

Shadows on the March

A One-Round D&D 3rd Edition Living Greyhawk
Adventure

by J. Allan Fawcett

A dark shadow is falling across the once lush fields of Furyondy. Across the countryside, crops are dying and workers are missing. This adventure is suitable for characters levels 1-6.

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

Scoring the game for RPGA points: The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

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

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK Tier Structure

To determine the tier, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any henchmen or animals according to the values on their certificates. Compare the total to the chart below to find the tier.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4 nd
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 th

The level cap indicated the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

Lifestyle

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

Destitute	You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.
Poor	You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.
Common	You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.
High	You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.
Luxury	You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

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

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

Lifestyle	Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	3 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

Adventure Summary and Background

This adventure takes place within the province known as the Viscounty of the March, which is ruled by Viscount Luther Derwent. For more information on the Viscounty see the below. Although not directly related to the *Blight* story, this adventure begins to set the stage for these events. Throughout the adventure, references will be made to the failing crops, DMs should seek to emphasize these points and help set the stage for future events.

Located in the heart of the kingdom, the March is by far the most populous region of Furyondy. Protected from the ravages of the wars with Iuz, these lands are practically untouched by evil. The capital city of Gorsend was secluded from the conflict and few of its soldiers saw combat in either the Greyhawk Wars or the Great Northern Crusade. For the most part, the population of the March remains blissfully ignorant of the horrors of war brought by Iuz.

The March lies along many of the established supply routes and Derwent has judiciously invested in the restoration of the road system. This province lies along one of the most important supply routes to the recently restored Shield Lands and the new route has served to greatly increase tax revenue and new settlers in the area.

In addition to its isolation from Iuz and prosperity from trade routes, the March is also located on the most fertile soil in all of Furyondy. The province is an interesting mix of rich nobility and hard working farmers whose daily toils provide much of the wheat used throughout the kingdom. Recently, the farmlands have failed to produce the usual bountiful crops. Blights have started to ruin entire fields and the once bountiful harvests are starting to dwindle. Furyondians here are often apathetic and rather cowardly. There has been a slow migration away from the eastern fringe of the province and Luther is considering the use of convict labor, or forced service from peasants on his own lands to maintain the local farming industry.

During the adventure, the heroes will be drawn into a plot involving an evil spell caster, Velladenna Delinener. She uses her inherent charms, a few enchantments, and the dark powers of Nerull to lure members of the local populace into permanent service to her god. She has made her way quietly into the lands of Furyondy on a series of caravans and has decided to test some of her powers in the relative obscurity of the complacent Viscounty of March. If her new spells and potions prove to be a success, she plans on moving into one of the larger cities of the kingdom, the capital of the Viscounty, Gorsend.

Velladenna's plan is to move about the country side in the guise of a pilgrim and speak to the simple folk of the March. Then, using her natural beauty and magical assistance if needed, she will draw unsuspecting people into her traps with promises of a better life of unlimited beauty and one free from the toils and pain that comes

from the hard work upon the farms. At ceremonies in secluded woods, she initiates her chosen victims, who are all attractive people, into the dark world of Nerull. By feeding her victims a potion designed to preserve the body and laced with poison, she animates them and fulfills her promise. Her victims are freed from the pain and suffering of their lives, only to suffer a worse fate and be trapped as a servant to a dark god for all eternity.

Due to the powers of the potion, the recently animated bodies do not decay provided they are immersed in a rose petal herbal bath at night. It is very unlikely that the heroes will know that the missing farmers have been transformed. Other than their improved appearance, they are normal zombies.

Adventure Synopsis

PCs arrive for various reasons at the inn of Whittleborough where they learn that something is not quite right about the town by talking with the people in the bar.

Shortly after, a local page will arrive, he will attempt to hire the group to assist with a delicate situation. If they agree, he will have them look into the missing farmers. One boy went missing only a few days ago while the other (Jerad) has been gone for a while.

