

GRM01-09

STRANGE DEADFELLOWS

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

Version 1

by Brett King

The road past Fort Endurance must be expanded to support the war against the giants. Your assistance is required to make sure this dangerous project in the Dim Forest succeeds. A well-balanced party with good tactical skills is required. For character levels 1–6, qualifies as military time.

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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 four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than seven 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" among the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

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

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

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a Living™ adventure, it is expected that players 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, Mialec, 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 Tier 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 SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

Strange Deadfellows is a story about two groups who have united against a common enemy. The groups are a band of kobolds led by a kobold sorcerer and a number of undead led by the last surviving member of a cult of Beltar, goddess of malice, caves, and pits. The kobolds and the cult are united against the sylvan elves of the Dim Forest. The kobolds and the cultists were once the primary residents of an area of the Dim Forest near Fort Endurance. The elves migrated into the area and nearly wiped out both groups. The kobolds and cultists now seek revenge.

About 20 years ago, a priest of Beltar from far-off Pomarj established a barbarian cult of Beltar in a network of caves in a rocky area of the Dim Forest. The size of the cult varied throughout the years, and it had dwindled to about 10 members about 6 years ago.

Around this time, a band of sylvan elves known as "Runners of the Flame" migrated into the area occupied by the cultists. The cultists captured and sacrificed one of

the elves. The elves tracked the cultists back to their cavern complex and nearly destroyed the tribe. One minor priest, named Verath, managed to escape. Verath would later return to bury the bodies of his fellow priests, that they might rise as undead one year later as all faithful followers of Beltar do. The land had been *unhallowed* by one of the priests of Beltar before his death, so the elves left the cursed place alone.

Two years after the cult was destroyed, the same sylvan elves discovered a group of kobolds living in tunnels in "their wood." The elves attacked and killed most of the kobolds. The leader of the kobolds, an exceptionally crafty male kobold sorcerer named Nazhaka, escaped with some of the survivors, heading west. They came across the caves once inhabited by the cult of Beltar, now inhabited only by Verath and a few undead. The kobold sorcerer negotiated with Verath to let them share the caverns. During the negotiation, they realized that they had a common enemy in the sylvan elves.

After a number of years of rebuilding, the kobold tribe has grown strong again. The cult of Beltar, however, has not been able to reestablish itself. Nevertheless, Verath and Nazhaka feel that an opportunity has presented itself to allow them to exact revenge on the Runners of the Flame. They have found a potential ally in the humans of Gran March, who have been upgrading a road through the Dim Forest in an effort to better supply troops to war-ravaged Geoff.

Nazhaka has been spying on the humans at nearby Fort Endurance using his *alter self* spell. He has learned that sylvan elves (a different band than the Runners of the Flame) have been sabotaging the road-building project to the east. The elves have stolen tools, damaged equipment, and encouraged some of the work-gang members to attempt escape. These events have put the road-building project behind schedule. To compensate for this, the Warden of the Dim March has been sent road-building experts from other divisions in the army so that he might start the widening of the road from the west in advance of the work-gangs coming from the east.

The road-building experts are currently camped in tents immediately outside the fort. The night before the adventure begins, Nazhaka and Verath sabotaged the road-building experts' camp and pinned it on the sylvan elves. Nazhaka and Verath hope that they can escalate tensions between the elves and humans to the point that war will break out, weakening the elves. The kobolds can then move in and have their retribution on the elves.

The adventure begins with the PCs arriving at Fort Endurance. There, they see a crowd mingling in a circle of tents. The Warden of the Dim March is in the middle of the crowd, discussing the previous night's events. He asks for volunteers to participate in scouting parties to look for the elves responsible.

In addition, a bard offers the PCs a reward if they are able to recover his *lyre of building*, which was stolen the night of the attack. A "druid" who knows where to find the elves leads the PCs. The druid is actually Verath, a priest of Beltar and conspirator in the night of sabotage.

Traveling through the forest, the PCs encounter a small group of elves untying a dead comrade from a tree. The elves eventually spot the PCs and confront them. Verath, not wanting any discussions to take place between the two groups, attempts to foil the diplomatic efforts. The PCs need to resolve the conflict through either force or diplomacy. Verath leaves the PCs.

Regardless of the outcome of the previous encounter, the PCs are pointed in the direction of a kobold lair in a cursed area of the woods. There, the PCs discover a cave complex. The entrance is guarded, and the kobolds inside are alerted to the presence of the PCs.

Making their way into the kobold lair, the PCs discover the remains of the cult of Beltar. The remains of the cult consist of some undead and possibly the leader, the PCs' "druid" friend Verath.

The PCs next need to defeat the kobolds on their home turf, along with the kobold sorcerer who carried out the attack on Fort Endurance.

Finally, if the PCs return to Fort Endurance with proof of the conspiracy, the intended assault against the elves is called off.

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the adventure depends on whether this event is played in conjunction with the corresponding interactive event. If it is, the PCs are assumed to have participated in the events the night prior. Skip the first paragraph of the introduction.

Otherwise, play begins with the PCs arriving at Fort Endurance for any of a variety of reasons. If in the military, they may be arriving for duty. The PCs may just be passing through. The PCs happen to be traveling in the same small caravan.

The small caravan you travel with arrives at Fort Endurance. The travelers in the caravan have talked about the recent goblin raids on the fort, and how many new inhabitants have sought out the fort for protection. The Gran March military has also reportedly added reinforcements to the fort. As you arrive, you see that tents fill the cleared area around the fort, and a new observation post is being built.

A crowd has gathered in the center of a circle of tents next to the fort. They are surrounding a man in military uniform who is standing on top of a box.

