

HIG1-09

OUT ON THE HUNT

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]

Highfolk Regional Adventure

Version 1

by Jason Bulmahn

The forces of good have discovered a den of evil deep within the confines of the Vesve. This hole of Iuz must be wiped out and soon. Something sinister is brewing. Are you up to the task? An event for the most patriotic of PCs. The Mystery of FMA part 3. For characters levels 1-6.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

PREPARATION

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

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

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

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

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

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

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

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

SCORING

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

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

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

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

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

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

DETERMINING AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

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

- 1) Determine the character level for each PC participating in the adventure.
 - 2) If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e., animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
- | CR | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1/4 and 1/6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1/3 and 1/2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
- 3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure—round up.
 - 4) If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the

APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

- 1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- 2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.
- 3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Mialee, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

If you are using a 591 CY adventure (campaign year 1) that uses the old Tiers, assume that the APL multiplied by 2 is the APL suitable for that encounter.

IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute: You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

Poor: You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

Common: You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

High: You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

Luxury: You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier	
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Deep within the Vesve forest, Iuz and his foul minions are slowly spreading their influence. Every day his forces become bolder and their missions more threatening. All too recently they have established a number of new outposts within the Vesve, to both spy on and strike at the forces of good. One of these new outposts is not far from Quaalsten, the home of the Rangers of the Vesve. The outpost, named Hollowblade, has been positioned near Quaalsten to both spy on the small garrison and perform a number of experiments with some of the forest creatures native to the area.

Over the past year the outpost has been very successful and managed to keep its presence a secret to the ever-vigilant rangers. Their experimentation has been their greatest success of all. Deep within the basement of the outpost, a wicked kennel has been set up. Worgs have been used in a terrible breeding process, introducing

the young to demonic taint. Over time, this taint has manifested itself in one prime subject, a full-grown half-fiendish worg named Bloodfang. Upon reporting their success, the masters of Hollowblade received instructions from their mysterious leader, F.M.A., to begin testing the horrible thing in combat. This is when everything went wrong.

Ten days ago, while escorting Bloodfang back to the outpost, the keepers made a small error. They left the mutilated carcass of a deer that Bloodfang had hunted lying on the forest floor. A Ranger of the Vesve came across the carcass while out on patrol and was stunned by the manner in which the poor beast was torn apart. Shocked by the carnage, the ranger, named Geldrin the True, decided to hunt down the wild beast that did this and put an end to it.

Geldrin spent almost two days carefully tracking the beast. His intensive labor led him straight back to the outpost of Hollowblade. Geldrin, being a senior member of the rangers, knew that the outpost was not a thing to be trifled with alone but he also knew that he must gather as much information as possible before returning to Quaalsten to report. Geldrin spent nearly four days observing the outpost. During that time, he got relatively accurate counts on the number of forces present and also discovered the pattern of their daily routine. During this entire time, Geldrin never saw the beast kept in the basement and never learned its nature until it was far too late.

On the evening of the fourth day, one of the orcish guards happened to spot Geldrin while on a patrol of the perimeter. Geldrin knew that the orc had seen him and slew him before he could cry out. Nonetheless, Geldrin knew that his scouting mission was over and that it was time to retreat from the area before the guard was noticed missing. The ranger packed up his belongings and fled the area.

On his trip back, Geldrin began to get paranoid. He was sure that he was being followed but could not see or hear anything. As the journey stretched on Geldrin became sure of his fears. A wicked game of cat and mouse ensued as Geldrin was being chased by none other than Bloodfang.

Back at Hollowblade the dead orc guard was discovered within hours and the commander of the outpost, a priest by the name of Xerick, order that Bloodfang be sent to slay the spy. In the days since, Bloodfang has been slowly tracking the ranger down, with a pair of his keepers in tow. The chase lasted two days and in the end, it was Geldrin who lost the race. As the keepers watched on, Bloodfang proceeded to tear the ranger apart.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Before the adventure begins, the heroes have been asked by Almeric Wilstone to find an errant ranger who has been missing for over a week. Almeric Wilstone is second in command within the rangers' organization.

The adventure begins just after the PCs have found poor Geldrin after his fight with Bloodfang.

Before Geldrin dies, he manages to tell the PCs of the outpost, how to find it, and briefly describe the thing that he fought. It is now up to the PCs to enact vengeance in the name of the fallen ranger and stop the horrible monster before it is loosed in the forest again.

The PCs must follow the instructions given to them by Geldrin to reach the outpost. The wandering path takes them through three interesting sites. The first is odd whispering stone that is a gathering place for serpents. The second is a strangely quiet clearing with and even stranger pool. The final spot is a long dead tree with an apparent campsite at its foot.

Before reaching the outpost, the PCs run into an errant Knight of the Vesve who questions them about their business. The knight is actually an illusion cast a pair of goblin tricksters. If the PCs give away too much information, they may find the outpost waiting for them.

Upon reaching the outpost the PCs may find it either waiting for them or completely unaware of their approach. In either case, the PCs must break into the small outpost to give the ranger the justice he deserves.

The outpost itself consists of many platforms above ground and a few chambers below. Once the outpost is breached and the orc guards dispatched, the PCs are free to deal with the commander of the place and some of his servants. Below the outpost, the PCs may find the secret breeding pen of the wicked worgs and their demonic guardians. They may also have a chance to gain valuable information about Iuz's minions within the Vesve and his plans for the future. Bloodfang is nowhere to be found.

Deep beneath the outpost, the PCs may also find the means to detect the wicked Bloodfang. Once the PCs are finished dealing with the outpost, the hunt can begin. Not a day later the PCs find the remains of Bloodfang's keepers, now the beast is loose. Over the next two nights, Bloodfang hunts the PCs until finally a battle ensues.

Assuming the PCs vanquish their foes they can return to Quaalsten to report their findings and earn some much needed rest.

INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to your players when you are ready to begin.

Deep red blood slowly drips from the dying man's fingers. Holding him gently you can feel his heart slowing, winding down into the dark embrace of death.

The past two days have been exhausting ones. It all began simple enough. Almeric Wilstone, the second in command of the Rangers of the Vesve, asked you to find one of his men that had gone missing. With the state of things in the Vesve as of late, the rangers need every single one of the members to protect the great wood from the Old One's taint. A small band of volunteers set out that same day.

The ranger you were sent to find goes by the name of Geldrin the True and his trail had grown quite cold. It took two

days to come upon his path and now it appears you have found him. Or rather what is left of him. His armor has been torn asunder, his mighty bow snapped, and his flesh rent. His lifeblood slowly spills onto the forest floor turning the cold hard ground into a crimson mud. A gasp for air escapes his cracked lips.

The adventure begins with the heroes standing in a small clearing, one that has recently seen battle. One of the PCs (choose one) is holding what is left of Geldrin the True, a ranger who has gone missing on a patrol mission. The heroes were sent out of Quaalsten to look for the ranger and have now found him. Only last night, Geldrin was locked in mortal combat with Bloodfang, the half-fiend worg from the outpost of Hollowblade. They are approximately two days south of Quaalsten.

As expected, the PCs will more than likely have a host of questions concerning the ranger, their surroundings, and the mission. Outlined below is all of the information that they have at the moment.

The Mission

As mentioned above, the PCs were in the small stockade down of Quaalsten when they were approach by Almeric Wilstone, second in command of the Rangers. The ranger asked them each individually if they would help him with this matter. They were given a description of the Geldrin, the missing ranger, and were also given directions to his normally traveled patrol route. The PCs have spent the past two days in search of the ranger and have finally found him in a small clearing.

The rangers offered no compensation for this mission other than their thanks for helping them in this time of need. The description of Geldrin given to them matches the man lying on the forest floor exactly.

The Dying Man

This small clearing is the spot where the worg caught up with Geldrin. Geldrin fought valiantly, but the beast was just too much for him. Bloodfang virtually tore the ranger apart and scattered him about the clearing. When the PCs begin to ask him questions, read or paraphrase the following to them in a weak and quiet voice.

"I thought I would die alone." The ranger begins, blood streaming from his mouth. "It is good that you've come... my knowledge will not be lost."

"Soon, my time will come. No, don't waste your healing on me I am too far-gone. Soon Ehlonna will heal me. I must tell you my tale. You MUST know, everyone must know." He pauses, in obvious pain. "A week ago I came upon a deer, a deer that had been torn apart. Whatever did it had to be stopped so I followed the tracks. Tracks that led to an outpost... an outpost of the Old One. Here, so close to home... so close. I watched them, the foul orcs in their twisted tree. I was found... I slew him... I ran."

The ranger grows silent for a moment. Just when you think he might have passed on his eyes snap open again.

"They sent IT after me. The thing with the cruel teeth and wicked claws. They sent it. They laughed as it gnawed on my

bones." Tears begin to mix with the blood that flows steadily from the ranger's eyes. "One day south to the whispering stone, then east to the silent pond, south again past the hanging tree. You must find the outpost; you must destroy it, now before the thing is unleashed. You MUST do this. For me, do this for me, avenge me." The ranger grows silent, the blood slows to a trickle and his chest raises no more.

Geldrin is dead. No amount of healing the players might possess will save poor Geldrin. His wounds are very severe and anyone who succeeds at a Heal skill check (DC 10) will be able to tell that very sharp teeth and claws caused the wounds. It will also reveal that the wounds appear to be less than a day old and it is amazing that he survived as long as he did.

A *Speak with Dead* spell will reveal a bit more information to players who ask the right questions. All that Geldrin knows is summarized below.

- Depending on the PCs tier, Geldrin knows the number of orcs present at the outpost. If tier 1 the number is 5. For tier 2 the number is 7 and for tier 3 the number is 12. Note that his numbers are not quite accurate. Geldrin also never saw Xerick, the dretch, or the worgs. Most of the orcs are armed with bows and battleaxes.
- Geldrin knows little about the thing that killed him, he definitely knows it had teeth and claws but he never actually saw it directly. He did notice that it could fly however.
- Geldrin can repeat the directions to the PCs as noted above but can give little other directional information.
- Geldrin knows that the guards at the outpost change their watches at noon and midnight each day and that a patrol of one or two orcs goes out every three hours or so to search the general vicinity of the outpost.
- The outpost appears to be a hollow tree with a number of ring platforms on the outside of it. There are a series of rope ladders connecting each level.

