +11; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang*.

Possessions: Masterwork cold iron longspear, 4 flasks of acid, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 10, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1.

Pixiestyx (advanced wolf animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 4d8+8; hp 32; Init +3; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, bite);

SA Trip; SQ Evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +2, Survival +2 (+6); Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Trip (Ex): A wolf that hits with its bite attack may attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Tricks: Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Heel, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Sniper: male troll ranger 4; CR 8; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 4d8+20; hp 99; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +9;

Atk +14 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +9 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +9 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +14/+9 ranged (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +12/+12/+7 (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +9 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Handle Animal +7, Hide +14 (+16 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +9, Use Rope +7; Endurance, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: Masterwork composite (+2) longbow, 2 quivers with 20 arrows each, 5 flasks of alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of magic fang*, *oil of flame arrow*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Forest Troll Shaman: female troll druid 4; CR 6; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 4d8+20; hp 99; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+4 Dex, +5 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +8;

Atk +8 melee (1d6+2, club) or +10 ranged (1d6+2, club) or +8 melee (1d4+4, claw) or +8 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+2, club) and +3 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +8 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +3 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, link with companion, low-light vision, nature sense, resist nature's lure, scent, share spells, trackless step, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +10 (+14), Handle Animal +7, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +5, Spellcraft +6, Spot +5, Survival +10; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Sylvan, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their

own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *flare*, *guidance*, *resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *longstrider*, *magic fang*, *shillelagh*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *flaming sphere*, *warp wood*.

Possessions: Club, tanglefoot bag, *wand of cure light wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 20.

Forest Troll: CR 4; medium giant; HD 5d8+25; hp 55; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +6;

Atk +6 ranged (1d6+3, javelin) or +6 melee (1d4+3, claw) or +6 melee (1d4+poison, bite);

Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+3, javelin) and +1 melee (1d4+poison, bite) or +6 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, scent;

AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5; Improved Initiative, Track.

Languages: Giant.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: 4 Javelins, 2 tanglefoot bags, 5 vials of alchemist's fire.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk the Forgotten: male human fighter 7/blackguard 1; CR 8; medium humanoid (human); HD 7d10+14 plus 1d10+2; hp 76; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 50 ft.; AC 18 (+8 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +11;

Atk +13 melee (1d8+6/x3, +1 lance) or +13 melee (2d8+12/x3, +1 lance) or +13 melee (3d8+18/x3, +1 lance);

Full Atk: +13/+8 melee (1d8+6/x3, +1 lance)

SA—Poison use; SQ—Aura of evil, detect good;

AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Handle Animal +8, Hide -1, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +2, Ride +10; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*corrupt weapon*.

Possessions: +1 lance, dagger, great club, silver holy symbol (Wee Jas), ~~vial of Large scorpion venom~~, +1 half plate, ~~potion of bear's endurance~~, vest of resistance +1, cloak of charisma +2.

Power-Up Suite: (*potion of bear's endurance* quaffed prior to teleportation, 28 rounds remaining); hp 92; Con 18; Fort +11.

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 2; CR 8; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 2d10+2 plus 2d10+2; hp 56; Init +3; Spd 35 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +1 def, +5 armor, +1 dervish ability), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7; Grp +7;

Atk +10 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) and +9 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri) or +12 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) or +11 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+2, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) and +11 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) or +10/+5 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) and +9 melee (1d4, 18-20/x2, masterwork kukri);

SA Dervish dance 1/day, sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, fast movement +5 ft., movement mastery, slashing blades, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +10, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +9, Knowledge (local—Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +8, Perform (dance) +8, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +5, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +6 (+8 scrolls); Combat Expertise, Mobility, Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar);

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon;

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus when wearing light or no armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus applies to touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. The dervish loses this bonus when immobilized, helpless, or when carrying more than a medium load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a number of times per day (but only once per encounter). A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the character has. At the end of this dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (until the ninth level of dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies). While in this dervish dance, the dervish can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to full speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of five feet between each attack and cannot return to a square he or she just exited (though the dervish may return to that square later during the full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of the move. A dervish prevented from completing a move is also prevented from finishing the full attack

A dervish may only wield slashing weapons while dancing, and gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls while doing so. This bonus is +1 at 1st level and increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level

thereafter. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require stillness, such as Move Silently, Hide, and Search.

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is unaffected by adverse conditions that could hinder movement. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, the dervish may take 10 even if stress or distraction would prevent him or her from doing so.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, the dervish gains an enhancement to speed when wearing light or no armor, and while carrying less than a medium load.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Possessions: +1 Mithril chain shirt, masterwork kukri, +1 scimitar, masterwork scimitar, sap, *potion of haste*, ring of protection +1, *vest of resistance* +1, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

Shuna: female human wizard 11; CR 11; Medium humanoid (human); HD 11d4+22; hp 55; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +2 def, +2 armor) touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +4;

Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d4, +1 dagger) or +8 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +16 (+20), Decipher Script +9, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +14, Spellcraft +16, Tumble +3, Use Magic Device +2 (+6 scrolls); Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quickened Spell, Spell Focus (evocation).

Languages: Common, Infernal, Abyssal, Draconic, Undercommon.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/5/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level; Evocation specialist, Enchantment and Illusion prohibited): 0—*acid splash* (+7 ranged touch), *detect magic*, *ray of frost* (+7 ranged touch), *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+4 melee touch, DC 14); 1st—*chill touch* (+4 melee touch, DC 15), *erase*, *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+7 ranged touch), *true strike*; 2nd—*detect thoughts*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray* (x2, +7 ranged touch), *see invisibility*, *spectral hand*; 3rd—*arcane sight*, *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 18), *gentle repose*, *haste*, *empowered magic missile*, *ray of exhaustion* (+7 ranged touch); 4th—*enervation* (+7 ranged touch), *ice storm*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere* (DC 19), ~~*Rary's mnemonic enhancer*~~, ~~*screaming*~~; 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *teleport*,

~~teleport~~, 6th—circle of death (DC 20), Otiluke's freezing sphere (DC 21).

Possessions: +1 dagger, bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +1, headband of intellect +2, spell component pouch.

Physical Description: petite, focused and unassuming aptly describes this nineteen year-old Suel female. Her short-cropped, pixyish platinum blonde hair and aqua-blue eyes do nothing to betray the absence of any playfulness whatsoever. Though she looks cute and harmless, she is in fact a volatile and unrestrained spellcaster who has been corrupted and manipulated by Tassita Fellhaven and the mysterious mage into using tactics and magic that violate every instinct that led her to being an arcanist. She is little more than a machine, built to specification and designed to please.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 10; CR 10; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 10d12+20; hp 110; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 armor, +1 def), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +9;

Atk +16 melee (1d10+7, 19-20/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) or +13 melee (1d4+4, bite);

Full Atk +16/+11 (1d10+7, 19-20/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) and +8 melee (1d4+2, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR2/-, improved uncanny dodge, light sensitivity, rage 3/day, trap sense +3, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Hide +7, Intimidate +12, Jump +11, Move Silently +6, Survival +14; Improved Critical (small greataxe), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (small greataxe);

Languages: Understands Goblinoid

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, +1 small greataxe, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 10d12+40; hp 130; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Atk +18 melee (1d10+10, 19-20/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) or +16 melee (1d4+6, bite); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (1d10+10, 19-

20/x3, +1 *small greataxe*) and +11 melee (1d4+3, bite); Str 22, Con 18; Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +8.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll Stalker: male troll ranger 8; CR 12; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 8d8+40; hp 143; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +11; Grp +16;

Atk +17 melee (1d8+8, 19-20/x3, +1 *cold iron longsword*) or +16 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +16 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +17/+12/+7 melee (1d8+8, 19-20/x3, +1 *cold iron longsword*) or +16 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +11 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy fey +2, low-light vision, scent, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Handle Animal +10, Hide +15 (+17 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +6, Spot +12, Survival +14; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang*; 2nd—~~none~~.

Possessions: +1 *cold iron longsword*, 4 flasks of acid, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 10, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1.

Forest Troll Sniper: male troll ranger 6; CR 8; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 6d8+30; hp 121; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +9; Grp +11;

Atk +16 ranged (1d8+3/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +11 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +11 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +13/+13 ranged (1d8+4/x3, +1 *composite longbow*);

Full Atk +16/+11 ranged (1d8+3/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +14/+14/+9 (1d8+3/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +11 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +6 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy humans +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Handle Animal +9, Hide +16 (+18 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Spot +11, Survival +11, Use Rope +7; Endurance, Improved Initiative, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—longstrider.

Possessions: +1 composite (+2) longbow, 2 quivers with 20 arrows each, 5 flasks of alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of magic fang*, *oil of flame arrow*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Charger (advanced wolf animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 4d8+8; hp 32; Init +3; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, bite);

SA Trip; SQ Evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +2, Survival +2 (+6); Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Trip (Ex): A wolf that hits with its bite attack may attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Shaman: female troll druid 6; CR 7; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 6d8+30; hp 121; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +9;

Atk +9 melee (1d6+2, club) or +11 ranged (1d6+2, club) or +9 melee (1d4+3, claw) or +9 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d6+2, club) and +4 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +9 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, link with companion, low-light vision, nature sense, resist nature's lure, scent, share spells, trackless step, wild empathy, wild shape 2/day, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +13 (+17), Handle Animal +9, Hide +6 (+8 in forest), Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +5, Spellcraft +7, Spot

+6, Survival +12; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Sylvan, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *flare*, *guidance*, *resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *longstrider*, *magic fang*, *shillelagh*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *flaming sphere*, *warp wood* (x2); 3rd—~~*snare*~~ (x2).

Possessions: Club, tanglefoot bag, *wand of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Lockjaw (advanced dire weasel animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 5d8; hp 30; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 19 (+5 Dex, +4 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+2, bite);

SA Attach, blood drain; SQ Evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +10, Spot +5; Alertness, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse.

Attach (Ex): A dire weasel that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body with its powerful jaws, and subsequently loses its Dexterity bonus to AC. An attached dire weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove it by grappling, an opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Blood Drain (Ex): A dire weasel drains blood for 1d4 points of Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

Tricks: Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Skirmisher: male troll ranger 3; CR 7; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 3d8+15; hp 88; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 17 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +8;

Atk +12 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +8 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +8 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +8 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +3 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy humans +2, low-light vision, scent;

AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +13, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Hide +14 (+16 in forest), Jump +4, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8, Survival +9; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Track, Rapid Shot.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Possessions: *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 4 javelins, 2 tanglefoot bags, masterwork net (+7 ranged touch), 5 vials of alchemist's fire, masterwork composite (+2) longbow.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk the Forgotten: male human fighter 8/blackguard 3; CR 11; medium humanoid (human); HD 8d10+16 plus 3d10+6; hp 104; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted (*phantom steed*) 240 ft.; AC 20 (+8 armor, +2 ring of force shield), touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +11; Grp +14;

Atk +16 melee (1d8+6, 19-20/x3, +1 lance) or +16 melee (2d8+12, 19-20/x3, +1 lance) or +16 melee (3d8+18, 19-20/x3, +1 lance);

Full Atk: +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+6, 19-20/x3, +1 lance);

SA—Poison use, smite good 1/day; SQ—Aura of despair, aura of evil, command undead, dark blessing, detect good;

AL LE; SV Fort +15, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Handle Animal +11, Hide -1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +13; Cleave, Improved Critical (lance), Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Practiced Spellcaster, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*divine sacrifice*.

Possessions: +1 lance, dagger, great club, silver holy symbol (Wee Jas), ~~vial of Large scorpion venom~~, +1 half plate, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of charisma* +2, *vest of resistance* +2, *ring of force shield*.

Power-Up Suite: (*divine sacrifice*, cast prior to teleportation, expires after first attack, *phantom steed* cast by Shuna).