"As you know, the road through the Dim Forest on which Fort Endurance lies is still being widened for military use. When complete, it will allow the army to more easily supply Geoff with troops and supplies. However, construction of the road is behind schedule, in large part due to sabotage. Some sylvan elves in the forest are apparently unhappy about the road construction, and they have been stealing and damaging equipment in the work camps to the east."

"As some of you know, the army has sent road-building specialists here from all across Gran March in an attempt to put this project back on schedule. The road-building specialists were the targets of last night's attacks. We have evidence that the elves

who have been sabotaging the road to the east have now sabotaged the road-building efforts here."

"These elves are no longer a mere nuisance. They have made a direct assault on a fort of the Gran March army. Lives were lost. This was a cowardly act of terrorism, and, if organized, an act of war. It is my intent to take whatever actions are necessary to eliminate this threat."

"However, to confront an enemy, one must be able to locate and identify that enemy. This has proven to be difficult in the past incidents due to the cowardly way these elves slip back into their precious forest. We do not know the location or the size of the enemy we face. Therefore, I am recruiting scouting parties to assist in locating these elves. Who will show a display of patriotism and valor by assisting in this effort?"

Note that the man speaking is the Warden of the Dim March, Gault Stalmir. There will be mixed reactions in the crowd. The native Gran Marchers will step forward, but recent immigrants will be more reluctant.

If the PCs ask, there is no financial reward. They are expected to do this out of a common need for survival. PCs in the military are not given an option to say no. If any of the PCs do not agree, the bard (see below) may be able to persuade them.

Assuming the PCs agree, the Warden tells the PCs the following.

- Last night, at least eight people were killed in acts of terrorism in the tents surrounding the fort.
- A druid brought a treant who was going to animate trees to clear a path for the road. The elves set the treant on fire, which caused the treant to go berserk and kill several people. The treant was destroyed.
- Some gnomes had built a wondrous tree-cutting machine. The machine was destroyed.
- A powerful creature, brought to assist in heavy lifting, was taunted and then set loose in the camp. The army had to kill the beast.
- A bard named Reginald Mercurium brought a magical lyre that could do the work in an hour of 100 men working for a week. The lyre was stolen.
- The warden has proof that the elves were responsible. He will show (but not give) the PCs **Player Handout #1**, which was found pinned to the chest of a dead guard with a dagger.
- Several witnesses spotted an elf fleeing the scene last night. The elf was short, had red hair, and wore a rust-colored leg band. A weasel was seen following the elf.
- Verath of the Root, the druid who brought the treant, believes he knows where the tribe of elves who wear rust-colored leg bands can be found. The druid will lead the PCs' scouting party to this location.
- The PCs are to gather information on the size of the force.
- The PCs are to confirm, if possible, that these were the elves involved in the attack.

- The PCs are to determine, if possible, if the elves are a renegade band or an arm of a larger elven force.
- The PCs are only to use force as a last resort. The PCs should not try to be heroes; it is much more important that the PCs live to return to the fort with the information they have collected.
- The PCs should return to the fort regardless of what they have found by the end of the 5th day of searching.
- The PCs should keep an eye out for goblins in the area and avoid them if possible.
- The PCs should leave immediately to begin scouting.

As the PCs are making their preparations, the bard will be making his way round to the different scouting parties. He will tell the PCs that he is offering a 100 gp reward to anyone who returns his *lyre of building* in working condition.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE ENEMY?

Verath quietly leads you down the hill away from the protection of Fort Endurance and into the Dim Forest. The canopy engulfs the sun, starving ground cover and underbrush of the sunlight needed to thrive. Fortunately, this eases travel through the forest.

Verath comments that he has seen sylvan elves in a small valley about a half-day's journey to the northwest. He says that these elves are aggressive, and would not even allow a human druid in their land. Verath appears very angry with the elves. He comments that this particular group of elves is, in fact, one band of a larger tribe that has been in this area for a number of years. He does not believe they would act without the consent of their leadership. Verath does not know the size of either the band in the valley or the larger tribe. If asked why tree-loving elves would set a treant on fire, he simply says "Anyone that would set a treant on fire has obviously demonstrated his true nature."

The PCs may, for whatever reason, attempt to evaluate Verath's sincerity. Verath has cast *undetectable alignment* to hide his chaotic evil alignment from detection spells. Otherwise, all of what Verath says above is true. Verath generally attempts to say as little as possible to avoid making a mistake that might reveal his true identity. His comments above are to plant the information with the PCs that these elves are an organized force that must be destroyed by the Gran March army. Verath is currently rather pleased that his plan is going well. His goal is to lead the PCs to the elves while preventing any dialog with the elves that might exonerate them.

SCOUTING

When the party reaches the valley, the druid will recommend that they scout along the top of the valley. At this point, he will put on a pair of spiked gauntlets that he has been carrying in his pack. If asked about them, he will

say that they are "for protection." If confronted with the fact that these are not weapons allowed to druids, he will reply, **"That is between me and my god."** If asked who his god is, he will reply, **"This is not the time for seeking converts. I will be happy to discuss it when we are not so close to danger."** If a PC tries to pursue this further, he cautions them to silence, pointing down into the valley.

Anyone actively scouting can make a spot check (DC 20) to notice a group of three elves carrying the body of another elf about 100 yards away. A second Spot check with DC 25 will allow a PC to see rust-colored bands tied around the legs of the elves.

After the PCs have either spotted the elves or all missed their Spot checks, a larger group of nine elves (all with rust-colored leg bands) will spot any PCs whom are not hiding or are doing it poorly (or Verath, if nobody else fits this description). These PC(s) may make a Listen check (DC 18 – Taking 10 on Move Silently check (+15) + 30' distance (+3)) and a Spot check (DC 18 - Taking 10 on Hide Check (+15) + 30' distance (+3)). A success at either one will allow the PCs to act in the surprise round.

