

BDK6-09

To Bleed or To Die

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Bandit Kingdoms Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

by David “Keyoke” Polansky

Circle Reviewer: Chris Tulach

Reviewers: Theo Judd

Playtesters:

Either Prince Zeech is preparing for the biggest party of the century or a massive war. Commander Marionnen's garrison has declared their undying allegiance to the Prince of Redhand and has mobilized along the borders. The cambion commander now looks east towards the former lands of the Reyhu and Duchy of the Artonsomay while Alhaster begins a grand celebration. The armies of the Prince now chant “To bleed or to die for Redhand!” Members of Hellstone Tower, Citizens of Redhand, members of the Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe and the Defenders of Morannon, are encouraged to participate in this adventure. Part four and the conclusion of the Breaking Up is Hard to Do series. A one-round Bandit Kingdoms adventure set in Redhand for characters level 7-13 (APLs 8-12).

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

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For questions specific to this document and your region, please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at poc@bandit-kingdoms.net; for LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

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

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

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

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

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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 rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

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

characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in 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 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 Bandit Kingdoms. Characters native to the Bandit Kingdoms pay 1 Time Unit per round; all others pay 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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

BDK6-09 To Bleed or to Die is the final adventure in the Breaking Up Is Hard To Do series, and thus has tie-ins with the previous adventures in that series. In addition, it involves the plans and fates of several major and minor NPCs, as well as the destiny of a meta-organization (the Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe). All of these are detailed as follows.

Major NPC: Prince Zeech

The story of Prince Zeech is one of sedition and treachery. Once a lawful ruler in the Shield Lands and a follower of Heironeous, he and his domain of Redhand broke with the Shield Lands in 577 CY. In 579 CY, the Shield Lands were invaded by the Horned Society; as city after city fell, Prince Zeech and his forces stood neutral by the sidelines. It was about this time that rumors of Zeech's conversion to Hextor began to surface. Since then, Zeech has been unremitting in his devotion to the Oeridian god of war and tyranny and emulates his patron in many ways.

Of course, Zeech did not stop at neutrality; when Iuz brought his forces to bear on the area during the Greyhawk wars, Prince Zeech willingly swore fealty to Iuz. For this, he was allowed to keep control of his domain, with only nominal subservience to the four Iuzian clerics of Balmund. His service to Iuz and his minions has been outwardly loyal in the ensuing years; however, recent events such as the Siege of Hallorn and the formation of the Northern Alliance have encouraged Prince Zeech toward secession once again.

Late last year, during the events of *BDK5-08: Hirelings*, he secured a pact of non-aggression with the Warfields to the west. With his left flank thus secured, Stoink and Dimre to his right already preoccupied with a war against the Northern Alliance, and Cranzer of Riftcrag apparently occupied with his own troubles, Prince Zeech feels that now is the perfect time to secede from Iuz's Empire. Declaring a grand, week-long celebration to commemorate his secession from the Shield Lands, Zeech plans to cap the festival by seceding from the Empire of Iuz when his populace is at their most devoted (or so he hopes). Commander Marionnen's public declaration of allegiance to him was surprising, and he is very suspicious as to the reasons behind this move. However, for now he does not wish to jeopardize this unexpected alliance and is proceeding as planned.

Major NPC: Marionnen

The half-fiend commander of Trallant Keep, Marionnen is charged with watching the border between the Empire and the County of Urnst. Unbeknownst to most in the Bandit Kingdoms, however, Marionnen is a servant to Pazrael, a powerful demon lord who controls the Abyssal layer known as Torremor. During the Greyhawk wars, Pazrael and Iuz formed a tenuous alliance which resulted in each side exchanging troops. Pazrael sent Marionnen, among other forces of his, to aid Iuz in taking the Bandit Kingdoms and the lands of the Horned Society. Thus, Marionnen was content to play border guard for the time being. However, Iuz launched an invasion of Torremor last year; while the results of this war are not widely known, it was enough for Marionnen that when his spies discovered the reason behind Zeech's planned celebration, he and his forces publicly declared their undying allegiance to the Prince of Redhand. Marionnen has always wanted his own domain on Oerth; should Zeech perish, who better than his new ally to rule Redhand?

Minor NPC: Elhilbor

The captain of Zeech's secret police, Elhilbor, is the Prince's strongest supporter. Now that the nest of rebel scum known as the Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe has been largely dealt with, Elhilbor has turned most his attention back to Prince Zeech and his plans for secession. So long as he remains with Zeech, any assassination attempts on the Prince are bound to fail.

Minor NPC: Malthos

Malthos, a wizard and member of Hellstone Tower, is not doing so well these days. While he has achieved his dream of becoming a green star adept, he is now hunted by minions of Prince Zeech for his interference in Alhaster. Add to this his growing addiction to star metal, as well as his lack of friends due to his greedy and narcissistic manner, and he is very much at his wit's end.

Meta-Organization: Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe

The Brotherhood owes its beginnings to Zeech's decisions to first secede from the Shield Lands and then join Iuz during the Greyhawk Wars. While most of those who opposed the "Prince" were either slain or exiled to the Shield Lands, a small number have remained hidden in Redhand. Forming into small and secretive cells, the Brotherhood had managed to keep itself well hidden until the foolish actions of certain PC members lead to the organization's discovery by Elhilbor and his secret police. Now they have been almost completely wiped out in Alhaster as well as the majority of Redhand, and the

executioners have been kept busy hanging any members who were caught alive. Even the leader of the Brotherhood was not immune to the purge; now he lies in Prince Zeech's most secure prison, tortured daily so that the last few agents and cells can be located and expunged.

Recent Events:

Deciding that Zeech's celebration will provide the perfect cover for an assassination, Marionnen plots in Trallant. Obviously, the first move will be to capture and replace Elhilbor, or at least eliminate him. After that, replacing Zeech's guards and arranging the Prince's death will be simple matters. Capturing Elhilbor will require a pawn who is unassociated with Marionnen, as he will need at least some plausible deniability once Zeech is dead (or in the event the pawn is captured). Thus, he selected the wizard Malthos; after a couple weeks of chasing, his demonic minions caught the wizard in Stoink. Malthos was then taken to a meeting with a "servant of the Iuzian clerics of Balmund." Though normally a bit of a coward, Malthos readily agreed to the task when promised freedom from Zeech's minions and, more importantly, a lifetime supply of starmetal. Malthos was given a large supply of gold and instructed to hire some very competent mercenaries or adventurers to aid him in this endeavor.

Malthos has made agreements with agents of the Shield Lands; in turn, they have helped him contact the much reduced Brotherhood, who has promised its aid in this matter. Unfortunately, Malthos was not very subtle with his other hiring attempts, which have come to the attentions of Elhilbor's agents. However, all his efforts to find out more about the rogue wizard's plans have been for naught, as another, more discreet organization is keeping things "secret."

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure will follow one of two major paths. Either the PCs will choose to support Malthos, or they will choose to support Elhilbor. For more information, see *DM's Aid #1*.

Introduction: Another Dragon to Slay

The PCs either receive *sending* spells from one of Elhilbor's wizards and/or Malthos or more general calls for mercenaries from both sides. They are instructed to report to Alhaster or Balmund, respectively.

Encounter 1: Wizard Green

The PCs meet with Malthos in Balmund. As Malthos gets to the details of his plot, they are interrupted by another

man's arrival. He gives away little, but what he does say will allow the mission to succeed.

Encounter 2: Into the Palace

On the second night of Prince Zeech's festival, the PCs, along with Malthos, disguise themselves as a hobgoblin patrol and make their way into the palace. Just when they seem safe, a trap threatens to reveal all.

Encounter 3: An Inevitable Showdown

After surviving the trap, the PCs meet with the Brotherhood agent and approach their target. They must trust their contact or see through Elhilbor's disguise; then they have only to defeat him and his inevitable ally.

Encounter 4: Guests of Trallant

If the PCs accompany Malthos back from Alhaster, they find themselves met by an overwhelming force of demons. With little chance of fleeing and little hope of survival if attacked, surrendering brings them to discover Malthos's unknown master, Commander Marionnen. Malthos is given his just reward, and the PCs are rewarded and turned loose.

Encounter 5: To Serve Redhand

The PCs meet with Elhilbor in Alhaster. After assuring their loyalty, he asks for their aid in capturing Malthos by serving as his bodyguards at night.

Encounter 6: He Smuggled in a WHAT!?

On the second night of their vigil, the wizard Malthos shows up for Elhilbor. He brings along a golem in *gaseous form*, hidden within a *bag of holding*. With the attack repelled, and Malthos hopefully captured, the PCs are rewarded and asked to stick around for the remainder of the festival as honored guests.

Encounter 7: Out of the Palace

If the PCs chose not to accompany Malthos, or they choose to attempt a rescue of the Brotherhood Leader after defending Elhilbor, they must use magic or the aid of the Brotherhood agent to escape. The methods vary depending on whom the PCs supported, and those who defended Elhilbor receive a taste of the same trap as in *Encounter 2*.

Encounter 8: Under the Sea

Choosing to rescue the Brotherhood Leader, the PCs set sail from Alhaster to find Prince Zeech's most secret of prison cells. Diving in near a strange rock formation, they search for an air-filled cave. However, before they can find it and rescue the leader, they must deal with a local kraken and/or his minions.

Conclusions:

Seven conclusions exist based on PC actions.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

Before beginning, find out if the PCs qualify for any of the following and show them the listed Player Handout.

- Member of Hellstone Tower
- Member of the Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe
- Member of the Defenders of Morannon Keep
- Citizen of Redhand (if none of the above)
- Enmity of or Influence with Malthos (see *BDK5-03 The Secret Ingredient*, *BDK5-07 Ebongleam*, or *BDK6-04 The Last Word*)
- Favor or Influence with Redhand or Prince Zeech (all referred to as Favor of Redhand from now on) (numerous sources)
- *Banned from Redhand*, *Branded Criminal of Redhand*, or *Enmity of Zeech* (all referred to as Enmity of Redhand from now on) (numerous sources)

Give out the appropriate handout, as shown below.

If a PC does not have Enmity of Malthos but does have one of the following:

- *Favor of Malthos* (*Player Handout #1a*)
- Hellstone Tower Member (*Player Handout #1b*)
- Brotherhood of the Sundered Axe Member or *Enmity of Redhand* (*Player Handout #1c*)

If a PC does not have Enmity of Redhand but does have one of the following:

- *Favor of Redhand* or *Enmity of Malthos* (*Player Handout #2*)
- Citizen of Redhand (*Player Handout #2*)
- Defender of Morannon Keep (*Player Handout #2*)

Divination Spells:

For the most part, simply answer questions asked with *commune* and *divination* as you see fit based on the adventure. Remember that any questions asked that directly involve the brotherhood leader will need to get past *nondetection* (CL 13).

A good answer for divinations involving Elhilbor and Malthos would be the following:

A useful tool, a pitiful fool, and the right to rule.

REGIONAL WARNING

If your players are unfamiliar with the Bandit Kingdoms region, read the following aloud before running this event:

It is important to realize at all times that the Bandit Kingdoms are under the control of Iuz, the Old One, a chaotic, evil deity who revels in torture, depravity and trickery. Government officials tend to imitate many of the attributes of their dread lord. Things that you might take for granted in other lands, such as freedom of worship and the rule of law, are not valued by the rulers of the Combination of Free Lords. You may be able to strike at Iuz, but seldom can you strike at him overtly without paying the final price. Be warned, life is short for those who openly defy Old Wicked.

INTRODUCTION: ANOTHER DRAGON TO SLAY

If any PCs received handouts, add in the text in parentheses.

As they say, another day, another dragon to slay. With this day's dawn, you must find something new to pay the bills (though the message you received last night hints at a job offer).

Give the PCs a chance to mention the message. If they do not, or did not receive one, continue with the following generic introduction.

Your search for today's "dragon" has brought you to the Drunken Hydra tavern in Hallorn. There, while enjoying nice, cold ale (seemingly chilled by a funny little winged ice creature working in the kitchen) you peruse the flyers posted on the walls just below the draconic heads which give this tavern its name. While most are simple requests for merchant guards, one in particular catches your eye: an announcement that Prince Zeech of Redhand is calling for mercenaries to report to the constable in Alhaster. Your eyes catch the phrases "good pay," "the favor of the Prince," and, in smaller letters, "pardons for past mistakes."

Give the players a little time to discuss this offer before continuing with the following.

An old dwarf sitting at a nearby table notes your attention on the flyer, and, after listening to your

discussion, gets up and moves toward you. "Sounds t'me like ye are a competent group o'mercenaries. Tell ya what—forget that there fool's bargain, and I ken get you in on a better contract. What d'ye say?"

Taurbon Axegrinder: male dwarf warrior 5.

- He is gruffly friendly, with a mercantile tone.
- The contract will be for a mage by the name of Malthos.
- While high risk (which he downplays), it will pay well.
- If interested, go to the Mug and Hearth in Balmund in 4 days and ask the barkeep for a "Wizard Green."

The players must now decide who they will support.

- If they choose Malthos, go to *Encounter 1*.
- If they choose Redhand, go to *Encounter 5*.

If they split up, have the adventure follow whichever has the majority, but give them the chance to reach a consensus.

- If Malthos, then those supporting Redhand are hired to guard an Elhilbor look-alike (unbeknownst to them). They are paid a modest fee (50 gp each) and the adventure is basically over for them.
- If Elhilbor, then those remaining supporting Malthos find they have been stood up (and the adventure is basically over for them as well).
- Try to avoid the PCs splitting up on this issue. If they are truly and irreconcilably divided, suggest that perhaps some of them should play a different character.

ENCOUNTER 1: WIZARD GREEN

This encounter occurs if the PCs choose to support Malthos.

As you approach the gates to the township of Balmund, you are eyed carefully by the guards. They appear to be searching you intently for something, but what that might be is not apparent. They ask you your name and business as usual.

If any PCs are in Disguise, the guards make a Spot check (+2 modifier) to attempt to recognize them. If any PCs are Wanted by the Church of Iuz, consult the *Bandit Kingdoms Meta-Campaign Guidebook* for guidelines on bonuses the guards should receive. If a Wanted PC is spotted, the guards insist the PC stop and surrender himself. Normally, guards would be easily bribable (represented in the increased upkeep cost for Wanted

PCs), but because the priestess Jaleena has gone on the warpath following an attack on her temple, the guards are more resilient to simple bribes.