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 5; CR 11; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 2d10+2 plus 5d10+5; hp 81; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 22 (+4 Dex, +1 def, +5 armor, +2 Dervish ability), touch 17, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +10; Grp +10;

Atk +14 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) and +14 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar) or +16 melee (1d6+1 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 vicious scimitar) or +16 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar);

Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d6+4 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 vicious scimitar) and +17 melee (1d6+3, 18-20/x2, masterwork scimitar);

SA Dance of death, dervish dance 3/day, sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, fast movement +10 ft.,

movement mastery, slashing blades, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +14, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +9, Intimidate +8, Jump +14, Knowledge (local—Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +9, Perform (dance) +13, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +6, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +6 (+8 scrolls); Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Mobility, Dodge, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar);

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon;

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus when wearing light or no armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus applies to touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. The dervish loses this bonus when immobilized, helpless, or when carrying more than a medium load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a number of times per day (but only once per encounter). A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the character has. At the end of this dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (until the ninth level of dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies). While in this dervish dance, the dervish can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to full speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of five feet between each attack and cannot return to a square he or she just exited (though the dervish may return to that square later during the full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of the move. A dervish prevented from completing a move is also prevented from finishing the full attack

A dervish may only wield slashing weapons while dancing, and gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls while doing so. This bonus is +1 at 1st level and increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level thereafter. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require stillness, such as Move Silently, Hide, and Search.

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is unaffected by adverse conditions that could hinder movement. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, the dervish may take 10 even if stress or distraction would prevent him or her from doing so.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, the dervish gains an enhancement to speed when wearing light or no armor, and while carrying less than a medium load.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Dance of Death: At 4th level the dervish gains the benefit of the Cleave feat while performing a dervish dance, even if lacking the prerequisites. The dervish does not have to move 5 feet before making the extra attack granted by this ability.

Possessions: +1 Mithril chain shirt, masterwork scimitar, +1 vicious scimitar, sap, ring of protection +1, vest of resistance +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, gloves of dexterity +2.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

Shuna: female human wizard 13; CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d4+26; hp 65; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +2 def, +3 armor, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +5;

Atk +7 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +9 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +17 (+21), Decipher Script +10, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Spellcraft +17, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +3 (+7 scrolls); Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quickened Spell, Spell Focus (evocation), Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Infernal, Abyssal, Draconic, Undercommon, Suloise.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/6/4/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level; Evocation specialist, Enchantment and Illusion prohibited): 0—acid splash (+8 ranged touch), detect magic, ray of frost (+8 ranged touch), resistance, touch of fatigue (+4 melee touch, DC 14); 1st—chill touch (+4 melee touch, DC 15), erase, expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (+8 ranged touch), true strike; 2nd—detect thoughts, protection from arrows, resist energy, scorching ray (+8 ranged touch), see invisibility, spectral hand; 3rd—arcane sight, dispel magic, ~~phantom steed~~, fireball (DC 18), gentle repose, haste, ray of exhaustion (+8 ranged touch); 4th—empowered scorching ray (+8 ranged touch), enervation (+8 ranged touch), Otiluke's resilient sphere (DC 19), ~~Rary's mnemonic enhancer~~, ~~scrying~~, stilled dispel magic; 5th—cone of cold (DC 20), quickened shield, teleport, ~~teleport~~; 6th—circle of death (DC 20), Otiluke's freezing sphere (DC 21), summon monster VI; 7th—finger of death, prismatic spray (DC 22).

Possessions: +1 dagger, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +3, headband of intellect +2, brooch of shielding, spell component pouch.

Physical Description: petite, focused and unassuming aptly describes this nineteen year-old Suel female. Her short-cropped, pixyish platinum blonde hair and aqua-blue eyes do nothing to betray the absence of any playfulness whatsoever. Though she looks cute and harmless, she is in fact a volatile and unrestrained spellcaster who has been corrupted and manipulated by Tassita Fellhaven and the mysterious mage into using tactics and magic that violate every instinct that led her to being an arcanist. She is little more than a machine, built to specification and designed to please.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 12; CR 12; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 12d12+36; hp 144; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 armor, +1 def), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +12; Grp +12;

Atk +18 melee (1d10+7, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) or +16 melee (1d4+4, bite);

Full Atk +18/+13/+8 (1d10+7, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) and +11 melee (1d4+2, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR2/-, greater rage, improved uncanny dodge, light sensitivity, rage 4/day, trap sense +4, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Hide +7, Intimidate +14, Jump +13, Move Silently +6, Survival +16; Cleave, Improved Critical (small greataxe), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (small greataxe);

Languages: Understands Goblinoid

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *elixir of fire breath*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *amulet of health* +2.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 12d12+40; hp 168; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Atk +20 melee (1d10+10, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) or

+18 melee (1d4+6, bite); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d10+10, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) and +13 melee (1d4+3, bite); Str 22, Con 20; Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +9.

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll Stalker: male troll ranger 10; CR 14; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 10d8+60; hp 165; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +13; Grp +18;

Atk +19 melee (1d8+8 plus 1d6 electrical, 19-20/x3, +1 *cold iron shock longspear*) or +18 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +18 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+8 plus 1d6 electrical, 19-20/x3, +1 *cold iron shock longspear*) or +18 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +13 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +6, favored enemy humans +2, favored enemy fey +2, low-light vision, scent, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +16, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Handle Animal +10, Hide +17 (+19 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +7, Spot +12, Survival +17, Use Rope +9; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Critical (longspear), Improved Initiative, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang*, 2nd—~~snare~~.

Possessions: *Nature's Lament* (+1 *cold iron shock longspear*), 4 flasks of acid, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 10, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1.

Forest Troll Sniper: male troll ranger 8; CR 12; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 8d8+40; hp 143; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 21 (+5 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 16, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +11; Grp +13;

Atk +18 ranged (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +13 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +13 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +14/+14 ranged (1d8+4, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*);

Full Atk +18/+13/+8 ranged (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +16/+16/+11/+6 (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +13 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +8 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy humans +2, low-light vision, scent, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +14, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Handle Animal +10, Hide +18 (+21 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Spot +13, Survival +13, Use Rope +9; Endurance, Improved Critical (longbow), Improved Initiative, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—longstrider; 2nd—~~snare~~.

Possessions: +1 composite (+2) longbow, 2 quivers with 20 arrows each, 5 flasks of alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of magic fang*, oil of flame arrow, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 10, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, brooch of shielding.

Charger (advanced wolf animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 4d8+8; hp 32; Init +3; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, bite);

SA Trip; SQ Evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +2, Survival +2 (+6); Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Trip (Ex): A wolf that hits with its bite attack may attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Shaman: female troll druid 10; CR 9; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 10d8+50; hp 165; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 21 (+5 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 16, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +10; Grp +13;

Atk +12 melee (1d6+2, club) or +15 ranged (1d6+2, club) or +12 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +12 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d6+2, club) and +9 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +12 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +7 melee (1d4+poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, link with companion, low-light

vision, nature sense, resist nature's lure, scent, share spells, trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy, wild shape 4/day, wild shape (large), woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +11, Will +14; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +17 (+21), Handle Animal +13, Hide +7 (+9 in forest), Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +10, Spellcraft +8, Spot +11, Survival +11; Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Natural Spell, Power Attack, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Sylvan, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (6/5/5/4/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *flare*, *guidance*, *resistance* (x2); 1st—*cure light wounds*, *faerie fire*, *longstrider*, *magic fang*, *shillelagh*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *flaming sphere*, *warp wood* (x2); 3rd—*cure moderate wounds*, *poison*, ~~snare~~ (x2); 4th—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *freedom of movement*; 5th—*baleful polymorph*, *stoneskin*.

Possessions: Club, tanglefoot bag, wand of cure moderate wounds, cloak of resistance +2, *periapt of wisdom* +2, ring of protection +1, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 30.

Lockjaw (advanced dire weasel animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 7d8; hp 42; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 21 (+5 Dex, +6 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grp +8;

Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+3, bite);

SA Attach, blood drain; SQ Devotion, evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +4 (+8 against enchantments); Str 16, Dex 21, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Hide +11, Listen +3, Move Silently +11, Spot +5; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Stealthy, Weapon Finesse.

Attach (Ex): A dire weasel that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body with its powerful jaws, and subsequently loses its Dexterity bonus to AC. An attached dire weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove it by grappling, an opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Blood Drain (Ex): A dire weasel drains blood for 1d4 points of Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

Tricks: Attack, Charge, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Skirmisher: male troll ranger 5; CR 9; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 5d8+25; hp 110; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +10;

Atk +14 melee (1d8+3/x3, +1 composite longbow) or +10 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +10 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d8+3/x3, +1 composite longbow) or +12/+12/+7 (1d8+3/x3, +1 composite longbow) or +10 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +5 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy humans +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Hide +15 (+17 in forest), Jump +10, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Spot +9, Survival +10; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Track, Rapid Shot.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang*.

Possessions: *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 2 javelins, tanglefoot bag, masterwork net (+9 ranged touch), +1 composite (+2) longbow.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk the Forgotten: male human fighter 8/blackguard 5; CR 13; medium humanoid (human); HD 8d10+24 plus 5d10+15; hp 136; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 40 ft.; AC 21 (+8 armor, +1 def, +2 ring of force shield), touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +13; Grp +17;

Atk +19 melee (1d8+7, 19-20/x3, +1 lance) or +19 melee (2d8+14, 19-20/x3, +1 lance) or +19 melee (3d8+21, 19-20/x3, +1 lance);

Full Atk: +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+7, 19-20/x3, +1 lance);

SA—Poison use, smite good 4/day, sneak attack +1d6; SQ—Aura of despair, aura of evil, command undead, dark blessing, detect good, fiendish servant (lesser nightmare);

AL LE; SV Fort +18, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Handle Animal +13, Hide -1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +15; Cleave, Extra Smiting, Improved Critical (lance), Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Practiced Spellcaster, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*divine sacrifice*; 2nd—*death knell*.

Possessions: +1 lance, silver dagger, great club, silver holy symbol (Wee Jas), +1 half plate, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*, ring of protection +1, *cloak of charisma* +2,

vest of resistance +3, ring of force shield, amulet of health +2, pearl of power (1st), ~~vial of purple worm poison~~.

Power-Up Suite: (*divine sacrifice*, cast prior to teleportation, expires after first attack.)

Lesser Nightmare (fiendish servant): CR—; Large outsider (Evil, Extraplanar); HD 6d8+18; hp 54; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +13 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +6; Grp +14;

Atk +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire, hoof);

Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire, 2 hooves); and +4 melee (1d8+2, bite);

Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Flaming hooves, smoke; SQ Darkvision 60;

AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +10 (+12 on prime material); Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run.

Flaming Hooves (Su): A blow from a lesser nightmare's hooves sets combustible materials alight.

Smoke (Su): During the excitement of battle, a lesser nightmare snorts and neighs with rage. This snorting fills a 15-foot cone with a hot, sulfurous smoke that chokes and blinds opponents. Anyone in the cone must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take a -2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls until 1d6 minutes after leaving the cone. The cone lasts 1 round, and a nightmare uses it once as a free action during its turn each round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Because of the smoke it gives off, a nightmare has concealment against creatures 5 feet away and total concealment against creatures 10 feet or farther away. The smoke does not obscure the nightmare's vision at all.

Skills: A lesser nightmare always knows where true north lies in relation to itself.

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 7; CR 13; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 2d10+2 plus 7d10+7; hp 98; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23 (+4 Dex, +2 def, +5 armor, +2 dervish ability), touch 18, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +12; Grp +12;

Atk +16 melee (1d6+1 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 vicious scimitar) and +16 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar) or +18 melee (1d6+1 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 vicious scimitar) or +18 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar);

Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+5 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 vicious scimitar) and +20 melee (1d6+5, 18-20/x2, +1 scimitar);

SA Dance of death, dervish dance 4/day, elaborate parry, sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, fast movement +10 ft., improved reaction, movement mastery, slashing blades, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +16, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Balance +13, Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +20, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +9, Intimidate +8, Jump +16, Knowledge (local—Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +9, Perform (dance) +15, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +6, Tumble +18, Use Magic Device +6 (+8 scrolls); Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Strike, Mobility, Dodge, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar);

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon;

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus when wearing light or no armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus applies to touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. The dervish loses this bonus when immobilized, helpless, or when carrying more than a medium load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a number of times per day (but only once per encounter). A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the character has. At the end of this dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (until the ninth level of dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies). While in this dervish dance, the dervish can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to full speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of five feet between each attack and cannot return to a square he or she just exited (though the dervish may return to that square later during the full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of the move. A dervish prevented from completing a move is also prevented from finishing the full attack.

