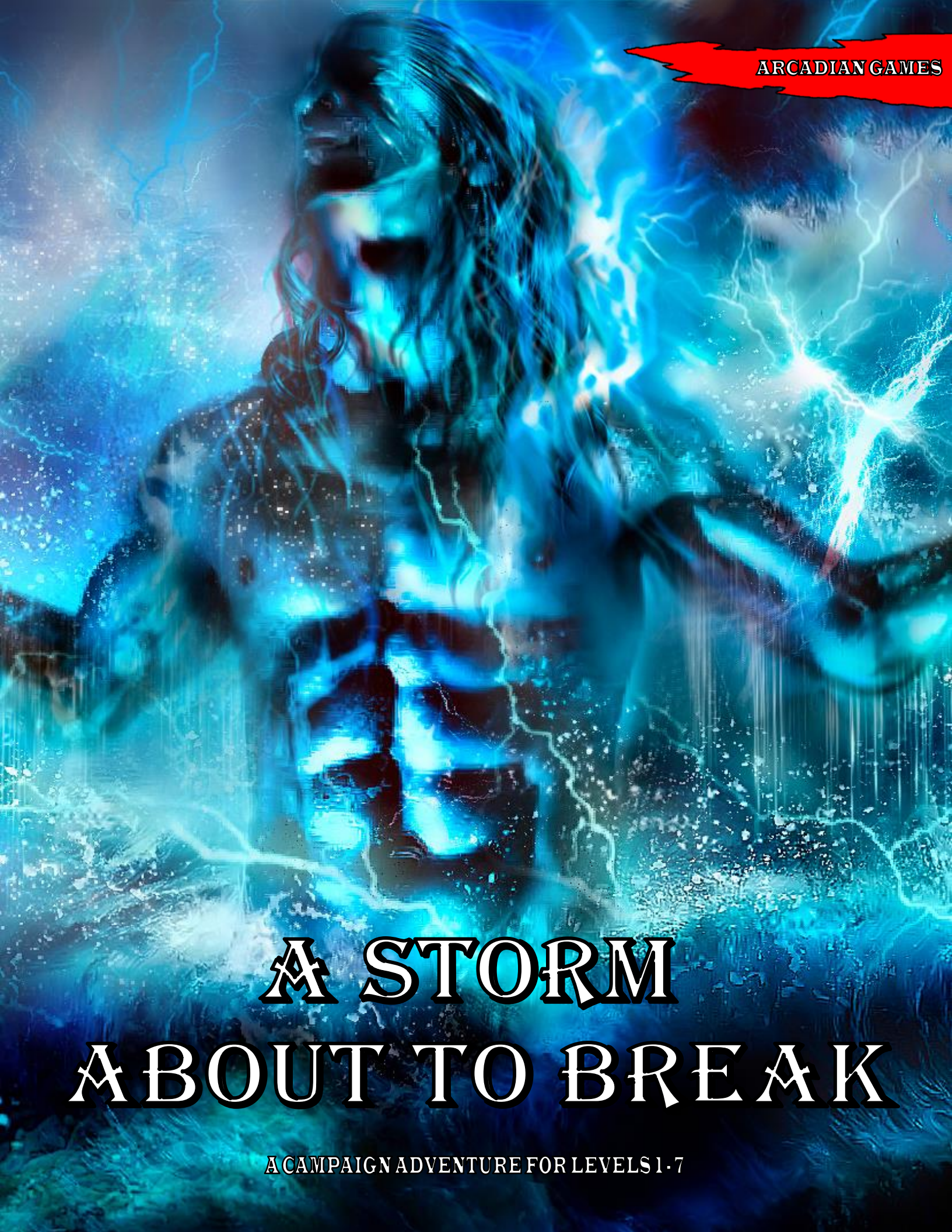




ARCADIAN GAMES

A STORM ABOUT TO BREAK

A CAMPAIGN ADVENTURE FOR LEVELS 1-7

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AN ECHO OF DAYS PAST

Gather round, brother and sister, for there is a tale I wish to relate – a tale of greatness and war, of creation and destruction – of the rise and fall of the world. Imagine if possible the great brothers, The Light and The Dark – from where they originated is not known but in perpetual competition they existed – joined but yet apart, bound in love and hate, sympathy and rivalry. They surveyed their domain – the ether, the void – each desiring dominance over the other and yet unable to achieve it. A competition is proposed, an arena which will see the rise of one and the fall of the other, forever. And so they created this land on which we live – and as I spin this bauble before thee, they set it in motion. How to resolve their conflict – each the opposite and equal of the other? Each destined to defeat and be defeated with the passing of the eons.

And so they created the Avatars, playthings which would do combat in their name and many was their form and myriad their powers. Around and upon this globe within the void, the Avatars strove and fought – each a

different physical form – a beast, an element, both great and insignificant – for the Avatar possessed no control over its physical state. The Light and The Dark were the shapers, the puppet masters. Their hands forged and nurtured their creations, one representing the light and purity and hope, the other the dark and despair and fear. And so the struggle proceeded through the ages and the world was shaped by these wars – seas created and dried – mountains thrown up and cast down and the Avatars, mortal to each other, suffered for their master's envy. And then it stopped and The Light and The Dark moved on – disinterested, to another contest, in another part of the void to continue their struggle. Neither could win, neither could throw down their rival. But struggle they still, two brothers in a death embrace – and their struggle will continue until the end of time.

But on this land, this experiment, the struggle continued – the Avatars of The Light and the Avatars of The Dark in perpetual conflict. They, unleashed and then forgotten, created Avatars of themselves in their likenesses – and we are their creations, man and beast and element – fighting a war started in ages before. And we worship our creators – and Gods we call them. But purely servants of The Light and The Dark they are. By our sacrifices they grow strong and thus rely upon us – the insignificant ones – for life. And myriad they are, and we know not their number.

Expect not to meet your God, creature of the world, for it is most mighty and yet cares not for thee. Only the

foolish brings forward the day its gaze should fall upon them and wishes to touch the divine – for a pawn you are. And yet there are still those who seek to do so – to promote their God's cause in the heavens and invite them back to the world – and these misguided souls are most dangerous, for sane men do not wish the return of the Avatars.

Beware their tricks and promises – and do not analyse dreams too deeply. Creatures of the day and creatures of the night, of The Light and of The Dark cannot fathom the whims of immortals and yet we contain their passions, their jealousies and their energies and will forever be bound to their fate until the end of days.

Excerpt from the heretical 'Book of Avatars' by Adhemar the Storyteller

INTRODUCTION

A Storm about to Break is a sequence of adventures set in the unexplored lands to the east of the Empire of Sarvania. **An Echo of Days Past** is the first in a whole adventure arc - and will cover this region – not only new to the players but to the Sarvanians themselves. Further adventures will develop and expand the land of Sarvania in detail. The quests will develop into a rich tapestry, not only of contemporary Sarvania and its troubles but of its history, heritage and culture. It is designed for use with the most recent edition to the world's most widespread RPG. It will utilise those mechanics but can be adapted to any other.

A Storm about to Break is a campaign of quests designed initially for a party of four to five **1st level** adventurers. This module is not designed to be purely a 'dungeon crawl' experience but should accommodate different styles of play depending on the methods chosen to resolve conflicts and dilemmas. There certainly is plenty of combat but this can be seen as only one of several solutions – some of which might benefit from thought and an appreciation that there are alternatives in play style. It will benefit a **GM** to take a little time to prepare for the more complex encounters to ensure a fluid and rewarding experience for their players.

The quests in this module will include hints and guidance on play and strategies. All encounters will be explained in detail to allow for a richer experience for all. Information for players will be boxed and can be read out directly.

A Storm about to Break is adaptable. More experienced GMs can alter these quests and adventures to personal taste or house rules. Similarly, difficulty levels can be adjusted depending on the size and experience of the party.

EXPLAINING THE WORLD

The banned *Book of Avatars* relates a time of conflict between two great powers, **The Light** and **The Dark**. These powers devised a world in which they could play out their rivalries using created beings or **Avatars** to fight for them. When the Great Powers lost interest in this world, as supreme entities may do, they left the world and the remaining Avatars to their devices. Soon realising that they were no longer being observed and realising that a continuing war would see an end to them all, the Avatars retreated to the Planes of Existence and an uneasy peace was established.

However, age old rivalries do not disappear overnight. The conflict was renewed but in order to preserve their own being, the Avatars created likenesses of themselves to do the fighting for them whilst they retreated to their spiritual homes. An unwritten law was established which allowed the Avatars to involve themselves in the affairs of these sentient beings – but not directly – and this law was generally upheld.

Centuries passed, and these new creations, elves, humans, dwarves and many others populated the world and prospered. The races of the world worshipped their parent Avatars – and took them to be gods. Great civilisations grew and spread and populated the world until jealousy and hatred sprang forth. Dabbling in the dark arts of the Ancients, the greedy, the power hungry and the unwise summoned once again the Avatars to the world. And their prayers were answered, for many of the Avatars of The Dark thrived on disorder and chaos and wanted to expand their realm to the Material Plane. Their

power was great and their rule long by mortal understanding but eventually the Avatars of The Light descended and war returned to the world. In

The Great War, the Avatars of The Dark were thrown back but not destroyed, and peace returned to the world.



Many of the peoples of the world were not so fortunate as to see this peace. Ripped asunder by the return of the Avatars of the Dark, and then the war, great and proud civilisations were destroyed and entered a dark age of poverty, ignorance and despair. They have now dragged themselves out of the chaos and re-established themselves - powerful in their own right but a shadow of their former selves. One of these new powers is the **Empire of Sarvania**.

Now the people of the world have other worries – trade to be conducted, sons and daughters to marry, money to be made. The rich and powerful care not for times past and the poor are ignorant. Civilisation has returned and the people flourish. A new generation populates the great continent and begins to colonise the **Outer Reaches** – casting its eyes into regions unknown with little concern for stories of ancients. Innocents go about their daily struggle, and are unaware.

But unknown to these people, dark forces wait – brooding patiently as new followers and acolytes

perform ancient rituals, thought long forgotten. Brooding and waiting – plotting revenge against a world that banished them back to the darkness. A storm is about to break.

OVERVIEW

The overall aim of this campaign is to thwart the designs of **Ehalazuhn, Destroyer of Life, Elemental God of Drowning and Corrupter of the Flesh and Avatar of The Dark**. Through the various episodes of this campaign the players will come up against the acolytes and supporters of Ehalazuhn, who wants to return to the world to wreak destruction and vengeance upon it. In this first module, **An Echo of Days Past**, the heroes begin at **Foley's Way Station** – a trading post funded by the Sarvanian government. They initially have the aim to investigate the loss of contact with a forward outpost of the Sarvanian Army. They will cross into the **Outer Reaches** and out of the known lands. **Part One** will see them discover a fort under threat of destruction and battle to save it.

They will then exact retribution on the attackers in their base of **Deepbelly**. In **Part Two**, the characters indulge in a quest to **Willow Marsh** and learn more about the ancient culture which existed before the Great War. Then it is onto the fortress of **Nightforge** where they will discover a plot to wage a war of conquest on Sarvania. **Part Three** is a quest to a cave system belonging to the self styled **King Kraag**, Warlord of the Tribes. As the heroes complete **Part Four**, they will travel to the ancient Barazud keep of Strongrock and then to the Iron Islands to disrupt the supply of war materials to the army of **Ehalazuhn**.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Why might our heroes be at **Foley's Way Station**? The easiest way is to say that they have found their way there out of self interest. That they have heard of a new land being opened up to colonisation and want to get first refusal on land or riches discovered there (**Option A**). Whilst at the Way Station they are engaged by a captain of the Sarvanian Army to investigate the loss of contact with a lost outpost.

Alternatively, they may actually work for the Sarvanian Army (**Option B**). Perhaps they have been given this job whilst in **Kingsvale**, the new capital city of Sarvania. They have been engaged to find and re-establish contact with the military outpost in the Outer Reaches. Why can't the army do it – well, they have orders to remain at station and not to conduct any extra military activity due to rumours of an incursion into Sarvania by Ichilian pirates. These freebooters have been pillaging the coastline of Sarvania for some time, and politically it is necessary for the army to put a stop to it.

Or perhaps they have been sent here on behalf of the Magic Guild of Kingsvale (**Option C**). Their benefactor is a prominent member of the guild and a great reader of ancient manuscripts. He has discovered an ancient text while rifling through the dusty tomes in the Guild library. This book relates to the tale of an ancient culture known as the Empire of **Barazuhn** which was reputed to be both wise and powerful. Surely their power must have been based on some magical capability. What if someone could

find this ancient magic and exploit it for the good of Sarvania?

Whatever the reason for the adventurers walking into Foley's Way Station, the heroes have some difficult experiences ahead. Choose one of the above or make up your own. Below are some boxed texts which you could read to begin the quest.

Option A

You have travelled far to be here. You and your companions have marched, hired transport and stolen passage to reach this desolate back of beyond trading post. You have not travelled well and are out of money. For some of you, the decision to embark upon a life of adventure is likely to be one of your poorer decisions. But now, things are looking up. Hearing, through the taverns of Sarvania rumours of new lands being opened up for brave individuals to colonise; you see the possibility of riches to be acquired. You and your friends – all new to this way of life believe that this is a fine opportunity.

And now the army stops you from entering! It's not for the likes of you, a captain Ibaras says. Only the chosen few have the right to exploit this new opportunity. It is just when you are contemplating how to avoid the army patrols and enter the land anyway that the captain summons you over. He is concerned about the fate of some of his soldiers. Weeks ago they left and headed east to establish a forward outpost in the Outer Reaches. However, all contact with them has ceased. In all likelihood, the reason for this is probably mundane but it is still a concern. If you will re-establish contact with this outpost, the Ibaras will allow you access to the lands beyond. The commander of this outpost is a sergeant at arms known as Perrett. A simple task, you think. Things are looking up!

Option B

Three weeks on the road and this will be your new home – a run-down shack populated by the scum of the earth. Foley's Way Station is known to you. Over the last month it has attracted the worst kind of scum from all corners of the kingdom. They all want a part of supposed new opportunities to the east. New lands are being opened up and everyone wants a part of it.

Not you however. You are professionals. As part of the Emperor's Scouts your job is to investigate the loss of contact with a forward outpost ran by a sergeant at arms known as Perrett. A meeting with the local commandant, a Captain Ibaras, lays out the area in which to begin your search. It is probably going to be a fairly dull mission, but at least you will not be splashing along the coastline looking for Ichilian pirates! Other military units have been ordered to remain at station for the time being whilst these cutthroats are tracked down and destroyed. That could be a long job but as the election of Kingsvale's new Governor is in the offing – all efforts are being put into it.

So, for now, it is up to you and your fellows. Head east, locate Perrett and see if he needs help. Will there be any action – you doubt it.

Option C

You haven't been adventuring for long. In fact, you really haven't done much at all and money is short. You have met a group of like minded individuals and have agreed to work together to achieve your dreams of riches and excitement. This, as of yet, has not been forthcoming – but things might be about to change.

The Mystical Xald requested your presence last week. As a leader of the Magic Guild of Kingsvale he discovered something interesting while rooting about in the guild library. He found an ancient historical tome which related a story of a great civilisation long thought to be a myth. According the text, a legendary culture known as the empire of Barazuhn, may have existed

centuries ago but, despite immense power and wealth, fell into destruction. Perhaps these legends were a reality – Barazuhn might have existed and, according to the text, was possibly centred on the area now intended for colonisation by the Sarvanian Government.

According to Xald, the Sarvanians have recently opened up new lands to the east, known as the Outer Reaches. These are to be colonised in the name of the Empire. Now many citizens of Sarvania are heading there in order to start a new life. Xald explained that this was a great time for the Guild of Magic to investigate this area more deeply. Surely a kingdom as great as this did not rely on strength of arms alone? Surely there was great magic behind it? What if we could find it and bring it back to Sarvania?

And the rest is history. You find yourself at Foley's Way Station – government papers in hand. The local captain, Ibaras reads and accepts your authorisation. Perhaps, the captain says, you could also help him. As you proceed east, could you re-establish contact with an outpost and its sergeant at arms, Perrett? All contact has been lost recently and the captain is concerned for his men. It's probably nothing but after that, your time is your own. You are now free to go on. Perrett's Fort first and then – east!

PART 1: OUT ON A LIMB

The adventurers begin their quest at **Foley's Way Station**. Initially this was intended to be a small trading outpost to assist the military to strengthen their presence before colonisation began in the Outer Reaches. Since then however it has become a focus for anyone who wants to be first to exploit the new opportunities opening up.

Foley's Way Station is surrounded by a rundown stockade which holds the trading post itself and a small barracks for a contingent of the Sarvanian Army. Outside the stockade, however, is a collection of traders, transients, adventurers and criminals all

awaiting the go ahead to move out east. At present, this is being denied by the army until at least the immediate environs can be secured and pacified. This has begun already with the dispatch of sergeant Guimer Perrett and a small contingent of soldiers.



Depending on the choice of entry point, the adventurers may already have attained authorisation to enter the area or will have received it when approached by Captain Ibaras once they arrived. The adventurers can enter the trading post at will once authorisation has been acquired. Inside they will be able to buy any goods they require.

Getting permission from the army to enter the Outer Reaches was relatively straight forward once you made the acquaintance with Captain Ibaras. A head start will be useful. A cursory look around the outside of Foley's Way Station proves that you are not the only ones looking for something here. All types are here, traders hoping to make money, soldiers on patrol, priests looking for souls to convert and a fairly shady looking contingent clearly out to grab what they can. The trading post itself however is inside a stockade protected by soldiers.

You have been informed by the captain that you can make free use of Foley's place inside the stockade. Perhaps here you can buy any gear that you think you might need in the days ahead.

ENCOUNTER 1: FOLEY'S WAY STATION

Whilst in the trading post, its proprietor, **Gurthrund Foley**, will try to make as much money as possible from the team. As a member of the **Goldthorn** faction back at Kingsvale, deals and business rule all his encounters. Why not take advantage of a captive audience? In fact, since the rumours began, he has never been so popular. Any trading will begin with a 50% mark up on the prices within the PHB. If the players accept this, he will be polite and cheerful and very helpful – why wouldn't he be!

Passing through the gates of the stockade that surrounds Foley's Way Station you see two buildings – one on either side of the compound. The building to the right is clearly a military barracks with a couple of what you assume are off-duty soldiers playing dice outside. Two large single storey buildings are joined by a smaller one with a barred window. To the left is a large log cabin structure. Various miscellaneous goods lie outside – barrels, cart wheels and such. Above the door is a large sign in peeling paint – it says Foley's Way Station.

Allow the party to choose their course of action. If they wish to investigate the military barracks, they will find themselves fairly unwelcome. The guards here know little of the lands to the east, and are not keen on strangers – even if they belong to the Emperor's Scouts (**Option B**).

NOTE: Detailed information about the barracks is located in the section entitled **Jailbreak** later in the module.

On entering the log cabin that is Foley's Way Station you are greeted by a fairly damp and musty stench. There is little room to move about amongst all the junk, sacks, barrels and boxes which are piled up around the walls. Old ropes and tarnished lanterns hang from ceiling hooks. Barrels full of arrows and crossbow bolts have to be negotiated. There is a claustrophobic feel to

the building which is made worse by the fact that the several small windows are grimy and cobweb covered. Dust, dirt and sawdust cover the floor.

Behind a large wooden desk, vigorously polishing a magnifying glass leans a rather fat, balding and bearded man. He nods to you as you enter. 'Good day to you.' he says. 'Take a look around if you're after a bargain. I have all you'll need if you're heading east. Not too many stores that way, I'd wager.'

Foley **can** be bartered with. If pressed he will reduce his prices but the players will have to make the first move. Foley will respond to both **Persuasion** and **Intimidation** skills. Each check can only be tried once so the players will have to pick the best candidates to try and bargain him down.



Gurthrund Foley is greedy but can be flexible, so a first successful roll on Persuasion or Intimidation will be taken at a **DC of 10**. This will convince Foley to reduce his prices. He will lower his asking prices to **25%** above the going rate. If a subsequent check on the other skill succeeds then he will lower his asking

prices to the going rate set in the PHB. However, perhaps he is more stubborn now so set the **DC** at **12**. Foley's civility will drop quite noticeably at this point. Nevertheless, he will grudgingly stick to the prices agreed at that time and for any future visits. Business is business. In addition to Foley, there are two **NPCs** that might be of interest to the party residing within the stockade.

BERNIER OF KINGSVALE

One is a noble cavalryman in richly adorned chain mail armour and sporting a surcoat bearing a coat of arms of a white griffon upon a blue background. This is the family crest of the Kingsvale family – once one of the premier families of the capital of Sarvania. His name is **Bernier of Kingsvale** and he seeks his brother. He is not over fond of adventurers, especially the less than savoury kind which seems to have descended on Foley's Way Station. Despite this, he does need the party. He has travelled from the capital in search of his brother who disappeared several weeks ago. If the characters make a **wisdom: perception (DC 12)** they notice him at the stables looking over at them. He will not take kindly to being approached but as he needs them to search out his brother, he will stifle his contempt – as far as he can. Bernier will ask them to look for any signs of his brother, **Rycharde of Kingsvale** to the east. Unfortunately he cannot give them any clues, just that he left Kingsvale heading to the Outer Reaches looking for guidance on a matter of confidential family business.

He will offer in return, a family heirloom. It is clearly expensive (**250gp**) but if not cashed in would give the characters a positive reception if ever dealing with the nobility of Sarvania – most of which are members of the **Patrician faction** – as is Bernier. He will not reveal his deep concern for his brother, especially as the two parted on bad terms. Bernier will wait at Foley's Way Station as part of the garrison for at least another month before departing for home. He can be reached however by **Empire Messenger** (there are two of these horsed scouts at Foley's) with any news and will return. The search for Rycharde of Kingsvale will end in **Willow Marsh** with the discovery of **Marshbeam**, who in her desperate search

for love snared Rycharde and where he will have died slowly but enraptured long before the adventurers ever reach him.

WILD CAL

The second NPC is less noble than Bernier. He is known by the residents at Foley's as **Wild Cal**. He is a rogue with a story to tell. Unfortunately, he can't tell it, as he is quite mad. Wild Cal is currently residing in the barrack room jail. He has been arrested for theft from a priest on the road to Foley's Way Station. Unfortunately for those living within the stockade, the jail's barred window looks out into the compound.



This allows Cal to lambast and insult passersby at will, which he does with monotonous regularity.

Cal's appearance is not a pleasant one. He is a

scrawny character with sunken cheeks and dark rims around his eyes. His hair is a dark brown to black and he is unshaven. His eyes have a wild and devious look about them. He will ask them if they are headed out to the east. If the party confirms this, he will laugh and tell them that the likelihood is that they will not return. If asked what he is doing in jail he responds that it is all a misunderstanding and that he needs to get out urgently. He informs them that he knows the Outer Reaches well and that he could guide them on their travels. Of course, this is not true. In fact he only knows one area well, and that is **Willow Marsh**. He will later be instrumental in guiding the party to Marshbeam (See: **A Voyage to the Marshes**). While he is trying to persuade the party to help him escape, a soldier will come over and tell them to ignore his pleas and explain that he robbed an innocent pilgrim for his religious symbol which Cal believed to be gold (it turned out to be brass). He was later found with it less than a quarter of a mile away. The soldier will claim that Cal faces a hefty spell in prison and that he

awaits the arrival of the local magistrate who will hear his case and pass sentence. Unfortunately, this magistrate has been delayed and will now not arrive for six weeks. In the meantime, Cal has been detained in the stockade.

Try to ensure that the party does not feel obliged to spring Cal out at this point. He will be there for some time and will still be locked up when they need him. They will have to break him out later (See: **Jailbreak**). If they insist on breaking him out immediately, follow the description in the **Jailbreak** section for how it can be done. If he is helped to escape at this point he will desert at the earliest opportunity. However, he can be picked up again near to Willow Marsh as he is entranced by the place, and Marshbeam, and will return there. Alternatively, Cal, being mad, might have forgotten all about his pleas for help – and scream the place down when the party tries to engineer an escape. Cal, in his fragile state, always thinks that people are out to kill him – which may not be far from the truth.

ENCOUNTER 2: HEADING EAST

The party should now be pushed into heading out to Perrett's Fort. There are no horses for sale or to hire at Foley's and the fort lies roughly 40 miles away to the north-east. Foley's has been built in a low lying area which penetrates the surrounding hills. Soon after leaving the station the heroes will have to ascend quite steeply to cross into this wasteland. The hills are a very rough and rugged barrier to exploration – one reason why the army has not really tried to enter the area before this time. If the party leaves Foley's in the morning, they will reach the fort on the **third** day. Progress is slow due to rough ground and they can barely make 12 miles a day.

The first day of travel will pass uneventfully – only the weather is against them as it is grey and drizzles throughout the daylight hours. As evening falls the party should be given the opportunity to organise themselves for the coming night. If they decide to light a fire then check to see if they have tinder boxes on them – otherwise it might prove very difficult due to the day's wet weather. The party must attempt a **Wisdom: Survival** check (DC 10) if they have dry fire lighting equipment on them or at DC 12 if they do

not. If they fail these checks then the ground and any scavenged wood is too wet to ignite.

If they decide to press on through the night they will experience one level of exhaustion per night spent awake. **Exhaustion** is a cumulative effect which can worsen until it is removed with a **long rest**. If they accumulate two levels of exhaustion then they move at **half speed**, and need two long rests to remove all the effects. Not only will these effects occur if the party marches through the night but anyone trying to sleep whilst fully armoured might also suffer the same penalty as they will have slept very poorly, if at all, due to discomfort.

WOLVES ABROAD

During the night, it will become clear that the party are not alone on the moors. Two **wolves** inhabit this area and the party will have a fight on their hands. The encounter with the wolves will take place at about 1am. Howls will be heard and dark shapes move in the distance.

Characters without **darkvision** and who have lit a lantern or torch can see clearly up to a range of 30' and dimly a further 30'. Unless lit by a light source, a creature prowling at night is classed as being **heavily obscured**. Wolves do not have darkvision but they do have very good senses of hearing and smell. They also get a **+4** bonus to stealth. If a guard sees the beasts approaching there will be no surprise and will be able to awaken or prepare the party whilst the wolves are still a fair way away.

A MOTLEY CREW

This encounter will take place at dusk on the final night before the party reach Perrett's fort. A few hours before dusk however, the heroes will stumble upon a corpse. The body is male and is dressed as a Sarvanian soldier but has no weapon. An **intelligence: investigation** check (DC 8) will show that he was killed by two arrow wounds in his back. The check will also reveal that the death occurred within quite a short space of time in the past as rigor mortis has not yet set in. A **Survival** check (DC 10) will establish that there are horses hoof marks near the corpse and that they head off east. The corpse

carries nothing of any value. The dead man is one of Perrett's men who was tasked with summoning help from the garrison at Foley's Way Station. He was ambushed and killed.



If the party follows the horse tracks east, they will see a group of four **Bandits** around a fire in the medium distance. They wear leather armour and are equipped with scimitars and shortbows. These are from **Zyler's** force which has come from **Deepbelly** to attack Perrett's Fort. They have been sent to prevent any messages from the fort reaching assistance. The bandits are on foot but they have the dead soldier's horse tied up nearby. Also one of the bandits has the soldier's longsword in his possession.

Cresting a rise on your way east, you see a small rocky gully. In this gully you can make out a small group of four men clustered around a fire. They are armed, but make no attempt to rise when you approach – in fact they smile and wave you over. Tied to the stump of a tree nearby is a well kept horse with good quality harness and saddle.

The bandits have been taken aback by the appearance of the party, as they were not expecting any eastward travellers. They will pretend to be travellers or even scavengers rather than reveal their true identities, and will try to lull the party into lowering their guard by **not** taking any offensive action. If the party want to attack the bandits, this will cause problems with any **Good** aligned characters as they have not yet been attacked. If any character plays in role and objects to unprovoked aggression they should achieve **Inspiration** for acting within their alignment. If challenged about the horse, which is clearly a military steed, the bandits will claim that it wandered into their camp a little while ago. A **wisdom: insight** check (DC 12) will suggest that they are perhaps hiding something. The bandits may find it harder to justify the soldier's longsword. A **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 14) will reveal the presence of this military style weapon, which is rare for poor travellers or scavengers.

The aim of the bandits is not to engage the adventurers but to escape and warn Zylar. If it is clear that their lies have been seen through, three will attack the party while the fourth will attempt to escape on the horse. If the party falls for the subterfuge then they will be offered the fire for the coming night. The bandits will attack them at this time. A search of the bandits' bodies will reveal a **letter** from Perrett asking for help (**Investigation** check – DC 10) as well as a total of 20sp.

If under any circumstance a bandit escapes and warns **Zylar** he will send another five bandits to attack the party. This will occur the next day when only an hour or so from Perrett's Fort. An ambush will be set with the bandits firing from behind small rocks 20' apart at a range of 80' if not discovered. Due to intervening terrain, the ambush can be spotted (Passive Perception check) at a range of 100' at most. The rocks will also afford the bandits **half cover**. If this ambush occurs, Zylar's subsequent attack on the fort will be diminished by the loss of the men who don't make it back.

ENCOUNTER 3: PERRETT'S FORT

It has taken a while to get here from Foley's Way Station, but as you descend the hills you see in the middle distance a small palisade enclosure built on an island in the middle of a river. This has to be Perrett's Fort. Just outside the fort you can see a collection of brightly coloured tents. As you approach you can detect that the strength of this building is debatable and seems to have been built fairly rapidly. The river is shallow and easily navigated – it would not impede attackers.

The gates are closed and around the walkway of the fort patrol three soldiers who eye you suspiciously as you near. They call down to within the fort, and soon another appears on the palisade wall. He bids you to halt and to state your business.

As the heroes arrive they will see that **Perrett's Fort** appears to have been built quickly. It is a wooden palisade construction divided into two halves. The first and largest half holds the military barracks and Perrett's quarters. The second and smaller of the halves is reserved for a hut designed as an eating area for the guards. The fort has no towers but does have a walkway around the palisade for defensive purposes. Despite this, it is clear that the fort would not be able to withstand a significant attack on its walls.

The fort was designed to hold a small garrison of 19 soldiers as well as their sergeant, **Guimer Perrett**. Now however, there are only **Perrett** and 15 soldiers present. In addition to the garrison there is a small encampment of tents outside the walls. This is a merchants' camp which belongs to the **Goldthorn faction** and sells essentials to the garrison. Clearly, Goldthorn intends to benefit from the colonisation of the area whenever that should happen. The three traders at the camp, **Bertran** (arms), **Symonet** (armour) and **Sewell** (miscellaneous) will be happy to sell their wares to the party. Due to their 'end of the line' location and with a somewhat captive market, they will increase their prices by 25%. If they deal with the party, they will do so politely – all except Bertran who seems to have something on his mind and will not converse.

Once the party has convinced Perrett of their intentions, he will allow entry and open the gates for them. Inside the fort, the party will see soldiers going about their military business, eating, sharpening their weapons and dozing. The 15 soldier garrison is armed with longswords and light crossbows. None of them looks like they want to be there. Most wear a mask of tiredness and also a certain apprehension. Perrett tells the party that they are concerned by activities of bandits in the area. Initially there were few in the region, but over the last week or so their activities have become more common. They also approach nearer and nearer to the walls of the fort. Perrett fears that something is brewing – so much so that he sent out a trusted soldier to notify his superiors at **Foley's Way Station**. This soldier is of course the man found slain in the hills by the party. He also sent out a patrol of three men eastward, which has not returned. Perrett fears that an attack on the fort is imminent.



He will ask the party if they could perhaps help his detachment by exploring the area to the northeast of the fort next day. The party should use their remaining time to perhaps resupply and reequip if necessary. However, Zyler will attack **before** this is possible. The aim of the party during the coming attack is to help defend the fort but also to keep Guimer Perrett **alive**.

The players should be awarded **50XP** each for reaching and relieving the fort as per their orders.

THE ATTACK

In the morning of the following day, Zyler's force will arrive. He has been ordered by **Kagan Brax** at **Nightforge** to destroy the fort and kill all inside. He has cleared out his bandit stronghold at **Deepbelly** for this purpose. His force consists of **40 bandits** armed with scimitars and **9** armed with daggers and shortbows, and will attack from the east. The bandits have also brought **seven** scaling ladders to assist them in crossing the fort's palisade. The defenders of the fort however, will only see one part of this force – **30 bandits** with **five** ladders and the archers. Unknown to them, a second force of **10 bandits** has circled around the camp with **two** ladders and will attack from the west **four** rounds into the assault. At the first sign of the bandits, the traders from outside the fort will run within its walls for protection. They will not participate in its defence unless attacked personally whereupon they will have the statistics of a **commoner**.



The day dawns bright and cold. Within the fort, soldiers are stirring whilst sentries on the walls wrap themselves tighter into their cloaks. A shout snaps you out of your slumber. A guard beckons to the east. Running up to the battlements you look towards the rising sun and see an armed force headed your way. They shout and scream at the fort encouraged by a large armoured man sitting astride a horse – he waves a large battle axe towards the fort. Pushed ahead of them, three soldiers stagger, their arms tied behind their backs. At a signal, these unarmed men are butchered in front of the fort. Alarms are sounded.

Soldiers rush out of their quarters. Perrett is already there, buckling on a longsword. He shouts for his men to man the walls.

CHARGING THE FORT

The bandits will attack en masse from **outside** the garrison's light crossbow range (330'). The archers support the melee troops. Their purpose is to kill the guards on the battlements. **Zyler** will watch the attack from atop a mound out of range of the defenders crossbows. He is not a fanatic and will try to escape if things are going badly – his men are expendable.



This combat is quite complex and would benefit from some planning and understanding of the various effects the terrain/fort will have on attack rolls. The attacking force will suffer initially from the range and that the defending soldiers will be behind the palisade. The archers will fire as they follow the melee troops. They will initially suffer from firing at long range (over 80') – because of this, they will suffer **disadvantage** on their attack rolls. Their targets are also behind the palisade which counts as **half cover**. This adds **+2** to the defenders' armour class. As the guards are wearing chain shirts their AC will increase from **14** to **16**. The bandits receive a **+3** to hit with a shortbow. The soldiers in the fort have shields but will only pick them up in melee when defending the walls. They **cannot** use them when firing their crossbows. Once the bandits are within short range the archers will no longer suffer disadvantage on their rolls.

For ease of management in terms of the archery part of the combat, it might be worthwhile grouping the archers on both sides in **sets of three** – rolling once for each group. This will reduce the amount of to hit rolls necessary. Damage can be worked out normally but set up a **rolling tally**. As soon as the tally exceeds the relevant **hit points** of a single target, one is killed and the extra carries forward onto the next man and so on. When the combat proceeds to melee, then individual combats can be carried out if desired. As the attackers have limited ladders, the management of this phase will be more straightforward.

CROSSING THE WALLS

Once the bandits have reached the walls, they need to expend an **Action** to place their ladder against the wall. Ladders **cannot** be destroyed from within the fort unless by actions of a player such as a **Burning Hands** spell. Anyone falling off a destroyed ladder will suffer **1d6** bludgeoning damage. They can then climb the ladder in their movement phase. Whilst fighting over the battlements, the bandits will fight with **disadvantage** until they can cross over. They can only cross over when they have killed an opposing soldier and thus created a space. The defenders will at this point most likely have picked up their shields but have lost the benefits of cover to any remaining archery. The defenders **do not** receive a bonus for defending the walls as the bandits are already fighting at disadvantage.

ENTERING THE FORT

If the bandits enter the fort then it is a fight to the death. If they have lost their ladders due to fire or other damage, they will try to **break through** the gates. They will attack them with their scimitars. The gates are not too sturdy. It will take a group of **three or more** bandits **5** rounds to chop a hole large enough for **one** man to pass through at a time. Another round will open up a space for another to enter the stockade.

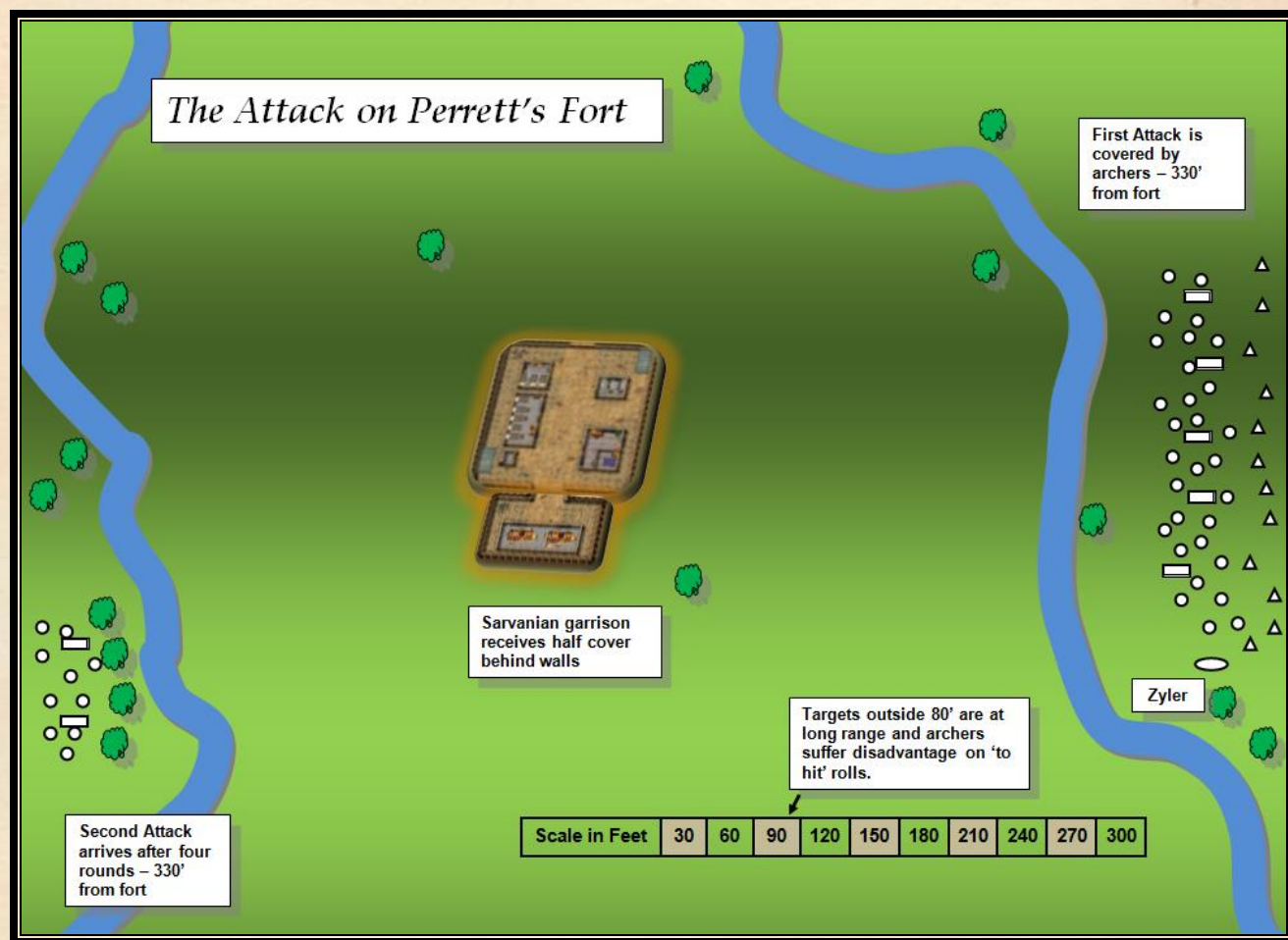
AN ATTACK FROM THE REAR

Whilst the battle is raging, Zyler's **second** force will attack from the west. This will occur on **Round 4**. As this assault is unexpected a **Passive Perception** check is necessary for a player to notice them. If a character has been placed to guard the rear of the fort,

he will spot them immediately. These bandits have two ladders.

On **Round 7** of the assault, the armoured, **Bertran** will make a dash for the gate. He intends to allow the

bandits into the fort as per his deal with Zyler. He can be killed or knocked unconscious if spotted on a **Passive Perception** check. It may appear as though he is just trying to escape.



COUNTING THE COST

The attackers will lose heart and retire if they suffer losses totalling over **35 men**. **Zyler** will not engage in combat but will retire to Deepbelly if his plans go awry. Once the bandit attack has been repulsed there will be time for healing and the burial of the dead.

A search of Bertran's person or body will reveal a **letter** to him from Zyler. In this letter, Zyler orders Bertran to help in the attack if he wants to see his wife and children again. It is clear that they are being held at **Deepbelly** as insurance for good behaviour.

Unknown to the occupants of the fort, Bertran and his family were waylaid and kidnapped by Zyler's men a week ago as they made their way east. His family, a wife and daughter are currently held in chains at Deepbelly. Zyler has no real intention of returning them to Bertran, as a spy in the midst of the enemy is too valuable.

*My Dear **Bertran** - Greetings*

Here is a keepsake to refresh your memory of the deal we have struck. As you will be aware, I will soon be leading a strike against our enemies from the west. Their pathetic defences will be swept aside leaving but ashes to mark their place. My men will brush the opposition aside but just to make sure of this, I expect you to uphold your side of the bargain and assist my troops with entry.

Remember, your beautiful wife and child currently reside with me at Deepbelly. If you assist me in this venture you shall be reunited. Otherwise I fear you might never see them again. Think on it. Expect us three moons hence.

Zyler

If the players discover the letter after the battle or are able to interview Bertran, Perrett will ask them to head northeast where he has received scouts' reports of a tented encampment. He believes that this could be the Deepbelly mentioned in the letter. He will ask them to gain the freedom of Bertran's family if possible, and return them to him at the fort. He cannot, and will not, leave the fort to escort the players – there is too much here to be done. If the letter is not found then the result will be the same but without the mention of Bertran's family – the players will find them there. The judgement of Bertran, should he live, will be postponed by Perrett until the party returns.

If Perrett **survives** the attack then the players will receive **100XP each** for keeping him alive. If he has died, they will receive **50XP each** and a soldier from the ranks, a corporal **Orwin**, will step forward and run events from then on.

ALTERNATIVE TO FIGHTING THE BATTLE

The attack on Perrett's Fort can be complex and quite long. You may wish to proceed without fighting the battle. If this is the case then have the players

arrive just after the battle has been fought. The plotline will not have to be changed much.

1. Perrett will succeed in fighting off the assault with 4 soldiers remaining.
2. There will be plenty of dead bandits left around the walls of the fort when the party arrive.
3. Zyler will have escaped to Deepbelly – he can still be described to the players by Perrett as a fearsome warrior wielding a battle axe.
4. Bertran will still betray the fort but will be knocked unconscious and apprehended – the players can interrogate him.

Apart from this, the quest will proceed as in **Counting the Cost** (above) and proceed to Deepbelly.

ENCOUNTER 4: REVENGE ON DEEPBELLY

Deepbelly is a tented camp serving as a forward base for bandits sent from **Nightforge**. It is located in a hollow in the ground nestling in a small group of trees. It consists of around 16 structures intended to hold Zyler's men.

Heading northeast, you follow the trail left by the bandit force. It is not a hard trail to follow. Clearly they did not expect a hard fight at the fort as they made little attempt to hide their passage. After a journey of 10 miles and with low hills to your left you see a small copse of trees nestling in a shallow valley. The tracks head in that direction.

Crawling closer, you see a gap in the trees and what appears to be a small barricade. Beyond this barrier and receding into the failing light within the trees, you can see a tented camp cut into a shaded clearing.

You can see movement from within the camp. It appears that it is not deserted. However, as of yet, you are undetected.

Deepbelly has been cleared out for the attack on Perrett's Fort leaving only **seven** bandits and Zyler inside. The survivors of the attack on the fort, if any, have fled the area. Zyler will be in his large tent near

the rear of the camp. He will be contemplating how to tell **Kagan Brax** of his failure. Zyler is expecting some form of retribution.

The characters might try a direct assault but the area could benefit from a reconnaissance. A night incursion should give them a good chance of success. Also the tents are flammable and could be used as a diversion. **Two bandits** are posted at the entrance to the camp. The remaining **five** are inside. Any sound of an attack will draw them, and Zyler, to defend the camp. If necessary, they will gather in front of Zyler's tent for a last stand. The bandits in the camp are demoralised by the defeat at Perrett's Fort and it won't take much to scare them off – especially if

Zyler dies. Zyler will **fight to the death** as he can expect little mercy from Kagan Brax.



If a frontal assault is not carried out then the party will encounter the bandits randomly within the camp. If secrecy is maintained, Zyler will be in his tent. If incapacitated but not killed then he can be **intimidated** or **persuaded** into revealing information as follows:

DC 10 - He will reveal the existence and location of Nightforge and that he was sent here to attack Perrett's Fort.

DC 12 - He will reveal the existence of Kagan Brax as the local warlord in the town and that Brax suggested that Zyler's attacks were only the beginning of a general assault on Sarvania.

DC 14 - He will reveal the fact that Brax takes his orders from another. Orders seem to be coming from the east and that he heard the name Zaleria mentioned.

Once entry is established and the battle won – the interior can be described and explored. **One bandit** has been tied to a stake outside Zyler's tent – he is not armoured and will pretend that he is a captured traveller. He will ask to be freed. The reality is that he was caught stealing and was to be executed. A **wisdom: insight** check (**DC 14**) will suggest that he is lying. If he is freed, he will escape and head northeast to Nightforge and warn them. If his lie is discovered, he will beg for mercy. If he is spared and if it fits with the heroes' alignment then they will receive **inspiration** for role-play. He can reveal the same information as above if Zyler has been killed.

Inside Zyler's tent will be **Bertran's** family. They are still alive and essentially well. Zyler kept them alive to ensure Bertran's loyalty. The heroes should be encouraged to fulfil Perrett's request and to return them to the fort. Also tied up is a young blonde haired woman who claims to be part of a travelling company headed for Perrett's Fort. She is weak and thin but underneath the grime she is quite attractive. She introduces herself as **Ethelyn Morvell**. She relates that she belonged to a group whose ship ran aground on the coast to the northwest. Skirting **Willow Marsh**, the party was headed south when they were attacked by Zyler's men. All her group were killed except for her and the leader of the group, a certain **Alvis Brownhill**. Brownhill luckily managed to escape but she was brought to Deepbelly. She requests an escort to safety. She has heard of Perrett's Fort from bandit chatter. She hopes to meet up with Brownhill there if he survived. The party should be encouraged to comply with her wishes – indeed those of a **good alignment** will not allow her to be left or set to wander this dangerous land alone.

If the party defeat Zyler they each receive **100XP** for saving Perrett's Fort and protecting Sarvania.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

WOLF

Medium beast, unaligned

Armour Class 13
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 13
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

BANDIT

Medium human, chaotic evil

Armour Class 12 (leather armour)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft. /320 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

RIDING HORSE

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 10
Hit Points 13 (2d10 + 2)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 10
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Hooves. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

GUIMER PERRETT

Medium human fighter, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 19 (Chain Mail, Shield)
Hit Points 22 (2d10 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Defence. Perrett gains a +1 bonus to AC

Second Wind. Perrett has a limited well of stamina that he can draw on to protect himself from harm. On his turn, he can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + his fighter level.

Action Surge. Starting at 2nd level, Perrett can push himself beyond his normal limits for a moment. On his turn, he can take one additional action on top of his regular action and a possible bonus action.

ACTIONS

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft. /320 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

GUARD SERGEANT

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 18 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Proficiency bonus: +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

GUARD

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 16 (Chain Shirt, Shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception+2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft. /320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage

BANDIT ARCHER

Medium human, chaotic evil

Armour Class 12 (leather armour)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft. /320 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

ZYLER (LEVEL 3 CHAMPION)

Medium human, Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 18 (Chain Mail, Shield)

Hit Points 35 (3d10 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Duelling. When wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, Zylar gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon

Second Wind. He has a limited well of stamina that he can draw on to protect himself from harm. On his turn, he can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + his fighter level.

Action Surge. Zylar can push himself beyond his normal limits for a moment. On his turn, he can take one additional action on top of his regular action and a possible bonus action.

Improved Critical. Zylar scores a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 6) slashing damage

PART 2: WILLOW MARSH

Into the Outer Reaches takes the party on a slight tangent away from the main quest line. It sees the heroes travel to Willow Marsh under the guidance of Alvis Brownhill, a sage with a dangerous plan. It also introduces **Ehalazuhn**, the main antagonist of this campaign for the first time, and the artifacts essential for achieving his downfall.

ENCOUNTER 5: VOYAGE TO THE MARSHES

When the party return to Perrett's Fort they will have to deal with the issue of Bertran's family first of all. If he survived his act of treachery during the attack, he will be overjoyed at seeing his family again. At the time of the party's arrival he will be chained up within the fort. Perhaps the party will need to participate in the judgement of him over his actions. The typical system applied by Sarvania in issues such as this is for the accused to be sent to Kingsvale for trial. There he will probably be found guilty and executed. As the local magistrate headed for Foley's Way Station is delayed, the party may influence this decision. It will be up to the party (if they so wish) to provide a reasonable case for his acquittal. Perrett may bow to their pleas as a result of the party's actions during and after the attack – a **Wisdom: Persuasion** check at a suitable DC which reflects the players' case may be appropriate. If Bertran is dead, then his family will visit his gravesite which lies just outside the walls of the fort. Regardless of the situation and how it develops, the heroes will get **experience points** for the conclusion of this quest thread. If they have worked for Bertran's acquittal and it is successful then they should be awarded **100XP** each. If Bertran died, or the case failed to acquit, then the party should still be awarded **50XP** each.

TALES OF THE OLD EMPIRE

In addition to the rescue of Bertran's family, the characters will discover that **Alvis Brownhill** did indeed make it to safety in the fort. Brownhill is an

old halving savant. His has silvered hair and a small goatee style beard. His robes, once expensive, have been sullied and torn by his experiences in the Outer Reaches. In conversation with Alvis, Ethelyn will make a reference to continuing their quest for the **Stone of Ashazuhr**. Alvis will be reluctant to discuss this item with the characters but after realising their potential usefulness, he will eventually explain why his group were in the Outer Reaches.

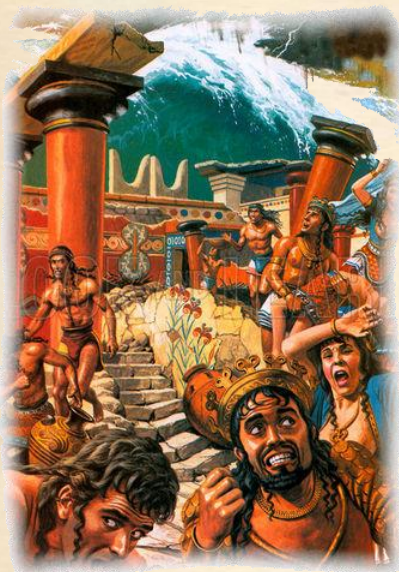
Brownhill relates that he came looking for a structure called the Tower of the False King. He explains that his life has been devoted to research on a supposedly mythical culture known as the Empire of Barazuhn. He and Ethelyn are from Kingsvale where Alvis works as a sage and an historian.

During his researches, he discovered locked in the vaults of the royal palace, a set of archives. In these archives were records of previous ages past. As he studied the accounts, he found that references were frequently being made of a magical gem – the Stone of Ashazuhr. This stone was closely linked to the rise of the Barazud culture and its dominance of the lands around.

According to his research, this stone, probably a great sapphire, held mystical and wild powers which might, if used correctly, strengthen the Kingdom of Sarvania from its enemies. Becoming fascinated with the legends behind the Stone, he reported this to his superiors. However, the other sages within the palace dismissed the legend as a fiction and rejected his pleas to send a mission out to locate the stone. They refused to even bother the Emperor with the news.

Alvis therefore decided to find it himself and bring it before the Emperor for the good of all Sarvania. He raised and funded a group of supporters and headed to the last known resting place of the gem, the Outer Reaches. It was on the way there when his ship was ruined in a storm and his party slaughtered by the bandits led by Zyler. Now perhaps the party will help him find the Stone of Ashazuhr and keep Sarvania safe for future generations.

Alvis Brownhill is not all he seems. On the outside a genial and perhaps even bumbling academic, his manufactured exterior hides a fanatical and determined nature which has long since descended into obsession. He does indeed want the Stone of Ashazuhr, but not for any reasons such as saving Sarvania. In fact he could not care less for the Empire, its rulers or its people. He wants the stone for himself. With the powers he thinks the stone will bestow he will, he believes, be able to dominate and take over the throne of Sarvania. This obsession has been dormant for many years but now, with further research, he believes that he has narrowed down its



location.

Unfortunately for him, this location is somewhere in the Outer Reaches of Sarvania – therefore he needs help. His capture and the death of his party were a hindrance, but since his escape, and importantly

since he met the party he can now return to fulfilling his destiny, as he sees it. **Ethelyn** knows nothing of this and has always taken Alvis to be exactly what he says he is – a good hearted man with noble motives. She will not believe otherwise and will passionately defend him against any criticism – she sees him as a genius.

A **wisdom: insight (DC 14)** check – will reveal that Brownhill is hiding something. If pressed he will reveal exaggerated but not impossible stories of great wealth to be found with the stone. He will claim that he wasn't sure about passing this information on to the party in case they were obsessed by greed. He will, however, become very suspicious of the party member who challenged him and be very careful about revealing himself in the future. He may even use Ethelyn as a tool to assuage suspicions.

The **Tower of the False King** does exist, as does the **Stone of Ashazuhr**. They, however, have little to do with what Alvis thinks they do. The tower is located in the large forest to the southwest of the Outer Reaches and belonged to one of **Ehalazuhn's** greatest commanders, **Ekasusuhr**. In times past it was called the **Tower of Ashazuhr**. It became known as the Tower of the False King during Ekasusuhr's sovereignty over this area in the name of Ehalazuhn. The stone can still be found there. In fact, it is one of the three **Jewels of Ehalazuhn**. These stones, when combined, will give access to the Water God's palace and throne room in the Outer Planes. The jewel was placed in the tower under the protection of his strongest lieutenant. With Ehalazuhn's fall it remained there and is still guarded by the phantom of Ekasusuhr, who awaits his master's return. The party on undertaking this quest will not discover or voyage to the Tower of the False King at this point. This will be included in **Part Two** of this campaign: **Adventure Module M2: Beneath the Razor's Edge**. Their quest for now is to thwart Brownhill's plans in **Willow Marsh**.

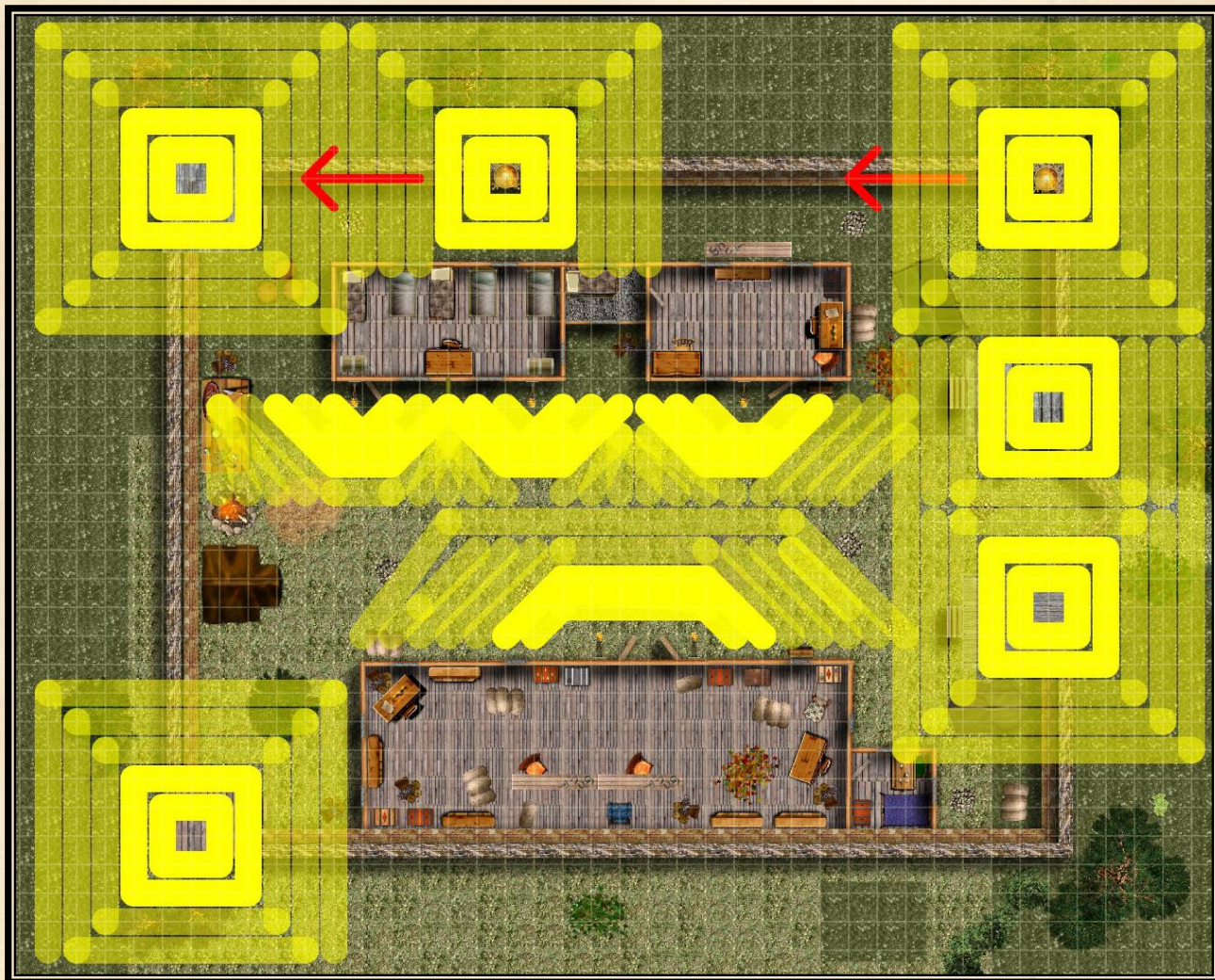
The main problem Alvis has in his quest for 'world domination' is that he is still unsure quite where the stone is to be found. No-one at Perrett's Fort knows the tower's whereabouts or has even heard of it. However, Perrett is aware of a strange and some say dangerous spirit in female form which exists in Willow Marsh. He believes that it has powers beyond mortal men in understanding the ways of the past. Perhaps the spirit may be able to aid them in their quest. Perrett will relate a tale passed to him by **Edstan**, the lighthouse keeper, of two people seen a month ago headed east to consult the woman, one of which was a knight, but only one came back – and he was half mad. He believes the man who returned was called **Calvin**.

No-one can get through the marsh without guide. Perhaps **Wild Cal** (for it is he) can guide them to visit this spirit. After all, it would appear that he has already been there. Cal currently resides in the jail at **Foley's Way Station**. To gain his help, it appears that the heroes must break him out.

JAILBREAK

Cal is held in the jail within Foley's Way Station. It is necessary for the party to break him out of this jail if he is to lead them through **Willow Marsh**. Entrance to the compound in daylight hours, should they want to make a plan will not be a problem as they have already been granted entry previously. However, getting Cal out might be. The compound is home to a

garrison of **16 guards** and one sergeant. Not all are on duty at the same time however. It may be wise for the party to spring Cal at night time when little stirs and they will receive the benefit of darkness. During the night, **10 guards** will be asleep in the bunked barrack area next to the jail. Although the jail adjoins the barracks, there is no access – it is a solid wooden wall.



Outside the barracks, the remaining **six guards** will be on duty. **Four** will be posted in the towers – one in each, and **two** patrol the walls. Each tower has an alarm bell which if sounded will raise the garrison. The guards in the towers are more concerned with the situation outside the walls at night, but will look on occasion inside the perimeter. The other two guards walk around the walls in an anti-clockwise direction

before returning the way they have come. The sergeant, although awake, will be in the office next to Cal's cell. There is an entry door to the jail from this office – the door is barred and the occupants of the cell are always visible from his office.

The key difficulty will be how to break Cal out while not disturbing the guards. The timber stockade

of the trading post is rough and relatively easy to climb if adept in such things – a **Dexterity: Acrobatic Check (DC 12)** will accomplish this task. In the party's favour is that the guards' coverage in terms of vision is not complete. The two towers near the gates cover the inside section of the compound but the other two only cover a small area due to the intervening buildings. The central section of the compound is reasonably well lit by torches – bright light reaches to a radius of 20' and dim light to another 20'. Therefore, bright light will cover all doors, whether to the trading post itself or the barracks area. If a character enters this area when a guard is looking (**25% chance**) he will be easily seen. The bright light of the torches therefore essentially covers most of the frontages of the buildings. The alcove which leads to the jail and which has a barred window is blocked by the buildings and therefore counts as total darkness. There is also a barred window at the rear of the jail – this is also shrouded in darkness unless a guard wanders by.

The dim light outside of the torches' immediate glare offers more cover. In this area of dim light, the guards suffer a **disadvantage** to **perception** checks. As the guards should not be aware of the characters presence or intentions, they are not alert. The guards on the wall walk 90' apart and cover 30' per turn. The guards do carry torches however and so will be easy to spot as they near the party.

How the adventurers get Cal out is really up to them. They need to formulate a plan to enter the compound stealthily, as they will not be able to stay in there when the gates are closed for the night. The bars of the jail are not too solid and require a **Strength Check (DC 14)** to bend. However the windows are not designed to assist in the escape of a felon and therefore are quite small – pulling a man, not known for his sensibilities – through the window might create a fair bit of noise. This is especially dangerous as the guard barracks and the sergeant's office are so close. Also perhaps a plan to warn Cal of their intentions may be advisable – otherwise he might think they are coming to kill him and sound the alarm himself.

It is important that the players realise that the guards are just doing their job – they are not

legitimate targets for murder. Any plans to kill the guards will probably go against **alignment** and should be discouraged. They can, however, be incapacitated. The players' faces must not be seen during the breakout as there will be a serious hue and cry when Cal is missed. They don't need the attention of the Sarvanian government looking for them. If they are recognised, Foley's Way Station will be barred to them until they can find some way of soothing the anger of the army. Once Cal is out, and if the party can keep him quiet, they can escape northeast, through the hills and on to **Willow Marsh**. The party will get **100 XP** each for the successful jailbreak of Wild Cal – **150 XP** if they do so without raising the alarm.

ENCOUNTER 6: MARSHBEAM

Willow Marsh is avoided by travellers. Many an unwary soul has disappeared into the mire, never to be seen again. This is not due to the inherent dangers or the fauna in the area, although this is certainly present, but because of the instability of the surface and its changing paths. Anyone entering the marsh with no reliable guide will find themselves lost within a few hours. There is a blanket of mist which hovers above the surface which obscures natural light to such an extent that it becomes impossible to find one's way through the use of the sun, moon or stars. Very soon a traveller will lose all sense of direction and it is only a matter of time before they will stumble off firm land and into the bog.



If at any time the party wander off the track Cal suggests, they will begin to fall into its grasp. Every turn spent in the marsh will risk a sodden fate as they are dragged beneath the still, rank waters. A **wisdom:**

survival check at a **DC 10** will keep them safe. If they fail, they slip in and will start to sink rapidly. It takes **three** rounds before anyone in heavy armour will be dragged beneath the surface, **four** if in medium armour and **five** if in light or no armour. Once ensnared by the bog, it will take one character holding them to just **stabilise** their descent. It needs **two** to drag them out. It will take the same number of rounds to extract a victim as it has to ensnare them – so if they have been sinking for two rounds, it will take two rounds to pull them out.

Despite what he might think, **Wild Cal** is not naturally gifted in finding his way through Willow Marsh. In fact he is being guided to the centre of the bog by **Marshbeam**, who needs more suitors to assuage her need for love and companionship. This is not the first time that Cal has entered the marsh; he has done so with **Rycharde of Kingsvale** and several times before. As Marshbeam's hopes of love are dashed each time, he is guided to find others. Typically, it is not hard to find impressionable travellers desperate to solve the mysteries of life, whether it is how to solve a local dispute or how to cure a sick loved one. Cal uses his gifts of persuasion to make Marshbeam out to be a form of **Oracle** which can answer their deepest questions. Once the innocents are in Marshbeam's grasp, Cal is turned loose and allowed to leave the bog – only to be instructed again when Marshbeam requires another victim. Cal is **not** doing this out of malice; he does not know that he is being manipulated by Marshbeam. He does believe that he loves her in some spiritual sense but it is clear that she sees him more of a worker than a future suitor. The more Cal works for Marshbeam, the more he loses his mind – the telepathic connections between him and his mistress are too powerful for his rather feeble intellect to counter. This conflict has led Cal to commit various crimes– not for any material gain but due to the madness engendered by his contact with the marsh spirit.

The party will be moving very slowly in this treacherous terrain, despite Cal's guidance, and will spend a night in the marsh. Wood is damp in the swamp and so a fire will require a **Wisdom: Survival** check (**DC 12**) in order to be successful. This time can be used to fill in some back-story for this campaign. Of course, Alvis Brownhill and Ethelyn will be with

them in this quest and it is through Alvis that they will develop knowledge of the history of this region a thousand years ago.