PCs who submit to the guards are captured. Any PC with a WCI score of 2-3 is imprisoned for 4 TUs before being released (and the adventure is over for them). Any PC with a WCI score of 4-5 is imprisoned for 8 TUs before escaping (with all his or her gear). Any PC with a WCI score of 6-7 is imprisoned for 12 TUs before escaping (with no gear; such PCs must invoke the charity of friends clause in the *LGCS*). Any PC with a WCI score of 8+ or higher is simply killed and animated to serve in Cranzer's army. The body CAN NOT be recovered, even through the "Your Work Really, Really Must Continue" or "Your Work Shall Continue" effect.

The current reward for wanted PCs has been doubled in Balmund, hence, if the PCs offer a bribe equal to double the reward for their capture, the guards let them pass, with the exception of an Enemy of the State, who cannot bribe his way through (such characters should know better than to be caught by 1st-level guards). In this event, the PCs will have to use magic (like *modify memory* or *suggestion*) to keep the guards from tipping off the local rulers. Otherwise, the guards sound the alarm and the whole town begins crawling with Iuzians and mercenaries out to nab the PC.

Knocking the guards out simply delays the inevitable. When they are found, they sound the alarm, with consequences as above. Killing the guards is an evil act and should be noted on the offending PCs' ARs; the Triad should also be contacted with the player's name and RPGA #. However, even killing them does not silence them completely (unless their corpses are rendered useless for *Speak with Dead*), and besides that there are many witnesses about. If the PCs attempt to kill any and all witnesses, these characters should be removed from play immediately for evil acts, and the Triad should be contacted with their names and RPGA #s. Basically, this is not a good time for the PCs to get caught, but this encounter serves to punish foolish PCs.

Balmund Gate Guards (4): human WARR; hp 5.

Entering the town, you manage to find directions to the Mug and Hearth, though it's somewhat difficult. All that the locals want to talk about is a festival Zeech is apparently planning next week.

Give the PCs a chance to use the Gather Information skill if they want. See *Appendix Four* for the rumors they might hear and how to adjudicate it.

The Mug and Hearth in Balmund is a simple, but well-built and maintained establishment, which

caters to the many traveling merchants who pass to and from Alhaster and the eastern Bandit Kingdoms. As you enter, you find no one present besides a single drunk and the innkeeper, who asks, "May I help you sirs (and madams)?" When you ask for a "Wizard Green," he directs you up a flight of stairs to a private room on the second floor. A small table of snacks awaits you as he murmurs, "Your friend should be here in a short while. Enjoy the food." He closes the door behind him.

After nearly half an hour, a man suddenly appears in the corner of the room nearest the window. Dressed in flowing robes of silver and blue, the most striking thing about him is the green tinge to his skin, which almost sparkles. He studies you all carefully.

Those who played *BDK5-03: Secret Ingredient*, *BDK5-07 Ebongleam*, or *BDK6-04: The Last Word* may recognize him as Malthos the mage, in which event, read the following:

You quickly recognize the man as Malthos, (the mage who had you collect his cargo from the Rhenee barge in Alhaster)/(the mage you met in Stoink)/(the mage who had you guard his chest in Balmund).

Malthos is paranoid. If any PC has the Enmity of Malthos, he makes a Spot check (+6) against their disguise. If he recognizes them:

"What?! What are you doing here?," Malthos cries, pointing at (PC names). He looks like he is about to flee.

If someone in the party does not immediately make a DC 25 Diplomacy check (with -10 for fast diplomacy), Malthos flees and does not return.

Assuming the check is made:

The mage calms down as you explain yourselves. "I am not sure if I should trust you at all, but you make a valid point."

Continuing:

"The reason I had you sent here is so I could secretly offer you a dangerous task with a high reward. The dangerous task is kidnapping one Elhilbor, leader of Prince Zeech's secret police. The high reward is (2,000/3,000/5,000) gold pieces...each. Are all of you still interested?"

Malthos: Male human Wiz5 (conjurer)/Green Star Adept1/Mage of the Arcane Order4

- He is fairly desperate, but remains condescending and arrogant.
- He will not say why he wants Elhilbor, just that he needs him alive.
- He will be going with the party to aid them.
- If pressed and given a DC 15 diplomacy check, he will offer them 500 gold pieces each up front - but only if they agree.
- He will wait until they all agree before mentioning the specifics of how to get in
- He will also hand the PCs a request from the Brotherhood (*Player Handout #3*).

After all PCs agree:

Malthos moves away from the corner he arrived in and picks up a goblet of wine from a table on the far wall. Casting a quick dwoemer, he examines the glass. Satisfied with the result, he begins sipping it slowly. Then he turns back to you. "I am glad we are all in accordance; allow me to explain my plan for getting us inside."

- Malthos cast *detect poison* to make sure the wine was not poisoned. A DC 15 Spellcraft check confirms this. Have him react appropriately (by fleeing) if the PCs have poisoned his glass.
- A patrol of palace guards will "disappear" while on leave in two night's time.
- He and the party will use a *scroll of seeming* to disguise themselves as the guards and enter the palace that way,
- An agent exists inside the palace who will help them find Elhilbor, as he has recently begun sleeping in a different room each night.

As Malthos sums up the plan:

"A decent plan, Malthos," says a cool voice as the door suddenly swings open. A man in dark clothing steps in and shuts the door behind him. Malthos seems paralyzed with shock; the man glances at him and snaps, "Oh calm down. I would have already done far worse if I was one of Elhilbor's minions. As I was about to say, a decent plan save that your lack of subtlety in looking for aid has caught Elhilbor's attention. Tell me, did you really expect to catch the spider unprepared? In his own web?" He chuckles quietly.

Nobody of Importance: Male human Rogue 5; Init +6; Will +2.

- He refuses to mention anything about himself, save that he offers his aid.
- He is actually a cultist of Vecna. With Iuz and his minions distracted, a cult to the Whispered One has cropped up in the Bandit Kingdoms.
- He does not have an evil aura (by virtue of his *ring of mind shielding*).
- His organization is seeing that Elhilbor receives false and conflicting information about this mission.
- He knows that Elhilbor plans on arranging several of his agents to disguise themselves as him at night. Each agent is guarded by a patrol of guards.
- Meanwhile, Elhilbor assumes his cover identity at night: Baron Ulik of Morannon.

The cultist will not reveal his loyalties to the PCs following Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks. If attacked or if a PC attempts to cast a spell, he will attempt to escape. If the PCs successfully *charm* him, he will still not admit who he works for (as he would not do so even for a friend). If the PCs successfully cast *suggestion* or *dominate* on him, he will admit who he is and who he works for.

If the PCs attack or cast any spells on him, and his organization finds out (either by the cultist telling them or by him not showing up), they will withdraw their aid from this endeavor. Elhilbor will be able to find out more about the PCs and will ensure he is better defended. This will have repercussions in *Encounter 3*.

While initially suspicious of the man, Malthos calms down once he hears the man's information. Since the man asks for nothing in return, Malthos does not think it a problem to hear what he has to say.

Treasure: If the PCs ask for an advance, Malthos provides them with the following:

All APLs: Coin: 500 gp

Once the PCs are ready to go, proceed to *Encounter 2*.

ENCOUNTER 2: INTO THE PALACE

The same evening you agreed to Malthos's task, he teleports half of you into a safe house deep inside Alhaster. The following morning he returns for the rest. The next several days pass with agonizing slowness as you sit inside the small house while Malthos teleports in and out, gathering supplies. You can hear the sounds of the festivities going on all over

the city; it sounds like Zeech is throwing a grand party...and you're missing it.

Give the PCs time to decide if they are doing anything while waiting inside the house. Malthos absolutely refuses to allow them to leave unless they are using teleportation magic to appear outside of Redhand. If asked politely, he will allow PC wizards to copy up to two spells from his spellbook while he is occupied, for the standard fee of 50 gp x spell level (as mentioned on page 179 of the *Player's Handbook*). Scribing PCs must pay normal scribing costs.

Finally, the second night of the festival arrives. Malthos gathers you into the main chamber two hours past midnight. "Well, the time has come for us to embark on this grand scheme," he says confidently. "We should be dealing with Elhilbor in less than an hour."

Once the party has buffed as they wish, Malthos uses his *scroll of seeming* to make the party and himself appear like hobgoblin guards. The PC should decide which one of them will appear to be the sergeant. Preferably, this should be a character with good social skills.

Malthos pulls out and casts a spell from a scroll. Looking around you find that all of you now resemble goblin or hobgoblin soldiers in the livery of Redhand; [PC] is dressed as your sergeant. Malthos speaks from beneath his disguise, "From here, we exit into an alleyway and then quickly join in the crowds. We are only a few minutes from the palace barracks gate, where we should not have too much trouble getting in, as the patrol we are replacing has been off duty and enjoying the festival." He pauses to hand [PC] an off-duty writ. He continues, "Once inside the barracks, we make our way through the mess hall and into the kitchens, where that agent you mentioned should be waiting. With his help, we find the real Elhilbor, capture him, and then I will teleport away with him - you may accompany me if you wish. If not, we will meet again at the Mug and Hearth in one week. Any questions?"

- Malthos expects this operation to go quite easily, as he severely underestimates Elhilbor.
- He has a *bag of holding type III* with him to carry Elhilbor in.
- If the PCs wish to accompany him afterwards, he offers to sell them a *scroll of greater teleport* (CL 18) as well as a description of where he is headed (a

chamber lit by torches on the walls inside Trallant). The scroll costs 3,150 gp.

- Malthos forged the off-duty writ by taking 10 for a 21. He has an example if the PCs wish to make their own (+8 to the check).

Heading through the streets is quite difficult due to the press of the partying crowd.

- It will take 30 minutes, with a DC 12 Strength check every 5 minutes of movement.
- Failure results in no progress for that PC (or party, if they wait for the PC), while failure by 5 or more results in an additional 5 minute delay as the PC is caught up in a current heading somewhere else.
- A PC can tow another PC by adding +2 to the strength check DC.

Additionally, you can toss in a few interesting side tracks (such as a well-endowed female half-orc kissing and latching-onto the "sergeant" or a half-elf sorcerer who is charming every female he lays eyes on, to the crowd's amusement) if time permits.

Each of these events shouldn't take more than 5 minutes to resolve; if the PCs have any ongoing spell effects active, make sure to keep track of the time this takes.

For the purposes of describing what's going on, think of a big Mardi Gras festival, and then add magic.

Once the PCs arrive at the gate, read or paraphrase the following:

Finally leaving the crowds behind, you arrive at the gates to the palace barracks. Far off to your right you can see the main palace gates, where a steady stream of coaches is leaving. Closer at hand, however, you do not see anyone near the gates you are approaching until you are at them. Then, a hobgoblin corporal comes out of his guard house, looking like he's been doing some celebrating of his own. Taking your off duty writ from [PC sergeant], he squints down at it, and then barks, "Oy! This writ ran out hours ago! Why should I let you back inside?"

The writ's expiration is actually illegible, but all such writs expire at midnight. During the festival, the gate guards generally make allowances, but this one is looking for a bribe. Getting past him requires:

- A DC 25 Diplomacy/Bluff check that points out something you consider reasonable.
- A 25 gold piece or more bribe (good alcohol of equal value also accepted).

- The PC “sergeant“ might realize he outranks the corporal and pull rank, at which point the corporal acquiesces.
- Attacking the guard alerts his partner in the guardhouse, who sounds the alarm bell.

Once through the gates and inside the barracks, you feel deafened in the sudden silence, broken only by snores coming from various doors. Consulting a map, Malthos quickly leads you down a hallway and through the deserted mess hall. He approaches a door on the opposite side of the hall, pauses, and gestures for you to proceed with him.

The door is not trapped. See *DM's Map #1* for this room. Keep a rough track of how much time the PCs spend in this room, as a patrol passes the exit door every 5 minutes and may hear them inside.

On the other side of the door is a peculiar room. 35 feet wide, 45 feet long, and 15 feet high, it is patterned with 5 by 5 tiles with a glowing, red hand imprinted on them. 9 make a box pattern on the floor and ceiling while another 3 run along each wall. Each sheds the light of a torch. At the other end of the room sits another door. Malthos murmurs, "We should hurry. A patrol comes by the other side of that door every few minutes or so."

The trap for this room is rather complex. It only triggers at night, when at least two creatures are in the area between the center red hand tile and the door opposite their entry. The actual trap is located in the center red hand tile and is hidden from magical detection by a *Nystul's magic aura* spell (CL 13).

APL 8 (EL 10)

Heightened (7th) *Mind Fog* Trap: CR 8; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [7th] *mind fog*, 15th level caster, DC 20 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Heightened (7th) *Song of Discord* Trap: CR 8; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [7th] *song of discord*, 15th level caster, DC 20 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Heightened (7th) *Mind Fog* Trap: CR 8; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [7th] *mind fog*, 15th level caster,

DC 20 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Heightened (9th) *Song of Discord* Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *song of discord*, 19th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

APL 12 (EL 12)

Heightened (9th) *Mind Fog* Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *mind fog*, 19th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Heightened (9th) *Song of Discord* Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *song of discord*, 19th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

As you cross the midpoint of the chamber, suddenly all the hands save the one in the center of the floor go out. A thin mist appears around you, clouding your senses; with a start, you realize that all your allies have been replaced by enemies...or have they?

If any PC fails against the *song of discord* trap, have the party roll initiative. Short of knocking the affected PC(s) out, dispelling or negating the effect, or hitting them with *calm emotions*, nothing can be done to stop the 50% chance each round of the spell's duration.

If the patrol happens by while the PCs are fighting and the alarm goes off, Malthos will *teleport* away (if not caught in the spell himself). The patrol does not enter the room as they know about the trap. Instead, they ready themselves on their side while the hobgoblins in the barracks prepare on theirs. If the PCs do not have some form of teleportation magic, they are attacked by elite soldiers supported by priests of Hextor.

All APLs (EL 14)

Hobgoblin Fighters (12): hobgoblin Ftr5; hp 47; see *DMG* page 117.

Human Clerics (2): human Clr10 (Hextor); hp 68; AL LE; *Domains:* Destruction and War; see *DMG* page 115.

Once the PCs have finished with the trap, proceed to *Encounter 3*.

ENCOUNTER 3: AN INEVITABLE SHOWDOWN

Once finished with the trap, all that remains is going through the door, across the hallway, and through another door. You now find yourselves in a cavernous kitchen, lit only by a banked fire. As you close the door behind you, a figure steps forward from where it was hiding just outside the firelight. It appears to be a half-orc in servant's garb, who quietly says, "It is quite late." Malthos replies, "But not too late," and then motions for you speak with the half-orc.

Urgan: male half-orc Expert 5/Spymaster 1.