In the surprise round, the elves will appear out of the bushes 30' away. They will use their surprise round to ready an attack if anyone makes an attack against them or begins to cast a spell. They have bows drawn, but lowered. The leader, a female elf with scraggly red hair, will call out:

"Trespassers! You know you are not welcome here; why do you come?"

A Spot check (DC 20) by any non-surprised PC will allow the PC to notice the top of a stringed musical instrument protruding from the backpack of one of the male elves.

IF THE PCS CHOOSE TO TALK...

If the party chooses to talk to the elves, the elves will listen. The leader's name is Wenlerey, and her band is called "Runners of the Flame." The flame refers to her red hair, and it is represented in the color of their leg bands. The PCs may role-play the situation as well as use any appropriate skills, such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive.

If the PCs reveal any information about the attack on the fort or ask the elves any questions about the attack on the fort, Verath will become nervous. He hoped to avoid the elves completely or to attack a smaller group. He begins to seethe with anger and frustration at coming face-to-face with his enemy and being unable to act due to overwhelming odds.

When questioned, the elves deny attacking the fort or even hampering the road building to the east, which is the truth. The road building was hampered by a different group of elves entirely. Verath calls them all liars and killers and try to convince the PCs that the elves are the saboteurs. He will point out the lyre if the PCs haven't noticed it yet. The elf does indeed have a lyre, but it is not magical.

The elves want to know more details about the elf that was seen at the fort. If the PCs mention the elf that

attacked the fort was carrying a weasel, Wenlerey says that only kobolds would associate with weasels. She remembers a kobold sorcerer who carried a pet weasel. The sorcerer and his band of kobolds once lived in the woods near where the elves live now. The elves killed almost all of the kobolds, but the sorcerer and a few others escaped. This happened about four years ago. The elves do not know where the kobolds might be, but they are certain that the kobolds are no longer in this valley.

Three rounds after the PCs encounter Wenlerey and her elves, the group of elves carrying their dead comrade will arrive. If the PCs are behaving diplomatically, the new group of elves will behave diplomatically as well, but they will question the PCs intently on the death of their comrade. They found their comrade with a note pinned to his chest by a dagger. The note, **Player Handout #2**, says, ***"The Gran March claims these lands. Elven squatters will be removed!"*** A successful Forgery check (DC 12) will reveal the writing to be the same as the writing found on the note in the Introduction, which had been found pinned to a dead guard with a dagger as well. The elf has clearly been tortured. He had been missing for two days.

Assuming the PCs mention the similarities in the notes and bodies, Verath, will realize that his plan is unraveling. If the PCs report back to the army that the elves were not involved, the army will obviously not attack. So, at this point, he must try to do away with the PCs.

"I know of these kobolds," says Verath. "They live in caves perhaps another half day's journey from here."

Wenlerey will say that she, too, knows of the caves; they are cursed. The elves will not travel there. Savage humans once lived in those caves. The humans sacrificed elves to their evil god, so the elves destroyed the barbaric cult. As a last act of vengeance, the cultists cursed the land so that the elves might fear it. This occurred about six years ago.

Verath says to the party, "So, if you believe that kobolds are capable of wreaking such havoc on the mighty army of Gran March, I suggest you go see them. Your new elven friends obviously know the way. My work here is done."

With that, Verath marches off into the woods with a huff. Once out of sight, he will move at a fast pace back to the cave complex to prepare for the PCs' arrival.

If the PCs suspect Verath is up to something and attempt to detain him, Verath does his best to talk his way away from the PCs. If forced, he attempts to drink his *potion of expeditious retreat* from his belt pouch and make his escape. If captured, he will not speak to the PCs.

If the PCs kill or capture Verath, they can find his holy symbol of Beltar (silver fangs) under his cloak. Beltar is an evil goddess of malice, caves, and pits. Since Beltar is not a common god in this region of Oerth, a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) is required to recognize the holy symbol. If the PCs do not recognize the symbol, one of the elves will.

If Verath escapes, the PCs may be able to track him. Using the Track feat, a PC needs to make 8 Wilderness Lore checks (DC 15) to cover the 8 miles to the caves. Retries (after an hour) and taking 10 are permitted.

The elves will agree to lead the PCs near the cursed land, but they will not enter it themselves. The elves want several things in return:

- Proof that the PCs were not involved in killing their companion.
- Revenge on whomever killed their companion.
- The PCs must convince the Gran March army that the elves were not to blame for the attack.
- Appropriate compensation (in the form of healing, assistance with the remaining cultists, or material goods) if the PCs attacked any of the elves.

If the PCs find their way to the caves, go to Encounter Two.

IF THE PCS CHOOSE TO FIGHT...

If any of the PCs attack the elves, they are in for a difficult fight. Verath will be elated at getting a taste of revenge. Given the first opportunity, he will savagely deliver a coup de grace to a *held* or unconscious elf with his spiked gauntlets, rather than attack an active one. When not casting spells, he will attack with his spiked gauntlets. The elves will concentrate their attacks on those attacking them, if some of the PCs have chosen not to get involved in the fight.

If the PCs are fighting the elves when the second group shows up, the second group will join the fight (joining in at the top of the initiative order, per the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, p. 62). The PCs will be given the option of surrender. If the PCs surrender, Verath will attempt to flee. Surrendering PCs will be intensely questioned about their actions and involvement. Diplomacy checks will carry a penalty commensurate with the PCs' level of violence against the elves.

Verath; male human, Clr3: CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3; hp 21; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 10, flat-footed 13); Atks +5 melee (1d4+2, spiked gauntlet); SQ Rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14. Height 5 ft. 8 in.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Profession (miner) +10, Wilderness Lore +5; Combat Casting, Track, Weapon Focus (spiked gauntlets).