As night falls an eerie silence falls across the marsh. Occasionally the cries of strange animals can be heard – some far away, some too close for comfort. Brownhill and Ethelyn stay close by. As you sit, Brownhill regales you with stories of the past. He tells tales of the great empire of Barazuhn, a great empire which ruled for hundreds of years. It is this culture that he wants to rediscover. The empire was so powerful that it learned to interact with planes of existence other than its own. Powers from other worlds were used to strengthen their hold on their lands.

What happened to this great culture is unknown but legend indicates a great cataclysm. There is mention of the name Ehalazuhn - an evil force, summoned to do the emperor's bidding which broke its bonds and summoned the waters to engulf the land in a disastrous deluge.

Legend suggests that Barazuhn survived this inundation but never regained the powers of previous ages and fell into a dark age before disappearing into myth. Brownhill explains that the chance to find a great artefact from the time is too great an opportunity to miss.

You are distracted by a sound from outside the camp. A sudden rustling and splashing comes from out of the dark and a large shape springs above the party and lands in the middle of the camp.

The party is about to be attacked by a **giant toad** drawn by the unfamiliar noises and might surprise the party. The toad will attack a random victim at the start of melee – this should be a party member rather than Ethelyn or Brownhill. **One** round later **another giant toad** will enter the melee – again by leaping in and attacking a random member of the party.

If the body of one of the toads is cut open, the party will find the half digested corpse of a young elf – on his person is a necklace made of gold and an ornate dagger. The necklace is worth **150gp**. The

dagger is an elven made blade and is decorated with silver stars – it is worth 100gp.

THE QUEST FOR LOVE



Marshbeam is not a malicious entity – in fact quite the reverse. She is a wood spirit which has absorbed her essence into the willow tree that lies in the centre of Willow Marsh. She has lain here for decades, and in that time has progressively become lonelier and more detached from reality as the years have sped by. Now she seeks someone to spend her existence with – someone to spend the years alongside. Unfortunately, her quest for love is unobtainable. Even though she is

immortal, her suitors have turned out not to be. She is able to use her powers to beguile, to fascinate but not to extend life. Therefore, those unlucky enough to cross her lonely path have fallen into a deep bewitchment, from which there is no return. In a sense, Marshbeam's efforts are a success – her targets never leave her side and remain entranced forever. However they, unable to fend for themselves or even feed themselves, inevitably die due to thirst or malnutrition. With every death, Marshbeam has become more and more desperate until she has become able to convince herself that any means justifies the end.

As time has passed, so her myth has grown. To the simple folk of the area, she has become a witch like figure - an ethereal spirit which has magical powers. In the way of local legends, Marshbeam is seen as an evil presence in the marsh. Stories have grown of a woman, beautiful to the eye but with a black heart that snares innocents and bends them to her terrible will – who summons gullible men into her web and never releases them. Men have been known to have disturbing dreams in which a strange and mystical spirit summons them into the marsh. They have so wandered willingly to their fate, never to be seen again – even fighting against those who try to prevent it. And yet she is also seen as an oracle – a mystic who can answer your dearest desires and questions. In fact, this is not too far from the truth – she has a seeing capability which can indeed look into the future in a limited sense. When she has a love in her grasp, and this love is not dead, she is quite open to visitations and emissaries. She can answer the questions of those who find their way to her and will be charming and amiable. Unfortunately, when her love dies, which they inevitably will, she becomes distraught with grief and will beguile the next victim who crosses her path.

Rycharde of Kingsvale was one such unfortunate victim. Dynastic issues blighting this premier family of the capital and desperate to halt the decline of the bloodline, Rycharde volunteered to visit the spirit of the marsh to find a way of restoring the family's honour and prestige. Unable to find a way through the marsh on his own he engaged the services of **Wild Cal**, who, he was informed, had been through before.

Cal is one of the few who are familiar with the marshes. He often came here to escape retribution from the local magistrates for his various crimes. On one such visit, he came across the willow in the marsh. He watched as a man approached Marshbeam's willow and was ensnared and succumbed to his fate. Even though he was not the target of her affections Cal fell deeply and magically in love with the spirit. Cast aside by Marshbeam, he nevertheless became her willing servant. He now follows her telepathic instructions and encourages the desperate to come with him to the centre of the marsh. He will then leave them with Marshbeam. Someday he hopes to be summoned himself. Now the adventurers have come to him willingly and actually wish to enter the marsh. In his twisted mind he hopes that by giving Marshbeam multiple victims that he will win her love and be permitted to stay with her until the end of time.

While the party make their way to the centre of the marsh, Marshbeam will become aware of their presence. She will be concerned about the size of the party and will try to remove any competition for her affections. She controls the **vines** and creepers of the locale close to her home and will have them attack the group. She will concentrate her attacks on female party members as she is aware that they are resistant to her charms. **Three** of these marsh vines will animate as the party approaches her willow. At this moment, she will be part of the tree and thus invisible.

You stumble through the swamp, led cautiously by a muttering Cal. You splash through fetid water, causing marsh insects to rise up in clouds around you. These, as if sensing fresh and rare blood, settle on any open skin to sate their hunger. As you stagger forward it appears as if the mist lightens ahead. The fog parts and you see ahead a tree, probably a willow. It is clearly an ancient specimen as it has become covered over with vines and moss which appear to choke the life from the tree.

Cal has become more agitated recently and this apparition seems to make his temper worse. He has developed a rapid blinking mannerism for a while now

and you can see his fingers working feverishly against his palms. Clearly, he is uncomfortable and excited about this lonely spot in the marsh.

As far as your eyes can penetrate into the white and swirling mist there is no vegetation surrounding the tree, just open and sodden fenland. Looking carefully at the tree as you near, you think that you see what appear to be two spots of bright emerald light emanating from within the willow's trunk. It appears as if the tree watches you. At various points around the tree you espy what look like sleeping humanoid figures. One is sitting upright with its back to you. It appears to be richly dressed in chain armour with a shield alongside it – it does not move as you approach.

As you try to make out this mysterious vision in the mist, the water swirls about your feet and three large and thick vines detach themselves from the marsh and swirl and whip at you.

The players are being attacked by **Animated Vines**. The vines have a basic bludgeoning attack but can also thrust their target into the marsh. The sinking victim must be rescued in the same manner as earlier before they sink beneath the filthy, brown water. The vines are unintelligent but females will attract special attention.

Once the adventurers have defeated the vines they can approach the willow unmolested. Marshbeam will emerge to meet them.

As you watch the willow tree from a short distance, an ethereal female figure seems to detach itself from the tree and step out into the swamp. Around her is a light green glow which surrounds her entire body. She is indeed beautiful, with long emerald hair, pale skin and foliage of the tree as clothing. As she walks towards you, you see that in fact she does not touch the ground but seems suspended above it. She addresses you, not in speech but from inside your head. Her voice is like a gently bubbling spring.

Marshbeam will ask the party why they have come to her in such large numbers bearing weapons. She will look directly at Cal whilst she speaks. Cal's response is to burst into tears and explain that he believed that he was doing her bidding. He will fall to her knees. **Alvis Brownhill** will step forward and demand quite aggressively that she tell him the location of the **Stone of Ashazuhr**. As he advances towards the spirit he will be accompanied by **Ethelyn**. Marshbeam concerned by the somewhat aggressive

posture of Alvis and the party will demand a **heart** from the party. In this she means someone to love but Brownhill will misunderstand and believe she is demanding a sacrifice. Thinking that Marshbeam will divulge her knowledge only with a death he will draw a dagger from the folds of his cloak and prepare to slit the throat of Ethelyn, crying as he does so *'I fulfil this bargain - take this blood sacrifice and divulge your secrets!'*



The party can react to this should they want to. It will require a **dexterity** check (**DC 10**) to disarm Brownhill before he plunges the dagger into Ethelyn. If the saving throw fails then Ethelyn will die. This will not concern Alvis – Ethelyn, similar to the rest of the party, is an expendable asset to him.

Whether, Alvis is disarmed or commits murder will not affect Marshbeam's response. Furious and confused at this sacrilege she will charm Alvis - but not as a potential suitor. Her voice will be heard saying *'How dare you bring death to this place of beauty and love!'* Alvis will be swallowed by a green glow and slowly walk as if hypnotised toward Marshbeam and the tree. The party will not be able to stop this process. They can try to hold onto Alvis, but his body

is becoming ethereal and will slip through their fingers. He will advance towards the tree and then be swallowed within – he screams as he goes. Even if the party attack Marshbeam at this point they cannot stop this process – his fate is sealed.

If the group attack the spirit she will defend herself. In this she will summon and another **two vines** to help her. She will attempt to charm as many of the party as possible into falling in love with her. The party **cannot** kill Marshbeam – her being is beyond their ken, but if she is reduced to zero hitpoints, she will cease to fight and wish to end this desecration of her home. She can then be negotiated with.

The party can talk to Marshbeam instead of taking aggressive action. If they do so, she will listen. She will bemoan her fate and loneliness and reveal her desire for love and companionship. She cannot leave this place and all who profess their love for her die shortly afterwards – she does not understand malnutrition or even mortality. During this process, Cal will have been hiding behind the party – now he will lunge forward crying *'Take me, my princess, for I will love you like no other!'*

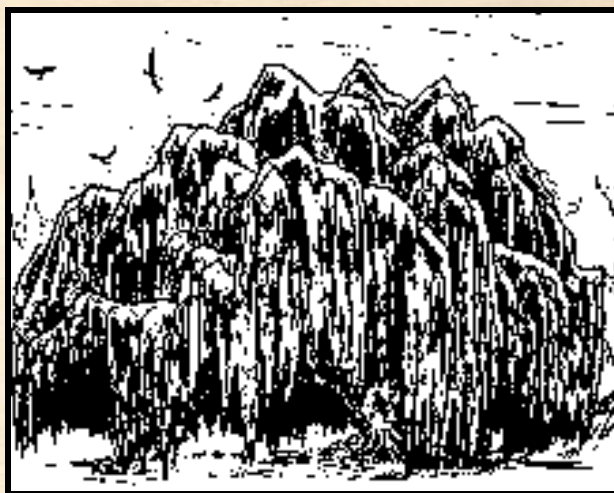
How the party will handle this is their choice. They can leave Cal behind whereupon, Marshbeam will accept him. He will follow the fate of others before him should he do so. Marshbeam, in exchange for this bargain, will transport the group out of the marshes. The party may even be able to play on her guilt and explain the suffering she has caused. They may, with a **charisma: persuasion (DC 14)** check, convince her to accept her lonely fate and to end her reign of terror. She will withdraw into the tree and bother them no more. She will always comply with any request to free charmed colleagues. If the party can think of other ways of ending the menace of Marshbeam then take these ideas on their merits and adjudicate a suitable saving throw.

Whatever they decide, Marshbeam does not know the location of the **Stone of Ashazuhr** apart from the fact that she sees it lying atop a great tower surrounded by trees. She is referring to the **Tower of the False King** which lies in the great forest in the southeast of the map. This will be a target for exploration in the second part of this campaign **Adventure Module M2: Beneath the Razor's Edge**.

At any time, the party can investigate the 'sleeping' figures. They will find them all to be dead. All are but skeletons in tattered clothing and reflect Marshbeam's attempts at finding her one true love. The expensively dressed figure is **Rycharde of Kingsvale**. He is in the early stages of decomposition but has remained upright – in the pose he adopted when charmed by Marshbeam – he never moved again. Before they leave, a cursory search of the body of Rycharde will reveal an **insignia** similar to the one offered by Bernier of Kingsvale. They can take this as proof of his fate. Rycharde also has a richly decorated family dagger with the Kingsvale crest on its pommel.

This weapon is a magical family heirloom and is a **+1 weapon**. If returned to the family, Bernier will offer them his own **Saddle of the Cavalier** in exchange as well as 100gp. If the dagger is returned to the Kingsvale family, the status of the party within the **Patrician** faction in the capital will increase. There will be no penalty if the party keeps the dagger, although Bernier will ask if it was found with Rycharde's body. If they take the time to bury Bernier's brother they will receive his blessing and also benefit from a higher **XP** reward.

If the adventurers leave and force Cal to accompany them as a guide, he will resist and wrestle with them. Once they leave the vicinity of the tree however, he will calm and guide them out sullenly. At the edge of the marsh he will distract the party, turn and dash back to his fate inside the swamp – he will not be seen again. If at any time the party leave him unguarded and unrestrained he will do the same – even if far from the swamp. If **Ethelyn** survives her shattering experience in Willow Marsh, she will beg to be escorted, shaken and humiliated to Foley's Way Station, from where she can make her way back to Kingsvale. If the party resolve the Marshbeam threat, they each earn **100XP** from bringing peace to Willow Marsh. If they buried Rycharde they earn an extra **50 XP** each.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

SERGEANT

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 15 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

GUARD

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 16 (Chain Shirt, Shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception+2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage

GIANT TOAD

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 11

Hit Points 39 (6d10 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Amphibious. The toad can breathe air and water.

Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) poison damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the toad can't bite another target.

Swallow. The toad makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the toad, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the toad's turns. The toad can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

ANIMATED VINE

Medium beast, unaligned

Armour Class 11

Hit Points 18 (3d10 + 3)

Speed 0 ft., range 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Push. The vines can force their targets back 10' on a successful hit. Anyone so pushed risks falling into the swamp unless they succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw.

ACTIONS

Whip. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage

MARSHBEAM

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armour Class 14

Hit Points 33 (6d8+6)

Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Cha +5, Wis +4

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Spell Saving Throw 13
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Transfixing Charm. This works like a powerful Charm Person spell. Anyone male attacked in such a way must succeed at a Charisma (DC 12) saving throw or become hopelessly enamoured with Marshbeam. They will not follow any instructions but will become inactive whilst they stare transfixed by the spirit. The effects of this spell are permanent until either Marshbeam dies or releases the victim

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Marshbeam can attack twice per round. Once with her scimitar and once with her Transfixing Charm spell.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

PART 3: TAKING THE WAR TO THE ENEMY

Part Three: Taking the War to the Enemy moves the adventure forward to a point in which they are in direct opposition to the plans of **Ehalazuhn** and his acolytes. The party will penetrate **Nightforge**, an evil town under the control of **Kagan Brax**, a local warlord. By the end of this mission the party will have a better idea of why the Outer Reaches has become so deadly and discover the impending doom that faces Sarvania and its people. They will then progress to **Kraag's Hideout** where they will destroy his plans to engage the local humanoids in the coming war. With a fuller understanding of their mission ahead they will proceed to **Part Four: Disrupting the Designs of Ehalazuhn**.

ENCOUNTER 7: ON TO NIGHTFORGE

When the characters return to Foley's Way Station to meet with Bernier of Kingsvale or to send Ethelyn on her way, they will receive a message from Perrett to return post haste to the fort. When they get there, Perrett will ask them to investigate and neutralise Nightforge - to protect the Outer Reaches and also Sarvania.

On your return to Perrett's Fort you see that it is well on the way to being repaired and fortified. Replacements have arrived from Sarvania to bolster the garrison but Perrett looks worried. Despite the recent defence of the fort he believes that another assault is inevitable. A more serious attempt would break through its defences and with it open the way into Sarvania. Scouts have been sent out into the wilderness to try to find out more about their mysterious assailants. News came from the north east. A scout reported seeing a small walled town about twenty miles away and saw many soldiers, better armed and organised than the ones who attacked here. He was attacked by enemy riders before he could investigate further.

"Head north east my friends. Make your way to this town; try to find out what kind of threat it poses, and if possible, gain admittance. If there is anything you can do to end this threat to Sarvania then please do so. If all goes well, return here and report. I wish you well and will pray for your safe return."

As the players may have discovered already, this fortification is called **Nightforge** and is the local base of operations against Sarvania. **Nightforge** has grown over the last few years when Sarvania's eyes were turned elsewhere and is nestled in a forest out of direct view. The town is presently governed by **Kagan Brax**, a ruthless warlord and a senior supporter of Ehalazuhn's in the Outer Reaches. He has been ordered to conduct a strategy of testing the defences of Sarvania as a prelude to an all out assault when the armies of Ehalazuhn are ready. A regularly used path leads from **Deepbelly** towards **Nightforge** and thus the adventurers should have no difficulty in finding the town.

You travel northeast for two days, beyond the bandit camp, to where it skirts around a large forest. Nestling in a clearing, you see tents and beyond, the walls of a large fortification. Carts are entering and leaving the town, as are armed men. At the gates stand two guards who occasionally stop and question those entering the

town. Beyond the gates, you can see thatched buildings and other structures. The walls of the town are occupied by several armed guards, who observe the proceedings below or pace the battlements. Outside are camped soldiers - probably over a hundred.

As you watch, a small group of horsed men, led by a human in dark purple robes canters out of the gate. They carry a plain dark blue banner. Men move aside to let them pass as they head north and gallop at speed out of sight.

It will become clear to the party that they are to make their way into Nightforge through stealth - they will not win a direct assault on this camp and the walls of the town. The riders they have seen is the **envoy** from Brax to Kraag in the Cloven Ground. Outside the walls of Nightforge, a camp of allies and soldiers has mustered as an army. The camp numbers at this time around **120** soldiers in 20 large tents with **four** officers. The characters need to get through the tented camp to enter Nightforge.

WALKING INTO THE LION'S MOUTH

NOTE: The following will **only** be possible if Nightforge has not been alerted by the escaping bandit at **Deepbelly**. If he has betrayed the presence of the heroes then the guards and soldiers will be alerted to them and a peaceful passage will be impossible.

Despite its foreboding appearance; it is actually possible for the characters just to walk inside the town. Nightforge is a busy and armed town, but in this lies its weakness. As there has been no Sarvanian Army activity at all in this area the guards are fairly relaxed and quite complacent. At some point, the lack of news from Deepbelly might elicit a concern, but for now the occupants have not checked up on Zyler and his band. Despite this, some caution needs to be shown as the party must first traverse the tented area before approaching the gates.

If they attempt just to walk in they will elicit a response dependant on how they **appear** to the soldiers outside the town. It also may depend on the time of day that they try to make an entrance. If they

establish that they are making an effort to conceal any **good alignment** orientated equipment it is quite possible that they will be taken as other soldiers arriving at the town. Any skills held by the party in terms of stealth or deception may also assist them here. As they are adventurers rather than soldiers, it is probable that they will elicit some interest, but this will not necessarily amount to a challenge if they do not act suspiciously. It will take three turns to pass the tented area and to approach the gates. There is only a **10%** chance at the beginning of each turn that they will be challenged if disguised. This falls to a **5%** chance at night due to poorer visibility, and the sleepiness and indiscipline of the soldiers. If they have made no attempt to disguise themselves then this chance increases to **40%** as they will appear totally at odds with the general populace of the area (**20%** at night).

If a challenge is made, then initially this will be only by one man who will question their presence there. However he can be **persuaded** or **intimidated** to go away (**DC 14**). This roll will be at **advantage** if the party make no overtly aggressive actions and bluff it out. If the **persuasion/intimidation** is a failure then another soldier will arrive due to the interest caused by the first challenge. The party can still rescue the situation and **persuade** or **intimidate** them to leave at a **DC of 14** without **advantage**. If this attempt fails an officer will demand their arrest. If an arrest attempt is made, the intention is for the party to be restrained and captured, not killed. Therefore they will be **grappled** by their opponents and knocked unconscious.

At the beginning of the melee, there will be only **five** bandits present but this will increase every two rounds by another **five** until the whole camp is alerted. It might be possible to escape if they act swiftly but if they take too long or attempt to fight it out they will swiftly become outnumbered. They will continue to be grappled and beaten until they all fall beneath zero hit points or surrender. If the party is captured, they will be taken into Nightforge, stripped and imprisoned for questioning. The soldiers in the camp are classed as **guards**. Their officers, of which there are four, are classed as **thugs**.

If the party gets to the gates unmolested they will be able to **persuade/intimidate** the two guards to let them through (DC 12 if disguised, DC 14 otherwise). If the party are aware of important players in their quest, they can use this information. Namedropping **Kagan Brax** or **Zyler** will help their efforts, as the guards are afraid of them (the difficulty check will have **advantage**). Both types of check can be made. If a **Persuasion** check is failed then they will be sent

away and no further action will be taken. If the party fails an **Intimidation** check then they will be seen as a threat and the alarm will be raised leading to the same grappling attacks as described earlier. As GM you can warn the party that the guards are looking agitated if they are to attempt to **intimidate** them – this may warn them of possible consequences. If the party gets through the gates unmolested then they receive **50 XP** each for their efforts.



SCALING THE DEFENCES

If the heroes try to scale the walls they will need to be aware of the sentries and find a place which cannot be seen by the tented camp. The rear of the town will be a typical place as it backs onto the forest. If they try to pass through the tented area they will have to pass the same checks as under the **Walking into the Lion's Mouth** episode. They can make their way through the forest without being seen. If this route is chosen they will disturb and be attacked by a **brown bear**. When

this creature is dead, the party can proceed – the melee will not have been heard and the alarm will not have been raised.

Once under the walls, it will be impossible to tell where the guards are. Unless they actively state that they are attempting to locate the guards above by listening or other methods they will have a 30% chance of a sentry being **very close**, 30% being **close** or 40% being **out of hearing**. The walls are scalable by a character with good **dexterity: acrobatic** skills (DC

16). A falling climber will suffer **1d6 bludgeoning damage** from the fall but will not be heard unless there is a **very close** sentry – who will investigate.

The climber needs to succeed in a **dexterity: stealth** check vs. the **passive perception** of a sentry who is **close**. If he succeeds then he will go undetected and he will reach the top. If the sentry is **very close** then the climber will be at a **disadvantage** on this check and is more likely to be heard or seen. If the sentry is out of hearing range then the climb over the battlements **automatically** succeeds.

If discovered then it will be the climber's choice about how to react – either by trying to incapacitate the sentry or by fleeing. The alarm will be raised at the end of the second round of combat by guards who hear the melee on the walls. If the party throw a grappling hook over the battlements there is more of a chance of being heard. If there is a **very close** sentry, then the alarm is automatically raised. If a sentry is just **close**, he will investigate the noise and arrive just as the first climber crosses the battlements. A sentry further away will not hear anything.

If the party enter Nightforge with no alerted guards then they will gain **50XP** each.

OUT ON THE TOWN

Nightforge is a busy and bustling military hub. Carts and wagons enter, unload their cargoes and leave on a regular basis. These wagons are unloaded in the central square by the garrison of the town and stored in the various buildings within the walls. Nightforge is being used as a marshalling point for the forces being raised by Ehalazuhn's minions. The buildings within are stone with thatched roofs and are all single storied apart from Kagan Brax's quarters. Dominating the central courtyard is an unnamed writhing statue of Ehalazuhn. It is carved to appear as an elemental force, a towering column of murky water. Within the statue's swirls and ripples are the faces of the despairing souls entrapped by the god. All possess a grimace of death or pain. Any attempts made to ascertain the subject of this statue will be successful but will raise suspicion, as the occupants of Nightforge would assume all within its walls would recognise their master.

The force defending Nightforge consists of **21 guards** and **two officers**. They would also normally have had **Zyler** as captain. In ultimate command, however, is **Kagan Brax** who resides in his quarters in the centre of the compound. Brax is **Zaleria's** lieutenant in this area.

During the course of the day, the town is a hive of activity and it will be easy for the party to pass unnoticed. The party can wander as they will throughout the compound without raising attention as long as they stay away from Brax's quarters. The garrison is mostly concerned with external security – most guards from the garrison are on the perimeter – one per tower and one per stretch of wall totalling **11 men** and **one officer**. Mostly, their attention is diverted to outside the town but they can be alerted by noise or alarms within. **Two** men guard Kagan Brax's quarters, day and night.

During the night, the gates will be closed and any unrecognised or undisguised occupants will raise suspicion and will probably be questioned by the garrison. At night there will be only occasional soldiers in the compound – most will be asleep in the barracks. The wall guard will be reduced to six men in the towers with one officer.

BUILDINGS 1 AND 2: EQUIPMENT STORES

The doors to these buildings are locked and require **thieves' tools** and a **dexterity** skill check (**DC 10**) to unpick the lock. This will take one turn. These areas are currently unoccupied and hold miscellaneous tools and goods necessary for the campaign ahead. All general items available on the players' purchasing list are available here. The party can restock their packs with anything needed from the various boxes and barrels around the rooms. The goods kept within these building include such items as rope, lanterns, bedrolls and clothes, ladders, poles and oil.

BUILDINGS 3 AND 4: WEAPONS STORES

The doors to these buildings are locked and require **thieves' tools** and a **dexterity** skill check (**DC 10**) to unpick the lock. These rooms are similar to Buildings 1 and 2 are also unoccupied and contain a

large selection of military gear, such as melee and missile weapons and ammunition of all kinds.

BUILDING 5: SIEGE MASTER'S QUARTERS

These rooms belong to **Rassler Grail** the Siege Master who works for Brax's fledgling army. **Rassler** is a **Level 5 Transmuter**. If the building is entered at daytime he will be at work in his office to the south. If he is attacked during the day he will try his best to escape and raise the alarm rather than fight it out toe to toe.

The doors to these buildings are locked and require **thieves' tools** and a **dexterity** skill check (DC 14) to unpick the lock. If attacked at night he will be asleep in his room to the north. However, **Rassler** is paranoid and always lives in fear of assassination by rivals. To this end, he always wears a **Ring of Protection+1** and at night time he casts **Alarm** on both his exterior doors. Thus he hopes, through a silent alarm, to be able to duck away from trouble. This he will do if the party try to break into his quarters. He will take his **quaterstaff+1** and escape through the other door to outside and raise the guards. Once outside, he will do his best to harm the party whilst calling for help.

Rassler's office contains bookshelves and a desk which is covered with official papers and drawings. They document the design and building of siege weapons, from catapults to bolt throwers. There is little of real value in this room except for a small bag in a desk draw containing a small ruby worth 50gp and a bag of 75 gold coins. Hidden in his bedroom under his bed frame is his **spell book**. This contains his **1st and 2nd Level** spells. These include: *Alarm, Protection from Evil and Good, Ray of Sickness, Witch Bolt, Shield, Thunderwave, Jump, Find Familiar, Levitate, Blur, Darkness* and *Detect Thoughts*. This will only come to light if the bed is searched closely or with an **intelligence: investigation** check (DC 12). A painting of a large desert area on his bedroom wall is well done and would raise 75gp if sold to a dealer – it is fragile though. The painting depicts the lands of **Khanoumia**, to the east of the **Razor's Edge** mountain chain.

BUILDING 6: GARRISON BARRACKS

This room is dedicated to the soldiers who defend Nightforge. There are eight bunk beds holding a maximum of **16 soldiers**. These will be largely occupied at night-time by **13** guards and an officer. The occupants are rotated as shifts change over. During the day these quarters will hold **six** guards and one officer from the night shift. The guards will not take kindly to strangers in their barracks. All soldiers in the barracks will be **unarmoured** unless they have **5 minutes** to don their armour.

There is a locked chest (**thieves' tools** and a **dexterity DC 8**) which contains the soldiers' possessions including general bric-a-brac and 100sp and 10gp in loose change. Also, the barracks hold several **spare uniforms** – the players can make use of these should they wish in order to enter Kagan Brax's quarters or to reduce the chances of them being apprehended.

BUILDING 7: ZYLER'S QUARTERS

This building belonged to Kagan Brax's lieutenant, **Zyler**, before he left to establish Deepbelly and attack Perrett's Fort. It is locked and requires **thieves' tools** and a **dexterity** check (DC 14) to open. It is currently unoccupied and contains his bed, desk and two chests. These chests contain little of value except for some fine shirts and breeches which would raise 15gp if sold to a tailor but are worth 10gp otherwise. There is also a silver inkwell worth 5gp. The letters detail military matters relating to the recruiting and payment of mercenaries.

BUILDINGS 8 AND 9: FOOD STORES

These buildings are not locked and are unoccupied. They contain the food stores for Nightforge. There are various tables, barrels and sacks but little of any real interest or value.

BUILDING 10: JAIL

This building is used to detain those who fall foul of the regime. Unless the party has been captured, it is presently unoccupied. If the party have been taken prisoner outside Nightforge, they will be placed here. The ground is filthy and damp. Three, mouldy and tattered beds have been supplied. A locked door

(**thieves' tools** and a **dexterity** check DC 12) leads from the prison to the jail keeper's room. There is a second door into the compound with a small barred grill. It will also be locked and too will require

thieves' tools and a **dexterity** check at DC 14 to open. The doors are strong but could be battered down with a **Strength** check (DC 14) although this would cause a lot of noise and therefore attract attention.



If the party has been captured they will have been remanded here as a prelude to interrogation. How the party escapes is up to them. If enough noise is made; the jailer, who is not too intelligent, will come to investigate and could be overpowered. Alternatively, an **intelligence: investigation** check (DC 12) of the jail's external door will reveal old and rusty hinges. These can be worked free over time. Any of the party emerging from the jail cell into the main compound will not elicit any real attention – most of the occupants of the town are passing through and therefore will be unfamiliar with the town's layout and buildings. Also the jail opens up into a fairly unobserved part of town. The party are not due be interrogated until two days time and so they will have time to plot and facilitate their escape. Their belongings are held in the jailer's office. How the

escapees cover their flight is up to them. If they fail to do this, an alarm will be raised soon after their jail break and a search conducted.

BUILDING 11: JAILER'S ROOM

This is where the soldier in charge of the jail works. The room is fairly bare but contains a desk with papers and a prison ledger on it. In a pile in the corner of the room will be the characters' equipment, if they have previously been captured. The jail keeper is a **guard**. If the party enter the jailer's room from the compound area, he will be filling in his prison ledger, listing those recently executed.

BUILDING 12: STABLE

This room houses the horses belonging to Kagan Brax and other notables. There are two horses presently here. One is a **riding horse** and the other is Kagan Brax's **warhorse**. These would both raise decent sum if sold to another stable or an interested party – 40gp and 250gp respectively. The warhorse is richly decorated in expensive fabrics and these are also worth 50gp.

BUILDING 13: KAGAN BRAX'S QUARTERS

The aim is for the party to enter Brax's quarters and to find evidence of his plot to gain the aid of regional humanoids, beginning with **Kraag** to the northwest. This is by far the largest building in Nightforge. Kagan Brax uses this building as an administrative centre for organising his attacks on the west. It is built of stone, has a tiled roof and is entered through a double door on the west side. Brax's quarters are guarded by two soldiers who will admit no-one without a prior appointment with their leader. These guards can be **persuaded** or **intimidated** but it is not easy (**DC 16**). A party which is disguised will reduce the **DC** to **14**. The party will probably be refused entry and attacked if suspicions are raised. To enter Brax's headquarters, the party may need other means.

The lower floor rooms have windows through which the occupants and detail can be seen. They are barred. The bars can be bent and require a **Strength** check (**DC 16**) to do so. The opening is too small to allow a person larger than size **small** to pass. The annex to the south is made of glass similar to a greenhouse. A large pool which is dominated by a central statue can be seen within. The statue represents **Ehalazuhn** and is similar to that within the courtyard. There are no opening windows in the sides of the annex but on the flat roof, a skylight has been left ajar. If the party break the glass of the annex it will create a disturbance which will be investigated. If they can enter the annex through the skylight, they will make no noise but could be seen unless precautions are taken.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE HOME OF KAGAN BRAX

ROOM 1: ENTRANCE PORTICO

This 15' square room is unoccupied but richly decorated. Clearly someone has spent time here to create a sumptuous first impression. Three heavily carved doors lie on each of the north, south and east walls and a more functional pairs of double doors is centred on the western wall. The floors are decorated with a checked pattern tile and two marble pillars stand in the northeast and southeast corners. The walls have half height oak panelling.

This entrance portico has been designed to magnify the status of Kagan Brax to any visitor. Anyone having an audience with Brax will enter through these doors and be directed into the waiting room to the south. A listen at the western double doors will easily pick up the noise of the hubbub from within the town's compound (**wisdom: perception** at **DC 8**).

ROOM 2: OFFICE

This room appears to be a working office. At the east end there is a desk with papers piled upon it and a plush velvet chair. Against the north wall is a book shelf containing scrolls and leather bound tomes. Three windows look out into the compound of the town. Hung on a wall is a painting of a muscular, long haired, wild eyed man in mail armour. It is entitled Lord Kagan Brax. He holds a great sword, point down. Behind him is a view of mountains and nestled within these peaks is a large fortified gateway leading into the mountainside. An army gathers outside this gateway.

This is Kagan Brax's office where he meets delegations from surrounding factions and where he deals with the business of raising an army. There is nothing of real monetary value in this room. The scrolls and books relate mainly to the running of the town and accounts related to paying his supporters.

In a draw in the desk is a letter to Zaleria in Skard which has yet to be sent.

My love Zaleria

Plans here proceed apace. The local banditry flock to my banner – no doubt encouraged by the offer of riches available in Kingsvale. They are a motley band but are expendable and will serve to distract and delay the enemy until your great host can be organised. Already I have dispatched Zylar to destroy the Sarvanian outpost to the southeast. I am yet to hear a report of his progress but I trust all is well and the mission has been accomplished satisfactorily. I have also sent an envoy to see Kraag in his caves in the Cloven Ground. He has a great deal of influence with the humanoid forces hereabouts and will prove a useful ally – assuming of course he doesn't kill my messenger. Please proffer my deepest loyalty to our master and reiterate my firm loyalty to his great cause.

Kagan

ROOM 3: TAPESTRY ROOM

This richly adorned room is bare except for two large tapestries. These are hung on the north and south walls. In the eastern wall is a double door. The tapestries show different events but both seem to have a water-based theme. The northern drape contains an image of a large city, unlike any that you have visited in Sarvania before. The buildings look unfamiliar and are designed in a somewhat archaic fashion. Above the city is a great wave hundreds of feet high. It looms over the walls. The water which makes the wave is not pure blue but a foul green colour. The people of the city flee in panic but the image suggests they are doomed.

The southern tapestry depicts a huge whirlpool of foul, green water which swirls within a great chamber. Within the grip of the pool are what appear to be souls

screaming and being sucked deeper and deeper. The image seems to show a vision of a watery hell.

These tapestries are artistic renditions of the rise of Ehalazuhn and his hellish abode. They show the destruction waged upon Barazuhn by the demon and his minions and one of his corporeal forms; that of an evil, foul whirlpool. They were given to Brax by Zaleria and he has put them in a prominent place in order to display his loyalty to his master.

ROOM 4: STAIRCASE TO UPPER FLOOR

You enter a semi-circular room with no windows. The walls and floor are fitted with turquoise marble. Dominating this room is a large ornate staircase about 8' wide. The steps are decorated with a thick blue/green carpet. The banisters of the staircase are made of a rich reddish wood with brass posts. It winds its way upward, bending to the left and disappearing out of view. On either side of the staircase stand two suits of plate armour. The armour is decorated with ornate scroll work and heraldic etchings.

The room contains three **animated armours** as guards – the fourth is not animated. As soon as the party enters the staircase room they will boom out 'PASSWORD'. If the password 'Ehalazuhn the Destroyer' is not uttered, they will animate and attack. There is nothing of any value in this room and the animated armour will be of no practical use after the melee.

ROOM 5: WAITING ROOM

This room has been richly decorated in carved wood panelling and has a tiled floor. Within the chamber are various velvet covered seats and a sofa. The room has the appearance of an audience or waiting chamber. Three windows look out into the town. There is what appears to be a silver candelabrum suspended from the ceiling. There are doors in both the north and south walls.

The room is bare apart from these details. The candelabrum is indeed silver and is worth around 100gp. It is however bulky. If broken down the value of this item will fall to 50gp.

ROOM 6: EHALAZUHN'S FOUNTAIN

This chamber is very brightly lit by a large candelabrum. This must be made from either copper or brass as it has acquired a tint of verdigris about it. It is clear that this has been caused by the heavy moisture in this room.

In the centre is a large fountain with a statue of a figure similar to that in the town square outside. The water spray from the fountain has a salty taste to it and so you deduce that this is probably sea water. How a fountain is powered by sea water so far inland is a mystery to you.

The tiles on the floor are a bright turquoise colour. The whole room is surrounded by glass windows which look out into the town courtyard. In front of the fountain is a lectern on which there is a book.

The room is bare apart from the items described here. The statue is a manifestation of **Ehalazuhn**. The statue and fountain are harmless. The book is written in an arcane hand and is undecipherable to the untrained eye. Any character successful with an **intelligence: investigation** check (DC 10) will see the word Ehalazuhn being repeated throughout the text. This is a prayer book for Kagan Brax. It has no magical properties and is used in the worship of his deity.

ROOM 7: AUDIENCE CHAMBER

This room is bare apart from two potted shrubs against the west wall. It has wooden panelling and a tiled floor but little else. A large ornately carved door lies within the western wall also.

On this door is a sign which states '*None may enter without the permission of Kagan Brax*'.

The room is an antechamber before entering Kagan Brax's private quarters. Visitors wait here to be seen. It also has a pressure plate mounted in the floor in

front of the west door. This is connected to an alarm which will alert Brax to any interlopers. This plate is disguised in the tiles but can be spotted and thus avoided on a **wisdom: perception** roll (DC 14).

ROOM 8: KAGAN BRAX'S QUARTERS

You enter a large plush room about 35' long by 15' wide. It is richly decorated with tapestries and other wall hangings. In the northwest corner, there is a large four poster bed with two bedside cabinets. This bed is iron and is covered with rich green velvet. Four large windows illuminate the room. Three doors including the one you have entered lie on the eastern wall.

Along the southern wall is a wide desk behind which a man sits. He is a large muscular man with long, dank hair. He wears black chain mail. Beside him, is propped a great sword. He holds the chain of a horrific two headed dog with red eyes which snarls and salivates as you enter.

If the party has not alerted him by stepping on the pressure plate in Room 7, then Brax can be surprised. If the party set off the alarm, Brax will be readied for their attack and thus cannot be surprised. Kagan Brax is a **Level 6 Barbarian Berserker**. As they enter he will raise himself from his chair and scream a war cry. This is Brax entering a **rage**. He will attack with the aid of his **death dog**.



After the melee, the party can investigate Brax's belongings. His bed is richly decorated and the velvet coverings will be worth 50gp if undamaged. The bedside cabinets have nothing of value except for a small book called '**The Teachings of Ehalazuhn**'. This

book however, is full of symbols and archaic writing and is undecipherable. The desk contains little of value, mainly military rosters and quartermaster stores. It does however have a map of the area and on

this map is marked with the location of the **Cloven Ground**. The map is also labelled **Kraag's Domain** which lies within the Cloven Ground. A note is written on it which states '*Envoy sent*'. One of the paintings shows a beautiful woman in a blue/green dress. Her hair is tinted blue. Behind her are mountains.

ROOM 9: TREASURE ROOM

NOTE: This room is alarmed by a switch on the top of the door frame. The alarm will have to be actively searched for. If the alarm is not seen and deactivated (**wisdom: perception DC 12**) then the sound of bells will emanate from Brax's HQ into the courtyard. This will alert the garrison of the party's existence.

You enter a blue velvet padded, 15' by 15' room. Inside are large and small chests as well as lockboxes. There are also various items of jewellery and ornate figurines. Most of the items within this room appear to be copper and silver but some gold does glint through. It would appear that this may be the treasury of Nightforge.

If the party take a while to sort through these goods and separate the valuable from the worthless they will amass a total of **750gp** in coinage and six **25gp** lapis lazuli gems. Within a small lockbox also lie 3 vials – each of which contains a **Potion of Healing**. There is also a scroll case. This contains a parchment scroll with three spells on it, these are – **Guiding Bolt** (1st Level), **Healing Word** (1st Level) and **Continual Flame** (2nd Level).

If the alarm is not disconnected, any remaining soldiers will make their way to the building. The guards in the towers will attempt to shoot any enemy emerging. The enemy will also close the gates to prevent escape. The party will need to defend themselves and then escape the town. Brax's personal quarters have a lock which can keep attackers outside his room until they batter it down. This will take five minutes. If it becomes clear to the garrison that Brax is dead, the morale of the soldiers will fall. If they fall to **six** men, officers or guards they will flee the town through the gates. If this occurs, the party will have to make their escape quickly as their alarms will summon others from outside the walls.

ROOM 10: DRESSING ROOM

This room hold clothing and miscellaneous items. There are cupboards and chests of drawers. Some of these clothes are richly decorated in lace and velvets.

This is Kagan Brax's dressing room. The clothing itself is of good quality and would be worth 50gp to a tailor or clothing merchant. Apart from this, there is little of interest here. Once the party defeats Brax they need to return to Perrett's Fort to report.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE CLOVEN GROUND

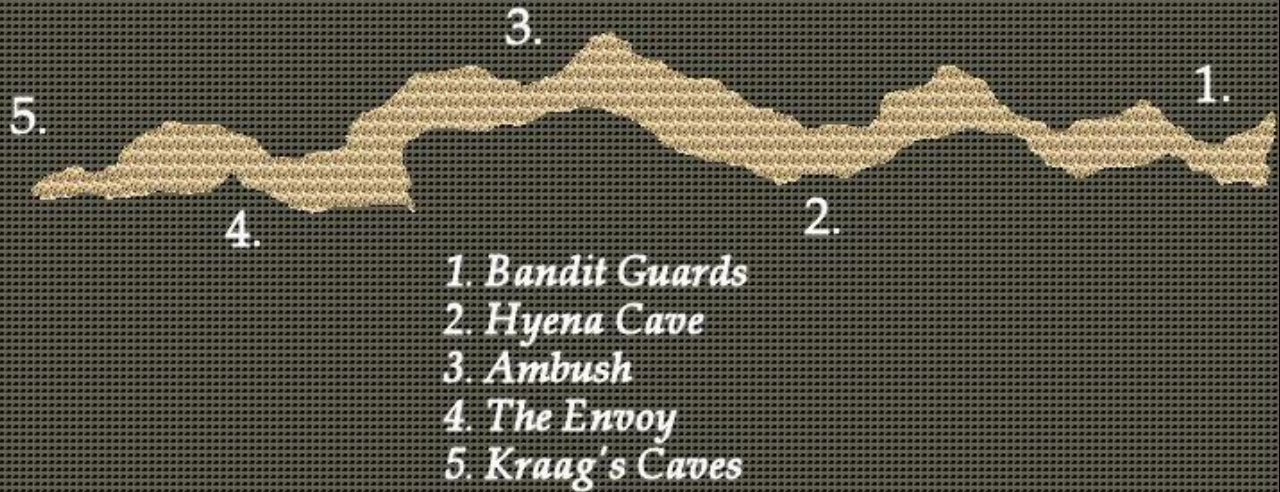
Upon the party's return to Perrett's Fort from defeating Brax they each receive **150XP** for removing Ehalazuhn's military leader in the Outer Reaches. Perrett will also give them three more **Potions of Healing** in thanks for their efforts and to assist them in the coming struggle.

Sergeant Perrett is overjoyed to see your return home, especially with the good news that the threat posed to his command has been removed. He is concerned, however, about the information you relate about the Cloven Ground and the attempt to enlist the aid of Kraag. Pointing to a vellum map he says that rumours have certainly pointed towards the Cloven Ground as an area worth investigating, but soldiers sent there failed to return.

"My friends, could I please ask of you one more deed which would ensure the security of our charge here. Head north, towards the sea – investigate the Cloven Ground and remove Kraag if possible. If successful, assess the situation and see if any further action is necessary. Your aid the Sarvania in such a fashion is of immense value to us."

The aim of this section is for the party to strike towards the Cloven Ground and to destroy Kraag's Hideout. Kraag is an orc chieftain who can be of great use to Ehalazuhn's intentions for the Outer Reaches.

THE CLOVEN GROUND



He is a very competent organiser and holds a great deal of influence in this region with the local humanoid population. He could be very useful in convincing other humanoids to join the coming war. To this end Brax has dispatched an envoy to Kraag to win him over to their cause. Kraag's hideout lies within the Cloven Ground, a natural fissure in the earth which heads east – west for six miles towards the sea. At the end of the Cloven Ground lies the entrance to Kraag's cave complex – it is here that he must be engaged and destroyed. Fortunately for the heroes, Brax's envoy has met with opposition from Kraag's minions and thus has not yet had time to present his case.

As you move westward, you discern what appears to be a large cleft or crevasse in the ground to the west. From the top, you can see that it extends miles to the west and widens considerably the further it goes. Peering down within the canyon, you see a small rocky path windy down to the valley floor. You will need to watch your footing should you descend. There is little vegetation

down below although some stunted and dried out thorn bushes manage to cling to life.

You have a strange feeling that the Cloven Ground is not as deserted as it might appear. Sheer cliff faces loom either side of the valley, small rocks tumble from unseen crags. A sense of danger and the feeling that you are not alone haunts your soul. However, enter you must.

The valley sides of the Cloven Ground are very steep and precarious. Loose stones and rocks would sweep a climber's feet away. The height of the valley sides (150') will also make lowering themselves down difficult. However if the heroes can think of a way to enter the valley at Kraag's cave complex then they should be able to do so and rewarded for intelligent thinking. Most people brave enough to enter the Cloven Ground however, do so from the east and the sloping path. As the party proceed through the valley they will face different challenges until they emerge at Kraag's hideout.

GUARDING THE PASS

At the entrance to the Cloven Ground, Kagan Brax's envoy, Nayte Rathmore has placed some guards. They have been tasked with protecting the horses of the envoy's party.

Stumbling down the rocky path you round a corner to see a group of soldiers from what must be Kagan Brax's diplomatic mission. They have encamped about 60' from your location. Clearly they are not yet aware of your presence. Five guards sit around a large fire whilst two tend to the party's horses. There are more horses here than guards which suggests to you that the envoy's party has proceeded on foot.

There are **6 guards** here led by an **officer**. They guard all **15 riding horses** of Rathmore's group. If losing, the remainder will attempt to flee into the valley to warn Rathmore. Here they will meet their end at the hands of the hyenas further inside.

NOTHING TO LAUGH ABOUT



As the party proceed into the Cloven Ground they will see signs of a struggle. This is the result of an attack on the envoy's party by a pack of giant hyenas from a cave just above the path. The corpses here may be those who fled the party earlier or members of Rathmore's group.

Moving through a narrow part of the valley floor you see signs of a struggle ahead. As you near, you can see some bodies in soldier garb. These seem quite fresh. All around are signs of a battle with broken

weaponry, blood stains and tufts of yellow fur.

Whatever happened here was brutal and protracted. From the crags above you, you can hear a low growling sound. This echoes around the valley floor making it hard to narrow down its real location.

If the party are able to make a **wisdom: perception** check (**DC 10**) they will be able to focus on the direction of the growling and place it on a crag above them to the south. If they proceed up to the crag they will come across a cave, in which lives a pack of **3 giant hyenas**. These will be fighting over the body of another guard in the centre of their lair. The hyenas will be occupied with their meal and thus if attacked can be surprised.

If the party ignore the sound or do not investigate the cave, they will be attacked from behind by the hyenas. If this happens, the party can be surprised.

AMBUSH

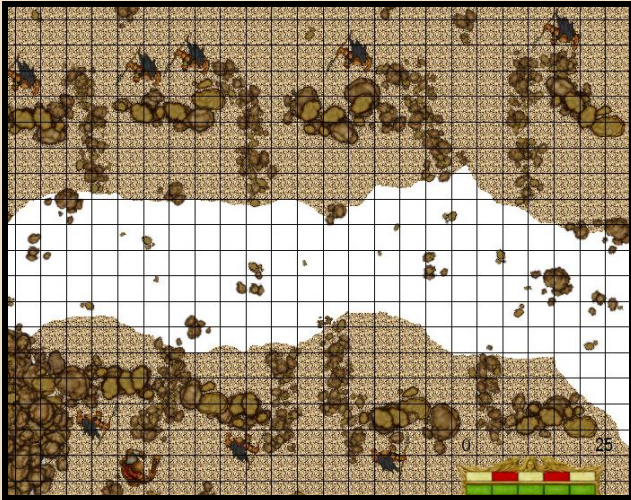
Here the party will be attacked by a planned ambush by **orcs** under the orders of Kraag. They did not attack Rathmore's party as it passed through too quickly and took them by surprise. The leader of the ambush would not mourn the loss of Kraag anyway. Now, however, they are alerted and ready for any other trespassers in the valley.

These **orcs** count as being in **lightly obscured** terrain when hiding behind the rocks and also **half cover**. If the party succeed in a **passive perception** check at disadvantage they will be warned in advance of the attack.

A small rock fall alerts you to the fact that you may be being watched in this section of the valley. All around you and above are crags and boulders. You can see several shadowy figures watching you from behind rocks. They appeared armed and certainly a danger.

If the party does not make a **passive perception** check, they will be ambushed and may be surprised. There are **8 orcs** here. They are armed with great axes and javelins. They are led by an **orog**.

The orcs have placed themselves on crags which are hard to reach. There are two orcs on each crag. There are rocky tracks which lead to the crags to allow the orcs to descend and attack. Any party member attempting to climb the loose shale paths must succeed on a saving throw (**dexterity: acrobatics** or **strength: athletics** with a **DC 10**) or slide down again. Heroes can jump across from one crag to another with another saving throw but if they fail they will tumble down to the bottom and suffer **1d4** bludgeoning damage.



The orcs will initiate the combat by throwing their javelins. They will then break cover and charge down towards the party. The orcs have no treasure but the orog wears a silver necklace worth 150sp.

THE ENVOY

When the party arrives at this location, a box canyon, they will see the diplomatic party sent by Brax attempting to make contact with Kraag and his orcs. They are not having much success. Of the eight bandits who entered the valley with him, only three remain – several have been killed by the denizens of the Cloven Ground. Now Rathmore is attempting to fulfil his mission.

If the party watch the proceedings, they will hear Rathmore call out in Orcish that he means no harm and that he offers great wealth and power to the Great Kraag. He states that he comes on a diplomatic mission and wants to discuss terms with their leader.

At this several arrows fly out of slits in the rock face and hit the rock in front of him.

The party can be given time to decide what to do at this juncture. If they act against Rathmore, the orcs inside Kraag's hideout will sit and watch. They will then defend their lair from the party too. If the party try to converse with Rathmore, he will be aggressive towards them. He will probably use the party as a way of showing his strength to the orcs behind the cliffs. He will call out that he will, as a sign of his loyalty to the orcs' cause, destroy the party as interlopers. He hopes by doing so that he will win the favour of the humanoids and affect a meeting with Kraag. If the party sits back to watch the show, they will be seen by a guard and Rathmore will attack them as above. Rathmore is a **Level 5 Knowledge Domain Cleric** and will be supported by the remaining **3 guards**. If the melee is getting out of hand then Rathmore will run for the cliff face, cast **Meld with Stone** and disappear – he will stay there until he hopes the party has left and then return to Nightforge.

A noise of shouting warns you to beware as you approach a bend in the valley. The floor of the valley has narrowed here to 10' – the rest is boulders and loose fragments of rocks. As you peer around the bend you can see a long 250' area which you perceive to be the end of the Cloven Ground. In front of you with their backs to you are four men. They hide behind a group of rocks and peer out towards the end of the valley. Most are dressed in bandit garb but one is more richly attired. He wears purple robes, chain armour and carries a mace. He also carries a white flag alongside a blue banner.

In front of the group the valley widens to around 40-50'. Along the north wall of the crevasse you can see what appear to be cracks in the rock but these may be more akin to arrow slits in a castle.

In front of the bandit group, and beyond their rocky cover is the body of one of their number – he has been pierced by several dark arrows. A white flag lies fluttering in the dust beside him.

If the party defeat Rathmore they each receive **150XP** for foiling Brax's plans to involve Kraag's humanoids in the war.

KRAAG'S DOMAIN

Once Rathmore has been dispatched it will be necessary for the party to enter Kraag's caves and remove him. They must first traverse the same area covered as it is by orc archers. These archers have poisoned their arrows with a weak venom taken from local serpents. If the target fails a **constitution** saving roll (**DC 8**) they will receive an additional **4 hit points** of **poison** damage. There are five arrow slits cut into the rock face. At any time up to three may cover the valley floor. The orcs within the cave system can be hit but receive three quarter cover and thus will receive a **+5** bonus to their armour class. If they are killed they will be replaced by other orcs. Any character peering through an arrow slit will see the rock cutting inside but little else. Once the characters get to the western side of the canyon, they will need to search for an entry point. This can be achieved on a **wisdom: perception** check (**DC 14**). They can try several times. It will be clear that this area is used as an entrance to the caves due to tracks heading up to the wall. This should encourage them to persist with the search if necessary. Any time spent searching for the door will see them as targets from within the cave system – one arrow slit covers the secret door. Once this has been achieved they will spot a secret lever which opens the cave entrance. Then can then access the cave system.

ENCOUNTER 10: THE CAVES OF KRAAG

Kraag and his minions have slowly chipped and extended their way into the cave sides over the last year or so. They now have a decent lair. All walls and ceilings are roughly hewn. Kraag's caves are the domain of a creature that does not require artificial light to see. Therefore any characters without **darkvision** will have difficulties here. A torch or lantern however will alleviate this problem, although it will signal a party's progress through the system.

The passages of this lair are generally 5 to 6' wide although there are variations. This means that a party will usually have to travel in single file. If characters wish to fire missiles at an enemy past a friend, as they might wish to do in cramped conditions, you could rule that the victim will receive cover as line of sight may be partially blocked. This situation, like many in this game can be ruled on individually as suits your style of play.

AREA 1: DEFENSIVE PIT

The entrance to Kraag's hideout is guarded by a concealed pit. The pit is 10' deep. This can be seen and avoided on a **wisdom: perception** check (**DC 14**). If the party are moving at speed, such as attacking the orcs in **Area 2**, they make the check at a **disadvantage**. Any who fall into the pit will sustain **1d6** points of bludgeoning damage. It will also gain the attention of its occupant. The pit has an offshoot to the east. This is the lair of a **gelatinous cube**. This creature is seen as a pet by the orcs and fed prisoners and vermin. It will attack any living organism which enters its domain. A character falling into the pit will end up prone and therefore give the **gelatinous cube advantage** on its first attack. If a character is absorbed by the cube, they will start to **suffocate**.

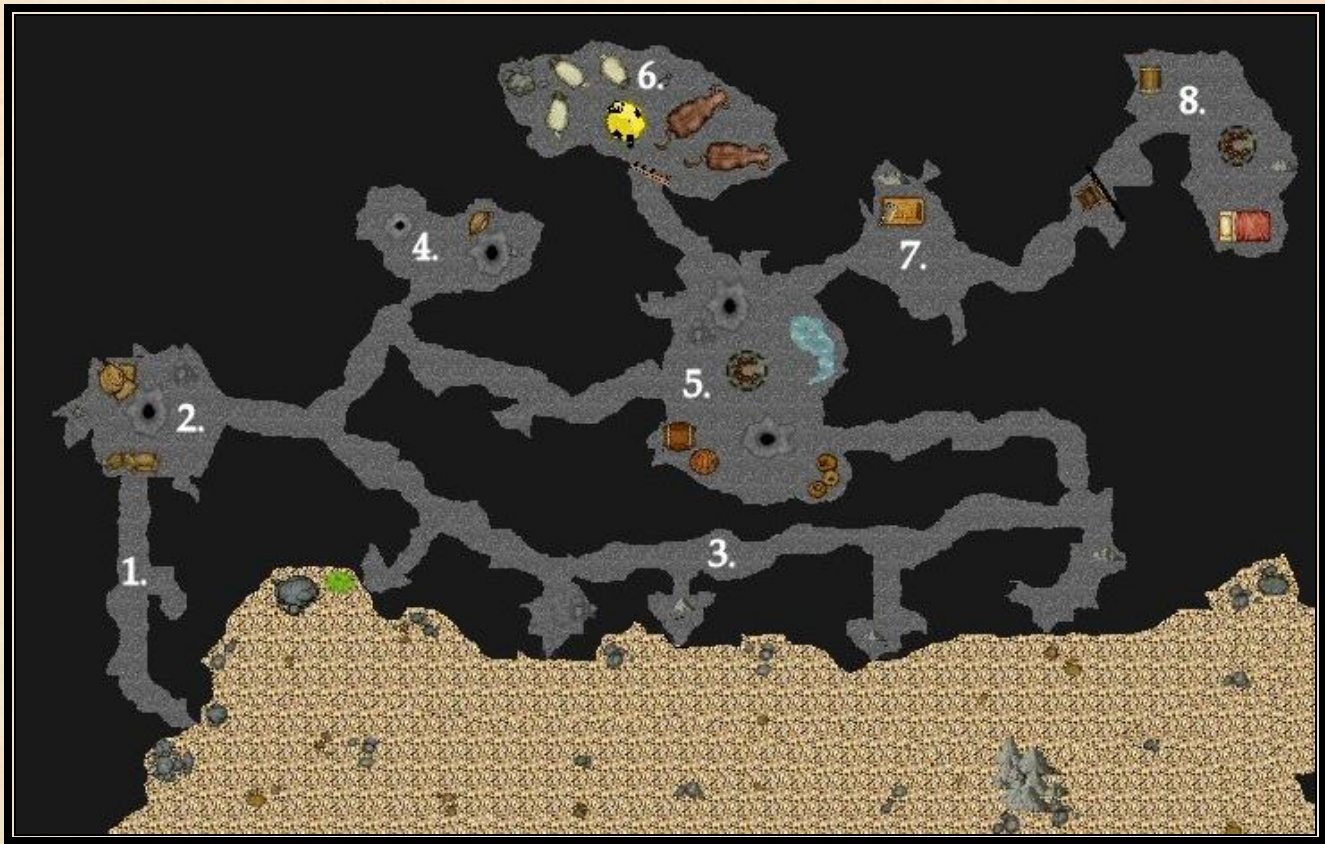
AREA 2: GUARD ROOM

The entrance this chamber has been blocked by a barricade. Behind this barricade lie **two orcs** with bows and poisoned arrows. Any lead character using a light source that has only **dim light** beyond 30' such as a torch or a hooded lantern will not see the orcs ahead unless they make a **wisdom: perception** check at a **disadvantage** at least until they get within 30'. Therefore they may get attacked before they see the archers and therefore may be surprised. The orcs behind the barricade benefit from **half cover** and thus get a **+2** to their AC.

This room is around 20' by 35' and has a large rock column in its centre. The chamber seems to be perhaps a guard room due to the piles of rotten leather armour and various items of weaponry lying around. There is a bucket of arrows next to the pathway south. An open doorway heads east.

There is a **third orc** in the room. If the party are defeating the guards, it will try to slip away from the

melee to alert the orcs in **Area 4**. These will arrive **four** rounds later.



AREA 3: SHOOTING GALLERY

This area consists of the five arrow slits carved into the walls of the cave complex. In each alcove there is an **orc archer**. The first may be surprised but after that any sounds of melee will reverberate down the corridor and alert the others. If there is time, the remaining orc archers will slip away to join their unengaged compatriots at the end of the corridor. They will then fight as a group until dead.

AREA 4: PRISONER ROOM

This room is around 35' long and has two rock pillars supporting the roof. Along the northern wall is a succession of manacles hammered into the rock. Most of these are unoccupied but the middle one holds the badly injured body of a dwarf. He is bleeding from several wounds.

If a warning has not come from Area 2 there will be **3 orcs** here. Two are torturing the dwarf while the other lies on a straw mattress and laughs. This room might however be empty apart from the dwarf if the party have already encountered the orcs. If they have been summoned to Area 2, the orcs here will have stabbed the dwarf with a dagger before they left. This wound, however, will not be fatal.

This is where the orcs keep their prisoners. They will torture them for information and then throw them to the gelatinous cube in **Area 1**. The dwarf, **Herbotir Oregut** is an escapee from the **Boulderspeak Mines** in the **Iron Islands** to the north. He will tell a tale of his escape from slavery in the mines and his stowaway onboard a ship which seemed to dock there regularly for iron ore and to bring more slaves. Oregut is not aware of **Ehalazuhn**. He is purely a civilian from **Skard** within the **Razor's Edge** to the

northeast. He was captured before the armies of Ehalazuhn came from beyond the mountains and occupied his home. He will, however, be able to describe what appears as preparation for some sort of conflict using slaves to dig out iron ore from the mines and the transportation of this overseas. Oregut was captured by Kraag's orcs a few days ago. He will beg the party to rescue the slaves held in the mines as they are all doomed to be worked to death. If the party ask Oregut about Skard, he will be able to describe it as a wonderful dwarven home in the mountains. He will be reluctant to go any further however for fear of betraying its location.

AREA 5: COMMON ROOM

This room stinks of body odour and damp. There is no ventilation and so a pall of smoke fills the roof cavity. There are a large amount of straw mattresses lying around and a large fire in the centre. Over this fire is the skewered corpse of some large rodent. There are also several barrels and sacks here. In the northeast corner is a shallow pool which is filled from water that trickles down the east wall.

This is the communal area for the orcs. There are a mixture of males and females here. If not disturbed, they are lying around, scrabbling in the dirt for food and arguing with each other. There are also some orc young rolling around in the filth – these are not combatants. There are **10 orcs** here in total. They will fight to the death to defend their home. Within three rounds however, any noise of melee will attract two of the **orogs** from **Area 7** to investigate. The **third orog** will retire to Kraag's quarters and prepare for a last stand.

AREA 6: LIVESTOCK PEN

This is the orcs food store. It is as unpleasant inside as it appears from the outside. There is nothing of any value in this room.

The smells emanating from this room hit you before you enter. A rickety wooden gate on a latch bars your way. Beyond this you can see various types of livestock including cows, sheep and goats. The ground is strewn

with sodden hay which is clearly never changed. There is a water trough fed from a dripping rivulet of water. Various farm implements are kept in this chamber also.

AREA 7: BODYGUARD BARRACKS

This room clearly has a military function. There is a weapons rack holding several great axes, spears and cleavers. There is also a large triple bunk bed against the north wall. Apart from that there are remains of food lying on the ground. A passageway flanked by rough wooden columns heads off to the east.

This is the barracks of Kraag's bodyguard. This takes the form of **3 Orog**s. If there has been no fighting then these will be present here – two of which will be asleep. More likely, these bodyguards will be occupied elsewhere. If there has been fighting in the common room then two will have been engaged there. The other will have retreated to Kraag's Chamber.

AREA 8: KRAAG'S CHAMBER

The path east seems to be better maintained and presented than the others you have traversed. The walls and roof seems much smoother – clearly this is a higher status area. As you round a bend to the north you see that the corridor ends in a solid wall. A ladder reaches from floor level up to a second level about 10' higher. As you watch, a hand reaches over the edge of the raised area and drags the ladder up and over the top. You can hear loud snarls and growls from above.

If the party speaks Orcish, a deep voice will be heard barking '*Leave my kingdom – only death awaits you here!*' This is **Kraag**, who although disturbed by the progress of the party will make a fight of it here and will die defending his hideout. He will most likely be assisted by one of his **orog** bodyguards. This will also fight to the death.

Kraag and his bodyguard will stay out of sight on the far side of the platform. Any character climbing up will have a space of 5' in which to act. There is not

space for a second character on the platform before they meet Kraag and his orog. Kraag will place his orog bodyguard ahead of him – it is expendable after all. During the combat he might hurl his spear or action his **Battle Cry** from the rear. Only if his bodyguard dies will Kraag enter melee. Any **area effect** spells cast from **below** the ridge will probably contact at least one of the orcs above but targeting specific orcs will probably be **impossible**. Any characters which jump down from the ledge to escape the orcs will suffer bludgeoning damage (1d6) and may be open to an **opportunity attack**. However, the orcs will **not** follow them down, but stay on the ledge where they are safe. Kraag will not retreat into his room where adventurer numbers would spell his doom.



The raised area can be climbed although it is not easy. Anyone proficient in this area should be able to manage it with a **dexterity: acrobatics** check (DC 14). If anyone falls they will suffer 1d6 hit points bludgeoning damage. Others may require a rope or grappling hook unless they can build a platform. There are items in various other rooms which might assist them here, such as tables and the bunk bed from the bodyguards' room. Once the enemy has been vanquished, the room can be explored.

This room is much plusher than the others – at least by orcish standards. It still has a rancid smell about it

but some effort has been made to show the status of the occupant. There is a large fire in the middle and a crude table, on which lie various remains of past meals. An iron bound chest can be seen in the northwest corner and a thick, straw-mattressed bed in the south. Clearly, Kraag lived better than his minions. On the far eastern wall there is a wooden ladder leading up to a trapdoor.

There is nothing of value on the table, but lost within the straw of the mattress can be found a small roughly cut topaz worth 200gp. The chest holds most of the ill-gotten gains of the orcs of Kraag. It contains 3000sp and 1000gp in coin, in addition to this there are two potions – one is a **Potion of Superior Healing** and the other a **Potion of Mind Reading**. There is also a ring made of gold and with an inset bloodstone which Kraag could not fit onto his finger. This is worth 250gp.