A dervish may only wield slashing weapons while dancing, and gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls while doing so. This bonus is +1 at 1st level and increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level thereafter. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require stillness, such as Move Silently, Hide, and Search.

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is unaffected by adverse conditions that could hinder movement. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, the dervish may take 10 even if stress or distraction would prevent him or her from doing so.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, the dervish gains an enhancement to speed when wearing light or no armor, and while carrying less than a medium load.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Dance of Death: At 4th level the dervish gains the benefit of the Cleave feat while performing a dervish dance, even if lacking the prerequisites. The

dervish does not have to move 5 feet before making the extra attack granted by this ability.

Improved Reaction (Ex): At 6th level the dervish gains a +2 bonus to initiative.

Elaborate Parry (Ex): When choosing fighting defensively or go on total defense, the dervish gains a +4 bonus to AC which stacks with both the regular bonuses for these actions, and the extra bonuses gained for having five or more ranks in Tumble.

Possessions: +1 Mithril chain shirt, +1 vicious scimitar, +1 scimitar, sap, ring of protection +2, vest of resistance +3, potion of cure serious wounds, gloves of dexterity +2.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

Shuna: female human wizard 13; CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d4+26; hp 65; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +2 def, +3 armor, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +5;

Atk +7 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +9 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +17 (+21), Decipher Script +10, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Spellcraft +17, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +3 (+7 scrolls); Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quickened Spell, Spell Focus (evocation), Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Infernal, Abyssal, Draconic, Undercommon, Suloise.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/6/4/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level; Evocation specialist, Enchantment and Illusion prohibited): 0—acid splash (+8 ranged touch), detect magic, ray of frost (+8 ranged touch), resistance, touch of fatigue (+4 melee touch, DC 14); 1st—chill touch (+4 melee touch, DC 15), erase, expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (+8 ranged touch), true strike; 2nd—detect thoughts, protection from arrows, resist energy, scorching ray (+8 ranged touch), see invisibility, spectral hand; 3rd—arcane sight, dispel magic, empowered magic missile, fireball (DC 18), gentle repose, haste, ray of exhaustion (+8 ranged touch); 4th—empowered scorching ray (+8 ranged touch), enervation (+8 ranged touch), Otiluke's resilient sphere (DC 19), ~~Rary's mnemonic enhancer, serving~~, stilled dispel magic; 5th—cone of cold (DC 20), quickened shield, teleport, ~~teleport~~; 6th—circle of death (DC 20), mass bear's endurance, Otiluke's freezing sphere (DC 21); 7th—finger of death, prismatic spray (DC 22).

Possessions: +1 dagger, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +3, headband of intellect +2, brooch of shielding, spell component pouch.

Physical Description: petite, focused and unassuming aptly describes this nineteen year-old Suel female. Her short-cropped, pixyish platinum blonde hair and aqua-blue eyes do nothing to betray the absence of any playfulness whatsoever. Though she looks cute and harmless, she is in fact a volatile and unrestrained spellcaster who has been corrupted and manipulated by Tassita Fellhaven and the mysterious mage into using tactics and magic that violate every instinct that led her to being an arcanist. She is little more than a machine, built to specification and designed to please.

Tassita Fellhaven: female human cleric 13 (Wee Jas); CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d8+13; hp 91; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +2 def, +2 armor), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +9; Grp +9;

Atk +10 melee (1d4-1, masterwork silver dagger);

Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4-1, masterwork silver dagger);

SA Death touch, rebuke undead 9/day (at +2 due to Knowledge [religion]), spontaneously cast *inflict* spells; SQ—;

AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 20, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Heal +11, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +11; Extra Turning, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (necromancy);

Languages: Common, Suloise.

Death Touch (Su): By virtue of her Death domain and the power of Wee Jas, Tassita may once per day attempt a melee touch attack against a living creature. If her touch is successful, she rolls 1d6 per cleric level she possesses. If the total rolled at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies (no save).

Cleric	Spells	Prepared
(6/7+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1; base DC = 15 + spell level; Necromancy spells = 17 + spell level): o— <i>cure minor wounds</i> (2), <i>guidance</i> , <i>detect magic</i> , <i>detect poison</i> , <i>read magic</i> ; 1st— <i>cause fear*</i> , <i>comprehend languages</i> , <i>cure light wounds</i> (2), <i>deathwatch</i> , <i>detect undead</i> , <i>entropic shield</i> , <i>sanctuary</i> ; 2nd— <i>cure moderate wounds</i> , <i>darkness</i> , <i>death knell*</i> , <i>death knell</i> , <i>hold person</i> , <i>remove paralysis</i> , <i>status</i> ;		
3rd— <i>animate dead</i> , <i>cure serious wounds</i> , <i>dispel magic*</i> , <i>dispel magic</i> , <i>invisibility purge</i> , <i>speak with dead</i> ; 4th— <i>cure critical wounds</i> , <i>death ward*</i> , <i>freedom of movement</i> , <i>sending</i> , <i>silent prayer</i> , <i>spell immunity</i> (<i>grease</i> , <i>magic missile</i> , <i>spiritual weapon</i>); 5th— <i>flame strike</i> , <i>greater command</i> , <i>slay living</i> (2), <i>spell resistance</i> (SR 25)*; 6th— <i>antimagic field*</i> , <i>mass cure moderate wounds</i> , <i>word of recall</i> ; 7th— <i>destruction*</i> , <i>repulsion</i> .		

*Domain spell. Deity: Wee Jas; Domains: Death (death touch once per day); Magic (use scrolls, wands, and other devices with spell completion or spell trigger activation as a wizard of one-half your cleric level).

Possessions: Masterwork silver dagger, 2 daggers, 4 sunrods, spell component pouch, platinum holy

symbol (Wee Jas), *headband of intellect* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of protection* +2, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *ring of mind shielding*, +1 *studded leather armor*.

Physical Description: wanted in Keoland for unauthorized resurrections and other undisclosed necromantic activity, Tassita gives new meaning to the Stern Lady's namesake, having fiercely embraced the Death and Magic domains with equal aplomb. She is particularly proud of her newly acquired scroll scribing ability. She stands at 5'6" and weighs 104 pounds; her long blonde hair has been dyed silvery-white and accentuated with small sprigs of nightshade at the temples; she typically wears her hair wet, lending a malicious air to her presence. She wears a tattered black velvet cloak over her studded leather armor, and complements the ensemble with an array of onyx jewelry that doubles as spell components. She is currently the key advisor to the mysterious mage of the Gamboge, the tutor of Shuna, and the sponsor of Meryk. As he is petitioning to be her champion, she takes advantage of every opportunity to goad him, especially during moments of tension. Tassita's one great phobia has become a liability for her: she hates being touched by others and tailors her spell selection accordingly. Rumor has it that in Gradsul one evening, an inebriated minor noble recognized her in a crowded tavern and made her an indecent proposal, placing his hand on her inappropriately and slurring her surname with an affected accent to the extent of "Hey pretty lady, did you Fall from Hay-ven?" She Death-Touched him and fled town.

ENCOUNTER 3: KITH AND KIN

Forestkith Goblin Berserker: male goblin barbarian 14; CR 14; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 14d12+42; hp 168; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 22 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +2 def, +5 armor), touch 16, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +14; Grp +14;

Atk +20 melee (1d10+7, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) or +18 melee (1d4+4, bite);

Full Atk +20/+15/+10 (1d10+7, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) and +13 melee (1d4+2, bite);

SA Discordant Frenzy; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., DR3/-, greater rage, improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, light sensitivity, rage 4/day, trap sense +4, tree shape, uncanny dodge;

AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +8 (+12 versus enchantment spells); Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Hide +7, Intimidate +16, Jump +14, Move Silently +7, Survival +17; Cleave, Improved Critical (small greataxe), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (small greataxe).

Languages: Understands Goblinoid.

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Possessions: +2 studded leather of light fortification, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*, cloak of resistance +3, ring of protection +2, gauntlets of ogre power, amulet of health +2.

Power-Up Suite: (Rage); HD 14d12+70; hp 196; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 20; Atk +22 melee

(1d10+10, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) or +20 melee (1d4+6, bite); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (1d10+10, 19-20/x3, +1 *mighty cleaving small greataxe*) and +15 melee (1d4+3, bite); Str 22, Con 20; Fort +17, Ref +10, Will +10 (+14 versus enchantment spells).

ENCOUNTER 6: GIANT STEPS...

Forest Troll Stalker: male troll ranger 12; CR 16; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 12d8+70; hp 187; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +15; Grp +20;

Atk +21 melee (1d8+8 plus 1d6 electrical, 19-20/x3, +1 *cold iron shock longspear*) or +20 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +20 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (1d8+8 plus 1d6 electrical, 19-20/x3, +1 *cold iron shock longspear*) or +20 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +15 melee (1d4+2 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +6, favored enemy humans +2, favored enemy fey +2, low-light vision, scent, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +19, Ref +15, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +18, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Handle Animal +10, Hide +20 (+22 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +15, Move Silently +10, Spot +14, Survival +20, Use Rope +10; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Critical (longspear), Improved Initiative, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang*, 2nd—~~snare~~; 3rd—~~tree shape~~.

Possessions: Nature's Lament (+1 *cold iron shock longspear*), 4 flasks of acid, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 20, *potion of haste*, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1, *periapt of wisdom* +2, gloves of dexterity +2.

Miss Vicious (advanced wolverine animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 5d8+20; hp 53; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk +5 melee (1d4+2, claw);

Full Attack +5 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +0 melee (1d6+1, bite);

SA Rage; SQ Evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +5, Listen +6, Spot +6; Alertness, Toughness, Track.

Rage (Ex): A wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. It gains +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and -2 to Armor Class. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

Tricks: Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Sniper: male troll ranger 10; CR 14; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 10d8+60; hp 165; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 22 (+5 Dex, +5 natural, +2 def), touch 17, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +13; Grp +15;

Atk +20 ranged (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +15 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +15 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +16/+16 ranged (1d8+4, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*);

Full Atk +20/+15/+10 ranged (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +18/+18/+13/+8 (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 *composite longbow*) or +15 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy humans +4, favored enemy dragons +2, low-light vision, scent, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +17, Ref +15, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +13, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Handle Animal +10, Hide +20 (+22 in forest), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +13, Spot +15, Survival +17, Use Rope +9; Diehard, Endurance, Improved Critical (longbow), Improved Initiative, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—longstrider; 2nd—~~snare~~.

Possessions: +1 composite (+2) longbow, 2 quivers with 20 arrows each, 5 flasks of alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of magic fang*, oil of flame arrow, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 20, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +2, brooch of shielding.

Charger (advanced wolf animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 4d8+8; hp 32; Init +3; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5;

Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, bite);

SA Trip; SQ Evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +2, Survival +2 (+6); Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Trip (Ex): A wolf that hits with its bite attack may attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Shaman: female troll druid 12; CR 10; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 12d8+50; hp 187; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 21 (+5 Dex, +5 natural, +1 def), touch 16, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +12; Grp +14;

Atk +14 melee (1d6+2, club) or +17 ranged (1d6+2, club) or +14 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +14 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite);

Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d6+2, club) and +9 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, bite) or +14 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +9 melee (1d4+poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, link with companion, low-light vision, nature sense, resist nature's lure, scent, share spells, trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy, wild shape 4/day, wild shape (large), wild shape (plant), wild shape (tiny), woodland stride;

AL CE; SV Fort +19, Ref +12, Will +15; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +17 (+21), Handle Animal +13, Hide +7 (+9 in forest), Knowledge (nature) +13, Listen +13, Spellcraft +11, Spot +11, Survival +12; Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Natural Spell, Power Attack, Track.

Languages: Giant, Common, Sylvan, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (6/6/5/5/4/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), flare, guidance, resistance (x2); 1st—*cure light wounds*, *faerie fire*, longstrider, *magic fang*, ~~pass without trace~~, shillelagh; 2nd—barkskin, flaming sphere, warp wood (x3); 3rd—call lightning, poison, ~~snare~~ (x3); 4th—*dispel magic*, freedom of movement, ice storm, rusting grasp; 5th—*baleful polymorph*, ~~commune with nature~~, stoneskin; 6th—mass bear's endurance, transport via plants.