Searching Geldrin's body reveals very little useful gear as he was stripped after being attacked. The only things that can be found are as follows: a whetstone, a dagger, 3 small lunars (sp), and a pair of gloves with the symbol of the rangers upon them. The gloves are of nice make indicative of the Rangers of the Vesve but are heavily bloodstained.

The Clearing

The PCs will undoubtedly search the clearing very carefully. It is early winter in the Vesve, and although it has not snowed yet, the ground is quite hard and cold. Heroes that have the Track feat and succeed at a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 14) will notice the signs of short battle about twelve hours ago or so. This check also clearly reveals the tracks of Geldrin during the fight but those of his opponent are strangely absent for the

most part. Only partial tracks can be found and those do not reveal much other than the thing was large and appeared to be hopping about. In reality the thing was flying but allow the PCs to figure that out for themselves. Another Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 14) will reveal the bootied tracks of the things keepers. These orcs stood at the edge of the clearing to observe the fight. After the fight, the keepers came in, searched the body of Geldrin and left, heading south.

A *detect magic* cast within the clearing will reveal no magical signatures or auras of any strength other than the ones radiated by the PCs themselves.

There are a number of arrows scattered about the clearing, all of which have either been broken or are lodged into trees nearby. The spent arrows are imbedded into trees all around the clearing as if Geldrin was firing at enemies who were approaching from all sides. A Search skill check (DC 15) will reveal 3 arrows that are neither spent nor broken. Much of Geldrin's fine leather armor is torn up and scattered about the clearing. Most of his other gear is either missing or destroyed.

Please note that there are also pieces of Geldrin all about as well. No detail needs to be given here and please mind the sensitivity of your players at the table. Especially gruesome PCs may wish to determine if all of him is here. A Heal skill check (DC 15) will reveal that some of him is missing.

Choices

At this time the players should introduce themselves to one another as they have been traveling together for over two days now.

The PCs will undoubtedly want to give Geldrin a proper burial. Doing so will take roughly four hours in the hard winter ground. They might also build a pyre or some other funerary vessel, all of which are acceptable. Please note that Ehlonna protects Geldrin's body from animation. Any attempt to do so will result in a *bestow curse* being cast on the PC with a Will save, DC 20. In either case the animation fails every time.

The PCs may want to go back to Quaalsten to report their findings before going on to the outpost. Remind them of the urgency of the ranger's plea and that the distance back to Quaalsten is two days. Also remind them that it may be difficult to find this clearing again and that Geldrin's directions only apply from this clearing. If the PCs still persist allow them to return and report. Almeric Wilstone will hear their story and be very saddened by the news. He will then ask the PCs to investigate the validity of the story and report back. Almeric would normally send rangers on this mission but because of current problems, none are available. Also add 5 hit points per tier to Bloodfang as he is allowed to reach full maturity during the PCs delay (ie add 5 hit points for tier 1, 10 for tier 2, and 15 for tier 3).

The PCs will probably want to follow Geldrin's directions toward the outpost. This leads them to encounter one. PCs who continue to track their enemy (DC 14) follow the exact same path as that given by Geldrin.

ENCOUNTER 1: LANDMARKS

Encounter one is broken into three distinct areas, each one corresponding to one of the critical points mentioned by Geldrin before he died. The first is the Whispering Stone, followed by the Silent Pond, and finally the Hanging Tree. The tracks of the orcs lead right along this path and can be spotted at any time by a PC with the Track feat who succeeds at a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 15). Also note that there are no tracks for the worg that is with them as it is flying most of the way and sleeps mostly in trees.

The Whispering Stone

The heroes will have to travel one day to the south to reach the Whispering Stone. The path leads along that of an old deer trail and is relatively clear. Note that the PCs must make camp at least once along their journey. You should make note of their watch rotation at this time, as it will prove useful later in encounter four. The journey along this path takes the PCs through more and more ancient parts of the woods and winters chill has begun to set in. When the PCs reach the Whispering Stone read or paraphrase the following to them.

Winters chill has been an ever-present companion on your journey to the first landmark. The trees in this part of the Vesve are ancient ones, some of them well over four feet in diameter with long tendrils of shaggy moss hanging from their leafless boughs. Up ahead you spot a ring of tall and venerable pines. Their twisted branches blocking all view of what is within. A strange sound, almost like the whisper of a thousand faint voices can be heard.

The small trail that the PCs have been following leads right up and into the small ring of trees. From the outside, nothing within can be seen. Read or paraphrase the following to all the PCs that enter the ring.

Making your way through the twisted limbs and sharp needles you enter into the heart of the pines. Standing in the middle of the clearing is a tall grey stone. Nearly thirty feet tall, the stone emits a constant noise, as if thousands were trapped inside but lacked the strength to properly call for help. Writhing about the stone is a large mass of serpents. They crawl all about the rock in an unending pattern.

The rock bears no carvings and is not especially worked into any given form. The serpents pose no harm to the PCs and if disturbed, merely return to their pattern as quickly as possible.

A *detect magic* cast within the clearing, the stone radiates an “overwhelming” aura that stuns the PCs for one round and ends the spell. The stone radiates neither good nor evil, law or chaos, just strong magic of an indeterminate type.

The whispering made by the stone is just that, it cannot be interpreted by comprehend languages or tongues

as it is just babble. It sounds vaguely like elven but nothing more. The PCs may use magic to attempt to speak with the serpents. Any attempt to do so receive only one result over and over again, “The time is near, we are ready”. Not further information can be gained.

It is also important to note that the stone cannot be affected by the PCs in anyway and in essence has SR 40 and a DR 50/+5. The snakes however are quite vulnerable to attack as they each only have two hit points and an AC of 12. There are over 500 snakes crawling about the stone.

The path continues around the stone and through the other side. Please note that the tracks of the orcs do not enter this clearing, they go around. From here the PCs must go east along a dry creek bed to reach the second marker.

Silent Pond

The journey along the creek bed takes about seven hours. The tracks continue along this path but become increasingly harder to spot (as they are growing older and the orcs made a fast march back to Hollowblade). The DC for spotting the tracks has increased to 16. The PCs may need to camp during this trip unless they travel into the night. Make sure to confirm their watch schedule at this point as well.

When the PCs reach the Silent Pond, read or paraphrase the following to them.

The dry creek bed you have been following has led you down a slow and meandering path deeper into unknown lands. With the lines drawn on maps today, you must be nearing the lands cursed by the Old One.

With a final twist the path becomes straight and narrow, encroached on either side by large masses of bramble. The wind grows silent as you enter a narrow clearing dominated by a small silver pond. The grey light from the sky above mirrored in the perfectly still surface of the water. Nothing can be heard and even your footsteps sound muted.

The small pond is the second landmark given by Geldrin.

The pool is clean and potable water. It is also a strangely magical pool that gives visions to any that disturb it smooth mirror like surface. A *detect magic* cast on the pool reveals a strong presence of divination magic.

The first time the pool is disturbed, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

The clean surface of the pond ripples and distorts, slowly returning to a perfect stillness. Revealed in the pond is not a reflection of the sky but instead the view of the clearing you are in as if seen from above. In the vision, you can make out all of your fellow adventurers when suddenly a young deer springs into sight and begins drinking from the pool. After this sight, the image slowly fades, returning to a dull grey.

After the image fades away, a young deer springs into the clearing and begins drinking from the pond. Assuming that the PCs do not attack it, the deer drinks for a

moment, looks at all of the heroes and springs off into the forest. If attacked, the deer flees as quickly as possible.

The second time the pond is disturbed, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

The water ripples and calms again, this time turning into an inky blackness. In it, you can see a small campsite. Surrounding a fire that has burned low, you can clearly make out all of your companions, sleeping soundly, save (insert random PCs name here) who appears to be keeping watch. Suddenly the fire goes out and a pair of deep crimson eyes can be seen staring at all of you greedily. The image fades away.

The eyes seen in the image do not appear to be humanoid but nothing further can be gleamed from the brief image. The PC named should be a hero who is normally on watch at midnight, which will be the first time the PCs defenses are tested by Bloodfang in encounter four.

If the pool is disturbed a third time, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

Another image is revealed as the small pool calms once again. This time you see a verdant forest stretching on for as far as the eye can see. It appears to be early spring but something is amiss, the forest is burning. As the vision drops below the treetops you can see long columns of orcs, goblins, and humans marching through the woods lighting afire all that they come across. The image fades in a small burst of flames.

After this image, the water of the pool begins to boil and completely disappears in a matter of minutes. Any PC touching the water during this time takes 1d6 points of damage per round of contact. Once the water is gone, no more magic can be detected within sight.

The PCs must now turn south again well worn but overgrown forest path to reach the third landmark.

Hanging Tree

The forest path leads on for another five hours before reaching the third landmark, the Hanging Tree. When the PCs reach the tree, read or paraphrase the following to them.

The gnarled forest path has led to an area full of long dead trees. Their dry and dead branches creak loudly at the slightest breeze. As you continue, the forest around you thins until you find yourself at the edge of a vast clearing. Dominating the open space is a huge oak tree, long dead. Hanging from its stiff limbs are at least two-dozen ropes, all twisted in the form of a hangman's noose. An overpowering stench of decay lingers in the cold winter air.

This tree was used heavily during the Greyhawk wars to meet out justice to the foul minions of Iuz. Now it stands as a silent reminder to those dark times. The tree itself is quite harmless even though some evil has permanently tainted this place.

Anyone attempting to detect evil in this place gets a faint trace of evil from the tree itself. A detect magic will

reveal a dim aura of necromancy in the area, the kind left over by a powerful spell.