In addition to this treasure there is a large antique silver statuette of a horsed warrior. This is in fact a relic from the time of the **Barazud Empire** and is worth around 1000gp to a reputable collector or museum. This is far more than its base value. This might be recognised by the party on an **intelligence: history** check (DC 16). The statue however is quite large and thus is awkward to carry. If this is destroyed to make it more portable or sold to a common merchant, the raw scrap value will fall to 100gp.

On the table and covered in greasy stains is a letter from Kagan Brax.

*To the great **King Kraag** – greetings*

My best wishes to you and your kin.

I beg of you your ear for a time, great lord. My mistress, Zaleria of Skard wishes me to make a proposal to you. As you know, I have always admired you and your people for their bravery and resourcefulness. Indeed, your reputation as a leader has spread far from your domain.

My mistress wishes an alliance with the great orc race in order to destroy that perpetual thorn in our side to the west.

Our Lord, Ehalazuhn the Destroyer, desires to return to this world and to regain his kingdom lost to him in ages past. He asks us, his humble servants, to lay the path for him. I beg your assistance in making this great moment a reality. The rewards will be vast for any leader engaged in such an important charge.

I am aware of course that our paths have never crossed and that your kin have often been responsible for the deaths of my men, but I say, let bygones be bygones. This mission is larger than any petty squabble.

As we correspond, the armies of Ehalazuhn receive the materials of war from the mines upon the Iron Islands. If you wish to see for yourself the progress we have made then journey north to the ancient keep of Strongrock on the coast. Descend to the bowels of the earth and cross to the islands. I guarantee you and your men safe passage and that you will be well received.

I therefore beg to treat with you and as such will send an envoy to you three days hence - please receive him.

Negotiate with him as you would me - he has my full confidence.

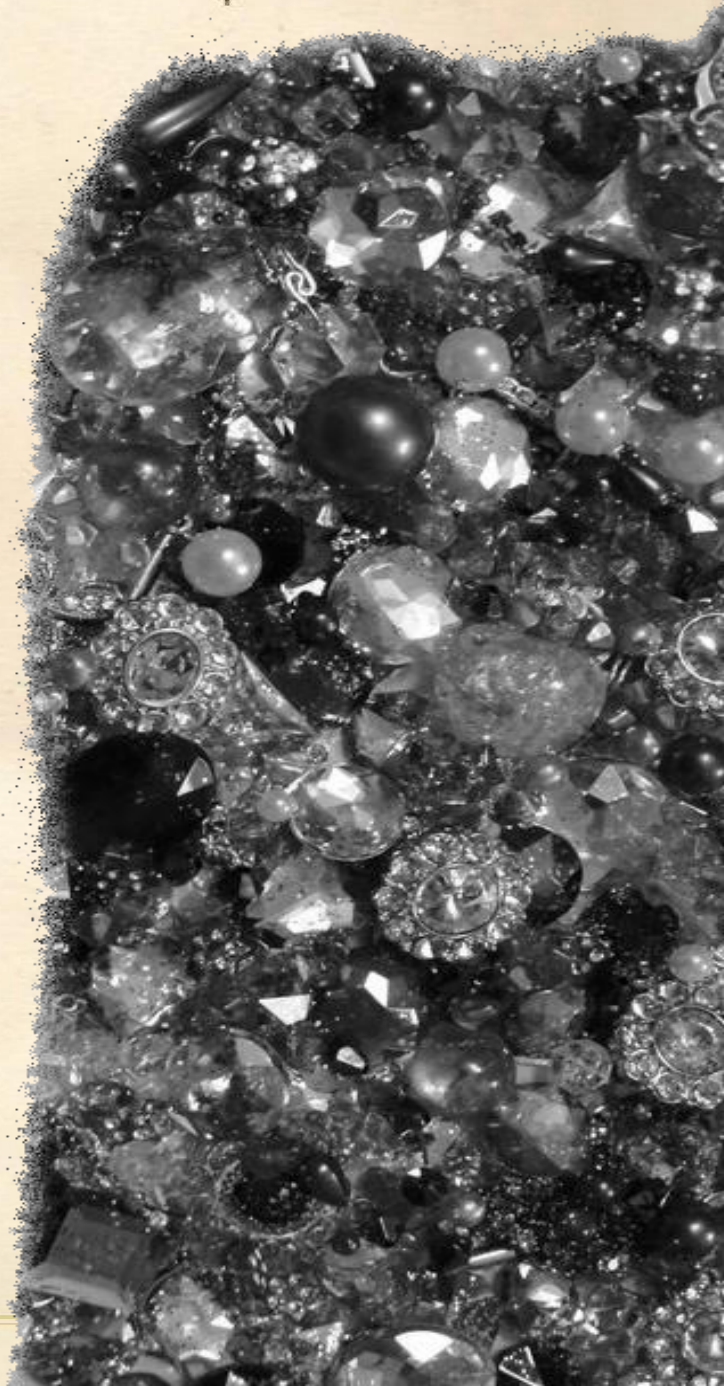
Ehalazuhn wishes it,

Kagan Brax

If the party climbs the ladder they will find that the trapdoor leads to another ladder - this time iron which leads further up. They should be encouraged to climb this ladder. It terminates in another trapdoor which opens up into a small cave above the Cloven Ground. This is Kraag's escape route if pressed. In the

distance across the plains to the northeast, the party will be able to discern a tall keep-like ruin about 6 miles away. To the northwest and out to sea they will also be able to make out a faint outline of a landmass about 15 miles away. The party could perhaps be reminded of what **Herbotir Oregut** told them about the **Iron Islands** and **Perrett's** orders to assess the situation at the time. They should therefore now advance to **Strongrock Keep** and **Part 4** of their quest.

When the party defeat Kraag they each receive **200XP** for removing Kraag and his kind from the Outer Reaches.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

THUG / OFFICER

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 11 (leather armour)
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

GUARD

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 16 (Chain Shirt, Shield)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception+2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage

RASSLER GRAIL

Medium human, any alignment

Armour Class 12 (Ring+1)
Hit Points 25 (5d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis+6, Int+6
Skills Arcana, History, Insight, Investigation
Senses passive Perception 13
Proficiency bonus +3
Languages Common, Elvish
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. He is a 5th-level Transmuter and uses Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14; +6 to hit with spell attacks).

He knows the following spells from the Wizard's spell list:

Cantrips (4 at will): Chill Touch, Mending, Message, Minor Illusion

1st Level (4 slots): Alarm, Witch Bolt, Shield, Thunderwave, Jump

2nd Level (3 slots): Levitate, Blur, Darkness

3rd Level (2 slots) Lightning Bolt, Stinking Cloud

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. Melee Attack: -1 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit: 2 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, versatile (1d8)

ANIMATED ARMOUR

Medium construct, unaligned

Armour Class 18 (natural armour)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 25ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses Blindsight 60ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The armour is incapacitated while in the area of an anti magic field. If targeted by dispel magic, the armour must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute

False Appearance. While the armour remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal suit of armour.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The armour makes two melee attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

KAGAN BRAX

Medium humanoid, Lawful evil Barbarian Berserker

Armour Class 17 (chain mail+1)

Hit Points 56 (6d12 + 12)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +5

Skills Perception

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Rage: In battle, Brax fights with primal ferocity. On his turn, he can enter a rage as a bonus action. He gains the following:

- Advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
- **+2 bonus** to the **damage** roll
- Resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

Rage lasts for 1 minute. It ends early if he is knocked unconscious or if his turn ends and he hasn't attacked a hostile creature since his last turn or taken damage since then.

Reckless Attack: He can throw aside all concern for defence to attack with fierce desperation. When he makes his first attack on his turn, he can decide to attack recklessly. Doing so gives him **advantage** on melee weapon attack rolls using Strength during this turn, but attack rolls **against him** have advantage until his next turn.

Danger Sense: He has advantage on **Dexterity saving throws** against effects that he can see, such as traps and spells. To gain this benefit, he can't be blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

Extra Attack: He can attack **twice**, instead of once, whenever he takes the Attack action on his turn.

Fast Movement: His speed increases by 10 feet while you aren't wearing heavy armour.

Frenzy: He can go into frenzy when he rages. If he does so, for the duration of his rage he can make a single **melee weapon attack as a bonus** action on each of his turns after this one. When his rage ends, he suffers one level of exhaustion.

Mindless Rage: He can't be charmed or frightened while raging.

ACTIONS

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

DEATH DOG

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

Armour Class 12

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	13 (+1)	6 (2)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +4

Senses Darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Two-Headed. The dog has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dog makes two bite attacks.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the creature must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. The creature dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

GIANT HYENA

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 12

Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Rampage. When the hyena reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the hyena can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 +3) piercing damage.

ORC

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 13 (hide armour)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 +3) slashing damage.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

OROG

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 18 (plate armour)

Hit Points 42 (5d8 + 20)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Intimidation +5, Survival +2

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc makes two attacks with its great axe

Great axe. **Melee** Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d12 +4) slashing damage.

Javelin. **Melee** or **Ranged** Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 +4) piercing damage.

NAYTE RATHMORE

Medium humanoid (cleric), Lawful evil

Armour Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 38 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	11(+0)	14(+2)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Wis+7, Cha+3

Senses passive Perception 14

Proficiency bonus +3

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. Nayte Rathmore is a 5th-level Knowledge Domain Cleric and uses Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15; +7 to hit with spell attacks).

Rathmore knows the following spells from the cleric's spell list including Domain spells:

Cantrips (4 at will): Sacred Flame, Guidance, Resistance, Thaumaturgy

1st Level (4 slots): Command (D), Identify (D), Cure Wounds, Sanctuary, Bane, Shield of Faith

2nd Level (3 slots): Augury (D), Suggestion (D), Silence, Enhance Ability, Zone of Truth

3rd Level (2 slots) Non-Detection (D), Speak with Dead (D), Dispel Magic, Meld Into Stone,

ACTIONS

Mace. **Melee** Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

ORC ARCHER

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 13 (hide armour)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. **Melee** Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 +3) slashing damage.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft. /320 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage

GELATINOUS CUBE

Large ooze, unaligned

Armour Class 6

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 15ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	3 (-4)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages –

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Ooze Cube. The cube takes up its entire space. Other creatures can enter the space, but a creature that does so is subjected to the cube's Engulf and has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Creatures inside the cube can be seen but have total cover. A creature within 5 feet of the cube can take an action to pull a creature or object out of the cube. Doing so requires a successful DC 12 Strength check, and the creature making the attempt takes 10 (3d6) acid damage. The cube can hold only one Large creature or up to four Medium or smaller creatures inside it at a time.

Transparent. Even when the cube is in plain sight, it takes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot a cube that has neither moved nor attacked. A creature that tries to enter the cube's space while unaware of the cube is surprised by the cube.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (3d6) acid damage.

Engulf. The cube moves up to its speed. While doing so, it can enter Large or smaller creatures' spaces. Whenever the cube enters a creature's space, the creature must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the cube. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw. On a failed save, the cube enters the creature's space, and the creature takes 10 (3d6) acid damage and is engulfed. The engulfed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 21(6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the cube's turns. When the cube moves, the engulfed creature moves with it. An engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 12 Strength check. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of the cube.

KRAAG

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 17 (chain mail and Ring+1)

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6, Wis +2

Skills Intimidation +5

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1,100XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Gruumsh's Fury. The orc deals extra 4 (1d8) damage when it hits with a weapon attack (included in the attacks).

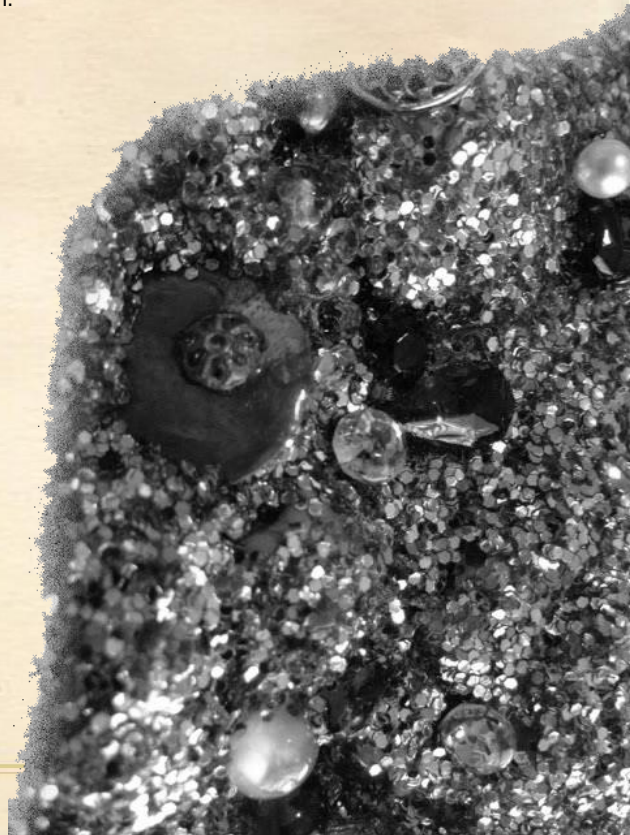
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc makes two attacks with its great axe or its spear.

Great axe. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 14 (1d12 + 4 plus 1d8) slashing damage.

Spear. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (1d6 + 4 plus 1d8) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Battle Cry (1/Day). Each creature of the war chief's choice that is within 30 feet of it, can hear it, and not already affected by Battle Cry gain advantage on attack rolls until the start of the war chief's next turn. The war chief can then make one attack as a bonus action.



PART 4: DISRUPTING THE DESIGNS OF EHALAZUHN

The ancient keep of **Strongrock** was an outpost of the old Barazud civilisation. It was initially used as a lookout post viewing across the sea to the north from its vantage point high on the cliffs. It, like other contemporary fortifications, has now fallen into disrepair and its walls are breached. Unknown to the people of the time, the rock on which it was built was riven and permeated with caverns, cracks and fissures. It is these caves and cracks that the new denizens of Strongrock have put to good use for the supply of Ehalazuhn's war machine. Years ago, in the aftermath of an earth tremor, it was found that one of these fissures broke out near the surface of the cliff and just underneath the keep of Strongrock. Exploring into the fissure, the underlings of Ehalazuhn found that it connected with a cave just above the water's edge, far below. They are now using this pathway to ship **iron ore** from the **Iron Islands'** mines up to the surface of the cliff whilst retaining a degree of secrecy. This iron ore is smelted at **Crystal Haven** and then sent via **Skard** to the lands to the east.



Tasked with this crucial function is a group of **bugbears** which has sworn loyalty to the new rising power in the north. They work with a group of pirates

who provide the ship necessary for the transportation of the iron. To assist them in this they rely on a large body of slaves, captured and kidnapped from the surrounding lands. It is the adventurers' mission to destroy the mines on the Iron Islands and in doing so halt the supply of iron to **Zaleria** at Skard.

Far away to the northeast you see what appears to be a castle overlooking the sea. It stands grey and foreboding on a grassy bluff, beyond which are the grey waves of the ocean. Looking out to sea, you can espy the faint outline of a landmass several miles away. Battling against the waves and headed towards this landmass, you can see a large black sailed ship receding into the murk.

The party should be encouraged to explore this keep – but caution should be taken.

As you near this ancient fortification, you see that it indeed is a stone built keep surrounded by a high defensive wall. This building has clearly seen better days – the walls now lie overgrown and crumbling – gaping holes can be seen. Several of the proud towers have collapsed in on themselves and the gates have fallen from their hinges. This is a derelict fort and can no longer perform as a defensive bulwark.

If the party do not take care whilst approaching the keep of Strongrock, they will be seen by the bugbear guard that watches from the remaining tower in the south east of the curtain wall. It will alert its party below and begin to set an ambush. Including the guard, there are **three bugbears**. The interior within the curtain wall is overgrown and strewn with rocks – ideal ambush terrain. Bugbears are experts at stealth and therefore they will hide in amongst this debris and wait. If the party does take care or has a way of scouting out the fort unobserved such as a druid's **Wild Shape** or a rogue's **stealth**, the bugbears will not be aware of them and may in turn be surprised, depending on the party's actions. If this is the case one will still be in the southeast tower.



A short exploration of the compound will reveal much as expected, in that it is a derelict fort with nothing of value. There is, however, a cart with a broken wheel – inside it is a small quantity of a **reddish mineral** – an **intelligence: investigation roll (DC 8)** will reveal this to be iron – a fact suggested by **Herbotir Oregut** in Kraag's caves. There is a fire, which was being used by the bugbears but this has been extinguished a while ago. Inside a filthy bedroll near to the fire is a secreted pouch, in which is **10gp**. Any exploration near to the keep will see that the stairs which led up to the front doors have been planked over to form a **slope**. Also there are clear wheel marks on these planks and ruts heading out of the gate. This is the route that the iron ore is taken from the caves and out to the east – the carts are very heavy and so caused the deep ruts.

ENCOUNTER 11: BENEATH STRONGROCK KEEP

The doors into the keep itself are easy to open – they are not locked as they are used often.

On entering the keep, the scene of dereliction continues. The internal walls within the structure have all collapsed leaving it open to the sky. From where you stand you can see that the wooden floor of the keep has also fallen in to reveal a stone basement or cellar. Looking down you can see a large fissure in the side of the cellar wall, approximately 10' wide.

All around the basement area are reddish rock fragments, gravel and dust. A wooden ramp has been

built which slopes up gently from the floor, around the walls and ends near the door at which you stand. This gives easy access up and down from the doorway to the cellar level.

This ramp is the route that the iron ore follows, being carried up the slope by slaves and mules. It is then transferred to carts which then head east.

If the party descends the ramp they will enter the fissure which has now been converted into a long winding tunnel. This tunnel slopes continually downward, weaving and winding its way to the sea. The passage is roughly hewn and quite wide (10'). Narrower parts have been extended to allow the free passage of the ore upwards. It will take an explorer about half an hour to descend to the cave by the shore. There is no natural light in the passage and no artificial light is available. When ore is brought up to the surface, torches are carried by the escort.



For most of this time, the party will be undisturbed, but about half way down they will hear the sounds of grunts and growls from further down the passage. They will also be able to hear rough speech in **common**. These voices exhort the slaves who are coming up the passage to walk faster. The voices are from a **pair of bugbears** who are escorting slaves up the passage towards the party. There are

five slaves with them. The slave party will be discernible well in advance by the glow of the torches they carry. This party cannot be avoided but should not pose a real threat to the adventurers. One bugbear is in front of the party of slaves and the other is behind. These can be engaged, but care should be taken that the slaves themselves are not hurt. If there is a melee, the bugbears will drop the torches, extinguishing them and fight using their darkvision. If the adventurers have put out their torches in order to

ambush the bugbears, party members with normal vision may struggle in the darkness.

The slaves are all human and are skinny and dressed in rags. They number half the slaves which work this passage. The rest are below in a cage in the cave. If they are freed they will thank the party and, if asked, can describe the situation in the cave by the shore.



They will explain that every second day a large black sailed ship hoves to at the cave from the Iron Islands to unload the iron ore mined there. This ship plies the route between the cave and the Iron Islands to the northwest. The slaves themselves have not worked in the mines but have heard enough to understand that these mines provide the raw materials to supply a military host which is being

built, but where and to what purpose, they know not. They will describe their job of moving iron ore up to the surface and explain that slaves which die are replaced with new victims which arrive by ship. These new slaves come from a group of slave trading pirates which stop at the cave on a fairly regular basis.

As the party nears the sea cave they will come across a bugbear guard post. This contains **two bugbears** that monitor any traffic up and down. They will be using torches in their cave and so will be visible from a distance by the light these emit. These guards can be attacked or avoided should the party wish to. Any fighting in this cave might alert **one of the bugbears** in the cave below if it passes a **wisdom: perception** check (DC 10). It will come and investigate on its own – it will not alert the rest of the bugbears as the two guards in the guard post dislike each other intensely and are known to fight on a regular basis. It is possible that this bugbear will come across the melee. If it does, it will not engage but retire down the passage and alert the rest. A character might see this bugbear but if engaged in combat, it will need a **wisdom: perception** check at a **DC of 16** due to the darkness and the bugbear's natural stealth. The bugbears in the cave will then set up an ambush at the bottom of the passage, just before it widens into the cave by the sea.

THE SEA CAVE

The party will approach the opening into the cave soon after the bugbear guard post. If the bugbears have been warned then none will be visible as an ambush will be set. There are plenty of boxes and sack for the creatures to hide behind. A comparison between the bugbears' stealth roll against the characters' **passive perception** at **disadvantage** needs to be made in order to avoid the risk of surprise.

If no alarm has been raised, they will see **one bugbear** with its back to them in the cave entrance and beyond this the cave and the sea beyond. They will also be able to see another **two bugbears** near the shore, next to a wooden jetty. If these bugbears are engaged, then a **remaining one** working out of sight in the south of the cave will come to their aid – totalling **four bugbears** in all.

Beyond the end of the tunnel you can see natural light. This illuminates a large cave which opens to the sea. The sea reaches the cave floor and gently laps the edge – it would appear to be quite deep. The cave is about 150' long by 60' deep. Red dust and rocks litter the cave. You

can see a fairly rickety wooden jetty which heads out into the sea for about 20'. There are various boxes, crates and barrels littering the cave. Across the sea, faint in the distance you can see the outline of a landmass, probably an island.

The cave is badly kept and messy. The jetty is for the ship to moor to, to unload its cargo. The boxes and barrels to the north contain little of any value – mainly just ropes, spare torches and restraining devices for the slaves, such as manacles. To the south there is a desk, on which there is a ledger which chronicles the arrival and departure of each load of iron ore. The ship's crew fill this in, as the bugbears are illiterate. Beneath the desk is a small chest which holds the bugbears' pay for their services. Being fairly unintelligent, these creatures are not especially interested in coinage. Instead, the ship's crew pays them in bright and shiny jewellery and baubles. Most of this is fairly low in value although the bugbears do not know this. In total, the value will run to 200gp, but this will be the entire contents of the chest and takes the form of a silver candlestick, low value gems, costume jewellery and the odd coin.

Further, to the south there is an entrance way to the slave pen. Here the party will find a filthy cage in which are kept the remaining **five slaves** until the next ship docks. They are afraid of the party but will be grateful for being saved. They know the same information as the other group but can further this information by mentioning that the latest ship just departed and therefore will probably not return until late the **next day**. This will give the party time to heal up if necessary before engaging the ship's crew.

The aim of the next phase is for the party to take over the ship, which is run by mercenary pirates, and for them to make their way to the Iron Islands which are visible to the northwest. The slaves in the cage and the ones liberated earlier are all **sailors**. They have been captured by the pirates on the open seas and pressed into service. This means that if the pirates are killed rather than captured, the slaves may be convinced to sail the ship for the party. One way or another, the party will need a crew.

THE BLACK SHIP

Late on the second day, a large ship will be seen approaching. It is the ore transport returning from the Iron Islands with a new cargo of iron.

Looking out from the cave entrance to sea you see a large sailing ship heading in your direction. The sails on this ship are jet black. You can just about make out the figures of the crew, who busy themselves about the deck. The ship is headed directly to the cave and comes from the direction of the islands to the north west.

The ship has a crew of **10 pirates** and a **pirate captain, Andrago Bolas**. If the party hide and have removed the bodies of the bugbears, the pirates will dock as normal and begin to disembark. They will automatically be very suspicious as to where the bugbears are and will look for them. **Three pirates** will do this; one will stand guard beside the ship. The other two will search the slave pen and then the passage to Strongrock – they will not proceed beyond the bugbear guard post in the passage. Whilst they are searching, the remaining crew will remain on board but will be alerted in case of danger. If no sign is seen of the bugbears, but they are not engaged they will eventually assume that the creatures are up at the surface. They will then begin to unload the ore in sacks and leave it on the floor of the cave. Captain Bolas will fill in the ledger on the desk documenting the date and how many sacks have been dropped off. **Six** of the crew will assist in the unloading while the other **four** will busy themselves on the ship.

If the party has not hidden the bugbear bodies or can be seen from the ship, then the ship's crew will land to engage the characters if they can see them – if they cannot they will disembark in full force to investigate.

The pirates need to be vanquished in order for the party to requisition their ship. In a melee, the pirates left on board will stay there and use their crossbows, while the remainder and the captain engage in hand to hand combat. However this melee plays out, the pirates will swiftly lose heart if Bolas dies. If they are

reduced to **five**, and their captain is dead, they will offer to surrender.

The captain has a money pouch within the folds of his clothing which will need to be searched for – it contains **20pp**. His scimitar also has a jewelled handle. These jewels can be prised out and are worth **100gp**. The pirates have no real treasure but if the ship is explored, then in the hold, hidden under some barrels is a small lockbox containing **300gp** – this treasure has been liberated from captured vessels. Also some of the contents of the ship are saleable. There are several barrels of good quality brandy which are worth **120gp** in total if sold to a reputable establishment and some large bales of silk which, although bulky, are worth **200gp** to a top quality tailor – there values are halved to general dealers or merchants.



Any captured crew will be able to be persuaded to sail the ship across the sea to the Iron Islands. If the slaves have not yet been released and fled the area, then they will also agree to man the ship if asked. Naturally, the pirates have somewhat fragile loyalty to the party, and will take any opportunity to betray them. This will probably be once they arrive in the Islands, unless measures are taken to prevent this.

Betrayal may be through raising the alarm or jumping ship and swimming to the shore.

Once the party has defeated Bolas and his men they each receive **150XP** for ending this inhumane traffic of the innocent.

ENCOUNTER 12: THE IRON ISLANDS

The journey across the sea to the Iron Islands will not take long – they are quite close by. As their ship approaches however, the party will be aware of a hive of activity. A small community has grown up around the long jetty which the ship usually pulls alongside. There are many workers and more pirates here.

You approach the islands after a short sail. As they get larger in your view you can see what appears to be a busy landing stage facility. A wide sandy area surrounded by trees leads to an inhabited area consisting of wooden shacks along the sea front and a long jetty heading out to sea. The little port is a hive of activity with people working on unloading carts of ore or expanding the clearing by chopping down trees. On the jetty are several carts all full of ore. These carts are pulled by mules and have human drivers.

In the distance beyond the port you can see a winding path heading into the hills. This twists and turns but you can make out some more carts coming down the slope. Off to the west and just around a headland, invisible to the occupants of the port, you can see a small deserted sandy beach.

As your ship begins to near the docks the drivers of the carts wave to you in greeting.

If the party head to the jetty and dock alongside, they will immediately raise suspicion as they are not recognised. Bolas' crew have been sailing this passage for quite a while and are easily recognisable. If they are challenged they will have to think on their feet as to why the crew of the ship has changed.

There is a fighting force available in the port. At this time, it consists of **12 pirates**. The rest are civilians

who will not engage in combat. These workers will flee along the beach or into the hills. If a melee develops then the pirates will have to board the ship, which will give the party **advantage** in defending it.

It may be advisable that the party avoids conflict and lands at the small sandy cove visible to the west. This is shallow enough for the ship to pull in quite close to the shore and the small ship's boat will easily accommodate the party to the beach. Similarly, if the ship finds itself without a crew for whatever reason (such as they jump ship) it will sail off course and beach on the sandy cove to the west. This diversion from the ship's usual route however, will not have gone unnoticed and a party from the landing bay will be sent to investigate. This party will consist of **four pirates**. If this group is engaged then they must be prevented from escaping and alerting the port. If the party leave the ship moored at the beach and avoid the pirate band, then the pirates will board the ship, kill any slaves on board and free any captured pirates. They will then raise the alarm. Once the port has been alerted, the remaining pirates will scour the countryside for the party.



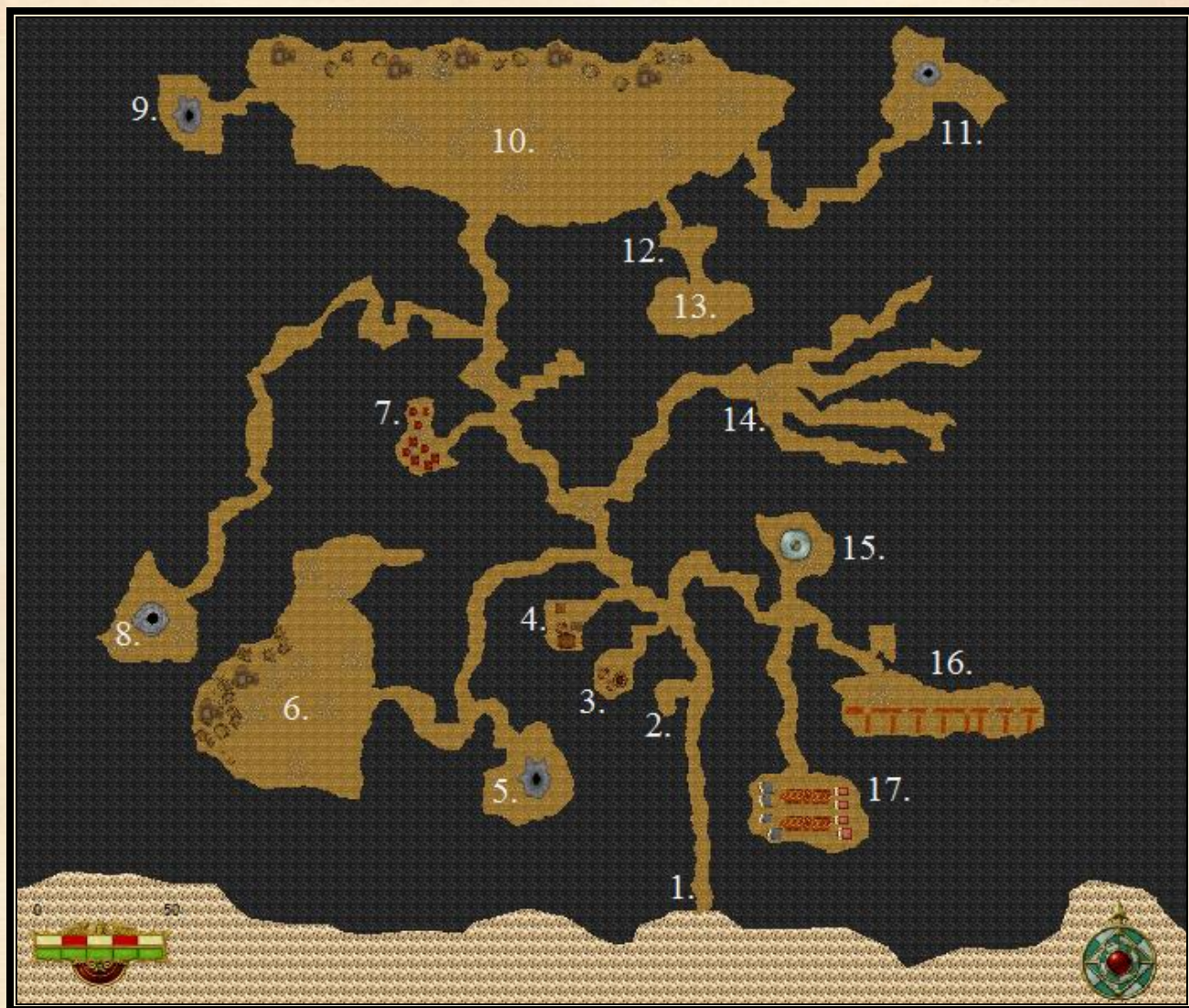
Once the party has established itself on the Iron Islands they need to find a way to the cave mouth of the mine and enter the complex. There is a guard of **two pirates** at the entrance.

INTO BOULDERSPEAK MINES

The key point about the **Boulderspeak Mines** is that they are **unstable** – hence their name. They experience regular cave-ins which have caused the death of many a slave or guard. Anyone entering the

mine will hear groans, rumbles and crumbling rock noises at frequent intervals. The mines are ancient and, although they went under a different name, were used during the era of Barazuhn. Now they have been reopened by the sympathisers of **Ehalazuhn** in order to supply his army. Despite this, they are not safe –

geological faults crisscross this area and this has led to a situation when to mine here is hazardous in the extreme. However, the deaths of a few minions are of little consequence to Ehalazuhn's followers – there is always a fresh supply of slaves or humanoids.



The aim of the party in the Boulderspeak Mines is to cause their **collapse** – although they are unaware of this at the start. Various clues will be found which will lead the party to the conclusion that they can destroy this area by using the tools found inside. A sub-quest will be the **release** of the slaves held within from their bugbear overseers. The adventurers may actually need these to help them sail away from the islands when they have completed their quest.

AREA 1: ENTRANCE

As the light fades behind you and your eyes slowly adjust to the gloom you see a wide 10' passageway heading north. At irregular intervals, small and fairly ineffective oil lamps splutter and spit. You can see the dim light cast by these light sources disappear into the

medium distance. The walls have been rough hewn and trickle with rivulets of water. Lichens and mosses add a splash of green to the reddish-brown walls and are sodden to the touch. It is clear that this passage is well used, or at least has been, due to the ruts which have been carved into the rocky floor – possibly by carts or wheeled mining trucks.

As you peer into the caverns your ears can discern a faint tapping or chipping noise reverberating down the cave towards you. This is rhythmic and constant. In addition to this there is a more threatening sound of crumbing rock – usually just a high pitched crackle of pebbles falling, but occasionally there is a deeper more ominous rumbling sound. This does not fill you with confidence as you contemplate edging forward into the gloom.

The party will not be disturbed at the entrance to Boulderspeak Mines unless they take an excessive amount of time preparing or they are being pursued from without. Any pursuing pirates will not enter the mines beyond 20' as they know the dangers within and are afraid of the bugbear overseers. If the party seem to be taking too long, they will see in the distance a small group coming towards them. This group will consist of two slaves and **one bugbear guard**. The slaves will be pushing a cart full of iron ore towards the exit. The bugbear must be killed or he will alert the two guards in Area 2.

AREA 2: GUARDROOM

This area is a guard post intended to keep interlopers or stray pirates out of the mines and to prevent slaves from escaping. Across the corridor mouth is a fairly ramshackle gate, behind which lurk **two bugbears**. If they are not alerted they will be in the adjacent cave to the corridor gambling at dice. The gate can be smashed aside with a **strength** check (DC 8). If the bugbears are engaged, they will fight to the death here. If they are warned by the bugbear approaching **Area 1** then they will be waiting and prepared. They will throw their javelins through the gaps in the gates although any targets will get the benefit of half cover due to the difficult shot. They will

then push the gate aside and engage in melee. These bugbears, as with **all** the normal bugbears in this complex, hold **4d6** silver pieces in rotten leather pouches around their waists. Occasional and particularly brutal, and thus well rewarded, bugbears may have **2d6** gold pieces.

AREA 3: STOREROOM

The passage opens up into a small room which is crammed full of odds and ends. The ground is dirty and damp and strewn with wet straw. Crates and barrels reach to the roof. Sacks are piled against the north wall, some of which are torn and have spilled grain on the floor. Several rats can be seen scuttling out of sight as you approach.

This is a general store area and contains little of interest to the party. The crates contain pickaxe handles and the barrels poor quality food – mainly a porridge style oat. The sacks do indeed contain grain – much of which has now been contaminated by the rats which infest this area.

AREA 4: DETONATOR ROOM

This room contains several small boxes and crates. On the wall as you enter you see a roughly made placard on which is written in Common '*No naked lights. By order of Razadh*' In the centre of the room is a small table on which lies a ledger bound in red vellum.

The vellum book contains instructions for the use of explosives in mining in regards to the placement of powder, different sizes of charges for different purposes and the use of the detonators. The tome was the ledger of the engineer previously responsible for the mining in Boulderspeak and is written in Common. Along the margin are various engineers' notes including:

'Note to self: ensure that no person of any value remains within the blast radius 2 minutes after mixing the compounds – can't afford more unnecessary deaths of guards'

and

'Note to self: find the idiot who has put all our lives in danger - a lesson here in employing amateurs to do a professional's job. Due to over blasting the whole mine is now unstable – keep explosives from idiots.'

This room is a store chamber for detonators used in the blasting of new fissures for mining. Each small box contains eight such explosive devices. They are a crude timing device which allows a charge to be set and the engineer to retire to a safe distance. They consist of two vials, one containing a flammable material and the other a volatile chemical which reacts explosively with the former. When the two materials are mixed they produce a chain reaction supposedly two minutes later which can ignite explosive powder.

This may give the party the suggestion that they may have a part to play in the destruction of the mines. This will be reinforced when they meet and interrogate slave foreman **Avery** in **Area 6**.

AREA 5: SUPPORT COLUMN A

On entering this roughly circular room you are immediately impressed by a huge rock column that reaches from floor to the ceiling 40' above. The column is 10' in diameter. All around the floor are rock fragments, both large and small. A large 1' crack has formed at the top of the column and has spread across the ceiling to the wall. From inside the crack, water drops fall and splash on the ground beside you.

From elsewhere in the mine you hear a deep boom as if from an explosion. At this, small pebbles fall from the crack, as do small fountains of rock dust. The ceiling does not look secure.

This room was ostensibly intended and sold by Avery in **Area 6** as a new mine face to speed up the production of iron ore. However, the work was done under the supervision of one not familiar with either geology or mining and intentionally too much explosive was used by the slave foreman. This has led to a large fissure appearing in the ceiling and the room had to be abandoned. The new mine engineer, Razadh put an end to this random destruction, both here and throughout the mine, but not before further

caverns were similarly damaged. This has led to the mine becoming a death trap.

All that keeps the mine from collapsing now are these remainder columns. The aim of the party, as they will discover, is to destroy these pillars and in doing so, cause the mine to collapse in on itself. Investigations to this end or interviewing central characters will reveal the perilous state of Boulderspeak Mines.

There are three other such columns - **Areas 8, 9 and 11**. The destruction of these pillars will wreak devastation on the mine, collapsing the main chambers and putting it out of action for the foreseeable future – as planned by Avery all along.

AREA 6: MINE FACE B

You can see the bright light emanating from this room long before you round the corner and see the opening. Similarly, you can also hear the sounds within; deep guttural shouts and the ringing of metal on stone. Peering into this large cavern reveals a mine at work.

By the flickering of wall mounted torches you can see the mine face stretching north to south - a sheer wall of rock worked by about fifteen emaciated workers clad in rags. They attack the mine facing with whatever strength they retain, chipping off shards of rock which are dragged and heaved into wooden, iron wheeled trucks.

As you watch, you can see an older slave directing what appear to be untrained workers to different parts of the rock face. Keeping a careful eye on their charges are three hairy bugbears – each brandishing a whip, which they use to force the miners to work faster and harder. Another lies sleeping against the southern wall.

This is a secondary mine face. It is being exploited in order to speed up excavation in addition to the larger, more productive **Mine Face A** to the north. The **four bugbear** guards are scattered around the chamber. The bugbears' attention is very much diverted towards the slaves at the rock face and so they can be surprised by the party. There is also an experienced mining engineer, **Avery** at work.

Although a slave, Avery has been given the responsibility by Razadh of ensuring the productivity of this area, due to his experience in mining and engineering. He could be classed as a 'trustee' although this trust has been declining since **Razadh** took over at Boulderspeak. Avery has no love for the regime in charge and secretly wishes to destroy the mine.



If the guards are killed, the party can free the slaves, however, they will be wary of the characters to start. They will also be reluctant to escape the mine due to their fears of the pirates outside at the harbour. If the party organise a collective escape, the slaves have a better chance for, if they leave the mine alone, they will to a large extent be recaptured and killed. This act, be it somewhat unethical, would however have the effect of distracting the pirates, as they will then be spread around the island hunting down the escaped workers.

If interviewed, **Avery** will be a willing assistant to the party and will explain what he knows – namely that the mine is in an increasingly unstable condition and that some judiciously placed explosives could bring the whole construction down. He will admit to being responsible for the perilous condition of the mine at **Areas 5, 8, 9 and 11**. Before the arrival of Razadh, Avery made full use of his time and position as a trustee prisoner. Razadh's predecessor was by no means as knowledgeable about mining as the warlock, and gave Avery a fairly free hand in delving into the mine to find new seams of iron ore. This trust was used by Avery to set up a situation in which he could ostensibly bring down the whole mine in one cataclysmic rock-fall. A deep understanding of geology and mining in general allowed Avery to spot fissures and cracks in an already old and fragile mine

and in its roof. By engineering an explosion in certain areas, a chain reaction should occur which would collapse the whole mine. The columns in **Areas 5, 8, 9 or 11** have been primed for this event and as they fall will cause the roofs in the neighbouring **Mine Faces A and B** also to collapse – closing the mine forever.

However, the removal and replacement of Avery's former overseer with Razadh led to many problems for the engineer – not least of which was the ending of any fake exploratory work and demolition. Also, Avery has found himself increasingly under suspicion and fears for his life. He now has little freedom to carry out his plan and thus must rely on the adventurers to do this job for him. He is also concerned about causing the deaths of many innocent slaves – a problem which he has not been able to resolve. Now with the aid of the party this might be possible – he will however warn the players of the risks to escaped slaves if they are freed from the mine into the murderous hands of the pirates outside.

Avery will suggest that they destroy the four columns in **Areas 5, 8, 9 and 11** with explosives found at **Area 7**, and he will offer to take the party there. On the way he will explain the process of detonation and the 2 minute delay – this will be until the notes of Razadh dispel such a comfortable escape.



Avery will also tell the party what they might not know, and that is that the ore is being transported to the ruined town of **Crystal Haven** to the east and south of the **Razor's Edge** mountain chain. There it is being smelted before being sent to Skard in order to forge weapons and other military equipment for a coming war.

AREA 7: EXPLOSIVES STORE

There is a single **bugbear** guard at the entrance to this chamber. Its purpose is to prevent the unauthorised removal of explosives since the damaging effects of the supposed random exploration by Avery (**Area 6**) prior to the arrival of Razadh.

This large chamber is divided in half by a wooden palisade. Within this fence is a padlocked gate. Behind the wooden structure, the space is filled to the ceiling with red painted wooden boxes. Each of these has also been padlocked shut. At the entrance to the room is a sign which reads,

'Strictly no naked lights or unauthorised entry. By order of Razadh'.

Both the padlocked gate and the boxes themselves can be opened with a **dexterity: stealth** check (DC 10). All the boxes contain explosives for extending the mine in the search of new veins of iron ore. If a naked flame, such as a torch is carried, there is a 10% chance that a spark will cause a small ignition on some spilled gunpowder on the floor. This will not cause an explosion, but it will remind the party of the perilous nature of their predicament. There is enough explosive here to place five boxes at the base of each pillar in **Areas 5, 8, 9 and 11**.

If the party is accompanied by the mining engineer Avery, he will dissuade the party from any ideas of setting fire to the explosives here as it will lead to only a partial destruction of the mine and cause the deaths of many slaves who will be trapped by falling rock. The explosives must be moved to the areas in which they will cause the most destruction.

AREA 8: SUPPORT COLUMN B

A large central column of rock dominates the centre of this large chamber. Although thick, at about 15', the column is deeply cracked and parts of it have already fallen to litter the floor at your feet. The roof of the chamber is largely hidden by darkness although some stalactites can be seen. On the floor, near to the column

edge facing you is a large stain of what appears be dried blood. There also appear to be shards of bone and tufts of hair scattered about the stain. A glint of a shiny mineral reflects the light of your torches from within the rancid remains.

This is the second chamber sabotaged by Avery (**Area 6**). This column will need to be destroyed in order to collapse the mine. Since this area has been abandoned by the occupants of the mine, it has now become home to a colony of **4 piercers** which lurk on the ceiling above, waiting for prey. The remains on the floor are an unfortunate bugbear victim of these secretive killers.



As the height of the ceiling is 40', the **piercers** will inflict **4d6** piercing damage on a successful hit. They are unable to attack any party members at the doorway but will fall in unison on any targets which enter the room. The glinting object is a golden ring holding a band of blue quartz which looks to be worth around 100gp. It is in fact a **Ring of Swimming** which was picked up but not recognised by the dead Bugbear.

AREA 9: SUPPORT COLUMN C

This chamber is empty except for a large quantity of fallen rock and a single brownish rock column reaching from floor to ceiling. This pillar is cracked across the middle and it appears that it is only the weight of the roof that is keeping it in position.

This is the third of the columns sabotaged by Avery (**Area 6**) and must be destroyed in order to collapse the roof of Boulderspeak Mines.

AREA 10: MINE FACE A

This is the most important mine face in the Boulderspeak Mine, and contributes most to the supply of iron ore being sent east. It has recently been supplemented by Mine Face B to the south. Just to the south east of the cavern lie the quarters of **Razadh** and the bugbear leader, **Yazuud**.

This huge chamber is a hive of activity. In it, slaves are working as miners and chip and lever away at huge shards of brown rock across a mine face stretching east to west. Frequent rumbles and crashes signify a rock fall which is then worked upon to break it into more manageable pieces. Fragile looking gantries have been built of timber and are populated with more slaves, who winch down their broken rocks in thick wicker baskets to waiting miners below. You can see these being emptied into large wooden trucks.

There must be about twenty five slaves in all. Bullying the slaves are six bugbear guards who lash and cajole the workforce. More than one slave lies motionless on the floor of the cavern – blooded by the guard's whips.

The cavern is lit by sputtering torches at irregular intervals around the walls. To the west there is an opening of a corridor and to the east and south east, two more. At the eastern opening stand two more bugbear guards carrying torches who watch into the corridor beyond, ignoring the work being done in the cavern behind them.

The slaves in the mines suffer daily with the abuses of their captors and although they are not totally broken, they lack the leadership to revolt. If it is clear that a rescue attempt is occurring, ten of the bravest will join in a revolt to break out from the bugbear's dominion. They will join in at **Round 3** of melee; once they are convinced they have a chance to overwhelm their guards. The noise of a slave revolt will bring forth the attentions of **Razadh and Yazuud**.

The two bugbears at the eastern entrance are there to keep at bay a **grell**. This creature was captured in another cavern on the island and brought to the mines in a cage – the intention being to curb its will and use

it as a monstrous guard within Boulderspeak. However, the cage was damaged in transit and it has since escaped. The bugbear guards have cornered the creature and are using their torches to keep it from Mine Face A until they can re-cage and then train the beast. If the bugbears are distracted by the party, the grell will emerge one round later and attack any creature near it – this may be a party member or a slave but most likely a bugbear as they have been tormenting it for some time. It will continue to attack in order to escape the cavern until slain.

If the party elect to stage a rescue in Mine Face A, the combat will turn rapidly into a free for all between the party, revolting slaves, bugbears and the Grell (which could be utilised as an unwitting ally to the party). **Five rounds** after the melee has started, Yazuud and Razadh will emerge from their quarters and engage any enemies – not necessarily the party. If the party choose a more subtle strategy, Yazuud and Razadh will remain within their quarters until a melee breaks out, when the sound will attract them, also in five rounds.

NOTE: For information on Yazuud and Razadh see Area 12 and 13.

AREA 11: SUPPORT COLUMN D

This room's main feature is a huge column which reaches into the darkness above. The column is thick but appears to be insecure. Large cracks have formed down its length and there is plenty of evidence of crumbled rock lying at its base. Apart from the column, the only other item of note in this room is a large wooden cage, which now lies smashed on the ground. Within the crate is sodden and filthy hay but little else.

This is the fourth column, sabotaged by Avery (**Area 6**) which if destroyed should bring the roof down on the Boulderspeak Mines. The cage is the erstwhile prison of the **grell** captured by the bugbears.

AREA 12: YAZUUD'S CHAMBER

The entrance to this chamber, which straddles the corridor leading to Razadh's room, will be obscured

by a curtain unless Yazuud has been encountered in **Area 10**.

This chamber cuts across the corridor – all the walls are bare rock and on each side of the corridor is a crackling torch illuminating the contents. On the right hand side of the corridor, you can see what you assume is a bed. Essentially, it is pile of furs – some of which look quite exotic, but all are stained and somewhat threadbare. Cast away bones and pieces of flesh lie beside it.

To the left of the corridor is a large, clumsily made table with a red painted wooden chair behind it. On the table are a ledger and a small chest. There is also a dagger, a large stained metallic plate with meat upon it and a wooden mug. The corridor then continues for another 20' before opening up again into what appears to be another room.

Yazuud is the bugbear leader in Boulderspeak mines – and he is a huge specimen. No bugbear would get to his status, almost on an equal footing with Razadh, if it were not both powerful and resourceful. He prides himself on his status and his yellow fur is well maintained – or at least to a bugbear's eyes. He has various scars caused by frequent battles and defences of his position, one especially large on the side of his face.

This is the chamber where he carries out the business of running the garrison of Boulderspeak Mines. The furs would have been worth something before Yazuud got his hands upon them, but now are so damaged as to be worth only 25 or so gold pieces in total – and they weigh quite a bit. The chest contains the pay and bonuses of his bugbear workforce – it contains 500sp. The ledger is an account of pay written in an almost undecipherable hand. The dagger is worthless but the metallic plate's stains cover an electrum relic from the time of Barazuhn. Yazuud is too ignorant to appreciate this. If cleaned, it will reveal a decorated surface depicting a country scene with deer and other wild animals. In terms of value, it is worth only 150gp on the market but to a collector or museum, four times as much – little

remains of the Golden Age of Barazuhn. This might be recognised by the party on an **intelligence: history** check (DC 16).

If not encountered in **Area 10**, Yazuud will be in the chamber at his desk filling in his ledger and counting out silver from his chest. After two rounds of combat, Razadh will emerge from his chamber to the south to investigate the noise. He will join in the fray immediately.

AREA 13: RAZADH'S CHAMBER

Clearly, this chamber is the dwelling of someone central to the activities at Boulderspeak Mines. Despite the fact that the walls have clearly been carved out of the solid rock, it has been richly furnished and decorated. There is a large four poster bed alongside the western wall which is adorned with what appear to be silks and velvets, and to the east is a large oak desk on which are ledgers and scrolls. A decorated ink pot holds a quill and there are three chairs, one behind and two in front of it.

Against the walls are bookshelves which contain various books and tomes – mostly mundane but some intricately embossed. A 10' blue and green rug softens the smoothed rock floor. A fluttering noise attracts your attention and you can see a silver cage, in which a raven, startled by your entrance flaps and attempts to escape. It soon settles down and watches you suspiciously.

Razadh, Acolyte of Ehalazuhn is Zaleria's man in Boulderspeak – sent here to speed up production. A task he is quite up to due to his ruthlessness and his experience in engineering and mining. Razadh is a warlock who long ago created a pact with **Ehalazuhn**. He wishes for the god's return but does not know how this is to be achieved. He has been assured, however, that it is possible when he communes with his patron at the fountain in **Area 15**, from where he receives guidance and instructions.

Razadh is a tall, thin man with angular pointed features. He has gone prematurely bald and what hair he has left is dyed green in honour of his master, Ehalazuhn. He wears a suit of studded leather armour which is dyed blue. He also wears a blue/green cloak

with an image of a whirlpool embroidered upon it. Razadh wields a spear emblazoned with marine motifs such as ugly, toothy, deep sea fish and giant squid. If engaged in combat, he will resort to his spear only if he has no choice but as an **Acolyte** of Ehalazuhn, he also has the ability to summon and disgorge foul water from his mouth which acts as a poison to any who imbibe it (see **Appendix A: The Cult of Ehalazuhn**). If Razadh has not been engaged in **Area 10** or **Area 12** he will be working in this room.



Razadh will not want to die at the hands of the party, especially if they have carved their way through his defences. As he nears death, he will offer to surrender. If this offer is accepted he will reveal the facts about the workings at Boulderspeak Mines and the existence of his superior to the east. He will know that the iron is being shipped to supply a coming war, and will also be able to reveal the presence of Zaleria, a High Priest of Ehalazuhn, at Skard. However, apart from his business dealings he knows little about her and cannot furnish any details apart from her intimidating presence. He does know that the ore once smelted and processed is destined for Skard (which he knows was until recently a dwarven stronghold), and then through and beyond the mountains - but he does not know where to after that.

He is a fanatical **Acolyte** of **Ehalazuhn** and will make frequent references to his return to the world of men.

Once he has revealed this information Razadh knows he is doomed – he will be destined to be assassinated at a later date by the supporters of Ehalazuhn. A more fitting end however, will be to have him killed by a group of vengeful slaves if any survive, whereupon he will be beaten to death with improvised weapons. If released after promises of good behaviour he will certainly be cornered and despatched by slaves seeking revenge. Whether or not Razadh dies, his defeat is sufficient for the party to gain his XP.

On his desk are several items which might interest the party. The first is an account of his experiences since arriving at Boulderspeak Mine a month ago. One account states:

'It is good fortune that I arrived when I did. It appears there has been mining of such incompetence that strains belief. Too many mine faces have been opened up which threaten the very integrity of the mine. I believe that the culprit be the slave Avery who has been given too much latitude by the previous warden. At the moment, this man is useful to me if kept in sight, but when the new foreman arrives then I shall have him executed as a warning to others. Incompetence shall not be tolerated and our mission here is too valuable to be put in danger from a rock fall. Our Lord, Ehalazuhn must have an army worthy of his majesty.

'Shipments must be maintained eastward to the smelters at Crystal Haven or Zaleria will have my hide. We need more workers to maintain production and the supply from the pirates on the coast is drying up. I will request a shipment of extra labour from Skard.'

A later account states:

'More problems – it now appears that the detonators which we use to open new mine faces have been tampered with. It seems that the chances of getting a 2 minute delay have decreased radically – now 18 seconds is all a worker can expect before detonation. We will either have to stop blasting or use expendable slaves to do it. More detonators have been sent for.'

In terms of treasure, Razadh has accumulated some items of value since he took over the running of

Boulderspeak Mine. In a small unlocked check under the desk is Razadh's loose change to pay for the working of the mine and bonuses – it contains 1000sp. The ink pot is crystal and silver and worth 150gp but is very delicate and must be protected from damage. A draw in the desk contains a further 100gp – this is intended to pay the pirates for their services in human trafficking.

Razadh was wary enough to keep most of his valuables out of sight. Most of the books in the library are fairly mundane but some are more important. One of the books is entitled '*A History of Barazuhn and its achievements*'. This book, if studied over a period of a few days, will reveal information about Barazud artifacts and art in addition to providing a quite basic account of the ancient empire. This will increase the likelihood of a correct valuation of a Barazud object. The book in itself is very rare and would easily be worth 500gp to a sage or museum. Texts detailing Barazuhn are hard to find – and most are incorrect. The information within the book will give little more information than is detailed in the **Background** earlier in the module, but the knowledge gained by reading it will boost the reader's chances of spotting a Barazud artwork by +5 on an **intelligence: history** check.

In addition to this book, one other has a false spine, and if withdrawn, will trigger a secret compartment within the bookshelf. Reaching in will reveal where Razadh keeps his real valuables. Inside is a **Potion of Resistance**, a **Potion of Greater Healing**, a spell scroll with the 3rd Level spell **Dispel Magic** and **Goggles of Night**. Also in a small velvet bag is Razadh's pride and joy, a beautifully cut yellow sapphire worth 1500gp. This secret compartment can only be discerned if searched for in the bookshelf specifically and will require a **wisdom: perception** check (DC 14) to locate.

AREA 14: ABANDONED TUNNELS

As you proceed down these tunnels you can see a sign affixed to the wall. The sign reads

'DANGER: This area is out of bounds to all staff unless engaged in refuse disposal. Do not proceed

beyond this point.'

Ahead of you, you can see that the passageway opens up into a 15' round chamber. This chamber then divides into four passageways heading eastwards, which disappear into the darkness.

If the party can make a **wisdom: perception** check (DC 12) then a faint scraping or scurrying noise can be detected as coming from the third passageway from the north.

This area is used for general waste disposal but mainly for the removal of the corpses of dead slaves. For this purpose, a **carrion crawler** has been chained against the eastern end of the passageway and is fed regularly – sometimes live prey to keep it happy. If the party ignore the monster and retire then nothing will happen. If however, they attempt to kill the creature then the noise and disturbance will attract the attention of an **umber hulk** resting within the rock nearby. This will burst out near the western entrance to the passageway to cut off retreat. It is quite a young specimen but its powers are fully developed. The passageway from which the monster emerges has collapsed and cannot be followed further than 15'. Neither creature has any treasure.

AREA 15: FOUNTAIN ROOM

This room is dominated by a large fountain but instead of fresh spring water gushing from the assembly, green, brackish watery slime oozes forth. A thick creamy coloured scum floats on the surface of the water at its base. The statue at the centre of the fountain is humanoid but only just – it is a blue/green old, bearded figure that appears to be constructed from oozing and putrid water. The statue, being made from blue glass has clearly been designed to show this translucent form off. A corroded metal plaque at the foot of the fountain's base reads:

'Ehalazuhn, Destroyer of Life, Elemental God of Drowning and Corrupter of the Flesh'

This is where Razadh communes with his patron, **Ehalazuhn**. There is nothing of value in this room but any attempt to deface or destroy this shrine will draw Ehalazuhn's eyes from across the void towards the party. From then on it will be difficult for the party to surprise a senior follower of Ehalazuhn. The destruction of any shrine or temple to Ehalazuhn will elicit a similar response. This does not however apply to minor emblems carried by supporters or general iconography, nor will minor or secondary followers receive any such warning.

AREA 16: SLAVE PEN

Staring down this south-easterly passageway you can see an opening from which emanates golden light. Standing in the doorway is one of the goblinoid guards facing into the room – its back to you. Beyond the loathsome creature you can see another and cages and wooden cells. Matted and sodden straw covers the floor.

There are **two bugbear** guards here. Once they are despatched and the characters can enter the room, they will find a total of 9 cells and cages – each around 5' square. Each cell contains three slaves. They are undernourished and weak and are awaiting a further living death at the mine face until they collapse. The cages are locked but the bugbear guards have a universal key.

The slaves are to a large extent afraid of their captors – but not all are. If encouraged, it is not impossible with a **charisma: persuasion** check (**DC 14**) to convince some of them to join the revolt in Boulderspeak Mine, but this should come from the party itself. There are **27 slaves** in total and **nine** are either strong enough or bold enough to join the party. Despite their enthusiasm to fight back, the slaves are in a weakened state and should not be allowed to die needlessly or in order to protect the party – a **good** aligned character could never countenance such action. An alternative will be to **free** the slaves but if this is done prematurely, they will face the same fate as those released from **Area 6**.

AREA 17: GUARD BARRACKS

Two long tables span most of the length of this room – each has a range of wooden chairs of various descriptions and styles – mostly rickety or cobbled together. Upon the tables are carcasses of deer and other animals. Most have been butchered and hacked to pieces with large iron cleavers.

At either end of the room are straw mattresses covered in matted and lank furs. Rats scurry across the floor.

This is the guard quarters where the bugbears come when not torturing slaves. There is room here for 12 guards although most are on duty throughout the mines. Occupying two of the mattresses are **two bugbears** – both asleep. The room contains little of any value as the bugbears do not trust each other enough to place any valuables here. Generally, the bugbears hide their limited wealth in secret places around the mines which they hope will not be discovered and plundered. One minute after their arrival at the guard quarters an off duty **bugbear** will come down the corridor to feed. If the party is occupied in the chamber, they may not hear it and may be surprised.

DESTROYING THE MINES

As the party should have discovered whilst exploring the Boulderspeak Mines, they are in a perilous and unstable state – largely due to the efforts of Avery in **Area 6**. They should also be aware of how they can assist Avery in his dream of thwarting the plans of Razadh. However, another complication has surfaced with the sending of **faulty detonators** from Skard with shortened fuses. This has increased the risk to potential saboteurs dramatically and Avery is too old, slow and weak to escape the falling masonry caused by even a single demolition of a column.

According to Avery the columns should be destroyed simultaneously. How the party coordinate this is up to them to decide. The destruction of a single column will not cause the devastation necessary to put the mine out of commission – all four must go. Avery will however inform the party that according to his calculations, the roof collapse caused

by his efforts should not go any further than the cross roads leading to **Areas 3** and **15**. Any saboteur who reached this area after detonation should be safe. He seems confident.



If the party is smaller than four then the necessity for simultaneous detonation can be dispensed with. Then the columns could be destroyed in the following order to ensure as little danger as possible to the party – **Area 11**, then **Area 9** then **Area 8** and finally **Area 5** – thus shortening the rush to the safe area of the cross roads and beyond as the mine collapses. This can be explained to the party if desired by Avery who after all set up the whole scenario – or it can be left to the party to work out. A warning may suffice that when the final explosion occurs then the mines will start to collapse and that an expeditious retreat may be advisable.

The following will explain the ramifications of explosions caused by the party in various locations throughout the mine if a **sequential** detonation is carried out rather than a **simultaneous** one. The slow deterioration of the mine's stability should be played for dramatic effect with the noise of falling masonry coupled with falling dust, rocks and rumbles from within the whole complex. Naturally, the slaves working in the various danger areas should be evacuated to safety first.

1. The destruction of the column in **Area 5** will lead to the collapse of that room and the passage to **Area 6** but no more. It will also cause damage to, but not the collapse of, **Areas 2, 3** and **4**
2. The destruction of the column in **Area 8** will lead to the collapse of that room and a slight collapse in **Area 6** but no more.

3. The destruction of the columns in **Areas 5** and **8** will lead to the collapse of those rooms and a quite serious collapse of **Area 6** but no more.
4. The destruction of the column in **Area 9** will lead to the collapse of that room and a slight collapse in **Area 10** but no more.
5. The destruction of the columns in **Areas 9** and **11** will lead to the collapse of those rooms and a quite serious collapse of **Area 10** but no more.
6. The cumulative demolition of the all the columns in **Areas 5, 8, 9** and **11** will not only lead to the total collapse of **Mine Faces A** and **B** but also the whole mine up to the cross roads to **Areas 3** and **15**, thus closing the mine forever.

The party will also have to be careful that any roof collapse does not block them into an area, so care should be encouraged. If by any chance this does happen, it will not be seen as suspicious by the occupants of the mine, but classed as a naturally occurring roof cave-in caused by clumsy demolition. Efforts will be made to open the chamber up again. This however will take some time and naturally focus the enemy's attention in the area where the party is.

The final escape to the safe zone should be played as a race against time using the rules for a **Chase** with the result not capture or escape but the reaching of the safe zone at the cross roads and beyond. The following rules will set the scene and are adapted to suit this scenario:

1. As soon as the final column is destroyed the whole mine begins to cave in. The collapsing roof travels at a speed of 60' a round from whichever point or points you think make most sense – the column rooms would be most likely and will give the saboteurs a chance to escape to the safe area.
2. Bear in mind that the faulty detonators only allow an 18 second head start before they blow. After this the chase will occur in 6 second rounds. It might make sense to place swifter characters in those areas with the furthest distance to go.

3. Members of the chase should use the **Dash** action and not waste time in defending themselves or attacking enemies. The **Dash** action can be used a total of three times. After that the runners must use their normal speed.
4. Attacks can only be made if they are possible once the **Dash** used as their **Action** has been carried out. They can however be the target of **Opportunity Attacks** by any enemy they **Dash** past as long as that enemy is not dashing to escape also.
5. **Complications** can occur to the escapees after the explosives have detonated. A random roll (**d20**) is made before their turn is taken.
6. If a character is caught by the collapsing roof they suffer **2d6** bludgeoning damage per round under the falling rocks. This continues until they emerge into the safe zone.

As soon as the party and all NPCs reach the crossroads they will not be affected by any further falling masonry. The collapse will however caused clouds of dust and smoke and this will billow through the remainder of the mine and outside. This coupled with the noise of the collapse will alert the occupants outside of the island to what has happened.

Complications are as below:

1. A large rock blocks the way – make a **dexterity** check (**DC 12**) to evade it and keep running or this turn is spent moving at half speed while it is negotiated.
2. A pit prop falls in front of you – make a **strength** check (**DC 12**) to push it out of the way or suffer a half speed penalty as you struggle past.
3. Old barrels and crates bar your path – make a **dexterity** check (**DC 10**) to leap over them and keep running or this turn is spent moving at half speed as you tripped over.
4. Water gushes onto the ground from a crack appearing in the wall making it slippery - **dexterity** check (**DC 10**) to skid through it or slip over and fall **prone**.

5. The torches in your area are extinguished by masonry dust and smoke – make an **intelligence** test (**DC 10**) to see the lights flickering ahead and press on blindly. A fail leads to a half speed penalty as you blunder through the darkness.
6. A dying bugbear, crushed by a fallen rock lies across your path - make a **dexterity** check (**DC 12**) to leap over it and keep running or fall **prone** as it grabs at your legs and tries to trip you over.
7. A crack has opened up in front of you - make a **strength** Check (**DC 12**) to jump it or suffer a half speed penalty as you fail to clear it in one go.
8. Dust falls from the roof into your eyes - make a **constitution** check (**DC 10**) to wipe it clear or stumble forward blinded at half speed.
9. A sudden drop catches you by surprise – make a **dexterity** check (**DC 14**) to keep your footing or fall **prone**.
10. A previously unseen slave asks for your help as he falls to the floor – make either a **strength or dexterity** check (**DC 10**) to pull him to his feet or suffer a half speed penalty as you struggle to assist the wounded man up.
- 11-20. No complication

THE FINAL ESCAPE

The pirates and workers on the island who hear the collapse of the mine will come to investigate. They will however not enter the mine as it is clearly a death trap. If there have been escaped slaves breaking out already, then there will be only **four pirates** and three non-combatant workers (classed as **Commoners**) waiting outside the mine as the rest will be chasing escaped slaves throughout the island.