Possessions: Club, tanglefoot bag, *wand of cure serious wounds*, cloak of resistance +3, *periapt of wisdom* +2, ring of protection +1, *potion of resist energy* (fire) 20.

Lockjaw (advanced dire weasel animal companion): CR—; Medium magical beast; HD 9d8; hp 54; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 24 (+6 Dex, +8 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +9;

Atk +12 melee (1d8+3, bite);

Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+3, bite);

SA Attach, blood drain, multiattack; SQ Devotion, evasion, low-light vision, scent;

AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +4 (+8 against enchantments); Str 17, Dex 22, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13, Listen +3, Move Silently +13, Spot +5; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse.

Attach (Ex): A dire weasel that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body with its powerful jaws, and subsequently loses its Dexterity bonus to AC. An attached dire weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove it by grappling, an opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Blood Drain (Ex): A dire weasel drains blood for 1d4 points of Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

Tricks: Attack, Charge, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Stay.

Forest Troll Skirmisher: male troll ranger 6; CR 9; medium giant; HD 5d8+25 plus 6d8+30; hp 121; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +9; Grp +11;

Atk +15 melee (1d8+3/x3, +1 composite longbow) or +11 melee (1d4+2, claw) or +11 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite), or +11/+11 ranged (1d8+4/x3, +1 composite longbow);

Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d8+3/x3, +1 composite longbow) or +13/+13/+8 (1d8+3, 19-20/x3, +1 composite longbow) +11 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +6 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite);

SA Poison; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy humans +2, low-light vision, scent, wild empathy;

AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Hide +16 (+18 in forest), Jump +11, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Spot +10, Survival +11; Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Track, Rapid Shot.

Languages: Giant, Common, Elven.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—magic fang.

Possessions: *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 2 javelins, tanglefoot bag, masterwork net (+11 ranged touch), +1 composite (+2) longbow.

ENCOUNTER 9: NO GOOD DEED...

Meryk the Forgotten: male human fighter 8/blackguard 7; CR 15; medium humanoid (human); HD 8d10+32 plus 7d10+28; hp 172; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., mounted 40 ft.; AC 21 (+8 armor, +1 def, +2 ring of force shield), touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +15; Grp +19;

Atk +21 melee (1d8+7 [+2d6 to good-aligned creatures], 19-20/x3, +1 unholy lance) or +21 melee (2d8+14 [+2d6 to good-aligned creatures], 19-20/x3, +1 unholy lance) or +21 melee (3d8+21 [+2d6 to good-aligned creatures], 19-20/x3, +1 unholy lance);

Full Atk: +21/+16/+11 melee (1d8+7 [+2d6 to good-aligned creatures], 19-20/x3, +1 unholy lance)

SA—Poison use, smite good 4/day, sneak attack +2d6; SQ—Aura of despair, aura of evil, command undead, dark blessing, detect good, fiendish servant (lesser nightmare);

AL LE; SV Fort +19, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Handle Animal +13, Hide -1, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +17; Cleave, Extra Smiting, Improved Critical (lance), Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Power Critical (lance), Practiced Spellcaster, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—corrupt weapon, ~~divine sacrifice~~; 2nd—death knell; 3rd—cure serious wounds.

Possessions: +1 unholy lance, silver dagger, silver holy symbol (Wee Jas), +1 full plate, ring of protection +1, cloak of charisma +2, vest of resistance +2, ring of force shield, amulet of health +4, ~~vial of purple worm poison~~.

Power-Up Suite: (*divine sacrifice*, cast prior to teleportation, expires after first attack.)

Lesser Nightmare (advanced fiendish servant): CR—; Large outsider (Evil, Extraplanar); HD 8d8+24; hp 72; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +14 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +8; Grp +16;

Atk +12 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire, hoof)

Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire, 2 hooves); and +4 melee (1d8+2, bite);

Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Flaming hooves, smoke; SQ Darkvision 60, empathic link, improved evasion, share saving throws, share spells;

AL NE; SV Fort +19, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +14, Move Silently +13, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14, Survival +12 (+14 on prime material); Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run.

Flaming Hooves (Su): A blow from a lesser nightmare's hooves sets combustible materials alight.

Smoke (Su): During the excitement of battle, a lesser nightmare snorts and neighs with rage. This snorting fills a 15-foot cone with a hot, sulfurous smoke that chokes and blinds opponents. Anyone in

the cone must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take a –2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls until 1d6 minutes after leaving the cone. The cone lasts 1 round, and a nightmare uses it once as a free action during its turn each round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Because of the smoke it gives off, a nightmare has concealment against creatures 5 feet away and total concealment against creatures 10 feet or farther away. The smoke does not obscure the nightmare's vision at all.

Skills: A lesser nightmare always knows where true north lies in relation to itself.

Narinn Kirr: male human rogue 4/fighter 2/dervish 9; CR 15; medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4 plus 2d10+2 plus 9d10+9; hp 115; Init +6; Spd 45 ft.; AC 26 (+4 Dex, +2 def, +7 armor, +3 dervish ability), touch 19, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +14; Grp +14;

Atk +18 melee (1d6+1 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 *vicious scimitar*) and +18 melee (1d6+1 plus 1 Constitution damage, 18-20/x2, +1 *wounding scimitar*) or +20 melee (1d6+1 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 *vicious scimitar*) or +20 melee (1d6+1 plus 1 Constitution damage, 18-20/x2, +1 *wounding scimitar*);

Full Atk +23/+18/+13 melee (1d6+6 plus 2d6 plus 1d6 [to self], 18-20/x2, +1 *vicious scimitar*) and +23/+18 melee (1d6+6 plus 1 Constitution damage, 18-20/x2, +1 *wounding scimitar*);

SA Dance of death, dervish dance 5/day, elaborate parry, sneak attack +2d6, tireless dance; SQ Evasion, fast movement +15 ft., improved reaction, movement mastery, slashing blades, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

AL CN; SV Fort +11, Ref +17, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Balance +16, Bluff +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8), Escape Artist +20, Forgery +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +9, Intimidate +8, Jump +18, Knowledge (local—Core) +4, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +7, Knowledge (local—Splintered Suns) +4, Move Silently +9, Perform (dance) +17, Search +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +13 (+15 scrolls); Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Strike, Mobility, Dodge, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Dwarven, Flan, Infernal, Old Oeridian, Undercommon;

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus when wearing light or no armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus applies to touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. The dervish loses this bonus when immobilized, helpless, or when carrying more than a medium load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a number of times per day (but only once per encounter). A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the

character has. At the end of this dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (until the ninth level of dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies). While in this dervish dance, the dervish can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to full speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of five feet between each attack and cannot return to a square he or she just exited (though the dervish may return to that square later during the full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of the move. A dervish prevented from completing a move is also prevented from finishing the full attack.

A dervish may only wield slashing weapons while dancing, and gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls while doing so. This bonus is +1 at 1st level and increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level thereafter. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require stillness, such as Move Silently, Hide, and Search.

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is unaffected by adverse conditions that could hinder movement. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, the dervish may take 10 even if stress or distraction would prevent him or her from doing so.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, the dervish gains an enhancement to speed when wearing light or no armor, and while carrying less than a medium load.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Dance of Death: At 4th level the dervish gains the benefit of the Cleave feat while performing a dervish dance, even if lacking the prerequisites. The dervish does not have to move 5 feet before making the extra attack granted by this ability.

Improved Reaction (Ex): At 6th level the dervish gains a +2 bonus to initiative.

Elaborate Parry (Ex): When choosing fighting defensively or go on total defense, the dervish gains a +4 bonus to AC which stacks with both the regular bonuses for these actions, and the extra bonuses gained for having five or more ranks in Tumble.

Tireless Dance (Ex): At 9th level and above the dervish is no longer fatigued after completing a dervish dance.

Possessions: +3 Mithril chain shirt, +1 *vicious scimitar*, +1 *wounding scimitar*, sap, ring of protection +2, vest of resistance +3, potion of cure serious wounds, gloves of dexterity +2, 2 arcane scrolls of blink.

Physical Description: Narinn's threat lies not in his combat prowess but in his inconspicuousness. With short brown hair, brown eyes, lightly-tanned skin, and a compact, medium frame, he could be anyone on the street, or no one, so plain looking that his lack of distinction is in itself an effective disguise.

Shuna: female human wizard 15; CR 15; Medium humanoid (human); HD 15d4+30; hp 75; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +2 def, +3 armor, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +6;

Atk +8 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +10 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dagger);

AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +13; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +17 (+21), Decipher Script +13, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Knowledge (religion) +17, Spellcraft +19, Tumble +5, Use Magic Device +3 (+7 scrolls); Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Focus (necromancy), Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Elven, Infernal, Abyssal, Draconic, Undercommon, Suloise.

Spells Prepared (5/7/6/6/6/6/4/3/2; base DC = 15 + spell level; Evocation specialist, Enchantment and Illusion prohibited): 0—acid splash (+9 ranged touch), detect magic, ray of frost (+9 ranged touch), resistance, touch of fatigue (+6 melee touch, DC 14); 1st—chill touch (+6 melee touch, DC 15), erase, expeditious retreat, magic missile (2), ray of enfeeblement (+9 ranged touch), true strike; 2nd—detect thoughts, protection from arrows, resist energy, scorching ray (+9 ranged touch), see invisibility, spectral hand; 3rd—arcane sight, dispel magic, empowered magic missile, fireball (DC 18), gentle repose, haste, ray of exhaustion (+9 ranged touch); 4th—empowered scorching ray (+9 ranged touch), enervation (+9 ranged touch), Otiluke's resilient sphere (DC 19), ~~Ray's mnemonic enhancer, scrying~~, stilled dispel magic; 5th—cone of cold (DC 20), enlarged enervation (+9 ranged touch), quickened shield, telekinesis, teleport, ~~teleport~~; 6th—circle of death (DC 20), greater dispel magic, mass bear's endurance, Otiluke's freezing sphere (DC 21); 7th—empowered cone of cold, finger of death, prismatic spray (DC 22); 8th—sunburst, temporal stasis.

Possessions: +1 dagger, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +3, headband of intellect +4, pearl of power (3rd), brooch of shielding, spell component pouch.

Physical Description: petite, focused and unassuming aptly describes this nineteen year old Suel female. Her short-cropped, pixyish platinum blonde hair and aqua-blue eyes do nothing to betray the absence of any playfulness whatsoever. Though she looks cute and harmless, she is in fact a volatile and unrestrained spellcaster who has been corrupted and manipulated by Tassita Fellhaven and the mysterious mage into using tactics and magic that violate every instinct that led her to being an arcanist. She is little more than a machine, built to specification and designed to please.

Tassita Fellhaven: female human cleric 15 (Wee Jas); CR 15; Medium humanoid (human); HD 15d8+15; hp 105; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +2 def, +2 armor), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +11; Grp +11;

Atk +11 melee (1d4+1, dagger of venom);

Full Atk +11/+6/+1 melee (1d4+1, dagger of venom);

SA Death touch, rebuke undead 9/day (at +2 due to Knowledge [religion]), spontaneously cast *inflict* spells; SQ—;

AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +18; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 22, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Heal +13, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +16, Spellcraft +12; Extra Turning, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (necromancy), Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Suloise.

Death Touch (Su): By virtue of her Death domain and the power of Wee Jas, Tassita may once per day attempt a melee touch attack against a living creature. If her touch is successful, she rolls 1d6 per cleric level she possesses. If the total rolled at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies (no save).

Cleric	Spells	Prepared
(6/7+1/7+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1; base DC = 16 + spell level; Necromancy spells = 18 + spell level): 0—	cure minor wounds (2), guidance, detect magic, detect poison, read magic; 1st—	cause fear*, comprehend languages, cure light wounds (2), deathwatch, detect undead, entropic shield, sanctuary; 2nd—
cure moderate wounds, darkness, death knell*, death knell, hold person, remove paralysis, spiritual weapon, status ; 3rd—	animate dead, cure serious wounds, dispel magic*, dispel magic, invisibility purge, magic vestment, speak with dead; 4th—	cure critical wounds, death ward*, freedom of movement, sending, silent prayer, spell immunity (grease, magic missile, spiritual weapon); 5th—
flame strike, greater command, slay living (2), spell resistance (SR 25)*, stilled freedom of movement; 6th—	antimagic field*, greater dispel magic, mass cure moderate wounds, mass inflict moderate wounds, word of recall; 7th—	destruction*, repulsion, stilled harm; 8th—
dimensional lock, protection from spells*.		