The heroes will investigate two farms – one closer than the other (Jared's is closer). The two lads are different in that Jared was dedicated to farming while the other, Lunth, dreamt of adventure and an easier life. After investigating the first farm, the heroes will be attacked at night by one of Velladenna's creatures. Velladenna's songbird familiar alerted her to the stranger's presence in the area. Following a clue from the boy's room at the second farm, the heroes can get to the secluded wood where the ceremony was performed.

At the wood, they will find remains of a campsite and a small cave. Inside the cave they will find a number of objects including braziers, rose petals, etc. There will be no signs of the owner until later that evening when another meeting occurs. That night, Velladenna and her servants (zombies) dressed in monk robes will return. They will set up camp and the zombies will go into the cave to prepare their baths. Then the guard captain will arrive, drawn by Velladenna's charms. If they allow it, she will complete the ritual, killing the captain and making another slave.

The final encounter can be resolved a number of ways, including a possible discussion between Velladenna and the PCs as she attempts to sway them to her point of view – using charm spells, etc. The longer they talk with her, the worse their situation becomes.

Locale Rules of Interest:

Coinage: While in the borders of the Kingdom, prices will be stated in Furyondian coinage: paladin, platinum; wheat sheaf (or "sheaf"), gold; knight, electrum; sherdan, silver; common, copper.

Reaction Adjustments: The common people of Furryondy (farmers, etc.) have little exposure to races other than humans and the occasional half-elf. The other races are treated with either a sense of suspicion (gnomes and halflings), careful concern (dwarves), wonder (elves), or downright fear and distrust bordering on hatred (half-orcs). DMs should role-play these reactions and impose situation modifiers to ability checks as appropriate.

Players Introduction

Read the following descriptive text when the players first sit down at the table. Based on this information they should determine which characters they will play, what spells to select, and what (if any) magical items they wish to bring along. The following blurb describes this event.

A dark shadow is falling across the once lush fields of Furryondy. Across the countryside, crops are dying and workers are missing. This adventure is suitable for low level characters (Tiers 1-3) of all classes

Once the players have had an opportunity to introduce themselves to one another and to select their heroes, the adventure may formally begin. The heroes start the adventure having just arrived in the small town of Whittleborough. For various reasons, they have found their way to this small town. Given its location along a number of well-established roads, the players may have nearly any explanation for why they are here. For example, they may be traveling with a caravan heading to Gorsend or the nation's capital Chendl. Allow players to make up whatever story they like for why they are in Whittleborough and determine whether or not they have any knowledge of the other characters. DMs should encourage those players whose characters have similar backgrounds or goals to consider having traveled together (caravan guards, religious pilgrims, etc.).

The southern provinces of Furryondy have been spared the horrors of the two great wars fought upon this nation's soil. Many of these provinces have benefited greatly from the increase in trade due to driving back of the Old One. One such land is the Viscounty of the March. The roads here have been rebuilt and maintained by the lands' feudal lord, the Viscount Derwent, arguably one of the richest men in the kingdom, if not the world.

Your travels have taken you through much of the province, although you have not made it to Gorsend, the capital, yet. Currently, you find yourself several days travel from the city, in one of hundreds of small farming communities found throughout the region. The Viscounty is one of the richest farming areas of the land, providing grain and corn for citizens across the nation.

The town of Whittleborough is unremarkable. Located in the center of several large farms, the town serves as a meeting place for the locals and a common stop for travelers. The atmosphere of the inn, the only one in town, is somber. There are very few patrons talking quietly over their ale but otherwise the place is silent. An innkeeper, a serving girl, and

a young boy are all present as you enter. As you walk through the door, the innkeeper nods at the boy who quickly exits through the kitchen.

Encounter One: The Inn of Whittleborough

When the heroes arrive at the small inn, they may immediately realize that things are not what they expect. It will be late afternoon when the last of the heroes arrive, and the inn would normally be busy with local farmers and workers coming in for a bite to eat or cold ale to drink. The few patrons in the bar are dour faced and bitter. Despite the sunshine filling the room from the open windows and doors, the place feels dark. The innkeeper looks expectantly at the new arrivals, hoping they bring some coins to his establishment. Given the problems with the local harvests, times are tough for the inhabitants of the town.