Possessions: backpack, spiked gauntlets (in backpack), hide armor, *potion of expeditious retreat* (in belt pouch), holy symbol (under cloak), 25 gp.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1, base DC=13 + spell level):
 o—create water, guidance, light, resistance; 1st—protection from good*, command (2), magic weapon; 2nd—desecrate*, hold person, ~~undetectable alignment~~.

*Domain spell. Domains: Earth (turn or destroy air creatures as a good cleric turns undead, rebuke or command earth creatures as an evil cleric rebukes undead, can use these abilities five times per day); Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

APL 2 (EL 8)

🗡️ **Elven Archers; 7 female and 5 male, Ftr 1** (12): CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d10; hp 10; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword), +4 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SQ Low-light vision, immune to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 on saves vs. Enchantment spells or effects; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. Height 5 ft.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Search +2, Spot +2; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows.

APL 4 (EL 9)

🗡️ **Elven Archers; 7 female and 5 male, Ftr 2** (12): CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10; hp 17; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13) [+3 Dex, +3 studded leather]; Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword), +5 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SQ Low-light vision, immune to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 on saves vs. Enchantment spells or effects; AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. Height 5 ft.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Search +2, Spot +3; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows.

APL 6 (EL 11)

🗡️ **Elven Archers; 7 female and 5 male, Ftr 4** (12): CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10; hp 24; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword), +7 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SQ Low-light vision, immune to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 on saves vs. Enchantment spells or effects; AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. Height 5 ft.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Search +2, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows.

Development: If the PCs defeat all of elves or run away, it will be up to the actions of the PCs to determine what happens next. The elves are part of a band of about 200 that live further into the valley. If the PCs look down in the valley where they saw the first group of elves, they may find the kobold tracks (DC 16) from the kobolds who killed the elf. If Verath is still alive, he tells the PCs that

they should return to Fort Endurance with the information they have about the elves. He then leaves the PCs and return to the caves.

Back at Fort Endurance, the elves will have retaliated by killing some Gran March scouts. Before the army can fully organize an attack on the elves, a diviner informs the Warden that the elves were not involved in the initial attack, but that a false priest was. The Warden informally reprimands the PCs for their poor scouting skills. He demands that the PCs attempt to correct their blunder by tracking the druid. If the PCs don't have a tracker in their group, they will receive the help of ranger who has been visiting the fort lately to see how things are progressing. This leads the PCs to Encounter 5 (entering the cavern complex from the rear because that's the entrance Verath uses if he's confident that his plan is working).

ENCOUNTER 2: CAVERNS OF THE CURSED

These caverns (see DM Aid #1) were once inhabited by a cult of Beltar that included Verath. The Beltar priests once cursed this land, but the effect has since worn off. Its reputation, however, has not. The kobold tribe led by the sorcerer Nazhaka has since moved into these caves. Nazhaka is very paranoid, so he has made sure that the entrance is appropriately guarded. He has also trained his fellow kobolds to use specific tactics in case of an assault on their complex. He does not want to lose another tribe.

There are two entrances into the complex, which is built into a rocky hill. The PCs will come across Entrance #1 first. Entrance #2 is well hidden, and it is effectively impossible to find without days of searching over the hillside (or by having followed Verath's tracks in the event the PCs defeated the elves in the previous encounter).

A cave mouth gapes from the base of a rocky hill. The area in front of the cave mouth is well trodden, but there is otherwise no sign of life or activity.

The 10-foot wide corridor leads to an irregularly shaped room (Room 1) guarded by 7 kobold guards. The kobolds' locations are marked with 'K' on the map.

There are three large ledges in the room (#1, #2, and #3). The PCs enter the room on ledge #1. The distance to the floor is dependent on the PCs' tier (APL 2 – 20 feet, APL 4 – 20 feet, APL 6 – 40 feet). The bridges are 10 feet long if someone wants to attempt to make a standing jump across one. The bridges are trapped (see below).

A narrow ledge runs along the wall between ledge #1 and ledge #3. The characteristics of the narrow ledge are dependent on the APL. A PC can attempt to use the Balance skill to cross it. Failure means the PC cannot make it that round; failure by 5 or more means the PC falls.

APL 2

6-inch wide ledge: 20 ft. fall (2d6); Balance check to cross (DC 15)

APL 4

6-inch wide ledge: 20 ft. fall (2d6); Balance check to cross (DC 15)

APL 6

6-inch wide, slippery ledge: 40 ft. fall (4d6); Balance check to cross (DC 20)

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6-inch wide, slippery, angled ledge: 40 ft. fall (4d6); Balance check to cross (DC 25)

Traps: A wooden bridge connects ledge #1 to ledge #2, where two of the kobolds stand. The bridge is 4 feet wide. It is made of planks nailed in the middle across a large log. The log rests in specially carved holes at each end. The bridge, when stepped on, will tip to the left or right as the oiled log spins in the sockets. The kobolds secure it from the opposite side by sliding a spear shaft down through a hole in the log into a hole in the ledge. This keeps the log from spinning. However, the kobold guards have removed the spear, so anyone attempting to cross the bridge may fall. If someone is aware (from seeing a comrade cross the bridge) that the bridge pivots in the middle, the Reflex save to avoid the trap is only DC 18.

Another wooden bridge connects ledge #2 to ledge #3. This is also a swinging bridge trap, but it is built on two smaller logs rather than one large one. Two spear shafts are used to steady the two logs, again on the side where the kobolds are standing. Again, the kobolds have removed the spear shafts. This bridge will part down the middle when someone crosses. If a PC is unaware of the way this bridge swings (as opposed to the previous one), the Reflex save to avoid the fall is DC 20. If a PC is aware of the way that the bridge swings, the DC is 18. The statistics for the second bridge are identical to those of the first bridge.