*Domain spell. Deity: Wee Jas; Domains: Death (death touch once per day); Magic (use scrolls, wands, and other devices with spell completion or spell trigger activation as a wizard of one-half your cleric level).

Possessions: Dagger of venom, 2 silver daggers, 4 sunrods, spell component pouch, platinum holy symbol (Wee Jas), headband of intellect +2, cloak of resistance +3, ring of protection +2, periapt of wisdom +4, ring of mind shielding, +1 studded leather armor, arcane scroll of phantasmal killer, arcane scroll of modify memory, 2 divine scrolls of cure critical wounds (caster level 15).

Physical Description: wanted in Keoland for unauthorized resurrections and other undisclosed necromantic activity, Tassita gives new meaning to the Stern Lady's namesake, having fiercely embraced the Death and Magic domains with equal aplomb. She is particularly proud of her newly acquired scroll scribing

ability. She stands at 5'6" and weighs 104 pounds; her long blonde hair has been dyed silvery-white and accentuated with small sprigs of nightshade at the temples; she typically wears her hair wet, lending a malicious air to her presence. She wears a tattered black velvet cloak over her studded leather armor, and complements the ensemble with an array of onyx jewelry that doubles as spell components. She is currently the key advisor to the mysterious mage of the Gamboge, the tutor of Shuna, and the sponsor of Meryk. As he is petitioning to be her champion, she takes advantage of every opportunity to goad him, especially during moments of tension. Tassita's one great phobia has become a liability for her: she hates being touched by others and tailors her spell selection accordingly. Rumor has it that in Gradsul one evening, an inebriated minor noble recognized her in a crowded tavern and made her an indecent proposal, placing his hand on her inappropriately and slurring her surname with an affected accent to the extent of "Hey pretty lady, did you Fall from Hay-ven?" She Death-Touched him and fled town.

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES

NEW PRESTIGE CLASSES

Dervish (Complete Warrior)

Wild, exotic, and as dangerous as her whirling blades, the dervish epitomizes speed, quickness, and abandon. Her motions appear to be as random as they are graceful, but the steps of her lethal dance play out according to their own rhythm.

Nearly all dervishes belong to nomadic cultures. These nomads are not simple wanderers with no roots to call their own—they have their ancient traditions, and their societies simply do not consider permanent settlements an important part of their nature. They are gypsies, keeping their own traditions and forging their own familial and societal bonds while they move throughout the world. Often, these tribes adopt the attitudes and even some of the laws of the lands they live in—for the sake of expedience, if nothing else. The dervish treats fighting styles the same way. A dervish learns the dance of war as she grows up among her family and her tribe. She watches others as she travels, however, and brings new steps to the dance as she goes.

Fighters, rangers, and monks often take up the role of the dervish. Many paladins look at the wildness of the dance and assume it has some roots in chaos, but those who look past the seeming randomness can find things to learn. Barbarians seldom choose to learn the ways of the dance—the dervish depends on subtlety more than brute force. The way of the dervish has been known to appeal to some druids, bards, and even sorcerers—those who wish to learn a type of fighting that does not rely on heavy arms or armor find the class interesting.

Halflings and elves make good dervishes, and many nomadic halfling tribes have dervishes as their primary protectors.

NPC dervishes seldom wander without their tribes. They can be sent on missions, or serve as scouts in new lands, but the dervish is too important to the tribal unit to go off on her own for extended periods of time. Some dervishes balk at this responsibility, however, so exceptions to this rule do show up occasionally. A dervish found wandering alone is usually seeking new challenges and new knowledge.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

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

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Skills: Perform (dance) 3 ranks, Tumble 3 ranks.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Focus (any slashing melee weapon).

Class Skills

The dervish's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Table: The Dervish						
Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+2	+1	Dervish dance 1/day, movement mastery, slashing blades
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+3	+1	Fast Movement +5 ft
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+3	+1	Spring Attack, Dervish dance 2/day
4th	+4	+1	+4	+4	+1	Dance of Death
5th	+5	+1	+4	+4	+2	Fast Movement +10 ft., dervish dance 3/day
6th	+6	+2	+5	+5	+2	Improved Reaction
7th	+7	+2	+5	+5	+2	Elaborate parry, dervish dance 4/day
8th	+8	+2	+6	+6	+2	Fast movement +15 ft.
9th	+9	+3	+6	+6	+3	Tireless dance, dervish dance 5/day
10th	+10	+3	+7	+7	+3	A thousand cuts

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the dervish prestige class.

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

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus to Armor Class as long as she is wearing no armor or light armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus to AC applies even against touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. She loses this bonus when she is immobilized or helpless, when she wears any armor heavier than light, when she carries a shield, or when she carries a medium or heavy load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a certain number of times per day. While in this dervish dance, she can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to her speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of 5 feet between each attack when using this ability, and she cannot return to a square she just exited (though she may return to that square later during her full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of her move. A dervish prevented from completing her move is also prevented from finishing her full attack.

If a dervish wields a slashing weapon while in a dervish dance, she gains a bonus on her attack and damage rolls. This bonus is +1 at 1st level, and it increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level thereafter.

A dervish may only perform a dervish dance while wielding a slashing weapon (she may use a double weapon, or multiple weapons, only if both ends of the weapon or all weapons are of the slashing type). She cannot perform a dervish dance in any armor heavier than light or if she is using a shield. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require her to remain still, such as Move Silently, Hide, or Search. A dervish with the bardic music ability can, however, sing while she dances, and a dervish can also use the combat Expertise feat while in a dance. A dervish cannot perform a dervish dance while under the effect of a rage or frenzy ability.

A dervish can perform a dervish dance only once per encounter. A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the character has. At the end of a dervish dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (unless she is a 9th-level dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies).

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is so certain of her movements that she is unaffected by adverse conditions. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, she may take 10 even if stress and distraction would normally prevent her from doing so.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, a dervish gains an enhancement bonus to her speed. A dervish in any armor heavier than light or carrying a medium or heavy load loses this bonus.

Spring Attack: At 3rd level, a dervish gains the Spring Attack feat, even if she does not meet the prerequisites.

Dance of Death: At 4th level, a dervish gains the use of the Cleave feats while performing a dervish dance, even if she does not meet the prerequisites for the feat. She does not have to move 5 feet before making the extra attack granted by this ability.

Improved Reaction (Ex): When she attains 6th level, a dervish gains a +2 bonus on initiative rolls.

Elaborate Parry (Ex): When she attains 7th level, a dervish gains an extra +4 bonus to Armor Class when she chooses to fight defensively or use total defense in melee combat.

Tireless Dance: When a dervish reaches 9th level, the character no longer becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter at the end of a dervish dance.

A Thousand Cuts (Ex): When a dervish reaches 10th level, once per day she may double the number of melee attacks she makes while performing a full attack action (whether in a dervish dance or not). If a dervish uses this ability in conjunction with her dervish dance, she can make up to two attacks between moves.

The dervish also gains the benefit of the Great Cleave feat with slashing weapons while performing a thousand cuts, even if she does not meet the prerequisites. She does not have to move 5 feet before making any extra attacks granted by this ability.

A dervish using this ability can receive an extra attack from the haste spell, but the bonuses provided by the spell do not stack with the bonuses provided by the class.

FEATS

Defensive Strike [General] (Complete Warrior)

You can turn a strong defense into a powerful offense.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Int 13, Combat Expertise, Dodge.

Benefit: If an opponent attacks you and misses while you are using the total defense action, you can attack that opponent on your next turn with a +4 bonus on your attack roll. You gain no bonus against an opponent that does not attack you or against an opponent that attacks and hits you.

Special: A fighter may select Defensive Strike as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Power Critical [General] (Complete Warrior)

Choose one weapon, such as a longsword or a greataxe. With that weapon, you know how to hit where it hurts.

Prerequisites: Weapon focus with weapon, base attack bonus +4.

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

Special: A fighter may select Power Critical as one of his fighter bonus feats. You can gain the Power Critical multiple times. Each time you take the 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.

Practiced Spellcaster [General] (Complete Arcane)

Choose a spellcasting class that you possess. Your spells cast from that class are more powerful.

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 4 ranks

Benefit: Your caster level for the chosen spellcasting class increases by 4. This benefit can't increase your caster level to higher than your Hit Dice. However, even if you can't gain from the full bonus immediately, if you later gain Hit Dice in levels of nonspellcasting classes, you might be able to apply the rest of the bonus.

For example, a human 5th-level sorcerer/3rd-level fighter who selects this feat would increase his sorcerer caster level from 5th to 8th (since he has 8 Hit Dice). If he later gained a fighter level he would gain the remainder of the bonus and his sorcerer caster level would become 9th (since he now has 9 Hit Dice).

A character with two or more spellcasting classes (such as a bard/sorcerer or a ranger/druid) must choose which class gains the feat's effect.

This feat does not affect your spells per day or spells known. It increases your caster level only, which would help you penetrate spell resistance and increase the duration and other effects of your spells.

Special: You may select this feat multiple times. Each time you choose it, you must apply it to a different spellcasting class. For instance, a 4th-level cleric/5th-level wizard who had selected this feat twice would cast cleric spells as an 8th-level caster and wizard spells as a 9th-level caster.

ITEMS

Vest of Resistance (Complete Arcane)

These garments offer magical protection in the form of a +1 to +5 resistance bonus on all saving throws.

Faint abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, creator's caster level must be at least 3 times the vest's bonus; Price 1,000 gp (+1), 4,000 gp (+2), 9,000 gp (+3), 16,000 gp (+4), 25,000 gp (+5); Weight 1 lb.

MONSTERS

Goblin, Forestkith (Monster Manual III)

Forestkith Goblin, 1st-Level Warrior

Small Humanoid (Goblinoid)

Hit Dice: 1d8 (4 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Armor Class: 14 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+2

Attack: Bite +3 melee (1d4+1) or masterwork net +5 ranged (see text)

Full Attack: Bite +3 melee (1d4+1) or masterwork net +5 ranged (see text)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Discordant frenzy

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, tree shape

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 9

Skills: Climb +9, Craft (weaving) +0, Hide +6, Jump +5, Move Silently +2

Feats: Improved Grapple

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Solitary (outcast), family (3-6), pack (6-16 plus one 3rd-level barbarian kith leader), or troop (14-34 plus one 3rd-level barbarian kith leaders and one 5th-level druid kith elder)

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: No coins, no goods, standard items plus masterwork net

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +1

This small, primitive-like humanoid is covered in stiff, black fur except for its cruel and wild face.

These nocturnal hunters, also known as kith, are formidable despite their small size. Though they can easily stand upright, forestkith goblins tend to run and walk on all fours in a manner characteristic of primates, perhaps because their arms are longer than their legs. Their mouths sport very sharp teeth, and each hand and foot brandishes long, curved claws adapted for climbing. They spend most of their time in tress.

Forestkith goblins hunt most creatures that travel through their forest territories, ignoring only those creatures larger than a horse. In lean times, forestkith goblins often plan and execute sophisticated raids on humanoid frontier communities for food, preferring snatch –and-run tactics targeting the young.

A forestkith goblin stands about 3 feet tall and weighs about 40 pounds.

Forestkith goblins speak rudimentary Goblin but are illiterate.

COMBAT

Forestkith goblins excel at ambushes and use well-established tactics to fit the prey they seek. If fighting a larger group, they attack the weakest members with nets first, dragging the entangled victims away quickly to feed on them before going back for the rest.

Forestkith goblins attack obviously superior foes heedlessly with the same wild frenzy and loud, discordant screams that paralyze their weaker foes with fright. Their lust for the kill usually overwhelms concern for individual safety. Any attack on a more numerous, stronger, or more sophisticated foe can result in the whole forestkith goblin party being wiped out if it is not led by a druid kith elder, who alone possess the wisdom and leadership to order a strategic retreat.