The inn is fairly small consisting of four sleeping chambers (2 sheridan (silver) per night), a common room (1 common (copper) per night), a small kitchen, and a storeroom. The common room has a small bar in the corner by the kitchen and a well-built hearth along one of the outer walls. A collection of mismatched chairs and stools are found throughout the place, nearly all of them empty. A well-used dartboard and several darts are located on a table in the corner to amuse the patrons (the darts have no value as weapons).

Demo Hint: If DMs are running first time 3E players, simulating a game of darts to familiarize players with the combat to hit system may be a good idea. Treat the dartboard as AC 12, the middle ring as AC 14, and the bulls-eye as AC 18.

Heroes may wish to speak with either the innkeeper (Hal), the serving girl (Illiana), or the some of the patrons (Foelmen and Gelmien) of the bar after their arrival. Illiana, the serving girl (Cha 10) will tend to the needs of the group quickly after they are seated providing a modest meal and ale or wine. The charge for a meal at the inn is 2 sheridan per person which heroes will notice is quite high. If they inquire about the prices, she will smile and apologize, and comment on how bad the harvests have been going this season.

Heroes that wish to obtain more information about the locale happenings may use the Information Gathering skill (DC 13). Or, preferably, role-play interactions with the NPCs. Remember the reaction effects for each of the races mentioned earlier in the adventure when role-playing these events. If PCs are half-orcs and attempt to Intimidate or bully any of the people in the bar, they will be asked to leave. Hal, the innkeeper, will refuse to allow them to stay at the inn. Unless these characters are careful, they will alienate the local population and the lord's man Bukan, and not be asked to assist with the task at hand. The people in the inn are:

Tavern NPCs

Halvenai (Hal), the Innkeeper (male human Com2)

Halvenai runs the simple inn in Whittleborough and has lived in the town for all his life. He is very protective of his niece Illiana and his nephew Gabriel who has taken care of since their parents death by plague several years ago. He is personally glad that the wars have ended and that the Viscount has been so thorough in managing the land's coffers. He tends to be good-natured and up beat about most things, but PCs that empathize with him will get to see his current situation. He is very concerned about the high level of taxes being levied by the king, blaming them for his need to charge high prices. Although he will never speak out against the king directly, he does wish the taxes could be reduced, after all, the war is over. In addition, he will complain about the lack of business lately. Several local farmers have stopped coming in due to the problems they are experiencing in the fields. Odd weather and strange crop failures have caused a reduction in the bounty the fields of the March typically produce.

Illiana, Serving girl (female human Com1)

Illiana is a seventeen-year-old girl and the niece of the innkeeper. She is a simple girl who works hard to help her uncle make a living at the inn. She has no dreams of grand adventure or anything other than eventually marrying a farmer, working some land for a local lord, and starting a family. Although of common origin, she has seen enough bards and other rogues come through the inn to develop quite a resistance to sweet words and charming travelers. PCs will find her open and honest as long as they do not cross the line of propriety. She knows she has little chance of marrying wealth, and has no desire to be courted by adventurers or mercenaries. If asked about the town, she will admit that business has been a bit slow and that many of the farmers have been complaining about the low yield of the fields. Many of the fields have had crops die quickly before they could even send for a cleric from a nearby town. PCs that are able to truly gain her trust will learn what is really bothering her. A good friend of hers (the man she someday hopes to marry though she will blush when she admit this), has not been to the inn for over two weeks. His name is Jared, and he is the son of a farmer about a two days walk from the inn. If asked what he looks like, she sighs and informs the PCs that he is a tall man with broad shoulders, long blonde hair, and bright green eyes (Cha 13). He often comes to spend time with her, about every 4th day, and her uncle lets him stay on the common room floor without charging him. She is very worried that something happened to him. She sent word to the farm a couple of days ago, but has not heard anything.