- He is subdued but helpful.
- He knows the location of all the "Elhilbors", though he doesn't know which one is real.
- He also knows that Baron Ulik is staying in a set of rooms known as the "Ogre's Suite" and can provide directions.
- He can describe the guard patrol patterns well enough to help the PCs avoid them.
- He can also provide a way out for the PCs if they can't teleport and don't want to go with Malthos.

Malthos firmly trusts that Elhilbor is masquerading as Baron Ulik. If the party decides to go after one of the Elhilbor look-alikes, he derides them as fools but waits for them in the kitchen. Each Elhilbor look-alike is guarded by hobgoblin soldiers; they will sound the alarm if the PCs attack. Unless the PCs have teleportation magic, they are swiftly attacked by elite soldiers and priests of Hextor (as in *Encounter Two*). Malthos, as always, teleports away if he hears the alarm go off.

Assuming the party heads for "Ulik's" room: (Refer to *DM's Map #2*)

Following Urgan's directions, you swiftly find yourselves before a massive oak door - clearly there is a reason this is called the Ogre's Suite.

The door to the sitting room is not locked. The ceiling is thirty feet high.

Though the sitting room beyond the door is built to the same scale, the furniture and fixtures are human-sized. Across the way is another massive door.

The door to the bedroom is locked (DC 40). However, Malthos does have a *scroll of silenced knock* to use if none of the PCs can open locks.

The bedroom is more than twice the size of the sitting room, though it seems to double as an office for the occupant. Shaped like an 'L', it has a desk and bookshelves along the walls nearest you, a small shrine and fireplace in the corner, and a large, four-poster bed around the bend. Of more pressing concern to you is the figure that stands up from a chair by the fire, closing the book he was reading. He is a youthful man, no older than 20, though it is difficult to tell due to the fact that his skin, eyes, and hair are completely bleached white. He is clad in what appears to be flexible blood-red full plate. There are no chinks in the armor, which appears to ripple as you look at it. His coat of arms is emblazoned upon the shield that hovers protectively in front of him, and his back bristles with weapons. You can see a falchion strapped to his back and a spiked chain dangling from his waist. "Well?" he demands. "What do you want?"

Elhilbor: Elhilbor is currently disguised as Baron Ulik. He will stay in character until the party attacks; Baron Ulik is very sarcastic cleric of Ralishaz with little liking for fools bursting into his chambers at night.

Meanwhile, Malthos will be urging them to attack Elhilbor before he has a chance to call his guards. If the party hesitates or speaks with Elhilbor for more than a couple minutes, Malthos will begin combat by starting to cast a spell.

Elhilbor has chosen Malthos as his Bloodhound Mark; thus, he is allowed to ready an action outside of combat against an action by Malthos. In this case, if Malthos starts casting a spell, Elhilbor reaches over to the mantelpiece and triggers the secret door that hides his inevitable ally. Note that the inevitable is able to observe the room through a small hole in the door and is also able to open the door from its side.

Elhilbor is able to recognize Malthos despite his disguise due to the inevitable; he is sharing a *Rary's telepathic bond* with the inevitable, who can see through Malthos's disguise with either *true seeing* or a Spot check of DC 27.

If Malthos triggers combat (as mentioned above), then this readied action works like any other readied action and cannot be pre-empted by the PCs unless they also have the ability to ready actions outside of combat; this is NOT a surprise round. If the PCs attack first, however, Elhilbor will either do this just before Malthos goes or on his turn, whichever comes first. Or, if the inevitable wins initiative, it uses a move action to open the door.

If the PCs do not have the cultists of Vecna's aid in this mission (by attacking their agent in *Encounter 1*),

then double the number of inevitables (and raise the EL by 2).

APL 8 (EL 9)

Elhilbor: hp 100; see *Appendix One*.

Zeলেখut: hp 74; see *Monster Manual* 160

APL 10 (EL 12)

Elhilbor: hp 100; see *Appendix One*.

Kolyarut: hp 91; see *Monster Manual* 159

APL 12 (EL 15)

Elhilbor: hp 100; see *Appendix One*.

Marut: hp 112; see *Monster Manual* 159

*The EL for this encounter is for the inevitable, as Elhilbor and Malthos cancel each other out.

Tactics: Malthos will focus on blasting Elhilbor and the inevitable and summoning aid; meanwhile, he orders the PCs to subdue Elhilbor so that his spells won't kill him.

Elhilbor has his dexterity minor aura and motivate attack aura up when the battle begins; this gives both him and his ally +6 to initiative and +1 to melee attacks. His first actions will be opening the secret door for the inevitable (unless the inevitable has already done this), switching to his charisma minor aura (a swift action), moving to a bell pull next to the bed, and yanking it to summon reinforcements.

Depending on whether the secret door is already open, this may take more than 1 turn. After that, he will use smart battle tactics to avoid being cornered and to get in a flank with the inevitable as much as possible. If reduced to half his hp or the inevitable is destroyed, he will flee through the secret door, which closes behind him (triggered effect). Unless the PCs can get through or past the secret door before his next turn, they lose him in the tunnels beyond (he knows the tunnels like the back of his hand and has had them magically treated to make tracking impossible).

At APL 8, the zeলেখut has *true seeing* up. It favors using its Ride-By-Attack feat through the air, though it can't do so every round due to the need to turn around. It will also try to use *hold monster* obvious fighters; if successful and they are still held next round, it coup-de-grace's them. Finally, if the PCs are nicely grouped, it may hit them with a *fear*.

At APL 10, the kolyarut begins with *invisibility* up, as well as *disguise self* to make himself look like a hobgoblin (DC 30 Spot check), making it more difficult for spell-casters to realize its weaknesses. It favors attacking twice a round with its *vampiric touch* ability (note that this is misprinted in the *Monster Manual*: it should deal 6d6 damage at CL 13, not 5d6), unless it

needs to move in which case it will use its *enervation* ability. However, like the zeলেখut, if the opportunity presents itself, it will use *hold monster* or *fear*.

At APL 12, the marut begins with *air walk* and *true seeing* up. It prefers to strike with its fists (thus causing blindness or deafness) from the air above the PCs, but will also make use of its other spell-like abilities (such as *chain lightning*, *greater command*, and *wall of force*).

The reinforcements Elhilbor ordered are slowed by the simultaneous attacks of Marionnen's demons on several of Zeech's most powerful bodyguards and advisors. It takes them 20 rounds to arrive at the room; if the PCs don't escape by then, they are attacked by elite soldiers and priests of Hextor (see *Encounter Two*). As soon as the reinforcements arrive, Elhilbor attempts to escape as described above.

Results:

- If the PCs and Malthos are defeated, go to *Conclusion E*.
- Elhilbor escapes, dies, or is captured. PCs may leave with Malthos (*Encounter 4*) or go after the Brotherhood Leader (*Encounter 8*). If they do neither, the adventure is over. Go to *Conclusion E*.
- If Malthos dies, the PCs will need to decide what they do with his body, as well as what to do with Elhilbor. If Malthos gave them the description of his intended location, they can attempt to teleport there (*Encounter 4*). Or they can end the adventure (*Conclusion A*, but leave out the part about Trallant, as well as any rewards the PCs might have received from Marionnen).

Malthos leaves for the rendezvous point as quickly as possible after the battle finishes (pausing only to stuff Elhilbor into a *bag of holding*, if he didn't escape). The PCs can follow him if they wish to purchase his *scroll of greater teleport* (CL 18).

If they refuse, Malthos tells them to meet him at the Mug and Hearth in Balmund a day after the end of the Festival to receive their reward. He does not have the money with him currently. If they are upset by this, he points out that they can come with him to ensure he pays.

If the PCs go with Malthos, proceed to *Encounter 4*. If not, proceed to *Encounter 7*.

ENCOUNTER 4: GUESTS OF TRALLANT

Malthos completes his casting from the scroll, and the palace fades away around you. You find yourselves now in a chamber lit by torches along the walls. A

single exit lies ahead of you; however, surrounding you on three sides are demons.

The largest of them, a grotesque creature combining the worst features of an ape and a corpulent boar, gestures at you as soon as you arrive. "My master, Marionnen of Trallant, is expecting you. Make no sudden moves unless you wish to meet him posthumously." It grins unpleasantly. You note that all of its companions appear ready to deal with you.

All APLs (EL 17)

Babaus (8): hp 66; see *Monster Manual* pg 40

Glabrezus (2): hp 174; see *Monster Manual* pg 45

Nalfeshnee: hp 175; see *Monster Manual* pg 45

Tactics: The nalfeshnee has had *anticipate teleport* (see the *Spell Compendium*) cast on it, so the demons have 1 round of warning on the PCs. During that round, the nalfeshnee tosses up an *unholy aura* on all the demons.

Since the demons were aware of the PCs' arrival but the PCs were not aware of the demons, the demons have prepared readied actions. If the PCs roll initiative, the babaus have readied actions to use *dispel magic* to counterspell spell-casting; the glabrezus have readied to use *power word: stun* on the first and second PCs to take an action other than obeying the nalfeshnee; the nalfeshnee once again requests that they come peacefully and ready to activate his smite ability.

If the PCs fight back, the demons attack with lethal force (though they won't coup de grace or attack fallen characters, as prisoners can be useful).

Malthos, not sure what is happening but knowing he has a chance of escape with his *teleport* and *dimension door*, will simply delay and suggest to the PCs that they do as the demons say. If fighting breaks out, he will attempt to use his spells to get him and up to three nearby PCs away (if they wish).

This combat is meant to be overwhelming for any parties not playing down and should be described that way.

- If the PCs successfully flee or defeat the demons, then they get away cleanly. Proceed to *Conclusion B*.
- If the PCs attack and are defeated, proceed to *Conclusion C*.
- If the PCs agree to come peacefully, the demons take them before Marionnen. The demons open the *bag of holding* and remove Elhilbor's body, if present.

Following the demons through several tunnels, you soon approach a doorway through which a large

throne room can be seen. As you step through the doorway, you feel a slight tingle run down your spine as a magical effect washes over you.

Entering the throne room targets the PCs with a *greater dispel magic* (CL 15). Roll to dispel any other spells including *seeming* that are affecting the PCs and Malthos. The demons are still surrounding the PCs and will force them through the doorway; see previous tactics if the PCs try to balk at this point.

The throne room before you is decorated for the main part with war trophies. A shield with a defaced symbol of Heironeous, a torn and burned standard bearing the swan of the County of Urnst, and many more spoils ring the chamber. Lounging on an elegantly carved throne of oak which rests upon a small dais, you see a large man with long, dark, black hair, glistening plate mail and a heavy weapon consisting of a large, heavy blade on one end and a spiked ball and chain on the other. Around the dais, numerous warriors in heavy plate stand at attention, observing you and your escorts with varied expressions.

The man on the throne speaks, "Greetings. I am Commander Marionnen of Trallant. As you may have guessed by now, it was I, or rather my agents, who hired Malthos to bring Elhilbor to me. Of course, to ensure that Elhilbor did not find out who was actually behind Malthos, my agents told him they served the clerics of Balmund. But you don't really care who you serve, do you mageling, so long as you get your reward?" With that, Marionnen gestures to the left side of the chamber, where two demons flank a large chest. Malthos's face takes on a look of intense longing as he gazes at the chest, but before he can move toward it, Marionnen continues. "Of course, rewards are only given to successful minions; did you get Elhilbor for me, mageling?"

Malthos informs him of the party's success or failure.

Marionnen: Commander Marionnen is actually a half-fiend with the ability to assume the alternate form of a humanoid at will. In addition, he is capable of using *charm person* several times per day as a spell-like ability. The human warriors at his side are knights from the Shield Lands who have long been charmed by Marionnen and broken of their will. They now serve him dutifully and will defend him with their lives.

Marionnen is confident, but short tempered, especially if the PCs and Malthos failed to get Elhilbor. He loves feeling in control and playing the part of royalty.

- If the PCs failed, he has the PCs escorted out while Malthos is imprisoned.
- If Elhilbor died, Marionnen rewards the PCs with some of Elhilbor's equipment (dependent upon APL) and then has them escorted out. Malthos receives his "reward" (see below).
- If Elhilbor was captured, Marionnen not only rewards them as above, he also promises them a grand reward once his plan is complete. They are escorted out after Malthos receives his "reward" (see below).
- If the PCs wish, they may ask for Malthos's release as their favor from him. He will agree to this and release Malthos to them. They will then be escorted out. Proceed to *Conclusion B*, though modify the box text to deal with the changes.
- In all cases, Marionnen warns them against revealing that he was behind this.

Read or paraphrase the following for Malthos's reward:

"Very well, mageling, it seems you have earned your reward," says the Commander of Trallant. Malthos hurries over to the chest and begins opening it. As he does, a green glow shines from under the lid. However, fully opening the chest reveals nothing but the green glow, which expands to include more than half the room. The two demons flanking the chest grab his shoulders and tear the back of his robes. There, in the small of his back, resides an odd tattoo composed of angles and lines. Marionnen smiles slightly. "It seems my information was correct. Cranzer has been looking for members of your organization, mageling. Presenting you to him should soothe any ruffled feathers he may have over my actions."

Malthos struggles for a moment, even getting a spell off despite the demons holding him, but nothing happens. He slumps down to the ground in despair. As you are escorted out, you hear Marionnen ordering him to be taken to his "guest room."

Proceed to *Conclusion A*.

Treasure: The PCs are awarded the following items (enough to make the gp cap). Marionnen will still hold the items of lower APLs for a short time (i.e. Adventure access) even if the items are not listed in the treasure entry. Elhilbor's items are indicated by a * on the AR.

APL 8: Magic: 1,300 gp – +1 shadowed, hellforged chain shirt of silent moves (800 gp), gloves of fortunate striking (166 gp), heward's handy haversack (166 gp), +1 heavy mithral shield (168 gp)

APL 10: Magic: 2,666 gp – amulet of health +4 (1,333 gp), cloak of charisma +4 (1,333 gp)

APL 12: Magic: 3,374 gp – +1 merciful hellforged longsword of sudden stunning (917 gp), mask of lies (1,416 gp), scepter of obedience (1,041 gp)

ENCOUNTER 5: TO SERVE REDHAND

This encounter occurs if the PCs choose to support Redhand.

With your journey to Alhaster behind you, you enter the city to find the streets are packed with people celebrating. You quickly gather that Prince Zeech has declared a week-long festival to commemorate his secession from the Shield Lands.

Give the PCs a chance to do Gather Info if they want. See *Appendix Four* for the rumors they hear.

If the PCs did NOT receive a sending from Elhilbor, read or paraphrase the following:

You find it difficult to get directions from the partying crowd, but you finally find yourselves before the constable's office of Alhaster. Another crowd, mercenaries this time, awaits you here. Looking around, you get the feeling that your group might just be the best in the gathering.