APL 2

☞ **Swinging bridge trap:** 20 ft. deep (2d6); Reflex save to avoid (DC 20/18); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20); CR 1.

APL 4

☞ **Swinging bridge trap:** 20 ft. deep (2d6); Reflex save to avoid (DC 20/18); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20); CR 1.

APL 6

☞ **Swinging bridge trap:** 40 ft. deep (4d6); Reflex save to avoid (DC 20/18); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20); CR 2.

AUGMENTED APL

☞ **Swinging bridge trap:** 40 ft. deep (4d6); Reflex save to avoid (DC 20/18); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20); CR 2.

Creatures: The kobolds are both listening and watching with their darkvision, so it will be difficult to surprise them. Six of the kobolds will lie prone (+4 to AC from ranged attacks) and fire their crossbows while the seventh (hidden from view) runs to warn others.

For APL 4 and above, a Gelatinous Cube lies on the floor below, waiting for someone to fall. It will not attempt to reach PCs on the bridge or ledge. On APL 4, the cube lies at the spot marked 'G' on the map. It slowly moves to whoever falls, attempting to engulf its opponent. A Spot check (DC 15) is required to see the cube. On APL 6 and the Augmented APL, the cube lies directly beneath the first bridge. Anyone falling off the first bridge will fall into the cube, becoming instantly engulfed, without a saving throw. The good news is that the cube will break the PC's fall. The cube will take damage equal to what the PC would have taken.

APL 2 (EL 1)

☞ **Kobolds** (6): hp 2 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

APL 4 (EL 4)

☞ **Kobolds** (6): hp 3 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

☞ **Gelatinous Cube** (1): hp 45; see *Monster Manual* page 145.

APL 6 (EL 4)

☞ **Kobolds** (6): hp 3 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with large centipede poison (DC 16; 1d4 Dex/1d4 Dex).

☞ **Gelatinous Cube** (1): hp 58; see *Monster Manual* page 145.

AUGMENTED APL (EL 4)

☞ **Kobolds** (6): hp 3 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with large centipede poison (DC 16; 1d4 Dex/1d4 Dex).

➤ **Gelatinous Cube** (1): hp 70; see *Monster Manual* page 145.

Tactics: Six of the kobolds will lie prone (+4 to AC from ranged attacks) and fire their crossbows while the seventh (hidden from view) runs to warn others.

Treasure: On the far side of the room on the floor is a masterwork chain shirt and cap; all that remains of a hapless intruder.

ENCOUNTER 3: LARGE CAVE

This large, irregularly shaped cavern (Room 2 on the map) is not lit except for whatever the light the PCs bring with them. This is the common room for the kobolds. Around the room are six low (3' high) openings into what appear to be burrows (their sleeping quarters). A thin waterfall on the far side of the room trickles into a pool below. The ceiling is 12 feet high. Scattered about the room are small tables (about the size of foot stools), tools, weapon parts, clay pots, barrels, and piles of debris.

Creatures: If given notice of intruders in the cave, the kobolds have been trained to hide as far back into their burrows as possible so as not to be seen. Nazhaka, their leader, can be found at the point marked with an 'N'.

APL 2 (EL 4)

➤ **Kobolds** (6): hp 2 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

➤ **Nazhaka, male kobold Sor3:** CR 3; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 3d4+3 + ½ d8; hp 14; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk -1 melee (1d6-2, halfspear); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14. Height 3 ft.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +4, Bluff +4, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Disguise +5, Gather Information +3, Hide +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +3, Profession (herbalist) +3, Profession (mining) +4, Search +4, Spot +2; Alertness (free), Improved Initiative, Silent Spell

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Kobolds suffer -1 penalty to attack in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possession: Wand of disrupt undead (used to keep the former priests of Beltar at bay). His halfspear is coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

Spells Known (6/6; base DC = 12 + spell level): o—daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound; 1st—change self, shield, sleep.

Familiar: Zizza, weasel (+2 reflex saves), non-combatant.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Kobolds** (12): hp 2 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

➤ **Dire Weasel** (1): hp 13; see *Monster Manual* page 56.

➤ **Nazhaka, male kobold Sor4:** CR 4; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 4d4+4 + ½ d8; hp 17; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk +0 melee (1d6-2, halfspear); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 15. Height 3 ft.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +4, Bluff +4, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Disguise +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Profession (herbalist) +3, Profession (mining) +4, Search +4, Spot +2; Alertness (free), Improved Initiative, Silent Spell

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Kobolds suffer -1 penalty to attack in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: Wand of disrupt undead (used to keep the former priests of Beltar at bay). His halfspear is coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

Spells Known (6/7/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): o—daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound, ray of frost; 1st—change self, expeditious retreat, shield, sleep; 2nd—alter self.

Familiar: Zizza, weasel (+2 reflex saves), non-combatant.

APL 3 (EL 8)

➤ **Kobolds** (12): hp 2 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with large centipede poison (DC 16; 1d4 Dex/1d4 Dex).

➤ **Dire Weasels** (2): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56.

➤ **Nazhaka, male kobold Sor7:** CR 7; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 7d4+7 + ½ d8; hp 28; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk +1 melee (1d6-2, halfspear); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 15. Height 3 ft.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +6, Bluff +4, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Disguise +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Profession (herbalist) +3, Profession (mining) +4, Search +4, Spot +2; Alertness (free), Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Silent Spell

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Kobolds suffer -1 penalty to attack in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: Wand of disrupt undead (used to keep the former priests of Beltar at bay). His halfspear is coated

with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

Spells Known (6/7/6/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound, mage hand, ray of frost; 1st—change self, expeditious retreat, magic missile, shield, sleep; 2nd—alter self, invisibility, mirror image; 3rd—haste, slow.