If however there have been no escapes then there will be **eight pirates** and six workers investigating. However, they will not be expecting a break out and

believe it to be a terrible accident – therefore they can be surprised as the party emerges. It may also be possible to encourage a slave revolt with them so close to freedom. A third of all slaves will be in a condition to fight and will do so with improvised weapons such as clubs.

Once the landing stage is subdued and the pirates driven away or killed, all that remains is for the party to escape the Iron Islands to the mainland. This should be fairly easy as many of the slaves were mariners, and so will actively help the party across the sea in various small craft if the original pirate ship is not available for whatever reason. The passage will go unmolested and the party can land and refresh in safety at Strongrock before tackling the next part of their quest.

If the party defeat Razadh and destroy the Boulderspeak Mines they each receive **500XP** for foiling Ehalazuhn's followers and disrupting their plans to bring war to the land of Sarvania.

NEXT STEPS

Enough clues should have been picked up by the party to allow them to proceed eastward to end the threat posed by **Zaleria** in **Skard**. They should also be in a position to link the rise of **Ehalazuhn** to their final quest. However, if they have missed some vital evidence then a letter from the **pirate captain** can be found on his ship detailing the transport of iron towards a place known as **Crystal Haven** to the east. Alternatively, any surviving slave can mention an overheard conversation between Razadh and Yazuud which mentioned the supplying of an army to the east which threatens all of Sarvania and the shipment of ore to the smelters at **Crystal Haven**.

MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

BUGBEAR

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), chaotic evil

Armour Class 16 (hide armour, shield)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6, Survival +2

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the bugbear hits with it (included in the attack).

Surprise Attack. If the bugbear surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Morningstar. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit: 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage in melee or 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage at range.

PIRATE

Medium human (any race), Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 13 (Leather Armour)

Hit Points 36 (6d8+6)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Hand Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120ft. one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

PIRATE CAPTAIN

Medium human (any race), Chaotic Evil

Armour Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2
Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common Goblinoid
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with his scimitar and one with his dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

PIERCER

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armour Class 15 (natural armour)
Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)
Speed 5 ft., climb 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

Skills Stealth +5
Senses Blindsight 30ft., Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

False Appearance. While the piercer remains motionless on the ceiling, it is indistinguishable from a normal stalactite.

Spider Climb. The piercer can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Drop. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, one creature directly underneath the piercer. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage per 10 feet fallen, up to 21 (6d6).

Miss: The piercer takes half the normal falling damage for the distance fallen.

GRELL

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armour Class 12
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 10ft., fly 30ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6
Damage Immunities: lightning
Condition Immunities: blinded, prone
Senses blind sight 60ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14
Languages Grell
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Grell makes two attacks: one with its tentacles and one with its beak.

Tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The poisoned target is paralyzed, and it can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. The target is also grappled (escape DC 15). If the target is Medium or smaller, it is also restrained until this grapple ends. While grappling the target, the Grell has advantage on attack rolls against it and can't use this attack against other targets. When the Grell moves, any Medium or smaller target it is grappling moves with it.

Beak. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage.

YAZUUD

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), chaotic evil

Armour Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2, Stealth +6, Survival +3
Senses Darkvision 60ft, passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the bugbear hits with it (included in the attack).

Heart of Hruggek. The bugbear has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned, or put to sleep.

Surprise Attack. If the bugbear surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes extra 7 (2 d 6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bugbear makes two melee attacks.

Morningstar. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage in melee or 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage at range.

RAZADH

Medium human, Lawful evil

Armour Class 14 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 44 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis+4, Cha +5

Skills Intimidation +5, Religion+4, Pact of the Blade

Senses passive Perception 11

Proficiency bonus +3

Languages Common, Primordial

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. Razadh is a 6th-level Warlock and uses Charisma as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14; +6 to hit with spell attacks).

Razadh knows the following spells from the Warlock's spell list:

Cantrips (3 – at will): Blade Ward, Chill Touch, Eldritch Blast

Spell Slots (2)

3rd Level: Fireball, Fear

Invocations (3) Agonising Blast, Mire the Mind, Thirsting Blade

Otherworldly Patron: The Fiend

Dark One's Blessing, Dark One's Own Luck

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Razadh makes two melee attacks – one with his spear and one through the ability Ehalazuhn's Gift (see Appendix A: The Cult of Ehalazuhn).

Dagger: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 +2) piercing damage.

UMBER HULK

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armour Class 18 (natural armour)

Hit Points 70 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 30ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses Darkvision 120ft., tremorsense 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages UMBER HULK

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Confusing Gaze. When a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the umber hulk and is able to see the umber hulk's eyes, the umber hulk can magically force it to make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, unless the umber hulk is incapacitated.

On a failed saving throw, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during that turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action but uses all its movement to move in a random direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes one melee attack against a random creature, or it does nothing if no creature is within reach.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the umber hulk until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the umber hulk in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

Tunneler. The umber hulk can burrow through solid rock at half its burrowing speed and leaves a 5 foot-wide, 8-foot-high tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The umber hulk makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its mandibles.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Mandibles. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

CARRION CRAWLER

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armour Class 13 (natural armour)

Hit Points 51 (6d10 + 18)

Speed 30ft., climb 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3

Senses Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The carrion crawler has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Spider Climb. The carrion crawler can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The carrion crawler makes two attacks: one with its tentacles and one with its bite.

Tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1 d4 + 2) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until this poison ends, the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on itself on a success.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage.

SLAVE

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 10

Hit Points 5 (1d8)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.





BENEATH THE RAZOR'S EDGE

And Ehalazuhn looked over his domain and was pleased. From the deserts of the east to the Razor's Edge the dominion of the Destroyer of Life held sway. And many came to wish him well and prosperity for there was none other to worship and no being, man or God came to dispute his overlordship. To his brothers, the Avatars of the Dark he sent greetings and between them the world was divided. All this shall come to pass once again for man is weak and jealous and will welcome him amongst them.

Excerpt from the 'Book of Gods and Monsters'
compiled by Safar Rahman, scribe to the Emperor
Heroteus II.

INTRODUCTION

Beneath the Razor's Edge is the second part of the **A Storm about to Break** epic campaign. It follows on from the quests which began with **An Echo of Days Past**. This module takes the adventurers further on their quest to prevent the return of **Ehalazuhn** to the world he covets. **An Echo of Days Past** took the adventurers from first through to fifth level and introduced them to personalities and characters within the **Outer Reaches**. They have disrupted the efforts of Ehalazuhn's minions and acolytes in the Outer Reaches and now are destined to move eastward under the ominous presence of the **Razor's Edge** mountain range. Their journey east will include the Whispering Barrows where they will encounter the necromancer, **Volomoch** and thence to the Tower of the False King: the powerbase of **Ekasusuhr**, Lieutenant of Ehalazuhn. After his defeat and the acquisition of one of the **Jewels of Ehalazuhn** they will proceed north to **Crystal Haven** and then to the entrance to **Skard**, an underground city. On their quest they will encounter more of the believers of Ehalazuhn both current and ancient, as well as find themselves targets of an Imperial plot from

Kingsvale, the new capital city of **Sarvania**. Beneath the Razor's Edge will end with the party about to enter the underground city of Skard.

PART 5: TO THE RAZOR'S EDGE

ENCOUNTER 1: AN UNEXPECTED MESSAGE

The party will make landfall without any real difficulties. The ship liberated from the pirates will be of no further use and so can be given over to any surviving slaves that were freed from the mines. Several of them have nautical experience and so can use the vessel to head south to Sarvania and then to their homes.



The party is now resting and recuperating on the western shore of the Outer Reaches near Strongrock keep. In this first encounter, the aim of the party will be to travel to the hamlet of Riverwing where they will investigate a cult shrine of Ehalazuhn.

A chill wind blows across the sea from the west. You huddle by a fire made from ancient driftwood garnered from the nearby beach. Spray whips off the breakers and sparkles in the icy winter sunlight as you shiver and draw your cloaks tighter around you. Over the sea lie

the Iron Islands, the scene of your most recent victory against a threatening power gathering to wreak destruction upon the civilised lands to the south. It is how to combat this evil which has led to this conversation around the fire.

Whilst engaged in the debate a high pitched screech above you draws your attention skyward. A shadow passes over the sun and as your eyes adjust to the dazzling brightness you see a large, winged reptilian creature circling just out to sea. In the creature's claws is what appears to be a human form.

As the creature spies your party camped on the beach it drops the body from its grip, which then spirals to earth and falls into the surf nearby. It emits another terrifying screech as it dives towards you.

This creature is a **Wyvern**. It has recently attacked and destroyed a Sarvanian military unit south of where the party are now. This unit had been sent into the Outer Reaches to find and pass on instructions to the party on how to proceed with the quest. The Wyvern killed and consumed its victims and was headed north with food for its young when it spotted the party below. Aggressive and greedy, the creature could not resist the temptation to garner more food for the coming winter.

Once the creature has been killed the party's attention should be directed towards the body of Captain Bryzetus which rolls limp in the surf nearby. Bryzetus' body is dressed as a member of the Sarvanian Army. He wears a surcoat displaying the Sarvanian emblem of a white griffon on a blue and white field over his punctured and ripped chain mail. On Bryzetus' body there is a **scroll case** in which the party will find new orders. He also wears a gold ring inset with a single large pearl worth **250gp**.

The body of the soldier has been ripped from shoulder to waist by the claws of the creature that now lies at your feet – his once expensive chainmail has been punctured and rent by the beast. Clearly the man has not been dead long as rigor mortis has not yet set

in. He carries no weapon although an empty scabbard suggests that he died fighting. Around his body is a canvas strap, attached to which is a leather scroll or map case.

On opening the scroll case the party will find instructions from Intendant **Isabelle de Challon**, Sarvanian representative of the Emperor in the east of Sarvania. News has reached the capital of the party's exploits in the Outer Reaches, either through Bernier of Kingsvale or Sergeant Perrett. Although their reports are scarce in detail it is clear that the powers within Kingsvale have an interest in their actions.

Investigating the scroll case you find a letter fastened with a wax seal bearing the arms of Sarvania. It reads:

'Captain Bryzetus,

I have been instructed by His Imperial Majesty to order you and your command to head into the Outer Reaches forthwith. You are to locate a band of adventurers who, in the service of His Imperial Majesty, has been engaged in conflict with enemies of the Realm. Make them aware that their actions so far in bringing security to this great land have not gone unreported.

Inform the party that they are to proceed post haste to the hamlet of Riverwing marked on the map that accompanies this letter - there to report to Sergeant Goubert Budmond resident therein. Further direction in their efforts will await them there. The last contact with a representative of the Realm suggests that they are headed towards the Cloven Ground or beyond. Seek them thereabouts.

Do not tarry – your task is of great import to the Empire.

Isabelle de Challon, Governor of Eastern Sarvania'

ENCOUNTER 2: RIVERWING

Riverwing is a small lightly fortified hamlet constructed a few months before the Sarvanians decided to open up this area to colonisation. It was set up in tandem with another hamlet, **Crimson Bluff** in two strategic areas in the Outer Reaches. The aim was for these small communities to precede general colonisation to test the logistics of maintaining a presence in these hostile lands. When the forces of Kagan Brax headed south to occupy Nightforge, Riverwing was bypassed, contact, however, was lost with Crimson Bluff. The rise to power of Ehalazuhn's acolytes in this area meant that all supply and support from the Sarvanian Government ceased and the hamlet has survived by its occupant's resourcefulness and initiative.



Riverwing sits in a small valley carved out of the local limestone by the fast flowing waters that head south from the Razor's Edge mountain chain. It consists of several small occupancies protected by a wooden palisade. Its defences would not deter attack, but its location amongst the crags and folds of the

ground has allowed it to remain hidden from prying eyes. The occupants of Riverwing are not fully aware of the events at Crimson Bluff but lack of contact has led them to fear the worst. By following the map supplied with de Challon's letter, the players should reach Riverwing without incident as the area has quietened down considerably since the end of Kagan Brax.

When the party reach Riverwing read the following passage to them:

You have travelled steadily south east - to your left looms the Razor's Edge mountain chain. In the grey dawn it looks foreboding and unassailable – stark grey and sharp in relief, it forms a natural barrier to the lands beyond.

As you travel, the natural undulations of the plain prevents you from seeing too far ahead but after one such rise you see a river flowing north to south. As you near the river, it disappears into a craggy and rocky area. As you approach the natural defile, and looking down, you see hiding amongst the rocks, about fifty feet below you, your destination, Riverwing.

Riverwing is not much to look at – just six wooden, thatched buildings surrounded by a palisade. The buildings look unkempt and fairly run down. To the southern end of the small hamlet is an animal enclosure and a small cultivated garden. The fast flowing river bisects the compound and is crossed by sequence of large stones set into its bed. There appears to be only a single guard on the palisade. He stands on the southern side of the palisade on a platform overlooking a small gate.

Although the guard on the palisade will be suspicious of the party at first, the production of the letter found on Bryzetus' body will placate him. He will call his superior, **Goubert Budmond** who after some cursory questioning will allow the party access.

In exploring Riverwing, the party will soon discern that it is a fairly depressed place. Initially, the hamlet contained four families but one, consisting of Bediwen and Isabena Calin, tried to leave the area some weeks

ago. They took their belongings and headed south in order to reach Sarvania. Unfortunately they never made it. Their fate was played out at the cult shrine at Silverglass Falls to the north. Their bodies floated into Riverwing some days later having been thrown over the waterfall. Apart from the three remaining families, the other two buildings contain the small army garrison of three soldiers as well as a small church and the fourth doubles as a HQ and a supply centre and belongs to Goubert. The small garden and the mangy animas kept at Riverwing provide the basics for sustenance.

The party will be welcomed by Goubert, and on any link to Sarvania being mentioned he will ask if they are aware of any help being sent their way. If the party inform him of the improving situation in the Outer Reaches he will decide to stay put and await relief. Goubert has long since lost his nerve and turned to drink. Any suggestion of leaving Riverwing whether by the party or the residents will receive short shrift.

THE HAMLET OF RIVERWING

BUILDING 1 – THE HOME OF THE GWENDOVER FAMILY

Klanet and Evalen Gwendover were the first to apply to be members of the Riverwing group. Klanet had experienced a downturn in his leather working business and sought new opportunities. As his talents were of use to the expedition the family was readily accepted. They soon made friends with others in the party and have done their best to keep the hamlet in a positive frame of mind. They were special friends with the Calins and were devastated when their bodies were found by their young daughter, Herzelde. Unlike some of the other buildings; Evalen Gwendover makes an effort at maintaining her property to a high standard. Any visitor will be treated to a plate of hot soup even if it means her going without. Despite the mission having essentially failed – no hordes of new emigrants have arrived – Klanet and Evalen are favourable to sticking it out.

BUILDING 2 – THE HOME OF GOUBERT BUDMOND

Goubert Budmond is the Sarvanian Army representative in this bleak outpost. As a middle aged man he was chosen to head the mission because no-

one else volunteered. He personally liked the idea as he had been bypassed for promotion several times and he hoped that if he made Riverwing a success, he might turn around his career fortunes. Now however with the failure of the mission he has long ago fallen into depression and drinks heavily. He recently received a pigeon messenger from Kingsvale which in itself caused quite a stir – the hamlet had long fallen off the Imperial radar. The note attached to the pigeon made reference to the party and that they were on their way. It ordered Goubert to discern their plans and then send the pigeon back with this information.



Goubert does not really feel comfortable with the party in his small base. On one hand he fears that they might attract unwelcome attention, and on the other, and more importantly, he resents them for who they are – they only make his life seem more worthless than it already was. If the party divulge what they know to Goubert he will send the message off to Kingsvale as quickly as possible in order to expedite the party's departure.

A small hut at the rear of Goubert's house is given over to storage. These resources are kept under lock and key by Goubert.

BUILDING 3 – THE HOME OF THE CALIN FAMILY

This building used to belong to Bediwen and Isabena Calin. These unfortunates felt that they could not cope with the isolation of Riverwing anymore and decided to leave. Ignoring the pleas of the Gwendovers, they set out with a small hand cart heading south. Goubert, in a drunken stupor at the time did nothing to stop them leaving – an act which

led several in the compound to lose patience with him once and for all. They were only seen again as corpses which floated into the hamlet a few days later. Their house is now quite dusty and is essentially empty apart from some old wooden furniture. The party will be offered this building as a base whilst they are in Riverwing.

BUILDING 4 – THE HOME OF SISAL FAINT

Sisal Faint lives alone in Riverwing and works as the hamlet's hunter. He has previously seen service with the Sarvanian Army as a scout. He is a strong and quite loud character who generally has maintained a positive state of mind until the disaster concerning the Calins. This has led him to openly challenge Goubert's right to command this post. In Sisal's mind, the base should be evacuated and they should all leave together. This has not gone down well with Goubert who fears how he will be seen if he returns from such a disastrous experiment. Sisal is a strong character and most of the occupants of Riverwing tend not to argue with him – generally his comments seem to make sense. Even the soldiers, nominally under Goubert, tend to look to him for leadership.

BUILDING 5 – THE HOME OF THE HARQUIN FAMILY

Cornell and Helbora Harquin are farmers looking for a better life north. They joined the party in order to move away from civilisation and to make a new start for themselves closer to nature. Their intention was not to stay in Riverwing for too long but to leave when the post had been established. Now, however, they have been trapped by the recent onset of hostilities and the increased bandit presence. They tend the food supply and the animals. Since the deaths of the Calins, they have re-evaluated their plans in the Outer Reaches and now desire to return home. They have been heavily influenced by Sisal Faint and his arguments to abandon the post.

BUILDING 6 – THE TEMPLE AND BARRACKS

This building has a dual purpose. In one manifestation, it acts as a small shrine to **Aluna, Goddess of Nature, Fertility and Avatar of the Light**. This shrine is maintained by **Hastos Tathalan** and his wife Vaeril. Hastos has bedecked his small religious

site with a small statue to the goddess and various artefacts and imagery. He ministers to the needs of the small community in Riverwing, and hopes by his devotions to encourage the flourishing of this barren place. Hastos and his wife are not keen to leave as they feel it will negatively affect how their deity is seen, but they would go with the majority. Hastos recognised the methods of **cultists of Ehalazuhn**

when he saw the bodies of the Calins – that they had been ritually drowned. The fact that they floated south from the mountains suggested to him that there was a cult centre or shrine there. He did not tell the rest of the community this news. Although he fears this cult, he will not divulge this information to the party until the kidnap of Herzelde.



Unfortunately for him, the only way that he could get permission to set up his shrine was by sharing the building with the hamlet's garrison. The three soldiers which ostensibly protect Riverwing are quartered at the rear of the temple building and in a separate room. This room contains three beds and the soldiers' meagre possessions. They have no real faith in Hastos' ministering but as the temple tends to be warm, they are quite content. None of the guards have any faith in Goubert. They tend to look on him as a weak reed on which to depend. They have also lost their cutting

edge due to the circumstances at Riverwing and are generally lazy and fairly sullen.

THE RAID

Not long after the party arrives at Riverwing, a lone figure will be espied looking down into the crag overlooking the community. He will then turn his horse and gallop away. This is a rider from Crystal Haven who has been sent to find out why the supplies of iron ore have ceased from the Iron Islands.

Locating this previously unknown Sarvanian outpost will divert the rider from his mission, and he will head north to the **Silverglass Falls** to report his findings. That night an **Invisible Hunter** sent by Naesala will enter the encampment in search of a victim for sacrifice. It breaks into the compound and enters the home of the Gwendovers. It then kidnaps **Herzelde** and spirits her away northwards for sacrifice.

A clamour followed by a scream wakens you from your slumbers and you rush outside. As you do so, you see the body of one of the guards lying on the ground – it has been ripped apart. You see movement on the palisade wall, but before you can investigate another scream penetrates the night - this time from the home of the Gwendovers. Evalen Gwendover followed by her husband rushes out and calls for Herzelde. Her cries are in vain and no answer comes.

The invisible hunter itself will not be traceable by any pursuers – it moves too fast, is ethereal and has the night on its side. It will spirit Herzelde away to the Silverglass Falls shrine to Ehalazuhn, where she will be caged in preparation for sacrifice. The hunter, having carried out its mission will then disappear.

Back at Riverwing, a panicked search will reveal nothing except for the body of the guard. It will be surmised by Goubert that the guard interrupted the creature and was killed. Outside the compound, evidence of a dropped doll, identifiable as Herzelde's, will reveal the invisible hunter's destination north. When possible, Hastos will take the party aside and inform them of what he thinks might be the cause of this tragedy.

"My friends, I fear that I know what may have caused such a tragedy. In my studies, I have researched many of the cults of this world. I worry that these events confirm my suspicions of an evil cult of Ehalazuhn practising in this area. Ehalazuhn continually demands more victims – and his devotees use any means to obtain them. I fear that dear Herzelde may have

succumbed to their magic. It is quite common for a cult of this deity to form near running water – their rites include the ritual drowning of victims in supplication to their god. Less than ten miles north of here there is a lake fed by what are known as the Silverglass Falls. This waterfall spills its icy torrents directly from the Razor's Edge. It is my belief that you should seek the cult at this place. Do not tarry – the cult of Ehalazuhn does not keep its prisoners long."

The members of Riverwing are devastated by the loss of Herzelde and demand action be taken. Sisal Faint will pressure Goubert to act in the freeing of Herzelde. This, Goubert will reluctantly agree to do. Goubert's nerves are shot and he is not keen to face the cult of Ehalazuhn. If the party want him though, he will go – mainly due to the pressure from the community to do so. In any combat however, there is always the risk that he will break down and lose his nerve completely. Whenever he is personally engaged he must succeed on a **Wisdom** check (**DC 10**) or he will decide that his talents are better used elsewhere. This may take the form of him running from the combat or just rolling into a ball to protect himself. Either way, this will last for the duration of the combat. Any recriminations for such behaviour are at the party's discretion. Goubert's statistics are at the end of this section. In addition, Sisal's statistics are supplied if another member of the party is needed.

THE LAKE AND THE SHRINE

The party will reach the lake under the falls after following the river for seven miles north.

In the distance under a boiling grey sky you see a large lake which stretches for miles in a north easterly direction. The wind which has been building up during the course of the day swirls across the water. When you get to the shore it starts to rain and the wind causes it to lash into your faces and it whips up small waves across the lake's surface. In the centre of the lake is a large area of what looks like reeds and rushes. To the north, almost obscured by the rain, you can see

the sheer face of the Razor's Edge. Just visible in the distance you can see a thin ribbon of white which should be the Silverglass Falls.

The lake at the bottom of the Silverglass Falls is home to a colony of 10 **Giant Mosquitoes** which resides in the vegetation at the centre of the lake – 80' from the bank.



As the party passes alongside the lake they will take off and fly into the attack. If the party tries to investigate the vegetation, they will have to swim there. They will

find nothing of any value in the area. After the defeat of the insects, the party is free to ascend the Silverglass Falls.

As you approach the Silverglass Falls, the sound of rushing water gets louder and louder. The main stream of the waterfall is about 20' across and it rises to a height of around 100'. Solid rock rises from either side – too steep and slippery to climb. You look up in despair. How can you climb such a sheer face? Then you see that there is a shallow cave-like fissure behind the water. As you peer through the ice cold torrent you can see what appears to be a set of steps rising behind the falls. It looks as if it is possible to avoid the inundation falling from above and to ascend these stairs. The steps look slippery but by using them, it should be possible to climb to the top of the waterfall.

Reaching the top of the stairs is a slow process. They are old and are partially covered with moss and slime from the constant splashing of the waterfall. When climbing the steps, each party member must make a **Dexterity: Acrobatics** check (DC 10) or slip on

the slimy steps and fall for 1d6 bludgeoning damage. At the top of the falls, **Acolyte of Ehalazuhn, Naesala** performs her rituals in supplication to her evil master. When new sacrifices are required the cult sends out a party to find suitable targets. If a target looks strong or is well defended an invisible hunter is summoned.

As you climb you begin to hear the sound of chanting above the roar of the water. As you peer over the last few steps you can see a rocky platform bisected by rushing water. The water of the falls leaves a crevice in the far wall, speeds through a gully in the platform and spills over the edge. This crevice has been decorated with arcane symbols, most of which show swirls and eddies carved into the stone. To your left, in the corner of the platform, is a cage in which you can see a small figure confined.

A ritual is taking place. There are four blue clad cultists visible. Each wears a mask which shows the face of an old man with blue/green skin. As you watch, a cultist casts a spell on the water which turns it from a pale cloudy blue to a putrid green sludge. Two other cultists then drag an adult human figure out from the water. He is clearly dead and the amount of foul, corrupted water that leaves his mouth and nose suggests that he has been drowned. A fourth cultist, a female, dressed more regally than the others in flowing blue robes indicates towards the waterfall and the body is pushed back into the gushing stream, flows swiftly to the edge and falls over to the land below.

The woman shouts above the noise of the waterfall, "And so the Lord of Corruption accepts another soul. Pray that his return to the world is thus speeded up and will once again rule over us. Bring forth the second sacrifice."

At this, the cultist at the crevice walks over to a cage and unlocks the door. Through the opening you can now see Herzelde pressing herself into the corner.

Without help, Herzelde will also be sacrificed to Ehalazuhn through ritual drowning. If attacked, Naesala will retire into the cave to the east of the platform over which she has previously cast a **Glyph**

of **Warding** and summon an **invisible hunter** to aid her – this will take one action. The cultists will fight to the death to protect the shrine from despoliation by unbelievers. If Naesala makes it to the cave she will wait inside with her summoned creature and fight to

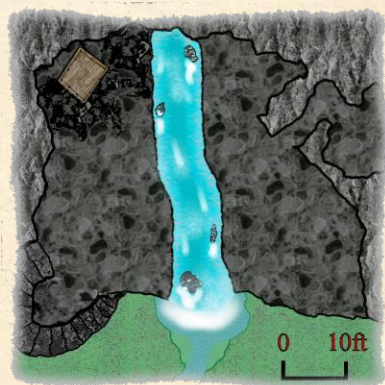


the death there, protecting the cult artefacts.

Once the cultists have been defeated, a search of the platform will reveal little, but the cave

contains a silver statue of Ehalazuhn in his old man form and is marked with his name. He appears as an ancient traveller bent over and walking with a stick – under his feet, water swirls and within its grasp are faces of lost souls. To a special collector this statue is worth much more (**2000gp**) than in metal alone (**500gp**). In a casket next to some furs used as a bed by Naesala is a **Potion of Greater Healing** and a **Spell Scroll** containing the Second Level Cleric Spells: **Detect Thoughts** and **Enthrall**.

Around Naesala's neck is a gold necklace which allows her to summon an invisible hunter once every 8 hours when performed in front of an icon of her god. This



creature is similar to an invisible stalker but does not have the same damage resistances and has less hitpoints. To a non-believer, this necklace will not work - however it is worth 400gp in metal alone and possibly more to a collector of religious iconography.

Upon the return to Riverwing and the reuniting of Herzelde with her family, each member of the party will receive **250XP** for destroying Ehalazuhn's shrine in the Outer Reaches.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE WHISPERING BARROWS

The remaining members of the community of Riverwing are chastened by the recent experiences with Ehalazuhn's cultists and the pressure to return south is impossible to resist. Any losses suffered at Silverglass Falls will be mourned and if possible, buried. Even Goubert will receive respect for his actions against the cult if he died facing them. They will pack up their most valuable possessions and escorted by the remaining soldiers head south. Before they leave, Sisal or Hastos will approach the party.

"Dear Friends, we are so grateful for your assistance against the cult of Ehalazuhn. We realise now that the time is not right for our little community here. We pray however that our sister community at Crimson Bluff has been spared these horrors. Could I ask you to investigate – we have heard not a thing for weeks and we have lacked the strength to investigate it ourselves. The village lies a day's journey to the south east. If all is well, please inform, Lawson, the Headsman there of our decision to abandon Riverwing and to return home. We pray he decides to do the same. I will pass on your actions in this great quest to the local garrison when we arrive at Foley's Way Station and ask them to send you any aid possible from Kingsvale."

On accepting this quest, the Riverwing community bid the party farewell and head south to safety, which they will reach without interdiction by Ehalazuhn's forces. On arrival at Foley's Way Station their message about the party will be sent by Empire Messenger to Kingsvale where, it will arouse the interest of Emperor Heroteus' **Chamberlain, Symounde Vuisgarde**. Vuisgarde it not quite what he seems and will react by attempting to remove the party.

CRIMSON BLUFF

Unless harassed by wandering monsters, the party will reach the vicinity of **Crimson Bluff** without incident. The site of this settlement is easily spotted –

the hamlet was named after its location – a range of small hills on which grows pinkish lichen which stands out in the sunlight. The weather is starting to turn now and there is a definite chill in the air with occasional wispy snowflakes blowing on the wind.

Night is falling as you near the small rise once occupied by the hamlet of Crimson Bluff. It soon becomes apparent that the hamlet has long been abandoned. The stockade has been breached in several places and the dwellings within have been burned to the ground. All the fires have long been extinguished but the smell of burned wood clings to the air. Ash blows on the wind as it howls through the remnants of the compound. Strangely, for a site of such destruction, there are no bodies – not one. Nor are there any traces of blood. It is as if one day the whole population just disappeared.

Scanning the area around the hills, a single spark of light attracts your attention. It isn't large and could very well be a mile or so away, but in the growing dusk, it stands out quite clearly.

The settlement was attacked some time ago by the minions of **Volomoch** in the Whispering Barrows, who is desperate to get more workers for his great project. All bodies were removed after the night assault wiped them out. There is no blood, as any spilt was soon consumed by Volomoch's creatures. Now, the community of Crimson Bluff works tirelessly and for all time within the Great Barrow.



The **Whispering Barrows** lie but two miles from Crimson Bluff and are a remnant of a great battle centuries ago in the time of the **Barazud** civilisation. The dead from this conflict were buried in what were called at the time, the Corobuhn Vaults.

There they stayed in eternal rest, or at least until stumbled upon by Volomoch, an exiled necromancer from Sarvania. Using his talents in the dark arts and an artefact stolen from the Nequoetron Tower in Kingsvale, he entered the Barrows and reanimated many of the more complete mummified corpses. He then began to build a new home for himself in the company of his silent slaves. Since then he has been using his creatures to join together the barrows into a single complex. Despite his immortal workers, Volomoch always desires more underlings and not a few solitary travellers have disappeared when traversing the area around this unpleasant place. The attack on Crimson Bluff was Volomoch's greatest venture yet and reflects his growing power. In fact, his power has grown to such an extent that he has been noticed by the spirit Ekasusuhr in the Tower of the False King as a potential tool in the west.

The light the party can discern belongs to Volomoch himself who is outside the Great Barrow inspecting the doorway – it is his lantern that the adventurers can see. It will disappear soon after being spotted when Volomoch retires back within the mound.

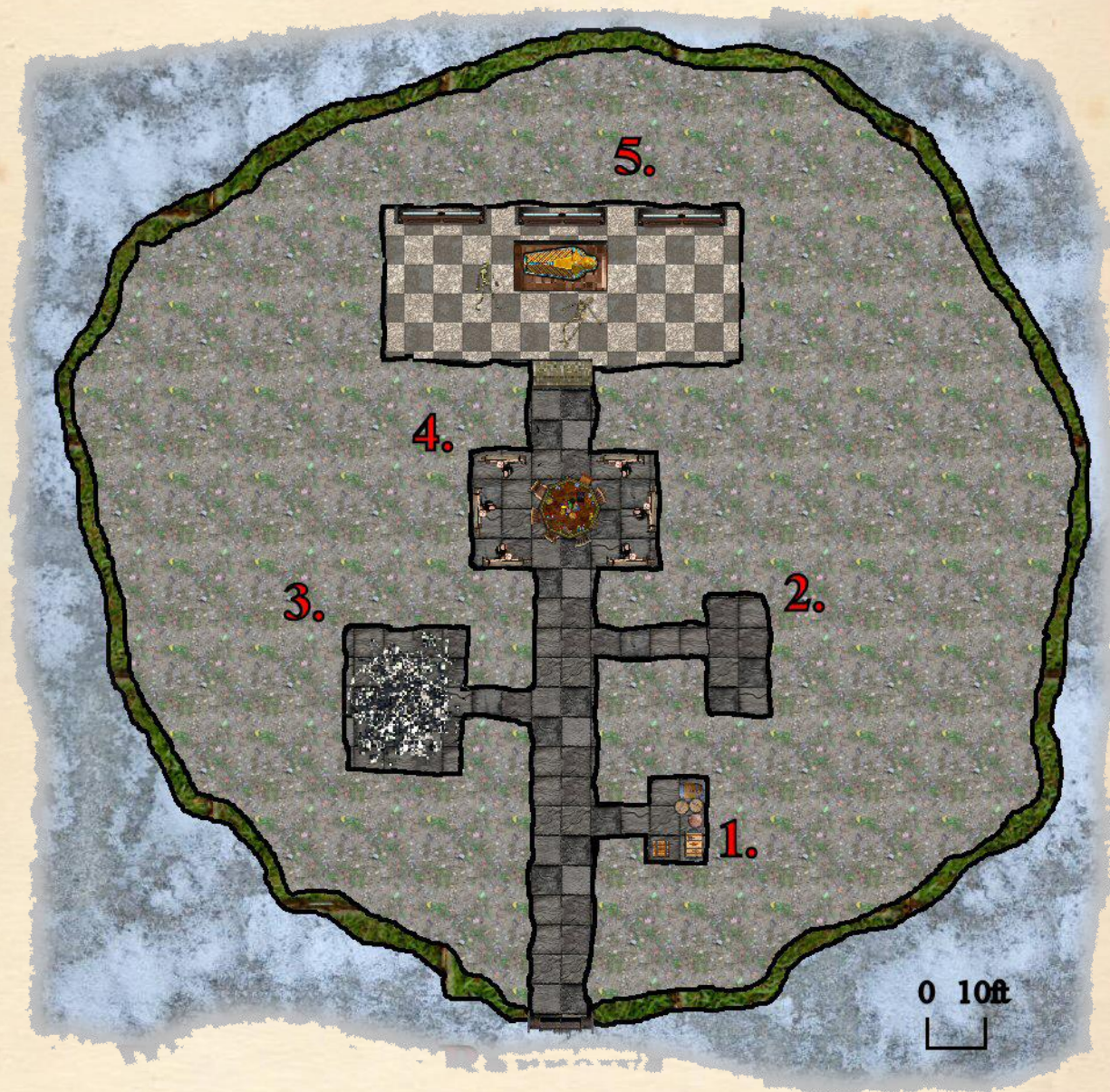
INTO THE BARROWS

After a little journey in the direction of the light a large shape looms out of the growing dark. It looks like a man made hill. Its surface is smooth and grassed but within the side of the mound you can see what appears to be a doorway fashioned out of stone. As you near you can see that it has been decorated with archaic text in a language unfamiliar to you. As your eyes adjust to the dark you see the silhouettes of other such hillocks lying around and about the larger one.

Any party member making a **Intelligence: History** check (**DC 15**) will recognise this writing as belonging to the ancient civilisation of Barazuhn – especially

(DC 10) if they have seen artefacts from this culture or have examined 'A History of Barazuhn and its achievements' found in Razadh's chamber in the Boulderspeak mines. A basic translation can be made if the association is established 'Here lies King Aglozuhr, mourned by his people but reigning supreme

with the gods.' The door is barred from the inside but the stone is ancient and cracked. Any party member will be able to wrench the portal ajar on a **Strength** check (DC 12). If more than one attempt is made, steps will be heard on the inside of the doorway and an **Undead Child** will appear to investigate.



Some of Volomoch's creatures are not soulless zombies – the artefact he wields allows the bestowal of some basic cerebral activity – enough to assist in certain tasks rather than just physical labour. Volomoch has used his powers to create several

servants in this vein – usually the young who, in his madness, he refers to as his children. Normally they traverse the complex doing menial errands which his less intelligent creatures cannot. Undead Children are **not aggressive** but are to all intents and purposes

dead. They have a peaceful visage unlike their zombie kin but their eyes are lifeless. They cannot speak. The opening of the door will attract the attention of one such and it will investigate. If the creature is not killed it will return to Volomoch and indicate a break-in to its master. He will send a group of less placid workers to discern the nature of the disturbance. If at any time, such as described above, Volomoch is alerted to the presence of the party he will send a detail to destroy them. This will consist of 4 **Zombies**. This applies not only to the Barrow but in the complex below also. If the alarm is not raised then the party can investigate Volomoch's lair at will.

NOTE: All zombies in Volomoch's domain benefit from his **Undead Thrall** ability which increases their damage capability (see Volomoch's statistics at the end of the section).

THE GREAT BARROW

AREA 1: ARTEFACTS ROOM

This room may have been a storage chamber or such in times past. However, there is not much to see now. Dust lies thickly on the floor. The walls previously painted red are now cracked and covered in old cobwebs. There are several crates and boxes but most of these have been smashed open and whatever contents they held have long been removed. There are small child sized footprints in the dust.

This was previously a storage chamber for grave goods accompanying Aglozuhr to the afterlife. Generally it contained items of little value such as his bed, furs and furniture. Volomoch ransacked this room looking for treasure but found none. The footprints belong to an Undead Child which has been posted in the area by Volomoch as an early warning device and to deter incursions into the barrow by vermin and animals.

AREA 2: TREASURE ROOM

This chamber was may have been important for the culture which raised the barrow. The walls were painted at one point. There are still significant multi-coloured

plaster deposits which show what would appear to be a king riding a chariot in front of his warriors. The king is shown on different walls either ruling from a great throne or smiting his foes. Apart from crumbled paint on the floor there is nothing in this room. The thick dust on the floor shows the signs of passing of a small barefoot humanoid.

This was indeed an important room at the time of Aglozuhr's burial. It was designed to hold the high status items belonging to the dead king. These included a gold plated chariot, boxes of gems and jewel encrusted weapons. These are long gone. After the fall of Barazuhn, this tomb was robbed and its contents dispersed. When Volomoch arrived therefore, there was nothing to be taken, a fact that annoyed him greatly. The treasures held by Aglozuhr remain still with him in **Area 5**.

AREA 3: WORKER'S CHAMBER

People have died in this room. The floor of the chamber is littered with the dried out skeletons of many – probably around thirty - people. The walls and floor of the room are undecorated. The bodies were seemingly piled one atop another. There is no indication why or how they died.

As was the culture of the time, any person involved in the raising of a king's barrow in the time of Barazuhn was ritually slain and left inside the tomb. These would serve the dead king in the afterlife. It was also hoped that this would also serve to reduce the numbers of people knowledgeable about the tomb and reduce the chance of robbery.

AREA 4: BODYGUARD CHAMBER

The ancient dead adorn this room. Around the walls of this chamber are alcoves – six in number. Each of these contains the skeletal remains of a human - each dressed in archaic armour now rusted and fragile. Some of these bodies have fallen to the floor and lie in a pile of bones; some are suspended from a wooden

pole and hang slumped from it. In the centre of the room are the remains of a large table and six chairs – collapsed and rotten. The walls were once painted but most of what was probably a fresco has crumbled to the floor. There are some surviving pieces which seem to have shown a long line of uniformed soldiers standing behind a king.

In this chamber reside the remains of the entombed bodyguard of Aglozuhr. In keeping with the rituals of the Barazud civilisation, when the king died his closest bodyguard were also ritually killed and placed in his tomb. From here they would ensure his safe passage to the afterlife. Despite already being dead, they were supplied with food and the table to nourish their spirits as they guarded their overlord for all eternity.

These six soldiers are imbued with a spirit which will reanimate their corpses if their king is disturbed. They will then return to their chamber and renew their watch. This fate befell a party of tomb robbers whose remains can be found in **Area 5**.

AREA 5: THE CHAMBER OF KING AGLOZUHR

This room is dominated by a huge sarcophagus in the centre. It is decorated richly and looks to be solid gold – pearls; both white and black have been set in its lid. Carved around the outside are reliefs of high status individuals which process towards a king sitting upon a throne. The king is later seen vanquishing an opposing army – he shoots a glowing bow which pierces his enemies as they flee from his chariot. Later figures carry the king's body towards a shining sun.

Around the walls are cracked frescoes painted in bright colours. The floor is dusty in parts but not in others. There is a suggestion of many footprints in the dust which has been kicked and swept aside. Towards the rear wall there are frames from floor to ceiling in which are depicted local scenery including the Razor's Edge mountains and large expanses of wasteland or desert. Over each scene is an image of a king – the

same one – looking down. On the floor, in front of the sarcophagus are two bodies – well on the way to decomposition. They are dressed in poor garments – their short swords lie in the dust beside them.

This is King Aglozuhr's burial chamber. It has long since been robbed. The sarcophagus is gold coloured but not solid – some gold leaf has been applied but not much. The gems are paste and worthless. Essentially, it is decorated stone. Unfortunately for the adventurers, Aglozuhr was not the great king he appears to be. In fact, as one of the last rulers of Barazuhn, he controlled a massively shrunken empire, long fallen into decadence and poverty, and beset on all sides by enemies. However traditions of the Empire meant that when he died he should be buried similarly to his predecessors. The sad truth is that his subjects could not afford the riches of previous funerals and therefore much was pretence or essentially done on the cheap. The Barazud civilisation disappeared into history soon after. What was of any value has long gone.

Any character checking the sarcophagus without touching it and that makes an **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 12) will soon realise that the coffin is basically worthless. The DC of the check will **reduce to 10** if the character is a dwarf or contact is made. However, as soon as the casing is touched it will revive the bodyguard in **Area 4**.

Despite the impending fall of Barazuhn, the magics of the Empire had not faded and traditional protection rites were observed. The bodyguard was set to defend their king and their reanimation linked to any tampering with the sarcophagus. The bodies on the floor are two unwary tomb robbers who were slain in the process of trying to open the coffin. If the party also try to prise it open, the bodyguard will return to fulfil their destiny. The rise of the bodyguard may be heard reverberating down the corridor behind them. The bodyguard are essentially skeletons but retain some of their power of times past. If they are killed by the party they will be freed from their duty and not reanimate.

The casket of the king has lain undisturbed due to the protective efforts of its guard. Even Volomoch has

left it untouched as, although he could pass by unseen by the bodyguard, he recognised its usefulness as an alarm or protective device for his domain below. Any interlopers will either be killed by the guards or assume that the barrow is haunted. They will therefore not proceed further.

Inside the sarcophagus lies the desiccated body of Aglozuhr. His good quality robes have long since disappeared leaving his mummified corpse dried and corrupted. What has survived however is his ancestral weapon, **Iasahr**, which lies upon his breast and has remained in good condition. This is an enchanted **shortbow+1** which Aglozuhr and his predecessors used from their chariot in times of war.

The entrance to Volomoch's tunnels lies behind one of the panels in the north wall. A successful **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 10) will reveal that the disturbed dust and footprints seem to come from this area. A successful **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 14) will show up a catch which releases a mechanism to swing the panel out revealing a staircase leading down. The panel can be destroyed quite easily if assaulted by bludgeoning weapons – this however will lead to the party's presence being known by Volomoch who will retreat into his chamber and send some of his creatures to destroy them.

VOLOMOCH'S DOMAIN

What lies underneath the Great Barrow is a combination of two areas. The first encountered will be the burial place of Aglozuhr's ministers who lie in state underneath the king's burial chamber. After this, the rest of the complex belongs to Volomoch which has been dug out by his undead creatures, thus forming what he likes to call his kingdom. As time has passed, the corridors holding the king's ministers have been extended and deepened. Volomoch has also connected the catacombs of the Great Barrow to the surrounding barrows by mining upwards and breaking through into the chambers above.

In his delusions, Volomoch sees the time when he can form an undead army which he will use to get his revenge on Sarvania. Although these are essentially pipe dreams, he has gained the attention of

Ekasusuhr in the Tower of the False King, who has tapped into Volomoch's insecurities and who has convinced him that he is already a great lord. Ekasusuhr communicates with Volomoch through a Sending spell, giving him instructions and guidance.

Volomoch has in his possession an evil artefact known as the **Orb of Unlife** which was locked within the vaults of the **Nequoetron Tower** in **Kingsvale** pending further study. When he found out that his somewhat antisocial activities were the subject of an investigation, he broke into the vaults and stole the item. The Orb of Unlife gives great powers in terms of the animation and control of the dead. It even allows the subject to be instilled with a small degree of self awareness and thought – a trait which has been utilised in his Undead Children which Volomoch uses as servants. The majority of the undead creatures underneath the Barrow however do not have this ability. Volomoch has used the Orb to build up a body of undead minions which do his bidding underneath the Great Barrow. Whilst possessing the Orb, undead creatures **will not attack** him and feel an uncontrollable urge to carry out his will. Without the Orb he would not have this protection and therefore he always carries it on his person.

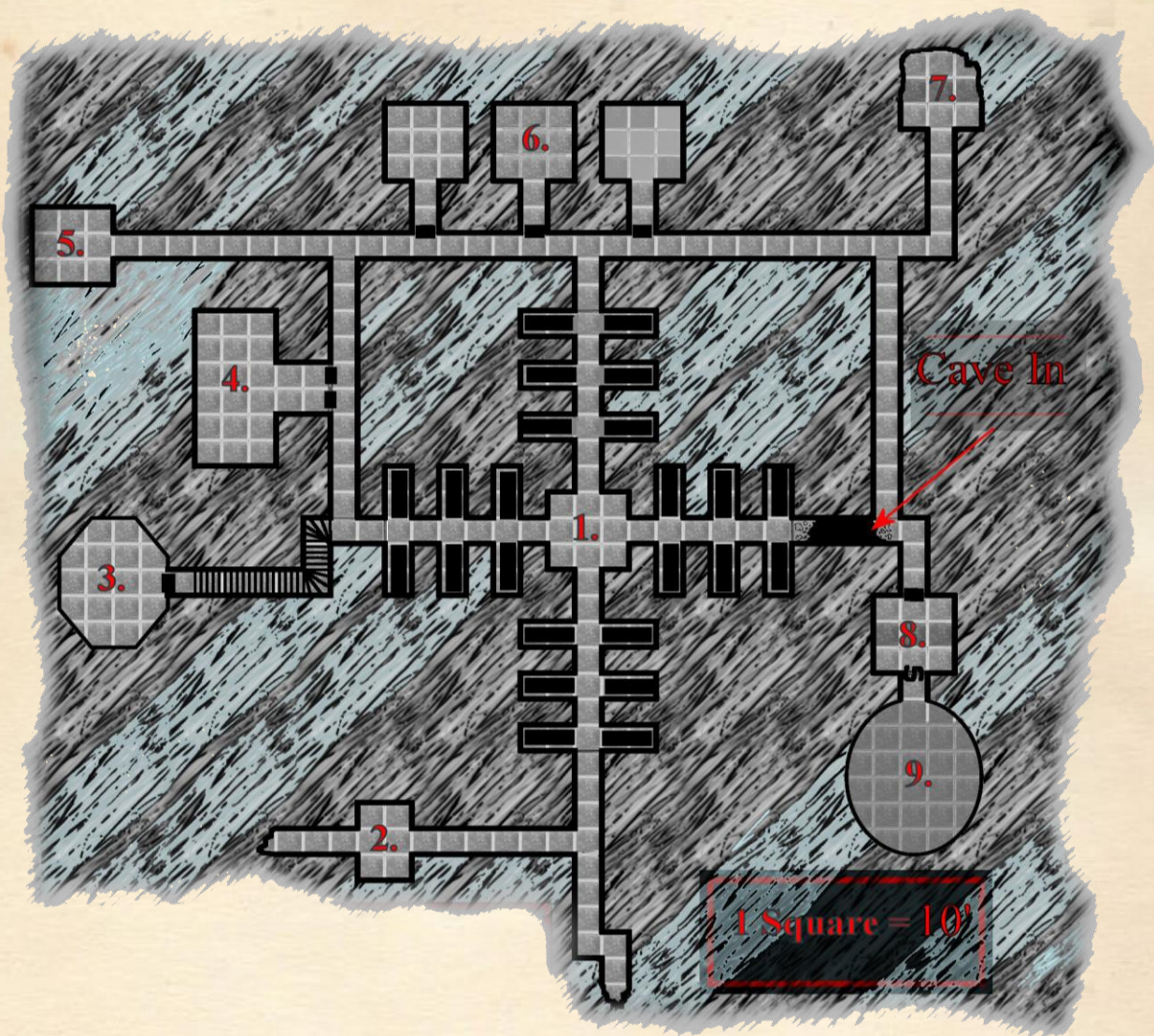
Anyone investigating Volomoch's domain has a chance of coming across an undead servant of one type or another. None are aggressive – they have a job to perform, as set by Volomoch, and they will endeavour to do this at the expense of any other. Zombies will generally be headed towards an excavation or back to the Birthing Room to be repaired. Depending on when the party come across them they will either be in 'pristine' condition or damaged and bloodied and in need of repair. Zombies will ignore the party even if attacked and can easily be followed to their destination. The only exceptions to this, in terms of wandering creatures, are several Undead Children in the lower complex. These will be confused by the party and head to Volomoch's quarters to report. If he is not there – for example he is hiding in his secret chambers, they will wait there until he appears. Thus it is entirely possible that if several Children have been encountered that they will all be standing motionless and silent in Volomoch's rooms awaiting his return.

AREA 1: THE MINISTERS' CRYPT

The stairs beneath the king's chamber head down and bend to the right. They terminate in a 30' square room. The floor is dusty but not especially so. It appears that the area is well trodden. Each of the walls has been painted in a variety of colours but much of this is cracked or peeling. The room has four exits, each

leading to a corridor 5' wide. On the south wall there is a plaque with archaic writing upon it.

If the plaque is translatable (**Intelligence: History** check (DC 15) or (DC 10) depending on prior experience) it states *'Here lie the King's great ministers, serving Aglozuhr in death as they did in life.'*



When the party travel down the passageways they will see six identical sarcophagi, three on either side. They are richly adorned and coloured but contain nothing of value. They are all empty – the occupants now work for Volomoch.

AREA 2: STORAGE CHAMBER

You enter a small 20x30' room with an exit on the opposite side. The room is full of equipment of various types. Most of it seems to relate to excavation and mining. There are picks, sacks, shovels and spades resting against the walls. The ground is dirty and has soil and gravel all over. The walls have been roughly hewn and are dusty and uneven.

This is a storage room for the gear needed by Volomoch's servants in the complex. Zombies use the tools to dig and extent his domain. It is currently empty although it is possible that a zombie might turn up to work, select a tool and head off west.

If the party themselves go west or south into the passages beyond the fork then they will come across two rock faces being worked by two zombies each. They hammer and chisel away at the rock and will ignore the party.

AREA 3: HARVESTERS OF THE LIVING

Before the party get anywhere near this chamber, they will have to descend some way down a flight of stairs. These have been well used by Volomoch's creatures and are swept clean by their passage. There are also traces of blood on the steps. These are the remains of the creatures' victims which have dropped from their claws. They will be noticed on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 12). When they reach the door, which is locked (**Dexterity: Stealth** check (DC 10)) they might, on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 12) be able to discern the sound of low growls and snarls from within.

As the door screeches open you initially see only darkness. What was first silence is broken by the sound of several vicious snarls and hisses from within. As your eyes become more accustomed to the gloom, you can make out the moving figures of dark humanoids - their eyes reflect off your torches as do their glistening teeth, dripping with saliva. A foul stench emanates from the room making you retch. The creatures howl and shriek and leap at you.



These are the creatures that do Volomoch's bidding outside the complex. They are **Ghouls** and are sent out to get new victims and drag them back to be turned into zombies. In reward for this they receive a corpse to gorge upon. In total there are six of the creatures. The ghouls may kill the party but they will not devour them – they have been instructed by Volomoch to take all captives to the Birthing Room for turning into zombies and they will not disobey his orders. Any party member killed but stabilized will regain 1 hit point after 1d4 hours. If cleared, the room is a foul, filthy place which stinks of death and decomposition but there is no treasure – the ghouls have no use for it.

AREA 4: THE BIRTHING ROOM

The double doors open to reveal a ghastly sight. All around the walls are stone slabs on which bodies lie. In addition to the bodies on the slabs, in the centre of the room standing motionless are five long dead people. They do not react to your entrance but gently sway from side to side. All the corpses are in different states of decomposition. Some look relatively recent but others

are barely held together by their corrupted tendons and muscles. The bodies wear different forms of garb from ancient dress to that which looks like Sarvanian clothing similar to that at Riverwing. There is no movement in the room, all is silent.

This is what Volomoch calls '**The Birthing Room**'. It is here that new victims are brought from outside the Great Barrow. Here they are reanimated and forced to work as servants to the necromancer. Volomoch also uses this room to repair any zombies which have been damaged whilst excavating the complex. At this time, Volomoch's attention is elsewhere and so nothing stirs. It is possible that while the party are investigating the room that a damaged zombie will return here and stand with the rest awaiting Volomoch's attention. Some of the occupants of Crimson Bluff are here. All the inhabitants of the hamlet were slaughtered by Volomoch's ghouls and taken here. Some are also currently engaged in the complex. In total there are 11 zombies in the room.



If **any** of the bodies are searched, it is possible on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 14) that they will find an expensive ring made of gold and amber which was missed when the bodies were examined – it is worth **200gp** and belongs to **Lawson** the Headsman of Crimson Bluff – on whose body it still remains.

AREA 5: TO THE BARROW OF THE SERPENT

This room is bare. The walls have been chipped out of solid rock and smoothed to an extent. Similar to the room that you entered when you descended into the complex; it is 30' square and has a staircase heading up.

This is one of Volomoch's excavated rooms that expands his domain. The staircase has been built by the zombies and takes the party to a barrow dedicated to a Barazud duke nicknamed 'The Serpent' for his cunning. The staircase ends in a trapdoor which gives access to the barrow.

You raise the trapdoor and peer inside. The room is unlit but you can make out the form of a sarcophagus in the centre of a large circular chamber. An exit heads eastward. Apart from this the room is empty. There is thick dust everywhere which appears to be undisturbed.

If the party enter the room and explore, they will find that it is indeed empty. The western exit leads down a short passage to a stone door which opens to the outside – a gentle breeze can be felt. The door is jammed shut and requires a **Strength** check (DC 16) to open.

This room has been left by Volomoch - mainly because of its dangerous inhabitant. Not that Volomoch really fears the **Ghost** inside the tomb as long as he has the Orb of Unlife but he still feels a little uncomfortable. He also is weighing up the options regarding the undead creature and is considering its uses in the great army.

If the party disturb the sarcophagus, they will also disturb the Ghost that lies within which will attack until slain. It is the spirit of the Serpent which has become blighted by its death – he was assassinated by

a competitor. It takes the form of a richly adorned noble wearing a multicoloured cloak. It will not pursue the party outside or under its resting place but maintains a vigil over its corporeal but decomposed body. The body of the duke still wears a necklace of state which is gold with a large topaz and is worth **700gp**. In a casket at the body's feet also lies one of the duke's most prized possessions, namely a **Robe of Useful Items** (DM should determine its contents as appropriate to the party and its skills) and some Dust of Dryness.

AREA 6: PRISON CELLS

A solid and locked wooden door bars entrance to this room. The door does however have a small latch flap though which you can peer.

These three 30' square rooms contain the prisoners taken by Volomoch who await their appointment in the Birthing Room. These 'unfortunates' were seized by Volomoch himself, who is thinking on how to turn their talents to his own ends. These include a **Sarvanian soldier** and an **Ogre** in separate rooms. The ogre is a genuinely savage creature but will recognise where its enemies really lie. It will be open to negotiation by the party if helped to escape. It will assist the players if fed but will frequently look at any dwarf, elf or halfling in the party as if figuring out whether it could get away with a swift mouthful. If alignment prevents working with the ogre it can be left behind or freed depending on choice.

The soldier is a totally different matter, is it in fact not a soldier at all but a **Doppelganger** working for Zaleria in Skard. It was captured recently by Volomoch but thought to wait to see what the Necromancer was up to before revealing itself. It does not know of the dealings between Volomoch and Ekasusuhr. It will be interested by the party and will endeavour to join up with them on a more permanent basis. It will betray the party whenever it seems opportune but not if it endangers its own life. It will show a willingness to fight for the party but will draw its blows, especially if fighting a creature of Ehalazuhn. Once it has all it needs, it will endeavour to return to its mistress in Skard to report. The doppelganger is not suicidal and will be very careful –

it is patient and will only strike when it can escape or indeed may never strike. It can be played in a way that makes the party suspicious or may end up being completely trusted – it is up to the DM. It will endeavour to leave at some point however, as it needs to return to Skard.

AREA 7: TO THE BARROW OF ARMAND THE SWIFT

A foul smell greets you when you enter this room. The walls are being worked by five animated corpses in various states of decomposition. They shamble around the room chipping and smashing at the sides – their hands smashed into bloody stumps which can barely hold onto their tools. It appears that this will be a room similar to the original chamber near the crossroads. It is approximately 30' square and apart from the rough walls there is a large staircase in the centre heading up. The four creatures in the room pay you no heed but continue at their task.

This chamber leads up to another of Aglozuhr's nobles, a chief named Armand the Swift due to his tactical prowess. It ends in a trapdoor. It is empty but contains the wealth stolen by Volomoch from these barrows and from murdered victims.

A room faintly lit by a sputtering torch is visible from the raised trapdoor. It contains a sarcophagus in the centre and blue painted walls. There is no furniture as such in the room but it does contain several boxes and chests. A doorway leads to a passageway heading east.

The sarcophagus contains the mummified body of Armand the Swift but nothing else. Inside the chests is Volomoch's hoard. It is mainly artefacts and treasure taken from the corpses in the barrows but also has some money stolen from Crimson Bluff. In total the boxes hold – 8 onyx gems worth **50gp each**, a carved ivory statuette worth **200gp**. In separate chests are **200cp**, **2,000sp**, **600gp** and **50pp**. It also contains a **Potion of Water Breathing** and a **Potion of Fire Breath**. The chests are guarded with a **glyph** which when opened casts an Alarm spell to Volomoch

alerting him to any tampering with the contents. These glyphs can be removed with a **Dispel Magic** spell.

The passageway leads east and similar to Area 5 will take the party outside if the external door is broken down.

AREA 8: VOLOMOCH'S QUARTERS

The door opens up into a richly adorned chamber unlike the surroundings that you have passed through thus far. It is clean and well kept. Multi coloured tapestries hang on the walls and a large bed is neatly made. A desk is pushed against the east side of the room and various bottles placed upon it. A large thick rug mostly covers the bare stone floor and a large candelabrum hangs from the ceiling. There is also a small shrine on the west wall with two unlit candles either side. This shrine is clearly dedicated to some dark entity and in a small bowl in front of it is what can only be dried blood.

On the south wall is a large painting, quite amateurishly done showing a small bearded man in scarlet robes in front of a huge army of the dead. In his left hand he holds a staff and in his right a glass globe which emanates a dull reddish glow. This glow spreads across his evil force behind him.

Despite its elegant surroundings, this room is pervaded with the sweet smell of decomposition which makes it an unpleasant place in which to remain.

These are Volomoch's private chambers. He will only be here if the party has not alerted him to its presence. The decorations might look plush but the reality is that they are of fairly poor quality - as a closer inspection will reveal. Volomoch himself carried out the painting on the wall. In this he sees himself as a great general ahead of his army. He is a functional painter and the work has no value. Indeed little here has a value and Volomoch's hoard lies in Area 7.

The noise of anyone entering his room will alert Volomoch within his chamber behind the secret door

in the south wall. This door is disguised by the painting. If the painting is removed, the door will become visible after a fairly cursory investigation such as with a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 10). A similar **Wisdom: Perception** check but at a DC of 14 will detect the sounds of shuffling from behind the door. The smell of decomposition emanates from this secret room. Any disturbance in his quarters will prompt Volomoch to raise his undead guardians in his altar room for his defence as well as summoning any remaining zombies to his aid.

AREA 9: VOLOMOCH'S ALTAR TO THE DEAD

A foul stench flows out through the open door. The smell makes you retch - it is the reek of death. In a brief moment you can see a large red painted room beyond the doorway before a foul creature, partially decomposed launches itself at you. Skin peels from the cadaver and fragments of rich cloth hang from its disgusting body. You can see several others behind it and behind them a small dark haired and bearded man holding a glass globe from which a red glow fills the room.

These are Volomoch's last line of defence and have been kept in this location just for this purpose. There are six zombies in all. They are what remain of the ministers from the sarcophagi in the centre of the complex. However, they are of unnatural strength being inspired by the power of the Orb of Unlife and have **maximum hit points**.



In addition to this Volomoch has also summoned the remaining servants from around the complex - this will total all the occupants not already destroyed by the party apart from the ghouls locked in their room and the ghost in Area 5. The zombies will move

as fast as they can to the aid of their master. Only those not already killed by the party will arrive to a total of twenty. They will start to arrive **five rounds** into the melee with Volomoch. All will try to destroy the party until Volomoch is killed when his power over them will cease. At this time they will lose all focus and return to a typical zombie state and wander the barrows unguided and attack any living thing they see.

Volomoch himself carries two potions of **Greater Healing**, a **Potion of Climbing** and a spell scroll containing the spells – **Enhance Ability**, **Gust of Wind** and **Invisibility**. He also carries a wicked looking blade; its hilt appears to be made from bone and is decorated with a skull. It is a **dagger+1** but feels cold and unpleasant to the touch – it does not warm up in the hand (included in melee stats).

Volomoch will use the Orb in the combat to maintain control. Should the Orb however be taken from him or knocked from his grasp then his control over these creatures will end and he will become just another life force to destroy. If this happens then the zombies will attempt to attack and kill him as well as the party – their attacks can be determined randomly. The party itself cannot use the Orb as it emanates evil but it does have a value. Any trader in the arcane will give the party **5,000gp** for it. The party might, however, want to think about why someone might want it or who might be interested in buying such a thing. The priests at the Nequoetron in Kingsvale will give the party **2000gp** for its return and it will be restored to their vault and protected.

Once the party has disposed of Volomoch they can examine the Altar to the Dead.

The room before you is foul to behold. It is circular in shape rising to a dome above you. The walls are painted red as is the floor. A large candelabrum is suspended from the ceiling – the black candles held within give off a dark noxious smoke. The floor is tiled and has what appears to be a gutter around the outside. Into this fresh blood trickles from a corpse upon a marble pedestal in the centre of the room. Around the outside of the chamber are piles of filth,

rotting flesh and pools of blood. What foul experiments took place here are hard to imagine but they are no more. The blood of your enemies now flows where innocents once did. This reign of terror has ended.

When Volomoch dies, **Ekasusuhr** will become aware of it. A phantom of dark swirling mist will rise up from the corpse in the centre of the room and address the party. Despite its ominous presence, the voice which comes from within is calm and measured.

'You have done well, friends, to remove the world of this evil being. He did not deserve life and took pleasure in taking it from others. I bring a message from my Lord – he wishes a bargain with you and has tasked me as his mouthpiece.

I humbly request that you join me in my abode in the great forest which lies but twenty miles south east from here. Fear not, I mean you no harm. My Lord, Ehalazuhn wishes to recognise your great efforts and asks you not to heed the lies spread about him by unbelievers. I have sent a sign to guide you - leave this evil place and meet with me.'

At the end of the message the apparition disappears. Unsurprisingly, Ekasusuhr has no intention of fulfilling any bargain. He wants the party within reach so he can destroy them, although if he can turn them, he will. When the party leave the Whispering Barrows, they will immediately see a shaft of blue light beaming horizontally to the south-east. It comes from within what appears to be a huge forest about two miles away. The forest stretches for miles to the north east and south west.

With the death of Volomoch, each member of the party will receive **250XP** for destroying this evil presence and ending his reign once and for all.

ENCOUNTER 4: A MESSAGE FROM THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

NOTE: this encounter does not have to take place at this time in the adventure sequence but at a time suitable for the GM. Nevertheless, it will serve as a break between the Whispering Barrows and the domain of Ekasusuhr.

The Emperor Heroteus' Chamberlain, Symounde Vuisgarde leads a double life. He has long been a trusted official at the Imperial court but this hides a more sinister side. In fact he is the **Great High Priest** of the Cult of Ehalazuhn (for information on this cult see **Appendix A**). There is only one Great High Priest and his identity is always a mystery. It should remain this way. It is probable that the party will encounter Vuisgarde at some point at the future but at the moment they will be unaware of both who he is and where he is. The Emperor and his court are not aware of Vuisgarde's divided loyalties at this time. Heroteus trusts him implicitly as a valued advisor and does not realise Vuisgarde's hidden agenda.

Suffice it to say that Vuisgarde does not have the adventurer's best interests at heart. He sees them as a threat to the rebirth of his master and therefore has prioritised their demise. Vuisgarde does not have any contact with Ekasusuhr in the Tower of the False King. They are aware of each other's existence but are competitors to win the favour of Ehalazuhn and despise and fear this competition. Nevertheless, they both desire the destruction of the party at this point. When he hears about the party's success at his cult shrine at the Silverglass Falls Vuisgarde will attempt to remove them.