This opinion is apparently shared by the constable. After looking you over, he gives a judicious nod and has a pair of guards escort you to the palace for a meeting with a lord named Elhilbor about a "special task."

You are taken through several back streets, thus avoiding the crowds, and quickly arrive at the palace gates. There, the gate guards only give your group a quick glance over before allowing you through. A short walk through the palace leaves you in an austere office, with a man in blackened chain lacking any sign of rank or insignia.

If the PCs DID receive a sending from Elhilbor, read or paraphrase the following:

Though you find it difficult moving through the crowds, you eventually make it to the gates of the palace. The guards at the gate appear to be expecting you; once they find your name on a piece of parchment, they whistle up another pair of guards to escort you to Lord Elhilbor.

A short walk through the palace leaves you in an austere office, with a man in blackened chain lacking any sign of rank or insignia.

Continuing for both, read or paraphrase the following:

The guards who brought you to the office now depart, leaving you alone with the man. He studies each of you for a moment before speaking. "As some of you may know, I am Elhilbor, servant of Prince Zeech. You were called here because I have a task which I believe you may be able to help me accomplish."

At this point, if any PCs have *Enmity of Redhand* or are unknown to Elhilbor, he will ask them to swear to cause no intentional harm to Redhand, Prince Zeech, or his servants. Should any characters plan to violate this when swearing, they must succeed on a Bluff check against Elhilbor's Sense Motive check of 31. Any PC that refuses or lies will be escorted out of Redhand by a patrol of guards.

Elhilbor: male human marshal 3/ranger 1/rogue 1/bloodhound 2/exemplar 1/justiciar 2/spymaster 3; see *Appendix One*.

- He is intelligent, diplomatic, and loyal to Redhand.
- He wishes to capture and arrest the wizard Malthos.
- Malthos is wanted for suspected sedition against the Prince.
- Malthos apparently plans on assassinating him; he will use this to set a trap for Malthos.
- He wishes to hire the PCs as secret bodyguards at night.
- During the day, he is well defended, so Malthos will likely try at night.
- He will offer 375 gold per PC for this, double that amount if Malthos is captured alive.
- Johrase mercenaries will be paid an extra ten percent.

If the PCs agree, read or paraphrase the following:

"Excellent. As it is nearly noon, I'll have a guard escort you to your rooms and lunch. Afterwards, I suggest you get some rest as your duties will begin at midnight this evening. Until then..."

As he finishes, a guard enters and holds the door for you to leave. Following the guard through the palace corridors, you are brought to a modest set of apartments. Two bed chambers flank a sitting room that opens into the corridor.

There, a fine spread of food awaits your consumption, along with plenty of ale, wine, and

water. The guard leaves you, closing the doors behind him as he leaves.

Should the PCs open the doors, they find the guard along with another one standing outside. While the PCs are not imprisoned per se, the guards do curtail their movements to a minimum. After all, the PCs are supposed to be a secret.

ENCOUNTER 6: HE SMUGGLED IN A WHAT?!

As midnight approaches, you are all somewhat startled as a secret door opens in the back of your sitting room, and Elhilbor gestures for you to follow. Leading you through a short maze of tunnels, you arrive at much larger bed chamber.

He closes the secret door in this room behind you, then turns and speaks, "Now, I suspect that should Malthos come, it will likely be closer to midnight than dawn. Therefore I will remain awake, thanks to this," he continues, touching a ring on his hand, "until two hours or so before dawn. After I retire, you will still be on guard, so keep a good watch. Should the mage show up, your job will be to keep him and any minions occupied until the guard shows up. They will be summoned when someone pulls this bell pull. Any questions?"

While the PCs guard, Elhilbor will engage in various light activities: reading, working on papers, occasionally asking the PCs about their adventures. While he is not interested in gambling, he'll agree to a few rounds of chess if a PC suggests it. Treat a chess match as an opposed Intelligence check.

Malthos does not show up this night; a couple hours before dawn, Elhilbor will go to sleep. When he does, he removes his gear, hanging it on a stand near his bed. This stand is warded by an *alarm* spell set to an audible alarm. At the sound of the alarm, Elhilbor awakens. Any PC standing within 10 feet of the stand is kicked out of the palace by a patrol of guards Elhilbor summons, unless they convince him they are innocent (DC 35 Diplomacy check if the truth or a DC 42 Bluff check if they are lying, including a +10 because such a lie is very hard to believe).

As dawn arrives, read or paraphrase the following:

Not long after dawn arrives, you notice Elhilbor stirring. Getting up, he tells you to return to your chambers through the secret passage he used to bring you here. His day bodyguards and servants will be arriving momentarily. As before, he suggests you enjoy a meal before retiring to await the next night.

The day passes uneventfully. As midnight approaches on the second night, read or paraphrase the following:

Once again, Elhilbor shows up just before midnight through the secret door in your chambers. Leading you back to his room, he retires to his bed to relax and read a book by candlelight. The first hour of your watch creeps past, as does most of the second with no sign of any mage-assassins.

Meanwhile, Malthos has successfully infiltrated the palace, along with a *bag of holding* which holds a golem in *gaseous form*; the golem has squeezed to fit into the bag. Upon arriving at Elhilbor's chambers, he applies an *oil of silence* to a large collar. After that, he lets the golem out of the *bag of holding* and dismisses the *gaseous form* spell. Next, he places the collar around its neck and then uses a *scroll of silenced knock* on the locked double-doors to Elhilbor's chambers. He then casts silent *fox's cunning*, silent *shield*, and silent *fire shield* in that order.

At this point announce a surprise round, so any with Feign Surprise may act; during it, Malthos casts *nerve-skitter* (from down the hall to be out of range of the *silence* effect) and uses his *dust of disappearance* and the golem opens the doors.

You are surprised to see the doors suddenly open without a sound; a huge behemoth of [clay, iron, or stone] can be seen on the other side. It steps through the door.

APL 8 (EL 9)*

Malthos: hp 74; see *Appendix One*

Clay Golem: hp 90; AC 28, touch 8, flat-footed 28; see *Monster Manual* 134

APL 10 (EL 12)*

Malthos: hp 74; see *Appendix One*

Iron Golem: hp 129; AC 36, touch 8, flat-footed 36; see *Monster Manual* 136

APL 12 (EL 15)*

Malthos: hp 74; see *Appendix One*

Greater Stone Golem: hp 271; AC 33, touch 6, flat-footed 33; see *Monster Manual* 136

*The EL for this encounter is for the golem, as Malthos and Elhilbor cancel each other out. Because the PCs are prepared for the attack and have the benefit of Elhilbor's marshal auras, the ELs have been reduced by 1.

Tactics: Elhilbor will have his marshal auras up, granting the PCs +6 to Initiative and Dexterity checks and +1 to melee attacks. On his first round, he will pull the bell pull, and then hold back until Malthos makes his

presence known. He will avoid the golem and try to stun and knock out Malthos.

At all APL's, the golem will begin with *greater mage armor* (CL 10) cast on it and with a collar upon which an *oil of silence* has been applied. The golem has been ordered to go after the nearest enemy, and will do so until none remain. It tries to remain on the edges of Malthos' *solid fog* (see below).

Malthos will try to keep away from the combat while performing battlefield control. Use the tactics given here if you are not sure how to handle his spells. He begins by casting *solid fog* inside the room to try to slow down the PCs. Following that, he casts *Evard's black tentacles* centered on the same location as the *solid fog*. He targets any PCs breaking out of the fog with his most powerful spells first (*Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *scorching ray*, *glitterdust*, *ray of enfeeblement*, and *magic missile* in order of preference). If he has nothing better to do and knows there are characters in the *fog cloud* then he uses his Spellpool to call a *fireball* spell centered inside or a *lightning bolt* straight down the middle (as long as it won't hamper his respective golem). Remember he can use his open slots to call spells from his Spellpool if necessary. His *invisibility* will last until the start of his action on the 5th round (6th, if counting the surprise round). If, at APL 12, the golem appears to be taking a lot of damage, he will cast *transmute mud to rock* on it, fully healing it. When given a shot at Elhilbor, Malthos prefers him over other targets.

The reinforcements will not arrive for 20 rounds due to simultaneous attacks by Marionnen's demons on Zeech's most powerful bodyguards and advisors. If they do and the fight is still going, use the hobgoblins and clerics from *Encounter Two*. This probably swiftly ends the fight. The PCs still get full experience and their reward if this happens.

Results:

- If Elhilbor dies or is captured, the PCs are kicked out of the palace and given a day to get out of town. Before they do, a message is sent to them from the Brotherhood.
- If Malthos escapes, the PCs are kept around for the rest of the festival, guarding Elhilbor at night (though Malthos does not return). While they gain no favors, Elhilbor will pay them 375 gold per person for their efforts. They also receive a message from the Brotherhood, which includes instructions on how to get out of the palace unseen.
- If Malthos dies/is captured, the PCs are paid their 375/750 gold, get some of Malthos's equipment, and receive a favor. They are allowed to stay at the palace until the end of the festival. They also receive a

message from the Brotherhood, which includes instructions on how to get out of the palace unseen.

Give them *Player Handout #3* (and #4 if necessary).

Treasure: Elhilbor rewards the following items to the PCs (enough to make the gp cap). He will still keep items for lower APLs available to the PCs for purchase for a short time (i.e. Adventure access) even if they are not listed in the treasure entry. Malthos' items are indicated by a † on the AR.

APL 8: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 458 gp – *brooch of shielding* (125 gp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp) **APL 10:** Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 1759 gp – *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp), *scroll of cloudkill* (93 gp)

APL 10: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 941 gp – *brooch of shielding* (125 gp), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (150 gp)

APL 12: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 1,357 gp – *bag of holding type II* (416 gp), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (150 gp)

If they wish to rescue the Brotherhood Leader, proceed to *Encounter 7*. If not, proceed to *Conclusion F*.

ENCOUNTER 7: OUT OF THE PALACE

If the PCs have teleportation magic available and know of a place near the docks to teleport to, they may do so; proceed to *Encounter 8*. If not, then they must get out with the aid of the Brotherhood agent (or possibly their own ingenuity).

If the PCs defended Elhilbor, following the instructions given in *Player Handout #4* will get them to the kitchen. Read or paraphrase the following:

Following the directions given in the message, you open the secret door and proceed through a short maze of tunnels before arriving in a cavernous kitchen lit only by a banked fire. As you enter, a half-orc steps out of the shadows and says, "I am glad that you have chosen to aid us [if the PCs worked with Elhilbor, follow this with "despite your contract with the false prince's lapdog"]. I will disguise you as hobgoblin and goblin guards and provide you with a set of orders sending you to the docks. There, find the ship 'The Kraken's Lament' and tell the captain you are fishermen looking for a lucky catch."

He quickly gathers together a couple disguise kits, as well as some tabards, weapons, and

miscellaneous pieces of armor. Once done, you find yourselves looking just like a patrol of Zeech's finest.

The agent takes 10 on the PCs' disguises and only makes minor changes to disguise them as guards. Thus, his total is a 22, modified by each PC's Charisma modifier. The orders are forged with a DC 31 Forgery check.

Once the PCs are ready to go, read or paraphrase the following:

Checking the corridor for any guard patrols, the half-orc then motions you toward the door across the hall. He whispers, "Good Luck! You'd best hurry, as a guard patrol comes through this corridor every five minutes. That door will take you through a hall and into the barracks. From there, you can easily get to the barrack's gate, where you'll need to display those orders." He then closes the kitchen door behind you.

Opening the door across the hall, you find yourselves in a peculiar room. 35 feet wide, 45 feet long, and 15 feet high, it is patterned with 5 by 5 tiles with a glowing, red hand imprinted on them. 9 make a box pattern on the floor and ceiling while another 3 run along each wall. Each sheds the light of a torch. At the other end of the room sits another door.

The trap for this room is rather complex. It only triggers at night, when at least two creatures are in the area between the center red hand tile and the door opposite their entry. The actual trap is located in the center red hand tile and is hidden from magical detection by a *Nystul's magic aura* spell (CL 13).

APL 8 (EL 10)

Heightened (7th) Mind Fog Trap: CR 8; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [7th] *mind fog*, 15th level caster, DC 20 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Heightened (7th) Song of Discord Trap: CR 8; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [7th] *song of discord*, 15th level caster, DC 20 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Heightened (7th) Mind Fog Trap: CR 8; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [7th] *mind fog*, 15th level caster, DC 20 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Heightened (9th) Song of Discord Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *song of discord*,

19th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

APL 12 (EL 12)

Heightened (9th) *Mind Fog* Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *mind fog*, 19th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Heightened (9th) *Song of Discord* Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (10 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *song of discord*, 19th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

As you cross the midpoint of the chamber, suddenly all the hands save the one in the center of the floor go out. A thin mist appears around you, clouding your senses; with a start, you realize that all your allies have been replaced by enemies...or have they?

If any PC fails against the *song of discord* trap, have the party roll initiative. Short of knocking the affected PC(s) out, dispelling or negating the effect, or hitting them with *calm emotions*, nothing can be done to stop the 50% chance each round of the spell's duration.

Keep track of how long the PCs remain in the room, as a patrol comes by every 5 minutes. If the patrol happens by while the PCs are fighting and the alarm goes off. The patrol does not enter the room as they know about the trap. Instead, they ready themselves on their side while the hobgoblins in the barracks prepare on theirs. If the PCs do not have some form of teleportation magic, they are attacked by elite soldiers supported by priests of Hextor.

All APLs (EL 14)

Hobgoblin Fighters (12): hobgoblin Ftr5; hp 47; see *DMG* page 117.

Human Clerics (2): human Clr10 (Hextor); hp 68; AL LE; *Domains*: Destruction and War; see *DMG* page 115.

Elhilbor is not pleased with them if they are caught in the act; if they do not make a DC 50 Diplomacy check, he has any captured PCs imprisoned until the end of the festival. If they succeed on the Diplomacy check, he simply has them tossed out of the palace with a warning. Imprisoned PCs have all of their gear stripped. A cleric of Hextor (see above) then casts *mark of justice* on imprisoned PCs set to cause a -4 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws if the PC lies, then casts *discern lies* (DC 18) to interrogate the prisoner and learn his intent for setting off the trap.

Meanwhile, Elhilbor oversees the interrogating and makes a Sense Motive check against any Bluff of the PCs. If all captured PCs succeed in deceiving Elhilbor and the cleric, or they are truly innocent (which is unlikely if they are in this situation), then Elhilbor releases them. If they attempt to lie and fail, the adventure is over for those PCs. Proceed to *Conclusion F* (as if the PCs had aided Malthos, but failed).