Familiar: Zizza, weasel (+2 reflex saves), non-combatant.

AUGMENTED APL (EL 10)

🐉 **Kobolds** (12): hp 2 each; see *Monster Manual* page 123.

Special: Their weapons are coated with large centipede poison (DC 16; 1d4 Dex/1d4 Dex).

🐉 **Dire Weasels** (5): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56.

🐉 **Nazhaka; male kobold, Sor 9:** CR 9; Small Humanoid Reptilian; HD 9d4+9 + ½ d8; hp 35; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Atk +1 melee (1d6-2, halfspear); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16. Height 3 ft.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +6, Bluff +4, Concentration +9, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Disguise +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Profession (herbalist) +3, Profession (mining) +4, Search +4, Spot +2; Alertness (free), Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Silent Spell

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Kobolds suffer –1 penalty to attack in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: Wand of disrupt undead (used to keep the former priests of Beltar at bay). His halfspear is coated with medium centipede poison (DC 13; 1d3 Dex/1d3 Dex).

Spells Known (6/7/6/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound, mage hand, ray of frost; 1st—change self, expeditious retreat, magic missile, shield, sleep; 2nd—alter self, cat's grace, invisibility, mirror image; 3rd—flame arrow, haste, slow; 4th—bestow curse, stoneskin.

Familiar: Zizza, weasel (+2 reflex saves), non-combatant.

Tactics: When the PCs enter the room, Nazhaka uses a silent ghost sound spell to make a chanting noise come from the burial chamber (Room 3 on the map). Note that PCs must actively attempt disbelief to receive a save at this point and that succeeding a save versus ghost sound reveals the sound as an illusion but does not reveal the location of the caster. Nazhaka's hope is to let the undead in the shrine weaken or kill the PCs before his kobolds have to fight them.

If the PCs enter a burrow rather than take the bait, Nazhaka casts a silent (if he has it) sleep spell on any party members in the room. He then gives orders in Draconic for the kobolds to rush out and engage in melee. The

kobolds will not deliver a coup de grace on sleeping opponents; they are too cowardly to risk an attack of opportunity.

If the PCs enter the shrine before investigating the burrows, Nazhaka waits until he hears battle with the undead. He then orders a kobold to lay prone inside each burrow with a crossbow pointed out into the common room. Additional kobolds will be evenly distributed in the burrows, armed with half-spears.

When the PCs walk back into the room, allow them to make Spot checks (DC 18). Success means that the PC spots the kobolds (at least their glowing red eyes, if the light source won't reach) and can act in the surprise round.

In the surprise round, Nazhaka will cast a silent sleep spell at the party while the prone kobolds fire their crossbows. On APL 2, Nazhaka is standing behind a prone kobold for protection from charging PCs. For APL 4 and above, Nazhaka is standing behind a dire weasel. The kobolds continue to fire their crossbows until the PCs rush into the burrows. The burrows are only 3 feet high, so medium-sized PCs that enter have to crouch to fight (-2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls).

The kobolds will fire crossbows for three rounds and then will rush out and engage in melee.

Nazhaka will not leave his burrow unless attacked by range attacks. He lets his dire weasel(s) and his bodyguard kobolds protect him from any PCs who enter.

Development: If it looks like things are going badly for the kobolds or himself, Nazhaka tries to orchestrate an escape by using *alter self* or *change self* to appear as a young (4 ft.- 4 1/2 ft. tall) human boy in burlap clothing. His success is determined by a Disguise check (+11, with all adjustments included). The PCs can detect a flaw in the disguise with an opposed Spot check. *Change self* can also be detected with a Will save if interacted with. As the young boy, Nazhaka cowers in the corner petting his weasel and does not speak if questioned. He will accompany the PCs if led.

At the first opportunity, the disguised Nazhaka attempts to escape. He is quite clever, so the DM should use whatever means are available. For example, he can use a Bluff check to create a diversion to allow him to make a Hide check. He can also try to get a PC alone, so that he has a better chance to either subdue the PC with a spell or escape. Note that *change self* and *alter self* only last 10 minutes per level. If he has cast *alter self* and it wears off, he shrink backs to his normal 3 ft. in height. This causes any ropes or shackles to loosen dramatically, allowing him to attempt to cast spells or free himself the rest of the way using a move-equivalent action.

Treasure: Inside Nazhaka's burrow, the PCs will find the stolen *lyre of building*, two vials of antitoxin, and Players Handouts #3 and #4. Nazhaka also carries a *wand of disrupt undead*.

ENCOUNTER 4: BURIAL CHAMBER

This area is marked as Room 3 on the map.

This room has a low, sloping ceiling that averages 4 feet in height. The ground is soft earth. There are perhaps two-dozen grave mounds in the room, each marked with a carved wooden rod protruding from the foot of the mound. There are two exits from the room. One is a large opening into another cavern; the other is a tunnel leading downward. A large pile of debris sits outside the tunnel.

The rods are about a foot high and are crudely carved with the name of the deceased and a symbol representing position in the cult. There are a number of disturbed mounds corresponding to the number of undead in Room 3. The mounds were dug up from the inside. Each of these particular grave markers has a symbol indicating a high-ranking member of the cult. A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 22) is required to recognize this.

The other graves have bodies in them, but no valuables. The tunnel leading downward is a new tunnel that is being dug by Verath. He hopes to bring glory to Beltar by finding some rich mineral deposit. So far he has been unsuccessful.

ENCOUNTER 5: SHRINE

This area is marked as Room 4 on the map.

This large room has been clearly enlarged from an original cave in a chaotic but visually striking way. The walls and ceiling have been cut into to form sharp crevices all around, which cast menacing shadows about the room. The cave almost has the appearance of a giant, tooth-lined mouth.