You awake to find the ground covered in a thin blanket of crispy snow. The air has turned more chilled over the last few days and the grey clouds have threatened a flurry for some time. You huddle around your spent fire and attempt to relight it. The nights are drawing in and the days grow short – you need to get on your way. As you stretch and pack equipment you see a lone figure in the distance. He rides a horse and seems to be following your route. As he nears you shout a greeting.

At a short distance from you he dismounts and walks purposefully towards you. He wears a chain shirt under his black cloak and carries a mace and a brightly coloured shield bearing a roaring lion's head. He has a steely expression and wears tattoos and scars about his arms and face – he seems enormously powerful.

This man is **Casgar**, an assassin sent from Vuisgarde to follow the party's tracks since Riverwing. His charge is to dispatch them when they are encountered and return with proof of their demise. In Kingsvale he is known as a great pit fighter but has accepted this mission as it came with an offer of great wealth. Casgar does not know his patron but was enticed with a significant down payment which he still carries. He has no qualms about this task – he is a professional killer. If challenged by the party, he will respond that he has '*A message from Kingsvale*'.



Casgar wields a **mace+1** called 'brain smasher' (included in his attack statistics) and carries a +1 **shield**. In a pouch around his waist is his down payment from Symounde Vuisgarde which is a large sapphire in a blue velvet bag. It is worth **1250gp**. Embroidered in light blue into the bag is a small symbol of an **eagle's claw**. This is the mark of Vuisgarde which although will mean nothing to the party at this time may aid them later. It can be spotted on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 16) unless searched for when it will be seen on an **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 10)

MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

WYVERN

Large dragon, unaligned

Armour Class 13 (natural armour)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 20ft., fly 80ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wyvern makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger. While flying, it can use its claws in place of one other attack.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Stinger. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

GIANT MOSQUITO

Medium beast, unaligned

Armour Class: 12

Hit Points: 15 (3d8+3)

Speed: 10ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: -

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Blood Drain: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the mosquito attaches to the target. While attached, the mosquito doesn't

attack. Instead, at the start of each of the mosquito's turns, the target loses 6 (1d8 + 2) hit points due to blood loss.

The mosquito can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the mosquito.

NAESALA, ACOLYTE OF EHALAZUHN

Medium human, Lawful Evil

Armour Class: 16 (ring mail)

Hit Points: 48 (6d8 + 12)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws: Wisdom +6, Charisma +4

Skills: Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +3

Proficiency bonus: +3

Senses: passive Perception 13

Languages: Common

Challenge: 4 (1100 XP)

Dark Devotion: Naesala has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting: *Naesala is a 6th-level Ehalazuhn Acolyte Cleric and uses Wisdom as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks).*

Naesala knows the following spells from the cleric's spell list:

Cantrips: (4 at will): Guidance, Light, Mending, Spare the Dying

1st level: (4 slots): Guiding Bolt, Inflict Wounds

2nd level: (3 slots): Blindness/Deafness, Hold Person

3rd level: (3 slots): Bestow Curse, Dispel Magic, Glyph of Warding, Spirit Guardians, Remove Curse

ACTIONS

Multiattack: Naesala makes two melee attacks – one with her dagger and one through the ability Ehalazuhn's Gift: (see Appendix A: The Cult of Ehalazuhn in An Echo of Days Past).

Dagger: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

CULT FANATIC

Medium human, any non-Good Alignment

Armour Class: 13 (leather armour)

Hit Points: 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills: Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

Senses: passive Perception 11

Languages: Common

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion: The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting: The fanatic is a 4th-level spell caster. Its spell casting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips: (at will) : light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy

1st level: (4 slots): command, inflict wounds, shield of faith

2nd level: (3 slots): hold person, spiritual weapon.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The fanatic makes two melee attacks – one with their dagger and one through the ability Ehalazuhn's Gift: (see Appendix A: The Cult of Ehalazuhn in An Echo of Days Past).

Dagger: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature.
Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

INVISIBLE HUNTER

Medium Elemental, Neutral

Armour Class: 13

Hit Points: 60 (12d8 + 12)

Speed: 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	9 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills: Perception +6, Stealth +7

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 18

Languages: Auran, understands Common but doesn't speak it

Challenge: 4 (1100 XP)

Invisibility: The hunter is invisible.

Faultless Tracker: The hunter is given a quarry by its summoner. The hunter knows the direction and distance to its quarry as long as the two of them are on the same plane of existence. The hunter also knows the location of its summoner

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The hunter makes two slam attacks.

Slam: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 8 (1d10 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

GOUBERT BUDMOND

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armour Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 18 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Proficiency bonus: +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armour Class: 8

Hit Points: 22 (37 hit points in Area 9) (3d8 + 9) (+4 maximum hitpoints for Volomoch's Undead Thrall bonus)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: Wisdom +0

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages: understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude: If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Slam: Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage inc. +3 for Volomoch's Undead Thrall bonus.).

SISAL FAINT

Medium human champion, Lawful Good

Armour Class: 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points: 35 (4d10 + 12)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws: Strength +2, Constitution +3

Skills: Athletics +4, Intimidation +4, Perception +2

Proficiency bonus: +2

Senses: passive Perception 12

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1 (200XP)

Archery: When wielding a ranged weapon he gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls with that weapon

Second Wind: He has a limited well of stamina that he can draw on to protect himself from harm. On his turn, he can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + his fighter level.

Action Surge: He can push himself beyond his normal limits for a moment. On his turn, he can take one additional action on top of his regular action and a possible bonus action.

Improved Critical: He scores a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

ACTIONS

Shortsword: Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Longbow: Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft, one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

ZOMBIE CHILD

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armour Class: 8

Hit Points: 10 (1d8 + 2) (+4 maximum hitpoints for Volomoch's Undead Thrall bonus)

Speed: 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: Wisdom +0

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages: understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude: If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC

of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Slam: Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage inc. +3 for Volomoch's Undead Thrall bonus.).

AGLOZUHR'S BODYGUARD

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armour Class: 15 (Armour scraps)

Hit Points: 35 (5d8 + 15)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (0)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities: bludgeoning

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: exhaustion, poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages: understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge: 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Greatsword: Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d6+2) slashing damage.

GHOUL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armour Class: 12

Hit Points: 22 (5d8)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (-0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite: Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10

Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GHOST

Medium undead, any alignment

Armour Class: 11
Hit Points: 45 (10d8)
Speed: 0 ft., fly 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances: acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non magical weapons
Damage Immunities: cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities: charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11
Languages: any languages it knew in life
Challenge: 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight: The ghost can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement: The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn in side an object.

ACTIONS

Withering Touch: Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (4d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Etherealness: The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horriying Visage: Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 x 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this ghost's Horriying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a greater restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Possession: (Recharge 6). One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies.

The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a bonus action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the dispel evil and good spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

OGRE

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armour Class: 11 (hide armour)
Hit Points: 59 (7d10 + 21)
Speed: 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8
Languages: Common, Giant
Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Greatclub: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Javelin: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage

DOPPLEGANGER

Medium monstrosity, shapechanger, neutral

Armour Class: 14
Hit Points: 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills: Deception +6, Insight +3
Condition Immunities: charmed
Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11
Languages: Common
Challenge: 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger: The doppelganger can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Ambusher: The doppelganger has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Surprise Attack: If the doppelganger surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The doppelganger makes two melee attacks.

Slam: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Read Thoughts: The doppelganger magically reads the surface thoughts of one creature within 60 feet of it. The effect can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of wood or dirt, 2 feet of stone, 2 inches of metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. While the target is in range, the doppelganger can continue reading its thoughts, as long as the doppelganger's concentration isn't broken (as if concentrating on a spell). While reading the target's mind, the doppelganger has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks against the target.

VOLOMOCH

Medium human, Lawful Evil Necromancer

Armour Class: 12 (unarmoured)

Hit Points: 42 (7d6 + 14)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18(+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws: Intelligence +7, Wisdom +5

Skills: Insight +7, Investigation +7

Proficiency bonus: +3

Senses: passive Perception 15

Languages: Common

Challenge: 4 (1100 XP)

Grim Harvest: He has the ability to reap life energy from creatures he kills with his spells. Once per turn when he kills one or more creatures with a spell of 1st level or higher, he regains hit points equal to twice the spell's level, or three times its level if the spell belongs to the School of Necromancy. He doesn't gain this benefit for killing constructs or undead.

Undead Thralls: Whenever he creates an undead using a necromancy spell, it has additional benefits:

- The creature's hit point maximum is increased by an amount equal to his wizard level.
- The creature adds his proficiency bonus to its weapon damage rolls.

Spellcasting: He is a 7th level necromancer and uses Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following spells from the wizard's spell list:

Cantrips: (4 at will): Acid Splash, Dancing Lights, Mending, Poison Spray

1st level: (4 slots): Protection from Evil and Good, Fog Cloud, Ray of Sickness, Tasha's Hideous Laughter

2nd level: (3 slots): Flaming Sphere, Hold Person, Melf's Acid Arrow

3rd level: (3 slots): Animate Dead, Blink, Dispel Magic

4th level: (1 slot): Blight

ACTIONS

Dagger: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft.or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 +3) piercing damage.

CASGAR

Medium human, Chaotic Neutral

Armour Class: 18 (chain shirt, shield+1)

Hit Points: 135(15d8 + 45)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws: Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6

Skills: Athletics +10, Intimidation +5

Senses: passive Perception 11

Languages: Common

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Brave: Casgar has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Brute: A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Casgar hits with it (included in the attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack: Casgar makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Mace: Melee Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Shield Bash: Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

PART 6: THE TOWER OF THE FALSE KING



ENCOUNTER 5: THE BEAR AND THE BEAST

The coniferous forest the party enters after the invitation by Ekasusuhr is mainly coniferous in nature. The trees are huge and quite thick in some parts. However, travel through the undergrowth is relatively straight forward. The forest is not especially dark and the branches begin quite high up. The ground they cross is soft to the touch and consists mainly of old and brown pine needles. The forest, although huge, is not especially dense and the light can just about be seen through the canopy above them. It will not be hard to follow the beam of light emanating from the Tower of the False King. In the undulating terrain though, the journey to Ekasusuhr will take around two days.

You have been travelling for several hours through the forest. Although the winter winds rustle the tree tops above you, you are fairly sheltered at ground level. As you have headed further into the forest you have perceived a slight change in the environment. The trees seem darker, more brooding. The air is thicker, damper and has an unpleasant odour.

Suddenly, a bloodcurdling roar echoes through the forest. It is followed by another different, more bestial, howl. The ground drops away quite steeply before you

and at the bottom of a forest dell is a stinking area of swamp. All around is rotten vegetation, fallen tree trunks – the sound of flies fills the air.

In the middle of the marsh you see a contest between two creatures of the forest. A huge half man, half bear creature is engaged in a life and death struggle with a foul, three legged swamp creature with a huge bulbous body. It whips long spiked tendons as its huge mouth opens and snaps shut at its prey. With a great effort, the man-bear embeds its axe in the creature's side and it falls the ground. The badly wounded victor also collapses with exhaustion, unable to walk. Suddenly, a new danger looms when there is another roar and a second swamp beast rises out of its rotting den and shambles forward towards its weakened prey.

The bear is a **Werebear**, a good forest creature which has entered the lair of a pair of **Otyughs**. If the party help the werebear to defeat the otyughs, he will return to his muscular human form and will introduce himself as **Razael**. He will ask them to help him to his shack which is not far away.

Whilst at the werebear's home the party will discover that Razael had been searching for the otyughs for some time as they had been plaguing the forest. The party will find themselves welcome at Razael's home which consist of a medium sized wooden shack with several outbuildings in a forest clearing. He will ask where they are headed and if they tell him the truth he will relate the following:

The fire in Razael's home crackles and warms you thoroughly. Outside the winter winds have increased, and whistle past the window. Razael cooks and feeds you a bowl of wholesome soup and tells a tale of wars past,

"The time of the inundation was a time of war, hardship and death, but we saw little of it here. I and my ancestors chose to separate ourselves from the race of man – preferring instead to live free and wander this unspoiled place. However, it wasn't long before the wars came to us. A great evil, a servant of Ehalazuhr,

came to these parts – Ekasusuhr was his name. He threw up a tower from which he sent out forces to destroy the surrounding lands. The Tower of the False King it was called as his power was great. Years went by and as we observed the world outside, much was laid to waste. Then the wars ended – how I do not know but Ehalazuhn was thrown down and his servants cast out. Ekasusuhr was destroyed also and his tower breached.

Now however, he has returned, wraith form he takes, and seeks to return his master to the world once again. In his charge is a token of his master, a source of power – it is called the Jewel of Ehalazuhn. A blue sapphire of great size it is – it is this which lights up the sky these past days. If you seek Ekasusuhr, new weapons will be necessary. Normal arms do not effect Ehalazuhn's lieutenant – silvered they must be. I can assist you there. Silver means little to me."

Within Razael's dwelling he possesses a small forge that he uses to make repairs and has enough silver to coat **three** weapons. Only a **silvered** or **magical weapon** will harm Ekasusuhr. If more silvering is required then the party must sacrifice some of their wealth should they possess some – **500sp** worth of silver coin or bullion will be enough once melted to cover a weapon's blade sufficiently. When the party are ready to depart they will receive the well wishes of Razael and directions to the Tower of the False King barely one day away.

He will not come with them. His kind has always shrunk from contact with men and although he hopes they will succeed, he secretly doubts it. It is possible however that the party will see him again. They can use his home for recuperation if necessary when fighting Ekasusuhr.



ENCOUNTER 6: INVITED GUESTS

The Tower of the False King is shrouded in darkness. This is magical darkness which persists regardless of the time of day. The characters will

therefore notice that the day becomes darker the nearer they approach the tower. If they move further away, then the day becomes lighter again. This darkness protects Ekasusuhr and the **specters** he has created. There are five such specters inside the

confines of the tower. These have been ordered not to attack by their master and thus will be seen from the outside but will not act aggressively. The darkness also protects three Wights outside the tower which will escort the party towards Ekasusuhr. Once Ekasusuhr's attempt to turn the party has failed then he will retreat into his tower and order them to destroy the party.

You sense that your journey to meet up with your malevolent host is nearing its end. For several hours now you have followed the light – as you proceed further into the forest the stronger it becomes above you. You also notice a change in your environment – the trees have become denser and where before you could easily see daylight above you, it has now become more difficult. In addition to this, it appears as if night is drawing in. This does not strike you as correct. There should be several hours of daylight ahead of you and yet the further you proceed through the forest the darker it gets.

It makes no difference if the party rests and waits for the dawn. It does not materialise – it should become clear that this murk is unnatural. When they approach the tower, it will be full night and all will be dark. All that will be visible is the tower itself and the glow emanating from the three **Wights** which escort the group towards their meeting with Ekasusuhr.

As you negotiate through the tangled and twisted undergrowth you get the feeling that you are not alone. A flicker of light between the trees attracts your eye soon followed by others. You see pale figures approach. You detect three such creatures in all. They are roughly humanoid and are dressed in all manner of costume or armour, most of which seems of an ancient style and each carries a sword by its side. Their faces, of those long dead, bear a visage of hate and loathing but they direct no aggressive action towards you. When they are within 20' of you they stop, a pathway is left through their ranks. They do not move, but beckon you onward.

As your eyes peer through the dark you see the foreboding shape of a dark fortification ahead. Its battlements and towers seem ruined, but at the rear a large octagonal tower looms above the walls. From within this tower a faint blue light emanates through slender arrow slits. All is silent; there is no noise, no life. All that can be heard is the snapping of branches above you and the rustle of leaves. Your unholy escort waits and watches. At the apex of the tower, the light that has guided you thus far faintly glows and crackles – radiating from what appears to be a large blue stone.

Nothing will happen to the party if they make no progress towards the tower. When they do the wights will follow them. When they pass through the towers gates they will meet Ekasusuhr.

You pass into the grounds of the tower. The walls are cold and rough to the touch and you see the large tower ahead. A wide staircase leads up to a large iron bound door, and as you watch, a formless shape, black as night passes directly through it and hovers at the head of the stairs. A dark skull is vaguely discernible in the blackness - a black circlet upon it. A voice, cold and sharp as ice enters your head.

"Welcome to my home, travellers. You have journeyed far to be here. I bid you greetings. I make you an offer from my Lord Ehalazuhn. He wishes you to join him in his great venture to re-enter this world and bring it back under his domain. He offers you riches taken from the deepest vaults of the world. You can rule the world at his side and lead his armies to great deeds. Many were they who served him in ages past and many will come again. All it takes is for you to put down your weapons and to join him. Accompany me and see what you can become. Fear not – many have already come and now reap rewards of wealth and power. What say you? Wilt thou join with him?"

As you listen to his words you become aware that the undead creatures from the forest have followed you into the fortress. They stand motionless behind you.

Ekasusuhr is not receptive to bargaining – he does not fear the party. If they agree to follow him they will be ordered, as a show of faith, to kill a member of their party chosen at random, but probably a cleric. Thus, through murder, will their souls will be tied to the evil of the wraith for all time. If they delay or try to negotiate he will assume it is a trick. If they refuse outright he will attempt to destroy them. If negotiations fail he will order the Wights to attack and retreat back into the tower.

The wraith grows agitated, the black mists that swirl around his unnatural form expand and contract and then explode around the compound. His voice screams in your head, “Thus you choose your fate mortals. You will all die and join my side as servants for all time – an eternity if pain awaits you.”

With this his incorporeal form returns from whence it came through the door of the tower and is gone. The light from the roof and the arrow slits winks out and all is darkness. The creatures, which have so far remained motionless, now approach, evil and hate gleams from their eyes and an unholy wail leaves their foul mouths as they reach for your throats.

Once the wights have been defeated the party can explore the compound of the tower. There is little to be found. The walls and corner towers have crumbled and floors have fallen in. Now only stones and dust remain.

INTO THE TOWER

Unlike the surrounding compound, Ekasusuhr’s tower is in good condition, kept that way by the wraith’s unholy power. The stones are smooth and strong and interlock with no spaces between them. The only way in is through the door at the head of the stairs. If an attempt is made to see through the arrow slits they will see only darkness. Any light will reveal the contents of the rooms as per the description but Ekasusuhr cannot be seen – he is in darkness and awaits the party at the top of the tower. The door to the tower is ancient and the hinges have seized. It can be pried or bludgeoned open on a **Strength** check (DC 12).

AREA 1: ENTRANCE LOBBY

When the doors finally spring open a foul reek escapes from within the tower. It is the stench of centuries of decay. Your eyes see a room, dark, unlit by ancient torches in wall mounted sconces. Thick dust covers the stone paved floor and billows around your feet as you step over the threshold. No footprints can be seen in the dirt – no-one has been here for a very long time.

The chamber heads in a south westerly direction and is about 15’ wide. Four doors can be made out through the oppressive gloom ahead and to the left is an open passageway through which you can see a spiral staircase heading up. No sound can be heard.

The entrance lobby has seen no visitors since the time of Ehalazuhn’s first coming. There is no remaining decoration – all is dust and decay. All the doors are seized up – they have not been used for centuries. They will all require a Strength check (DC 10) to open.

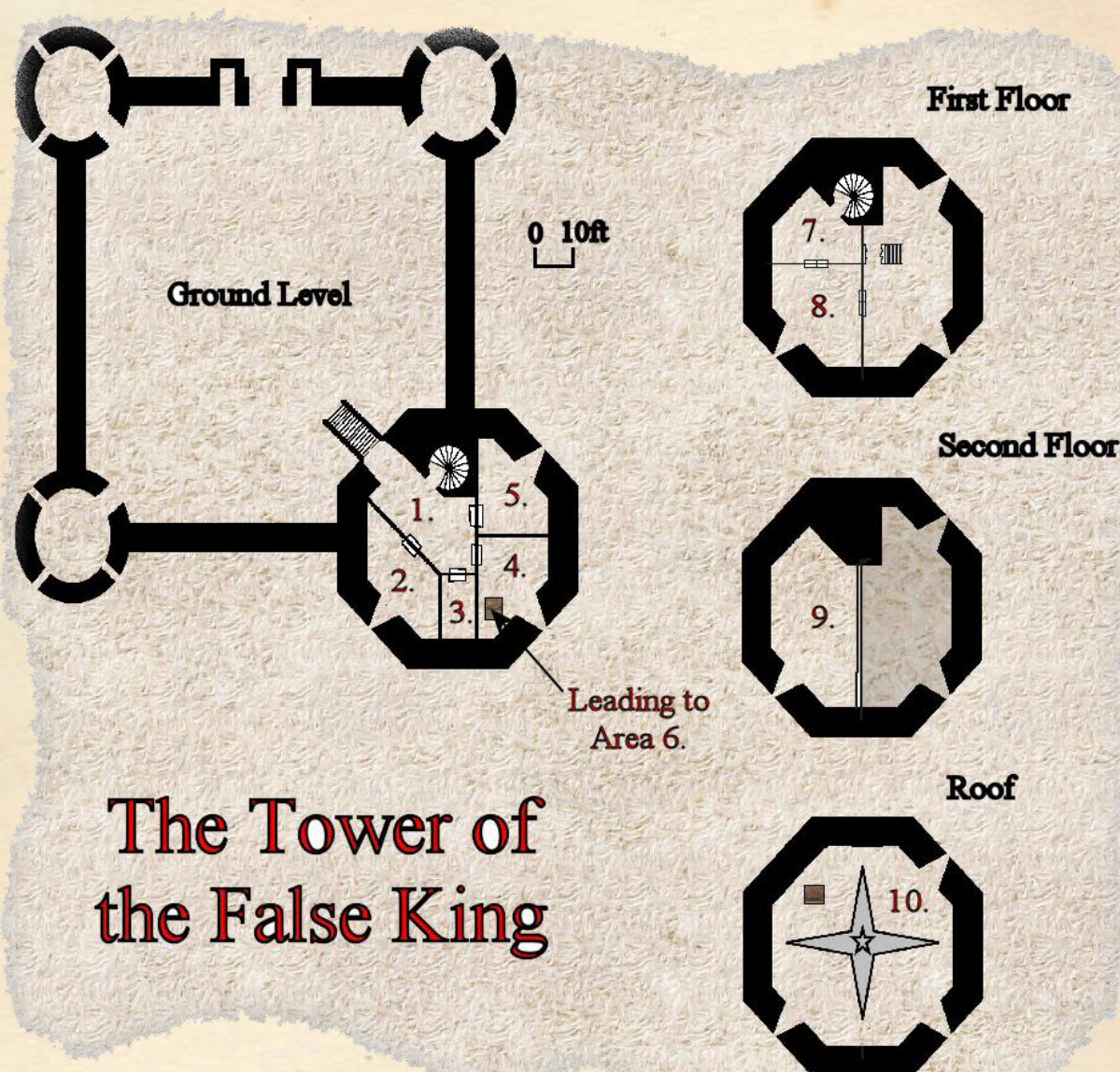
AREA 2: LIBRARY

The door swings open and is accompanied by a loud crash. A bookshelf, long corrupted by rot falls to the floor sending dust clouds high into the air. The books that were once lined upon the shelf dissolve into dusty fragments. This room must have been a library. The walls are covered with a rotten wooden layer, perhaps once richly decorated. Ahead of you is an arrow slit to the outside through which only blackness can be seen. There is also an old chair and a desk. Other bookshelves line the walls – their tomes dusty and crumbling. A large dust covered painting has fallen to the floor and lies at an angle against the wall, face outwards.

There is nothing of value in this room. All is corrupted and decayed. Any investigation of the desk, chair or bookshelf will see them crumble and collapse causing dust to rise chokingly upwards. A careful

examination of the painting will reveal a great warrior dressed in black plate mail armour astride a powerful

looking horse. Behind him is a castle in a forest with a great tower from which soldiers march as if to war.



The canvas will rip when brushed alerting the occupants of the room. The collapsed painting hides a crack in the internal wall within which is lair of 10 **Giant Wolf Spiders**. The lair lies between the wooden walls and the stonework. Any disturbance of the painting will agitate them. A scuttling noise will be heard through the walls around the party as they emerge to feast on their new meal. It is possible to poke into the hole but there is nothing there except for dust and mouldy books.

AREA 3: STORAGE CHAMBER

Barrels and boxes fill this room, some have collapse over the ages and some are still in one piece. There is a strong smell of rancid vinegar. The walls are undecorated and are bare stone.

There is nothing of any real interest here. The room was used for the storage of foodstuffs in times past. All its goods are now dust or rotten.

AREA 4: THE OUBLIETTE CHAMBER

Thick dust once again covers the floor of this chamber. Ancient weapons racks line the walls holding pole arms and swords. Several weapons now lie rusted on the floor where a rack has collapsed under the weight. There are several boxes against the walls. An arrow slit faces south east. The ceiling was once painted but most of the plaster has now collapsed onto the floor. The room is cold and the silence is unnerving.

Lying under the layers of dust is the **trapdoor** entrance to the oubliette dungeon of the tower. It has rotted through the years and is now in a dangerous state. Any party member not checking where they walk may cause it to collapse under them. This will lead them to fall in the room below. A successful **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 16) will give out enough of a warning to allow a quick sidestep as it caves in. If an adventurer falls into the dungeon below they will suffer **2d6** bludgeoning damage from the fall. If the party investigates the boxes they will find a quiver of **15** strangely uncorrupted barbed arrows. These are **magical +1** arrows – the quiver will fall apart when lifted.

AREA 5: THE KITCHEN

This room seems to have been designed for the preparation of food. There is a large brick oven against the east wall and a large preparation table in the centre of the room. Various items of crockery and tarnished silverware lie around the room. There are also some rotten cupboards. Various implements are also scattered around the floor.

This was the tower's kitchen. It is now of little interest. There is nothing of value here except to old silverware which collectively is worth 250gp. Ekasusuhr has no need for food.

AREA 6: THE OUBLIETTE

There is no light in this room. The rough un-faced walls crowd around you. The room is roughly circular.

All around the outside of the chamber in the shadows are sets of manacles and chains – mostly corroded. There is a feeling of damp in this room and it appears that the water table has begun to penetrate the walls and floor – a shallow layer of water covers the cobbled floor making it slippery and treacherous to walk on.

In the centre of the room and seemingly out of place. Is a large sarcophagus. It is made out of a dark stone and is deeply incised with carvings – these show images of water and contorted, mutated sea creatures. The heavy looking stone lid has the effigy of a metal clad warrior portrayed upon it. The coffin has clearly rested undisturbed here for some time as a thick layer of dust covers its length. It seems to spread an air of menace to this chamber.

This room is the dungeon of the tower. Prisoners were kept here, sometimes until they died or more often than not until they were tortured to death. Now however, it is the resting place for the corporeal remains of Ekasusuhr placed here for safe keeping by acolytes of Ehalazuhn. Evil rites were carried out including human sacrifice in order to preserve the spirit of their great leader. It is these rites which saw the rise of Ekasusuhr as a wraith some years ago. Any investigation will reveal the body of Ekasusuhr.

The ancient lid slides from your grasp, scraping your fingers as it does so. With a low thud it hits the floor sending a plume of dust into the air. As you look into the sarcophagus a horrid sight greets you. Inside the coffin is a dried and withered corpse. Once dressed in a fine raiment, these have now mainly fallen away to reveal the powerful skeleton beneath. Some attempt at mummification has been carried out leading to the skin on the face being preserved – it is now dry, taught and the lips have pulled back revealing the teeth. The eyes have long gone but wisps of ancient hair still cling to the head. Across the breast and covered in dust has been placed a longsword in scabbard. A book rests next to the corpse.

The sword is a **Longsword+1, +3 vs. Elementals** – when withdrawn from its scabbard the blade has a multicoloured sheen from red through to blue, representing the elemental forces it was designed to combat. It was acquired by Ekasusuhr in the Great War off an enemy prince of Barazuhn who hoped to use it against Ehalazuhn's minions. Ekasusuhr kept it as a trophy but also just in case his capricious new master turned against him. The scabbard has jewels embedded within it which will reveal themselves on an **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 10) if the sword is inspected. Placed all the way up the front of the scabbard are transparent green tourmalines. These are worth in total 750gp.



Despite the fact that Ekasusuhr no longer needs his body he is still attached to his remains. He returns to his corpse on occasion, trying to remember days long past when he had life and vigour as his Master's champion. Most of these memories however are long gone – only hate preserves him now. However, as his attachment to the corpse has never really left him, he derives some of his strength from it. Should this body be destroyed he will **diminish** in strength. The body is desiccated and would burn easily - the results of the destruction if this corpse will be discussed below. However – Ekasusuhr's remains are not unguarded.

You feel a swirling sensation around your feet. All the water at the bottom of the dungeon seems to have become animated and circles the room as if in a tide or whirlpool. As you watch, the water begins to manifest into some form of life, A foul, watery stench fills the air. Before your eyes it takes the form of a man similar to that in the tomb.

To guard their leader, enchantments drawn from Ehalazuhn's powers were placed on the sarcophagus. If it is disturbed a **Water Elemental** will be summoned to destroy those desecrating the tomb. Although it looks like Ekasusuhr it is in fact a standard enchantment and will attack like any other.

The book is an account of Ekasusuhr's deeds but has mainly rotted away. Some extracts can still be made out. As the party read the book, the pages crumble in their fingers.

Page 3

And so I gave myself to the Lord of Water, the great Ehalazuhn, and through this achieved many notable f....

Page 17

No-one can resist me. With the power ... hands I am invincible. My armies ... plains sweeping all before m...

Page 32

To think that he believed he could stand before me. His armies were dispersed and I took ... crown for my o...

Page 63

And so I secure this great charge – a magnificent sapphire which seems to glow within. I know not its purpose but I will ... within my tower... My Lord, Ehalazuhn has ...that ... controls ... gate to ... across the stars, what a wondrous gift - I am indeed the chosen one.

Page 84

And so, they come to me here in my own tower and assault it with fire and ... It is all over for me now unless through some means my Lord can ... He has prom... me eternal life – I will secure the gem from my enemies. I will come back – this is not the end...

The book relates an account of Ekasusuhr's deeds from him worshipping Ehalazuhn to his destruction and rebirth as a wraith. Central to this information is the Jewel of Ehalazuhn which currently lies in **Area 10**. The party needs to know that this artefact is important to the quest and may be able to piece together the information that it opens up an entrance to Ehalazuhn's dominion across the planes.

AREA 7: PUBLIC CHAMBER

This room would appear to have been of quite high status. The walls are wood panelled although much is rotten and peeling. Rusted metal rods attached to the walls shown where drapes would have hung – these now lie on the floor in a dusty rotten pile. Under a light covering of dust you can see marble flagstones. The arrow slit to the northeast emits a slight breeze which occasionally disturbs the dirt in the floor. Two large benches are pushed against the wall. On one of these lies a skeleton dressed in tattered fragments of cloth. There is another lying on the floor. There is an arrow head protruding from its chest.

This was a chamber where Ekasusuhr entertained guests and met deputations. When the tower was stormed at the end of the reign of Ehalazuhn, two envoys were seeking an audience with Ekasusuhr. They were both killed in the ensuing melee. Their bodies were stripped and contain nothing of value except one has a set of gold teeth. These can be found on an **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 10) of the body. In all they are worth **50gp**.

AREA 8: INNER AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Fine drapes once hung from the walls of this chamber – now they lie mouldering on the floor. There is also what must have been a plush rug on the floor but now it has decayed and has been partially consumed by vermin. A double door in the east wall is richly carved out of oak. Cobwebs lie across wooden benches against the walls and across a large carved chair.

This is where Ekasusuhr entertained visitors of high status. It was a plush room which was richly decorated but has decayed much like the other rooms in the tower. There is nothing of value in this chamber.

AREA 9: PRIVATE QUARTERS

Opening the double doors reveals a chamber with

two levels. At ground level there is a large filthy and dusty bed. It has clearly not been slept in for a very long time. The sheets and blankets lie beside it in dusty pile. In the centre of the room is what remains of a wooden staircase – it has long collapsed and only part of it remains. It led up to a gallery which lies directly above you. You cannot see into the gallery and there are wooden cobweb covered banisters which partially obscure the dark room beyond.

The first floor gallery is bare of furniture but is shrouded in darkness. **Ekasusuhr awaits the party there** and will try to kill them individually as they attempt to reach the next floor. If it is necessary, once he has been engaged he will fly down and attack them on the lower floor. He is accompanied at this location by **five Specters**. These are stationed on the roof above. When combat commences they will float down through the ceiling and attack the party on the wraith's command. If he senses that he might be losing the battle, Ekasusuhr will escape through the ceiling above. There is also a hatch there which leads to the roof – although the wraith does not need it. Here he will heal himself by **absorbing the rays** emanating from the Jewel of Ehalazuhn. If allowed to heal, he will do so and then rejoin the fray – his specters will hold off the party (see **Area 10** for information on the **healing properties** of the Jewel of Ehalazuhn on the roof).

If Ekasusuhr's corporeal body was destroyed in the oubliette then he will be weakened. He will **lose** all benefits from his **Constitution** bonuses. If he is healed by the Jewel of Ehalazuhn it will only be to this lower total. The only item of furniture on the upper gallery is an ancient wooden ladder heading to a trapdoor in the ceiling. This will collapse when tested. Through the trapdoor is the roof where a fully healed Ekasusuhr may be waiting unless slain earlier.

AREA 10: ROOF

Wind gusts and whistles as you open the trapdoor to the roof. Black clouds above you race past and snow lashes your face. The roof is flat and flag stoned with a

battlement around the outside. In the centre of the roof is an iron construction moulded to look like a star pointing to the heavens. The 12' assembly tapers from the roof to the top of the edifice. At its narrowest point, a huge sapphire has been placed and is held there by black iron claws. Although it is not lit in any way it seems to glow with a blue light from within – it looks as if there is life within the heart of the gem.

The Jewel of Ehalazuhn is central to his return to the Prime Material Plane. When **combined** with two others it unlocks his throne room on the **Elemental Plane of Water** and allows his access to the world. It is therefore very precious to him and thus was entrusted to his great lieutenant, Ekasusuhr. The gem has healing properties to any creature which worships the Corruptor of Flesh and will emanate a blue light which returns to the recipient **10 hitpoints** per turn. This is continuous whilst in the glow of the gem. If the gem is obscured, the healing stops. If Ekasusuhr has not died on the gallery below he will retreat here to regain his strength. The gem can be removed from the claws which hold it in place on a Strength check (**DC 14**). It should be made clear to the party that Ekasusuhr is deriving some benefit from his proximity to the gem – they will see a faint blue light emanating from the jewel and entering Ekasusuhr's body – the players can adapt to this knowledge as they see fit.

When Ekasusuhr dies, the black circlet he wore as a sign of his power and influence will fall to the ground with a thud. It is an ancient artwork predating the modern world and belonged to a king of Barazuhn slain by Ekasusuhr's own hand. It is in fact platinum. It is worth **3000gp** to a collector of Barazud artefacts or **1500gp** on the open market or as bullion. In addition, the black and fetid robes worn by the wraith will, if searched, reveal an emerald Elemental Gem. The manufactured darkness which surrounds the tower will also dissipate to reveal the forest and clear skies above.

The party should recognise the sapphire from the roof as a Jewel of Ehalazuhn from the book in the oubliette and therefore need to keep hold of it. Close inspection of the gem will reveal that it is indeed lit

from within by hundreds of tiny light blue sparkles that dance inside its facets. It seems to have no depth within and the lights seem to reach into infinity.

With the death of Ekasusuhr, each member of the party will receive **250XP** for destroying Ehalazuhn's lieutenant in the Outer Reaches and removing his like from the world.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

WEREBEAR

Medium humanoid (human, shape changer), neutral good

Armour Class: 10 in humanoid form, 11 (natural armour) in bear and hybrid form

Hit Points: 135 (18d8 + 54)

Speed: 30ft. (40ft., climb 30ft. in bear or hybrid form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	11(+0)	12(+1)	12(+1)

Skills: Perception +7

Damage Immunities: bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non magical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses: passive Perception 17

Languages: Common (can't speak in bear form)

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Shapechanger: The werebear can use its action to polymorph into a Large bear-humanoid hybrid or into a Large bear, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size and AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Keen Smell: The werebear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. In bear form, the werebear makes two claw attacks. In humanoid form, it makes two greataxe attacks. In hybrid form, it can attack like a bear or a humanoid.

Bite: (Bear or Hybrid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with were bear lycanthropy.

Claw: (Bear or Hybrid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Greataxe: (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

OTYUGH

Large aberration, neutral

Armour Class: 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points: 114 (12d10 + 48)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws: Con +7

Senses: darkvision 120ft, passive Perception 11

Languages: Otyugh

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Limited Telepathy: The otyugh can magically transmit simple messages and images to any creature within 120 feet of it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The otyugh makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its tentacles.

Bite: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. The target dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0. This reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until the disease is cured.

Tentacle: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 13) and restrained until the grapple ends. The otyugh has two tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

Tentacle Slam: The otyugh slams creatures grappled by it into each other or a solid surface. Each creature must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or take 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and be stunned until the end of the otyugh's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't stunned.

WIGHT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armour Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

GIANT WOLF SPIDER

Medium beast, unaligned

Armour Class 13

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	3 (- 4)	12 (+1)	4 (- 3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses blind sight 10ft. , darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13

Languages-

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Smaller than a giant spider, a giant wolf spider hunts prey across open ground or hides in a burrow or crevice, or in a hidden cavity beneath debris.

ELEMENTAL, WATER

Large elemental, neutral

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 114 (12d10 + 48)

Speed 30ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	5 (- 3)	10 (+0)	8 (- 1)

Damage Resistances acid; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan

Challenge 5 (1, 800 XP)

Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Freeze. If the elemental takes cold damage, it partially freezes; its speed is reduced by 20 feet until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Whelm (Recharge 4-6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If it is Large or smaller, it is also grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and unable to breathe unless it can breathe water. If the saving throw is successful, the target is pushed out of the elemental's space.

The elemental can grapple one Large creature or up to two Medium or smaller creatures at one time. At the start of each of

the elemental's turns, each target grappled by it takes 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. A creature within 5 feet of the elemental can pull a creature or object out of it by taking an action to make a DC 14 Strength and succeeding.

SPECTER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armour Class: 12

Hit Points: 22 (5d8)

Speed: 0 ft. , fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10(+0)	10(+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances: acid, cold , fire , lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities: necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities: charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses: darkvision 60 ft. , passive Perception 10

Languages: understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge: 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement: The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity: While in sunlight, the specter has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain: Melee Spell Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. one creature. Hit: 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

EKASUSUHR

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armour Class 13

Hit Points 81 (9d8 + 27) (Hit point maximum is reduced to 54 if Ekasusuhr's corporeal body in Area 6 is destroyed)

Speed 0 ft. , fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (- 2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non magical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the wraith has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. The wraith targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. The wraith can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.



PART 7: ENDING THE THREAT

A SIGN FROM ABOVE

The party will be directed towards Crystal Haven from the Tower of the False King by a messenger from Kingsvale. This messenger rides a **Hippogriff**. The elite of Kingsvale society can sometimes acquire these beasts for recreation. However, they are more commonly used by the military and government as mounts and couriers. This is one such courier and will alight on the tower roof after the battle with Ekasusuhr.

As the clouds which once enveloped this terrible place dissipate, a piercing screech can be heard above you. Straining your eyes you see circling down towards you a strange beast – part eagle, part horse – an odd creature indeed. It does not seem threatening but what is especially strange is that it carries a woman about its back.

This is **Florian Moonfeather**, Sarvanian courier on Imperial business. She is an elf in the employ of the Empire and has been sent to find the party. Initially, she could not locate them but was attracted by the light coming from the Jewel of Ehalazuhn. She briefly snatched a glimpse of the group but then lost the party again when they entered the tower and were absorbed by the darkness. She has since maintained a watching brief to see what occurs. She will alight on the tower roof and engage with the party. Florian has a rather dramatic and flowery turn of phrase which stems from her dealings with foreign diplomats through the years. Despite occasionally appearing a touch theatrical and dramatic, Florian Moonfeather is a brave warrior for the Empire and has many successful combats under her belt. Florian seeks adventure and is **willing to join** the party in their mission to Crystal Haven.



"I bid you greetings travellers – stay your hand and fear not, I am a friend to you. Allow me to introduce myself – Florian Moonfeather, courier to the Empire at your service. And am I glad to find you."

"I bring you a message from the great city, and directions. Firstly, my superiors bid me to relate that strange matters are afoot in Kingsvale. A conspiracy has been discovered which may place your lives in danger. Be on your guard."

"Secondly, I am instructed to pass on new guidance in your quest. It is likely that the enemy has occupied the old city of Crystal Haven some distance to the north. I myself have passed overhead and there appears to be much activity. My instructions request that you head north, and see what there is to be seen. You are requested also, if the opportunity presents itself, to destroy or disrupt the enemy's foul machinations in the area."

"I am due to return forthwith to Kingsvale but I stand in great admiration of your endeavours thus far. If we can serve in any way, Lemonbell and I are willing to do so. I will say that I got lost."

ENCOUNTER 7: CRYSTAL HAVEN

With the destruction of Ekasusuhr, the party needs to press forward to Ehalazuhn's new fortress – the ancient dwarf stronghold of **Skard**. Before doing so however there is the matter of ending the threat to Sarvania. This can be achieved by putting a stop to weapons production at Crystal Haven. Crystal Haven is an archaic settlement from the time of the Barazud Empire but much has now fallen into ruin. Nevertheless, the enemy has occupied this area and uses it to smelt the iron needed for weapons and the machines of war.



Crystal Haven lies on a plain at the south east rim of the Razor's Edge. It was initially a fortified outpost guarding western edge of the Barazud Empire. Through Crystal Haven, contact was made with the dwarves of Skard and soon a thriving trade was developed. It was destroyed during the wars against Ehalazuhn centuries ago. Its walls have long since crumbled and it is no longer defensible. Despite this, it will be a difficult task for the party to penetrate it and destroy the smelters sited within its perimeter. Although the outer curtain wall of the fortress has long fallen into disrepair, there are still towers standing. Ballistae have been placed on **two** of these, both point southwards. The task is even more difficult as not only are there army units situated within the walls but also the enemy has deployed an aerial force to bolster its defence. This takes the form of three **Giant Pteranodons** which have been trained as mounts. These now carry soldiers of Ehalazuhn upon their backs. When not patrolling the area they rest upon the three remaining towers of the inner fortress.

You enter a large snowy plain extending as far as the foothills of the Razor's Edge. Situated on this plain is a large derelict fortification. You can see movement within its outer perimeter and from within the crumbling walls of the inner compound, several trails of black smoke heads skyward. These trails originate from what appear to be large metal iron smelters worked by oversized humanoids. In addition to these constructions are tents and wooden buildings as well as siege weapons such as ballistae and catapults. A single rail track has been built through the north wall and this is worked by horses pulling wagons towards the mountains. You can see an escorted group of five trucks heading north as you watch. There are three towers still standing on the outer edges of the keep – on each of which is a reptilian bird like creature being used as flying mounts.

Nearer to you, on the ruined outer curtain wall of the fort are a further two towers. Soldiers have been placed in these towers and man ballistae. They are, as of yet, unaware of your presence.

The forces which lie within Crystal Haven are not expecting any disturbances in their war production and are thus fairly lax. The guards on the towers, which are fairly undisciplined, will notice them only on a **passive perception** check. If the party plan their assault carefully they may be able to disable the garrisons of both towers without disturbing the workers in the main keep - who generally face inwards.

Florian Moonfeather will obey any sensible suggestion for assaulting Crystal Haven but will be keen to avoid the death of her mount, **Lemonbell**. If an aerial assault is launched by the pteranodons then Florian Moonfeather will join in the defence.

PUTTING OUT THE FIRES

As stated, Crystal Haven is not really a defensible site. There are many breaches in the walls; the gatehouse is not functioning and lies ajar. The stronghold is guarded by a garrison of soldiers from the land of **Khanoumia** beyond the mountains. These are dark skinned warriors wear the robes of a desert



nomad. Under these robes however they wear a chain shirt. They also carry light wicker shields, spears and

Zaleria sent **Maraith**, one of her senior lieutenants to run the operation in Crystal Haven. He currently resides in the large tent to the north of the keep, guarded by two soldiers. He will join any defence of the keep if the alarm is raised. If a melee breaks out, Maraith will retire to his tent and drink a Potion of Stone Giant Strength which is kept in a chest at the foot of his bed. He will also take one of his Potions of Superior Healing into combat.

How to destroy the forces and smelters within Crystal Haven is up to the party itself. Efforts should be made to prevent alarms from being raised but the eagle eyed pteranodons will always be a threat. The ballista and mangonels in the south are not manned and can be used. Any well thought out plan should be rewarded with a chance of success. Within the limits of the fort is sufficient black powder to destroy the smelters. It is kept in the chests and containers near to the east wall. Any explosion

scimitars. The ballistae in the towers are crewed by three **Khanoumid warriors** allowing quite a rapid fire rate if necessary.

Within the walls of the keep are a further 15 Khanoumid warriors as well as three **Ogres** working the smelters. This force was stronger but has depleted with the need to provide a guard for the caravan heading north. It was also deemed sufficient to guard Crystal Haven by **Zaleria** in Skard - especially as until recently they had very much the upper hand in the Outer Reaches. There are various non-combatant slaves acting as forced labour. Each of the giant pteranodons carries an elite **Khanoumid Beast Rider**. The tactics used by the pteranodon riders is to engage in flybys which allow a pteranodon bite and a spear thrust from the soldier. Due to the dinosaur's speed, opportunity attacks are not possible.



involving a smelter will lead to molten iron being sprayed around to a distance of 20'. Any creature

within this range must make a **Dexterity** check (DC 12) or be hit for **2d10** fire damage.

Flying mounts can attack with their natural weapons whilst their riders can attack with melee or missile weapons. Any rider of a flying mount killed in melee will fall 40' and suffer **4d6** bludgeoning damage and will be stunned for one round.

Maraith's tent holds the camp treasury and correspondence with Zaleria Drakmor. There is a large locked chest which can be opened on a (**Dexterity: Stealth** check (DC 14). It contains **10,000sp** and **500gp**. It also includes two potions of **Stone Giant Strength** and two of **Superior Healing** unless some have been consumed by Maraith during any melee. It also contains a journal.

You see a leather-bound ledger open on a large oak desk. It tracks the supply of smelted iron to Skard in the Razor's Edge and has someone called Maraith's signature to each shipment. The most recent entry is dated with today's date. Next to the this entry is a note written by Maraith which states:

"Last shipment possible due to disruption of supply."

Also on the desk is a sealed letter which is also written in Maraith's hand. When opened it reveals that he was very concerned about the ore supply situation.

My dear Zaleria,

I am fully aware of the importance of our mission here. You do not need to remind me of the essential nature of our purpose, nor threaten me. I am finding it very hard to complete my instructions when there is no iron ore to work. All supplies from the west have stopped. The most recent shipment which has left today is the largest and most important we have sent in weeks. It contains all the iron we have been able to smelt in recent days. I have given it a large escort – to the detriment of my forces here

- to ensure that it reaches you. Our cause will be harmed if it fails to arrive through the Vazuhir Pass.

I am also hearing that an item of great worth to our master has fallen into the hands of our enemies – can this be true? Could the dark one have been overcome? I know that you also have in your possession another such item. I trust that it will be safer in Skard than the other one was.

Maraith

Ps Rumours abound of renewed Sarvanian activities in the area – I trust these are untrue. If they are not, then it is also imperative that you strengthen my forces here. And get the supply rolling again!

The letter found in Maraith's quarters should act as enough of a stimulus to the party to further their expedition into the Razor's Edge mountains and stop this last supply of iron getting to Skard. The fact that the evil forces behind Ehalazuhn's return are also concerned by the loss of Ekasusuhr's jewel and that at least one other is to be found in Skard should further spur them forward. If rest is need after the destruction of Crystal Haven then the caravan north can always be **delayed** by an avalanche which has to be dug through. This can either be heard by the party or seen by Florian on Lemonbell. The party should be steered towards the interdiction of this last convoy and get moving into the pass.

With the destruction of the forges at Crystal Haven, each member of the party will receive **300XP** for ending the threat of warfare in the Outer Reaches once and for all.

ENCOUNTER 8: INTO THE RAZOR'S EDGE

The mission now for the players is to journey up the **Vazuhr Pass**, to defeat any enemy forces ranged there and to enter the underground city of Skard.

Looking north to the Razor's Edge you feel a sense of foreboding. None have passed this way in recent years and few would do so now. The track from Crystal Haven winds north into the foothills and beyond. Above lie the jagged peaks of this impenetrable barrier. You must press forward – the safety of the world depends upon it. North, into the Vazuhr Pass and to the city of Skard.

CUTTING THE SUPPLY

The first task that the players must face is to end the enemy's supply of iron once and for all. The last convoy from Crystal Haven left some time ago and has proceeded quite a way ahead. Nevertheless, due to the slow moving nature of the transport and possible avalanches and rock falls, the party should have little trouble catching it up. The convoy has an escort of Khanoumid warriors which form an advance and rear guard. The players could find a way to avoid both of these and to take out the wagons in between. This can be achieved by taking a route through the mountains alongside the pass and ambushing the sluggish target below.

You achieve a good pace following the rails through the early stages of the mountains but the weather is beginning to be a concern. The air is chill, and even the lesser peaks above you are covered in snow. The winter really hits you as you ascend the pass – snow falls thick and fast and freezing winds rush through the valley towards you, bringing with them sharp ice crystals that sting your eyes. About two miles into the mountains the ground begins to fall away and this coincides with a clearing of the air.

Roughly a mile ahead and below you see a slow moving caravan of five carts on rails heading into the

snowy pass. The animals struggle as they try to pass through drifts which cover the tracks. Drivers whip the horses as they pull their heavy load through the pass, while soldiers try to dig a clear path ahead.

A quarter of a mile ahead of this caravan is an advance guard. Several riders forge a path through the drifts, and similarly, behind come more riders, guarding the rear of the convoy. It will be hard to break through this cordon in time to stop the caravan from reaching its destination.

Any observant (**Wisdom: Perception** check at **DC 14**) adventurer will see an alternative at this point. To the left of the pass and partly covered in loose rocks and snow is a narrow pathway heading alongside the valley. It heads up and then parallel to the valley floor. This pathway will take them ahead of the rearguard and allow them to assault the convoy from above. If this pathway is not found, the party must decide a strategy to destroy the rear guard and press on to the convoy. Any delay after combat with the defenders such as in taking a long rest will ensure that the convoy will reach Skard before them and they will have failed this part of their quest. The convoy travels at 2 miles per hour.

As the distance to Skard is but eight miles from where the party sees the group it is likely they will escape if anything more than a short rest is taken. The party must be urged on at all costs.

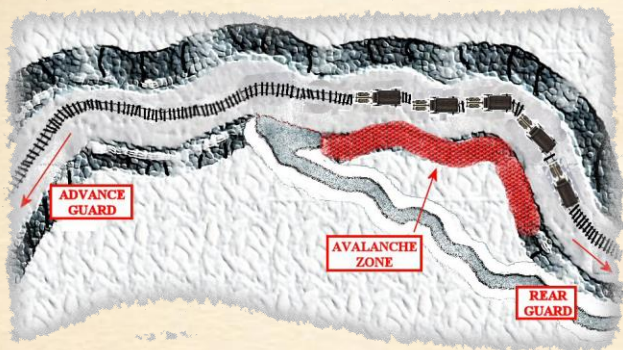
The convoy is formed as follows:

1. **Advance Guard** – 10 Khanoumid cavalry (Riding horse, chain mail, shield, lance and scimitar)
2. **Convoy Guard** – 15 Khanoumid warriors (chain mail, shield, spear and scimitar)
5 Khanoumid Archers (leather armour, short bow and dagger)
5 Cart Drivers (no armour, dagger)
1 Caravan Master (Riding horse, chain shirt, shield, longsword)
3. **Rear Guard** – 10 Khanoumid Cavalry (Riding horse, chain mail, shield, lance and scimitar)

ATTACK FROM ABOVE

Any assault from the path above the convoy will gain the benefit of height. It is not necessary to make any rules for this but if desired an **extra 10' range** (both short and long) could be added to cover the benefits of gravity. An ambush can be set up on the cliff side above a steep slope about **100'** from their target as it passes below and from around a bend. The bend will obscure any attack from the rear guard. If the party hide themselves amongst boulders and other rough terrain, they will not be seen by the caravan unless the group makes a passive perception check at disadvantage.

If the party make a successful **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 12) they will ascertain that there are loose rocks and boulders which can be dislodged to cause an avalanche. If they are dropped on the caravan it will lead to a larger collapse which may kill or injure their targets below. The rock fall will increase in momentum due to the steepness of the face. Falling rocks will hit **2d10** targets below. If contact is made any injured party will take **3d6** bludgeoning damage from falling boulders. It is safe to assume that the carts will be destroyed and the iron buried forever. If the enemy try to scale the rock face to the party after the avalanche it is classed as difficult terrain and will slow them up. It is also impassable to horses. Combat will most likely be over long before the rearguard come into view. They may be unable to reach the party anyway due to fallen rocks.



The advance and rear guards will race back to the site of the avalanche if one is caused. They will have been alerted by the noise. They will arrive **3 minutes** after the collapse. If the party takes too much time in destroying the caravan, it is possible that they may

end up sandwiched between the rear and advance guards.

If there is no avalanche then the advance party will continue oblivious until they realise the caravan is no longer behind them. They will then gallop back and arrive at the site of the battle a little after the rear guard has.

With the destruction of the caravan in the Vazuhr Pass, each member of the party will receive **150XP** for preventing the final shipment of iron reaching Skard.

WALKING IN A WINTER WONDERLAND

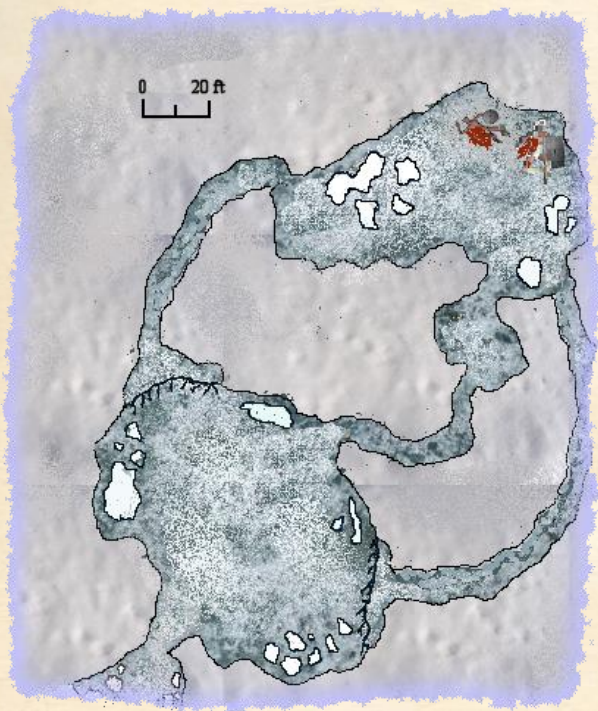
Further down the valley lies the den of a small pack of **Winter Wolves**. These intelligent creatures are as big as a dire wolf but are well suited to their frozen home. The wolves hunt and eat any travellers who are foolish enough to traverse the Vazuhr Pass. They cannot afford casualties though and so let any strong force pass through. Any party member who makes a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 16) will see a snow and ice camouflaged entrance to a cave. If they investigate it they will gain access to the wolves' cave system.

Once you are aware of the cave entrance you see that it blends seamlessly with its surroundings. A creature of intelligence lived or lives here. Picking your way through the ice and snow barriers which block your path the entrance opens up into an icy cavern. There is enough light from fissures in the rock above to see clearly that the cave extends quite far back. Icicles descend from the ceiling and sparkle in the shafts of light that stream in. All the walls are covered in a thick layer of white ice – no rock is visible. Your breath hangs in front of your face as you peer into the whiteness beyond. To your left and right lie raised galleries again covered in frost and ice. At the end of the cavern is a smaller entrance – a little larger than a man.

As you watch, a large white wolf slowly emerges through the opening. It stops and stares at you with icy blue eyes. As it breathes, thin wisps of blue emanate from its mouth and nose. Its mouth opens and you can't quite tell whether or not the creature is attempting a

smile or a snarl. What is a greater surprise is when you hear it speak, 'Ah, visitors. Do you flee those outside? Are you coming in to escape from the cold? Do you wish to join me for dinner? I am just about to dine. Come in, there is fresh food on the menu. You are quite safe here'.

The winter wolf is intelligent but not that intelligent. It desperately wants the party to enter its cave so that it can dine on them. The fact it can talk has enticed many an unwary traveller to their doom. Its intention is to lull the party into trusting it and will therefore engage them in conversation in order to do so. This, it hopes will increase the chances of a surprise attack later on. It may not fool the party. If the party does not immediately attack it will slowly back into the entrance and disappear from view. It will then attempt to blend in with its surroundings in a subsequent cave in order to carry out an ambush.



The creature is not alone. It is the leader of a small pack and resides with three other wolves. Whilst it tries to entice the party in, they will have sneaked onto the galleries above through well disguised passages in the ice. They will gain **advantage** on any

stealth checks as they are in their snowy element. If a melee ensues they will leap on the party and attempt to outflank them. If the party follow the first wolf into the later caves, one will jump down and block their exit while the others will retrace their tracks to support the leader. At the back of the cave are two corpses of previous victims of the wolves. One was a local traveller but one was a mage who was isolated and killed. His body is quite fresh and still contains his belongings which include **Boots of Striding and Springing** and a **Spell Scroll** holding the 4th level spell – **Ice Storm**. He also wears a silver and gold brooch worth **750gp**.

SKARD

Skard was first dug and explored by the dwarves of **Havaeth Bronzejaw**. Bronzejaw led his clan south from the **Shimmering Hills** to the Razor's Edge, where, once traces of emeralds were found, an outpost was dug. This quickly began a major enterprise which saw Skard become a great mining concern in the lands bordering the great Empire of Barazuhn. Tentative links were forged with the Barazud civilisation through their advanced post at Crystal Haven. In time, the caves and passages of the underground kingdom were widened and deepened leading to further discoveries and greater wealth. Then it all ended. With the rise of Ehalazuhn, the dwarves of Skard sent a sizeable force to fight on the side of Barazuhn.

Many of the greatest and most doughty dwarven folk never returned from battle. This coincided with the decline of the area as a mining operation. The emeralds ran out and with them the fate of Skard was sealed. Debates were held in the halls and galleries of this once mighty, now depleted, civilisation. Most left to find new lands in which to prosper. Where they went is unknown but they disappeared from history at this point and became known to the descendants of Bronzejaw as the Lost Dwarves. Some stayed, either in blind faith or because they were too closely linked to their heritage and history. They remained in hope of a great discovery, to see Skard reborn. Centuries passed and no great discovery came.



What did come, however, was the army of a god bent on vengeance. Sweeping in from the desert lands to the north, Ehalazuhn's forces broke into this passage through the mountains and destroyed all in their way. What resistance was mustered was swept aside within the dark passages of the once great city. Now Skard has a different use – as an armoury for Ehalazuhn - led by his most trusted commander, **Zaleria Drakmor**. Dwarves still remain; they know their caverns better than any human, but new dangers have arisen which threaten to erase the last of the Bronzejaw clan.

THE GUARDED GATE

Zaleria Drakmor is no fool. She knows the party is coming. She also knows that they hold one of the three **Jewels of Ehalazuhn** in their possession. In order to affect the return of her master she needs to retrieve that gem. Therefore she needs the party where she can get at them – and where better than in the corridors and galleries of her kingdom at Skard. Within the restrictive passageways and halls she intends to trap these interlopers, destroy them and retrieve the property lost by Ekasusuhr. To this end, the entrance to her domain is not especially fortified. Naturally, if they die here then so much the better but she thinks it unlikely. They have shown their strength and resourcefulness before now.

As the party near the entrance to Skard they will hear the sounds of an argument – grunts and growls come from what appear to be four individuals.

The trail ends here – a large box canyon. A huge granite dwarven statue stands carved out of the living rock. Between the feet of this warrior lies a great iron faced gate and far above it, you can see intricately carved galleries and balconies poking out from the rock face. This is Skard, the city of the dwarves as described by Herbotir Oregut in the Iron Islands. Old buildings, long destroyed and derelict dot the valley floor – deserted, roofless, dead.

A strange argument is going on in front of the stone doorway. Two huge two-headed humanoids brandish axes and flails at each other, each creature's two heads shout and bawl abuse at the other one. They are chained either side of the doorway, and pull and stretch at their iron restraints. At the feet of these creatures are two soldiers who are trying to calm the brutes down through the use of whips and threats. Beside the doorway is a large iron lever.

None of these creatures has noticed your presence – they are too occupied with each other.

These creatures are **Ettins** and they hate everything – especially other ettins. These creatures will happily tear each other to pieces, which is why the two **Khanoumid warriors** are trying to calm the situation down. They levers on either side of the doors release the chains and this will be the primary goal of the guards if they notice the party. This will only be achieved if they make a **Wisdom: Perception** check (**DC 14**). If the party do not hide or take too long in making a decision the difficulty level will decrease by two per turn until they are noticed. If melee has not been initiated at this point the guards will run to the levers and release the ettins. They will then run through a small doorway within the larger gate and into Skard to raise the alarm.



The chains holding the ettins will also begin to stretch to breaking point – each round will see them either snap or stretch because of the forces being placed on them. Each round the ettins are left to argue they make a **Strength** check (DC 20). If this succeeds, the chains snap – if it fails, they stretch. They cannot take more than two stretches before they break. If the ettins do not become aware of the party they will fight each other once they break free. Once aware of the group, the ettins will forget their previous business and try to crush the party. When they have been defeated the way is open to Skard. If she still lives, Florian Moonfeather will leave the group at this point –she has tarried long enough.

The gates loom above you, impenetrable to machines of war. Inside one of them is a smaller 6' gate with a round brass handle. It turns freely in your hand. The door opens without a creak or groan. As you peer inside you see only darkness. Then small twinkles of light become apparent as your eyes adjust. These become larger and you see a great space ahead. It forms into a huge hall with columns reaching 100' into

what you can see of a vaulted ceiling. The columns disappear into the darkness as does the great hall ahead. All is quiet.

With the entrance to Skard cleared and the final objective achieved, Sarvania has been at last secured by the party and the machinations of Ehalazuhn brought to an end in the Outer Reaches. Each member of the party will receive **600XP** for achieving this great deed.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

FLORIAN MOONFEATHER

Medium High Elf, any alignment

Armour Class: 18 (chain mail and shield)

Hit Points: 40 (5d10+5)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws: Strength +3, Constitution +1

Skills: Perception +2, Athletics +6, Intimidation +6, Animal Handling +2, Survival +2, advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep

Proficiency bonus: +3

Senses: darkvision 60ft, passive Perception 12

Languages: Common, Elvish

Archery. When wielding a ranged weapon she gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls with that weapon

Second Wind. She has a limited well of stamina that she can draw on to protect herself from harm. On her turn, she can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + her fighter level.

Action Surge. She can push herself beyond her normal limits for a moment. On her turn, she can take one additional action on top of her regular action and a possible bonus action.

Extra Attack: She can attack twice, instead of once, whenever she takes the Attack action on her turn.

Weapon Bond: Once she has bonded a weapon to herself, she can't be disarmed of that weapon unless she is incapacitated. If it is on the same plane of existence, she can summon that weapon as a bonus action on her turn, causing it to teleport instantly to her hand.

Spellcasting: She is a 5th level eldritch knight and uses Intelligence as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She knows the following spells from the wizard's spell list:

Cantrips: (3 at will): Acid Splash, Fire Bolt, True Strike

1st level: (3 slots): Magic Missile, Shield, Thunderwave, Witch Bolt

ACTIONS

Longsword: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Shortbow: Ranged Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft, one target. Hit: 3 (1d6 +3) piercing damage.

LEMONBELL

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armour Class 11

Hit Points 22 (3d10 + 3)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Sight. The hippogriff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hippogriff makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage

BALLISTA

Siege engine

Armour Class: 15

Hit Points: 50

ACTIONS

A ballista is a massive crossbow that fires bolts. It takes one action to load the weapon, one action to aim it, and one action to fire it.

Bolt. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 120/480 ft. one target. Hit: 16 (3d10) piercing damage.

MANGONEL

Siege engine

Armour Class: 15

Hit Points: 100

ACTIONS

A mangonel is a type of catapult that hurls heavy projectiles in a high arc. It takes two actions to load the weapon, two actions to aim it, and one action to fire it.

Mangonel Stone. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 200/800 ft. (can't hit targets within 60 feet of it), one target. Hit: 27 (5d10) bludgeoning damage.