Once the PCs deal with the trap, read or paraphrase the following:

After the climax of the trap, the remainder of the trip to the docks is a breeze. The guards at the gates barely glance at your orders before letting you through and returning to their warm gatehouse.

Outside the gates, the celebrating continues late into the night. Joining the crowds, you soon find an alley to remove your disguises before continuing on your way to the docks.

Proceed to *Encounter 8*.

If the PCs instead aided Malthos, the Brotherhood agent has a slightly more ludicrous, yet feasible, suggestion for escaping the palace:

Hurrying back to the kitchens to meet with Urgan, you find that the corridors are alive with the movement of palace guards. However, this serves you well as you are able to blend in. Arriving at the kitchens, Urgan quickly directs you through another door and down a corridor to a large storeroom filled with crates and barrels.

"I don't know what you did, but the guards are running around claiming several dozen demons appeared out of nowhere! Last I heard, most of the false prince's most powerful bodyguards and advisors were dead! Anyway, they won't look for demons inside these supply crates that are to be moved out to the docks this morning." So saying, he begins opening up crates and barrels.

While the idea seems somewhat ludicrous, it really is the best way Urgan can get them smuggled out. There are no unguarded secret passages out or sewer grates large enough for them, and it's highly unlikely that they could bluff or fight their way past the guards at the moment.

If they wish to try, though, the redhand room is no longer trapped, and the barracks gate is defended by a large force of hobgoblins (use the forces from *Encounter Two*). The PCs will need some sort of forged writ that requires a DC 23 Forgery check and a DC 34 Bluff check. Attacking the gates brings in reinforcements quickly; after five rounds of combat, a second patrol arrives

accompanied by Elhilbor (but no more after this). If the party is captured, see above on adjudicating the situation. If the PCs attacked and killed any guards however, they are simply imprisoned for 52 TUs with hardly a trial. However, if the party focuses on fleeing instead of attacking the guards (using *fly* to go over the walls for example) you may assume they are able to escape into the city.

Assuming they take the smuggling route:

Convinced by Urgan that the crates are the safest route out, you allow yourselves to be packed in. You are each given a crowbar to help you get out. Before closing you inside Urgan tells you, "Look for the ship called the Kraken's Lament, and tell the captain that you are fishermen looking for a lucky catch." As you lie in the cramped and stuffy darkness, you hear the uproar of the palace slowly descend into the normal sounds of everyday life. Soon, you hear the doors to the storeroom open, and the tromp of a couple dozen feet. Your crates are lifted to the tune of grunts and complaints and then carried for several minutes before being set down.

After the sounds of more loading, a rumbling begins as the wagon you were loaded on starts moving. Another hour or so passes, as the sounds of the Festival reach you, though not as loud as the night before. Finally, the wagon slows and your crates are unloaded. The rumble of the wagon heads off into the distance and silence returns. Now would probably be a good time to get out.

The PCs are able to get out and may make their way to the ship without trouble.

Proceed to *Encounter 8*.

ENCOUNTER 8: UNDER THE SEA

Looking around the docks, you find the Kraken's Lament; a trim looking ship, its name is explained by the odd bowsprit it bares: a very large preserved tentacle.

As you approach the ship, you note a pair of sailors keeping watch at the ramp. At your request to speak with the captain, they lead you on deck, where a large grey-bearded man in brightly colored clothing awaits. He grins at your message and says, "A lucky catch ye say? Well then, we'd best be pushing off now – they say the luckiest fish swim at dawn." He begins

bellowing orders to his crew, who quickly get the ship underway.

Captain Samuels of the Kraken's Lament: Fighter 5/Expert 5

- He's an old sea dog, but grateful for the PCs' courage
- The cell holding the leader appears to be part of rock formation known as the Sleeping Dragon (because the above water portion was sculpted by someone to resemble one).
- It's almost directly South of Alhaster and East of Admunfort, in heavily patrolled waters.
- His ship's name comes from a battle he and his crew had with a kraken; he spins a wild tale of daring whose only proof is the preserved kraken tentacle used as a bow spirit.
- If asked about dangers of the deeps, he mentions all sorts of sea creatures, including sharks, dragon turtles, and kraken. He also mentions the lack of light.
- He will provide two teleportation tokens; snap one, and you and 3 others will travel to a chosen location.
- In addition, a 7th level cleric of Osprem on board will prepare and cast up to 4 1st, 3 2nd, 2 3rd, and 1 4th level spells for the party (selected from the *PH* only) at normal NPC spellcasting charge.

PCs who make a DC 35 Knowledge (arcana) check realize that the tentacle belonged to a kraken. A DC 25 Knowledge (the planes) check reveals the kraken was half-water elemental.

Once the PCs are done speaking with the captain, read or paraphrase the following:

The next couple days pass uneventfully as the crew goes about their business keeping the ship on course. The captain proves quite the storyteller; when not bellowing orders at the crew, he has no problem stretching your ears with an endless number of tales of the sea.

Midmorning of the third day, the captain mentions that the rock formation should be within sight in a couple hours. However, not half an hour later, the lookout spots a warship bearing the symbol of Redhand, which turns its course toward your ship.

As it grows closer over the next hour, the captain suggests you get ready to go overboard and swim the remainder of the way. The route to Admunfort passes well west of the ship's current position, and the Redhand vessel will likely escort the Kraken's Lament there once they catch up.

Once the PCs are done casting preparation spells and ready to go, read or paraphrase the following:

Diving into the Nyr Dyv, you make your way south, hopefully toward this rock formation the captain spoke of. An hour passes as you swim through murky waters, with nothing but the occasional school of fish meeting your gaze.

Unbeknownst to the party, a half-water elemental kraken and his minions have taken over the area around the rock formation. As the party approaches it, they are spotted by a patrol of water elementals. At APL 8 and 10, the patrolling water elementals attack the PCs. At APL 12, they report back to the kraken, who, feeling like showing off, uses his empowered *elemental swarm* spell-like ability to gather some extra reinforcements before proceeding to battle.

If the PCs have lights, the water elementals spot them long before the PCs are able to, as the light shows up from several hundred feet away. The enemies will gain a surprise round against the PCs.

If the PCs are not using lights (in other words, all have darkvision), the water elementals will have to be within 60 feet to discover them. Thus, the PCs have a chance of seeing them. Give them a DC 16 spot check (taking 10, -8 for size, +8 for terrain, and +6 for distance) to see the elementals. At APL 12, the elementals will not engage if spotted but will instead flee and warn the kraken. When the elementals and kraken return, another DC 16 spot check allows the PCs to act in the surprise round.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Water Elemental, Elder: hp 228; see *Monster Manual* 159

APL 10 (EL 13)

Water Elementals, Elder (2): hp 228; see *Monster Manual* 159

APL 12 (EL 15)

Advanced Half-Water Elemental Kraken: hp 396; see *Appendix Two*

Water Elementals, Large (7): hp 96*; see *Monster Manual* 159

Water Elementals, Huge (3): hp 208*; see *Monster Manual* 159

Water Elemental, Greater: hp 273*; see *Monster Manual* 159

*Hit Points maximized due to *elemental swarm*.

Tactics: At APL 8, the water elemental will approach as a vortex and attempt to grab all PCs inside it.

At APL 10, one water elemental will approach as a vortex while the other will be in its normal form. The normal one will attack those within the vortex; due to its size, it does not risk being pulled in.

At APL 12, the kraken begins with a *horrid wilting*. The following round, he approaches (jetting if he needs to). The kraken prefers to stay at "arm's length" (i.e. 30 feet) from the majority of the party and grab as many of them as possible. If they are all protected by *freedom of movement*, however, he will close and direct all of his attacks on one PC at a time. Feel free to toss in his quickened *cone of cold* whenever he can avoid most of his minions. If reduced to less than 70 hp, he will spray a cloud of ink and jet away, fleeing the battlefield.

The elder water elementals will use the same tactics as APL 10. The lesser water elementals will focus on those PCs not caught in the vortex.

Once the PCs have defeated the patrol, they may continue on to the rock formation. Have the PCs make a Search check. If they beat DC 35, it takes them half an hour to find the cell. For every 1 point below 35, it takes them an extra ten minutes. This may mean they can't find the cell before their water breathing runs out. Read or paraphrase the following once they locate the cell:

After scouring the rock formation for what seems like hours, you come across a tunnel opening that leads into an air-filled cave. Inside, you see [a man/a pair of men if Malthos was captured] manacled to the walls. The edges of the cave nearest the water are marked with magical runes.

A DC 23 Spellcraft check reveals that the runes created an effect in the cave similar to a *bottle of air*, continually providing breathable air to the cave.

The Brotherhood leader is chained to the wall and *feeble-minded*. He has a *ring of sustenance* to keep him alive. If the PCs worked for Redhand and captured Malthos, they find him locked up here as well, in a similar condition. It is up to the PCs to decide if they wish to take him with them.

Using the teleportation stones simply requires breaking them while visualizing a location, however they only have two stones which are capable of transporting a total of six characters, so if the PCs are playing with a full table of six, they may have difficulty getting everyone out that way.

Treasure:

All APLs: Magic: 416 gp – ring of sustenance
(2 @ 208 each)

If the PCs aided Malthos, proceed to *Conclusion D*. If they aided Elhilbor, proceed to *Conclusion G*.

CONCLUSION A

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Malthos and defeated Elhilbor.
- The PCs returned with Malthos.
- The PCs surrendered to Marionnen.

Results:

- If Elhilbor died, the PCs are granted some or all of his possessions as payment (dependent upon APL).
- If Elhilbor was captured, the PCs gain *Service to Redhand* in addition to some or all of his possessions (as indicated on the AR).

Barely a week after you leave Trallant, you are taking your ease in a tavern when a man rushes in, quite out of breath. Taking a moment to catch it, he then yells, "Zeech is dead!" A shocked silence descends upon the tavern; into it, he continues. "He was giving some big speech at the end of that festival he was holding. Apparently, he was gonna secede from the Empire! Anyway, I hear they are claiming it was assassins from Balmund and that they killed him by exploding! Commander Marionnen of Trallant took over after making some speech about getting revenge upon the clerics of Balmund for this."

Listening to the crowd question the man, you gather he doesn't know much else. However, as the days pass and more news arrives, it becomes clear that for better or worse, Marionnen is now Prince of Redhand. And it's all your fault.

CONCLUSION B

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Malthos and defeated Elhilbor.
- The PCs returned with Malthos.
- The PCs escaped from Trallant.

Results:

If Malthos escapes with them, the PCs gain *Malthos's Gratitude*. If Malthos brought them out, read or paraphrase the following:

Malthos's spell brings you into a small study. As you start to glance around, Malthos quickly runs over to a chest in the corner. Opening it, he reveals a large

amount of gold as well as a scroll. "There is your payment," he gasps as he grabs the scroll. (Turning around, he upends his bag of holding, spilling out Elhilbor.) He then chants the words on the scroll and disappears. Though you do not hear from him again directly, the mage sends word that should you have need of any scrolls or wands, he might be able to help.

Investigation of the coin reveals that it is nothing but a permanent *minor image*. This is likely to infuriate the PCs, but Malthos is gone and there is little they can do about it (his current location makes him immune to *scrying*). He still gives them his favor and gives access to Elhilbor's equipment though.

If the PCs brought Malthos, read or paraphrase the following:

After escaping Trallant and getting to a safe haven, Malthos arranges for you to receive your payment before departing (leaving Elhilbor for you to deal with). Though you do not hear from him again directly, the mage sends word that should you have need of any scrolls or wands, he might be able to help.

If the PCs left Malthos, read or paraphrase the following:

After escaping Trallant and getting to a safe haven, you pause to wonder about the fate of Malthos (and those companions you left behind). There seems little you can do for (him/them), so you go on with your adventures.

If the PCs choose to go after the Brotherhood Leader at this point and they have teleportation magic available to get to Alhaster, they will find that the Kraken's Lament has already sailed.

If the PCs do not inform Zeech of what they know, read or paraphrase the following:

Barely a week after your escape, you are taking your ease in a tavern when a man rushes in, quite out of breath. Taking a moment to catch it, he then yells, "Zeech is dead!" A shocked silence descends upon the tavern; into it, he continues. "He was giving some big speech at the end of that festival he was holding. Apparently, he was gonna secede from the Empire! Anyway, I hear they are claiming it was assassins from Balmund and that they killed him by exploding! Commander Marionnen of Trallant took over after making some speech about getting revenge upon the clerics of Balmund for this."

Listening to the crowd question the man, you gather he doesn't know much else. However, as the

days pass and more news arrives, it becomes clear that for better or worse, Marionnen is now Prince of Redhand. And it's all your fault.

Alternatively, if the PCs send word to Zeech about Malthos' attempt to catch Elhilbor, and Elhilbor is neither dead nor captured, then Marionnen's assassination of Prince Zeech fails. The PCs receive *Service to Redhand* and *Ire of Marionnen*. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you try to relax after your close call at Trallant, a messenger from Redhand brings you a letter of thanks from Elhilbor. Based on the contents, it seems your information allowed him to uncover a plot to assassinate Prince Zeech. He adds that the newly independent Principality of Redhand owes you a service which you may call on at any time.

CONCLUSION C

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Malthos.
- The PCs returned with Malthos.
- The PCs were defeated by Marionnen's troops.

Results:

- Dead PCs' remains may be recovered through WCI.
- Living PCs are used as slave labor for 52 TUs before escaping.
- PC items may only be recovered through WCI benefits.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Working as slave labor in Trallant is certainly not the highlight of your career, though at least you're not dead. Little word of the outside penetrates into the slave camps you work at, but you do hear after a few weeks that Prince Zeech is apparently dead. Commander Marionnen is now the new prince of Redhand and is quite busy making war upon Balmund.

However, this means little to your working conditions. As weeks turn to months, you despair that you will ever escape this place alive; just as you are about to collapse, however, a way out appears. The sole guard watching you and your companions falls asleep, allowing you to escape nearly a year after you were imprisoned. With whip scars and what little possessions your friends could recover, you set off to reclaim your life.

CONCLUSION D

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Malthos.
- The PCs rescue the Brotherhood Leader

Results:

Read or paraphrase the following:

Teleporting away from the underwater prison cell, you find yourselves arriving right on target. Clearly, Ralishaz was too busy sneezing to curse you. After getting the man you rescued cured of the feeblemind spell, he thanks you and directs you to some allies of his. They provide you with some useful contacts for magical items, as well as promising to pay your upkeep whenever you are in the area. Leaving them behind, you proceed once more to the Mug and Hearth in Balmund to meet Malthos for your payment.