The room is decorated with primitive furnishings. Tall, carved wooden candelabras with unlit candles are placed about the room. Wooden benches are lined up to face a linen-draped table. Silver bowls and a large carving of a snake-bodied demon woman rest on top of the table. A square open pit opens up in the ground near the altar. Glittering coins are arranged around the outside mouth of the pit, while curved iron spikes line the inside. The spikes give the appearance of fangs. A ladder leans against the far wall.

This room is the temple room of the cult of Beltar. The ladder is below a hidden entrance to the complex. At the top of the ladder, the PCs discover a stone covering a hole that leads outside. This may give the PCs an opportunity to leave the complex to recuperate before fighting the kobolds in Room 2.

The pit in the room was (and occasionally is still) used for sacrifices. Verath still prays at the altar, but no services have been held here in a number of years. Around the edge of the pit are 400 copper pieces pressed into hardened clay as a crude form of decoration. The copper pieces are easy to remove. The iron spikes are

meant to deter people from climbing out of the pit, but they are easy enough to break out of the clay (Strength check, DC 5). They also break off when people fall into the pit. The bowls on the altar are lead. Nothing in the room is of sufficient quality to be of particular value.

If Verath escaped from the PCs, he is found standing behind the altar. Prior to the PCs entrance, he casts *desecrate* on the room, giving the undead hidden here +2 profane bonuses to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. The undead also get +2 hit points per HD. Finally, all turn attempts are at –6. He also attempts to bolster the undead prior to the PCs arrival if possible (see Player's Handbook, p. 140).

When the PCs walk in, Verath will invite them to have a seat and listen to a short talk about the advantages of worshipping Beltar. He has some hope that he can actually convert the PCs and restart his cult. If not, they are in a good position to be shoved into the pit.

Several former priests of Beltar, raised as undead by their goddess for being loyal servants, hide in the shadows near the altar.

Traps: When a PC is paralyzed, one of the undead attempts to use a bull rush to push that PC into the pit as a sacrifice to Beltar. As the undead is pushing the PC to the pit, it cries out in a raspy voice:

"We bring you a sacrifice, Mother Beltar!"

Treat a paralyzed PC as having a 0 for an opposed strength check for purposes of determining how far the undead can bull rush the PC. See Bull Rush in the *Players Handbook* (p. 136-137) for more details. The rats in the pit attack any PCs who are pushed in.

APL 2

🔪Open Pit: 10 ft. deep (1d6), CR 1/2.

APL 2

🔪Open Pit: 20 ft. deep (2d6), CR 1.

APL 3

🔪Open Pit: 20 ft. deep (2d6), CR 1.

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🔪Open Pit: 20 ft. deep (2d6), CR 1.

Creatures: If Verath is here, the number of undead appearing is the first number below. If Verath is not here, increase the number of undead to the larger number listed. The undead wait until given the signal by Verath, Verath is attacked, or the PCs approach the altar, and then attack with their paralyzing touch.

👤**Verath; male human, Clr 3:** CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3; hp 21; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 10, flat-footed 13); Atks +5 melee (1d4+2,

spiked gauntlet); SQ Rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14. Height 5 ft. 8 in.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Profession (miner) +10, Wilderness Lore +5; Combat Casting, Track, Weapon Focus (spiked gauntlets).

Equipment: backpack, spiked gauntlets (in backpack), hide armor, *potion of expeditious retreat* (in belt pouch), holy symbol (under cloak), 25 gp.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1, base DC=13 + spell level): 0—*create water*, *guidance*, *light*, *resistance*; 1st—*protection from good**, *command* (2), *magic weapon*; 2nd—~~*desecrate*~~*, *hold person*, ~~*undetectable alignment*~~**.

*Domain spell. Domains: Earth (turn or destroy air creatures as a good cleric turns undead, rebuke or command earth creatures as an evil cleric rebukes undead, can use these abilities five times per day); Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

**Substitute *hold person* if Verath has had a chance to rest before the PCs find him here.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🐾 **Ghouls** (1 or 5): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

🐾 **Rats** (2): hp 1 each; see *Monster Manual* page 201.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🐾 **Ghasts** (2 or 3): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

🐾 **Rats** (4): hp 1 each; see *Monster Manual* page 201.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🐾 **Ghasts** (5 or 6): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

🐾 **Rats** (10): hp 1 each; see *Monster Manual* page 201.

AUGMENTED APL (EL 9)

🐾 **Ghasts** (7 or 8): hp 26 each; see *Monster Manual* page 97.

🐾 **Rats** (10): hp 1 each; see *Monster Manual* page 201.

Tactics: If Verath has a night of rest before the PCs arrive, he prays for *hold person* rather than *undetectable alignment*. Verath uses his *command* spells to tell PCs to die. Verath will also attempt to negate any turning effects by the PCs.

It is the goal of the undead not to kill the PCs but to push them into the pit while still alive. This is the way that Beltar likes her sacrifices. Note that an undead can also attempt to drag a paralyzed PC to the pit rather than push her, essentially using a reverse bull rush. The only difference is which side of the PC the undead starts from. The undead are not concerned about suffering attacks of opportunity while they move their victim to the pit.

There are ordinary rats at the bottom of the pit. While this wouldn't usually be a problem for PCs, a paralyzed PC will make a relatively easy target for a rat. Note that each rat bite does a minimum of 1 point of damage.

Of course, the undead can also be pushed into the pit, but they have excellent climbing skills for getting out. They will not purposely follow the PCs down into the pit, even if all of the PCs are there. The undead will not pursue PCs out of this room, and they will only leave the room if attacked by ranged attacks from outside of the room.

Treasure: Verath carries a *potion of expeditious retreat* and 25 gp.