KHANOUMID WARRIOR

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 15 (Chain shirt and shield)
Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage

KHANOUMID BEAST RIDER

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (Chainmail)
Hit Points 32(5d8+10)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+2)	13 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

GIANT PTERANODON

Medium beast, unaligned

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)
Hit Points 25 (5d8+5)
Speed 10ft., fly 60ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception + 1

Senses passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Flyby. The pteranodon doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (2d4 + 1) piercing damage

MARAITH

Medium human, lawful evil knight

Armour Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Constitution +4, Wisdom +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multitack. The knight makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a non hostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

Parry. The knight adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

OGRE

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armour Class: 11 (hide armour)

Hit Points: 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed: 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8

Languages: Common, Giant

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Greatclub: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Javelin: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage

KHANOUMID ARCHER

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 12 (leather armour)

Hit Points 18 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 80 ft. /320 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage

KHANOUMID MAMLUK

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 18 (Chainmail and shield)

Hit Points 32 (5d8+10)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Lance: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 10ft. one creature. Hit: 7 (1d12+2) piercing damage

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

DRIVER

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 10

Hit Points 5 (1d8)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

CARAVAN MASTER

Medium human, any alignment

Armour Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Longsword: Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

RIDING HORSE

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 10

Hit Points 13 (2d10 + 2)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Hooves. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

WINTER WOLF

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armour Class 13 (natural armour)

Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities cold

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Giant, Winter Wolf

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Snow Camouflage. The wolf has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Cold Breath (Recharge 5-6). The wolf exhales a blast of freezing wind in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ETTIN

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armour Class 12 (natural armour)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Giant, Ore

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Two Heads. The ettin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

Wakeful. When one of the ettin's heads is asleep, its other head is awake

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ettin makes two attacks: one with its battleaxe and one with its morningstar.

Battleaxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Morningstar. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.





THE CITY UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

And Ehalazuhn took out the jewels and distributed them amongst his followers and each was to be guarded, for they gave entrance to His throne room on the far planes. Ruby, Sapphire and Emerald they were, and only those who could combine them all could access the deity in all His splendour and wrath. Over the centuries they disappeared only to rise again as the Destroyer planned his return to the world. As His strength grew they shined ever more brightly and if you looked closely into their facets, you could see the souls of the tortured within.

A reading from the 'Mysteries of the Planes' as related by Mortis Fyre, Bard of Kingsvale

INTRODUCTION

The City Under the Mountain is the final part of the epic campaign **A Storm About to Break**. The party now moves into the great underground city of **Skard**, now occupied by the enemies of mankind. Within its chambers lies **Ehalazuhn's** most trusted servant, **Zaleria** and her allies from the Eastern Kingdom of **Khanoumia**, as well as fearsome underworld denizens. In the corridors of Skard the party will need to summon all its strength to defeat the forces of Ehalazuhn one last time. They will wrest the Emerald and Ruby **Jewels of Ehalazuhn** from Zaleria and her lieutenant, **Zorander le Torneau** and unite them all to open a gateway to Ehalazuhn's throne room in the **Elemental Plane of Water**. The door lies open to Skard...

PART 8: SKARD

ENCOUNTER 1: A MEETING WITH ZALERIA

The entrance hall to Skard is over 100' long. In the centre of the hall and before the invasion by Zaleria,

there was a huge finely carved statue of **Havaeth Bronzejaw**, Founder and first King of the **Bronzejaw** clan. However, it has since been defaced with crude daubs in blue paint and partially wrecked. Bronzejaw's face has been hacked off and a new one rigged up from what appear to be shards of blue glass which form a crude humanoid face with a beard. Around the hall, and roughly 20' from ground level, there is a gallery - around which is a stone banister. This was designed to welcome visitors to Skard in its glory days. It will now be used for a greeting of a different sort.



There is a welcoming committee waiting for the party. This consists of Khanoumid warriors and **two ogres** drawn to Skard by the attractions of wealth and violence. Also with them is **Zaleria**, whose aim is to retrieve the sapphire stolen from Ekasusuhr in the Tower of the False King and her lieutenant, **Zorander Le Torneau** who appears as a dark armoured figure behind her.

When the party arrives, this welcoming committee will appear on the gallery above them. This consists of **6 Elite Khanoumid Guards** dressed in black desert robes with scarlet trim. They wear black turbans and have their faces covered. Elite guards wield crossbows and two handed scimitars. They point their missile weapons at the party. The tips of the crossbow bolts glisten in the torchlight - they have been dipped in a poison which induces limited paralysis (**Constitution** SR at **DC 12** or receive the effects of a **Slow** spell for two rounds). Zaleria will be at the eastern end of the platform. She appears as a beautiful woman dressed

in flowing blue and green robes. Her hair is also blue. She looks unarmed. She will smile at the party.

"Welcome travellers. What a pleasure it is to finally meet those who have caused me so much trouble. I assume you have Ekasusuhr's jewel with you - the fool clearly underestimated you - I will not make the same mistake. You can save your worthless lives now should you choose. All I want is the sapphire. You can place it on the ground in front of you and leave this place and you have my word that you shall not be pursued. If you do not, then my men will take the jewel and you will all die here today. What is your decision?"

When Zaleria stops speaking, the doors at the northern end of the room will open and two club wielding **Ogres** will enter, one on either side of the statue, and wait for a command to attack.

If the party refuse to comply, Zaleria will give the order to assault the group. The Ogres will storm in whilst the Khanoumids fire their crossbows from the gallery. If at any time the party escape the entrance hall, the tribesmen will descend the stairs to the north to attack them at ground level.

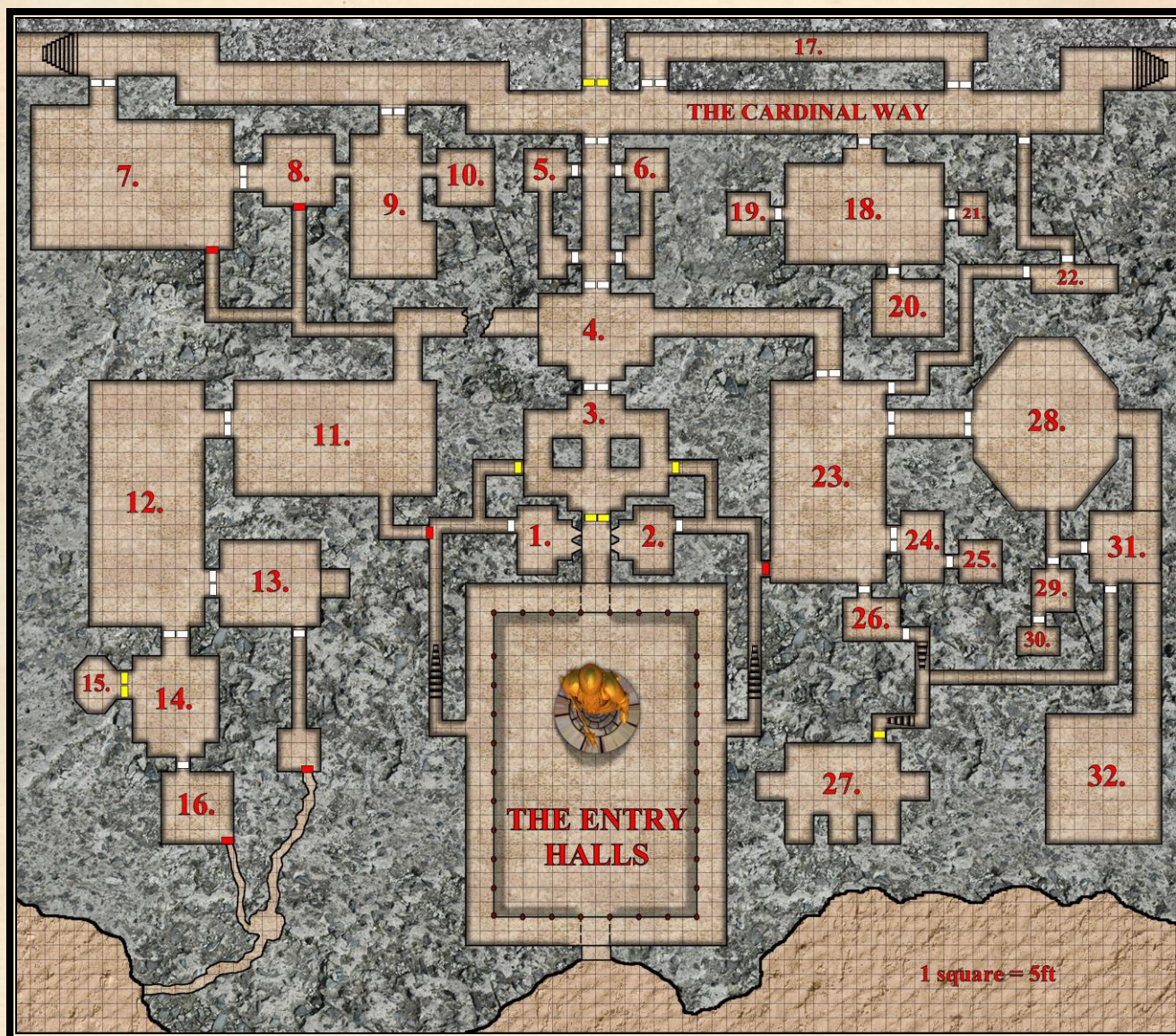
Zaleria and her lieutenant will not engage in combat. Despite her words, Zaleria is in fact a little apprehensive about engaging the party at this time - they have shown their power several times in the past. She will retire down the stairs to the east. She and Zorander will leave respectively to the Temple and the Aerie. If any of their attackers escape the party, they will attempt to raise the alarm. There is a garrison force in **Area 23** which will search for the party as documented in the description of that area. The party will meet Zaleria later.

ENCOUNTER 2: BREAKING INTO SKARD

From herein, the party must fight its way through Skard until the final encounter with Zaleria. They will then be able to enter Ehalazuhr's throne room and defeat him. Most of the earlier areas in Skard are readily accessible to the party. However, as they

proceed further in, it will become necessary to acquire special sigils from guardians entrusted with their possession. These were issued to certain notables by

Zaleria as a security measure. Zaleria herself does not require any such sigil – as leader in Skard, her ruby Jewel of Ehalazuhn allows access to all areas.



AREAS 1 AND 2: GUARD ROOMS

Both of these rooms contain two **Khanoumid warriors** who are trained to fire through the arrow slits on either side of the corridor at any unwelcome guest. They wear black desert robes with blue trim. They also wear light blue turbans. Both of these rooms are fairly bare, containing only chairs and a table as well as a barrel containing spare crossbow bolts.

The **double doors** at the end of the corridor are iron and decorated with images of dwarven faces in helmets. These doors are locked and require a **Dexterity** check (DC 10) to open. They can be battered down on a **Strength** check (DC 14). There is a key hanging up on the other side which allows entrance and exit to the guards and population.

AREA 3: GALLERY

This area was designed as a gallery to display portraits of the leaders and notables from the Bronzejaw clan to visitors. As with other areas in this complex, it has been vandalised by the present occupants.

As you pass through the double doors you see a 30'x50' room with two large 10' columns in the centre. These reach from floor to ceiling. On these columns and around the walls are picture hangings and empty frames. In some frames the paintings remain but have been slashed, or occasionally, burned. The paintings depict dwarves in dramatic poses or in portrait form. This room appears to have once been a gallery of sorts but it has been vandalised.

Unless the party are still fighting their way into Skard, this room will be quiet and has no occupants. There are two doors on the east and west walls which are presently locked. These doors require a **Dexterity** check (DC 10) to open.

AREA 4: CROSSROADS

This room was designed originally as a form of waiting room for guests and visitors. It was once plushly decorated but this has all been removed or destroyed.

This room may once have been important as there are remnants of fine furnishings and decor. However, these mostly lie in dusty heaps on the floor. There is also a large rug which looks to have been quite expensive at one point. However, it is now torn and dirty and has clearly been trodden on by many uncaring feet. There is a set of oak double doors ahead of you and to the east and west lie 10' corridors.

Hiding in the rubble in the eastern corridor is **Vorsen Brightarm** from the last remaining dwarven community left in Skard. He has been cut off by the entry of the party into Skard and the excitement this has caused in the corridors nearby. Vorsen has hidden

here to avoid the fighting that has presaged the adventurers' arrival at this location. He is only interested in getting back to the **secret door** which gives entry to the **hidden dwarven enclave** to the west. If discovered by the party he will not be aggressive but will be wary. If he trusts them, he will show them the entrance to the enclave through the secret door to the south west. Here they will meet with the remnants of the Bronzejaw clan in Skard.

AREA 5 AND 6: GUARD ROOMS

These rooms formed a part of the defences of Skard but are now occupied by **Khanoumid warriors**. There are **four guards** in each room. They wield crossbows but in closely confined spaces will probably engage their enemies with scimitars. Each room has a table and chairs and various foodstuffs and drinks. The southernmost sections are reserved for kit and equipment and thus are filled with barrels and cases holding crossbow ammunition and melee weapons. There is little of any value in these rooms but if the bodies are searched, the party can collect a total of 30sp and one looted electrum ring worth 20gp. **5a** also is the kennel for the guards' pet dog which will growl menacingly but not attack. It will however alert the guards in the adjacent room. Any fighting will alert both rooms unless care is taken.

THE CARDINAL WAY



smelters.

The great double doors to the north open up into the city communal district, **Gam Daruhl**, the **Aerie**

The major thoroughfare in Skard connects some of the most important zones of the city and has been named **The Cardinal Way** as it runs directly north, south, east and west. To the east is the **Power Source** area and the water supply. To the west are the **Fire Pit** and the

and the royal chambers or **Temple** as it is now. They are 10' wide and made of bronze – they are decorated with etchings of great events from dwarven mythology. These bronze doors have been magically locked since the party entered Skard and cannot be opened without the sigil held by **Muzmed** in the **Fire Pit**.

AREA 7: ARMOUR SMITHY

This room is very hot. There are two forges for the production of armour here. Each of these is worked by a Khanoumid blacksmith who hammers at plates of steel or forges rings intended for chain mail. The room is full of suits of armour of different types. The majority of this equipment is mail armour but there are also several suits of plate mail as well as shields of different sizes and types. There are also boxes and barrels full of the materials of war.

This room is one area where the supplies designed for the coming war are kept and worked prior to issue. The blacksmiths here are not combatants and will **not** act aggressively towards the party. They will, however, **report** the party to the commandant of this zone in **Area 23** at the first opportunity.



The players can help themselves to anything armour related from this room, but none is magical and will conform to the statistics found in the equipment guide.

Unknown to the Khanoumid workers here, or indeed any member of the occupying forces, there is a

well disguised **secret door** leading to the dwarven enclave to the south. This door was created by experts in the field of concealment using all their dwarven expertise. It can only be found on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 20).

AREA 8: STORAGE ROOM

You enter a large storeroom about 25' square. This room contains weaponry of various types and styles. There are barrels and boxes full of ammunition as well as racks to hold swords and pole arms. There are no occupants in this room.

This room contains part of the weapons store for Zaleria's forces. Any type of non-magical weapon can be found here. There is also a small bottle of the **slow poison** used by Elite Khanoumid Guards – enough for **five** applications to any weapon.

AREA 9: WEAPON FABRICATION AND RESEARCH

This is a large room which currently stands empty. All around are large missile weapons, some of which look more intricate and complex than usual. There are crossbows mounted on tripods with hoppers full of bolts as well as strange racks containing five longbows each, all fixed, drawn and ready to fire. There are also strange 3' high bronze metal constructions in the shape of heads with gaping mouths through which crossbow bolts protrude.

This is a weaponry research area. The designer of these weapons is currently in **Area 10**. The aim of these objects is to increase the rate of fire of Zaleria's troops. Some of these weapons have a magical aura and some are purely advanced engineering. The multi-longbow does not work and is still in testing. The crossbow does however work and when the hopper has ammunition, fires **twice** as fast as a normal one. A crank lever speeds up the pulling of the bowstring and the hopper deposits a bolt in the slot ready to fire. It requires reloading every **five** rounds which in itself takes two rounds to complete.

The **bronze metal heads** are magical but are not functioning at this time. They need to be animated to work, when they can form a non-sleeping permanent missile firer. This weapon fires **twice** as fast as a normal crossbow. They each contain a hopper within their metal frame which holds 20 heavy crossbow bolts. This needs replenishing after **10** rounds of constant fire. The automatons have an **AC 15** and **50hp** each. They will fire and track both visible and invisible targets until destroyed or their ammunition depletes.

AREA 10: THANUS CASEDES' QUARTERS

This square chamber is the abode of a small, thin and balding man. He is dressed in work clothes and an ink and oil stained apron. He works at a large desk on which are paper, ink wells and drawing tools. To the rear of the room is a largish bed and bedside cabinet. There is also a bookshelf full to overflowing with tomes and scrolls. The man looks up at you. *'What now,'* he asks in an irritable voice.

This is **Thanus Casedes**. He is the mastermind behind the innovative designs in **Area 9**. He and his son were captured by Zaleria's men long ago. His talents as an inventor were soon spotted and he was reassigned to Skard. Since then he has designed many weapons of war which are to be used by Zaleria's forces in the coming conflict. Casedes is not evil. He is however blinded by the responsibility and respect he is shown by the rulers of the underground city. He takes great pride in his work and this has clouded his judgement. It would not however take too much to show him the right path and highlight the dangers his weapons will bring to the people of Sarvania. In order to ensure his loyalty, Zaleria has imprisoned his son, **Selyn** in the cells to the east of the complex (**Area 27**). Casedes can and does visit him regularly and he is kept in quite comfortable surroundings to prevent any resentment or rebellious ideas from his engineer father. Despite Casedes' feelings of importance, he is not aware of his expendability in Zaleria's eyes. When he has fulfilled his tasks in Skard she intends to have him and his son executed. Casedes cannot and will not fight the party, but if not convinced of the error of

his ways and freed, he will **report** them to the Khanoumid authorities in Skard as soon as he can.

THE BRONZEJAW ENCLAVE

When Zaleria and her forces burst into Skard, the forces of the Bronzejaw clan were already weakened. Too many had grown disaffected with the future potential of Skard and left. Many of these had been warriors. Therefore, only a token resistance was possible to the Khanoumid warriors who ransacked the city. Many dwarves were killed. The remainder retreated into defensible sections of the city. All entrances were blocked and disguised. One of these was the temple complex for the city. Its entrances were concealed and the tunnel to **Area 4** collapsed. To the unknowing and untrained eye of the Khanoumid invaders, all the dwarves perished in the assault. They could find no trace of any survivors. The dwarves, under their redoubtable leader, **Storgaen Thundermaul** now exist precariously at the heart of Zaleria's new fortress. They number but a few. To survive, they are forced to sneak out in the quiet times of the day and steal and raid the Khanoumid supplies. So far, none have been caught doing so but Zaleria's suspicions have been roused. It is to quell these suspicions that she has employed **Duergar** allies to search Skard for any survivors. The party will encounter these later when they discover the destroyed dwarven outpost in **Gam Daruhl**.

The party should have met **Vorsen Brightarm** in **Area 4** and may have convinced him of their noble intentions. Without his aid, the party would find it very hard to locate the cleverly concealed entrances to the dwarven enclave. If for some reason the party fails to meet Brightarm or offends him in some way, then another method of discovering the dwarves can come into play, such as following a dwarf returning from a food raid. If this is the case then they will have to convince and reassure the dwarf guard on the other side rather rapidly.

Behind each of the secret entrances marking on the map (**Areas 1, 7 and 8**), there are two heavily armed **dwarf guards** in mail and shield and wielding battle axes. Their job is to act as the first line of defence should the enclave be breached. They will alert the complex and fight to the death. This sacrifice will, it is

hoped, allow the rest of the dwarves to escapes to the south and out of Skard. If the party is not accompanied by Vorsen, they will **not** be allowed to proceed until permission comes from Thundermaul. They will be kept within the secret entrance under guard. Within the dwarven enclave it is possible to sell or exchange items of value – the need for valuables burns in the heart of many dwarves – even in times of stress.

AREA 11: DWARVEN ACCOMODATION I

The first thing that hits you when you enter this chamber is that it is oppressively hot. There is a mixture of male and female dwarves here, some of which talk in quiet voices, others stare at you in a quizzical fashion. Around the walls are basic straw cots, small cupboards and boxes of clothing and food. You sense a depressed mood in the room. Several dwarves sit with their heads bowed – they stare at the floor and ignore your passing. A pair of large bronze double doors lies ajar within the east wall.

This is where some of the surviving Bronzejaw clan live out their basic existence in Skard. There is generally a down beat atmosphere here since Zaleria took over. Efforts are made to keep morale high through the exertions of Storgaen and Vorsen Brightarm but it is difficult in such circumstances. If the party are with Vorsen he will use the party as a propaganda tool and declare to the population here that help is at hand and that there is still hope for them. There will be a slight increase in positivity in the room but not much. How could such a small group help their predicament? Vorsen will not tarry here but urge the party on to Thundermaul's quarters.

AREA 12: DWARVEN ACCOMODATION II

This is a second community room. The same stifling heat is present as are the cots and down beat occupants. There is a large fireplace in the eastern wall and a long table with basic wooden chairs to the west. There are also two sets of double doors in the south east corner. You count around 20 dwarves on the cots

and at the table. Some talk, others sharpen weapons. Although they don't regard you with hostility, you sense that most are unimpressed. There are some, however, who summon a weak smile when you meet their eye.

This is another accommodation chamber. Areas 11 and 12 hold the last of the Bronzejaw clan in Skard apart from the ill-fated group under **Nalgir Stonebrow** to the north. There is an increasing acceptance that their tenure in Skard could be at an end. They are alone and have no allies.

AREA 13: THE TEMPLE OF EMJIR

This room has clear religious significance to the Bronzejaw clan. It is a large temple about 30' square. At the east end is a 10' square alcove and in this is a large dwarven statue. At its base is a bronze plaque engraved '**Emjir the Far Seeing**'. The statue portrays an unarmoured dwarf who is depicted scanning the far distance. Around the walls are incense burners and yellow and burgundy drapes. At the feet of the statue, kneeling upon a cushion is an elderly dwarf dressed in golden robes. His beard is braided into two separate strands and his long hair into a pony tail.

This is a shrine to the dwarf God, **Emjir the Far Seeing**. He is a wanderers' god which many in the dwarven communities worship - especially if they are headed on a long journey. Emjir is not worshipped solely by dwarves but by anyone embarking on a journey. His opposite number, **Dhubraem, God of Lost Byways and Hidden Dangers** is worshipped also in a precautionary manner. Emjir is especially venerated by the Bronzejaw clan as it is believed that he is closely linked to their finding of Skard and their fortunes in the years preceding the decline of the group.

The elderly dwarf is **Firaeth Bonefinger**, the most senior cleric in Skard since the invasion. He prays daily to Emjir in the vain hope that he will return the **Lost Dwarves** (referred to in Beneath the Razor's Edge) to their home and that they will help retake

Skard once again. These prayers have fallen on deaf ears. He will ask the party for any news of his lost brethren. Despite the disappointment he will feel at any negative response, Firaeth is quite a positive influence in the community and he will not be depressed for long.



Firaeth would however appreciate a service. He would like the party to find any **survivors** of Zaleria's invasion in other parts of the city. He cannot accept that all are dead. He will ask the party to scour the city for any still alive and bring them back to this zone. He hopes they, like he and his brethren here, may have found a way to survive. It is a slim hope. He does not want this quest to divert them from any missions given to them by Storgaen Thundermaul and will therefore ask that they deal with their leader's demands first.

The door in the south wall leads to a small room, empty apart from barrels of crossbow bolts and some other weaponry and armour. There are also shelves

which contain dwarf helmets and side arms. The room was originally for the priest's vestments before the invasion but now it has been taken over as a weapon store and emergency exit. Behind the shelf, which is released by a hidden catch is a **secret door** to the outside. Only Firaeth and Storgaen know of its existence. The catch and mechanism can be spotted on a **Wisdom: Perception** roll (DC 16).

AREA 14: AUDIENCE CHAMBER

There is a plusher feel to the decor in this chamber. Atop a large dais against the east wall is a throne, on which sits an older dwarf with a regal bearing, wearing mail and a silver helm. He is flanked by guards. A large thick rug bearing an axe motif covers most of the floor. The general appearance is of a throne room. A closer look however reveals a less opulent side. The seated dwarf's face is lined and appears tired. The golden and burgundy hangings are a little tattered and the throne seems ill fitting on the dais, as if it was not intended there. The armour of the four guards in the room is unpolished as if fresh from battle.

This is **Storgaen Thundermaul** and he is the leader of the last dwarves in Skard. When Zaleria invaded he was but a well respected noble but with the death of **Thomas Greybraid**, the leader of the Bronzejaw clan, he took over the organisation of the defence. He now does his best to maintain a dwarven presence in the city – against some criticism from those who wish to leave and start again. He has fought to keep the Bronzejaw heritage alive and will now ask the players to assist him in the destruction of Zaleria and her minions. The throne does not belong in the room but was taken and placed here as a sign of the authority of Storgaen and his right to rule.

Once he realises that they are to be trusted he will task them with a mission.

"To the west and east of this zone lie two areas of great import to the survival of Skard. To the east lies an area known as the Power Source. This is a network of chambers connected to an underground river called

Skollin. Through the harnessing of Skollin, we built a mechanical system through which Skard not only received a constant and reliable water supply but a method of power. That is until we put a stop to it. This has caused our enemies no small inconvenience but more can be done. One of the most important functions of the Power Source is to power our machines throughout the city. It does this alongside our furnaces which lie to the west in the Fire Pit. These furnaces are powered from an underground river of fire we call Khunmir. The combination of the waters of Skollin and the fires from Khunmir allow us to power devices through the use of steam."

"For years these devices have powered our city and we have thrived. Now, they can help us to destroy the enemy. If the waters of Skollin can be made to flow at an unrestricted rate upon this underground fire, then my engineers assure me that an explosion of such magnitude would occur that it would destroy the machinations of the evil Zaleria in a blink of an eye. We need to restart the flow of water into the city."

"What I ask of you is to head east and repair the machinery that reconnects Skard to the river. To accomplish this task you will need the help of our allies underground. You will not see them, but look for them under the waterworks. Once this task is completed, travel west – smash the pipes which regulated the water to the furnaces. A tide of high pressure water will flow in an unstoppable torrent into the Fire Pit, causing an explosion."

"One final request. During your time in the Fire Pit, it would be of great importance to me that you retrieve a weapon belonging to our forefathers - some say to Havaeth Bronzejaw himself. It was kept in a repository next to the great forges which saw its birth. I am informed however, that the enemy seeks to gain entry to this sacred place, and to retrieve the weapon. This must not happen. Please attempt to reunite the Hammer of Havaeth with its people. To help and guide you through our great city, I order Vorsen Brightarm to

accompany you on your great quest."

Vorsen Brightarm will relish the party's mission – even though deep down he may be unsure of its chances of success. Vorsen is a **Level 5 Champion**. The party will be wished great success and asked to leave without too little delay - healing time is perfectly acceptable. In fact, before the party leaves, Storgaen will retrieve several **Potions of Extra Healing** from his diminished supplies to aid them. Each party member will get one. He gets these from the treasury next door.



If pressed by any of the party, Storgaen will elaborate on these quests in the sense that in order to complete their mission in the Fire Pit a great overseer, **Muzmed**, will probably need to be bested. He doesn't want to put them off with details. He has also failed to mention **Rursubela**, the guardian of Havaeth's Hammer for a similar reason. Storgaen is a pragmatist. He does not really understand the party's mission but does see their usefulness in clearing Skard

of its enemies. This is his only priority – his home and his people – compassion can only come a far second to his pressing needs.

AREA 15: TREASURE ROOM

The door to this room is magically locked by Storgaen's Chamberlain due to the valuable goods inside it. If for whatever reason the players get access then they will find a store of all the valuable goods left over to the Bronzejaw clan.

This room is dominated by a large statue of a dwarven figure. The figure is bedecked in finery and jewellery. Light sparkles in the expensive looking gems and jewels that decorate it. This room also contains boxes and containers of weapons, bottles and scrolls. The weapons seem to be of a much higher order of quality than normal ones. The bottles contain various liquids, some of which are marked, and others have no indication of what they contain. Old tomes and scrolls are also in abundance here – most of the books are fastened with metal clasps. There are also coffer which are padlocked shut. It appears that these goods are very valuable to the Bronzejaw clan and perhaps are all that remain of its once great wealth.

This room was dedicated to the dwarven god, **Thordrid, God of the Mountains and the Jewelled Kingdoms**. The gems are real and represent the best jewels found by the Bronzejaw clan during their time in Skard. In total, the value of the riches found in this chamber value over 20,000gp. Naturally, the dwarves will not part from these riches, although some might be given as rewards to the party for any help they give. Any theft or underhand activity to do with the items in this room would lead to serious reprisals as well as alignment difficulties.

AREA 16: STORGAEN'S QUARTERS

The door to this room is guarded by two dwarven warriors in addition to the two flanking Storgaen's throne.

Despite its size, this room is quite sparsely decorated. The bare walls have been covered in gold and burgundy material and there is a large bed with a bear's hide draped upon it. Apart from this there is also a large desk and comfortable looking chair. Hanging above is a sputtering iron chandelier, the smoke from which has left a black mark on the ceiling above. Atop the desk is a large pile of papers, an ink well and several quills.

These are Storgaen's quarters. Not only is it his private area for rest, but also he conducts his most personal and secret business here. Few dwarves have entered it. There is actually little of value here – most is kept in the treasury. In his desk is a **Ring of Mind Shielding**. The ring is worn on state business or what is left of it. The ring was worn by **Thomas Greybraid** when he was slain in the battle for Skard. As an important heirloom of state, Storgaen took it and has communed with the dead Greybraid since. It is this ability which has allowed him to discern the location of Havaeth's Hammer in the Fire Pit. The rest of the room has little of note – very little apart from the city treasure was saved during the battle. There is a **secret door** behind a drape on the southern wall (**Wisdom: Perception** check at **DC 15**) which leads to the outside. Storgaen is reluctant to admit its existence in case it strengthens the hand of those who want to leave the city.

AREA 17: ARCHERY RANGE/MEMORIAL HALL

This room is quite dark, being lit as it is by only a few candles. Ranging along the northern wall are stone busts of dwarves. Most of these have been smashed or defaced. Beside you is what appears to be an archery butt. At the far end of this corridor like room you can see several figures dressed in Khanoumid robes. Beside them is what appears to be a large bronze contraption which is 3' tall and in the form of a human head. There is a hole where the mouth should be.

This used to be the Skard Memorial Hall, where the great and good dwarves or yore were

remembered. It is now used as an internal archery range and testing room. The contraption is one of **Thanus Casedes'** inventions. It is a multiple bolt shooter. The party may have seen an un-animated version of this in **Area 9** where there is a description. This one is animated and is being tested – it is a magical device and does not need to be manned. There are three **Khanoumid warriors** present in the room.

Naturally the party can exit the room and go around to the eastern doors although these may not be visible from where they are. One round after combat has begun however, one of the archers will escape out of the doors to raise the alarm in **Area 23**. Help will arrive several rounds later from **Haasim Sarwar** and his men. At a dash pace, **Area 23** is a good **four rounds** run away. It is possible that the occupants of **Area 18** might hear any disturbances in the corridor and come to investigate.

AREA 18: THE KITCHENS

This large room is clearly a food preparation area. Very long and heavy looking tables span the room. Each of these either holds foodstuffs such as meats and breads or utensils and food preparation equipment. Above the tables are racks and chains from which dangle articles such as pans and spoons. Most of the light in the room comes from a large fire that burns in a fireplace against the south wall. Above it roasts a large pig or boar. At the eastern end of the room is another table at which sit three Khanoumid soldiers eating and supping their wine. Several smaller humanoids scurry back and forth with plates and bowls.

This is the kitchen for the whole southern part of the complex. All the occupants come here at some point for feeding. If the party are noticed, the three **Khanoumid warriors** will attack. The six humanoid kitchen assistants are in fact **goblins**. They will not initially fight but will cower against the southern wall. They will fight when the **cook** enters the room. This he will do if there is any noise; **one round** after a fight begins. He is a **goblin boss** and does not like his food being spoiled. He carries a bloodied meat cleaver,

which he was using at the time (acts like a scimitar) and will enter from **Area 19**. There is nothing of any real value in the kitchen – it is a work place.

AREA 19: THE MEAT STORE

This room is quite chilly which would explain why it is being used as a meat store. Various cuts of several animals hang here on hooks suspended from the ceiling. There is also a large table on which a half butchered carcass lies.

This is the area meat store and is filled with all types of protein. There is nothing of value here bar some good steak.

AREA 20: PROVISION STORE

All manner of boxes, sacks and barrels fill this room. Dried fish hangs from hooks as well as herbs and vegetables. Several containers are open and reveal other foodstuffs such as grain and bread. There are also bottles and jars. A small rat scurries out of sight behind some sacks as you enter

This is a food pantry for this zone of the city. Much here is stale and mouldy although there are edible items too. There is nothing of value in the room.

AREA 21: WELL

A large 5' well dominates the centre of this room. There are also barrels and buckets nearby. A wooden assembly above the well holds a rope with a bucket. A lever allows the bucket to be lowered.

This is usually the fresh water supply for this area. However, since the supply has been cut off due to the activities of the dwarves, this has run dry. This cannot be discerned from above as the well descends into darkness. The well is fed from the cistern in the **Power Source** zone.

If the players **descend** the well, they will find a small 3' wide passageway which will take them to this cistern. This passageway is wet and slimy and

occupied now by several rats. It is a safe way by which the party can penetrate the Power Source. They will enter the cistern at **Area 3** in the Power Source. The entry to the cistern is protected by a grill which can be dislodged on a **Strength** check (DC 12).

AREA 22: LAVATORY

A highly unpleasant stench greets you as you enter this room. Against the southern wall is a flat wooden assembly with 1' holes cut into it. The stench seems to emanate from these holes.

This is the toilet for this zone. It is not a pleasant place to be. If a party member investigates the toilet he will see the holes descending into the darkness. Any further investigation will probably lead the player into feeling nauseous for no reward.

AREA 23: GARRISON QUARTERS

The doors to north and south of this chamber will be open. Several raised voices will be able to be heard from 20' away. The full complement of soldiers will only be present if they have not been encountered previously. There are normally **twelve** men here, not including their leader. If an alarm has been raised there will be only four men within the barracks.

This area has the appearance of a military barracks. Two long tables have been placed in the centre with benches underneath. The tables have plates and wooden goblets as well as utensils and scattered weapons. The walls are of plain but smoothed stonework. Around the outside of the room are cots with straw mattresses. There are also weapon's stands holding a variety of weapons from scimitars to bows and crossbows. Several men dressed in Khanoumid garb are sitting at the tables talking, sleeping and playing cards.

This is the main Khanoumid barracks in this sector of the city. It used to be an Audience Chamber for the welcoming of guests to Skard. It has since been stripped. The men are all **Khanoumid warriors** and are supported by others in nearby rooms. They will

attack if the party is spotted. Any disturbances after the first entry into the city by the party will see them leave the barracks and search for the party. If any search is unsuccessful they will return to their base in this room. Each guard carries his belongings about him which will total **200sp**.

There is a **secret door** in the south west corner although it is not especially well hidden and can be discovered on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 12).

If a fight breaks out and they have not already been encountered, the garrison will be supported by **Haasim Sarwar** and his four **Elite Khanoumid** bodyguards from **Areas 24** and **25**. They may also receive the assistance from the jailer in **Area 26**.

AREA 24: GUARD CHAMBER

This room holds Haasim Sarwar's bodyguard. If they have been engaged already, this room will be empty.

This room is more decorated than the garrison chamber. There are two large beds and a small table and chairs. Around the walls are hangings which depict desert and mountain scenes with a golden sun above. A large barrel with two golden goblets has been placed next to the table. Seated at the table are four large, burly Khanoumid warriors. One is sharpening a large curved knife whilst others pour over a richly decorated book.

These are Haasim Sarwar's bodyguard. They are **Elite Khanoumid** warriors and will fight to the death to protect their leader. If disturbed, the warrior holding the knife will throw it at the party before drawing his large two handed scimitar.

Each warrior carries a purse in which can be found **25gp** in total. The barrel holds a good wine and the goblets are indeed golden. They have been stolen after the attack on Skard. They are a matching pair and depict dwarven warriors marching to war. They are works of art, although this is not appreciated by the Khanoumids, and together are worth **500gp** to a collector of dwarven artefacts and **200gp** generally. The book is a Khanoumid prayer book and is richly

decorated with illuminated texts and gold leaf. To a purveyor of fine books it is worth **100gp**.

AREA 25: SARWAR'S CHAMBER

This room is Haasim Sarwar's bedchamber. If he has been engaged already, this room will be empty. He will hear any commotion in the room next door.

This chamber has been decorated to resemble the inside of a large tent. Gold and green silken drapes run up the walls and across the ceiling. The stone floor has been covered by a sumptuous carpet and there is a large desk and chair. Against the eastern wall there is a large bed with expensive looking silk sheets, under which lies a beautiful dark haired women. When you enter she screams and pulls the sheets tightly to her neck.

Haasim Sarwar is the officer in charge of the garrison in this area of Skard. He is a religious fanatic and although going to war in the name of Ehalazuhn, he will fight to the death in the name of **Arshad the Great, God of the Sands**. Sarwar is a **Level 7 War Domain Cleric**. He wields a mace blessed by the priests of Arshad the Great which bestows a bonus of **+1/+2 vs. Water Based Creatures**. This has special bonuses against summoned water creatures such as Water Weirds or creatures which rely on the water element for life or strength such as Sahuagin or Merfolk. He also carries a **shield +1** which depicts a scorpion with a man's head. This is Arshad the Great. This shield will act normally but **will attract the attention** of any Khanoumid engaged in battle – use of it will be perceived to be a studied insult to their god. For this reason, Khanoumids will attack the character wielding the shield more than any other until the image is removed or the shield repainted. In the desk is another Khanoumid prayer book which is more elaborate than that in **Area 24** and is worth **250gp**. There is also a **Philter of Love**. Sarwar himself is fond of glittering objects and wears around his neck a necklace of aquamarine and topaz gems in a gold setting – it is worth **1000gp**.



The woman in his bed is **Naseefa Rahmani**. She is the consort of Sarwar, and is actually a Khanoumid princess betrothed to Haasim by her ambitious father. If captured she is worth a great deal to the family of **Rahman** in Khanoumia. Her ransom, which she will be duty bound to offer, will be **5000gp**. If the party take up this offer they will find that her impoverished father will only pay **2000gp** for her return. This will lead to Naseefa murdering him for this unforgiveable insult to her status as a princess. She will then use all her resources to hunt the party down and exact her revenge for this slight and for the death of her consort - this can be a plot thread to be developed.

AREA 26: JAILER'S ROOM

The door to this room will be open and so the jailer may come to the aid of the warriors in **Area 23** if a fight breaks out. The jailer is an **Elite Khanoumid**

warrior and he will be present in the room 75% of the time. If he is not there he will be in the cells below.

This simple room has little decoration or adornment. The walls are bare stone and there is a simple bed and a desk, upon which rests a ledger. Attached to the southern wall is a row of keys with numbers above them.

This is the jailer's quarters whose workplace is in **Area 27**. The keys unlock the cells below. The ledger is a record of the victims held in the cells. There are several names crossed out – most of them dwarven. Only two names remain. These are **Nulgoth Grimstone** – a captured dwarf being held for interrogation and **Selyn Casedes**, the son of **Thanus Casedes** in **Area 10**.

AREA 27: THE CELLS

The door to the cells is locked. The lock can be picked by a on a **Dexterity** check (DC 12)

This bare and unpleasant room is clearly a cell block. The walls and floor are damp and un-worked stone. There are five cells, three of which are open. There is a small table and wooden chair at which sits a Khanoumid guard.

The guard is a **Khanoumid warrior** and he holds the key to the cells. He has a pouch with **10sp** in it. There is also the possibility that the jailer from **Area 26** is present in this room.

When the cells are opened the party will find the worn out but alive **Nulgoth Grimstone**. He is a dwarf captured in the upper levels of the city – an area that the dwarves here have heard nothing from since the defeat by Zaleria. He reports a frightening tale of the last survivors of the assault holed up in an area they deemed safe – hidden behind well constructed secret doors. He will tell the party and **Vorsen Brightarm** if he is present that somehow Zaleria's men found this enclave. Grimstone does not know how but he heard the guards talk of Zaleria employing **specialists** in this field. Everyone died including their leader **Nalgir**

Stonebrow. He also heard them discussing these new allies of Zaleria being brought south to discover any more hidden enclaves. Vorsen is particularly worried as his brother, **Sigmund** was serving in the upper city in the great hall of **Gam Daruhl** and he now fears the worst. Vorsen will insist on returning with Grimstone to report to Storgaen Thunder Maul. He will ask the party to continue following Thunder Maul's orders and will try to join them later. If the party try to return to the dwarven enclave with Vorsen then he will insist that they continue with the mission – time is of the essence! Vorsen **should not** accompany the party into the **Power Source**.



The other prisoner is **Selyn Casedes**, the son of Thanus, the engineer in **Area 10**. If the party has not encountered Thanus yet, his son will describe how his father is being forced to work for Zaleria manufacturing terrible weapons of war. To Selyn, there is no possibility that Thanus might be cooperating willingly. He will ask them to rescue his father and will give rough directions to the engineering and weapons development sector. If Thanus has been encountered, the party should recognise Selyn's name. They can then deal with him and his father as they see fit, depending on their earlier actions – whether it being to help them out of Skard or to take them to the dwarven enclave. If they killed Thanus then some explanation is in order.

AREA 28: THE ARENA

You step into a large open chamber with six sides. It is lit by several sconces which hold sputtering torches. The floor in the centre of the chamber is covered in sand giving the room an arena style feel. The outside edge, about 5' wide, is separated from the centre by a low wooden palisade about 4' high. There are dark brown or red patches in the sandy area, which may be blood.

This room was converted by the Khanoumid invader into a large fighting arena. Here the Khanoumid champions test their prowess against each other, animals or against prisoners. The brown marks in the centre of the room are indeed blood stains. When duels are set up they are witnessed by the guards who watch the proceedings from behind the palisade.

NOTE: the corridor which heads east from the arena is actually divided in half lengthwise to allow for a low caged system about 5' high. This allows animals from the **Area 32** to enter the arena directly without escaping into the other rooms. It leads all the way from the arena along the right hand wall to Area 32 where it connects with the animal pens.

AREA 29: THE ARMOURY

This chamber is full of gladiatorial style equipment. Along the walls are racks of strange and artistic looking armour and bizarre shaped weapons. It appears that the gear here is designed more for show and flamboyance than for killing efficiency. There are some helmets which are clearly designed to block any kind of vision, forcing the combatant to fight blind.

This is where the arena fighters choose or are given their equipment. Most of the time they are given weaponry which will entertain the viewers rather than will allow a quick kill - such as huge unwieldy maces or narrow wave bladed daggers. The helmets have designs often related to Khanoumid mythology or traditions. Several of these weapons

and armour pieces would be worth money if sold in a city but are generally too bulky to be transported efficiently.

AREA 30: THE HOSPITAL

There is a low 2' wide bench which is built around two walls of this room. There are also towels and rags, as well as a small table with metal implements upon it. The floor slopes slightly downwards towards the middle of the room, which has a small circular drain at its centre. There is evidence of dried blood on the bench and on the floor.

This is the room where those injured but not killed are treated. The metal implements are basic medical tools for sewing up or clamping injuries. Any excess blood is washed away down the drain.

AREA 31: PREPARATION ROOM

This large room is fairly empty with only some benches around the outside and three straw filled manikins in the centre. The walls are bare but worked stone and the floor is basically flagged. Against the east wall there is a 10' passageway leading north and south. This has a 5' high iron cage construction which leads through and out of the room.

Before a contest, the fighters limber up in this room. Here they may have to become used to a weapon they have never seen before or try to acclimatise themselves to fighting in armour they are unaccustomed to. The cage allows for the transit of animals from **Area 32** to the arena.

AREA 32: THE BEASTMASTER

Loud animal noises will be heard from the corridor to the north of this room. Any spying into the chamber will quite possibly be spotted by one of the animals - this will set up a **loud alarm call**. This will alert the **Beastmaster** to the party's presence.

A strong smell of hay, urine and animal dung greets you as you approach this room. You can hear animal growls and screeches coming from within. When you do see inside you see a large cage assembly reaching from the floor to the ceiling. This is formed by two tiers of animal pens. You count eight in total across the two levels. Within the cages are animals - some familiar but also some less familiar. Some appear totally alien to you.

Feeding one of the animals, a dark hyena that hugs the shadows, is a huge 7' tall man. His burly shape is dressed head to foot in animal skins – a mishmash of different hides and pelts. A set of keys dangles from his belt. He delicately proffers a large chunk of flesh into the cage on a stick, which the animal lunges at and drags into the shadows. He makes soft keening noises to the animal which glares at him from within its cage. Beside the man is a large lever assembly.

The **Beastmaster** provides the animal entertainment for the arena audiences. These animals have been brought from far and wide – both from the mountains and the wastes of Khanoumia. All of these creatures are fed on human flesh so as to develop a taste for it. The Beastmaster is responsible for ensuring an exciting show.

When a duel is announced, he shepherds the animal into the cage assembly against the east wall. The animal is then poked and prodded towards the arena by his assistants. There are 6 cages occupied and there is a selection of different animals. There is a **Dire Wolf**, a **Giant Hyena**, a **Lion**, a **Giant Boar**, a **Giant Scorpion** and a **Giant Spider**.

Unless great care is taken, any approach by the party will be seen by one or more animals. This will most likely be one of those on the eastern edge of the

cage system which can see down the corridor. If this is the case then the Beastmaster will be aware of the party and therefore cannot be surprised. If he gets the opportunity, and once a genuine threat has been established, he will lunge at the lever in the middle of the room with a cry of '*Protect me my children!*' This lever will raise the cage doors thus releasing the creatures within.

The Beastmaster is a fanatic and believes that the animals love him and will defend him – this is not the case. In fact, many bear him an understandable grudge. By releasing these creatures he will make himself a target for attack in the same way as the party. There are several animals held in the pens. If they are released and the party is visible, they will react in one of three ways.

On a d8:

1-2 - They will leave their cages but stand confused near to them or in the centre of the room. They will make threatening noises but will not physically attack. These animals should be rolled for again after each round. On a second roll of **1-2**, they will return to their cage.

3-4 – They will vent their anger at their nemesis, the Beastmaster. They will attack him to the exclusion of all others. They will only change their target if they receive damage from another and more threatening source. If the Beastmaster is killed they need to be rolled for again. On a 1-3 on a d8 they will return to their cage sated, else they will attack the party.

5-8 – They will perceive the party as the greater threat and attack them.

The Beastmaster's thick hides afford him some protection equivalent a chain shirt. He wields a huge magical two handed **maul** in combat which confers a bonus of **+1/ +2 against Beasts**. He also carries two potions of **Animal Friendship** and a flask of **Keoghtom's Ointment** to assist him in his duties. He has no treasure to speak of – his animals are his life.

MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

OGRE

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armour Class: 11 (hide armour)

Hit Points: 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed: 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Senses: darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8

Languages: Common, Giant

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Greatclub: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Javelin: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage

KHANOUMID ELITE GUARD

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (Chainmail)

Hit Points 44 (7d8+14)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Perception+3

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit range 100 ft. /400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage

Two Handed Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

KHANOUMID WARRIOR

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 15 (Chain shirt and shield)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage

VORSEN BRIGHTARM

Medium dwarf champion, lawful good

Armour Class 16 (Chain mail)

Hit Points 54 (5d10+15)

Speed 25ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str+6, Con+6

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Skills Athletics+7, Intimidation+4, Perception+4, Survival+4, advantage on saving throws against poison, and resistance against poison damage

Proficiency bonus +3

Second Wind: He has a limited well of stamina that he can draw on to protect himself from harm. On his turn, he can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + his fighter level. Once he uses this feature, he must finish a short or long rest before he can use it again.

Action Surge: He can push himself beyond his normal limits for a moment. On his turn, he can take one additional action on top of his regular action and a possible bonus action. Once he uses this feature, he must finish a short or long rest before he can use it again.

Extra Attack: He can attack twice, instead of once, whenever he takes the Attack action on his turn.

Great Weapon Fighting: When he rolls a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack he makes with a melee weapon that he is wielding with two hands, he can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for him to gain this benefit.

Improved Critical: His weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

ACTIONS

Greataxe: Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit range 100 ft. /400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10) piercing damage

GOBLIN

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armour Class 15 (leather armour, shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 80f320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing **damage**.

GOBLIN BOSS

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armour Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 21 (2d6)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (-10)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (-0)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The goblin makes two attacks with its scimitar. The second attack has disadvantage.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 80f320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Redirect Attack. When a creature the goblin can see targets it with an attack, the goblin chooses another goblin within 5 feet of it. The two goblins swap places, and the chosen goblin becomes the target instead.

HAASIM SARWAR

Medium human, lawful evil War Domain cleric

Armour Class: 19 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points: 53 (7d8 + 12)

Speed: 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws: Wisdom +6, Charisma +4

Skills: Medicine +6, Insight +6, Persuasion +4, Religion +3

Proficiency bonus: +3

Senses: passive Perception 13

Languages: Common

Challenge: 4 (1100 XP)

Dark Devotion: Sarwar has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

War Priest: Sarwar's god delivers bolts of inspiration to him while he is engaged in battle. When he uses the Attack action, he can make one weapon attack as a bonus action. He can use this feature three times. He regains all expended uses when he finishes a long rest.

Channel Divinity – Guided Strike: Sarwar can use his Channel Divinity to strike with supernatural accuracy. When he makes an attack roll, he can use his Channel Divinity to gain a +10 bonus to the roll.

Channel Divinity: War God's Blessing: When a creature within 30 feet of him makes an attack roll, he can use his reaction to grant that creature a +10 bonus to the roll, using his Channel Divinity.

Use of Channel Divinity = twice between rests

Spellcasting: Sarwar is a 7th-level War Domain Cleric and uses Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following spells from the cleric's spell list:

Cantrips: (4 at will): Guidance, Light, Spare the Dying, Thaumaturgy

1st level: (4 slots): Divine Favour (D), Shield of Faith (D), Bane, Command, Create or Destroy Water, Healing Word

2nd level: (3 slots): Blindness/Deafness, Calm Emotions, Protection from Poison, Spiritual Weapon, Zone of Truth

3rd level: (3 slots): Magic Weapon (D), Spiritual Weapon (D), Bestow Curse, Clairvoyance, Glyph of Warding, Mass Healing Word, Speak with Dead

4th level: (1 slot): Banishment

ACTIONS

Mace: Melee Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

DIRE WOLF

Large Beast, Unaligned

Armour Class 14 (natural)
Hit Points 37 (5d10+10)
Speed 50ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills: Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell: The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics: The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite: Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone

GIANT HYENA

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 12
Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Rampage. When the hyena reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the hyena can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

LION

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 12
Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. The lion has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pack Tactics. The lion has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the lion's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Pounce. If the lion moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the lion can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Running Leap. With a 10-foot running start, the lion can long jump up to 25 feet.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.
Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

GIANT BOAR

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 12 (natural armour)
Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)
Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

Senses passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the boar moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the boar takes 10 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Tusk. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target.
Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

GIANT SCORPION

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 15 (natural armour)
Hit Points 52 (7d10 + 14)
Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	1 (-5)	9 (-1)	3 (-4)

Senses Blindsight 60ft., passive Perception 9
Languages -
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The scorpion makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its sting.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). The scorpion has two claws, each of which can grapple only one target.

Sting. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make 1 a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

GIANT SPIDER

Large beast, unaligned

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)
Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)
Speed 30ft., climb 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +7
Senses Blindsight 10ft., darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.
Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a

DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Web (Recharge 5-6). Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 30ft60 ft., one creature. Hit: The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

BEAST MASTER

Medium human, any chaotic alignment

Armour Class 15 (hides)
Hit Points 92 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages: Common
Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Beast Master makes two melee attacks with his maul.

Maul. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 6 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

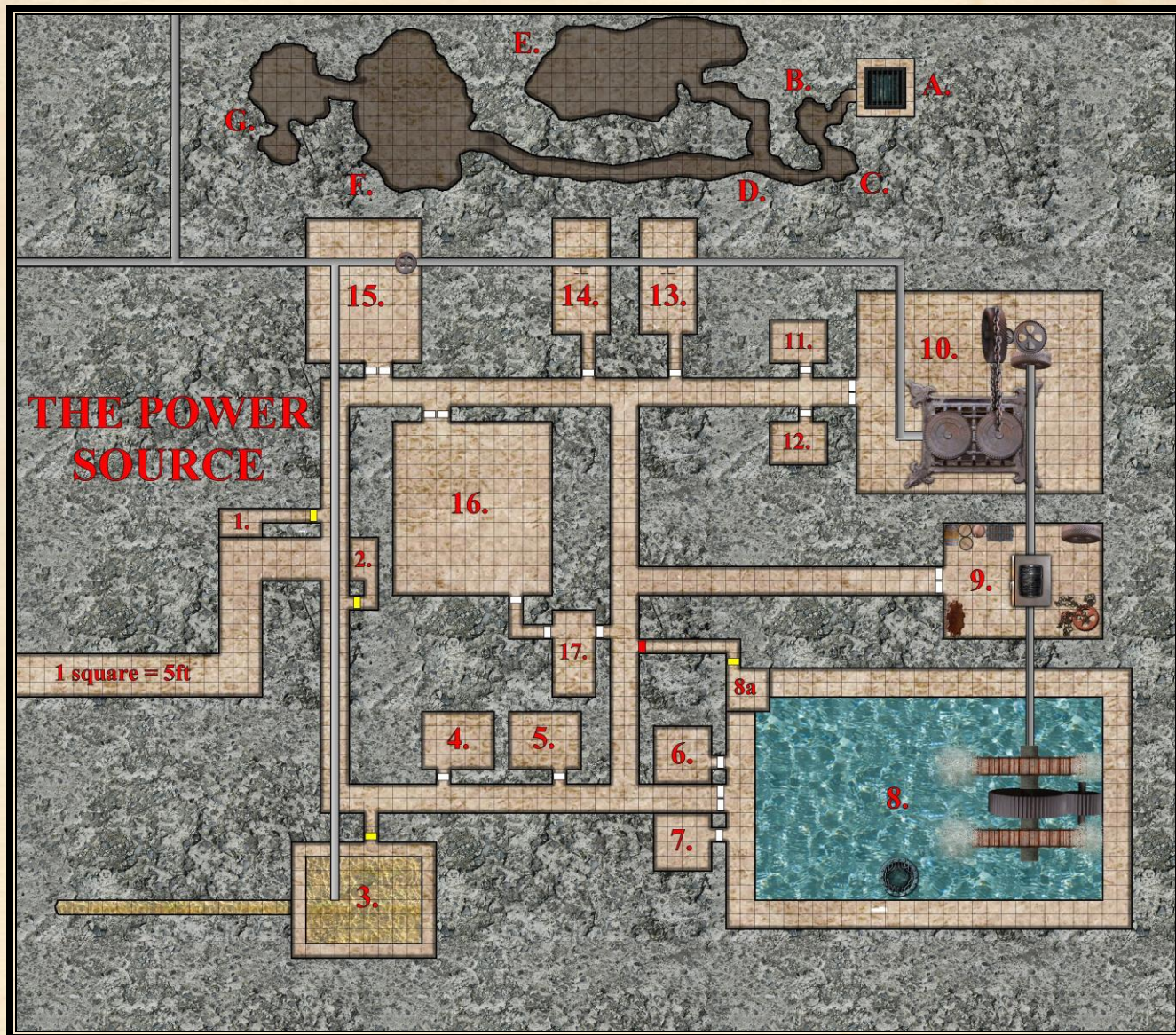
REACTIONS

Parry. He adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE POWER SOURCE

The dwarves of Skard in all their ingenuity have mastered the skills necessary to harness the power of steam. To facilitate this they have utilised their most readily available source of running water, that of the underground river, **Skollin**. The **Power Source** zone is the beating heart of this system. The power of the

river is captured and utilised to propel a set of gears and cogs which work an enormous water pump. The power generated here allows fresh water to be pumped around the city. In addition, pipes take the water to the **Fire Pit** and are used, with the flowing lava of **Khunmir** to create steam - this drives the bellows and machinery necessary for the extraction and manufacture of wondrous objects.



This supply of water has however been cut off due to the efforts of the last remaining dwarves in the city. This has led to discomfort and inconvenience to the new rulers of Skard, who now need to import a water

supply. In addition the pipes which supply the water necessary for the production of steam have been **blocked** inside the Fire Pit. Storgaen Thundermaul has recognised that if the Fire Pit was to be flooded,

then the combination of high pressure water running unchecked into the lava of Khunmir would cause a huge explosion and devastation would follow, he hopes.

Thundermaul has received assistance in his plans through his alliance with the creatures of **Wildmoss**, a prince of fungi, who dwells beneath the waterworks. Wildmoss has taken an integral **cog** from the machine that powers the water supply and secreted it in his domain. The players need to find him and his people and to retrieve it. This will allow the machinery to restart and the water supply to return to Skard. They then will be free to enter the Fire Pit, unblock the pipes, and to initiate the explosion. However, Zaleria's minions also hunt for the cog and they are near to discovering Wildmoss' domain.

The party can gain access to the Power Source by travelling along the **Cardinal Way**. This is a direct route but none too subtle, and the party will need to fight their way into the zone. **Alternatively** they may have discovered the drain from the well in **Area 21**, which will allow a much more measured approach and will see them access the area through the cistern in **Area 3** of the waterworks.



The corridors of the Power Source are generally clean and well lit by torches. There is always a faint watery smell pervading this area. The ceilings of this zone are also very high. Any 10' wide passage is about 20' high. 5' wide passages are a more typical 10' high. On occasion the pipes of the water supply will be visible to the party, such as running overhead in the north/south corridor next to **Area 2** and in various rooms.

It is important that **Vorsen Brightarm** is **not** with the party when they enter the Power Source. This will

allow the players to solve the problems of the water system themselves. Vorsen may have already been called away due to the information given to him by **Nulgoth Grimstone** in the cells. If this has not happened, then the party should be **waylaid** by a dwarf sent by Storgaen Thundermaul who needs Vorsen back with him. This is because he needs him to prepare for a possible incoming attack. There has been a revelation that the enemy may have found a way to discover their whereabouts in the enclave and Thundermaul needs all the help he can get.

NOTE: There are keys for all doors in the Power Source in **Cyrus Buckle's** office at **Area 8a**.

AREA 1: GUARD CHAMBER I

This area contains three **Khanoumid warriors**. It is fully manned due the alarm caused by the party's arrival into Skard. They wield heavy crossbows and scimitars. The bolts of the crossbows have been dipped in **slow poison** (Constitution SR at DC 12 or receive 5 damage and the effects of a Slow spell for two rounds). There are **three arrow slits** opening up to the **Cardinal Way** which allow them to target any intruder coming towards them. This area is also covered from **Area 2**. They each carry **15sp** in purses attached to their waist. Apart from the soldiers, the room is fairly bare with a simple table and three chairs. The door to the guard room is locked but can be picked with a **Dexterity** check (DC 12) or smashed down after a successful **Strength** check at the same DC.

AREA 2: GUARD CHAMBER II

This is similar in description and style to **Area 1** and is an initial guard post to ward off unwanted visitors from the area. They are posted here to cover Area 1 and are **similarly armed**. The door to this chamber is also locked (**same DC**).

AREA 3: CISTERN

The door to the cistern is locked but can be picked with a **Dexterity** check (DC 14).

This room is dominated by a huge water tank or cistern. Clearly designed to take a great deal of water, the tank is now practically empty. A large 4' diameter pipe enters the room at ceiling level through the northern wall but no water flows from it. An occasional drip falls through its grilled opening. Around the edge of the cistern is a 5' wide walkway with a small iron ladder leading to the base of the tank on the north side.

This is the water tank which supplies fresh water to the southern parts of Skard. It has fallen out of use since the water was cut off by **Wildmoss** and the dwarves. If the party have come through the drain from the well, they can climb out via the ladder. If they have entered through the door, the hole through which the water gets to the well will be clearly visible. The hole to the well is protected by a grill which can be dislodged on a **Strength** check (DC 12). There are no occupants in the cistern as it is currently unusable.

NOTE: once the pump in **Area 10** is functioning and the various valves opened, water will fill this cistern making a return through the drain to the well in the west hazardous if not impossible.

AREA 4: STORAGE

This room is full of engineering equipment. There are chains, cogs and levers in boxes and barrels. There is a strong smell of oil and grease. There are various boxes named Machine Parts. These are similarly full of small cogs and levers.

This is a general storage area for maintenance of the water supply. There is nothing of value in the room.

AREA 5: STORAGE

There is a sign upon this door which simply reads **MECHATRON**.

There is a strong smell of oil and lubricant when you enter this room. There are several boxes and containers piled neatly against the north wall. These boxes have numbers ranging from 0001 to 0030 stencilled upon them. There is also a paper ledger hanging on a chain.

This is a storage zone for parts of the **Mechatron** construct currently in **Area 16**. Any investigation of the boxes will reveal what appear to be metal parts of a humanoid body such as eight inch long fingers and other body parts. A vaguely stylised human head with large black eyes can also be found. It is hollow but there are connectors inside it. If anyone asks, they will be able to estimate the full height of this 'statue' at around 15'. In other boxes are glass tubes and cylinders. These are the containers for the watery blood of the Mechatron.

The body in this room is incomplete and unworkable – they are just spares for the real prototype. The ledger is a check list for the parts of the body in the room. Most have been ticked but some have been left blank – entries such as Chest Cavity and Circulatory Pump. Notes are written beside and signed by **Cyrus Buckle**. One note states

"We are behind, one breakage and the project fails. Muzmed needs to take action and speed production before Zaleria becomes aware of his incompetence."

AREAS 6 AND 7: GUARD ROOMS

These were initially offices in the dwarven period. Now they act as guard rooms securing the water supply – or at least they will be when the water supply is working again. There is a small 1' high window which runs the length of each room (15') on the corridor side. These are four feet from the floor. Therefore it is easy to see inside either room and for the **three Khanoumid warriors** within each one to see out.

You can see a light ahead on either side of the corridor as you head east. The light emanates from two narrow 1' high windows running horizontally for the final 15' or so of the corridor. You can hear voices from

within. The corridor itself ends at a pair of huge bronze doors decorated with dwarven faces – mostly defaced. You can hear a faint sound of rushing water as you approach.

When it is clear that they are being attacked, two of the guards will run out of their rooms and **bar entrance** to the **Waterworks**. They will try to hold the doors shut whilst they call for help from **Cyrus Buckle** in the control room. To gain entry, the party needs to defeat the **strength totals** of the two guards on the opposite side. The soldiers have a combined strength of **28**. If the characters attempting entry muster less strength than that, the doors remain barred – if more then they burst through.

If alerted by the sounds of fighting, Buckle will immediately summon the **Mechatron** from **Area 16**. See the information in **Area 16** for a description of the Mechatron and how it works. The Mechatron will enter into the Waterworks corridor in **five rounds** as it must take the long way round due to its bulk. The characters will hear its coming long before they see it.

NOTE: Once it is activated, the Mechatron is impossible to turn off – it obeys **only** Cyrus Buckle.

AREA 8: THE WATERWORKS

If the party enters the Waterworks whilst combat still rages they will have to contend with **Cyrus Buckle** in the **Control Room** as well as the arrival of the **Mechatron**. If they stay in the corridor, Buckle will leave the Control Room to engage the party there **once** the Mechatron is engaged. He will arrive in four rounds. If being defeated he will run to the Control Room to escape. If he gets to the secret door in the corridor before the party rounds the corner they will not see him enter. It can be found however, if searched for, on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (**DC 14**). Once the combat is over the following can be read (or before if it helps).

This is a huge room, the majority of which is filled by a huge cistern full of water. The water enters the tank from two large pipes in the east wall. As the water

pours in, it falls on a massive waterwheel construction. The force of the water propels the wheels around, which in turn rotate a 5' diameter spindle. This spins rapidly, heads north and through the north wall. In the north west corner of the room and 20' off the ground, there is what appears to be an office with windows overlooking the cistern. Despite the huge flow of water into the tank, the level of the water never seems to rise.

The point about the lack of rising water is a hint to the players that there is a drain somewhere. If they have time to look for it in the turbulent eddies below, they will see it on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (**DC 10**). If they fail to see it, they can be informed that the water is too frothy which makes it difficult to see below the surface – they will see it if they poke their head beneath the surface. Any investigation will locate the huge 15' drain and will notice that the grill covering it has been destroyed leaving an 8' hole. The players might also remember Storgaen's advice to search below the Waterworks.

The spindle from the waterwheels is 5' thick but there is a **3' space** around it. This allows access to **Area 9**. It is through here that Wildmoss entered the room and took the cog.

AREA 8a: THE OFFICE

The entrance to this room is protected by a **secret door** in the corridor. It can be found on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (**DC 14**). The door to the office will usually be **locked**, especially if **Cyrus Buckle** is inside. The lock can be picked on a **Dexterity** check (**DC 12**).

This 15' square room clearly has an important function in running the Waterworks below. It is full of levers and buttons. There is a large opening window from which the whole of the chamber below can be seen apart from the area directly below.