Discordant Frenzy (Ex): When melee ensues, forestkith goblins go into a frenzy, jumping about chaotically and screaming loudly. Creatures with 2 HD or fewer within 30 feet of at least three attacking forestkith goblins become shaken for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a DC 9 Will save. A creature that resists the effect cannot be affected by it for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Forestkith goblins are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the effect of a *daylight* spell.

Tree Shape (Su): A forestkith goblin can change form into a small tree, shrub, or limb, equivalent to the *tree shape* spell as cast by a 12th level druid. A forestkith goblin typically uses this ability at or near daybreak as a form of camouflage, due to its dislike for daylight.

A goblin cannot dismiss this effect, but it ends automatically at sunset or if the goblin takes damage.

Skills: Forestkith goblins have a +2 racial bonus on Jump checks. A forestkith goblin also has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A forestkith goblin gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks in forested areas, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Craft (weaving) checks to create nets.

Nightmare, Lesser (Planar Handbook)

Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 6d8+18 (45 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 24 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +13 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 22

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+14

Attack: Hoof +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire)

Full Attack: 2 hooves +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire) and bite +4 melee (1d8+2)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Flaming hooves, smoke

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 12

Skills: Concentration +12, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +10 (+12 on other planes and following tracks)

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run

Environment: Gray Waste of Hades

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 7–10 HD (Large); 11–18 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: +3 (cohort)

At first glance, this creature looks like a large, powerful horse with a jet-black coat. A closer look, however, reveals its true nature. Flames wreath its steely hooves, trail from its flared nostrils, and smolder in the depths of its dark eyes.

Lesser nightmares are as evil as their more well known brethren, but not as accomplished at plane hopping.

A lesser nightmare is about the size of a light warhorse.

Lesser nightmares understand Infernal and Abyssal, but speak no languages themselves.

COMBAT

Biting with its viperfish fangs and kicking with its powerful legs is a lesser nightmare's best option in a fight. A lesser nightmare can fight while carrying a rider, but the rider cannot also fight unless he or she succeeds on a Ride check.

A lesser nightmare's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Flaming Hooves (Su): A blow from a lesser nightmare's hooves sets combustible materials alight.

Smoke (Su): During the excitement of battle, a lesser nightmare snorts and neighs with rage. This snorting fills a 15-foot cone with a hot, sulfurous smoke that chokes and blinds opponents. Anyone in the cone must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take a –2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls until 1d6 minutes after leaving the cone. The cone lasts 1 round, and a nightmare uses it once as a free action during its turn each round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Because of the smoke it gives off, a nightmare has concealment against creatures 5 feet away and total concealment against creatures 10 feet or farther away. The smoke does not obscure the nightmare's vision at all.

Skills: A lesser nightmare always knows where true north lies in relation to itself.

Troll, Forest (Monster Manual III)

Medium Giant

Hit Dice: 5d8+25 (47 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Armor Class: 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+6

Attack: Claw +6 melee (1d4+3 plus poison) or javelin +6 ranged (1d6+3 plus poison)

Full Attack: 2 claws +6 melee (1d4+3 plus poison) and bite +1 melee (1d4+1) or javelin +6 ranged (1d6+3 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison

Special Qualities: Darkvision 90 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +6 (+8 in jungle or forest setting), Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5

Feats: Improved Initiative, Track

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Solitary, gang (2–8), or warband (9–24)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +5

This creature has the ape-like posture and rubbery skin of a troll, but it is merely the size of a large human. Its gaze and posture bespeak an intelligence greater than its troll-like visage would suggest.

Smaller and smarter than other trolls, forest trolls can prove almost as dangerous as their larger kindred to those who underestimate them. Although they lack the size and prodigious strength of their larger cousins, their intelligence, makes them capable of sophisticated tactics that other trolls cannot match.

Gifted with a mind at least as adept as that of an average human, a forest troll takes advantage of its amazing recuperative powers with crafty fighting techniques. An adult forest troll stands between 6 and 6-1/2 feet tall and weighs around 250 pounds.

Forest trolls speak Giant.

COMBAT

Crafty and organized hunters, forest trolls prefer to strike from ambush. When possible, they throw their javelins from the safety of the trees and then drop down on their weakened prey. They use sophisticated tactics to capitalize on their fast healing ability, splitting a warband into waves of hunters. Should the first wave encounter dangerous foes, those hunters retreat to allow their wounds to heal while the second and subsequent waves press the attack. By using this tactic, a warband rarely loses a hunter in combat.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 17, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. Forest trolls create their own special poison from their saliva to coat their javelins and claws. The DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: A forest troll has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

The skin of a forest troll changes color somewhat, allowing it to blend in with its surroundings and providing a +2 racial bonus on Hide checks. In forest settings, this bonus improves to +4.

DM AID: GATHER INFORMATION RESULTS

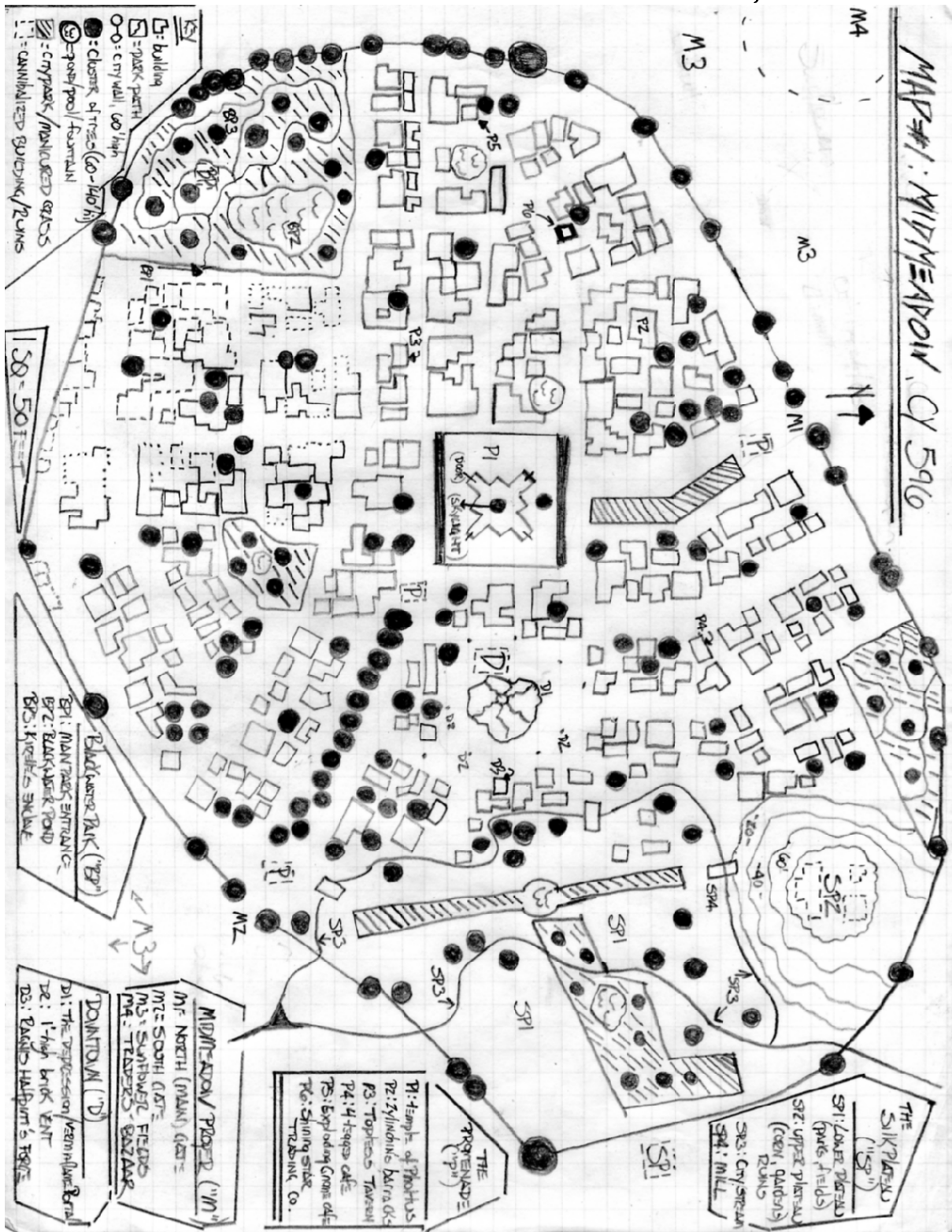
Gathering information in the Traders' Bazaar yields the following results:

- DC 10: The bazaar closes one hour after dusk; there is no official curfew, but most merchants agree that conducting business after dark is somewhat shady, allowing thieves to skulk about undetected. The bazaar reopens at dawn each morning.
- DC 15: While the selection of goods within the Bazaar is diverse, word is that the quality of items among the more upscale merchants in the city is superior.
- DC 20: The reason so many merchants have congregated around Midmeadow has to do with King Lynwerd's apparent neglect of the city and the fact that no taxes are being enforced.
- DC 25: There are rumors of a ruthless bandit gang preying on Bazaar merchants once they leave Midmeadow. No one has any information concerning numbers, tactics or whereabouts, but word among merchants is that the bandits are posing as another merchant caravan.
- DC 30: Attempting to negotiate or barter for a third party within the bazaar is not only considered bad form, but is in violation of an unwritten agreement among all merchants

Gathering Information within Midmeadow yields the following:

- DC 2: Midmeadow has four distinct districts: The Promenade is a long boulevard lined with shops that runs between the north and south gates with the temple of Pholtus at its midpoint; Downtown is home to craftsmen, city engineers, and the Verminflame Portal; the Silk Plateau, clearly visible from all other districts, is where much of the city's food is grown, where the water supply is purified, and where textiles are manufactured; finally, Blackwater Park is a large artist's enclave in the southwestern corner of the city where many residents go to relax.
- DC 4: The North Gate is the main gate to the city; it sees the most traffic in the form of visitors and merchants. The South Gate has kind of become a "back porch" area where the city stream empties, and where people do laundry, and pile up any non-organic trash.
- DC 6: You might hear some small explosions from Downtown; nothing to worry about. It's been a long time since the Big One; I'm sure everything's under control down there.
- DC 8: The temple of Pholtus has recently opened its doors to non-Pholtans! Heck, I don't even LIKE Pholtus, but they gave me a cot and a bowl of hot stew, and cured my sore toe!!
- DC 10: Need a place to stay? Well sure, any leaf-eater can sleep in one of the parks, but there are too many half-naked elves walking around. Try the Topless Tavern, just off the Promenade.
- DC 12: The wedding? It's for an acolyte of the Church of the Bright Path, and his bride, Faith.
- DC 14: The new Bishop of the Bright Path church must really be a patient man. How else could he tolerate that young cleric of Pelor shouting invectives at the church every sundown?
- DC 15: Those Bright Path Pholtans lifted the Martial Law ban after them other Pholtans left town; not a good thing if you ask me. Any dang fool could come in and cause trouble.
- DC 18: Sure, the Pholtan temple is the obvious landmark, but they aren't the only faith in town. There are plenty of other priests in Midmeadow, including those of Corellon and Pelor.
- DC 20: Once the Pale invaded Tenh, most of those grubby Flan refugees moved back home. Then, someone planted sunflowers where their dirty tents used to be. Sounds like powerful earth magic to me, like from those nature folks on the Plateau.
- DC 22: The Church of the Blinding Light may be gone, but what about those two other Pholtans from the Pale? Why are they here, and what are they doing over at General Zylinchin's old barracks?
- DC 24: Acolyte Bonchal's bride-to-be, Faith, is much prettier (and quieter) than other elves.
- DC 26: King Lynwerd himself asked the Church of the Blinding Light to withdraw from Midmeadow.
- DC 28: Some wild-looking elf was in town a week ago asking questions about the wedding. Jealous.
- DC 30: The Church of the Bright Path has a new Bishop assigned to them; I don't know where his predecessor was transferred, or why. Out with the old, in with the new, I guess.
- DC 35: I was out for a late night stroll in Blackwater Park last night and thought I saw some of the catering staff rearranging the rehearsal dinner area, but I was tired and didn't want to hear them prattle on about which fork goes with which course, so I went to bed. Crazy gnome etiquette freaks...
- DC 40+ The Silk Plateau is that small hill where the old Mayor's mansion used to be. It's spooky there now: all that corn, people who barely talk ...and the rumors of the Brown Recluse...