A careful inspection of the area may prove to give useful information to the PCs as well. Any hero with the Track feat who succeeds at a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 12) will discover that someone was here recently accompanied by a large host. These tracks are distinctly different from those of the orc tracks they have been following. The new tracks enter the clearing from the west, approach the tree, where they seem to stop and meander about for quite a while and then leave heading east. Most of the tracks appear to be barefooted humanoids although there is a single pair of slender boot prints among them. A Search skill check (DC 10) near the tree itself will reveal a number of cut ropes that look like they must have belonged to the tree.

The PCs may decide to cut down or burn down the tree. Cutting the tree reveals a viscous crimson sap that stinks horribly. Treat this as a stinking cloud effect cast at 5th level with a Fortitude save at a DC of 14. The stench fades from the area and the sap after only thirty seconds. Also note that the tree will not burn, especially not at this time of year. Any attempt only releases a stink as noted above but does little real damage. Persistent PC will have to spend roughly six hours cutting down the tree unless axes are available in which case the time is cut in half. Doing so has no bearing on the rest of the module.

When the PCs are done investigating the site, the trail continues onward heading south. The outpost is about six hours away along this path. Continue on to encounter two once the PCs have left the Hanging Tree and are on the way to Hollowblade.

ENCOUNTER 2: KNIGHT RUSE

This encounter occurs roughly half way between the Hanging Tree and Hollowblade (about three hours away). After determining a marching order, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

The path you are on is a treacherous one, riddled with gnarly roots and tangled undergrowth. Up ahead you see a lone figure standing on the path looking in your direction. The figure is dressed in supple brown leather armor with a dark green cloak. A longbow is in his hand while the other rests on a quiver strung to his back. The figure throws back his hood to reveal elven features as he calls out to you. "Ho there travelers, stand and present yourselves to a Knight of the High Forest!"

The man claims to be Marlen Greentree a Knight of the High Forest. He is a half elf, roughly six feet tall with deep blonde hair. In reality he is an illusion created by a major image spell cast by a pair of goblin tricksters to get information from the PCs. The goblins, Grinn and Borot, are mercenaries currently under the pay of the outpost sent to determine the course of any intruders. The knight is their favorite ruses.

The knight will talk to the PCs only briefly, asking them their business in the area and where they are from. He is most interested in finding out their mission and

will ask the question repeatedly until answered. If questioned about his business, he will tell them he is a Knight of the High Forest who is making his way to Quaalsten with an important message from Flameflower. Note that he will refuse to accompany the PCs or allow them to deliver his message for him. If the PCs are suspicious of the knight, he will gladly show them his insignia, a pair of silver antlers on a green field. The knight should be played as haughty and noble but not overly so.

After discussing matters with the PCs the illusionary knight will head off north and the PCs will never see the knight ever again. If attacked, the knight flees. If surrounded, the illusion disappears as the goblins flee with Grinn's fly spell.

Once the PCs have spoken with the knight or dealt with the illusion, they can proceed down the path to encounter three, Hollowblade.

Creatures: Grinn and Borot are a pair of goblin tricksters who hire themselves out to the forces of Iuz throughout the Vesve. Grinn is the brains of the operation while Borot is the muscle. While Grinn is a short pug faced goblin wearing red wizard robes, Borot is a huge hulking goblin wearing crude leather armor.

The two are hiding in the high branches of a tree fifteen feet from the path under the cover of an *invisibility* spell. If discovered, these two will escape using Grinn's fly spells if possible, using other spells as necessary. With Grinn's spells, the duo should not be captured or killed and know little of the outpost in any case. Please note that against a low level party, these two can be quite deadly and should not be used to bash the party unless given no other choice, which should be unlikely.

☛ **Grinn, male goblin Wiz(Illusionist)7:** CR 7; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 7d4; hp 23; Init +7; Spd 30; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); Atks +1 melee (1d4-2/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Wiz spells; SD Wiz spells (currently *mage armor* and *invisibility*); AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 7, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +7, Bluff +3, Concentration +10, Escape Artist +5, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +4, Move Silently +12, Scry +5, Speak Common, Speak Draconic, Speak Goblin, Speak Orcish, Spellcraft +11, Spot +4. Alertness, Brew Potion, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, red robes, pointed red hat, spell components, pouch with 30 large lunars (gp) and 15 small lunars (sp).

Spells Prepared (5/6/5/4/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*daze*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (x2), *mage hand*; 1st—*cause fear* (x2), *expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *silent image*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—~~*bull's strength*~~, ~~*invisibility*~~ (x2), *mirror image*, *scare*; 3rd—*fly* (x2), ~~*major image*~~, *slow*; 4th—*dimension door*, *rainbow pattern*.

☛ **Borot, male goblin Ftr6:** CR 6; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 6d10+21; hp 68; Init +0; Spd 30; AC 15 (+1 size, +3 studded leather armor); Atks +13/+8 melee

(1d8+1/19-20, longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 19 (22 from *bull's strength*), Dex 10, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Hide +6, Jump +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Speak Goblin, Spot +2. Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Sunder, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: Longsword, studded leather armor, whatever Grinn tells him to carry (including Grinn).

Development: If the PCs tell the illusion about their mission and specifically mention the outpost, Grinn and Borot will fly back to the outpost and warn them of the PCs approach. They will then leave well before the PCs arrive. If this occurs, consider the outpost on alert (see below) when the PCs arrive.

ENCOUNTER 3: HOLLOWBLADE

The outpost of Hollowblade is broken down into keyed areas as shown on DMs Map #1. Each area receives its own description as noted below. First however are a number of points about the outpost itself, such as general conditions and a discussion on what changes take place if the outpost is on alert. Enemies are described under the location where they are most commonly found but this is not always the case (such as when on alert). The DM may move some of the monsters as he sees fit throughout the outpost and into the surrounding environ.

Hollowblade is an outpost manned by the forces of Iuz. Depending on tier there are a good number of orcs here at all times. There is also a priest of the Old One named Xerick who oversees the outpost as well as some demonic servants who work tirelessly in the breeding den. Please note that in addition to this, Bloodfang and his four keepers can also be counted as inhabitants of the outpost although they are not there when the PCs arrive.

The outpost itself is situated around and underneath a large hollowed out tree that is long dead. It has no branches, only an enormous trunk that goes almost fifty feet into the air. There are three platforms surrounding the trunk at various heights, the first being a defensive platform used for stopping intruders and the other two being guard platforms. On the highest guard platform is a door leading into the tree trunk itself. Behind this door is a staircase that leads down below the tree into its root system. Here are the quarters for all of the guards as well as the commander. Also hidden down below is the breeding chamber where Bloodfang, the half-fiendish worg was created. All of the doors are made of strong oak and all of the walls below ground are made of hewn stone. The trunk of the tree can be breached as well with enough effort.

☛ **Wooden Doors:** 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; AC 5; Break DC 23.

☛ **Hewn Stone Walls:** 3 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 540; AC 5; Break DC 50.

☛ **Tree Trunk Walls:** 3 ft. thick; hardness 5; hp 360; AC 5; Break DC 40.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the rooms beneath the tree are lit with torches spaced out every twenty feet. When the PCs reach Hollowblade, proceed with area 1.

Outpost on Alert

The outpost can go on alert for a variety of reasons. The easiest being that the players told Grinn and Borot too much during encounter two. The second most common reason is to find a guard dead or missing. The outpost will also go on alert if the PCs are spotted during their approach. Once on alert, the outpost will remain so for one full day so long as the PCs do not make an appearance during that time.

The outpost takes roughly five minutes to reach full alert. Once this is done all of the following effects occur.

- None of the guards will go on patrol outside the outpost.
- Caltrops will be spread onto the platform that is area 3. The trap door in area 3 underneath the rope ladder leading to area 4 will also be unlocked.
- The rope ladder leading from area 3 to area 4 will also be soaked in oil. This is so that the orcs on level 4 can light in on fire if need be with a torch that will also be prepared.
- The rope ladder leading from area 2 up to the first platform (area 3) will be pulled up requiring the PCs to find their own means to reach the platform as described in area 2.
- All of the guards positioned on the platforms will be making rolls (as opposed to taking 10) on their Spot and Listen skill checks to notice approaching PCs, and if during the day, they will automatically notice any PC crossing the open field toward the tower.
- Any remaining guards, if any, will be positioned at the bottom of the stairs (area 6) waiting to ambush any that come down. This will remove them from their normally stationed locations.
- The door leading into the breeding chamber (area 11) will be locked, as will be the door leading into Xerick's chamber (area 10). Both these door increase to a break DC of 25 but can be opened with an Open Lock skill check (DC 25).

Patrols

If the outpost is not alerted to the PCs presence, the guards occasionally patrol the area surrounding the outpost. These patrols happen one every three hours (roughly) and consist on one guard at tiers one and two and two guards at tier three.

These guards on patrol never travel outside of earshot of the outpost, or roughly fifty feet into the woods. This is one of the few duties the guards take seriously and make active Spot and Listen skill checks to notice any hidden PC they come upon. If noticed or attacked, the guards will cry out at the first opportunity if given one.

These patrols usually only last about fifteen minutes. If the patrol does not return within thirty minutes, the outpost goes on alert. During this time no one leaves the outpost to look for the missing patrol, they instead prepare themselves for an ambush that may be approaching.

Area 1: The Clearing

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs arrive at Hollowblade.

The journey has been a long one but finally it comes to an end. Ahead of you, the narrow path widens into a vast clearing. Indeed it appears as if nature itself reviles this place and is trying to escape from it.

Standing in the center is the massive trunk of this desolate ring is a tree that is missing its top. The trunk must be at least twenty feet wide at its base and it rises over seventy feet before ending in a broken stump. Surrounding the trunk at three different levels are stout wooden platforms, the top two of which are crenellated. Each platform is mounted with wooden spikes pointing down to prevent ascension. Skulls are mounted on some of these and two desiccated corpses hang from them as well.

Nothing wholesome can live in this place.