Gabriel, Human male, Errand Boy (Com1)

Gabriel is the boy who leaves when the PCs arrive. He is a young lad of about 8 or 9 summers and is Illiana's kid brother. He returns later to the inn with Bukan. Gabriel helps about the inn most days to be near his uncle and

sister. He does not know much about what has been going on in the town, other than lots of the grown-ups, including his parents, have been complaining about the poor harvests.

Foelmen & Gelmien, Human Male Farmers (Com3)

These two farmers have tired of seeing many their crops die on the vine despite their best efforts. They are both very skilled farmers and have worked the lords land for their entire lives. Recently, they have both suffered some severe crop loss due to an odd blight. They are so angry that they have decided to get roaring drunk! Although obnoxious and argumentative, these two are harmless to the PCs. If taunted or angered, they will eventually attempt to throw a punch at the offending hero. They will miss horribly, and pass out in a heap on the floor Illiana will quickly tend to them while scolding the PCs. PCs that wish to get on their good side may buy them a drink for a pair of commons (copper) each for the house ale. This will win the PC a smile and a tip of a mug, but that is about it. Both men will complain loudly if asked about the crop situation, taxes, churches (just another tax on the simple man) or just about any topic the PCs bring up.

DMs should use these NPCs to set the stage for actions to come. They should seed the belief that crop damage is a major concern to the region as are the tax increases. Both of these leads are important to the development of forthcoming Furyondy regional modules, however, only the missing farm boy is critical to the plot of this adventure. After the PCs have had a good opportunity to interact with the bar patrons and one another, proceed to the next encounter.

Encounter Two: Call to Service

After a few hours in the inn (when the PCs have learned what they need to know or are growing tired), the young boy will return with Bukan, a servant of the local lord, Jacalarn. The boy was instructed by Bukan to fetch him if any people suitable to assist him in the search for the missing boys arrived at the inn. Bukan is a member of the local lord's household and a close friend to the local guard captain and war veteran, Hennevier. When the first farmer, Jared, went missing Hennevier was tasked with finding the lads whereabouts. Bukan has noticed him acting strangely and is afraid that his friend could be disgraced in the eyes of Lord Jacalarn. He has a deep sense of respect for the guard captain and is hoping that someone else can help his friend avoid a fall from grace.

When he arrives, use the following description or paraphrase as appropriate:

The main door to the inn opens and two people make their way into the inn. Leading the way is the young boy who left earlier, with him, is a young man (about 20 or so) dressed in leather armor and carrying a rapier and dagger. He has a long cloak made of fine weave that is fastened with a brooch that bears the symbol of the Viscounty and of the local lord

Jacalarn. *The boy points at you, and the man makes his way across the common area to meet you.*

“Greetings and welcome to the town of Whittleborough, protectorate of the Viscount Dewnet and his noble, Lord Jacalarn. Allow me to introduce myself, I am Bukan, a member of the house of Jacalarn. Do you plan on staying in town a while, or are you, like so many others, just passing through?”

Bukkan

Human male, Fighter1/Rogue1: CR 2; SZ Medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1d6; HP 10; Init+6 (Dex +Feat); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (Leather & Dex); Atks: +3 (1d6, [Crit 18-20/x2] Rapier), AL LG; SV Fort +2 Ref +5 Wil +0

Str 10 Dex 15 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 10

Skills: Intuit danger +4, Listen +4, Sense motive +4, Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Escape artist +6, Innuendo +4, Move silently +4, Hide +4; Feats: Dodge, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Improved initiative

Equipment: leather armor, rapier, dagger, riding horse w/saddle, Furyondy medallion (10 gp), 60 gp in coins

Bukkan is a young man (about 20 or so) dressed in leather armor and carrying a rapier and dagger. He has a long cloak made of fine weave that is fastened with a brooch that bears the symbol of the Viscounty and of the local lord Jacalarn

Bukan is superstitious and be very skeptical of any outlandish looking characters such as barbarians, obvious wizards, etc. He also shares the race reactions outlined in the side bar earlier, although he is more willing to accept outsiders given his current situation. During his conversation with the PCs, Bukan will attempt to learn as much about them as is reasonable (using his Sense Motive skill) before letting them know too much about his problems. He is very interested in what skills the group possesses to look into things but will not attract undue attention to this curiosity.