If Elhilbor got away, the PCs gain the *Hero of the Brotherhood* plot point. Read or paraphrase the following:

However, Malthos never shows and never sends a message. While you are waiting for him at the inn,...

If Elhilbor died or was captured, the PCs gain the *Hero of the Brotherhood* plot point. Read or paraphrase the following:

However, Malthos never shows. Instead, you are awaiting him one evening when a demon suddenly appears and drops a sack before you. "Complements of my master. He thanks you for your efforts in aiding the fool Malthos," he says, before disappearing. Inside the sack, you find (some of) the equipment Elhilbor was wearing the night you captured him.

Barely a week after this encounter, you are taking your ease in a tavern when...

Continuing for both, read or paraphrase the following:

...a man rushes through the door, quite out of breath. Taking a moment to catch it, he then yells, "Zeech is dead!" A shocked silence descends upon the inn; into it, he continues. "He was giving some big speech at the end of that festival he was holding. Apparently, he was gonna secede from the Empire! Anyway, I hear they are claiming it was assassins from Balmund and that they killed him by exploding! Commander Marionnen of Trallant took over after making some

speech about getting revenge upon the clerics of Balmund for this."

Listening to the crowd question the man, you gather he doesn't know much else. However, as the days pass and more news arrives, it becomes clear that for better or worse, Marionnen is now Prince of Redhand. And it seems it that it's all your fault.

CONCLUSION E

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Malthos
- The PCs were defeated by Elhilbor or Elhilbor got away.

Results:

The PCs receive *Banned in Redhand* and *Ire of Marionnen*.

Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs were defeated:

Your trial is short and to the point. Elhilbor serves as your judge, already recovered from the battle. You are found guilty of sedition against Redhand, for which the punishment is death. However, the court shows leniency by allowing past acts of your group in service to Redhand to decrease the penalty.

Add up all favors of Redhand and Prince Zeech the party has and consult the chart below. If any PC has one or more negative plot points with Redhand or Prince Zeech, that specific PC's punishment is two less per plot point than that party's.

- 0: Execution (PCs remains are recoverable)
- 1: 40 years hard labor (escape after 52 TUs)
- 2: Impressed into the Redhand Navy (jump ship after 20 TUs)
- 3: Exiled without possessions
- 4+: Exiled with possessions; Dead PCs are raised at their expense.

Read or paraphrase the following:

While awaiting your sentencing, you hear your guards chattering amongst themselves. From what you gather, it appears that Prince Zeech has seceded from the Empire of Iuz and has issued the order for an invasion of Balmund. Perhaps it was the priests of that town who hired Malthos to go on this fool's mission...

Alternately, if the PCs simply failed to kill or capture Elhilbor:

It is not long before you hear the news. After your failure to capture Elhilbor, a plot against Zeech's life was uncovered and foiled. This dovetailed on the announcement of Zeech's official secession from the Empire of Iuz. To make matters even more interesting, it appears Zeech lays the blame for the plot on his life against the clerics of Balmund and consequently, troops from Redhand are marching north even now to settle the score.

CONCLUSION F

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Elhilbor.
- The PCs did not rescue the Brotherhood Leader

Results:

If Elhilbor died or was captured, the PCs receive nothing. Read or paraphrase the following:

Having left Alhaster and your failure far behind, you are relaxing in a tavern one day when a man rushes through the door, quite out of breath. Taking a moment to catch it, he then yells, "Zeech is dead!" A shocked silence descends upon the inn; into it, he continues. "He was giving some big speech at the end of that festival he was holding. Apparently, he was gonna secede from the Empire! Anyway, I hear they are claiming it was assassins from Balmund and that they killed him by exploding! Commander Marionnen of Trallant took over after making some speech about getting revenge upon the clerics of Balmund for this."

Listening to the crowd question the man, you gather he doesn't know much else. However, as the days pass and more news arrives, it becomes clear that for better or worse, Marionnen is now Prince of Redhand. And you can't shake the feeling that it's all your fault.

If Malthos escaped, the PCs receive the *Ire of Marionnen*. If Malthos died or was captured, the PCs receive the *Ire of Marionnen*, the *Service to Redhand* plot point. Read or paraphrase the following:

Having successfully defended Lord Elhilbor (and removed the threat of the mage Malthos), you are given a good set of seats at the final ceremony of Prince Zeech's celebration. Thus, you hear first hand the astonishing news as Prince Zeech announces that Redhand will be seceding from the Empire of the Old

One. He continues that as the attacks upon the palace have been linked to the clerics of Balmund, Redhand's first act as an independent country will be declaring war on Balmund.

The crowds, at first stunned by this dual declaration, quickly herald their approval with cheers and whoops. In fact, looking around you, the only person who doesn't look positively jubilant is Commander Marionnen of Trallant. And for some strange reason, he seems to be glaring in your direction...

CONCLUSION G

Conditions:

- The PCs aided Elhilbor.
- The PCs rescue the Brotherhood Leader

Results:

If Elhilbor died, the PCs receive *Hero of the Brotherhood*. If they also rescued Malthos, they receive *Malthos' Gratitude*. Read or paraphrase the following:

Teleporting away from the underwater prison cell, you find yourselves arriving right on target. Clearly, Ralishaz was too busy sneezing to curse you. After getting the man you rescued cured of the feeblemind spell, he thanks you and directs you to some allies of his. They provide you with some useful contacts for magical items, as well as promising to pay your upkeep whenever you are in the area.

Malthos also thanks you for your efforts in freeing him, though he is still annoyed with you for defeating him. He says that should you have need of any scrolls or wands, he might be able to help.

A week or so later, you are relaxing in a tavern when a man rushes through the door, quite out of breath. Taking a moment to catch it, he then yells, "Zeech is dead!" A shocked silence descends upon the inn; into it, he continues. "He was giving some big speech at the end of that festival he was holding. Apparently, he was gonna secede from the Empire! Anyway, I hear they are claiming it was assassins from Balmund and that they killed him by exploding! Commander Marionnen of Trallant took over after making some speech about getting revenge upon the clerics of Balmund for this."

Listening to the crowd question the man, you gather he doesn't know much else. However, as the days pass and more news arrives, it becomes clear that for better or worse, Marionnen is now Prince of Redhand. And you can't shake the feeling that it's all your fault.

If Elhilbor survived, the PCs receive the *Ire of Marionnen*, the *Ire of Prince Zeech*, *Hero of the Brotherhood*. If they also rescued Malthos, they receive *Malthos's Gratitude*.

Teleporting away from the underwater prison cell, you find yourselves arriving right on target. Clearly, Ralishaz was too busy sneezing to curse you. After getting the man you rescued cured of the feeblemind spell, he thanks you and directs you to some allies of his. They provide you with some useful contacts for magical items, as well as promising to pay your upkeep whenever you are in the area.

Malthos also thanks you for your efforts in freeing him, though he is still annoyed with you for defeating him. He says that should you have need of any scrolls or wands, he might be able to help.

A week or so later, you begin hearing rumors that Prince Zeech has seceded from the Empire of Iuz. As time passes, not only are these rumors confirmed, but you also hear that he has declared war on Balmund. Besides that, the only changes to life are the bounty hunters and assassins that have been hounding you since you rescued that fellow from Prince Zeech's grasp...

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 2

Surviving or disarming the trap

APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	360 XP

Encounter 3

Defeating Elhilbor and his inevitable

APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Encounter 6

Defend Elhilbor

APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Encounter 7

Surviving or disarming the trap

APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	360 XP

Encounter 8

Defeating the kraken and/or elementals

APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 8	225 XP
APL 10	270 XP
APL 12	315 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 8	1125 XP
APL 10	1350 XP
APL 12	1575 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 1

All APLs: Coin: 500 gp

Encounter 6

APL 8: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 458 gp – *brooch of shielding* (125 gp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp)

APL 10: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 941 gp – *brooch of shielding* (125 gp), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (150 gp)

APL 12: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 1,357 gp – *bag of holding type II* (416 gp), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp), *cloak of resistance +2* (333 gp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (333 gp), *hat of disguise* (150 gp)

Encounter 8

All APLs: Magic: 416 gp – *ring of sustenance* (2 @ 208 each)

Conclusion A or D

APL 8: Magic: 1,300 gp – *+1 shadowed, hellforged chain shirt of silent moves* (800 gp), *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp), *heward's handy haversack* (166 gp), *+1 heavy mithral shield* (168 gp)

APL 10: Magic: 2,666 gp – *amulet of health +4* (1,333 gp), *cloak of charisma +4* (1,333 gp)

APL 12: Magic: 3,374 gp – *+1 merciful hellforged longsword of sudden stunning* (917 gp), *mask of lies* (1,416 gp), *scepter of obedience* (1,041 gp)

Total Possible Treasure

If the PCs aid Malthos:

APL 8: Coin 500 gp; Magic: 1,716 gp; Total 1,300 gp (916 over cap)

APL 10: Coin 500 gp; Magic: 3,082 gp; Total 2,300 gp (1,282 over cap)

APL 12: Coin 500 gp; Magic: 3,790 gp; Total 3,300 gp (990 over cap)

If the PCs aid Elhilbor:

APL 8: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 874 gp;
Total 1,649 gp (349 over cap)

APL 10: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 1,347 gp;
Total 2,132 gp

APL 12: Loot: 25 gp; Coin: 750 gp; Magic: 1,773 gp;
Total 2,548 gp

Special

Malthos's Gratitude: You gain Regional access to either two Core arcane spells (max 5th) or one wand of a Core arcane spell (max 4th) of the conjuration, evocation, or necromancy school. Members of Hellstone Tower also gain Regional access to *greater dimension door*^{SPC}.

Scroll (or wand) of _____
Scroll of _____

Service to Redhand: Select one of the following:

- Pardoned for crimes against Redhand (must be selected if PC has enmity or is banned from Redhand; remove all enmity and banned points).
- Each favor of Redhand spent (including this one) gains the character Regional access to one of the following (cross out all others): *ring of invisibility*, *boots of speed*, *portable hole*, *monk's belt*, *cloak of resistance +4*, *armbands of might*^{CAD}, *ring of theurgy*^{CA}, *explosive enhancement*^{CW}, *helm of glorious recovery*^{MH}, *caustic surge*^{DMG2}, or *lightning surge*^{DMG2}. Defenders of Morannon Keep gain access to one additional item.
- Receive the title of Squire of Redhand as well as access to a half-price mansion or grand house along with accompanying lands. You must be a Defender of Morannon Keep or a Citizen of Redhand with at least two favors with Redhand (which must be spent).

Iron of Prince Zeech/Marionnen: During future Bandit Kingdom adventures, you must make a Will save against *scrying* (DC 20) or spend one extra TU dealing with bounty hunters/babau assassins. This expires one year after the play date.

Hero of the Brotherhood: You gain free standard upkeep in future adventures set in Redhand. In addition, you gain Regional access to one of the following items (cross out all others): *hat of disguise*, *ring of mind shielding*, *wand of invisibility*, *wand of protection from evil*, or *vest of escape*.

Members of the Brotherhood gain Regional access to all of the above items, plus one of the following (cross out all others): *holy weapon enhancement*, *medallion of thoughts*, or *staff of healing*.

Cell members are automatically upgraded to senior cell members, regardless of prerequisites or time requirements.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

*Elhilbor's Items

†Malthos' items

APL 8:

- *Brooch of shielding*[†] (Adventure; *DMG*)
- *Gloves of fortunate striking*^{*} (Adventure; *Miniatures Handbook*; 2,000 gp)
- *+1 heavy mithral shield*^{*} (Adventure; *DMG*; 2,020 gp)
- *+1 hellforged shadow chain shirt of silent moves*^{*} (Adventure; *DMG* and *DMG II*; 9,600 gp)
- *Ring of sustenance* (Adventure; *DMG*)
- *Scroll of greater teleport*[†] (Adventure; *DMG*; CL 18; 3,150 gp)

APL 10 (all of APL 8 plus the following):

- *Amulet of health +4*^{*} (Adventure; *DMG*)
- *Cloak of charisma +4*^{*} (Adventure; *DMG*)
- *Cloak of resistance +2*[†] (Adventure; *DMG*)
- *Hat of disguise*[†] (Adventure; *DMG*)

APL 12 (all of APLs 8-12 plus the following):

- *+1 hellforged merciful longsword of sudden stunning*^{*} (Adventure; *DMG* and *DMG II*; 11,015 gp)
- *Mask of lies*^{*} (Adventure; *Complete Adventurer*)
- *Scepter of obedience*^{*} (Adventure; *Miniatures Handbook*)
- *Bag of holding type II*[†] (Adventure; *DMG*)

APPENDIX 1: NPCS

Malthos Pe'handru: Male human Wiz5 (conjurer)/Green Star Adept2/Mage of the Arcane Order4; CR 11; Medium humanoid (human); HD 9d4+9 plus 2d8+2 plus 16; hp 80; Init +11*; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+2 Dex, +6 *greater mage armor*, +4 *shield*, +1 natural); BAB/Grp +5/+4; Atk +4 melee (1d6-1, slam) or +7 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, mwk dagger); SA Spellpool II; SQ DR 10/adamantine (100 points total), guild member, unnatural metabolism +2; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +15; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 10.

*With *nerveskitter*.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15 (+19 casting defensively), Decipher Script +13, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +9, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local: Iuz's Border States) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Move Silently +7, Spellcraft +21; Combat Casting^B, Cooperative Spell*, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll^B, Silent Spell^B, Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Still Spell^B.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Flan, Old Eeridian.

Spellpool (Su): If Malthos leaves a spell slot of the appropriate level open, he can call a number of spells per day from the Arcane Order's Spellpool whose total levels are equal to or less than five. He must pay off any spell debt accrued through use of this ability within four days.

Guild Member: As a member of the Arcane Order, Malthos gains all the benefits of guild membership, including a place to stay and eat for a reduced rate, access to the order's library, laboratory workspace, and access to the group's Spellpool.

Unnatural Metabolism (Ex): Malthos has a +2 bonus on saving throws against poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and necromancy effects.

Possessions: *bag of holding type II*, *brooch of shielding*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *dust of disappearance*, *elixir of hiding*, *elixir of sneaking*, *gloves of Dexterity +2*, *hat of disguise*, *oil of silence*, *scroll of gaseous form*, masterwork dagger, spell component pouch.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/5/4/3; CL 10; +7 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash*, *detect poison*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, 1st—*grease* (DC 16), *magic missile* (3), *nerveskitter**, *ray of enfeeblement*, 2nd—*OPEN SLOT*, *false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 17), *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*, *silent shield*, 3rd—*OPEN SLOT*, *greater mage armor* (2)*, *silent fox's cunning*, *silent knock*, 4th—*Evard's black tentacles*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*

(DC 19), *solid fog*, *stoneskin*, 5th—*silent dimension door*, *silent fire shield*, *transmute mud to rock*.