This is Hollowblade, the outpost mentioned by Geldrin before he died. The PCs have many options here and may meet a very different response depending on whether or not the outpost is expecting them. Note that the secret entrance shown in area 13 is located nearly a half mile away and is quite impossible to find without a guide from the outpost.

The PCs may also spot guards on some of the balconies depending on the situation. If alerted to the PCs presence, the guards remain hidden behind their crenellations until the heroes are out in the open, only revealing themselves to fire upon the PCs with their bows. The PCs may notice the guards first however, by succeeding at a Spot skill check (DC 20).

If the guards are unaware of the heroes approach, they are merely relaxing on the platforms and keeping a light lookout. PCs may notice the guards under these conditions if they succeed at a Spot skill check (DC 13).

Once the PCs decide to make their way toward the tower, proceed to area 2.

Area 2: Ground Floor

This area represents the ground right around the base of the tree. Although there is no real danger here, the threat is getting to this location without being shot by the archers above. Once the PCs climb up to the second floor proceed to area 3.

The Killing Field

If the outpost is alerted to the PCs presence and it is during the day, consider all of the orcs in area 5 (the fourth floor) to have a readied action to fire upon any that get within 50 ft. of the outpost.

If the outpost is alerted to the PCs but it is night OR if the outpost is not on alert, the guards in area 5 must first notice the PC with an opposed Spot/Hide check to notice the approaching heroes. If successful, the guards should get their readied actions.

In either case, so long as the PCs move as a group each guard should only get one shot before all of the heroes are at the base of the tree and under the cover of the second floor platform. If the PCs stagger their approach, they all may be the target of multiple shots from the archers above.

Getting Up

Once around the base of the tree, the PCs must still climb up to reach the second platform. If the outpost has not been alerted, this is a simple task as the rope ladder is down. Climbing to rope ladder to area 3 does not require a roll.

If the rope ladder is not down (because the outpost is on alert) the PCs must find another way up. This might involve scaling the tree up to the second floor. This feat requires a Climb skill check (DC 15). Climbing up at the location of the ladder is simple but the PC may be fired upon as noted in area 4. The rope ladder will be sitting next to the opening if it has been pulled up.

Climbing up at any other location is a very tricky feat to accomplish. It first requires a Climb skill check (DC 15) to reach the underside of the platform. It then requires another Climb skill check (DC 25) to make the transition to the edge of the platform itself. Finally it requires one last Climb skill check (DC 20) to avoid injuring oneself on the spikes attached edges of the platforms. Failure on this roll deals 1d6 points of damage, although the PC still makes it up to the next level. These rules apply to scaling up any of the levels.

Area 3: Second Floor

This floor consists of a large open wooden platform with no railings. The rope ladder leading up to area 4 is on the opposite side of the tree as the rope ladder leading down to the ground floor. If the outpost is aware of the PCs presence, the players will be fired upon from above by the guards in area 4 through the large arrow slits in the platform above, see area 4 for further detail. This level contains a pair of traps however if the outpost is on alert.

Trap: The entire floor of this level is covered with caltrops if the outpost has been alerted to the PCs approach. These caltrops are easy to spot but will slow down the PCs as they make their way to the rope ladder on the other side. Clearing a 5 ft by 5 ft area of caltrops requires two full round actions to accomplish. For the purposes of the caltrops attack roll, the hero's AC does not include any shield, armor, or deflection bonuses. The PC does receive a +2 AC bonus if he/she is wearing shoes.

The PC is attacked once for each 5 ft square they move through. Wounded PCs move at half speed until the damage is healed, one day passes, or the PC receives a Heal skill check (DC 15). Creatures moving at half speed can take a standard action to move through the field of caltrops without taking damage.

✦ **Caltrops:** CR 1/2; +0 melee (1); Search (DC 5); Disable Device NA.

The second trap on this floor is a trap door located directly beneath the rope ladder leading up to area 4, the third floor. This trap door is normally locked in place so that the guards do not fall through but if on alert, the trap door is unlocked. Any PC weighing more than 50 lbs will set off the trap. PCs that do fall through hit the very solid ground 25 ft below.

Note that it is possible for the PCs to notice the trap and avoid it, only to fall on it later if the rope ladder is cut or burned. PCs falling from the ladder may take an additional 1d6 damage if they are over half way up the ladder when it gives way.

✦ **Trap Door:** CR 1; no attack roll necessary (2d6); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 15).

Area 4: Third Floor

This floor consists of a wooden deck surrounded by a three-foot high wooden wall. The floor of this level has six large arrow slits roughly 3 ft by 7 ft. The rope ladder leading up to the fourth floor is on the opposite side as the ladder leading down to the second floor. There are a number of orc guards stationed on this floor at all times.

Creatures: These orc guards are the first line of defense that outpost has against invaders. They are all dressed similarly in scale mail and have the requisite battleaxes. There is one modification to the standard orc however, instead of javelins, each orc at the outpost has a shortbow. These bows are poor make and are worth on a quarter value if resold.

APL 2 (EL 1)

✦ **Orcs (2):** hp 5, 6; with shortbows and twenty arrows each; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

APL 4 (EL 3)

✦ **Orcs (4):** hp 4, 5, 6, 6; with shortbows and twenty arrows each; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

APL 6 (EL 4)

✦ **Orcs (6):** hp 4, 5, 5, 6, 6, 7; with shortbows and twenty arrows each; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

Tactics: The orcs stationed on this floor has only two objectives, the first is to prevent any intruders from reaching this floor and the second is to deter intruders who reach the second floor below. As the PCs reach the third floor, if the orcs are aware of them, they will fire on

the PCs using their bows through the arrow slits. If the PCs have not been spotted, these orcs should receive opposed spot/hide rolls to notice the intruders. Any PCs who reach the third floor will be attacked by the orcs using their battleaxes. These arrow slits and the surrounding wall provide the orcs with one half cover from missile fire (+4 AC bonus).

If the outpost is on alert, these orcs will have doused the ladder leading up to this floor in oil. They will also have prepared a torch to light the ladder on fire as soon as any PC attempts to climb up. Heroes that are within five feet of the ladder get a Spot skill check (DC 15) to notice the scent of the oil. When lit, the rope ladder will burn through in only two rounds. During that time, any PC on the ladder will suffer 1d6 points of fire damage. Although it is possible to climb up in one round, any PC on the ladder when it burns through will fall down to the level below and suffer 1d6 points of falling damage. This damage may be greater if the trapdoor is unlocked, see area 3 for further details.

Treasure: Each orc has a poor quality shortbow and twenty arrows above and beyond their usual equipment. If the outpost is not on alert there will also be a flask of lamp oil, a torch, and a tinderbox here as well.

Area 5: Fourth Floor

This floor is made up of a wooden deck roughly eight feet wide with a gap to allow the rope ladder to reach down to the third floor. There is also a sturdy wooden door leading into the trunk of the tree to the staircase that leads below to area 6. A four-foot tall crenellated wall made out of wood also surrounds the floor. The level has a number of orc guards stationed upon it at all times.

The door leading into the stairwell has a lock but it is broken. Proceed to area 6 when the PCs descend the staircase.

Creatures: These orc guards are the lookouts of the outpost. They are all dressed similarly in scale mail and have the requisite battleaxes. There is one modification to the standard orc however, instead of javelins, each orc at the outpost has a shortbow. These bows are poor make and are worth on a quarter value if resold.

APL 2 (EL 1)

🗡️**Orcs** (2): hp 5, 6; with shortbows and twenty arrows each; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

APL 4 (EL 3)

🗡️**Orcs** (4): hp 4, 5, 6, 6; with shortbows and twenty arrows each; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

APL 6 (EL 4)

🗡️**Orcs** (6): hp 4, 5, 5, 6, 6, 7; with shortbows and twenty arrows each; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

Tactics: The primary job of these orcs is to prevent any intruders from entering the core of the outpost and the chambers below. The secondary job of these orcs is to spot intruders and raise the alarm.

These orcs only use their bows to fire upon the heroes as they approach the outpost as noted in area 2. They do this while the orcs below in area 4 are preparing for the PCs ascent. Once the PCs are slowly making their way up the tree, these orcs prepare to face off with any intruder that makes it up to their floor. Their favorite tactic is to wait until the first hero makes it up to this level and then spring forth to attack him without the help of his friends. Battleaxes are best for this kind of fighting.

The crenellations on the exterior walls of this floor make it extremely hard for these orcs to be fired on with missile weapons from outside. The walls give them three quarter cover (+7 bonus to AC).

Area 6: Meeting Chamber

Once the heroes have made their way down the stairs and into this chamber, read or paraphrase the following to them.

The stairs in the heart of the hollow tree have gone down and down for a very long way, indeed you must now be completely underground. The stairs have deposited you into a roughly carved rectangular chamber. Thick and gnarled roots hang from the ten-foot high ceiling.

Scattered about the room is a number of heavily patched tables and chairs. Most of the tables show signs of an untidy feast. In the southwestern corner of the room are a number of crates stacked up against the wall. A door is set into the opposite wall.

The heavy smell of stale ale and mildew permeates the air.

If the outpost is on alert, all of the remaining orcs from area 7 and their leader, Xerick, from area 10 are here to greet the PCs and do battle. If this is the case, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

Standing in the center of the room is a tall oridian man wearing coal grey robes surrounded by (fill in the correct number of orcs here) orcs. The man pulls back the hood of his robes to reveal a shining black skullcap above steel grey eyes. "Well, well, well. You've managed to cause quite a disturbance, much more than that ranger fool who we caught spying on us. I assume that you have dispatched my guards above. I guess I am just going to have to kill you myself."

At this point in time, combat should begin. See area 7 for full details on the remaining orcs and area 10 for full information concerning the tactics and actions of Xerick.

If the outpost is not on alert, this room is empty when the PCs arrive. There is little of interest in the room itself aside from the crates, which contain the following:

- Three spare rope ladders
- Six pints of lamp oil
- Fifty torches
- Eight tall grey candles
- One-hundred feet of hemp rope
- Two pairs of manacles w/ key

- Ten sacks
- One healers kit

Aside from that listed above, there are six badly broken tables and twenty-two chairs. The door leading to area 7 has no lock but it is often stuck (DC 15 to open).