Few of the buttons and levers works at this time due to the meddling and sabotage of the dwarves. When functioning they control the entrance of the

water and the velocity of the wheels' rotation. The only controls that work are two large levers. One **stops** the water wheels from moving round and thus halts the spindle heading north from rotating and the other **stems** the river from entering the chamber thus leading to it draining through the grate in the floor. The first lever must be pulled if the machine in **Area 9** is to be accessed in order to replace the stolen cog.



The room is the workplace of **Cyrus Buckle**, a **Level 8 Rock Gnome Wild Mage Sorcerer** and a co-conspirator of Zaleria. Although starting his life in a positive fashion as with most gnomes, his mind was forever warped by a tragedy which led to the deaths of his whole family. This was caused by a rock fall initiated by some dwarves who had been mining near his home. Since then, he could not but hate dwarves and the light left his life. Due to this he was a willing collaborator with Zaleria who promised the destruction of Skard and the dwarves within. His heart is now black and his mind clouded – he detests all dwarves and those who would help them. The **Mechatron** in **Area 16** exists from Cyrus'

inventiveness as do many of the other weapons found there. See the information in **Area 16** for a description of the Mechatron and how it works.

NOTE: Cyrus wears the device necessary for the animation of the Mechatron around his neck.

NOTE: Cyrus, being a Wild Mage sorcerer is a complex character to play – prepare his responses to the party before he is encountered as far as possible.

NOTE: When Cyrus is in the office he receives **half cover** giving him a +2 to his AC and Dexterity saving rolls.

AREA 9: THE GEARS ROOM

This is a 60' chamber and the first thing that you notice is the deafening noise. There is a huge mechanical contraption in the centre of the room, and from what you can see; it is full of cogs and other devices – a constant rattling and clanking comes from within. There is a large 5' spindle entering the room from the south wall and another from the north. Both terminate inside the machine but the difference is that whilst the southern spindle rotates rapidly as it enters the room, the northern one is stationary. It appears that the device might not be working properly. Various large wheels and levers are stacked around the walls of the room.

An **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 12) will discern that there is a cog missing from within the machine. This is the machine from which **Wildmoss** stole the cog. This cog needs to be retrieved. In order to replace the cog, once retrieved from Wildmoss, and therefore start the water pump in **Area 10** working, the **lever** in Cyrus Buckle's control room must be pulled to stop the whole machine. This will allow access to the cog machine. Once the cog is fixed in place, the lever in **Area 8a** can then be pulled again restarting the rotation of the Water Wheels. This will start the flow of water to Skard again. None of the cogs scattered throughout the room will work in the machine.

AREA 10: THE PUMP ROOM

If the party has replaced the stolen cog from Wildmoss' domain then this water pump will be functioning. The noise will reverberate throughout the room and the sound of rushing water will be heard as it speeds through the pipe. Otherwise the pump will not be functioning.

A huge mechanical device sits in the centre of this enormous chamber. A succession of wheels and cogs lead to a contraption which can only be described as a huge bellows or pump. Two great cylinders lie at the centre of the machine and these are connected to a large 5' spindle which exits the south wall near the ceiling. A wide steel pipe leads from the machine across the ceiling west and exits the chamber through the north wall.

The pump is fed from the underground river, **Skollin**. A tributary of the river speeds below the machine and the water is drawn up through pipes by the pump cylinders. It is then forced along the pipe to the rest of Skard.

Therefore the force of water from **Area 8** makes the pumps in **Area 10** work. They then draw more water up from below and send it around the city.

AREA 11: ENGINEERS' WORKROOM

This room contains several tables on which are spread various charts and schematics. Some large chairs surround these tables. Around the walls are various cupboards and bookshelves filled with scrolls and books.

This is a workroom for the engineers who are trying to get the machine in **Area 10** working again. The papers cover complicated engineering problems and are basically undecipherable. The books and scrolls likewise cover mathematical issues dealing with marine and fresh water engineering such as water pressure and flow rates. Mixed in amongst these papers is a scroll on which are the spells: **Create or Destroy Water**, **Water Walk** and **Water Breathing**.

This can be found if time is taken to search the room on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 14).

AREA 12: ENGINEERS' RESTROOM

A 10' table is situated in the centre of this room with several chairs around the outside. Three men and a woman sit at this table eating and drinking. They all wear aprons and work clothes and have oily hands and faces. They are engaged in a heavy discussion and barely notice your arrival.

These are the engineers tasked with repairing the pump device in **Area 10**. They are busy arguing about how to achieve this impossible task and the dangers of falling foul of Zaleria. They are **non-combatants** and will not engage the party. They will cower against the south wall and beg for mercy. If they think that it will save their lives one will reveal the existence of the spell scroll in **Area 11**.

AREA 13: SAFETY VALVE A

NOTE: if the water pump in **Area 10** has been fixed then there will be the sound of gurgling water within the room. It is prevented from proceeding however by the valve, which is closed. If the water pump is not yet functioning, there will be silence. This silence will continue even when the valve is turned to ON as there is no water to flow.

This room is bare of any adornments except for a large 5' pipe which enters and exits the room at ceiling height on the east and west walls. An iron step ladder assembly reaches up to the pipe, where you can see a large red circular valve.

This is the first of the safety valves installed by the dwarves to stop the flow of water to the rest of the city for maintenance work. If the characters climb the ladder they will see that it is turned to the **OFF** position. It needs to be turned to **ON** to allow the water to flow through. If the pump in **Area 10** has been fixed there will be a loud rushing sound as the water speeds through and on to **Safety Valve B**.

AREA 14: SAFETY VALVE B

NOTE: whether any water at all is flowing through this area depends on whether the pump in **Area 10** has been fixed and whether **Safety Valve A** has been switched to **ON**. If any of these criteria is not achieved then there will be no water noise in this room. This silence will continue regardless to whether the valve in this room is turned to **OFF** or left as **ON** as there is no water to flow.

If the water pump in Area 10 has been fixed **and** Safety Valve A turned to **ON**, then there will be the sound of rushing water within the room.

There is nothing of note in this room except for a large pipe about 5' in diameter which enters the room at ceiling height on the east wall and exits on the west. A rusting iron stepladder rests against the south wall. About half way along the pipe you can see a large blue circular valve.

This is the second safety measure to allow the dwarves to maintain and regulate the water flow into Skard. If the characters climb the ladder, they will see that the valve is turned to **ON**. It needs to be **left in this position** in order to allow the water to flow west onto **Safety Valve C**. Whether there is any water flow in this room at this point is dependent on the party's actions in **Areas 10 and 13**.

AREA 15: SAFETY VALVE C

NOTE: whether any water at all is flowing through this area depends on whether the pump in **Area 10** has been fixed and whether **Safety Valve A** has been switched to **ON** and **Safety Valve B** has been left **ON**. If any of these criteria is not achieved then there will be no water noise in this room. This silence will continue regardless to whether the valve in this room is turned to **ON** as there is no water to flow.

If the water pump in Area 10 has been fixed and Safety Valves A and B turned to **ON**, then there will be the sound of gurgling water within the room.

This very large chamber is bare except for a large 5'

diameter pipe which enters the room on the east wall at ceiling height. This pipe splits into two at about two thirds of its length from the east wall. One pipe heads through the west wall while another heads through the south wall. A large iron gantry accessed by a ladder is fixed to lie adjacent to the pipe above you where you can see a large yellow circular valve.

This is the final safety measure installed into the dwarves' fresh water supply. The valve is currently set to **OFF**. It needs to be switched to **ON** to allow the water to flow through to the rest of Skard. Once all the safety valves are turned to **ON** and the pump in Area 10 fixed there will be the sound of rushing water as it speeds through the pipes and into the city.

AREA 16: THE MECHATRON ROOM

The double doors to this room are 15' high and solid iron. There is a sign on the door which reads: **NO ADMITTANCE. CB**

NOTE: Only read **Version A** if the party has not already met the Mechatron. If they have then read **Version B**.

Version A:

This chamber is huge at around 60' square. It is filled to the brim with mechanical equipment and engineering tools. There is a heavy smell of oil and metal. Large devices designed for metal working squat around the room, which is lit by strangely lit metal orbs. There are workbenches and stools all around, as well as what look like protective suits and heat resistant garments.

There are some devices which are unfamiliar to you but by far the most striking feature is an enormous shape in the centre of the room draped in a large canvas tarpaulin. It appears to be around 12' high. You can just about make out the shape of a huge metal foot protruding from beneath its covering.

Version B:

This chamber is huge at around 60' square. It is filled to the brim with mechanical equipment and engineering tools. There is a heavy smell of oil and metal. Large devices designed for metal working squat around the room which is lit by strangely lit metal orbs. There are workbenches and stools all around, as well as what look like protective suits and heat resistant garments. There are some devices which are unfamiliar to you.

This is an engineering room deluxe. It is run by **Cyrus Buckle** and his associates and has been turned into a weapon maker's dream. Some of the weapons around the room are fairly typical, others less so.



One of these devices is a primitive **flame projector** which can be used by anyone so trained. This works on the principle of **Greek Fire** and is man portable. The flame comes from an insulated tube held by two men whilst another two hold a great canister of fuel. It is thus very unwieldy and heavy and can only travel at 5' per round. However the flames generated inside the cylinder reach a distance of 15' and cause 5d6 fire damage. What is more, the flames stick to any flammable surface causing an additional 2d6 fire damage for another round. It is a dangerous weapon to use however and if the cylinder is punctured at any time the crew will be consumed by flames inflicting 10d6 fire damage each and a further 4d6 over the next round. There is one of these devices in the workshop but it is empty and unusable. The party may have come across one in **Wildmoss'** domain depending on their journey through the Power Source.

The huge metallic construction is the **Mechatron**. This is a construct devised from Cyrus Buckle's

twisted mind. It is built in the shape of an iron giant style of figure. Its features however are stylised to only vaguely resemble that of a humanoid face. It is semi-sentient but will not move unless activated. It is powered through a glass canister on its back of what looks like water with blood swirling within. This acts as the creature's life force. If this is broken, its blood will seep out and the Mechatron will seize up and cease to function in 3 turns. The glass will resist normal weapons but can be broken by other means. When active it is truly terrible to behold both with its horrific humanoid visage, its metallic muscled frame and the damage it inflicts.

The Mechatron is the first prototype of its kind and is therefore fairly unreliable. The magical bonds which give it life are weak and thus it has a tendency to **break down**. The Mechatron will break down on a roll of 1 (1d4) on each round that it is active. This will reduce it to a state of immobility whereupon it will grind to a halt in its present position. It will restart after one round whereupon the reliability rolls should recommence.

There are blueprints for the construction both of the Mechatron and the flame projector in the room. These will reach to the thousands of gold pieces if sold to the right buyer on the open, or black, market. They are evil devices however, both in their workings and their intent and so a certain amount of thought should be given in their disposal. These blueprints can be found, if searched for, amongst many other documents on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 14)

AREA 17: THE ROOM OF FLAMES

The party will discern a great heat emanating from this room long before they open the door.

A rush of searing air hits you as you open the door to this room. From the doorway you can see three 5' vats of burning liquid. They bubble and hiss with a diabolical or volcanic intensity. The vats themselves glow orange from the heat being generated. Around the rest of the room are long ladles and iron buckets. The room is lit purely by the glow of these liquid furnaces.

This is the fuel that is used by Cyrus Buckle to forge and power his machines – most notably, the flame projectors.



The room is a very dangerous place and the party will take damage if they stay longer than one round (1d6 fire damage each round after the first). Buckle and his associates wear protective and insulated gear whenever they enter this room.

THE PRINCE OF MUSHROOMS

The area dug out by the dwarves of Skard was not uninhabited before their arrival. For centuries there was life in the dark, a world of living fungi which passed the decades in a sodden and silent paradise. Then the dwarves arrived and change seemed in the air. The fungi silently wondered if they could live alongside their new neighbours who dug and delved into their homes. Live they did and not only that, they discovered that they had little to fear from the gem obsessed small folk. The dwarves also realised that they could live alongside the fungi and coexist – their interests were different. For years the two cultures coexisted – the Bronzejaw in Skard under their kings and the fungi in their realm of **Eudoris** under theirs. This ended with the invasion of Skard.

Now the fungi have gone into hiding – they can expect no such tolerance from the new rulers of the city. An alliance was formed between the beleaguered dwarves and their dark dwelling friends. So much so that when the dwarves wanted to create havoc amongst Zaleria's followers they enlisted the help of **Wildmoss**, long lived prince of the fungi. A deal was made that the dwarves would never cease their struggle against the invader if Wildmoss would disrupt the Khanoumids to the best of his ability. Thus the plan to stop the supply of water was formed.

Coming up through the great **Waterworks** of Skard, Wildmoss took an integral piece of the machinery that supplied Skard with water. The dwarves knew that the desert folk did not possess the know how to repair it and they were proved right. Now, Wildmoss holds the piece until it is needed by a group working for Storgaen Thundermaul to throw out the invader once and for all.

AREA A: THE WAY DOWN

The party will discover that if they pass through the damaged grate on the floor of the Waterworks in **Area 8**, they will gain access to the principedom of Wildmoss. The excess water flows down and into a second drain and away from Skard but the characters will descend onto this second grate and therefore see the path leading to Eudoris before them.

NOTE: Read the following only if the water entering the Waterworks has not been shut off.

You descend through the grate from the Waterworks above and land upon a second grate gasping for air. As you crawl out of the torrent and stand on the narrow ledge, the water continues to rush past. You find yourself in a small stone lined chamber. To the west you see a large crack in the wall of the room. Darkness lies beyond but a strong earthy smell seems to emanate from within.

This is the entrance to **Eudoris**. Unless the party have a light source which is not affected by water, all is dark. Their torches and lanterns will not function. As they progress into Eudoris however, they will see that fungi can provide its own light.

AREA B: INTO EUDORIS I

As you duck to enter the strange cavern you are soon aware that the walls are warm and moist. Rivulets of water trickle down the sides and form pools at your feet. A strong musty smell drifts along from the west and small organic growths, soft to the touch, appear amongst the rocks. They also emanate a faint purple

light which allows you to see ahead. The light moves with you as you proceed. As you round a corner you enter a slightly larger chamber about 10' in diameter. The floor is covered with purple fungal growths and these continue up the walls.

These are **Violet Fungi**. There are **six** in this chamber mixed amongst the other molds. They are a first line of defence cultured by Wildmoss. They will attack any creature who wanders into range.

AREA C: INTO EUDORIS II

As you continue to grope your way forward you see another small chamber ahead. Inside the chamber float several shadowy spherical forms. As you near, you see that each seems to have a large single eye in the centre of their bulbous bodies. They make no move to attack but seem to float on the fetid breeze.

These are **four Gas Spores**. They resemble beholders but are gas filled entities which will explode on the slightest touch. If they are disturbed in any way they will release their poisonous spores. They will also attack anyone who enters the chamber. Some members of the party may become infected by their spores and thus risk death. Wildmoss however has the power to remove this disease. He will do so once he realises the party's reasons for entering his kingdom.

AREA D: THE SCREAMING CORRIDOR

Further into this strange fungal world and you slowly progress along the corridor. Soon however you see by the faint purple light that surrounds you some more mushroom shaped plants. They are large and bar your path ahead.

These are four **Shriekers** and are cultivated here as a warning to Wildmoss that intruders are in his kingdom. If the party moves towards them a loud screaming noise begins to emanate from deep within them. This will alert the Myconids inside the complex.

AREA E: THE MYCONID CHAMBER I

If the Shriekers have sounded the warning, the party will see a cautious Myconid appear at the entrance to **Area E**. It will look at the party in confusion but will not attack. Strange hissing sounds will emanate from within it. If it is attacked it will retreat into the chamber rather than retaliate. The rest of the Myconid community will become aware of the danger through the creatures rapport spores. When the party enters **Area E** read the following.

You enter a large cavern. It is lit subtly by the same purple luminosity that has accompanied you so far and is filled with fungi and molds. A bizarre sight greets your eyes, for ahead of you are a group numbering about twenty of what appear to be animated mushrooms. They stand as large as a man but are all different, both in colour and shape. These strange creatures of nature make no attempt to approach you or attack. They just stare and sway gently. A faint hissing sound can be heard emanating from the group.

These **Myconids** are not aggressive but are wary of the party. If the party attacks, they will not resist unless it is clear that the group will slaughter them. If no aggressive action is taken they will decide collectively to take them to their prince. If any of the party has been poisoned by the **Gas Spores** then a voice will be heard telepathically saying '*You are infected...follow*'. Otherwise the word '*Follow*' will be heard in the characters minds. Two Myconids of blue and red hues will lead the group west.

AREA F: THE MYCONID CHAMBER II

You enter another large cavern which is also populated by a score or more of the strange mushroom creatures. As you enter they make way to let you past and you follow your guides through this silent room of living fungi. When you reach the other side you see an entrance to another chamber. The two that you have been following halt and stand aside '*Enter, warm ones*' says the voice in your head.

This is the second Myconid colony. Again they view the party as a strange visitation. They are less apprehensive as the party is clearly accompanied by their kin.

AREA G: THE HALL OF PRINCE WILDMOSS

You pass through a darkened portal and enter a room well lit by fungi light. Waiting to greet you are four more mushroom men of different colours and shapes. They however look less vibrant as their brethren outside – one could almost say older. They make no noise but a telepathic voice states, “Behold Wildmoss, Prince of the Silent Underworld”

At this, a taller, stronger and more colourful creature steps out from a small cavern at the back of the chamber. He stands a good foot higher than the others. You see some flat rocks beside him and he beckons you to sit. A deep voice in your head says with a flourish, “I am Prince Wildmoss, Lord of the Myconids and this is my realm – welcome.”

Prince Wildmoss already knows through his telepathic link that the party mean him no harm. He also knows their mission of destroying Zaleria’s servants in the world above and preventing the return of Ehalazuhn. The first thing he does is to reach over to each party member that is infected with the poison from the **Gas Spores**. As his hand nears, the party will see small specks of light leave their bodies and dissipate into the cavern. Wildmoss will tell them that they are free of disease and will apologise for any discomfort his guardians caused them.

He will also know that they have been tasked by **Storgaen Thundermaul** with restarting the city water supply. He will stand and slowly make his way into a small cave behind him. He returns holding a large iron cog in his hands. This is a large piece of metal and would need two normal people to lift but he seems to carry it as if it weighs little. He will sit and offer it to the party.



At the same time he will proffer a shining jade ring, *‘You mean well – take this gift and remember the underworld folk’*. This is a magical ring that will protect the user against poison damage. It grants the bearer **advantage** on any poison saving rolls they need to make whilst it is worn. He will then will say *‘Go in safety – bring back the old days’*.

THE INVASION OF THE UNDERWORLD

A noise startles you whilst you are in the midst of your meeting with Wildmoss. It is a high pitched screaming which is followed by a Myconid stumbling into the cave. You can tell that it has been injured. It hisses and wheezes and has been badly burned. Wildmoss takes its hand, bows his head and the creature expires slowly in front of him. A loud voice is heard in your head – it is Wildmoss, *‘Warriors from above are come – they bring fire and destruction on my people.’*

Zaleria’s efforts in finding the domain of Wildmoss have reached fruition and she has sent a force to wipe them out. This body of Khanoumid warriors is

supported by a flame projector team (the flame projector is described in the text of **Area 16** of the Power Source). By the time news reaches the party they will have penetrated Eudoris as far as **Area E**. The Khanoumid warriors are creating havoc largely protected by the flame projector team. Read the description below when the party nears the enemy.

As you head down the corridor from the Myconid colony you can see a flickering of flame ahead. In the distance you can see that Khanoumid warriors have entered the cave of the first Myconid colony and are wreaking havoc. What really grips your attention is a group of four warriors dressed in protective clothing and wearing steel masks which use a fire breathing contraption on the fungi in the cave. They spray fire left and right instantly igniting the occupants. The flames seem to stick to the targets burning constantly. Behind the flame projector you see a large warrior dressed in black robes wielding a two handed scimitar. He directs the flame team onto their targets. Hisses and high pitch screams fill your head.

The enemy force is numbered at **10 Elite Khanoumid Guards**. They are supported by **four** more who wield the flame projector. At the head of the group is a warrior called **Fahd Kaleel**. He is a champion of Khanoumia. To combat these, the Myconids can muster some **five** beings left in the first cave with **ten** of the strongest from the second cave. These will support the party – **Wildmoss** will also fight – he will **single out** Kaleel in a duel to the death.

After the battle the Myconids will mourn their losses in their own silent manner. If Wildmoss lives and any of the party has died, he will **raise** them through the use of his **animating spores**, not as a Spore Servant but as they were in life. The party will leave Eudoris with the lost cog and the blessings of the remaining Myconids. They will find that the Khanoumids had drained the Waterworks and lowered ropes down the hole. The party can use these to escape. Once the cog is fitted into the machine in **Area 9**, they must make their way to Cyrus Buckle's

office in **Area 8a** and turn the water supply back on before they can succeed in their ultimate mission.



Once the party has turned the water supply back on and opened the safety valves, their work in the Power Source is done. A reminder of their quest to cause an explosion may be necessary. They must now proceed to the **Fire Pit**.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

KHANOUMID ELITE GUARD

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (Chainmail)

Hit Points 44 (7d8+14)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Perception+3

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit range 100 ft. /400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage

Two Handed Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

KHANOUMID WARRIOR

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 15 (Chain shirt and shield)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage

CYRUS BUCKLE (WILD MAGIC SORCERER) (LEVEL 8)

Small gnome, lawful evil

Armour Class: 12

Hit Points: 53 (8d6+16)

Speed: 25ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10(+0)	11 (-0)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws: Constitution +6, Charisma +7

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages: Common, Gnomish

Skills: Arcana +0, History+0, Deception +7, Persuasion +7, advantage on all intelligence, wisdom and charisma saving throws against magic

Proficiency bonus: +3

Challenge: 5 (1800 XP)

Spellcasting: He is an 8th level Wild Magic Sorcerer and uses Charisma as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He has **8 sorcery points**. He can use his spell slots to gain more spells or sacrifice spell slots in order to gain more sorcery points - see p101 (PHB). He knows the following spells from the sorcerer's spell list:

Cantrips: (5 at will): Acid Splash, Blade Ward, Message, Poison Spray, Ray of Frost

1st level: (4 slots): Colour Spray, Expeditious Retreat, Mage Armour, Ray of Sickness

2nd level: (3 slots): Blindness/Deafness, Hold Person, Phantasmal Force

3rd level: (3 slots): Blink, Gaseous Form, Water Walk

4th level: (2 slot): Ice Storm, Polymorph

Careful Spell: When he cast a spell that forces other creatures to make a saving throw, he can protect some of those creatures from the spell's full force. To do so, he spends 1 sorcery point and chooses a number of those creatures up to 3. A chosen creature automatically succeeds on its saving throw against the spell.

Distant Spell: When he cast a spell that has a range of 5 feet or greater, he can spend 1 sorcery point to double the range of the spell. When he casts a spell that has a range of touch, he can spend 1 sorcery point to make the range of the spell 30 feet.

Empowered Spell: When he rolls damage for a spell, he can spend 1 sorcery point to reroll a number of the damage dice up to 3. He must use the new rolls. He can use Empowered Spell even if he has already used a different Metamagic option during the casting of the spell.

Extended Spell: When he casts a spell that has a duration of 1 minute or longer, he can spend 1 sorcery point to double its duration, to a maximum duration of 24 hours.

Heightened Spell: When he casts a spell that forces a creature to make a saving throw to resist its effects, he can spend 3

sorcery points to give one target of the spell disadvantage on its first saving throw made against the spell.

Quickened Spell: When he casts a spell that has a casting time of 1 action, he can spend 2 sorcery points to change the casting time to 1 bonus action for this casting.

Subtle Spell: When he casts a spell, he can spend 1 sorcery point to cast it without any somatic or verbal components.

Twinned Spell: When he casts a spell that targets only one creature and doesn't have a range of self, he can spend a number of sorcery points equal to the spell's level to target a second creature in range with the same spell (1 sorcery point if the spell is a cantrip).

Wild Magic Surge: Immediately after he casts a sorcerer spell of 1st level or higher, he must roll a d20. If he rolls a 1, he must roll on the Wild Magic Surge table to create a random magical effect – see p104 (PHB)

Tides of Chaos: He can manipulate the forces of chance and chaos to gain advantage on one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw.

Bend Luck: He has the ability to twist fate using his wild magic. When another creature he can see makes an attack roll, an ability check, or a saving throw, he can use his reaction and spend 2 sorcery points to roll 1d4 and apply the number rolled as a bonus or penalty to the creature's roll. He does so after the creature rolls but before any effects of the roll occur.

ACTIONS

Dagger: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 +2) piercing damage.

GAS SPORE

Large plant, unaligned

Armour Class 5

Hit Points 1 (1d10 - 4)

Speed 0 ft., fly 10ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

Senses blind sight 30ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 5

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. The gas spore explodes when it drops to 0 hit points. Each creature within 20 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) poison damage and become infected with a disease on a failed save. Creatures immune to the poisoned condition are immune to this disease. Spores invade an infected creature's system, killing the creature in a number of hours equal to 1d12 + the creature's Constitution score, unless the disease is removed. In half that time, the creature becomes poisoned for the rest of the duration. After

the creature dies, it sprouts 2d4 Tiny gas spores that grow to full size in 7 days.

Eerie Resemblance. The gas spore resembles a beholder. A creature that can see the gas spore can discern its true nature with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check.

ACTIONS

Touch. Melee Weapon Attack: +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1 poison damage and the creature must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become infected with the disease described in the Death Burst trait.

VIOLET FUNGUS

Medium plant, unaligned

Armour Class 5

Hit Points 18 (4d8)

Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, frightened

Senses Blindsight 30ft. (blind beyond this radius)

passive Perception 6

Languages -

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

False Appearance. While the violet fungus remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary fungus.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fungus makes 1d4 Rotting Touch attacks.

Rotting Touch. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d8) necrotic damage

MECHATRON

Large construct, neutral

Armour Class 20 (metal)
Hit Points 135 (15d8+75)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20(+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Immunities: fire, poison
Condition Immunities: charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 6 (2300XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Mechatron makes two melee attacks which stun the target for one round if a Constitution Saving Throw (DC 14) is failed.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft one target.
Hit: 14 (2d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage

MYCONID ADULT

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armour Class 12 (natural armour)
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 20ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Distress Spores. When the myconid takes damage, all other myconids within 240 feet of it can sense its pain.

ACTIONS

Fist. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage.

Pacifying Spores (3/Day). The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Rapport Spores. A 20-foot radius of spores extends from the myconid. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

WILDMOSS

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armour Class 13 (natural armour)
Hit Points 72 (8d10 + 16)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 12
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Distress Spores. When the myconid takes damage, all other myconids within 240 feet of it can sense its pain.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The myconid uses either its Hallucination Spores or its Pacifying Spores, then makes a fist attack.

Fist. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 8 (3d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (3d4) poison damage.

Hallucination Spores. The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The poisoned target is incapacitated while it hallucinates. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Pacifying Spores. The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC12 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on itself on a success.

Rapport Spores. A 20-foot radius of spores extends from the myconid. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

SHRIEKER

Medium plant, unaligned

Armour Class 5
Hit Points 13 (3d8)
Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, frightened
Senses Blindsight 30ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6
Languages -
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

False Appearance. While the shrieker remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary fungus.

Shriek. When bright light or a creature is within 30 feet of the shrieker, it emits a shriek audible within 300 feet of it. The shrieker continues to shriek until the disturbance moves out of range and for 1d4 of the shrieker's turns afterward.

FAHD KALEEL

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (scale mail)
Hit Points 80 (10d8 +30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. He makes two melee attacks.

Two Handed Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage

REACTIONS

Parry: He adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon

ENCOUNTER 4: THE FIRE PIT

The dwarves of Skard long ago pioneered the use of steam to power their city, engineering works and machinery. The power of the underground river **Skollin** was used with the heat generated by a searing open fissure in the earth called **Khunmir**. Since the invasion, this innovative way of running the city has fallen into disuse. The Khanoumids have imported their own fuel in the form of coal, and this is used to power the dwarven forges in the city. These forges are being used to manufacture the materials and weapons of war. Khunmir still flows beneath the forges of Skard however and Storgaen Thundermaul has calculated that if the area was flooded then the resulting reaction between the powers of Khunmir and Skollin will lead to a great explosion which will put the Khanoumid works out of commission.



The aim of the party in the Fire Pit is to open up the pipes which feed the forges to such an extent that the area will be inundated with water. This will involve the smashing of these pipes so as to prevent the flow of water from being stopped. The party will also regain the services of Vorsen Brightarm who will meet them at the entrance to the Fire Pit.

All the corridors of 10' width or greater in the Fire Pit are 20' high and of a polish dark stone with a thin red vein running through them.

AREA 1: GUARDROOM

The garrison of this room regulates the passage to and from the Fire Pit but also protects the city from the occupants in **Area 3**. They do not allow access without the express authorisation of Zaleria or her second in command, Zorander le Torneau. There are **four Khanoumid warriors** here armed with crossbows and scimitars. They will be watching through arrow slits in the wall and will challenge the

party. They **do not** have a key to Area 2 or 3. The room is empty apart from a table and some chairs.

On the table is a letter, on which is written

'I need not impress on you the importance of your charge. Our guests in the rooms opposite cannot be allowed into the main precincts of the city. Only overseer Muzmed has access - none other bears the Sigil necessary. Do not attempt entry but if there is a breach you must sacrifice yourselves for the benefit of us all.'

Zorander le Torneau.'

AREA 2: THE HALL OF THE HEADS

The double doors to this room are locked and require a **Dexterity** check (DC 14) to open. There is a sign on the door that states **'DANGER - NO ADMITTANCE - Z'**

You enter a long 20' wide corridor. All along the sides of this area are bronze constructions fixed to the walls – you count eight on each side. They sit on bronze sconces which would allow them to rotate. Each construction is roughly 2' in diameter and shaped to look like an abstract head and face. There are large holes where their mouths should be and you can see the sharp barb of an arrow or bolt protruding from it. The heads remain motionless and silent as you enter. They point towards the far end of the corridor where you can see another set of bronze double doors.

These animated heads are design to kill any intruder who does not wear Muzmed's **Sigil of Ehalazuhn**. This is a bronze whirlpool shaped symbol. The heads guard the entrance to the prison of **Wayne and Elphine Creighton**. They can see the invisible spectrum, which is useful in terms of their prisoners and will respond to any movement beyond the first 5' space at either end of the corridor. They are designed not so much to prevent access but to prevent the escape of the occupants.

The heads work as a non-sleeping permanent bolt firer. Each weapon fires twice as fast as a normal crossbow. They each contain a hopper within their metal frame which holds 20 bolts. This needs replenishing after 10 rounds of constant fire. The

automatons have an AC of 15 and 50hp each. They will track and fire at any organic target visible or invisible until destroyed. They will cease firing if a target retires to a safe zone.

Getting past this defence will prove a challenge and a dangerous one at that. A party could bypass these rooms until they acquire Muzmed's sigil. Otherwise it could be possible with use of spells such as **Non-detection**, **Haste**, **Mirror Image** and **Dispel Magic** or the like.

AREA 3: THE HOME OF WAYNE AND ELPHINE CREIGHTON

The bronze double doors to this room are locked and require a **Dexterity** check (DC 14) to open.

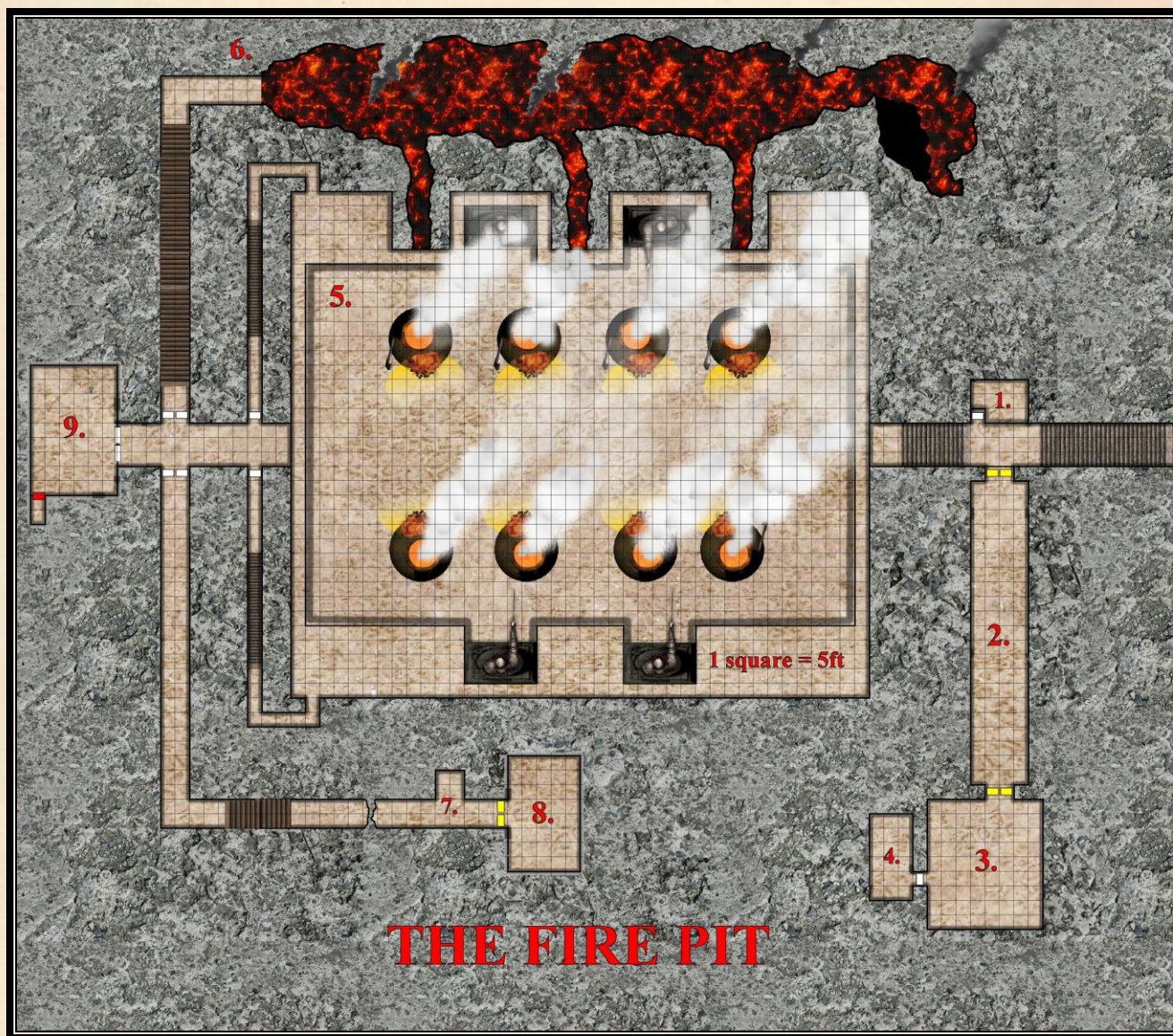
You enter a very large and richly decorated room. The floor has a plush carpet covering the stonework and the walls are wood panelled and from them hang expensive drapes. There are bookcases along most of the walls as well as a bureau. In the centre of the chamber is a large mahogany table. This is richly decorated with silver candlesticks and cutlery. Two crystal decanters of port and two bottles of wine are also laid out. There are only two chairs at this table – one at either end.

The occupants of these rooms are **Wayne and Elphine Creighton**. These dangerous characters were captured attempting to break through the Razor's Edge by traversing Skard. Zaleria's men captured them but not before they had slain a good many soldiers. They have been kept in this gilded cage ever since and are desperate to leave. The Creightons are a married couple who were both turned permanently invisible by a magical experiment that went wrong. They both blame each other for their predicament and now hate each other with a passion. Their invisibility has not improved their minds which were already fragile, and they can be both classed as insane. Now they spend their time together but invisible from each other and everyone around them.

Any person unlucky enough to enter this chamber is entering a world of hate and frustration. However,

the Creightons will work together if it helps them escape from their prison. Zaleria intends to convince them to support her cause but treats with them at

arm's length. Several of her soldiers have met their ends at their hands during these negotiations.



The prisoners' first action on the party's entrance into their room will be to sneak around to check if they can pass by the animatronic heads. If they have been destroyed or decommissioned somehow they will endeavour to make their way out. If this is not the case, they will attempt to negotiate with the party as they believe, which may be the case, that the party has the sigil belonging to Muzmed. They may ask about the whereabouts or well being of Muzmed in order to ascertain whether the party has killed him.

If the party clearly has the sigil and refuse to give it to them or escort them out, they will turn violent and attack the party. Neither Vayne nor Elphine can see each other and thus any area effect spells cast by them may hit the other one, which will elicit a furious response. The party should soon begin to realise that these beings are totally insane through their dialogue with the group and each other. The Creightons have no treasure or magical items to speak of but the value of the cutlery, ornaments etc would in total value 750gp.

AREA 4: THE BEDROOM OF HATE

This room is also richly decorated with floor coverings and wood panelling. There are also several tapestries. These are odd however as they seem to have had their human subjects roughly cut out by a knife leaving a space. The cut cloth lies in a pile on the floor. There is a large expensive looking double bed in the centre of the room but this lies untouched. Instead, on either side of the bed is a rough mattress. This has been made from torn wall hangings and each has a rudimentary pillow. The occupants of these beds would not be able to interact with each other at all unless they raised their voices.

This is the love nest of a husband and wife who hate each other but are forced to live together. Elphine cut out the figures in the tapestry in a furious show of resentment towards the subjects' visibility. Vayne and Elphine sleep on either side of the bed and not together. It has been this way since they were brought here.

AREA 5: THE FIRE PIT

As you descend the stairs, waves of intense heat blast up the corridor towards you. Reaching the bottom, and peering through the 20' high doorway, you see an enormous chamber stretching out westwards. It is full of activity which centres on a succession of furnaces which span the length of the room. Many Khanoumid personnel tend these furnaces either in operating huge bellows or shovelling coal from huge stacks into the fires. There are several large grates in the floor which betray the existence of Khunmir bubbling below. The intense heat emanating from these grates ensures that the staff that work here wear protective clothing. Every now and again a furnace deposits its metallic contents into ingots which are being used to manufacture weapons and armour. Large stacks have been placed in piles around the hall.

Although the furnaces give off a significant amount of light as well as heat, they also cast large shadows on

the walls which flicker and dance as the flames flare and diminish. On both side of the hall are two enormous 50' bronze statues of dwarven champions in 20' deep alcoves. They stand tall and serene as their enemies make the materials of war before them. Around the outside walls of the hall is a gallery 40' above the floor, most of which is in shadows.

This is where the dwarves of the Bronzejaw clan forged their great machines and marvellous artefacts. Now Zaleria has turned it into an arsenal. The pipes that come from the Waterworks enter behind each of the statues and can be accessed from the gallery above them. The pipes enter the Fire Pit at gallery level and then travel down the backs of the statues and then through the dais at the bottom of their feet. Other pipes were design to then take the water to the machines. These boiled it by extracting heat from Khunmir below and converted into steam. This steam then powered bellows, heavy machinery and the like. Now these lower down pipes do not function and they have been mangled beyond repair by sabotage. The party's directions, and Vorsen will describe this, is to **break open** the pipes on the gallery level above, thus allowing the water to flow over the edge and into the Fire pit.

Vorsen Brightarm will be able to help the party in their quest to flood the area. He will direct the party through the hall and up the stairs beyond to the pipes and show them how they can be destroyed. It should not be too hard for the party to sneak around the edge of this hall should they wish to use **stealth**. They will usually be hidden in the shadows cast from the furnaces. Likewise, when up on the gallery the party will be very hard to spot. If the group wish to use force to get through the hall it will be a hard fight and will most probably arouse the attention of Muzmed.



The gallery is patrolled, but once this is dispatched the party can destroy the four pipes. This will result in water pouring out of them and into the hall below – but only if the water supply has been turned on in the Waterworks first. All four pipes must be broken and will fracture on a **Strength** check (DC 16). The noise caused by this, or the torrent of water which falls to the floor of the Fire Pit, will probably elicit a response from those below. There will be rumbles and gouts of steam as each torrent pours from the gallery to ground level and pours on to Khunmir through the grates in the floor. Once all four are broken, Vorsen will hasten the party out of the chamber before the chain reaction begins. The fires of Khunmir and the waters of Skollin will combine to destroy the furnaces in the Fire Pit, cracking the floor and leading to more lava trickling into the chamber. They will also fill the chamber with scalding steam which will be unbearable to any without protective clothing and quite impossible to work in. Thus Zaleria's war machine will grind to a halt.

NOTE: as an additional quest, the party could be sent to defend the Power Source against enemies instructed to halt the supply of water.

There are **twenty Khnoumid warriors** working at the forges in some capacity or other. They all wear protective gear due to the intense heat. They will fight if attacked or to defend the Fire Pit. There are also **eight Elite Khnoumid Guards** who keep an eye on the hall from various locations. One of these guards protects the western exit of the hall. There is also a section of **four Elite Khnoumid Guards** who patrol the gallery above the hall. **Müzmed** will probably be in his room but will come forth if combat occurs.

Vorsen Brightarm will recommend that the party attempts to find the **Hammer of Havaeth** before they sabotage the Fire Pit as it may not be possible afterwards. This quest is optional to the party and will not affect their main objective.

AREA 6: KHUNMIR

As the party descends the stairs towards Khunmir they will feel a noticeable increase in heat. When they round the corner which reveals the river of fire, the heat will be unbearable. Every round spend in this heat will cause any unprotected characters to suffer **1d4** fire damage. If they can acquire protective suits, such as from a guard, they will be unharmed.

You have noticed a great increase in heat as you have descended beneath the hall. On rounding a corner to the east, a wave of superheated air blasts over your face. Through the shimmering heat you can see a long bubbling lava flow stretch out before you. Any open skin feels as if it is burning and hair singes. This is Khunmir, the river of fire. The lava flows slowly eastwards as far as you can see. There are some branches of the river which head around corners to the south and under the Fire Pit.

Any character who falls into Khunmir will take **8d6** fire damage immediately if no protective gear is worn. If they have protection then they will suffer **3d6** but the protective layer will then be destroyed.

There is a thin 18" ledge around Khunmir to the east but this is precarious and poorly maintained. A character must make a **Dexterity** saving roll (DC 8) every second turn or plunge into the fiery depths.

Any adjacent character can try to steady them to prevent them falling in. This is a **Strength: Athletics** check (DC 12). The ledge will take them to the platform around the far side where they will encounter its residents.

The ledge at the far side of Khunmir has become the home of **six Magmin**. These small elementals play in the flames and fire of the great river. When they see the party they will immediately rush across the lava to cause as much mayhem as possible. This will include igniting anything combustible they can reach. Whilst fighting these creatures, the characters must make a **Dexterity** saving roll every melee round as stipulated above due to the distractions caused by their attacks. If four of these creatures are killed, the remainder will jump into the flames and not be seen again. If the characters proceed around the ledge to the shelf they will find a slain **Fire Snake** which was killed by the Magmin before it could evolve into a Salamander. If cut open, the party will find a large **Fire Opal** worth **1000gp** in the Fire Snake's belly.

AREA 7: THE TEST

As they proceed down the corridor to the repository of Havaeth they will see that there has clearly been a land slide here previously. This has now been cleared. Beyond the cleared rock fall they will be able to see several dead Khanoumids. Their bodies have been scorched and burned to a cinder.

As you peer down the corridor you can see at its end two large bronze doors. These are closed and show an effigy of a powerful dwarf wielding a great hammer. To the left and within the corridor you can also see an alcove. In this alcove is what appears to be a stone sculpture of a great winged creature with a female human head. As you approach its head turns to face you. 'Seek thee the great hammer?' it asks.

The guardian of the Hammer of Havaeth is **Rursubela**, a spirit guardian bound to this place by arcane magics after its summoning by Havaeth Bronzejaw. It is **not** a sphinx although the statue it inhabits was carved to look as one. A spirit guardian

manifests itself as a tiny shining light which can be seen zipping around inside a host. It has limited skills in illusion, which it uses to make it appear as if the sphinx is alive. It has been guarding this place since the beginning of dwarven culture in Skard. Rursubela awaits its release by Havaeth, but the death of the great king means that it waits in vain. It now follows its instructions by asking those who wish to pass riddles. Only those who wear the royal seal of Havaeth Bronzejaw can pass unmolested – and this is in Zaleria's possession. As soon as the party acknowledges their quest they are committed to the contest.

The riddles it asks are as follows:

1. I am the beginning of the end, and the end of time and space. I am essential to creation, and I surround every place. What am I?

The letter 'E'

2. The one who makes it, sells it. The one who buys it, never uses it. The one that uses it never knows that he's using it. What is it?

A coffin

3. What does man love more than life
Fear more than death or mortal strife
What the poor have, the rich require,
and what contented men desire,
What the miser spends and the spendthrift saves.

And all men carry to their graves?

Nothing

If **more than one** riddle is failed Rursubela will attack. Like all spirit guardians, her statue host is immobile and Rursubela will attack through spells and her innate shock blast. The only indication of the spirit's presence inside the statue will be a shining blue light which speeds around inside the host. Once Rursubela is defeated the light will go out and the statue will be destroyed. If the party succeeds in out-riddling Rursubela, she will accept that she has been defeated and return to her silent vigil. The party can then pass.

AREA 8: THE HAMMER OF HAVAETH

The bronze double doors to this room are locked and require a **Dexterity** check (DC 16) to open.

A bright golden light greets you as you enter this large chamber. Fiery braziers burn along the walls even though this room must have been untouched for some time. The walls and floor are a smooth cream marble tile and a large golden chandelier hangs from the ceiling giving off a magical radiance. At the end of the room is a dais on which rests a great war hammer. It looks to be made from solid gold and it shimmers in the beams of light that play upon it.

This is the **Hammer of Havaeth**, the great weapon wielded by the first King of the Bronzejaw. Despite its looks it is not made of gold, but the radiance that spills from it brightens when held, dazzling opponents it is pitted against.



To any not from the Bronzejaw royal line it is an unwieldy beast and not much better than an ordinary hammer but to one of the true blood it is a devastating weapon of great power. As Storgaen Thundermaul is not of the royal line he cannot wield this weapon, nor does he desire to do so. It is however a symbol, a totem which he can show his clan to stir them to great deeds against their enemies.

AREA 9: THE CHAMBER OF MUZMED

The huge bronze double doors to this room require a **Strength** check (DC 14) to open.

This room is clearly intended for some creature of great size. There is a huge table and a great chair covered in the pelts of cave bears. Against the wall is a great black iron shield and beside it a huge sword about eight feet long. At the far end of the room is a large iron bed and hanging on the wall is a huge painting of a castle amongst the mountains wreathed in fire.

Muzmed found his way up Khunmir when he heard that the dwarves of the region had fallen to the assault of Zaleria. He is a 15' **Fire Giant** who was low down the scale and fairly weak in terms of the **Ordning**, and was expelled from his clan further within the Razor's Edge. He now works for Zaleria, although he is not loyal to her quest to return Ehalazuhn to the world. He has been entrusted with keeping the forges of Skard burning and is ruthless in pursuit of this task.

Muzmed has been entrusted with the great key that opens up the northern doors of the **Cardinal Way** which he bears around his neck and also holds a **Sigil of Ehalazuhn** safely stored in a secret panel in his chamber – this gives access to the chambers of **Vayne and Elphine Creighton**.

It is possible that Muzmed might be out in the Fire Pit when the characters first approach or at any time after. If he is not, then he will be found in his room berating a Khanoumid Warrior for carelessness. He will smash this unfortunate subordinate against the wall killing him outright.

If engaged in battle Muzmed will attack with his great sword. If he cannot reach opponents due to his great size – such as if they are on the gallery of the Fire Pit - he will hurl missiles at them – any will do.

Within a large secret panel, requiring a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 14) will be found Muzmed's valuables alongside his **Sigil of Ehalazuhn**. If this panel is pushed in it will spring open to reveal its contents. These are:

A chest holding **2300gp** – most of which have fused together from the heat forming a solid block.

Four platinum chess pieces worth **100gp each** – he doesn't understand the game.

A complete suit of **adamantine** chainmail armour - taken from an adventurer Muzmed literally stumbled on in the mountains.

A **Ring of Warmth** – he intends to give this as a gift to Zaleria.

An **Eversmoking Bottle** which reminds him of home.

NOTE: With the destruction of the Fire Pit, access is now open to the rest of the city. Each member of the party will receive **600XP** for helping the dwarves of Skard and destroying Zaleria's war making potential.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

KHANOUMID ELITE GUARD

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (Chainmail)

Hit Points 44 (7d8+14)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Perception+3

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit range 100 ft. /400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage

Two Handed Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

KHANOUMID WARRIOR

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 15 (Chain shirt and shield)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage

WAYNE CREIGHTON

Medium human, chaotic evil level 5 evoker

Armour Class 12 (unarmoured)

Hit Points 25 (5d6+5)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting: He is a 5th level Wizard (Evoker) and uses Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following spells from the wizard's spell list:

Cantrips: (4 at will): Acid Splash, Blade Ward, Chill Touch, Prestidigitation

1st level: (4 slots): Longstrider, Magic Missile, Shield, Silent Image

2nd level: (3 slots): Blindness/Deafness, Levitate, Misty Step, Ray of Enfeeblement

3rd level: (2 slots): Fireball, Vampiric Touch

Sculpt Spells: Wayne can create pockets of relative safety within the effects of his evocation spells. When he casts an evocation spell that affects other creatures that he can see (therefore not Elphine Creighton), he can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. The chosen creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell, and they take no damage if they would normally take half damage on a successful save.

Invisibility: Wayne Creighton is invisible.

ACTIONS

Dagger Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 (1d4 -1) piercing damage.

ELPHINE CREIGHTON

Medium human, any alignment

Armour Class 13 (unarmoured)

Hit Points 22 (4d6+8)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting: She is a 4th level Wizard (Diviner) and uses Intelligence as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She knows the following spells from the wizard's spell list:

Cantrips: (4 at will): Chill Touch, Fire Bolt, Poison Spray, Shocking Grasp

1st level: (4 slots): Colour Spray, Disguise, Self, Identify, Illusory Script, Sleep

2nd level: (3 slots): Blindness/Deafness, Gust of Wind, Crown of Madness,

Portent: She can roll two d20s and record the numbers rolled. She can replace any attack roll, saving throw, or ability check made with one of these foretelling rolls. She must choose to do so before the roll, and only once per turn. Each foretelling roll can be used only once.

Invisibility: Elphine Creighton is invisible.

ACTIONS

Dagger Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 (1d4 +1) piercing damage.

MAGMIN

Small elemental, Chaotic neutral

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 9 (2d6 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Ignan

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. When the magmin dies, it explodes in a burst of fire and magma. Each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried in that area are ignited.

Ignited Illumination. As a bonus action, the magmin can set itself ablaze or extinguish its flames. While ablaze, the magmin sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

Touch. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 3 (1d6) fire damage at the end of each of its turns.

RURSUBELA

Tiny Elemental, Unaligned

Armour Class 19

Hit Points 42(12d4+12)

Speed 0ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	22 (+6)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, necrotic, thunder, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses truesight 50ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1, 100 XP)

Magic Resistance. The spirit guardian has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects

Spellcasting. The spirit guardian is a 5th-level spell caster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): Fire Bolt, Light, Minor Illusion, Ray of Frost

1st level (3 slots): Magic Missile, Shield, Thunderwave

2nd level (2 slots): Blindness/Deafness, Scorching Ray

3rd level (1 slot): Lightning Bolt

ACTIONS

Shock: Ranged Spell Attack: +4 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d6) lightning damage.

MUZMED

Huge giant, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 107 (13d12 + 65)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	9 (-1)	21 (+5)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +10, Cha +5

Skills Athletics + 10, Perception +6

Damage Immunities fire

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Giant

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant makes two Greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. Hit: 24 (6d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Projectile. Ranged Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. Hit: 25 (4d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.



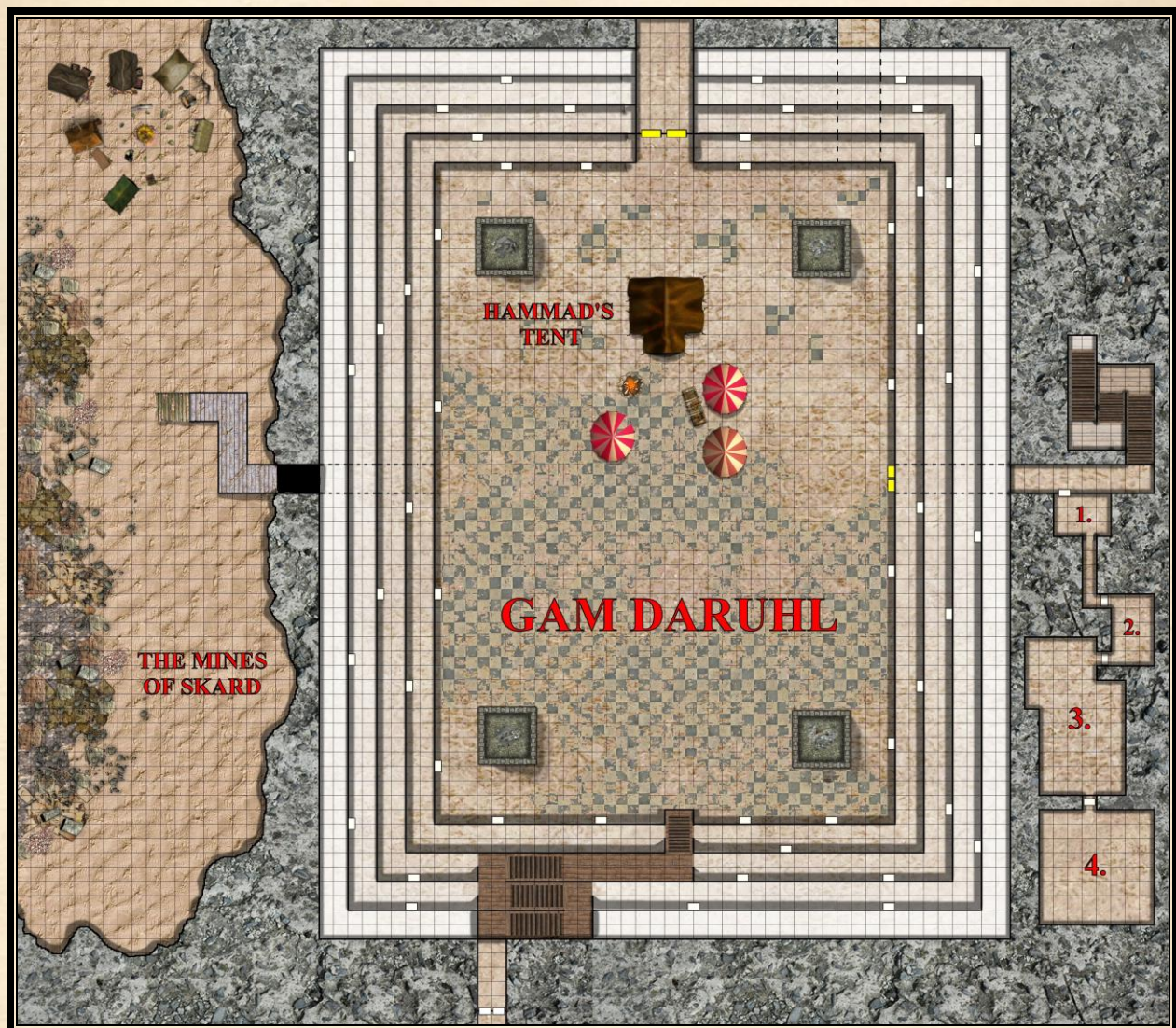
PART 9: THE UPPER LEVELS

ENCOUNTER 5: THE FALLEN CITY

The dwarf city of **Gam Daruhl** was the first area of Skard to fall to the army of Zaleria. Although the military resources of the Bronzejaw clan had depleted with the exodus of the Lost Dwarves they still put up a hard fight. In the end, numbers told and the city fell. From Gam Daruhl, the Khanoumid forces spread throughout the city and swept all before them. Now this central sector is the beating heart of Zaleria's domain. The houses which once were homes to hard

toiling dwarves have been converted into military barracks and supply stores. Recently the senior Khanoumid general, **Arhab Hammad**, has set up his base on the floor of the hall and pitched his command tent there.

To the east of Gam Daruhl, a **sealed** doorway leads to the staircase heading up to the **Aerie**. The party must possess Hammad's **Sigil of Ehalazuhn** to pass through here. To the west a passage ends in the mines of Skard. These mines are now occupied by a force of mercenary **duergar** under their leader, **Snargund Firemane**. These were brought in by Zaleria to root out any surviving dwarf enclaves. This they have done with some success and are now about to turn their attentions southward.



To the north is a wide passageway heading north east under the mountain to Khanoumia. This is many miles, and before they get there the party would have to pass Khanoumia's Army camped outside. It consists of hundreds of warriors. Beast riders such as those encountered at Crystal Haven will fly overhead. It is a huge tented city. There is no way past this force and the party will have to back track to Gam Daruhl. Also, at the north end of the hall is the entrance to Zaleria's temple and throne room. This is protected by two huge magically sealed doors made of bronze. They are decorated in water based themes such as swirling waters and waves. There are two cavities in the doors for two **Jewels of Ehalazuhn** jewels to be placed within. They require **two** of the **Jewels of Ehalazuhn** to be slotted into the doors – no sigil will work here. The characters have one already and Zaleria's deputy **Zorander** has another. The party will find him in the **Aerie**. However, first they need Hammad's **sigil** to enter that zone and that is kept in his tent. The aim of the party is to take the sigil from Hammad by any means possible and advance to the Aerie to confront Zorander.

GAM DARUHL

You have entered the old living quarters of the Bronzejaw clan, or Gam Daruhl as it is known. It is a huge area dug out of the living rock and shaped like an inverted pyramid. From where you stand you can see four tiers of dwarven accommodation leading down to the floor of the hall. All around these tiers are the doors of individual dwarven homes. At ground level there are four exits from the area, two to the north and one each east and west. Four massive pillars support the roof high above you.

A large tan coloured tent has been pitched in the centre of the hall with several smaller ones around it. There is clearly some Khanoumid activity around this tent. In addition there are large numbers of Khanoumid warriors at work here. Some move in and out of the open rooms carrying boxes and sacks while others work or train across the hall.

You are just about to descend the winding wooden

staircase when the sound of running footsteps can be heard coming up the steps.

The footsteps they hear come from a **Khanoumid warrior** messenger. He bears a letter from Arhab Hammad to Muzmed in the Fire Pit. If the party waylays him and retrieves the letter it reads:

Greetings Great One,

How go affairs within the Fire Pit. I hear that you make much of this cursed dwarven machinery. This is good for my army grows ever stronger and has a need for the weapons you make. At this moment my main forces await our leader's command to march, and camp to the north outside the confines of this underground fortress.

I myself have just arrived here to take command and am to be found in my tent in Gam Daruhl. Seek me there if you have news. I am yet to meet with the great Zaleria and cannot bypass those infernal doors. I am loath to report worrying tidings but my men have begun to question why they are here and rumours have spread of a terrible band of warriors who sweep aside our soldiers as if they are chaff. Morale is flagging and yet no order to march has come. Without me, my forces will dissipate and return to their homes. Assure me that these rumours are untrue.

On another note, I now hold the sigil you sent me to gain access to the Aerie. My beast riders need somewhere they can land and tend their mounts. I hear that Zaleria's second man, Zorander secures it. You will receive more help soon – our leader's dark allies head south tomorrow.

With deep respect

General Arhab Hammad

If the party succeed in killing Hammad his army will indeed begin to disperse. Despite appearances their morale is fragile and should Hammad die, there will quite likely be a mutiny. Zaleria does not come forth from her temple to assuage their fears. The party will need to retrieve the sigil to the Aerie from Hammad's tent if they are later to gain access to the temple of Ehalazuhn.

Should the party choose the path of force they will have to contend with ever strengthening enemies. There are **30 Khanoumid warriors** within Gam Daruhl and a further **10 Elite Khanoumid Guards**. Hammad's bodyguard is another **two Elite Guards**.

They would also have to fight **Hammad** in the open with all his men.

Should the party choose the path of stealth then they may have a greater chance of success. The tiers that make up Gam Daruhl can be walked or crept along. Anyone crawling across them will generally be invisible from enemies below – although not above. Similarly the party can travel via the rooms of the dwarven homes – all doors are unlocked and many lie open. There are risks with this as they are not necessarily empty. Should they enter any of the rooms, use the following table to determine its occupants, if any. If a combat is fought there is a 20% chance that the noise will attract the attention of **two Khanoumid warriors** to investigate.

Roll a d100:

0-40: The room is empty. It has been ransacked and anything of value removed. There are broken tables, chairs and crockery on the floor.

41 – 55: The room is empty and it is a high status dwelling. It connects to either a room next to it or one above/below. Choose which is most appropriate/advantageous. There is also a 10% chance that an item of value was missed – perhaps an unassuming art piece worth **1-200gp**.

56 – 60: This room is occupied by a sleeping **Khanoumid warrior**. He lies upon a mattress and holds a wine flagon to his chest. He snores loudly but does not wake unless a loud noise is made. He has a pouch holding **15sp**.

65 – 70: The party stumble across a dwarven child who hid when the invasion began. He/she is frightened and cries, especially if there is a dwarf in the party.

71 – 85: A Khanoumid store room. Inside the party can find many random pieces of equipment, including enough Khanoumid uniforms to outfit the whole party. There are also crossbows and scimitars. One small keg holds **slow poison** like that use by Elite Khanoumids. If this is applied then the victim must attempt a **Constitution** saving roll (DC 12) or receive the effects of a **Slow**

spell for two rounds. There is enough poison for **ten** applications whether arrows, bolts or blades.

85 – 95: Three **Khanoumid warriors** occupy this room and are playing cards. They will attack the party but can be surprised. There is **150sp** on the table.

96 – 100: An **ankheg** has dug into the side of this dwelling and now has made a temporary home here. If it is engaged **another** will come through to support its hive member. If the party searches the partially collapsed tunnel behind the beasts the will find a Khanoumid officer dead and partially eaten. On his body there is a **Gem of Brightness** that he looted from a fallen dwarven warrior.

HAMMAD'S TENT

Whichever path they take, the party's main focus is **Hammad's tent** and access must be gained. There are **five Khanoumid warriors** amongst the tents near Hammad's HQ and two bodyguards. The **two Elite Guards** at the door to his tent will not allow any entry unless the party can convince them otherwise. This would need to be plausible and would require a **Charisma: Persuasion** check (DC 14) or a **Charisma: Intimidation** check (DC 16) to prevent them summoning Hammad. Once they gain access to the tent read the following:

The large tent is richly decorated and resembles a desert warrior's abode. There is a large eastern rug in the centre and various small seating cushions. From the ceiling a small incense burner perfumes the air. There is also a small highly decorated table on which are wine flagons and crystal glasses. At the far end there is a large desk on which there are writing materials and a pile of papers.

Arhab Hammad will be in this tent if he has not been encountered before. He is a great chieftain and will not surrender to the party but will fight to the death. As he fights, he will summon his bodyguard to help him. Hammad wears **scale mail +1**, a shield and wields a scimitar. He also carries a **Potion of Heroism**, which he will use in the battle.

Hammad also has a small decanter in his possession and in this resides a water spirit akin to a **Marid**. This will fight for the general on condition that it will be released once this service is accomplished. He is however an unwilling servant and this will become clear. This creature knows itself as **Pasha Naazim Hakim** and is very pompous. It will want reassurance from Hammad that he is indeed the greatest of all water spirits. Like all of its kind Naazim is fond of flattery and if the party recognise this then there is a possibility that it will refuse to attack them and watch the proceedings instead. To convince Naazim to stand aside however would require a **Charisma: Persuasion** check (DC 16) and a great deal of convincing language. Naazim will cease fighting if Hammad dies. He will disappear into a flurry of foam and water once the battle is over leaving its eastern silks behind and also a **Decanter of Endless Water** as a reward for his freedom.

Hammad's tent contains a large chest with which he pays his immediate followers. This contains **5,000sp** and **650gp**. There is also a large corked bottle which contains the equivalent of two potions of **Superior Healing**. The papers on his desk refer to army matters and are of little use to the party. Also on the desk however, is a large bronze whirlpool **sigil**. This opens the doors which will give the party access to the **Aerie**.

THE MINES OF SKARD

The mines of Skard are accessed through an archway leading from the western side of Gam Daruhl. The passage is 70' long and terminates at a wooden gantry. This gives access to a rather rickety staircase leading to the mine floor. Although by human standards the mines would still reveal huge wealth in terms of emeralds and other valuable gems, to a dwarf they are practically exhausted. The contents of the mines are of little interest to the invaders – they are not miners.