Bukan is hoping to find an “unofficial” group of people willing to look into the recent events to avoid embarrassing his friend Hennevier. He is not acting on any official requests of his lord and is careful not to misrepresent this fact. If asked any questions he cannot or does not want to answer, he will attempt to deflect them. He will not lie to the PCs, and will apologize if they give him the impression that he is not being forthright. If any of the PCs are hostile towards him or any of the other patrons, he will refuse to speak about the situation in the offending PCs presence. If pressed, Bukan will insist that any offensive PC be left out of the mission, thereby ending the tournament for that player character.

Bukan's dilemma is a fairly complicated one. He needs to continue to obey his lord and defend the lands to the best of his ability. He also has a deep sense of commitment to the people of the March and does not want to see any harm come them. Bukan knows that Illiana and the missing farmer, Jared, were close and he has been staying nearby hoping of some sign of the man's return. If any of the PCs have befriended Illiana, Bukan will play on this fact when trying to negotiate for the

group's assistance. With the recent disappearances and the strange behavior of his friend, Bukan has decided to take matters into his own hands. He hopes that his friend Hennevier can address the lord's issue, but he also knows that his friend's strength is his sword arm and presence, not his intellect.

If the PCs are able to convince Bukan of their abilities and interest in helping out, he will let them know a bit more about what is going on in the March. Since he is not working on behalf of the lord or Hennevier, he has limited resources to bargain with. If the PCs require an incentive, all he has to offer is a gold medallion that belonged to his grandfather and a few saved coins. The medallion is an ornate piece, well, but not exceptionally well made, with the coat of arms of Furyondy on it. The medallion is worth 10 sheaf (gold). In addition, Bukan has saved 60 sheaves he is reluctantly willing to part with for the good of his friends. Once an agreement to look into things has been struck and sealed by a handshake, Bukan will reveal the following:

These past few months have been hard upon the people of the March. It is his job to travel Lord Jacalarn's holdings to watch over the people and collect tithes when due. Crops have been failing and many of the farmers are growing uneasy with the tax burden levied by the King. Recently, two farm workers have disappeared. About two weeks ago a farmer named Jared disappeared after leaving from his father's farm a day to the north. A few days ago, another farmer's son, Lunth, disappeared from another farm, a little further north of Jared's. As far as he knows, the boys were cordial, but not really friends.

I have been to both farms over the past week to speak with the farmers, but has learned nothing. Jared's parents were very distressed by his disappearance while Lunth's father Aniradal seemed angry and annoyed.

Shortly after Jared's disappearance, Lord Jacalarn dispatched a guard captain, Hennevier, to look into the matter. He was gone for over a week and a half, returning shortly after the second boy disappeared, and was somehow different. His once warm smile was gone and he seemed distracted. The two of them often dined together, but they have not said more than a few words since Hennevier's return. Hennevier now rides through the land looking for the boys, but something is amiss. Bukan is unsure where to find the captain at this time.

Lord Jacalarn is growing impatient with the lack of results from his dependable captain. Hennevier served in the Northern Crusade and saw action on the front against the forces of the Old One and is very dependable. Bukan fears that some evil must have come over him.

If asked where to start, Bukan will suggest the group travel to the farms and try and talk to the parents to find out what is happening, perhaps the farmers will share with other people things they would keep from nobility. He will provide descriptions of each of the farms locations and distances so that the PCs will be able to find them without difficulty. They can mention his name, but he encourages them to be as discrete as possible. He will also caution the group about the affects of any odd behavior or appearances will have on the conservative and somewhat sheltered people of the March.

Once Bukan has made some arrangements with the PCs, paying them half of the funds in advance at most, he will excuse himself from their table. He suggests that the group return to the inn when they have figured out what happened. They can send word to him at the inn with a local farmer if they need to get him a message. Bukan will speak softly and quickly with Illiana, assuring her that they will find Jared, before departing the inn and riding off into the night.