*New spell described in *Appendix 3*.

Active Spells: *greater mage armor* (CL 10), *false life* (CL 10), *see invisibility* (CL 10), *silent fire shield* (CL 10), *silent fox's cunning* (CL 10), *silent shield* (CL 10), *stoneskin* (CL 10).

Powered-Down Suite: HD 9d4+9 plus 2d8+2; hp 64; Init +6; AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 natural); SQ DR 2/adamantine; Int 16.

Skills and Feats: Decipher Script +11, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local: Iuz's Border States) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Spellcraft +19.

Spells Prepared 1st—*grease* (DC 14); 2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 15); 4th—*Otiluke's resilient sphere* (DC 17).

Elhilbor: Male human marshal 3/ranger 1/rogue 1/bloodhound 2/exemplar 1/justiciar 2/spymaster 3; CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d6+4d8+4d10+26; hp 100; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (20*), touch 11, flat-footed 18 (19*) (+1 Dex, +5 armor, +3 shield); BAB/Grp +9/+10; Atk +12 melee (1d8+1 nonlethal/19-20 plus 1d6 non-lethal, +1 *merciful longsword*); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+1 nonlethal/19-20 plus 1d6 nonlethal, +1 *merciful longsword*); SA crippling strike, nonlethal force, nonlethal strike +1d6, sneak attack +2d6; SQ cover identity, favored enemy humans +2, magic aura, major aura (motivate attack), mark (1), minor auras (motivate charisma, motivate dexterity), quick change, ready and waiting, scrying defense, skill artistry, skill mastery, swift tracker, trapfinding, undetectable alignment, wild empathy; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10 (12), Int 14 (16), Wis 12, Cha 18 (22).

*Includes bonus from hellforged armor.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +30 (+36*), Diplomacy +34 (+40*), Disable Device +4, Disguise +39 (+45*), Forgery +19, Gather Information +32 (+38*), Hide +15 (+20), Intimidate +29 (+35*), Knowledge (local) +8, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +2, Search +13, Sense Motive +21, Survival +13; City Slicker†, Combat Expertise, Endurance, Improved Feint, Improved Grapple, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Gather Information), Track.

*Bonuses in parentheses indicate bonuses with Elhilbor's Motivate Charisma active.

†This feat is from *Races of Destiny* but is not required to run this scenario.

Cover Identity (Ex): While disguised as Baron Ulik, Elhilbor gets +4 on Disguise checks and +2 on Bluff and Gather Information checks.

Crippling Strike (Ex): When striking a foe with a Nonlethal Strike, Elhilbor deals 1 point of Strength damage.

Mark (Ex): Elhilbor can target an individual humanoid or monstrous humanoid foe to better hunt that enemy.

Magic Aura (Sp): Elhilbor can use *Nystul's magic aura* at will (CL 3).

Major Aura – Motivate Attack (Ex): All allies within 60 ft. gain +1 to melee attacks.

Minor Auras – Motivate Charisma, Motivate Dexterity (Ex): All allies within 60 ft. gain either +6 to Charisma checks and Charisma based skills or Dexterity checks and Dexterity based skills.

Nonlethal Force (Ex): Elhilbor can use a lethal weapon to deal nonlethal damage without taking the normal -4 penalty.

Nonlethal Strike (Ex): When dealing nonlethal damage and a foe is flanked or denied their Dexterity modifier to AC, Elhilbor deals an additional +1d6 nonlethal damage.

Quick Change (Ex): Elhilbor can don a disguise in 1d3 minutes and don or remove armor in half the normal time.

Ready and Waiting (Ex): A bloodhound is ready for trickery at all times. He can ready an action against his mark, even outside the initiative sequence.

Skill Artistry (Ex): +4 competence bonus on Sense Motive.

Skill Mastery (Ex): Elhilbor can take 10 on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks.

Undetectable Alignment (Ex): Elhilbor is always protected by *undetectable alignment*.

Languages: Common, Cold Tongue, Infernal.

Possessions: +1 heavy mithral shield, +1 merciful hellforged longsword of sudden stunning, +1 shadowed, hellforged chain shirt of silent moves, amulet of health +4, cloak of charisma +4, gloves of fortunate striking, headband of intellect +2, Heward's handy haversack, mask of lies, refuge gem, scepter of obedience.

Physical Description: Varies.

APPENDIX 2: APL 12

ENCOUNTER 8: UNDER THE SEA

Advanced Half-Water Elemental Kraken: CR 15; Gargantuan outsider(water, aquatic, augmented magical beast); HD 24d10+264; hp 396; Init: +6; Spd: Swim 20 ft; AC 23, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (-4 size, +2 dex, +15 nat armor); Base Atk +24; Grp +48; Atk: +32 (3d8+12/19-20, tentacle); Full atk: +32/+32 (3d8+12/19-20, 2 tentacles) and +30/+30/+30/+30/+30/+30 (1d6+6, 6 arms) and +30 (4d6+6, bite); Space/Reach: 20 ft/15 ft (60 ft with tentacle, 30 ft with arm); SA Improved grab, constrict 3d8+12 or 1d6+6, spell-like abilities; SQ Darkvision 60 ft, ink cloud, jet, low-light vision, immunity to disease and water-based effects, +4 against poison; AL NE; SV Fort +25, Ref +14, Will +15; Str 34, Dex 14, Con 32, Int 24, Wis 22, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +33, Diplomacy +32, Hide +17, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (geography) +34, Knowledge (nature) +34, Knowledge (the planes) +20, Listen +33, Search +34, Sense Motive +33, Spellcraft +20, Spot +33, Survival +33, Swim +27, Use Magic Device +33; Combat Reflexes, Empower Spell-Like Ability(*elemental swarm(water)*), Improved Critical(Tentacle), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack(Tentacle), Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-like Ability(*cone of cold*).

Languages: Common, Aquan.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the kraken must hit with an arm or tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple attempt as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Constrict (Ex): A kraken deals automatic arm or tentacle damage with a successful grapple check.

Jet (Ex): A kraken can move at a speed of 280 ft once per round as a full round action. It does not provoke attacks of opportunity but must move in a straight line.

Ink Cloud (Ex): A kraken can emit a cloud of jet-black ink in an 80-foot spread once per minute as a free action. The cloud provides total concealment, which the kraken normally uses to escape a fight that is going badly. Creatures within the cloud are considered to be in darkness.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): 1/day—*acid fog, cone of cold* (DC 21), *control water, control weather, control winds, dominate animal* (DC 19), *elemental swarm(water), fog cloud, horrid wilting* (DC 24), *ice storm, obscuring mist, plane shift, water breathing*. Caster Level 24.

Skills: A kraken has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always take 10 on a Swim check. It can use a run action while swimming.

APPENDIX 3: NEW RULES ITEMS

Half-water Elemental Template

Half-water elemental is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature with an Intelligence score of 4 or more (referred to hereafter as the “base creature”). Because the half-elemental is still mostly flesh, it cannot be of the elemental type. Instead, the creature type changes to “outsider” and it gains the water and augmented subtypes. It uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

AC: Natural armor improves by +1.

Special Attacks: Half-water elementals with an Intelligence or Wisdom of 8 or higher possess the following spell-like abilities, using their hit dice as the caster level. Each ability is usable once per day. *obscuring mist, fog cloud, water breathing, control water, ice storm, cone of cold, acid fog, horrid wilting, elemental swarm, plane shift.*

Special Qualities: Half-water elementals are immune to disease and water-based effects and gain a +4 racial bonus on fortitude saves against poison.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +0, Con +2, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +2.

Skills: A half-water elemental has 8 skill points plus its Intelligence modified per hit die. Treat skills from the base creature’s skill list as class skills.

CR: Same as base creature +2.

(Excerpted from *Manual of the Planes*, pg 189)

Chain Spell

You can cast spells that arc to other targets in addition to the primary target.

Prerequisite: Any metamagic feat.

Benefit: Any spell that specifies a single target and has a range greater than touch can be chained so as to affect that primary target normally, then arc to a number of secondary targets equal to your caster level (maximum of 20). Each arc affects one secondary target chosen by you, all of which must be within 30 feet of the primary target, and none of which can be affected more than once. You can choose to affect fewer secondary targets than the maximum.

A chained spell uses up a spell slot three levels higher than the spell’s actual level.

(Excerpted from *Complete Arcane*, pg 76)

Hellforged

The hellforged template can be added to any suit of armor, shield, or weapon crafted on the Nine Hells of Baator by a smith native to that plane. Chain devils frequently make hellforged items for their masters, who outfit entire elite regiments with them.

A hellforged suit of armor or weapon has all the base statistics of the normal item except as noted here.

A good creature that wears hellforged armor or wields a hellforged weapon takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls.

Hellforged Armor and Shields

Cost: The hellforged template add 1,000 gp to the other costs associated with creating the item.

Hardness: The hardness of a hellforged armor or shield is increased by 1.

Hit Points: The hit points of a hellforged armor or shield are increased by 5.

Armor Check Penalty: The armor check penalty imposed by a hellforged armor or shield improves by 1 (minimum -1).

Arcane Spell Failure: The arcane spell failure chance imposed by a hellforged armor or shield increases by 5% (minimum 5%).

Special: A suit of hellforged armor grants a +1 bonus to its wearer’s AC whenever she is adjacent to an ally.

Hellforged Weapons

Cost: The hellforged template adds 1,500 gp to the costs associated with creating a given weapon.

Hardness: The hardness of a hellforged weapon increases by 1.

Hit Points: The hit points of a hellforged weapon increase by 5.

Special: A hellforged weapon deals an extra 1 point of damage to any foe that the wielder flanks.

(Excerpted from *Dungeon Master’s Guide II*, pg 277)

Sudden stunning

Weapons with the sudden stunning ability can, to put it simply, knock their targets into next week.

Activation: Activating a weapon with this ability is a swift action that must occur immediately after the wielder makes a successful melee attack.

Effect: On a successful melee attack, the wielder may cause the weapon to emit a surge of magical energy. Unless the target succeeds on a Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 wielder’s level + wielder’s Cha modifier), it is stunned for 1d4+1 rounds. This ability is usable a number of times per day equal to the wielder’s Charisma bonus.

Price: +2,000 gp.

Non-lethal substitution

You can modify an energy spell to deal nonlethal damage.

Benefit: Choose one type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, or fire). You can then modify any spell with the chosen descriptor to deal nonlethal damage instead

of normal energy damage. The nonlethal spell works normally in all respects except the type of damage dealt.

A nonlethal spell uses a spell slot one level higher than the spell's normal level.

Mage Armor, Greater

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: No

An invisible sheen of armor-shaped force surrounds you.

This spell functions like *mage armor* (PH 249), except that it requires no material component and its tangible field of force provides a +6 armor bonus to Armor Class.

Source: *Spell Compendium*, p. 136

Nerveskitter

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 immediate action

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

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: None (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You suffuse your ally with a brief, blue glow. He jerks away from you, as if he can anticipate your next action.

You cast this spell when you and your party roll for initiative. You enhance the subject's reactions in combat, granting it a +5 bonus on its initiative check for the current encounter. If the subject does not make an initiative check within 1 round, this spell has no effect.

Source: *Spell Compendium*, p. 146

Orb of acid

Conjuration (Creation) [Acid]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close

Effect: One orb of acid

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude Partial; see text

Spell Resistance: No

An orb of acid about 3 inches across shoots from your palm at its target, dealing 1d6 points of acid damage per caster level (maximum 15d6). You must succeed on a ranged touch attack to hit your target.

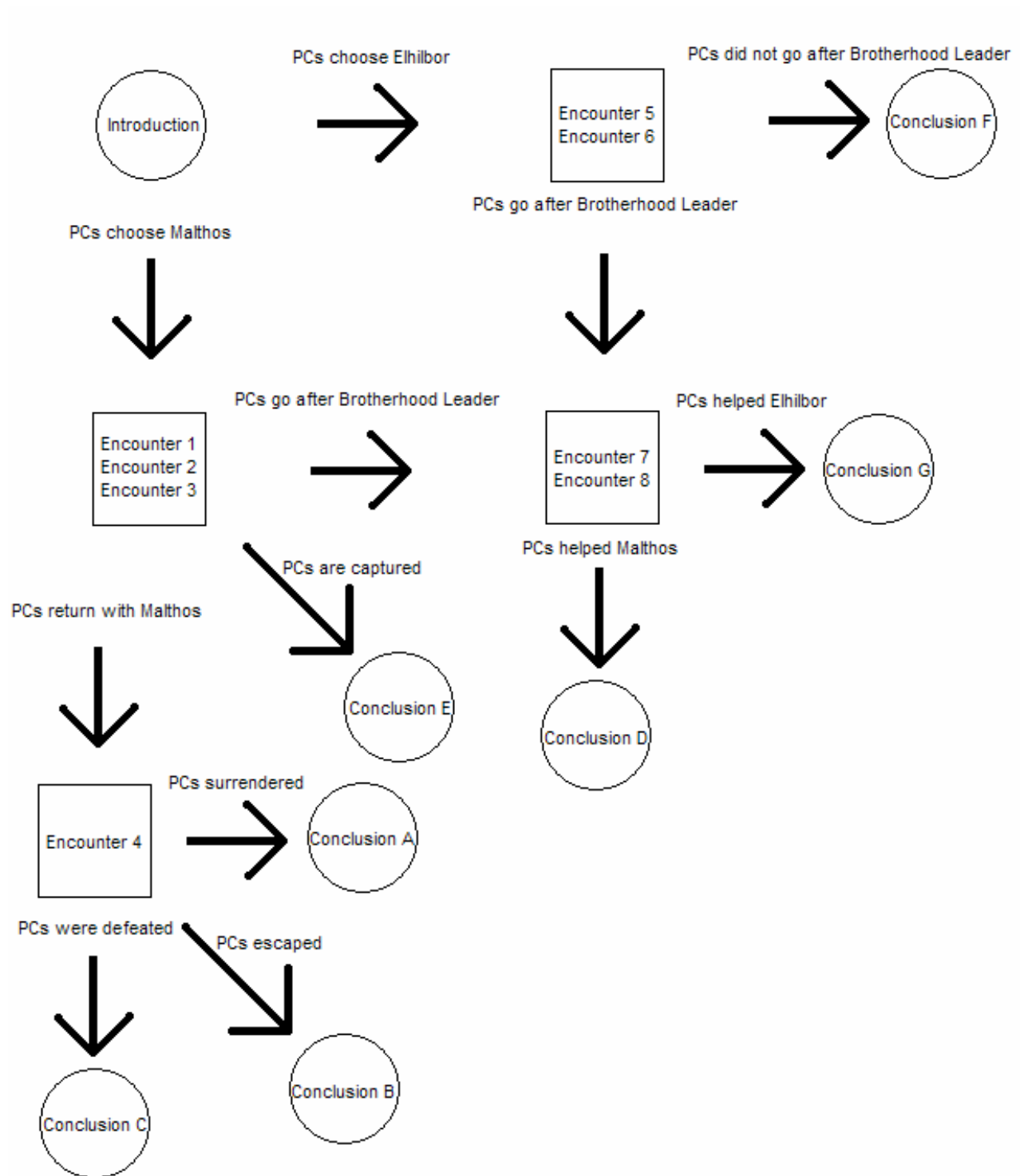
A creature struck by the orb takes damage and becomes sickened by the acid's noxious fumes for 1 round. A successful Fortitude negates the sickened effect but does not reduce the damage.