The mines have now been put to another use. This is as an HQ of a mercenary contingent of **duergar** warriors which are in the employ of Zaleria. These have been summoned to find and destroy the last of the dwarves of Skard. They have already had success to the east where they discovered an enclave under **Nalgir Stonebrow**. The dwarves were massacred by the Khanoumids and their allies – but not all of them. Despite what **Nulgoth Grimstone** may have thought in the cells in the Entry Halls there was one survivor. This was **Sigmund**, Vorsen Brightarm's brother. Unfortunately, Vorsen will be too late to save his last family member.

You stand on a wooden gantry looking over a huge cavern – these are the Mines of Skard. They reach back as far as you can see and soar high up into the darkness. From here the Bronzejaw clan made its fortune. There are rumoured to be many an emerald still to be found in the corners of this place.

As you wonder at this place, you can see off to your right a small tented enclosure. This is not Khanoumid. As you look closer you can see dwarf figures moving about the tents. The dwarves have strange greyish skin. They eat, drink and sharpen their weapons. How can this group of dwarves have survived the deluge?

Vorsen Brightarm will **not be fooled** if he present – nor will **any** dwarf in the party. They will recognise them as their hated **duergar** foes. If the party has come across rumours of these allies of Zaleria then it will not be too hard to see why she has employed dwarves to find dwarves. Only a kin race could spot the hidden doorways and passages of the remaining Bronzejaws.

NOTE: if the party have no dwarf available for such advice they will assume that they are normal dwarves unless they have encountered duergar before. If this happens then they will be susceptible to surprise, as the duergar will play them for the naive adventurers they seem to be.

Vorsen will see his brother, Sigmund shackled to a boulder just outside the duergar encampment. He has been tortured by the duergar for information. The dwarf looks and is indeed dead. At the sight of his brother, Vorsen will enter a primal rage and will dash down the stairs and engage the duergar on his own. He is in a **blood fury** which gives him the powers of a **Level 5 Barbarian Rage** skill. Therefore he gets **+2** to his damage rolls and gains **resistance** to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage. He will fight until all the duergar or he is dead. From now on, whenever he sees duergar he will enter a similar rage and will not consider how his actions might affect the party.

There are **10 duergar** in the camp. Currently they have no leader as he is to be found to the east. If they are attacked, such as by Vorsen, they will turn themselves **invisible**. They will laugh at Vorsen's inability to see them and will then **enlarge** and attack. They will fight to the death.

The duergar have treasure given by Zaleria as payment for service. This is a small chest full of gems and jewels. They are of various values but in total are worth **1500gp**. There are amethysts, garnets, pearls and tourmalines. Sadly, Sigmund is dead but he died without revealing anything to his hated enemy. Vorsen will insist that he is buried and sing a song of mourning to his lost kin.

NOTE: the Mines of Skard go a long way back and are ideal for disappearing into, if necessary, for recuperation and rests. The Khanoumids do not enter here as they fear becoming lost.

TO THE AERIE

AREA 1: THE STORE ROOM

This room has no importance except it was used as a front by Nalgir Stonebrow and his remaining dwarves. These were discovered by the duergar and wiped out.

This room is fairly bare. There are a few scattered tables and chairs and a broken bookcase lies face down on the floor. There are also several sacks and boxes strewn around the room. What is interesting however is that a hole 4' wide and 5' high has been smashed through the south wall.

Vorsen or any dwarf will recognise the workmanship of the doorway as dwarven. They will take it for a secret door similar to those used by Storgaen Thunder Maul to the south.

AREA 2: THE NORTHERN ENCLAVE

There has been fighting here. There are weapons cast across the floor and a dwarven helmet lies dented in a corner. Furniture has been smashed and there are unmistakable signs of blood on the floor.

This was Stonebrow's first line of defence. The warriors here succumbed under constant pressure from Khanoumid soldiers after their enclave was breached by the duergar. None of the guards survived.

AREA 3: THE LOST FAMILIES

This looks to have been a room similar to that found at Thunder Maul's enclave. There are several straw mattresses and a long table with chairs. All are strewn across the room. There is a smell of smoke drifting through the room from an open doorway to the south.

The families of dwarves were secreted here when the attack came in. No mercy was given and they all perished.

AREA 4: THE FUNERAL PYRE

In the centre of this room is a horrific pile of the dead. Alongside many Khanoumid soldiers lie the bodies of the dwarves which perished in this cataclysm. The pile has been set on fire previously and now smoulders gently. The stench of the dead is nauseating.

Standing next to the pyre is a powerful dwarven male wearing black scale mail and wielding a battleaxe. He has been rooting around in the dirt for items of value. He is accompanied by five other grey skinned dwarves.

This is **Snargund Firemane**, the **leader** of the duergar in Skard. He is a strong warrior and has led his men here to destroy his hated enemies, the dwarves. If the party have not seen a duergar before and have no dwarves present, they may mistake him for a typical dwarf, except for his ugly battle scarred features and his pale skin. Vorsen Brightarm or any dwarf will recognise the duergar for what he is and immediately attack. If Vorsen has come from the Mines and seen his dead brother then he will enter a **rage** as described in the section on the Mines of Skard.

Snargund has no treasure apart from a platinum necklace bearing his family crest (a fist holding a lightning bolt). It is worth **500gp** but **1000gp** to any dwarven trader, who will relish the thought that a prominent member of the Firemane clan has been bested. He does however wield a **+1 battle axe**, **+2 against creatures of the Underdark** instead of a war pick. He will turn **invisible** and then **enlarge** and engage the party screaming foul duergar war cries.

After the defeat of Snargund, the party must now wrest the second of the **Jewels of Ehalazuhn** from **Zorander le Torneau**. He can be found up the stairs to the north in the **Aerie**.

NOTE: at this point Vorsen can leave the party if you as DM feel that he is not needed in the group. If you wish, once he has his revenge on Snargund, he can return to Storgaen's group to report the fate of the northern enclave. The party must press on without him.

MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

KHANOUMID ELITE GUARD

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (Chainmail)

Hit Points 44 (7d8+14)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Perception+3

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit range 100 ft. /400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage

Two Handed Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

KHANOUMID WARRIOR

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 15 (Chain shirt and shield)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage

ARHAB HAMMAD

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 19 (scale mail, shield)

Hit Points 82 (12d8 +22)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +4, Con +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Brave. Hammad has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. He makes three melee attacks

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 +3) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. He adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon

PASHA NAAZIM HAKIM

Medium elemental, chaotic neutral

Armour Class 15 (natural armour)

Hit Points 81 (9d8 +45)

Speed 30ft., fly 60ft., swim 90ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +6, Cha +7

Damage Resistances cold, lightning

Senses Blindsight 30ft., darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Naazim's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: create or destroy water, fog cloud, purify food and drink

2/day each: water breathing, water walk

1/day each: control water, gaseous form, invisibility

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Naazim makes two trident attacks.

Trident. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. 12 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Water jet. He can magically shoots water in a 30-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 12 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and, is pushed up to 10 feet away from him. On a success, a target takes half the bludgeoning damage, but is not pushed.

DUERGAR

Medium, humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (scale mail, shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Dwarvish, Undercommon

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Duergar Resilience. The duergar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the duergar has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Enlarge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the duergar magically increases in size, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. While enlarged, the duergar is Large, doubles its damage dice on Strength-based weapon attacks (included in the attacks), and makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage. If the duergar lacks the room to become Large, it attains the maximum size possible in the space available.

War Pick. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, or 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. Or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

Invisibility (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The duergar magically turns invisible until it attacks, casts a spell, or uses its Enlarge, or until its concentration is broken, up to 1 hour (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the duergar wears or carries is invisible with it.

SNARGUND FIREMANE

Medium, humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armour Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 70(10d8+ 24)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Dwarvish, Undercommon

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Duergar Resilience. The duergar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the duergar has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The duergar chieftain makes two melee attacks

Enlarge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the duergar chieftain magically increases in size, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. While enlarged, it is Large, doubles his damage dice on Strength-based weapon attacks (included in the attacks), and makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage.

Battleaxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 +3) slashing damage, or 11 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage while enlarged.

2/day Invisibility (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The duergar chieftain magically turns invisible until he attacks, or uses his Enlarge, or until his concentration is broken, up to 1 hour (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment he wears or carries is invisible with him.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE AERIE

The **Aerie** is a natural fissure in the mountain above Skard. It was used by the dwarves to ensure that they would never run out of supplies in the event of a siege. Now, however, it has been taken over by the forces of Zaleria. It is now utilised by the beast riders of Khanoumia to land their pteranodon mounts. This area is run by **Zorander le Torneau**, Zaleria's lieutenant. This **Oathbreaker** ensures that the forces of Ehalazuhn are continuously supplied and makes sure that any messages which come from the east are dealt with immediately. Zorander has in his possession the second of the **Jewels of Ehalazuhn**,

a great **emerald** which helps protect him from his enemies.

The aim of the party in the Aerie is to move up the spiral path that runs to the top of the fissure as quickly as possible, to defeat Zorander. The party must take the Jewel, thus allowing it to enter Zaleria's chamber to the north. The longer they take to climb the Aerie, the more damage they will take.

AREA 1: THE GUARDROOM

As you ascend the stairs from Gam Daruhl, a turn to the north sees you enter a level path area. You can see light spilling from a chamber ahead. Figures move about in this room although it is hard to discern how many there are. You can also make out a desk and several cots.

This room is a simple guardroom meant to control the access to the main city. It is occupied by four **Khanoumid warriors** and an **Elite Khanoumid Guard**. On the desk is a ledger which documents various visitors from Khanoumia. There is one strange entry, however, as it is for an **Abelin Ayesta** and refers to his place of origin as 'KV' meaning **Kingsvale**. This name is a fair way down the ledger and unless the reader is careful (**Wisdom: Perception** check at DC 12) he might miss it. Ayesta is the right hand man of Emperor Heroteus' Chamberlain, **Symounde Vuisgarde**. He has travelled in this capacity to check on the progress of Zaleria's plans. He will not divulge the identity of his master to anyone but has the authority to treat with her. He will not be around to engage the party but may be seen **leaving** the Aerie after the defeat of Zorander.

AREA 2: STOREROOM I

This room is full of boxes and crates. Most of them have an unfamiliar notation on them. There are also several ledgers which have been placed on a large oak table. Apart from these goods, the room looks unoccupied. There is a 10' doorway on the south wall.

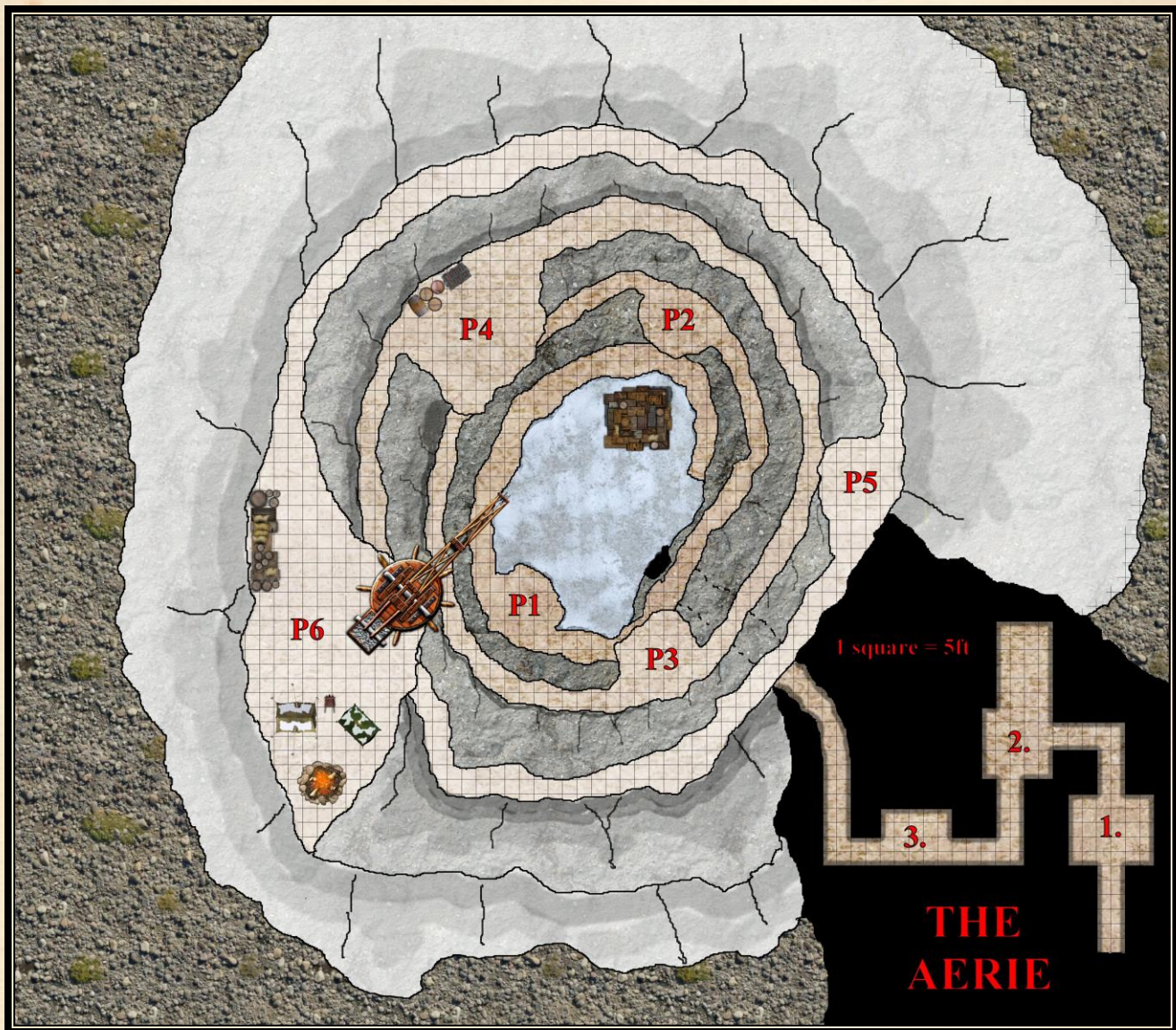
This is a storage chamber for the goods being brought into Skard from Khanoumia. The dialect is Khanoumid, which the characters will be able to recognise on an **Intelligence: Investigation** check (DC 10). The ledgers which are written in common just monitor the arrival of goods into the city.

mundane merchandise. An exit on the west wall leads out of the room from which you can hear the sound of footsteps approaching and what might be the rumbling of wheels.

AREA 3: STOREROOM II

Similar to the previous chamber, this room looks like a storage chamber containing barrels and sacks of

This is indeed a second storage chamber, used for the depositing of wine and grain. The sounds outside the chamber are from two **Khanoumid warriors** wheeling a small hand cart towards the room. The cart contains crates of salted meat.



The two guards will put up a token resistance before trying to escape. They need to be overpowered **before** they can raise the alarm. This is necessary if

the party are to have a head start in climbing the Aerie. If the guards escape, they will raise the alarm. Although this will not lead to an attack from within

the Aerie, the guards there will be alerted and ready for the party. Therefore they cannot be surprised.

AREA 4: ENTRANCE TO THE AERIE

The Aerie supplies aerial access to Skard and it is the party's aim to ascend the path to defeat Zorander at the summit. If the alert has been raised the warriors on the first platform will call a warning to their comrades above and fire their crossbows at the party. If they are unaware, the party can plan their ascent in a more leisurely fashion. Once the alarm is raised, the party will be engaged from all levels which are occupied by warriors. The exception to this is **Platform 3**, on which are bronze bolt shooters which cannot depress far enough. They can only engage any target from **Platform 2** upwards.

You see bright daylight ahead as you approach the end of the tunnel. From the entrance to the tunnel you can see a large snow covered open space about 100' across. To the north there is a very large pile of boxes and crates. Tethered to a wooden rack next to these boxes is a hippogriff. The beast is clearly a mount as it wears a saddle and blue and white livery. It paws the ground when it sees you.

It is clear that this area is a fissure in the mountains. It has formed a roughly cylindrical opening to the sky, far above. You can also see a fairly wide path roughly 5 to 10' wide circling its way up the outside of this hollow area. At intervals along this path there are wider sections forming rocky platforms, you count six including the largest platform at the top. You cannot see what is on most of these outcrops but the lowest one, to the south of you holds three soldiers dressed in Khanoumid robes.

The hippogriff belongs to **Abelin Ayesta** who entered the city some time ago to consult with Zaleria. The animal displays the colours of Ayesta's home city of Kingsvale. A character may make this association on a **Wisdom: Perception** check (DC 10) due to their earlier interaction with **Florian Moonfeather** in **Beneath the Razor's Edge**. They should not be helped to make any connections regarding this information.

The hippogriff will not be ridden by any other than Ayesta and is released will not fly away but will await the return of its master.

THE PLATFORMS AND THEIR OCCUPANTS

NOTE: All enemies without missile weapons will find plenty of cover on these landings, which have boxes and crates all around. This will usually afford at least half cover from missile weapons.

NOTE: All Elite Guards from **Platform 2 and above** each have a single hand held naphtha device in the form of a clay flask which acts as an incendiary projectile. They will attempt to drop them onto the characters as they pass beneath their platform. If it hits a character and explodes it will cause **3d6 Fire** damage (**Dexterity** saving throw at **DC 12** for ½ damage). If the incendiary misses its target, the flask might still shatter on the path (50% chance). Fiery spray which explodes from the device will cause **2d4** fire damage to everyone within **5'** (**Dexterity** saving throw at **DC 12** for ½ damage).

PLATFORM 1:

Platform One as stated above is held by three **Khanoumid elite guards**. They are armed with crossbows and can fire at targets ascending the platform and at ground level.

PLATFORM 2:

Platform Two has four **Khanoumid elite guards**.

PLATFORM 3:

There are three **bronze head bolt firing automatons** here. They can only fire at targets on **Platform 2** or above. They can be destroyed or ignored. If ignored they will continue to fire at targets as they ascend the path but cannot hit **Platforms 5 and 6** due to the acuteness of the angle. The automatons have an **AC of 15** and **50hp** each. They each contain **20** heavy crossbow bolts which they fire twice a turn.

PLATFORM 4:

Platform 4 is held by three **Khanoumid elite guards** armed with crossbows. When the party are

nearing this platform, two **Khanoumid beast riders** will descend to their level. The riders will attack with their spears while their pteranodon mounts will try to pick up characters in their claws. The character can make either a **Strength** or **Dexterity** check compared to the reptile's **Dexterity** to avoid being grappled. The pteranodons cannot carry the weight of both their riders and the target so will **drop** any grappled characters. The character will fall to the path at the next level directly below and suffer **2d6** bludgeoning damage. They will then need to make their way back up. The pteranodons will make similar attacks until their riders are killed – they will then fly off.

PLATFORM 5:

Platform 5 has four **Khanoumid elite guards**. These will roll **4 barrels**, one at a time, down the slope as the characters approach. The party members must succeed at a **Strength** or **Dexterity** check (DC 10) to avoid these. If they are hit they receive **1d4** Bludgeoning damage and need to make a **Dexterity** check (DC 10) or be pushed off the path onto that below. If this happens they suffer **2d6** bludgeoning damage. They will then need to make their way back up.

PLATFORM 6:

Platform 6 is where supplies for the city of Skard are deposited before being taken below. There are boxes and barrels of miscellaneous goods and a large wooden crane assembly to lower them down. The platform is open to the elements, unlike the others, and is very cold and windy.

The party will find **Zorander le Torneau** here. He is a **Level 10 Oathbreaker** and is commander of Zaleria's beast riders. He will descend on a pteranodon from above as the party ascends and wait for them. His mount will fly off. He is supported by six of his **beast riders**. These are armed with short bows and will fly out of melee range and attack with missile weapons. Zorander will attack the party head on. He will say to the party, *"You have come far, but your journey ends here."*



Zorander wears black Plate Armour +1 and a similarly black shield, decorated with a blue whirlpool effect. He also has in his possession – a potion of **Climbing**, a **Potion of Poison Resistance** and a flask containing **Oil of Slipperiness**. He wields a **Longsword +2**, the hilt of which has the emerald **Jewel of Ehalazuhn** embedded within it. He is partially protected by this jewel. The emerald has the benefit of giving its wearer (as long as they are an adherent of Ehalazuhn) **full immunity** to melee and ranged attacks. This power works on **one in three** of Zorander's combat rounds and lasts until his next turn. This will manifest itself as a green glow that emanates from the Jewel and covers his body.

Once Zorander is killed it will be an easy job to prise the emerald from the pommel of his sword. If placed together, the sapphire and emerald Jewels are bathed in a light that alternates between green and blue. It is now the party's task the use the Jewels to enter the temple and to confront Zaleria.

NOTE: when the party reach the summit and destroy Zorander, Abelin Ayesta will emerge from the entrance to Skard below. He will mount his hippogriff and fly up and past the party. The group cannot stop this, but they will see a figure dressed in **Sarvanian** armour and heraldry pass by them headed south. This might make them think a little on their previous dealings, such as with Casgar and Florian Moonfeather, and the fact that intrigue is afoot. If for whatever reason the hippogriff is not available for Ayesta, the party will see him at the base of the Aerie looking up at them. He will then retire back into Skard and they will not see him again. Similar to

above, they should have the opportunity to make out his garb – it is very similar to Moonfeather's.

On their return to Gam Daruhl they will have no difficulty making their way to the temple's huge doors. The Khanoumid garrison, incensed at the death of their general, and seeing no response by Zaleria, have returned to their army – there to await developments. Thus the party will not be challenged. The Jewels will click quite happily into the sockets made for them in the temple doors and they will swing open automatically. The Jewels must then be retrieved.



MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

KHANOUMID ELITE GUARD

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (Chainmail)

Hit Points 44 (7d8+14)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Perception+3

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit range 100 ft. /400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage

Two Handed Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

KHANOUMID WARRIOR

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 15 (Chain shirt and shield)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Shortbow: Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft, one target. Hit: 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage.

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage

KHANOUMID BEAST RIDER

Medium human, lawful evil

Armour Class 16 (scale mail)
Hit Points 32(5d8+10)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+2)	13 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear: Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature.
Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage (versatile), (1d6+2 if thrown)

Scimitar: Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

GIANT PTERANODON

Medium beast, unaligned

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)
Hit Points 25 (5d8+5)
Speed 10ft., fly 60ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception + 1
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Flyby. The pteranodon doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 6 (2d4 + 1) piercing damage

ZORANDER LE TORNEAU

Medium human, Lawful evil, Defence style Oathbreaker

Armour Class 22 (Plate and shield)
Hit Points 95 (10d10+30)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +6
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Proficiency bonus +4
Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Spellcasting: He is a 10th level oathbreaker and uses Charisma as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following spells from the oathbreaker's spell list:

1st Level: hellish rebuke, inflict wounds

2nd Level: crown of madness, darkness

3rd Level animate dead, bestow curse

Dreadful Aspect. As an action, he channels the darkest emotions and focuses them into a burst of magical menace. Each creature of his choice within 30 feet of him must make a Wisdom saving throw if it can see him. On a failed save, the target is frightened of him for 1 minute. If a creature frightened by this effect ends its turn more than 30 feet away from him, it can attempt another Wisdom saving throw to end the effect on it.

Aura of Hate. He gains a +2 bonus to melee weapon damage rolls (included in stats.)

Lay On Hands. His touch can heal wounds. He can restore a total number of hit points equal to **50** hit points of damage. Alternatively, he can expend 5 hit points from his pool of healing to cure the target of one disease or neutralize one poison affecting it.

Divine Smite. When he hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, he can expend one spell slot to deal radiant damage to the target, in addition to the weapon's damage. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st-level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher than 1st, to a maximum of 3d8.

Divine Health. By 3rd level, the divine magic flowing through him makes him immune to disease.

Extra Attack. He can attack twice whenever he takes the Attack action on his turn.

Aura of Protection. Whenever he or a friendly creature within 10 feet of him must make a saving throw, the creature gains a bonus to the saving throw of +2. He must be conscious to grant this bonus.

Aura of Protection. He and friendly creatures within 10 feet of him can't be frightened while he is conscious.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Oathbreaker makes two melee attacks.

Longsword: Two Melee Weapon Attacks: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d8 + 8) slashing damage.

PART 10: THE FINAL STRUGGLE

ENCOUNTER 7: THE TEMPLE

This encounter will see the party challenge their nemesis from the beginnings of this campaign. The temple area which is occupied by **Zaleria** used to be the throne room of the king of the Bronzejaw clan. After the death of the present king, when Skard was invaded, Zaleria converted the chamber into an enormous temple dedicated to her god. It is used for any religious services led by her but at this time, apart from her, lies empty.



Zaleria is a **Level 11 Way of the Shadow Monk** who has dedicated her life to the cause of bringing Ehalazuhn back to the material plane. She also knows, however, that he is a shadow of his former self. Zaleria's self appointed task as a **High Priest** of Ehalazuhn is to spread, through force if necessary, the worship of her deity. This she knows will increase his

strength, which is much depleted since he was defeated and removed from the world. She hopes that through this support that she will gain favour and thus supplant the current **Great High Priest** of Ehalazuhn, Symounde Vuisgarde – although she is as of yet unaware of his identity. She will fight to the death.

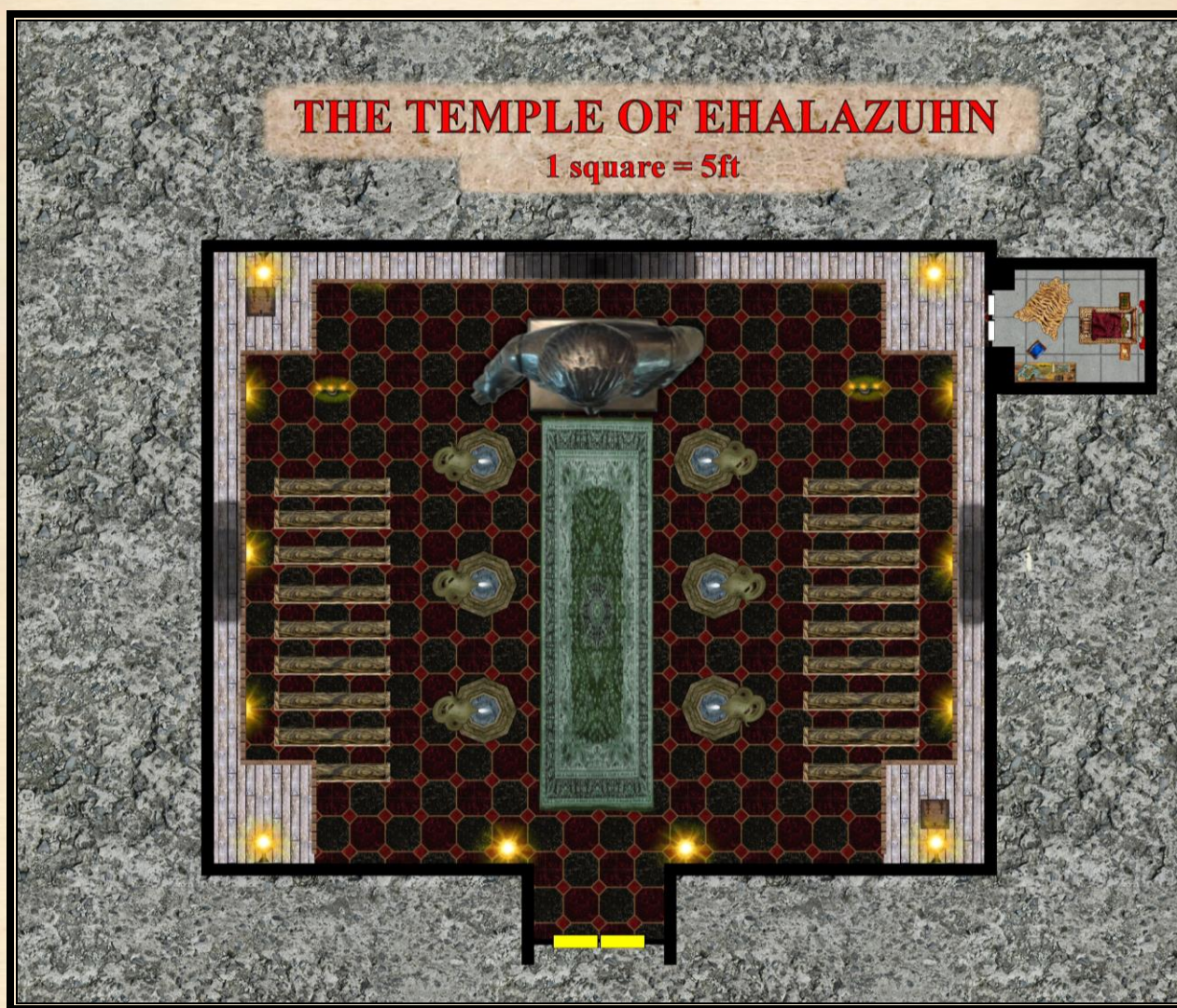
The huge iron doors swing open to reveal a large temple area roughly 80' by 100'. There are rows of benches for worshippers and a long 15' wide turquoise carpet leading through the centre. Around the walls, torches sputter, casting a gloomy light. 10' off the floor is a wooden balcony resting on ornate iron supports which follows the shape of the room on three sides. Each corner of the balcony terminates at a large platform reached by iron ladders. These ladders are in the north west and south east corners of the room. All down the centre of the room, flanking the carpet are large fountains in the shape of snakes pouring out a stream of putrid water which explains the thick moist smell which pervades the chamber. By far the most imposing feature of the room is a huge 30' wide and 60' high statue of Ehalazuhn in his guise of an old and frail man. The strange metal it is made from drips with moisture and glistens in the torch light.

Kneeling on the carpet in front of this statue is a young woman dressed in blue and green flowing robes with light blue tinted hair. Around her neck can be seen a large red jewel, possibly a ruby. As you enter she rises to her feet and turns to face you. Her face shows no expression but she grasps the ruby and unhooks it from the necklace. She also picks up a glittering spear from next to her. She strides towards you. She says, "At last, a real challenge. So now we end this."

The main problem the party will have when engaging Zaleria, is tying her down to one place. As a **Level 11 Monk** she can move at 50' per turn and also climb **vertical** surfaces. This she will use to fight the group on her terms. She will use the **dash** action whenever necessary to make good an escape. She will

also use her **Unarmoured Movement** skill to climb the walls of the chamber - to climb up to and swing herself onto the balcony above. Her **Shadow Step** ability will allow her to move from one shaded area of the balcony to another and then disappear through use of **Cloak of Shadows**. She will then strike when unexpected. Any characters moving through a shadowed area on the balcony will endanger themselves to a sudden materialisation and a melee attack at **advantage**. Zaleria can also jump off the balcony at any time without taking damage due to her **Slow Fall** ability.

When engaging from a distance such as on the balcony, she will use the ruby **Jewel of Ehalazuhn** to attack the group. This, the third of Ehalazuhn's jewels allows the user to make a single energy blast **once every three** turns. A bright scarlet streak flashes from the jewel to a point within **50'** and then explodes into a burst of electrical energy. Each creature in a **5-foot-radius** sphere must make a **Dexterity** saving throw. A target takes **4d6** lightning damage on a failed save, or **half** as much damage on a successful one. If the burst is aimed at a target standing in water then the burst radius extends to a **10-foot-radius** sphere or to the extent of the water if less than that.



Zaleria will act in very much a **hit and run** style and will engage with her spear and **Unarmed Attacks** when she has to. She has also the skills of a High

Priest of Ehalazuhn such as **Ehalazuhn's Gift**, **Conjure Servant** or **Desiccate** at her disposal (see Appendix A).

Zaleria wields a **Spear+1, +2 vs. Creatures of Fire**. She also wears **Bracers of Defence** which give her a +2 bonus to her AC and a **Ring of Free Action**. She has a **Potion of Diminution** and a **Potion of Superior Healing** but no portable wealth apart from the golden necklace from which the Jewel of Ehalazuhn hung (750gp).

Once the party defeats the High Priest they can investigate the chamber. In the centre of the base of Ehalazuhn's statue are carved three circles, in the centre of which is a socket into which a Jewel of Ehalazuhn will fit. It does not matter in which order they are placed but when all are locked in, a coloured beam will shoot from each gem (red, blue and green) and converge at the base of the statue. A portal of multicoloured light will then open up that will take them to **Ehalazuhn's Throne Room**. Once the portal has opened the beams from the jewels will flicker out and they can be retrieved. The jewels **must** be in the party's possession when they attempt to enter the portal – if not the first to try will receive **1d6** lightning damage and be pushed back **10'**. Once this has been worked out, the party can progress to the final encounter.

ZALERIA'S CHAMBER

Zaleria's quarters are comfortable but not plush; there is a simple bed, a tiger skin rug on the floor and a desk with maps of the Outer Reaches on it. There is no treasure – Zaleria had no use of it. The only item of any real interest is a journal which lies amongst the maps. In this, Zaleria has documented the attempts led by her to take over Sarvania. They include references to Kagan Brax and his army, as well as to the missions at Boulderspeak Mine and Crystal Haven. It is really just an account of her plans in the area. Of more interest is a quite recent comment:

'Ekasusuhr is dead and gone – or rather dead again. Why he had a Jewel confuses me but the Master knows all and all is part of his design. Now it is to Zorander and me to end this threat to our plans. We must not fail this task – our Lord at this time is not as strong as he once was. He needs the sacrifices of the unworthy to build his strength before entering this world. It is my purpose to ensure this happens – thousands will worship his greatness. Only then will the world again quake before the name of Ehalazuhn.'

This refers to the fact that Ehalazuhn at this time is actually quite weak and unable to break out from his throne room in the **Elemental Plane of Water**. This makes him a foe that can be defeated by the party. Under the journal is a **Scroll of Protection from Aberrations**. Also upon the desk is the **Royal Seal of Havaeth Bronzejaw** which should be returned to **Storgaen Thundermaul** – it is worth **1000gp** to a collector of dwarven artefacts.

MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

ZALERIA

Medium human, Lawful evil Way of the Shadow Monk

Armour Class 18 (unarmoured)
Hit Points 77 (11d8+22)
Speed 50ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +6, Dex +8
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +6, Stealth +8
Proficiency bonus +4
Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Ki Points: 11
Ki Save: 14

Martial Arts: 1d8

She uses **Dexterity** instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of her unarmed strikes and monk weapons. She rolls a **d8** in place of the normal damage of her unarmed strike or monk weapon. When she uses the Attack action with an unarmed strike or a monk weapon on her turn, she can make one unarmed strike as a **bonus** action assuming she hasn't already taken a bonus action this turn.

Flurry of Blows: Immediately after she takes the Attack action on her turn, she can spend 1 ki point to make two unarmed strikes as a bonus action.

Patient Defence: She can spend 1 ki point to take the Dodge action as a bonus action on her turn.

Step of the Wind: She can spend 1 ki point to take the Disengage or Dash action as a bonus action on her turn, and her jump distance is doubled for the turn.

Unarmoured Movement: Her speed is increased by 20 feet and she has the ability to move along vertical surfaces and across liquids on her turn without falling

Deflect Missiles: She can use her reaction to deflect or catch the missile when she is hit by a ranged weapon attack. When she does so, the damage she takes from the attack is reduced

by 1d10 +15. If she reduces the damage to 0, she can catch the missile if she has at least one hand free. If she catches a missile in this way, she can spend 1 ki point to make a ranged attack with the weapon she just caught, as part of the same reaction. She makes this attack with proficiency, regardless of her weapon proficiencies, and the missile counts as a monk weapon for the attack.

Slow Fall: She can use her reaction when she falls to reduce any falling damage she takes by 55 hit points.

Extra Attack: She can attack twice, instead of once, whenever she takes the Attack action on her turn.

Stunning Strike: She can interfere with the flow of ki in an opponent's body. When she hits another creature with a melee weapon attack, she can spend 1 ki point to attempt a stunning strike. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of your next turn.

Evasion: Her instinctive agility lets her dodge out of the way of certain area effects, such as a fireball spell. When she is subjected to an effect that allows her to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, she instead takes no damage if she succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if she fails.

Stillness of Mind: She can use her action to end one effect on herself that is causing her to be charmed or frightened.

Purity of Body: Her mastery of the ki flowing through her makes her immune to disease and poison.

Shadow Arts: She can use her ki to duplicate the effects of certain spells. As an action, she can spend 2 ki points to cast darkness, darkvision, pass without trace, or silence, without providing material components. Additionally, she has the minor illusion cantrip.

Shadow Step: She has the ability to step from one shadow into another. When she is in dim light or darkness, as a bonus action she can teleport up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space she can see that is also in dim light or darkness. She then has advantage on the first melee attack she makes before the end of the turn.

Cloak of Shadows: She has learned to become one with the shadows. When she is in an area of dim light or darkness, she can use her action to become invisible. She remains invisible until she makes an attack, casts a spell, or is in an area of bright light.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The monk makes two melee attacks.

Spear: Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

ENCOUNTER 8: THE CHAMBER OF EHALAZUHN

With the destruction of his temples and shrines on his fall from power, Ehalazuhn is in no position to make his re-entry to the Material Plane and is in fact a shadow of his former self. The being that the players

will encounter is a manifestation of this lack of strength at this time. He still has his powers but these are much depleted. The party cannot kill Ehalazuhn but can push him further back into the Elemental Plane of Water which will further reduce his influence upon the world. When the characters arrive in Ehalazuhn's domain they will materialise in any of the five locations in the outside ring of the pentagon. This effect is random and so several could arrive together or the individuals could be separated. If separated they must find a way to coordinate their attacks.

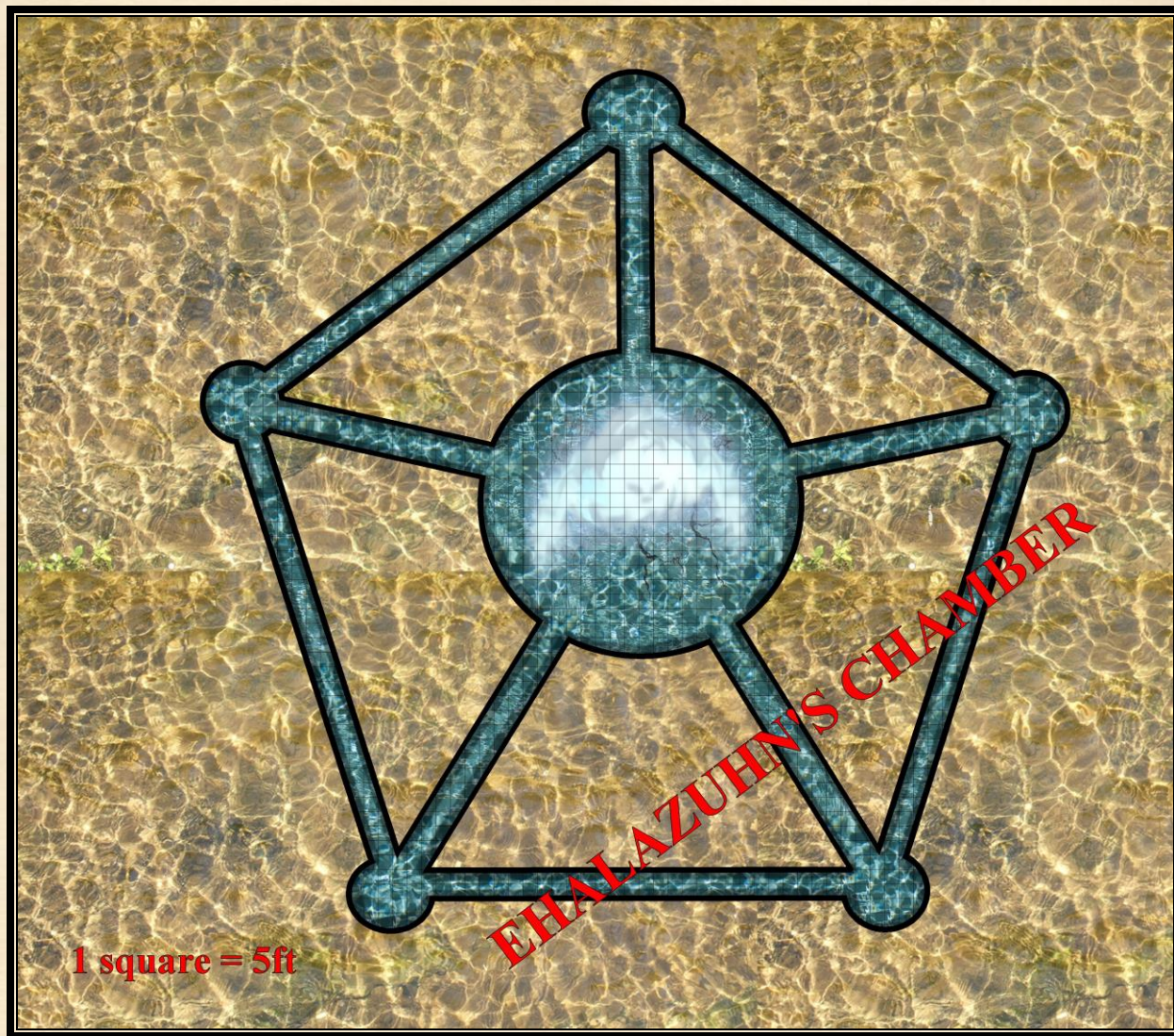
You step through the portal and are transported away from the Material Plane. Your body seems to divide into particles and sweeps through the ether. You become an awareness rather than a person. You leave the ether and enter a world of water, but are not affected by it. You are propelled through a watery abyss – images of bizarre and alien marine creatures speed past at lightning speed. Eventually you see a darker patch of water, black and foreboding. Your presence does not slow down as you enter this chilling atmosphere – but suddenly you stop and in a flash are returned to your corporeal body.

You find yourself in a large circular chamber standing in two feet of water. The liquid is not pure – it has a green tinge and an unpleasant stagnant reek fills your nostrils. The walls and ceiling of this chamber – if that's what they are invisible – all you can see is the water above and around you – and yet you are dry. It is as if you are in a bubble. You look around for your party. They are not all there. A low thunderous rushing noise fills the air – a sound of water gushing, or stormy waves.

Ahead of you is a watery corridor about 10' wide and at the end it seems to open up into a larger chamber. However, you cannot see into it from where you are. You hear a voice in your head saying, "Come thee to worship thy Master, mortal? Step forward and join me."

Ehalazuhn abides in this complex. His presence fills it all and is thus aware of the arrival of the party. To destroy the party however, he must take a corporeal form. As the party approach from the various rooms they have teleported to, they will be able to discern a whirlpool effect in the centre of the large chamber. It fills the room but is quite shallow. The current is strong but not enough to knock the

party off their feet at this time. **This is Ehalazuhn.** In the whirlpool, the characters will be able to see the tortured souls of those corrupted by the deity – ghostly faces rotate with the current, mouths open as if in a lament. Once the party congregate in the central chamber he will take the form of a huge water elemental and attack.



FIGHTING EHALAZUHN

Ehalazuhn has two main attacks and can only be harmed by magical weapons. In one form, he is a large 10' water elemental with a face of an old man formed in its centre. It can slam and engulf like any other but for more damage.

In his second form he is a huge whirlpool which fills the chamber. In melee he will spin in a fast and powerful whirling torrent. This will **sweep** the feet from any opponent and knock them **prone** unless they make a **Strength** check (DC 12). If they fall into the whirlpool they are **stunned** by the power and buffeting effects of the water for **one turn**. After this

they can stand. Ehalazuhn will tend to alternate these forms to disadvantage his enemies, reforming into elemental form to attacks those stunned at **advantage**. Whilst in whirlpool form, Ehalazuhn **cannot be harmed** unless an effect would destroy or change the form of water such as intense heat or cold.



Finally, Ehalazuhn controls the water in the whole complex. **Once per turn** he summons a wave from one of the five points of the pentagon. This gushes forth and is absorbed by Ehalazuhn's form regenerating **10hp** of damage. Which corridor it comes from is random. It will harm any character in a corridor for **2d6** bludgeoning damage. It will also knock them **prone** and **stun** them in the same fashion as the whirlpool effect unless the **Strength** check is made.

NOTE: With the destruction of Ehalazuhn the threat to Sarvania is at an end and Skard can be reclaimed. Each member of the party will receive **700XP** for helping return peace to the world.

MONSTERS OR NPCs IN THIS SECTION:

EHALAZUHN, THE DESTROYER

Huge Elemental, chaotic evil

Armour Class 18

Hit Points 169 (13d12 +65)

Speed 30ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	17 (+3)	21 (+5)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)

Damage Immunities poison, acid; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Aquan

Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

Water Form. The elemental lord can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. He can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Freeze. If the elemental lord takes cold damage, he partially freezes; his speed is reduced by 20 feet until the end of his next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental lord makes two slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 21 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Whelm (Recharge 4-6). Each creature in the elemental lord's space must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 21 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. It is also grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and unable to breathe unless it can breathe water. If the saving throw is successful, the target is pushed out of the elemental's space.

The elemental lord can grapple up to two creatures at one time. At the start of each of Ehalazuhn's turns, each target grappled by him takes 21 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. A creature within 5 feet of the elemental can pull a creature or object out of it by taking an action to make a DC 16 Strength check and succeeding.

THE END OF EHALAZUHN

Ehalazuhn will not die at the party's hands. In fact, he will remind them of this if he is defeated. He will tell them that he will be watching them through his agents in the world and that they will never be safe. He will then rise up into a huge column of water and splash down pushing the party to the walls of the chamber, where they will receive **1d6** bludgeoning damage unless they succeed at a **Strength** check (DC

14). The water in the complex will then drain away and all will be silent.

As the party have defeated the deity, the powers of the Jewels are fading too. The walls of the chamber will begin to spring leaks and as they watch, the magical brightness of the Jewels will slowly begin to diminish until it will eventually wink out. The party need to leave the chamber before this happens. There are three sockets in the wall of the chamber similar to those in the temple. These will accept the Jewels as a way of returning home. The portal will be created and the party will be transported back to the Material Plane. As before, they must have the Jewels with them to travel.

There is no treasure as such in Ehalazuhn's chamber, however, the three Jewels of Ehalazuhn have now lost their powers and reverted to large flawless examples of their kind. The emerald and sapphire are worth **2,000gp** each and the ruby **10,000gp**. As for other rewards for their endeavours, the party will be met by Storgaen Thundermaul, who can now reclaim Skard from the disorganised and demoralised Khanoumids, and awarded a platinum ring each (worth **500gp**). This has the emblem of a bronze axe embedded into it and will elicit a positive response from any dwarf in Sarvania in terms of business or favours. Dwarves have long memories.

In addition they will also be met by **Florian Moonfeather**, or another of the Emperor's couriers, who has descended through the Aerie since the Khanoumids left. She will fly to report the news to the Emperor himself. She will be questioned by **Symounde Vuisgarde** most intently as to who the party are. In private, he will fly into a rage and then begin to make preparations for revenge – this can manifest itself in further quests. Moonfeather will return with a charter from the Emperor inducting them into the Sarvanian **Patrician** faction which automatically allows them access to the **Upper City of Kingsvale**, a rare privilege. He has also bequeathed them a magical item of their choice. This can be taken from a suitable magic item table.

The death or at least defeat of Ehalazuhn brings this campaign to an end. The party's renown will spread from their endeavours throughout the Outer Reaches and in the defeat of **Ehalazuhn**.



Appendix A: The Cult of Ehalazuhn

Some Avatars want to come back. Some do not like their exile, voluntary or otherwise, to the planes surrounding the world on which man dwells. Some desire to re-enter this world and take it as their own. Some wish to stalk the land - for good or ill.

Ehalazuhn, Destroyer of Life, Elemental God of Drowning and Corrupter of the Flesh and Avatar of The Dark is one of these Avatars. Since the **War of the Created Ones** and his path to the planes, Ehalazuhn, Avatar twin of **Namera, Bringer of Life, Elemental Goddess of the Seas, Rivers and Rejuvenation and Avatar of The Light**, has desired to return to a world weak and divided - a world ripe for the domination of the masses. It is time, Ehalazuhn reckons, time for The Dark to regain the majesty of lords of the world - time for the rivers, springs and seas to flow with putrefaction and decay - for the creatures of the sea to worship him or asphyxiate in the murk of his kingdom. The Avatars of The Light are weak - and will do nothing. They lie, sated and complacent in their towers of gold. They take the supplications of the insignificant ones and dream. How will it be, when The Dark controls the world and these supplications end? The Light will disappear from existence, as its support will, under the thrall of Ehalazuhn. Supplications and prostrations to The Dark, will be forced from the lips of inconsequential beings. But it is such supplications which Ehalazuhn needs to realise his material form. Such is the message to those who worship, Ehalazuhn. The Destroyer of Life is coming - all bow and it will come to pass.

The Cult of Ehalazuhn is only one of many which support, as it would be seen in the world, an evil deity. But its devotees have the good fortune, in their eyes, to worship a God which listens. To an Initiate in the Cult, their God is an active part of their lives. No worshipping far off and disinterested Gods - no praying hopelessly for a good harvest or a healthy child - a prayer that shall not be answered. In worshipping Ehalazuhn there are rewards and gifts. Why do innocents follow Gods which have no interest

in them? Join Ehalazuhn, and prayers will be answered. And how great those rewards and gifts will be to those who showed loyalty before the return.

As with most evil cults, the supporters of Ehalazuhn are often the violent, the disenchanting and the greedy - but not always. There are always shades of grey. Many a seafarer or desert tribesman will offer at least a propitiatory gesture towards Ehalazuhn whilst giving supplication to Namera. Just in case. For who is to know who is strongest? No action will be taken to insult the God of Drowning, or his followers. Just in case. It has been known that some become Initiates in the Cult as a way of ensuring loved ones' safe return from the seas or to pray for a lost one to be returned to them. It is a vain hope - Ehalazuhn does not return his victims. Thus a community, faithful to a Goddess of The Light, innocently supports a God of the Dark - such is the way of things.

The supporters of Ehalazuhn are drawn from a wide and varied body. The greatest numbers of worshippers however are from societies and communities which require protection from the ravages of the seas or to whom water is a staple of existence. Therefore it can seem strange to an observer that what is essentially a water god receives a great deal of attention from those in waterless surroundings. However, to turn their back on this God could see the end of their society as the wells dry up or become polluted. Therefore, it is not difficult to see why the recent worship of this deity first began in the waterless wastes beyond the **Razor's Edge**. Seafaring societies have also seen an increase in influence of the Cult of Ehalazuhn and a proliferation in the number of those devoted to its service.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF EHALAZUHN

It has been long established that any supporter of Ehalazuhn can become an Initiate. This means that they can be found in all walks of life - not purely in the cleric class. There are five main stages in the career of a worshipper of Ehalazuhn. These stages are Initiate, Acolyte, Priest, High Priest and Great High Priest. Promotion within the cult is dependant, but not wholly so, on length of service to the god. The route from Initiate to Acolyte takes three years of

unblemished service. In this time, the Initiates prove their loyalty and dedication to the cause of bringing Ehalazuhn back to the world. Doctrine and liturgy are learned and re-learned, prayers are conducted and converts sought. A novice in the ways of Ehalazuhn is expected to spread the word and to convert the unbelievers to the great cause. The burden of responsibility increases over time until one is considered for the priesthood. Not all are called – some remain Acolytes for their entire lives due to being found wanting in the dedication and ruthlessness desired by the leadership of the cult.

To be considered for the priesthood it is necessary to find and kill the local Priest through ritual drowning. This can take the form of a duel at sea or on a lake where the two combatants are taken out in a small boat. A single combat is fought and only one returns. Thus the support of Ehalazuhn will ensure that only the most devout survive. Less scrupulous Acolytes have been known to murder their senior Priest and then go through the motions of ritually drowning them – the body brought to the temple as proof of their deed. The life of a Priest is one based on strength but also the ability to recognise a potential rival and having them done away with before they become too powerful. A Priest will take over the running, or establishment, of a temple. They will carry out the rituals and procedures of true and devout service to Ehalazuhn. This can last many years.

Only the greatest of the priesthood feel worthy to claim a place as a High Priest – only five are reputed to exist. No simple formalised duel takes place in this instance. When a new challenger to the position of High Priest emerges, the incumbent and the newcomer are placed at the whim of Ehalazuhn himself. Both are placed in a situation where they will die if they are not favoured by their God. This usually involves them being weighed down and cast out at sea. Only the true believer of Ehalazuhn will find the ability to breathe underwater bestowed upon him by his god and the power to free himself of his shackles and return to the shore – the other lies at the bottom for eternity. It is therefore a serious decision to seek the High Priesthood and the role of the incumbent is to ensure that if such a challenge takes place that he is in the good graces of his Lord.

There is only one Great High Priest – whose whereabouts is unknown, as is his or her identity. The Great High Priest is the closest link that the supporters of Ehalazuhn have with the Divine. Needless to say the Great High Priest will be at the centre of all attempts to return Ehalazuhn to the world.

GAINING THE FAVOUR OF EHALAZUHN

The Cult of Ehalazuhn like many religions has both shrines and temples. The former are relatively simple constructs of purely an altar and perhaps a statue or two. This altar is usually of stone with a bluish green cloth draped over it. These shrines are not in the public view but neither are they hidden. Usually a local community will have a good idea about at least the general location of a shrine of Ehalazuhn. Shrines can be found near any water source – rivers, seas, marsh pools. The water source is used for the dedication of gifts to the deity but also for initiation rites and sacrifice. A temple is a much larger complex. Depending on the local area and its belief in the cult, this can either be hidden or in plain view. Away from the cults centres of power, it is most common that a shrine be hidden away from the uninitiated – perhaps near a mountain stream which can be polluted at its source or often within a subterranean cavern, again near a water source. The temples tend to be fairly large with several ritual buildings and a great deal of iconography. There will always be a water source running through the temple and this is generally polluted through the will of Ehalazuhn into a river of slime or sludge. This recognises the Gods powers over corruption. Temple iconography will show the various manifestations of Ehalazuhn from a putrid wave, through a green/blue crystalline bearded old man to a monstrous whirlpool sucking the souls of the damned to a watery hell below.

One way of gaining favour with Ehalazuhn is through conversion. As a novice it is a duty and responsibility to do this to advance in the faith. More credit is given if the convert comes from a supporter of a deity hated by Ehalazuhn – thus a deity of The Light or for special consideration and favour, a convert from **Namera**, Ehalazuhn's despised twin.

Similarly a convert from a diametrically opposed deity such as **Ekmoss**, God of Flame and Fire, Avatar of the Light will receive great celebration.

Ehalazuhn feeds on the death of innocents in water, through accident or intent. The simultaneous cry of despair from a shipwreck strengthens his soul. There are stories of deliberate sabotage to sea going vessels to ensure this comes to pass. Similarly, there are well documented cases of wrecking – drawing ships onto rocks – not for profit but to send their souls to Ehalazuhn. However a more reliable way to achieve favour is through sacrifice. The rites of sacrifice are carried out by a Priest or above. At a Shrine of Ehalazuhn the sacrificial victim is drowned in the nearby water source, usually by weighting the body down. Temple sacrifice however includes the victim being dressed in robes of blue/green and ritually drowned in the flowing sludge that oozes through the complex. This can be done by either holding the victim's head under the surface or by pouring the foul liquid continually into their mouth and nose until they expire. Bodies are then allowed to sink beneath the surface – their corruption feeding their Master's wrath. Similar to conversion, a supplicant gains more credit if the sacrificial victim comes from those hated by Ehalazuhn. Additionally, the sacrifice will have more of an impact if it is carried out at a temple rather than a shrine. It has been known for ambitious Priests to transport their sacrifice leagues to a temple of Ehalazuhn, rather than utilise the services of a mere local site.

THE GIFTS OF EHALAZUHN

Ehalazuhn does not expect the support and veneration of the masses to occur naturally. That is the way of the Avatars of The Light. Ehalazuhn rewards his supporters with tangible or spiritual gifts. An Avatar of The Light may respond to a supplicant's plea by ensuring a peaceful voyage or profitable business venture but this action is very hard to ascribe to intervention by the God – thus their loyalty is always fragile. To Ehalazuhn – real gifts ensure service and loyalty – gifts which could only come from him. Therefore many of the worshippers are given potent spells which reflect their service to the

great Destroyer and become powerful adversaries in their master's element.

These Spells or Abilities are in addition to normal cleric spells and include:

Initiate (Level 1-3):

- **Create or Destroy Water**
- **Faster Swim Ability** – *caster can travel through water at 2/3 normal speed.*
- **Putrefy Water** – *caster can change 20 gallons of pure water into a slime coated liquid sludge both repellent and undrinkable. If cast on a running source no bigger than a stream, the spell will make the water flow putrid for 5 minutes – twice a day.*

Acolyte (Level 4-6)

- **Ehalazuhn's Gift** – *the ability to vomit putrid water which can hit a single target within 5' in front of the Acolyte. If a hit is made the victim must make a **constitution** saving throw at DC 12 or be poisoned by the foul water that has been imbibed. This will cause 1d6 poison damage for 3 rounds before wearing off – twice a day.*
- **Water Breathing**
- **Water Walk**

Priest (Level 7-8)

- **Conjure Servant** – *caster has the ability to summon a single water weird once per day as long as there is a water source within 40'. This summoned creature can be given instruction and remains under the Priest's control for twelve hours before returning to the Elemental Plane of Water.*
- **Control Water**
- **Aquatic Adaptation** (gills/fins) – *caster's body changes in form to become more suitable for water travel in that their toes and fingers become webbed and gills appear in their throat. This allows faster movement (normal speed) and water breathing ability until caster leaves the water when his normal form will return – twice a day*

High Priest (Level 9-10)

- **Desiccate** – *the ability to drain moisture from the body of an enemy within 20'. The Priest can call on Ehalazuhn to suck the life force from a mortal being leaving them dehydrated and exhausted. For each turn cast, the victim suffers one level of*

exhaustion up to level 3. Concentration is required by the caster and once broken the effects cease to worsen. The target recovers all lost energy after a long rest – once per day

- **Conjure Water Elemental**
- **Aquatic Invisibility** – caster has the ability to become invisible when submerged in water. This effect lasts 1 hour and requires concentration. The spell ends when the caster makes an attack or casts a spell – twice per day.

Great High Priest (11+)

- **Watery form** – the caster has the ability to change his physical form to transmute into fresh running water. This water will drain as any normal water such as downhill and cannot flow in any manner impossible to normal un-magical water. When in this form, the caster will become invisible in normal water unless a **wisdom: perception** check is made at **DC 20** when a faint shadow will be detectable. Whilst in this form, the caster cannot attack or cast spells. The caster can only be harmed by affects that would evaporate/freeze normal water such as intense heat or cold which will cause damage and return the caster to his original state. Otherwise, the enchantment lasts until dispelled or voluntarily ended by the caster – once per day.
- **Elemental Merge** – the caster has the power to merge forms with any summoned **Water Elemental** or **Water Weird**. This destroys the elemental but bestows its remaining hitpoints on the caster as temporary hitpoints. The caster also gains some of the elemental's abilities - **Damage Resistances and Immunities** and its **Condition Immunities** – twice a day.

The devoted willingly receive these gifts in exchange for their souls and it is through these people that Ehalazuhn will once again come to the world.

Appendix B: Fenk Blitzspanner and his Travelling Market

There are many items of treasure in this module which are in forms other than coin. This reflects the reality that cold, hard cash is not the only form of wealth in the world. Some goods will be more valuable if sold to particular vendors or interested parties – Barazud artefacts are an example of this. As GM, you may want the players to have the full value of these items as soon as they receive them, without the need to find a suitable market. This will make their life easier - but is a little unrealistic. If not, the need to find a market for valuable items will prove difficult with the limited knowledge they have of Sarvania and particularly Kingsvale at this time. They also need the opportunity to upgrade their items, armour etc as they proceed through the campaign, and this too might prove inconvenient. Indeed, there are no markets for these items in the **Outer Reaches** until they reach **Skard** – which is quite a way off at this time.

One solution at this time might be the services of **Fenk Blitzspanner and his Travelling Market**. Fenk, being a traveller and a well protected one at that, can be dropped in at any time throughout a wilderness campaign. This is due to his constant search for new markets to open up and a desire for money making. Thus adventurers, if laden down with booty can rid themselves of this encumbrance at convenient points in the narrative. It also means that they can enter cave complexes and the like without the story busting dose of reality that they are carrying with them all forms of books, silverware, paintings and statues.

There are two backgrounds for a GM that will justify the appearance of Fenk and his people. The first is that he is just that – a travelling business man who is on the lookout for new markets to exploit, and this includes the relatively unknown area of the Outer Reaches. This allows the party to cross the path of his caravan at any point in the wilderness.

The alternative narrative is that **Fenk Blitzspanner** does not actually exist – that he is in fact a magical creation put in the adventurers path to help them on their way. Thus the party, and its progress, has been observed from afar by **Namera, Bringer of Life, and Elemental Goddess of the Seas, Rivers and Rejuvenation**. **Namera**, while not wishing to intervene directly in the fortunes of the party, will subtly do what she can to assist the group on their path to thwart the evil designs of her water god twin, **Ehalazuhn**. Her aim is to gently guide the party to success without direct involvement, which might cause a conflict with the other Avatars in the planes. The party may not realise that they are being observed and assisted but that is the way of such things. There will be no references to **Namera** in the caravan, but perhaps a gentle hint might not go amiss – a subtle reference or such. It might also introduce **Namera** to the story, which in turn might ease the goddess' passage into the narrative if the adventurers get themselves into a situation where they are in dire need of help. What should be avoided however is the feeling that the group are somehow the chosen ones and that they can rely on divine assistance whenever they mess up. The Avatars of The Light do not behave in such a way. If Fenk is indeed a manifestation of divine assistance, then technically he could appear at any time, even in bizarre locations – barring occasions when the party are in direct conflict with the followers of Ehalazuhn.

How does Fenk work? Regardless of which origin you choose for the trader he can certainly work in the same way. Fenk is a master appraiser of art and antiquities – and thus is a great conduit to the markets and collectors who will really appreciate the booty taken by the adventurers. He will take the items off the hands of the adventurers, give them a realistic appraisal of their value and move them on to his contacts in Kingsvale or further afield. Naturally, he will take a finder's fee for his services, and this runs to **20%** of the collector's price. Thus the party gets a good price and these goods find a loving home. He will also take more mundane items off the party for their normal market price as he can resell them easily in the towns and cities he visits.

What about buying from him? Well, all goods are available from his coffers, carts and chests. Any item

in the equipment list can be purchased from him. This allows the adventurers to buy such items as upgraded armour which would normally be available only at specialist armour smiths and weapon smiths. As for price, this depends on who he is. If he is indeed just a well travelled merchant, then he will include a mark up of 20% on his goods – one has to turn a profit. If he is a manifestation of divine assistance, then perhaps he would sell these goods at their normal price – or possibly even cheaper – it is your choice. Will he have **magical items** for sale – possibly – these are available in the world after all. It is perfectly possible that adventurers just like the party have offloaded items of limited use to them for cash. No doubt these will fetch a hefty price but then again, they are very rare and might be restricted to common or uncommon items. Naturally, these products will cost **at least** double the typical selling price in the rules guide. Fenk will certainly buy magical items off the players and their normal magic item price with adjustments based of the rolls of a percentage dice as in the rules.

However you play him, should you choose to do so, it is possible that **Fenk Blitzspanner and his Travelling Market** may become a feature in the lives of the party as they play out their roles in the campaign and beyond.

A long blast of a distant horn. What comes your way? Scanning the horizon for its source, your eyes alight upon a large body of mounted figures and transports heading in your direction. As they near you see a multi-coloured caravan – possibly of thirty or so vehicles and multitudes of animals. Four wheeled and two wheeled vehicles approach, horses, mules and even camels – all laden with baskets, boxes and barrels. On each cart sits a dwarven driver barking orders at his animals and shouting insults to fellow drivers. As this odd convoy approaches so does the noise and smell. Music you have never heard, sounds and unfamiliar languages shouted and spoken – colours bright and gaudy. A pall of dust hovers above the long parade, kicked up by a host of animals. Around the outside of this caravan ride what appear to be military men, caravan guards armed in chain mail and bearing lances, each topped by a bright blue banner.

At the head of this cavalcade, sitting astride a brightly decorated mule is another dwarf. Dressed in fine silks of many colours, expensive looking rings on his hands and a turban, crested by a great blue feather, he looks as a prince might on his wedding day. With a raise of his hand the caravan slowly comes to a halt in front of you. Snorts, jostling and voices are heard from behind this dwarven vision of colours and what could be immense wealth. His face is weather beaten and tanned, his beard plaited with rich golden cord – his bright blue eyes sparkle in a bewitching and entrancing manner.

‘Good day, fellow travellers of distant lands.’ he says. ‘What a rare pleasure to meet such as thee on our journey. Allow me the honour of introducing myself – I am Fenk Blitzspanner, and this is my travelling market, purveyors of fine and the mundane, art appreciators and buyers, traders and merchants – journeying the wilds and wastes, always on the search for new markets and business opportunities. Where we are from, no-one knows. Where we go – no one knows. But here we are and good fate has brought me to your door. What you desire, I have – what you do not want – I will buy. Welcome to the bazaar of dreams travellers – you are welcome to share our fires and our goods.’

With that, he leaps down from his mule, signals for the others to do the same and strides towards you with a wide smile upon his face and his hand outstretched towards you.

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