DM AID: MIDMEADOW MAP, CIRCA CY 596



DM AID: PROMINENT NPCS BY SUBDIVISION

THE PROMENADE:

Talpin Thorea, Bishop of the Church of the Bright Path: male human cleric 10 (Pholtus). The new head of the Bright Path church in Midmeadow is usually found within the temple of Pholtus (location P1), and informs PC that he hails from Rel Mord and was sent to Midmeadow to usher in a new era of tolerance following the withdrawal of the Church of the Blinding Light.

Knight-Captains Talbrith Hemerenn (LG female human paladin 12) **and Quenthe Ilerrio** (NG male elf fighter 4/wizard 5/Eldritch Knight3): these two members of the Pholtan Knights Valorous, Order of Celene, can usually be found at the former barracks of General Zylinchin's troops (location P2). at the south gate. They are renovating the barracks for use by future inhabitants, and also assisting the Church of the Bright Path by functioning as a Lawful presence in Midmeadow.

"Mugs" MacGruber: Male human expert 5; Mugs is the owner and proprietor of the Topless Tavern (location P3), tucked away just off the Promenade, in the shadow of the temple of Pholtus. Wild rumor and confusion abound over its name, but there is nothing indiscreet about it: formerly a two-storied warehouse, its long beams and thick paneling made it one of the first targets during the city's west side building cannibalization in early CY 596. When "Mugs" arrived in town, he saw it as a challenge and promptly converted it into a unique tavern, with soundproof guest rooms on the ground floor and an open bar—literally—upstairs, which is also graced by a retractable, cantilevered roof (courtesy of "Rats" from Downtown). The upstairs bar has no true roof and is essentially a large balcony where food and drink are served. "Mugs" is in his late thirties and of Oeridian descent. He imports all of his ales from the Traders' Bazaar. His is not the only tavern in the district: the 4-legged café (location P4) caters to centaurs and other animal-oriented guests, while the Exploding Gnome (location P5) is an upscale, human-run hostel whose namesake pokes fun at a recent event in Midmeadow's development.

DOWNTOWN:

"Rats" Rastinattii: male gnome expert 3/sorcerer 3; "Rats" hates rats, and this is the cornerstone of his personality. Once the Great Sewer Explosion of early CY 596 turned what is now Downtown into a large crater, "Rats" discovered his calling in life, as thousands of rodents scampered up through the resulting hole and swarmed the area. Hundreds more continued to pour out daily, infesting the entire district. "Rats" could not sit idly by and let the property value sink as well, so he teamed up with Ragnis (one of the ill-fated architects of the Explosion) and created the Verminflame Portal: essentially a massive blowtorch which can be excited —via magic—to incinerate anything coming out of the hole. "Rats" has become obsessive of late, considering it his mission to exterminate every rat in Midmeadow. He has a stray cat familiar named Murderpaws who assists him in this task, along with some fellow gnomes. "Rats" can usually be found clutching a sharp stick and peering into the hole...

Ragnis Halfpint: male dwarf expert 5/fighter 1; Ragnis was one of the engineers who sought to curb Midmeadow's original rat infestation by bricking over every sewer access point. Since few people dared to explore the sewers based on the rumors lingering from CY 593, it was unknown what was down there besides rats. The answer turned out to be methane gas; though much of the sewer system was manmade, a significant portion consisted of natural chambers. When the access points were all sealed, pressure built up and resulted in the Great Sewer Explosion of CY 596. Accepting full responsibility for his shortsightedness, Ragnis took it upon himself to create a more effective ventilation system for the sewer; several small chimneys were erected in what became known as Downtown, while Ragnis worked with "Rats" to create the Verminflame Portal. Ragnis and the other dwarves in the district spend their time working on ways to improve conditions in the city, in addition to building tools, brick structures, and the occasional odd weapon. Ragnis is proprietary about Downtown and is wary of "tall folk" undoing his hard work.

Finlay Seedspitter: male Halfling expert 2/aristocrat 2; Finlay hails from Dyvers and is of minor nobility for a Halfling, having come from a distinguished line of chefs. However, he lacks the focus necessary to be a good cook and tends to get easily sidetracked. He has also developed an addiction to sunflower seeds and spends much of his time scuttling between the fields outside town and Downtown, where he runs errands for Ragnis and "Rats." His latest obsession involves sunflower seeds as an ingredient in every dish. His seed trail is easy to follow.

THE SILK PLATEAU

Towk: male half-orc barbarian 5/expert 1. Towk is tall and muscular, all in all an impressive and somewhat intimidating figure. He wears a light tunic and carries a glaive whose many kill-notches on the handle are overshadowed by the blade itself, which has been modified (by Ragnis Halfpint) into a kind of trowel. Towk is a former elf-hating marauder who was converted to pacifism by the philosophy of the Brown Recluse. Towk now practices painting (he is often covered in

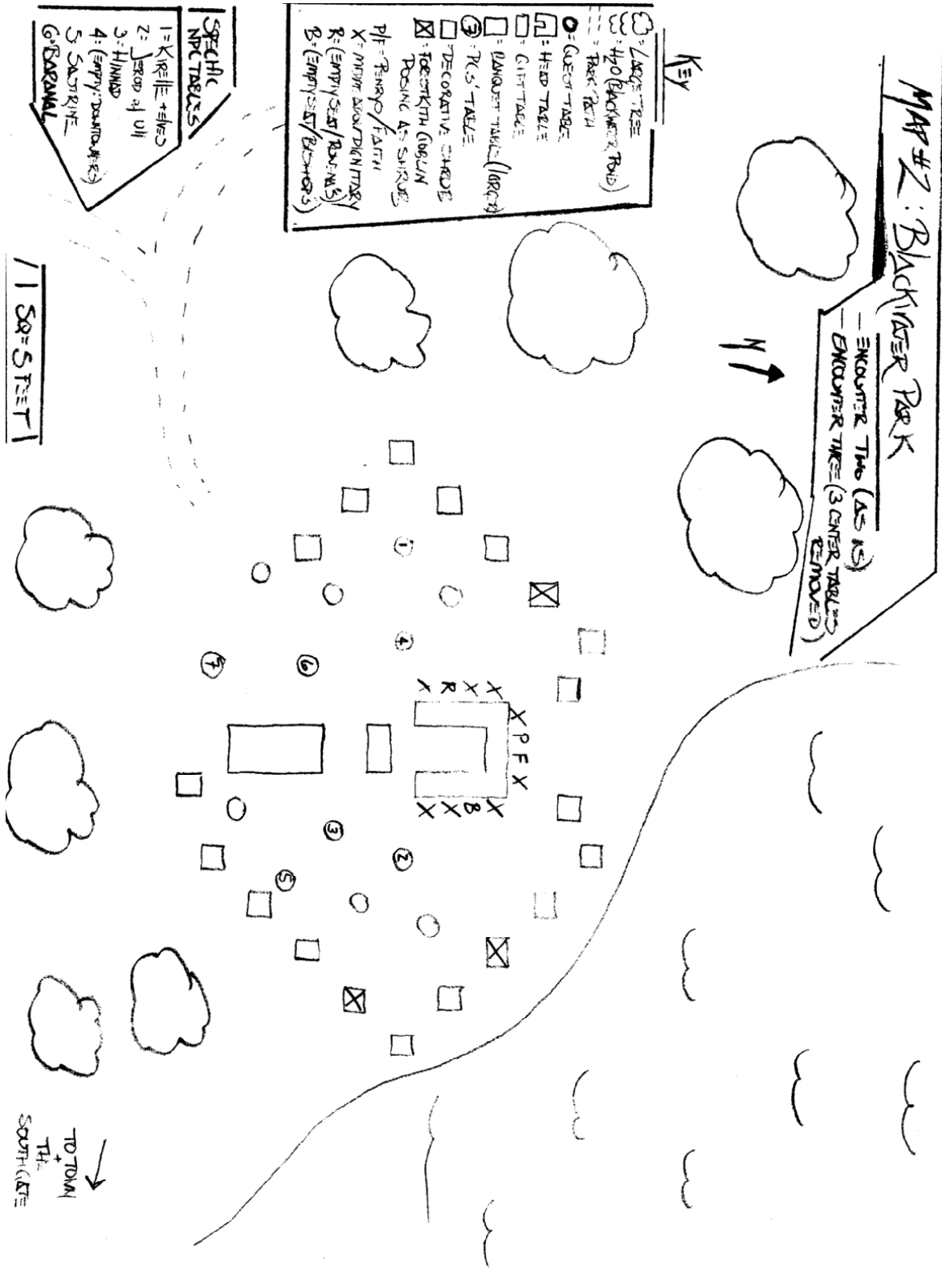
splotches of paint) and gardening, using his muscles and glaive to create rather than to destroy. Other half-orcs have since come to Midmeadow and been swayed to Towk's lifestyle, and he has become their unofficial spokesman. If questioned, he knows most things relating to the Silk Plateau: who resides there, what is grown, what is made, how the water is purified, and the like. If asked specifically about the "mystery man," Towk acknowledges the existence of the Brown Recluse and gives a stern gaze to any obvious doubters. If the PCs persist, he directs them to the upper Plateau where they may find Aricyn, who oversees this area. Towk is difficult to agitate, but the one thing that still provokes his barbarian rage is when other people get angry at one another and argue for no reason. He is soft spoken but wary of Pholtans. It is Towk who initially approaches the PCs should they visit this district (Lower Plateau, location SP1).

Aricyn Maquillan: female half-elf/half-Suel cleric 11 (Bralm); this priestess is the lover, confidant, and protector of the Brown Recluse. If the PCs are persistent and led to her, she immediately appraises their appearance and demeanor. She distrusts Pholtans not out of any religious dichotomy but because they are "disorganized." She admits the existence of the Brown Recluse, but under no circumstances (short of hostile mental domination or high magic) will she allow the PCs to meet him at this time, noting that his philosophy is more important than his audience. Aricyn should be portrayed as stern, guarded, and confident; she is surrounded at all times by three giant, potter wasps that move not unlike *Ioun Stones*. Any curiosity she has toward the PCs should be based on their explanation of why they are in Midmeadow. She oversees all agricultural work in this district, and also purifies the water supply daily. She welcomes PCs who have befriended the Merikka priest, Hinnad, but cannot fathom why he is afraid of her. In roleplaying Aricyn, note that she speaks as seldom as possible, instead favoring hand gestures and eye contact. She also notes that the Recluse prefers not to use names, designating his friends instead by their actions and personalities; Aricyn offers examples to the PCs based on their interaction with her (i.e.: "nosy," "grouchy," "useful," etc). She is usually found on Upper Plateau (location SP2).