Area 7: Barracks

Read or paraphrase the following to the players when they enter this chamber.

Opening the door reveals a vast chamber filled with two rows of bunk beds. Each one covered with filthy rags and moldy fur. Large amounts of garbage and bones form small heaps scattered about the space. The stench of orc sweat is heavy in this place.

If the outpost is not on alert, any remaining orc will be lounging in this room waiting for their shift up above. Suffice to say, they will be unhappy with the PCs disturbing their rest and attack.

Creatures: The number of orcs lounging in this room depends upon the parties tier. Only half of the orcs are wearing their armor (the other half are AC 10), although all of them have their battleaxes within easy reach.

If the outpost is on alert, all of these orcs will be with Xerick in area 6 awaiting the PCs arrival. They will all be wearing their armor under these circumstances.

APL 2(EL 1)

🐉 **Orcs** (2): hp 5, 6; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

APL 4 (EL 3)

🐉 **Orcs** (3): hp 4, 5, 6; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

APL 6 (EL 4)

🐉 **Orcs** (4): hp 4, 5, 6, 7; see *Monster Manual* page 146.

Treasure: Heroes that spend the time to search this den of filth may find a few things of value. A Search skill check (DC 15) will discover an ornate silver dagger. The dagger is obviously of elven design. It is stashed away underneath a ragged fur mattress. Another Search skill check (DC 10) will turn up a grand total of 8gp and 14sp in miscellaneous coins. All of the coins are of Highfolk mint.

Area 8: The Privy

This room smells worse than all the rest as it is the only privy in the entire outpost. PCs entering this room will immediately become nauseous but the wave of sickness passes soon after leaving. There is absolutely nothing of any value in this room.

Area 9: The Kitchen

This room smells nearly as bad as the privy next door. The room features two large tables, a small cooking pit, three barrels and a few shelves. Aside from the cooking utensils scattered around the room there is also scraps of

last night's meal slowly going rancid (it appears that they captured a deer). Of the three barrels, one contains water while the other two contain horribly strong ale with a strangely rancid taste.

There is nothing of value in this room.

Area 10: Xerick's Quarters

The door to this chamber is locked while Xerick is not within and is hence locked while the outpost is one alert (as he is in area 6). The door can be opened with a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 20). Once inside, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

Opening the door you see a small cramped room packed full of parchments, scrolls, and books lit by two green glowing torches. Underneath all of the clutter, you can make out a sturdy wooden bed, a simple desk and a trunk. Hanging from the center of the ceiling is a brazier with a strange green smoke pouring from it. Along the west wall, in a small alcove is a shire covered in grey wax. Hanging above the shrine is a stone skull with ruby eyes, the symbol of Iuz.

If the outpost is not on alert and any fighting in area 7 was not too loud, Xerick, the commander of the outpost will be sitting in this room, busily writing in his journal. If this is the case, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

Sitting upon a short stool at the desk is a tall oeridian man wearing coal grey robes. His hood is pulled back revealing a shining black skullcap. He looks at you with cold grey eyes. "Fools, can you not see that I am busy. I am afraid you will have to die for your lack of manners."

With that, Xerick rises and attacks the party.

Creatures: Xerick is about six and a half feet tall and is very well built. He always wears his skullcap to cover up his complete lack of hair. Dangling from his neck, but beneath his robes is the grinning skull symbol of Iuz. He also wears heavy black boots and chainmail armor. He wields a greatsword.

APL 2 (EL 2)

🐉 **Xerick, male human Clr2:** CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 2d8 +4; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 20; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +3 melee (2d6+3/19-20, greatsword); SA Clr spells; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 13. 6 ft., 6 in tall.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Spellcraft +1; Combat Casting, Marital Weapon Proficiency (greatsword).

Possessions: Chainmail, greatsword, holy symbol of Iuz.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): o—cure minor wounds (x2), detect magic, light; 1st—bless, change self⁶, cure light wounds, magic weapon.

*Domain spell; Deity: Iuz; Domains: Chaos (+1 caster level for all Chaos spells); Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

APL 4 (EL 3)

Xerick, male human Clr3: CR 3; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 3d8 +6; hp 23; Init +1; Spd 20; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +5 melee (2d6+3/19-20, greatsword); SA Clr spells; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 13. 6 ft., 6 in tall.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Spellcraft +2; Combat Casting, Marital Weapon Proficiency: Greatsword, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Chainmail, greatsword, holy symbol of Iuz.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *light*; 1st—*bless*, *change self**, *cure light wounds*, *magic weapon*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *shatter*.*

*Domain spell; Deity: Iuz; Domains: Chaos (+1 caster level for all Chaos spells); Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

APL 6 (EL 5)

Xerick, male human Clr5: CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 5d8 +10; hp 38; Init +1; Spd 20; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +7 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword); SA Clr spells; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 13. 6 ft., 6 in tall.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3; Combat Casting, Marital Weapon Proficiency: Greatsword, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Chainmail, greatsword, holy symbol of Iuz.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*; 1st—*bless*, *change self**, *cure light wounds* (x2), *magic weapon*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *shatter**, *spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*circle of protection versus law**, *cure serious wounds*.

*Domain spell. Deity: Iuz; Domains: Chaos (+1 caster level for all Chaos spells); Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Tactics: Xerick is bold and overconfident, especially within his own domain. If given proper warning, he does precast some spells to help him in the ensuing fight. If the spells are available, he will cast them in this order: *bull's strength*, *prayer*, *spiritual weapon*, *magic weapon*, and *bless*.

If the outpost is on alert, and Xerick is in area 6 with his guards, consider him to have precast all of the above named spells that are available to him before the PCs arrive. If the PCs descend the stairs under cover of *silence*

or similar magic, all that Xerick should have precast is *bull's strength*.

Remember that Xerick can swap out any of his spells for *inflict wounds* spells of an equal level.

Treasure: PCs that spend the time thoroughly searching Xerick's chambers may find quite a few interesting things. The chest is locked, requiring an Open Locks roll (DC 25) to open. The key is in Xerick's pocket, as are the keys to every other locked door in the compound. Inside the chest is a light crossbow with 5 +1 *crossbow bolts*. There is also a letter written by the mysterious F.M.A. Give the players PC Handout #1 when they decide to read the letter. There is also a small leather sack containing 10pp bearing the Furyondy stamp.

Sitting on the desk is a large leather bound journal, detailing the history of the outpost. Give the players PC Handout #2 if they spend the time to read the journal. The remaining papers, parchments, and scrolls scattered around the room are mostly drawings and notes concerning the experiments that have been taking place in the outpost. Going through them all paints an accurate portrait of what has been going on in the outpost, but no more information than what is already written in the journal.

The two torches on the wall are *everburning torches* that just happen to glow green. They can be removed easily.

The only other things of value in the room are the small ruby eyes of the holy symbol of Iuz. If pried loose, they are worth 30gp each back in Highfolk.

Area 11: Trap Hallway

If the outpost is on alert, the door leading into this hallway from area 7 is locked and only Xerick has the key. A successful Open Lock skill check (DC 25) will open the door however. Once the heroes open the door, read or paraphrase the following to them.

The door slowly glides open to reveal a corridor about twenty feet long that ends in another door.

This hallway contains a trap meant to keep intruders out and the worgs in if the situation called for it. The door leading into area 12, the laboratory, is not locked.

Trap: Located five feet away from either door in this corridor is a trip wire located about one foot off of the ground. If either is tripped, a heavy wooden portcullis drops from the ceiling cutting the room in half. The portcullis could possibly strike any PC that is standing in the area. In addition to this, the portcullis is also coated with a Terinav Root, a virulent contact poison.

Avoiding the trap as simple as stepping over the wires. It is important to note, that while the rogue in the party may check for traps and find the first trip wire, if they fail to continue the search, they may miss the second. Also note that disarming one trip wire does not disarm the other.

Once the portcullis has fallen, lifting it back into place requires a Strength check (DC 25). Any PC not wearing gloves that attempt this will be subject to the poison as well. Other statistics for the portcullis are noted below.

☠️**Poisoned Portcullis Trap:** CR 2; Reflex save (DC 15) avoids (2d6) plus Terinav Root contact poison (1d6 Dex/2d6 Dex); Fort save resists (DC 16); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 20).

🪵**Wooden Portcullis:** 3 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 30; AC 5; Break DC 23; Lift DC 25 (contact poison).

Area 12: The Laboratory

When the PCs enter this chamber read or paraphrase the following to the players.

The heavy scent of stale incense wafts freely from the now open doorway. Beyond is small chamber full of alchemical equipment. Vials and other glassware are connected forming an intricate array of glass and fluid. Most of the vials are full of oddly colored liquids while others are obviously full of blood. Carved into the center of the floor is small silver circle. A deep crimson stain is at its center. As you take in this scene, a strange growling can be heard coming from a passageway leading south.

This keepers use this chamber for all of their diabolical alchemical experiments. Their goal has been to build a better demon. As of this date they have had little success other than Bloodfang although a second generation is on the way.

The PCs must be careful not to damage all of the equipment in this chamber. Many of the agents do not reach well if mixed. If the lab is destroyed by the PCs, every one in the room must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer the effects of the alchemical gas. This gas does 1d4 initial Str damage and 1d4 secondary Str damage. The gas dissipates after two minutes. Destroying the lab has another effect as well; it alerts the dretch in area 13 to the PCs presence and gives them a little time to set up an ambush, see area 13.

Also sitting on the table is the *demon vial*. This item is the only thing in the room that glows if a *detect magic* is cast. It also radiates evil. The vial glows if within 60 feet of a demon or half-fiendish creature. This may prove invaluable when Bloodfang comes looking for the PCs.

The summoning circle in the center of the room was used to summon the demons in the next room, including the now dead vrock. The stain in the center of the circle is dried blood from that demon. A Heal skill check (DC 20) will reveal it to be blood, but not that of any normal humanoid. The circle itself is carved into the floor and is unbroken.