APPENDIX FOUR: GATHERING INFORMATION

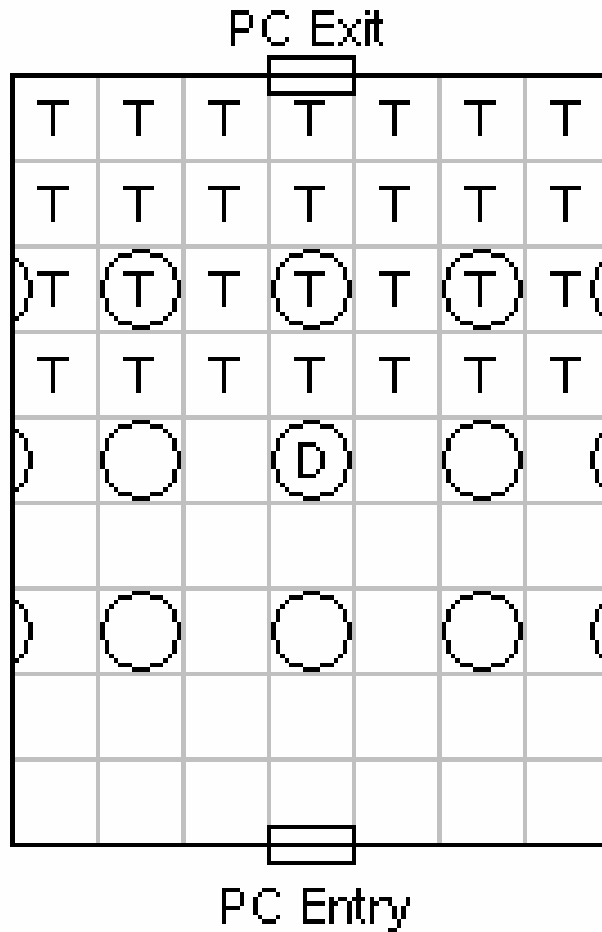
A Gather Information check takes $1d4+1$ hours. The DC of the check is 15. For each successful check, roll 1d6 and consult the chart below to randomly generate a rumor. For each 5 full points by which the PC's Gather Information check beats the DC, add 1 to the d6 roll, to a maximum of +3.

- 1: The clerics of Balmund have made a secret deal with Zeech. The two plan to seize the Duchy of the Artonsomay from the orcs that run amok there. Zeech is announcing the alliance at a festival to celebrate the 20th year of his rule later in the week. (False.)
- 2: Boneheart Cranzer is back! Ever heard of him? He's an archmage of incredible power who serves Old Wicked as governor of these Bandit Lands. He hadn't been seen for several years but he just showed up again earlier this year. He's a dastardly fellow. Folks say he is personally responsible for the complete destruction of that forest up north called the Tangles. (True.)
- 3: That Rhenee group, the Red Planks, is planning to assassinate Prince Zeech at the festival to celebrate the 20th year of his reign in Redhand. Word is they are pretty sore about him closing the ports last year. (False.)
- 4: The four priests of the Old One who rule here in Balmund are supposed to answer to Cranzer, but they are usually too busy bickering with each other to answer to anyone. Jaleena the Merciless is the most powerful politically, but the warrior-priest Hazakar Kogo could give her a run for her money if he wanted. Xerenal the Outsider and Norvin Blackteeth are the other priests but neither have the clout Jaleena and Hazakar have. As long as Balmund stays divided, it is probably a ripe target for neighbors like the Warfields or even Prince Zeech. (True.)
- 5: There was a big battle down in Trallant last Reaping. Boneheart Althea attacked Commander Marionnen and tried to kill him! I don't know why she was after him, but it sure caused a lot of destruction and Marionnen barely survived. I hear now Marionnen wants an alliance with Zeech to protect himself from the likes of her. (Partially true. Althea was after an item that had already been stolen from Marionnen [see *DYVI6-02 Fallen Hero, Risen God*]. Besides that, Boneheart don't "try" to kill people.)
- 6: You ever hear of Commander Marionnen, the guy who runs the garrison in Trallant? Word is he has just allied himself with Prince Zeech. They say he looks like a human, but that's just a farce. The secret is he's actually a cambion, the spawn of a true demon! Nobody ever sees his true form... well, nobody who's lived to tell about it anyway. A fiendish fellow like that surely has some ambitious plan. I wonder what it is. (True.)
- 7: Nobody can touch Zeech! His right hand man and captain of the secret police, Elhilbor, keeps him up-to-speed on all the goings-on in Redhand. You can't spit on the ground without old E' knowing. He's got a number of tricks up his sleeve. He even goes incognito sometimes, sneaking about in disguise and pretending like he is someone else to foil plots against the prince. (True.)
- 8: Jaleena the Merciless, one of the local rulers here in Balmund, is fuming at an attempted break-in of her temple a few months ago. Security has been pretty tight around here since then. The Iuzians are keeping a close eye on the city gates and highway patrols have been stepped up. Best to keep on your guard. (True.)
- 9: Don't tell anyone I said this, but something isn't right about the alliance between Marionnen and Zeech. The ruler of Trallant (Marionnen) is ambitious to be sure, and he and Zeech seem a bit too close for comfort. When you add in the fact that the armies of Trallant and Redhand have been doing "routine training exercises" along the border, it's pretty apparent that something big is about to happen. I'm willing to bet whatever that is will happen at Prince Zeech's big shindig down in Alhaster next week. (True.)

DM'S AID ONE: PLOT FLOWCHART

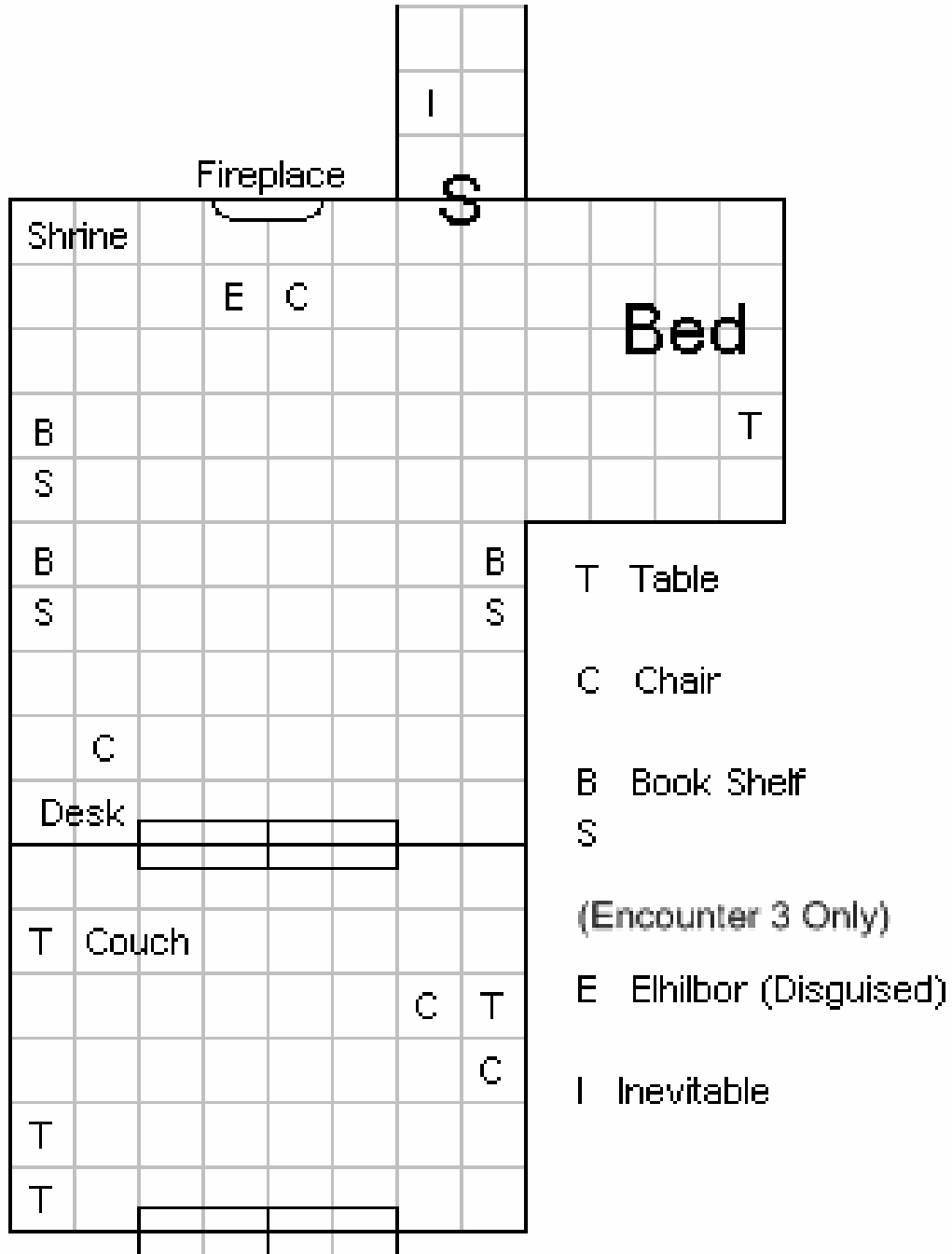


DM'S MAP ONE: REDHAND ROOM TRAP (ENCOUNTER 2 AND 7)

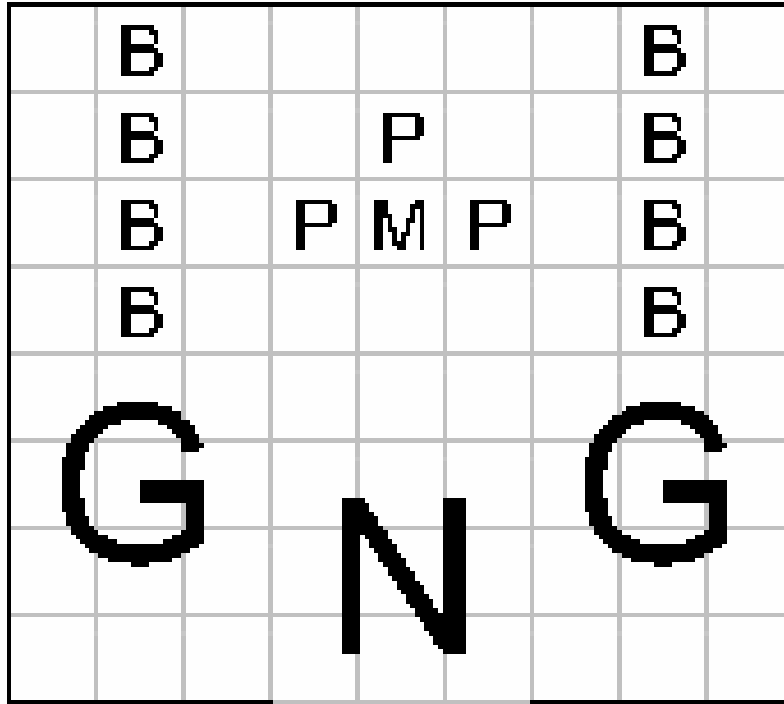


-) Redhand on Wall
- () Redhand on Floor or Ceiling
- T Trap Triggers
- D Trap Location (for Disarming)

DM'S MAP TWO: OGRE'S SUITE (ENCOUNTER 3 AND 6)



DM'S MAP THREE: DEMON AMBUSH (ENCOUNTER 4)



B Babau

G Glabrezu

N Nalfeshnee

M Malthos

P PCs

PLAYER HANDOUT ONE–A

Received from a *sending* spell:

This is Malthos. I have another task. Meet me at Mug and Hearth in Balmund in four days. Bring others. Tell barkeep "Wizard green."

PLAYER HANDOUT ONE-B

Received from a *sending* spell:

Associate,

This is Malthos, also of the Tower. Meet me at Mug and Hearth in Balmund in four days. Bring others. Tell barkeep "Wizard green."

PLAYER HANDOUT ONE-C

Received from a *sending* spell:

I am Malthos. We share Redhand as enemy. Meet me at Mug and Hearth in Balmund in four days. Bring others. Tell barkeep "Wizard green."

PLAYER HANDOUT TWO

Received from a *sending* spell:

Friend,

I speak for Elhilbor. Meet in Alhaster in six days. Speak to gate guards. Bring others. Task involves mage Malthos. Rewards: money, favors, pardons.

PLAYER HANDOUT THREE

Friends,

I represent a group that seeks the downfall of the false "prince" Zeech and a return of Redhand to the Shield Lands. Recently, however, our organization has been penetrated by Zeech's lapdog Elhilbor, and many of our members have been captured by his secret police. Among those taken was our leader, a powerful servant of the Archpaladin.

Through much gathering of knowledge, we have located his prison; it is secreted in an air-filled cave deep beneath the Nyr Dyv. If you would be willing to rescue him, we would gladly reward you with contacts to various magical item vendors in the Shield Lands. Our agent in the palace can put you in touch with a loyal captain who can get you to within swimming distance of the prison.

PLAYER HANDOUT FOUR

If you wish to aid our cause, you must sneak out of your rooms an hour before midnight. Use the secret door Elhilbor has been using; you can open it from your side by pressing the right eye of the stuffed moose head in the sitting room. Follow the passage beyond, taking a right, a left, and another left, and then open the secret door at the dead end (the button will be waist high on the left wall). This will bring you to the kitchens, where I will meet you. Do NOT let this letter fall into Elhilbor's hands.