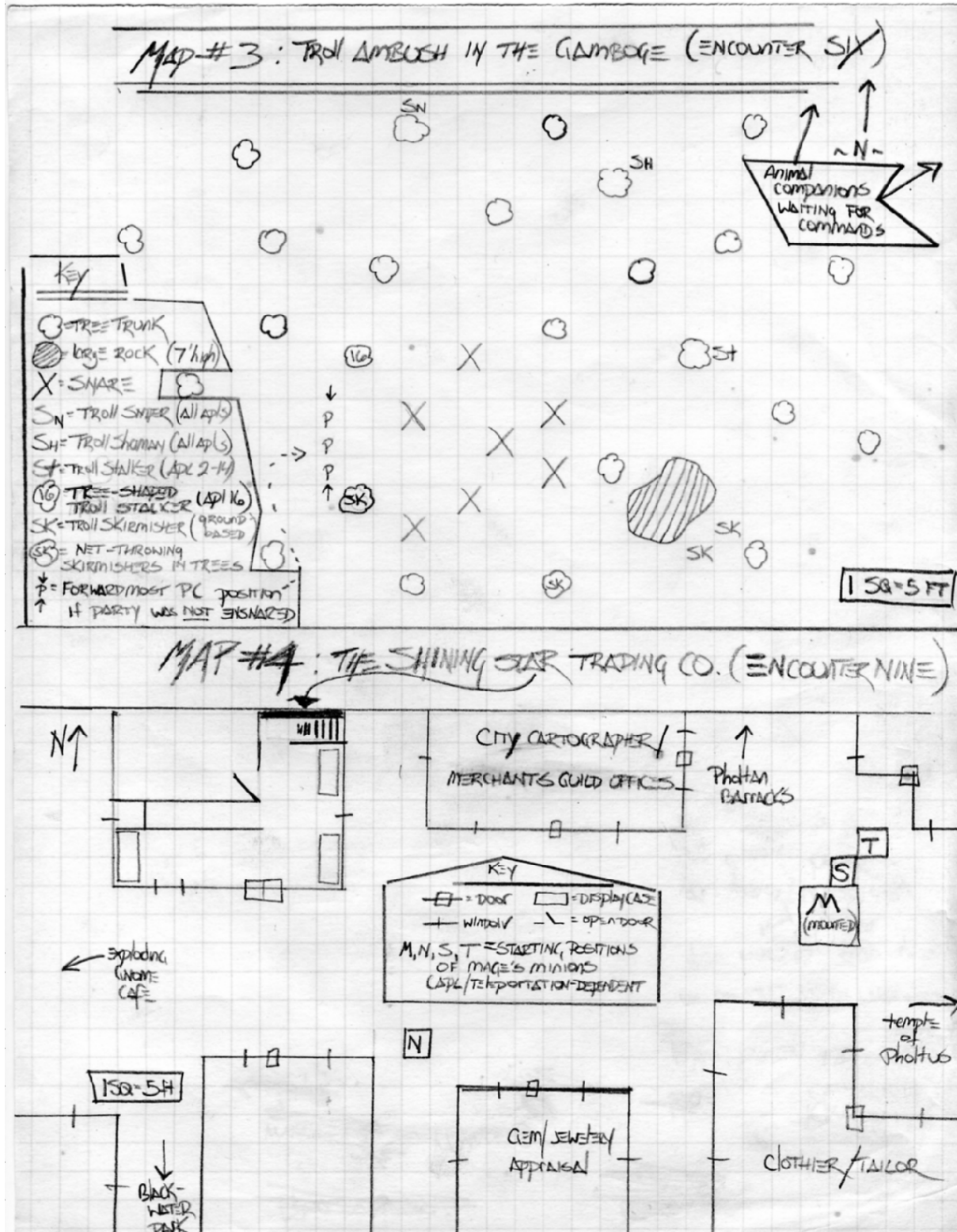
BLACKWATER PARK

Baranal: male high elf bard 3/expert 2. Baranal is a resident of the Park and is likely encountered by the PCs if they try to enter Backwater Park prior to the wedding rehearsal dinner in Encounter Two. He has grown to detest clothes for their sense of oppression and barely covers himself only at the behest of Kirelle, who considers his nudity both a deterrent to visitors and a distraction to her spell preparations. Baranal is a portrait artist and offers to sketch a random PC at the rehearsal dinner; if the selected PC agrees, inform them during the dinner that it was understood to be a nude portrait.

DM AID: DINNER IN BLACKWATER PARK MAP



DM AID: THE GAMBOGE AND ROWENA'S PLACE MAPS



DM AID: RECENT HISTORY OF MIDMEADOW

Midmeadow did not evolve into a functioning commune overnight; rather, its residents—old and new—developed stamina and self-reliance from a steady diet of neglect provided by the Kingdom of Nyrond.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, CY 595–?

Following the events in NMR3-03 *Blind Faith, Muted Voices*, a significant percentage of the population fled the city, never to return. Those who stayed desired more than anything to be left in peace, both by religious fanatics and especially by political manipulators who sought to speak “for the people.” If anyone was qualified to speak for the people, it was the people themselves, but they chose to say nothing. Throughout the latter half of CY 593 and early CY 594, the people waited, expecting some new tumultuous event to shake the city to its foundations, but it never came. The majority of residents, still afflicted by terrible poverty, kept mostly to themselves, making what meager existence they could amid the rubble and decay of neglected. Visitors to Midmeadow were few, and they never lingered, given its recent history. Trade was nonexistent, morale was dismal, and news from the outside world was limited to wild rumor and speculation. Finally, in the latter months of CY 594, when it seemed as though something might finally break the spell to spark social activism and community, Sewardt struck.

The year of the Imperium was perilous one for the residents of Midmeadow; waiting for something to happen was tedious and unfulfilling, but at least it was safe. Waiting for the Hextorian minions of the Black Prince to march through town and take what little its people had left was far worse; the residents withdrew even further into their social shells, rarely emerging from their damaged homes, let alone venturing outside the city walls. Midmeadow had become a thing, not a place, an empty coliseum where the gladiators had long since lost sight of purpose, reason and the will to strive. Those Flan refugees who had not yet returned to Tenh once it was “liberated” by the Theocracy of the Pale fled Midmeadow rather than face the reign of yet another despot. The weed-choked, rubble-strewn streets were nearly deserted; the impoverished, listless people rarely spoke to one another, huddling among their own kind; small fires burned unattended through the night in shattered buildings; the sewers were a breeding ground for courageous vermin waiting for humanity's last twitch; religion—even amid the ever-present Pholtans—seemed to lose its meaning. Under the crushing weight of all these things, the yoke of martial law, and the threat of Zylinchin, Midmeadow's populace buckled, collapsed and lay like a desiccated corpse: lifeless, fragile, waiting for even a gentle wind to scatter its filaments on the breeze.

Once Sewardt was defeated a second period of darkness paralyzed the city, with residents staying mostly in their homes and cannibalizing uninhabited dwellings to trade with the rare passing merchant in exchange for necessary food, potable water and other supplies. This time, however, the pressure of inactivity was too much for one particular Midmeadow resident, and he silently emerged from the shadows of obscurity to take control not only of his own destiny, but that of the city as well. The overt squabbling and often violent dichotomy between the two churches of Pholtus in Nyrond characterized this second darkness. Two unrelated events provided an opportunity for this resident to move unnoticed into Midmeadow: once the Valorous League was banished, their temple was left without clearly defined leadership, which resulted in the Church of the Bright Path and the Church of the Blinding Light contesting for occupancy in Midmeadow. With no one to oppose them, they both established a presence in the city, competing for dominance and converts. At the same time, the annexation and liberation of Tenh by the Theocracy of the Pale drew the majority of Flan refugees from their squalid tent camps outside Midmeadow's gates back to their native homeland. This mass exodus left only a handful of refugees around Midmeadow: those who were too poor, weak, dispirited—or perhaps unwanted—to make the long journey home. Thus, they stayed; most of these leftover Flan died from conditions within the camps, but a determined few slipped quietly into the city, unnoticed by the squabbling Pholtans who were too used to seeing the Flan to notice one more stray. The majority of these ended up converted to one of the Pholtan churches, or died trying to survive in the sewers before they were bricked over.

One of them, however, was a dispirited half-elf/half-Flan whose entire family had been slain in the Ether Invasion of CY 592. This man detested Pholtans and their brand of organized spiritual prostitution, exchanging healing and food for obeisance to Pholtan dogma, and he withdrew to the ruins of the mayor's former mansion. Here, he shed his last vestige of sociability and undertook a personal vow of silence, embracing the Baklunish deity Istus and the doctrine that an unnamed Fate controlled the world. He believed his own survival to be linked to Istus and her web, and that he had survived Iuz, the Ethers, the exodus from Tenh, the Pholtan conversion and, finally, the events in Midmeadow during CY 593. He realized that the idea of organized religion was an illusion, and that lesser deities and their puppets had duped mortals, despite the intensity of their convictions. He vowed never to attempt conversion upon anyone to his beliefs, but instead focused on that which was most necessary to survival: food, shelter, clothing and the philosophy of self-reliance that the Pholtans—and especially the so-called “Faithful Flan”—had subverted. He began toiling and attempting to work the parkland near Midmeadow's eastern wall; slowly, others took note of the silent half-elf's manner of existence and joined him.

It was rare for the Pholtan clergy to venture too far from their temple in search of converts, and it was easy to hide within the eastern parks. Thus, months went by before the rest of the city noticed that the eastern third had developed

workable agricultural plots, cleaned up the water supply, and begun to manufacture their own tools and loose-fitting cloth garments. The half-elf's philosophy eschewed the notion of possessiveness, however, so his followers naturally shared the fruits of their labors with Midmeadow's curious residents. These other residents, suitably impressed, gradually came to embrace the same philosophy of self-reliance and realized, as the half-elf did, that things could be better in Midmeadow; they soon coalesced into their own social groups, each of which was drawn to a particular area and aspect of the city's renewal. Even the Pholtans caught on to what was happening and, rather than try to control it, wisely chose to mimic it, despite being oblivious to the half-elf's existence.

The Pholtans concentrated on the public appearance of Midmeadow, cleaning up the main thoroughfare and creating the Promenade district, which was done by offering food and shelter to impoverished citizens in exchange for manual labor instead of obeisance to Pholtus; this tactic was much more effective and actually created some willing converts from the lower classes. The city's dwarven and gnome population, never content to be idle, saw it as their responsibility to make the city function like a working machine rather than a dying animal; thus, they undertook the role of civil engineers. Working together around the clock, they bricked up the city's filthy and infamous sewers in attempt to control the rabid vermin population and the spread of disease. Though bold, this plan had a disastrous side effect: the buildup of methane gases in the sewer resulted in a tremendous explosion, almost like a systematic purge, which left a giant hole and depression in the street, resulting in the Downtown district.

The poorer, more pacifistic (and lazy) elves and humans left in the city congregated near Crystal Mere park, both to hide from Pholtan converters and to avoid responsibility, pridefully regarding themselves in the pond's mirrored surface. At the death of the Widow Sage, however, in NMR5-08 *Fighting the Headwind*, the pond's surface clouded over and has been dark and impenetrable ever since. This made the indolent park residents rethink their ways; realizing that perhaps if they had behaved less selfishly, they might have foreseen the signs of the sage's passing and acted to prevent it. They were still too pacifistic to take up arms or politicize, but many had artistic talent and had been living near the sage for years; these artists soon drew a collection of like-minded individuals, formed an artist's enclave and renamed the area Blackwater Park, trading their works with more upscale merchants in exchange for food, supplies, and—most importantly—news and advice from the world outside Midmeadow's gates.

Finally, back on the east side of town, the half-elf's philosophy had blossomed into a kind of movement. The eastern parks were now wholly converted into agricultural fields; the once-filthy city stream was now a purified source of clear, healthy water, and the half-elf's abhorrence of racism and acceptance of all races resulted in a diverse population that included half-orc barbarians and half-elves who simply wanted to live in peace. The most important convert to this philosophy was another half-elf: this one an itinerant female priestess of Bralm who was nearly reduced to tears by the self-governed industriousness of the half-elf's followers. The two half-elves quickly became enamored of one another and were inseparable, communicating on a level that transcended mere speech. His ideas were converted into action by the priestess, and the eastern third of the city was soon transformed into a model of efficiency: the agricultural fields soon spread to the small hill upon which the mayor's former mansion lay in ruins, once the two half-elves designed a working mill and pump system. After one month, Midmeadow's food production doubled; the unsightly Flan tent camps were burned to the ground and in their place massive fields of sunflowers were planted, much to the joy of the city's halflings; huge cornstalks were grown on the mayor's hill, and the half-elves dwelled here, under the open sky; from anywhere else in town the cornfields indeed looked like a giant maze, but from overhead or along the city's eastern wall, the cornfield was revealed for what it was: a web-like pattern in homage to Istus.

The Pholtans never knew this, however; throughout the months in which the eastern third of the city developed, the male half-elf strove to maintain a low profile, allowing his followers to speak for themselves. He had risen to messianic proportions among them and, rather than betray him as some kind of figurehead, they did not mention him at all, instead maintaining a story that they were simply working together for the good of the city. This satisfied the Pholtans, to whom such a motley collection of "pagan" races was not seen as a threat, the way one charismatic, determined and persuasive half-elf would be, especially one whose dangerous philosophy of society without centralized government or religion went against everything in which the Pholtan church believed. Soon enough, the Bralm priestess became the public figure for the city's eastern recesses, which came to be known as the Silk Plateau; the dual metaphor was apt for both public opinion (based on the silk garments recently manufactured by the residents there) and the true etymology—Istus' web and the secretive, spider-like machinations of her lover, whom she affectionately nicknamed the Brown Recluse.