The growling noise coming from the south is made by worgs locked up in their prisons. PCs may make a Knowledge: Nature or Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 15) to identify the noise as the growling of wolves, although it is a strange growl.

If the heroes spend the time to fully investigate the chamber, a Search skill check (DC 15) will reveal a loose stone in the north wall. Behind this stone is a decrepit book. The book is called the demon tome and is described in more detail below.

Treasure: Hidden behind the loose stone in the north wall of the room is the demon tome. This book is covered in a scaly fireproof skin and its pages are made of ancient but well maintained parchment. The tome describes all sorts of demons, their means, and goals. Further descriptions of the tomes contents are given under the treasure section at the end of this module.

The *demon vial* is also sitting on the table amongst all of the other alchemical equipment. This vial glows when demons or half-fiendish creatures are near.

Area 13: The Breeding Pit

When the heroes finally venture south into this chamber, read or paraphrase the following to them.

A short corridor leads you into a large natural chamber with three rusty metal cages. The source of the growling heard before becomes evident, as there are three large and especially feral looking wolves penned up in one of these cages. Another of the cages stands empty, while the last contains a large and especially bloated wolf. Another corridor can be seen on the opposite site of the room.

Strange as the scene might be, it does not compare to the grotesque horror lying on a table next to the bloated wolf's cage. The thing is huge, much taller than a man with large feathery wings. Like a bird with the body of a man, you can clearly make out the head of a vulture that sits upon its shoulders. The thing appears quite dead, its blood draining off the table into a large bowl at the edge of the wolf's cage. Staring in revulsion, you see the bloated wolf wander over and drink from the dish.

Watching the scene with glee is a pair of squat humanoids, their hairless bodies covered with rolls of fat. As the wolf takes another sip the things hop up and down, their excitement is evident.

This outpost uses this chamber to perform all of their breeding experiments. One of the cages contains three male worgs (not wolves as described above) used to mate the one female worg in the cage next to the table. The pregnant female is then fed demon blood so as to produce half-fiendish offspring. Up to this point, Bloodfang is the only one to have grown to maturity. The others have either been stillborn or died shortly after birth. The two humanoids in the room are a pair of dretch, who have been summoned to tend to the worgs night and day.

Note that the worgs are much larger than normal wolves and this fact should be pointed out to the PCs. A Knowledge: Nature skill check (DC 10) will reveal the creatures for what they really are. All though the worgs can speak their own language, none of them can speak common and refuse to speak to the PCs even if a means are provided.

The female worg is currently very pregnant. Any hero that succeeds at a Heal check (DC 10) will realize

this fact. A Heal skill check (DC 15) will reveal that the worg will give birth within a week or two.

The dead thing on the table is in fact a terrible demon known as a vrock. This terrible beast is quite dead and has been for many days now. The strange Baklunish man mentioned in the logbook (area 10) summoned the vrock to serve this purpose.

The only resident missing from this chamber is Bloodfang and his keepers. They are currently out on an exercise from which they will never return, see encounter 4 for further details. The empty cage belongs to Bloodfang alone. Inside the cage is a large amount of refuse, straw, and bits of moldering meat. Heroes that search the cage may find an important treasure as noted below. PCs with the Track feat who succeed at a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 20) discover that an especially large wolf lived in the cage quite recently and that it frequently dined on fresh meat.

The corridor opposite the entrance goes on for about half a mile before exiting above ground into dense wilderness. This entrance to the outpost is nearly impossible to find without a guide and only the keepers and Xerick know about it.

Creatures: The two dretch in this room are the only real threat to the PCs. These two have been ordered not to release the worgs under any circumstances. Even if the worgs are somehow released, they flee the scene immediately using the cave exit. The pregnant female is too close to giving birth to flee or fight.

The dretch are also under strict orders not to use their *stinking cloud* ability in this chamber. Xerick placed this order for fear of disturbing the worgs and poisoning the unborn. As with the order not to release the worgs, the dretch will obey this order under fear of death from Xerick.

ALL APL

➤ **Dretch** (2): hp 7, 10; see *Monster Manual* page 41.

Tactics: Although there are only two dretch at all tiers, the dretch facing a tier one party do not attempt to use their *summon tanar'ri* ability to summon more dretch. At tier two, one of the dretch can attempt to use the ability and at tier three both do. Note that any new dretch cannot use their summon ability for at least one hour.

Note that the *demon vial* will glow when brought within 60 ft. of the dretch. This may be the PCs only indication as to the function of the vial until Bloodfang attacks.

Treasure: The only treasure to be found in this room is lost in the debris of Bloodfang's cage. Any PC that searches the cage and succeeds at a Search skill check (DC 15) discovers a pair of bracers. The leather bracers, *bracers of the true shot*, bear the symbol of the Rangers of the Vesve, a blue field with an oak tree in the center. These bracers belonged to Geldrin the True and are very magical. A *detect magic spell* will also reveal the location of

the bracers. For more information, see the treasure summary at the end of this scenario.

Leaving the Outpost

Once the PCs have conquered the outpost, they will more than likely decide to return to Quaalsten to report their adventure. This is where the fun really begins. If time permits proceed to encounter four, the hunter in the dark. If not, proceed to the conclusion.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: HUNTER IN THE DARK

Run this encounter only if time permits. If time is lacking, proceed directly to the conclusion under the heading "Straight Back".

Once the PCs have left the outpost, read or paraphrase the following to them.

After concluding your harrowing adventure at the outpost, you look onto a quiet path leading back to Quaalsten. Reversing the directions that Geldrin gave you make your way back toward the hanging tree. The journey there takes only six hours and at the end, the twisted tree returns to view.

A new sight avails you around the base of this twisted tree. Four orcs lie around the tree torn to pieces. There bear similar markings to the orcs from the outpost and one of them has a gigantic leather leash tied to his severed arm. The bodies look amazingly fresh. What ever did this must still be in the area.

These are the four keepers that watch after Bloodfang. The half-fiendish worg was taken out of the outpost the day before the PCs arrived for more training. Bloodfang had other ideas however, and slew all four of the keepers before they could take him back to his cage. Now the worg is loose and looking for more prey.

A successful Heal skill check (DC 10) will reveal that the wounds of the orcs are identical to those done to Geldrin. A *speak with dead* spell (each body receives a Will save to resist) only gets the same answer over and over again, "No Bloodfang, NO".

A PC with the Track feat may make a Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 10) to discover the tracks of the orcs in the area and one large wolf print. Note that there are no other prints because Bloodfang can fly.

The Hunt

Bloodfang does not confront the PCs here at the tree. A few ominous noises and paranoid glances is all the PCs should get (play this up as much as the players will tolerate). Instead Bloodfang hunts them, learning their movements and their tactics before striking. His hunt of the PC is summarized below by the night on which his attacks occur.

The PCs may grow tired of Bloodfang after his first annoyance and try to hunt the worg themselves. This will prove to be mostly a wild goose chase. Since Bloodfang only attacks at night, has an impressive Hide skill, and can fly, any attempt to find him should prove very

difficult at best, if not impossible. Attempts to track down the worg are left up to the DM discretion.

The First Night

The journey back to Quaalsten from the outpost will take at least four days. The heroes have already traveled half a day when they found the keepers. They will have to rest soon.

That night, Bloodfang visits the party although he does not attack. During the watch of the PC chosen at the pond (encounter one, the Silent Pool), Bloodfang sneaks up to the camp and uses his *darkness* ability on a stone, which he drops into the camp from above, right into their fire. When this occurs, read or paraphrase the following to the PCs.

The night grows long, and the silence becomes a heavy burden. Your ears strain at the slightest sound. Suddenly, the low burning fire of your camp goes out revealing a pair of burning red orbs, staring at you (point at the PC) from the trees above you. There is malice behind them, a burning hate for all things living. As soon as you move to wake your companions, the eyes are gone, the dim light from your campfire restored. Looking up to the branches above you, you see nothing.

Allow the PCs to mount whatever search they see fit but Bloodfang is long gone. He merely wanted a look at his next prey. Climbing up the tree to where the eyes were reveals the only proof that the thing was there at all. A pair of huge claw marks can be found on the branch, as if a giant animal were perching there.

From here, the rest of the night, and the next day's journey pass uneventfully, with no sign of the wretched Bloodfang.

The Second Night

On this, the second night of camp, Bloodfang first tests the heroes' defenses. Later that evening, after the PCs have relaxed again, Bloodfang attacks in full, this time going for the kill.

During the first watch, about three hours after nightfall, Bloodfang sneaks up to the camp. Allow the PCs on guard an opposed Listen/Move Silent skill check to hear his approach. For these purposes, Bloodfang receives a +5 circumstance bonus to his check because he glides into the area.

Once in the area, Bloodfang uses his *darkness* ability on a dead rabbit, which he drops to once again darken the camp. Then he watches for two rounds, allowing the PCs to wake and prepare themselves for battle. After the two rounds, he retreats into the night. Once the *darkness* takes effect, read or paraphrase the following to the PCs.

The deep darkness of night is made deeper by heavy cloud cover in the sky. A light drizzle falls, making the evening completely miserable.

Without notice, the darkness becomes complete. It is as if a heavy blanket were tossed over your eyes.

The DM should have the players roll initiative for these two rounds, starting when the camp goes dark or when the guards hear Bloodfang approach. Heroes that attempt to locate Bloodfang must succeed at an opposed Hide/Spot skill check to locate the beast. PCs without low light or darkvision suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to this roll because of the deep darkness of night. PCs within the area of the *darkness* created by Bloodfang cannot make a roll at all.

If discovered, Bloodfang flees immediately.

The Attack

Later on that evening, two hours after midnight, Bloodfang returns to the camp. This time, he intends to kill the PCs. It starts with Bloodfang flying above the camp and dropping another stone with *darkness* cast on it, into the PCs camp. This time however, any PC that flees the darkness will have an angry half-fiendish worg to deal with.