CONCLUSION

As the PCs leave the cursed land, they are confronted by the sylvan elves. The elves ask the PCs what they found. They want proof of what the PCs say, such as letters or a prisoner. Assuming the PCs provide such, the elves thank them for defeating their old enemy. The elves remind the PCs to tell the people of the Gran March that the elves did not attack their camp. They further say that while some elves may not like the humans invading their lands, they are far preferable to the goblins seen there as of late. Perhaps the humans and elves can set aside their differences to fight a common enemy. Perhaps they will be more successful at this than the kobolds and the followers of Beltar.

When the PCs return to Fort Endurance, the Warden is very interested to hear their story. He, too, asks for proof of what the PCs say. If given such, he calls off hostilities against the elves. The PCs are thanked for their service in preventing unnecessary and unjust bloodshed. Each PC receives a commendation.

Finally, if the PCs return the *lyre of building* to the bard, he will pay them the 100-gp reward.

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 One

Using good diplomacy with the elves

50 xp

Encounter Two

Defeating kobolds and cube (if present) 100 xp

Encounter Three

Defeating kobolds 50 xp

Defeating Nazhaka (half if he escapes) 100 xp

Encounter Five

Defeating undead 100 xp

Defeating Verath 50 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 which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter Two

- Masterwork chain shirt (250 gp, 25 lb., metal rings, common): This finely wrought steel shirt comes with a steel cap.

Encounter Three

- Antitoxin, 2 vials (50 gp each, 0 lb., glass vials, common): This small glass vial contains a single dose of antitoxin.
- Wand of disrupt undead (375 gp, 0.1 lb., bone wand, common): The wand affects undead as the spell *disrupt undead* cast by a 1st level caster. It has 35 charges remaining.

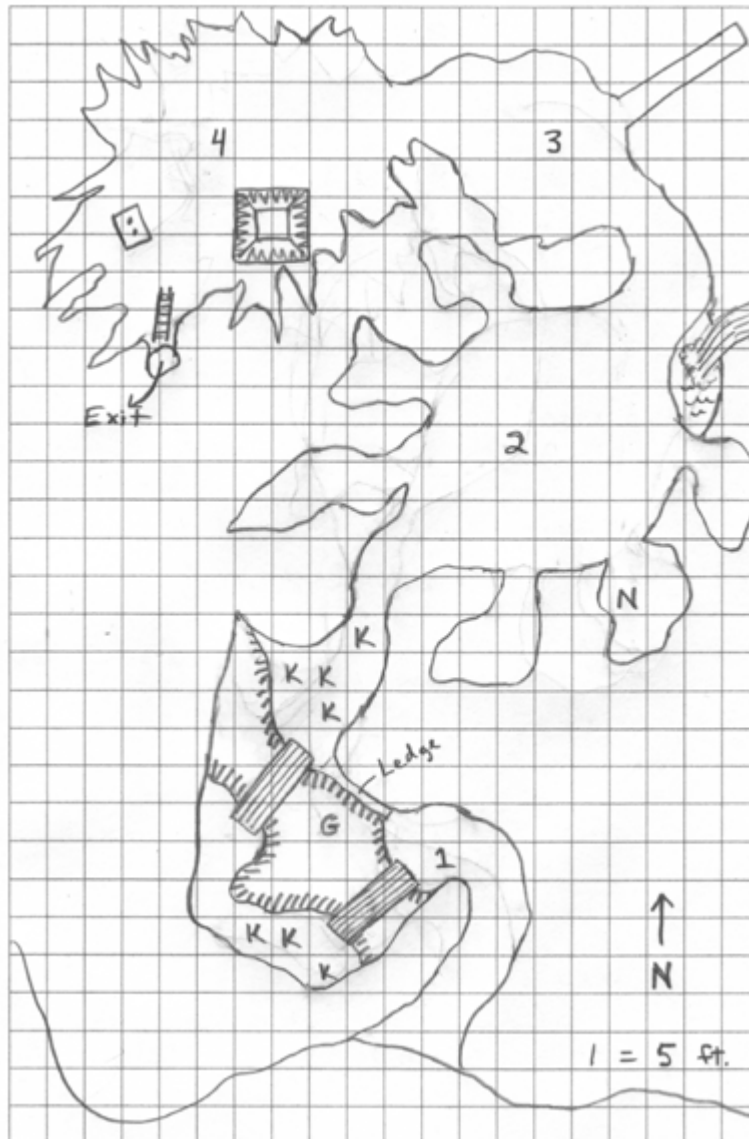
Encounter Five

- Potion of expeditious retreat (50 gp, 0.5 lb., ceramic bottle, common): The potion affects the drinker as the spell *expeditious retreat* cast by a 1st level caster. The potion bottle is ceramic.
- 25 gp

Conclusion

- 100 gp reward for returning *lyre of building*
- Commendation – Each PC, whether in the military or not, receives a commendation from the Warden of the Dim March. The commendation states, “___ has acted with exemplary skill in diplomacy and battle to absolve innocents of guilt and bring enemies of the Gran March to justice.”

DM AID 1 – MAP OF CAVES



The stones
of your road
will mark
the graves of
your people!

The Gran
March
claims these
lands. Elven
squatters will
be removed!

Master Plan for Retribution against Elves by Nazhaka (and Verath)

- ✓ - V. find treant-p. glibness
- ✓ - V. infiltrate fort
- ✓ - N. look like elf
- ✓ - N. mess up road plans
- ✓ - V. say he saw elf
 - V. lead army to elves
 - Kobolds attack hurt elves

Nazhaka's Goals

- Destroy elves in valley
- Find another centipede for poison
- Grow tribe to 400
- Locate great dragon ancestor - maybe this is Beltar?
- Expand lair
- Build more traps
- 3 new ways to kill elves