Creatures: Bloodfang is appears to be a large blood red wolf with a pair of large black leathery bat wings. His eyes glow with a demonic glare when he wants them to. Bloodfang is a cunning hunter but not full of complex tactics. He would rather fight a lone PC than a large group. Bloodfang can speak a broken common but does so rarely.

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **Bloodfang, male half-fiend worg:** CR 4; Medium-size outsider; HD 4d10 +12; hp 30; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 50, fly 50; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +9 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +7 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); SA trip, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft, immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 21, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +9, Hide +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9; Multiattack.

Immunities (Ex): Bloodfang is immune to poison. He also has resistance to acid, cold, electricity and fire 20.

Scent (Ex): Detects presence of hidden foes within 30 ft and may track as per the feat.

Spells (Su): Bloodfang may cast *darkness* 3/day and *desecrate* 1/day as a spell like ability. All these spells are cast at 4th level of ability and have a save DC of 12+ the spell level when applicable.

Trip (Ex): When Bloodfang scores a successful bite attack, he may initiate a trip attack for free. If the attempt fails, the defender may not attempt to trip Bloodfang.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Bloodfang, male half-fiend worg:** CR 6; Medium-size outsider; HD 6d10 +18; hp 50; Init +4; Spd 50, fly 50; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +11 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +9 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); SA trip, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft, immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +13, Hide +15, Listen +9, Move Silently +14, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +11; Multiattack.

Immunities (Ex): Bloodfang is immune to poison. He also has resistance to acid, cold, electricity and fire 20.

Scent (Ex): Detects presence of hidden foes within 30 ft and may track as per the feat.

Spells (Su): Bloodfang may cast *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day, and *unholy blight* 1/day as a spell like ability. All these spells are cast at 6th level of ability and have a save DC of 12+ the spell level when applicable.

Trip (Ex): When Bloodfang scores a successful bite attack, he may initiate a trip attack for free. If the attempt fails, the defender may not attempt to trip Bloodfang.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🐾 **Bloodfang, male half-fiend worg:** CR 8; Large outsider; HD 8d10 +40; hp 84; Init +3; Spd 50, fly 50; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); Atks +16 melee (1d8+9, bite) and +14 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws); Reach 5ft x 10ft/ 10ft; SA trip, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft, immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +13, Hide +12, Listen +14, Move Silently +11, Spot +14, Wilderness Lore +12; Flyby Attack, Multiattack.

Immunities (Ex): Bloodfang is immune to poison. He also has resistance to acid, cold, electricity and fire 20.

Scent (Ex): Detects presence of hidden foes within 30 ft and may track as per the feat.

Spells (Su): Bloodfang may cast *darkness* 3/day, *poison* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day, and *unholy blight* 1/day as a spell like ability. All these spells are cast at 6th level of ability and have a save DC of 12+ the spell level when applicable.

Trip (Ex): When Bloodfang scores a successful bite attack, he may initiate a trip attack for free. If the attempt fails, the defender may not attempt to trip Bloodfang.

Tactics: Bloodfang uses his flying ability to his best advantage, getting out of any situation that is too dangerous for him. Bloodfang also has one remaining use of his *darkness* ability left and should use it to make good an escape if necessary. If forced to flee, Bloodfang does not trouble the PCs again.

At high tier, make sure to utilize his *poison* ability and Flyby Attack. The Flyby Attack feat allows him to move part of his movement, take his bite attack and then take the rest. This will prevent no flying characters from retaliating effectively.

If Bloodfang is obviously too powerful for the party to defeat, choose one of the down characters at random and flee with the body in tow. That PC may be unrecoverable, but at least the rest of the party will survive.

Once the combat with Bloodfang is over, the heroes are free to return to Quaalsten in peace. Proceed to the conclusion.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs defeated the outpost and defeated the evil Bloodfang, read or paraphrase the following to them.

“Disturbing, very disturbing.” Almeric Wilstone leans across the table to pour each of you more wine. You just finished the story of your recent encounters with the outpost and the dreaded wolf and Almeric looks very upset. “An outpost so close, a ranger dead, and a demonic wolf running loose. You are sure that the thing is dead and that there are no more of them?” Almeric waits for your answer.

“Well,” he continues, “at least this map may prove useful. With the location of these bases maybe we can finally strike back at the old one. Maybe we can get our hands on this mysterious FMA. Your services of heroes like yourself might be needed again in the near future. I would like to think that I could call upon you.” With that, Almeric gets up from his chair and leaves.

As you make your way around the outpost, many of the rangers come up to you and thank you for a job well done. As night comes and the forest darkens, the howling of a wolf can be heard in the distance.

If the PCs defeated the outpost but either did not defeat or did not face Bloodfang, read or paraphrase the following to them.

“Disturbing, very disturbing.” Almeric Wilstone leans across the table to pour each of you more wine. You just finished the story of your recent encounters with the outpost and the dreaded wolf and Almeric looks very upset. “An outpost so close, a ranger dead, and a demonic wolf running loose. You are sure that this thing is still out there. None of us are safe if that thing manages to breed.”

“Well,” he continues, “at least this map may prove useful. With the location of these bases maybe we can finally strike back at the old one. Maybe we can get our hands on this mysterious FMA. Your services of heroes like yourself might be needed again in the near future. I would like to think that I could call upon you.” With that, Almeric gets up from his chair and leaves.

As you make your way around the outpost, many of the rangers come up to you and thank you for a job well done. As night comes and the forest darkens, the howling of a wolf can be heard in the distance. It is an ominous portent of things to come.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the

game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter Two

Not divulging too much info to the goblins 25 xp

Encounter Three

Defeating the orcs in areas 4 and 5 50 xp

Defeating Xerick and the orcs in area 7 100 xp

Finding the letter from FMA in area 10 50 xp

Getting past the trap in area 11 25 xp

Defeating the dretch in area 13 50 xp

Encounter Four

Defeating Bloodfang 150 xp

Total experience for objectives 450 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-50 xp

Total possible experience 500 xp

TREASURE SUMMARY

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things that it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter Three

- Elven Silver Dagger (value 50gp, weight 1 lb, material silver, frequency common): This ornate dagger is made of pure silver and is carved with elven designs. The dagger is only worth 10gp if sold to a non-elf.
- 5 +1 light crossbow bolts (value 235gp, weight 1/2lb, frequency common)
- Everburning Torch (value 50gp, weight 1lb, frequency common): This torch was retrieved from the vile outpost of Hollowblade deep within the Vesve forest. It glows a strange green color.
- Everburning Torch (value 50gp, weight 1lb, frequency common): This torch was retrieved from the vile outpost of Hollowblade deep within the Vesve forest. It glows a strange green color.
- Demon Tome (value 60gp, weight 3lb, frequency unusual): This strange book has black scale hide for a cover. The pages are made of a thin parchment that smells vaguely of sulfur. The book, considered blasphemous by many, is an extensive treatise covering all things demonic. Characters who reference this book receive a +2 competency bonus to all Knowledge: Planar skill checks that concern demons. Characters without this skill that spend one hour searching through the book can make a Knowledge: Planar skill check at a -2 penalty so long as the question concerns demons.
- Demon Vial (value 200gp, weight 1/2lb, frequency unusual): This crystal vial is filled with the blood of a demon. The cork is made of pure silver and carved with a number of runes. The vial radiates "dim" evil. This vial acts as a continuous *detect evil* cast by a 10th level caster. The vial only detects demons and half-fiendish creatures however. The vial glows more brightly when more powerful demons are present, corresponding to the aura strength of the demon as per *detect evil* (phb pg 192). It only detects the presence or absence of demons and does not divine the number or location of demons.
- Bracers of the True Shot (value 400gp, weight 1lb, frequency unusual): These bracers belonged to Geldrin the True, a Ranger of the Vesve. Geldrin died at the hands of a vicious demon wolf named Bloodfang. The bracers bear the symbol of the rangers upon them, a large oak tree in the center of a blue field. Twice per day, these bracers give the wearer a +20 insight bonus to their next bow or crossbow attack roll as per the spell *true strike*. Activating these bracers is a standard action. The shot must be taken within one round of activating the bracers.
- 119 gp and 4 sp in miscellaneous loot.

APPENDIX

ALL APL

✦ **Grinn, male goblin Wiz(Illusionist)7:** CR 5.5; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 7d4 (Wiz); hp 26; Spd 30; AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 15); Atks +1 melee (1d4-2/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Wiz spells; SD Wiz spells (currently *mage armor* and *invisibility*); AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 7, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +7, Bluff +3, Concentration +10, Escape Artist +5, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +4, Move Silently +12, Scry +5, Speak Common, Speak Draconic, Speak Goblin, Speak Orcish, Spellcraft +11, Spot +4. Alertness, Brew Potion, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, red robes, pointed red hat, spell components, pouch with 30 large lunars (gp) and 15 small lunars (sp).

Spells Prepared (5/6/5/4/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*daze*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (x2), *mage hand*; 1st—*cause fear* (x2), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *silent image*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *invisibility* (x2), *mirror image*, *scare*; 3rd—*fly* (x2), *major image*, *slow*; 4th—*dimension door*, *rainbow pattern*.

✦ **Borot, male goblin Ftr6:** CR 4; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); 6d10+21 (Ftr, Toughness); hp 68; Init +0; Spd 30; AC 15 (+1 size, +3 studded leather armor); Atks +13/+8 melee (1d8+11/19-20, longsword); SA AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 19 (22 from *bull's strength*), Dex 10, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Hide +6, Jump +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Speak Goblin, Spot +2; Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Sunder, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: Longsword, studded leather armor, whatever Grinn tells him to carry (including Grinn).

APL 2

✦ **Xerick, male human Clr2:** CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d8 +4; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 20; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +3 melee (2d6+3/19-20, greatsword); SA Clr spells; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 13. 6 ft., 6 in tall.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Spellcraft +1; Combat Casting, Marital Weapon Proficiency (greatsword).

Possessions: Chainmail, greatsword, holy symbol of Iuz.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *light*; 1st—*bless*, *change self*^{*}, *cure light wounds*, *magic weapon*.

*Domain spell; Deity: Iuz; Domains: Chaos (+1 caster level for all Chaos spells); Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

✦ **Bloodfang, male half-fiend worg:** CR 4; Medium-size outsider; HD 4d10 +12; hp 30; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 50, fly 50; AC 17 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +9 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +7 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); SA trip, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft, immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 21, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +9, Hide +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9; Multiattack.

Immunities (Ex): Bloodfang is immune to poison. He also has resistance to acid, cold, electricity and fire 20.

Scent (Ex): Detects presence of hidden foes within 30 ft and may track as per the feat.

Spells (Su): Bloodfang may cast *darkness* 3/day and *desecrate* 1/day as a spell like ability. All these spells are cast at 4th level of ability and have a save DC of 12+ the spell level when applicable.

Trip (Ex): When Bloodfang scores a successful bite attack, he may initiate a trip attack for free. If the attempt fails, the defender may not attempt to trip Bloodfang.

APL 4

✦ **Xerick, male human Clr3:** CR 3; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 3d8 +6; hp 23; Init +1; Spd 20; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +5 melee (2d6+3/19-20, greatsword); SA Clr spells; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 13. 6 ft., 6 in tall.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Spellcraft +2. **Feats:** Combat Casting, Marital Weapon Proficiency: Greatsword, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Chainmail, greatsword, holy symbol of Iuz.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *light*; 1st—*bless*, *change self*^{*}, *cure light wounds*, *magic weapon*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *shatter*^{*}.

*Domain spell; Deity: Iuz; Domains: Chaos (+1 caster level for all Chaos spells); Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

✦ **Bloodfang, male half-fiend worg:** CR 6; Medium-size outsider; HD 6d10 +18; hp 50; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 50, fly 50; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural); Atks +11 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +9 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); SA trip, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft, immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +13, Hide +15, Listen +9, Move Silently +14, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +11; Multiattack.

Immunities (Ex): Bloodfang is immune to poison. He also has resistance to acid, cold, electricity and fire 20.

Scent (Ex): Detects presence of hidden foes within 30 ft and may track as per the feat.

Spells (Su): Bloodfang may cast *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day, and *unholy blight* 1/day as a spell like ability. All these spells are cast at 6th level of ability and have a save DC of 12+ the spell level when applicable.

Trip (Ex): When Bloodfang scores a successful bite attack, he may initiate a trip attack for free. If the attempt fails, the defender may not attempt to trip Bloodfang.

APL 6

☛ **Xerick, male human Clr5:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 5d8 +10; hp 38; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15); Atks +7 melee (2d6+4/19-20, greatsword); SA Clr spells; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 13; 6 ft., 6 in tall.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3; Combat Casting, Marital Weapon Proficiency (greatsword), Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Chainmail, greatsword, holy symbol of Iuz.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*; 1st—*bless*, *change self**, *cure light wounds* (x2), *magic weapon*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *shatter**, *spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*circle of protection versus law**, *cure serious wounds*.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Chaos (+1 caster level for all Chaos spells); *Trickery* (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

☛ **Bloodfang, male half-fiend worg:** CR 8; Large outsider; HD 8d10 +40; hp 84; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50, fly 50; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); Atks +16 melee (1d8+9, bite) and +14 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws); Reach 5ft x 10ft/ 10ft; SA trip, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft, immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +13, Hide +12, Listen +14, Move Silently +11, Spot +14, Wilderness Lore +12; Flyby Attack, Multiattack.

Immunities (Ex): Bloodfang is immune to poison. He also has resistance to acid, cold, electricity and fire 20.

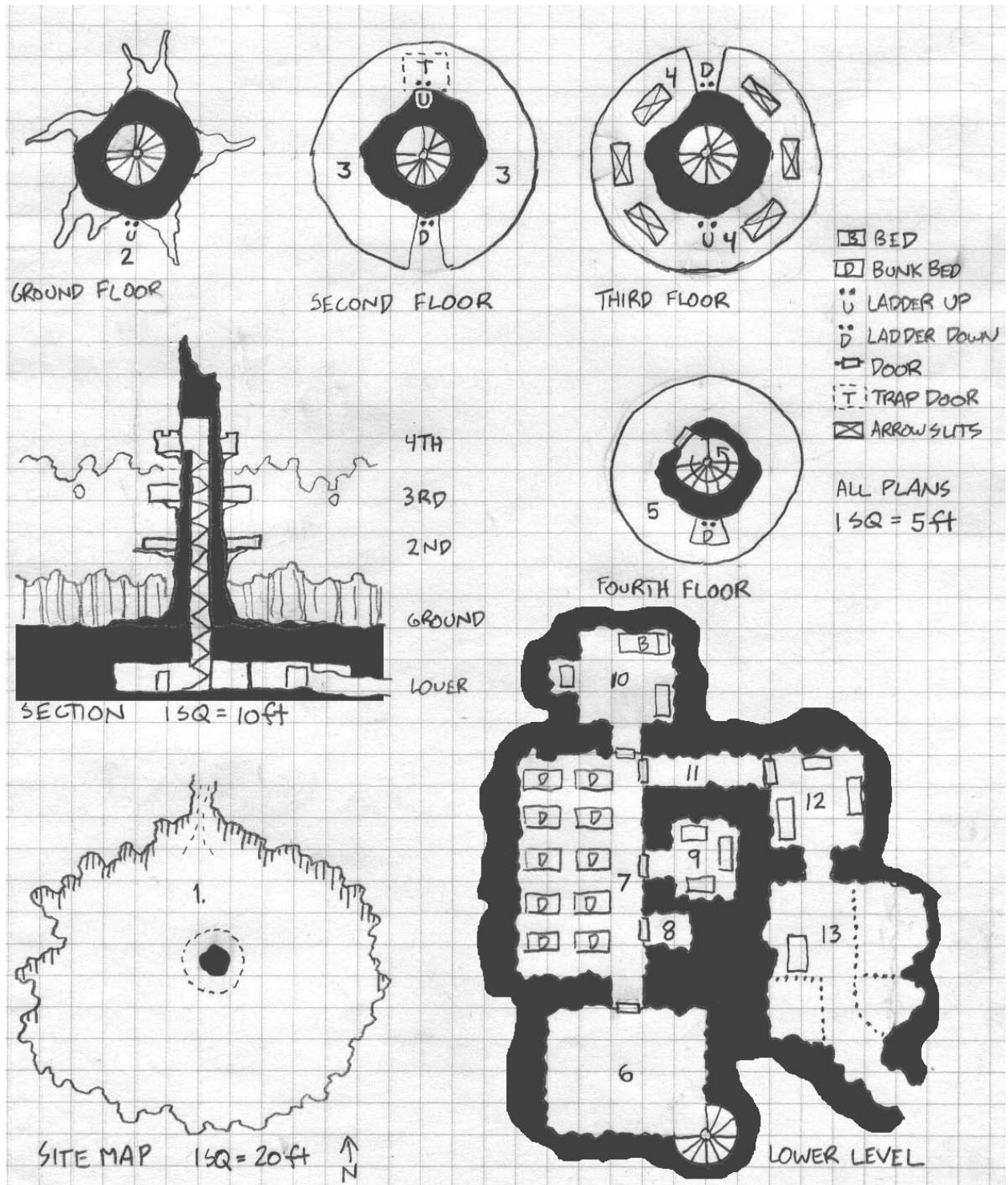
Scent (Ex): Detects presence of hidden foes within 30 ft and may track as per the feat.

Spells (Su): Bloodfang may cast *darkness* 3/day, *poison* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day, and *unholy blight* 1/day as a spell like ability. All these spells are cast at 6th level of

ability and have a save DC of 12+ the spell level when applicable.

Trip (Ex): When Bloodfang scores a successful bite attack, he may initiate a trip attack for free. If the attempt fails, the defender may not attempt to trip Bloodfang.

DM MAP #1 – HOLLOWBLADE OUTPOST



PC HANDOUT #1

Xerick,

You have proven yourself worthy serving underneath me. I have decided to put you in command of a new outpost being erected near the foolish rangers. We shall call the outpost Hollowblade. It is imperative that you not be discovered, do so and I will be VERY displeased with you. Use the map below to make your way there.

There is another matter. I wish to do some experimentation that you will find most interesting. If successful, they may prove very fruitful in the upcoming campaign. I will give you further details once you arrive.

Do not fail me

FMA



PC HANDOUT #2

Excerpts from the Journal

25 Sunsebb, 590

Arrived at Hollowblade today. The place is a mess, the orcs have only half constructed the place. If we were found today, we would all be doomed. Why did he send me here?

15 Fireseek, 591

The outpost is finally complete, and I just received word today of the nature of the experiments that I have been promised. It will prove to be a challenge but one that is well worth the reward. the pens are being constructed now and the first worg was captured today. A female, what luck.

7 Readying, 591

All is quite now as we await the birth of the first test. I am quite eager. The Baklunish man gave us the necessary blood to make this work but I do not trust him. Anyone with that much power is not to be trusted.

11 Flocktime, 591

Although many of the young have died and now two of the mothers, our first born still proves to be the biggest success. The keepers have taken to calling him Bloodfang, I can't imagine why. Soon we will begin teaching him to hunt.

2 Reaping, 591

The hunts have gone well, nothing in this forest can withstand his might. I am sure we will have another live birth soon. To have a pair of these would be a wondrous thing to behold. My master will be very pleased.

8 Goodmonth, 591

It is amazing the rate at which Bloodfang has grown. It must be the demon in him. Nonetheless, he hunts better than all of the normal worgs. Soon we will have to see how he hunts an elf or human perhaps. That should prove quite amusing.

22 Ready'reat, 591

We were discovered. It must have been one of those annoying rangers. No matter, I have sent Bloodfang after him. He will not escape. The baklunish manner returned with an even more potent gift. I am sure that this will solve all of our problems. The keepers tell me that the female is very pregnant. Perhaps even with four young. This could be the breakthrough we've needed.

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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