The rest of the evening will pass without incident unless the PCs cause one. They will be able to stay at the inn provided they pay the innkeeper the appropriate amount. Once they arise in the morning, they will be free to journey to the first farm.

Contacting Bukan

If the PCs leave word with Bukan during the adventure he will respond to the best of his ability. He will be able to meet them anywhere within reason for face-to-face meetings in fairly short order. Although he will have no new information, PCs that bring him into the final encounter will have a much easier time dealing with the charmed Hennevier.

Encounter Three: Traveling to Jared's

The trip from the Inn of Whittleborough to Jared's father's farm requires a two-day walk. If the PCs have horses—there will not be any for rent or sale in the town—they can make the journey in a single day. If not, they will be forced to camp along the road near the place where Jared camped the night he met Velladenna. A small hill lies about half way between the town and the farm, and the PCs will find it an ideal place to camp. A small stream runs nearby where a fair number of trout can be caught by those attempting to fish. The relevant skill is Profession (fishing) (DC 12). If no character has this skill, they may still attempt to fish using one-half of their wisdom score due to the abundance of fish (normally Profession skills cannot be used untrained). DMs should add a significant penalty if the PCs do not have proper equipment such as fishing line, hooks, etc.

DMs should ask the PCs what their sleeping arrangements and watch schedule will be when setting up camp. Although not directly relevant for this encounter, this will be important for the following night.

If the PCs decide to camp on or near the hill, they will find the remains of Jared's camp.

As you make your way towards Jared's farm, you find the daylight growing short. A small hill seems to make an ideal campsite. You can hear the sounds of a small stream not far away. Taking a closer look around, you can see that not too long ago this spot had been used by other travelers. A small clearing contains a fire pit from which the ashes of an old fire have nearly completely blown away.

If the PCs decide to make camp, they may find a few items tossed unceremoniously into the bushes near the remains of the old campsite. If the PCs take time to search the area carefully, several skills may prove useful. These skills (DC 16) include Spot (no active looking required) and Search or Track (if actively looking for other signs of the campers). Those PCs that are using Track may also find additional information (see below). If any of the skill checks are successful, the heroes will have found a clue to Jared's disappearance.

Located in the bushes not far from the camp are three items. A simple wreath made of laurels, a small bouquet of wild flowers now wilted and dying (at least a week old), and a simple silver ring sized for a small hand. The ring is actually holding the stems of the flowers together and is rather cleverly hidden. While each of these items is not worth much, their meaning is more valuable. Any PC of common or peasant upbringing will immediately recognize these items and their relationship to courtship among the simple people of the March. Whoever left them behind was contemplating proposing to a hopeful bride. The ring is small but well made and is worth 5 sherdan (silver). The ring was intended for Illiana and the PCs may wish to return it to her – although it is not required. PCs that return the ring at the end of the scenario receive an additional experience bonus listed in the module summary.

If the heroes attempt to thoroughly search the area for additional tracks, have them make a Track check, DC 23 due to the elapsed time and rain from several days ago. If successful, the PCs will notice two sets of sporadic tracks lead from the campsite down to the road, heading away from Whittleborough. The first set of tracks belongs to a man-sized boot while the other belongs to a smaller person, perhaps a woman or an elf. This clue is more subtle, but would seem to indicate that the two beings left together rather than one being forcibly removed from the area.

Crop Investigation Results

If the PCs examine any of the plants along the way to the farm or once they arrive, they will notice that they are suffering, although not dying outright. The plants are all covered with a trace of a white film that blows away in the wind if disturbed.

Characters that attempt to investigate the nature of the problems with the crops may do so using any number of avenues. The plants will neither detect as evil or poisonous if checked. Characters that are able to cure disease will be able to remove the film from a single plant, but each breeze blows new powder onto the plant whose effects are outlined below. Two primary skills: Profession/Farming and Alchemy provide the most insight. Each player with any of these skills is allowed one check against whichever skill(s) they possess. Consult the following table:

DC 0-19: No information available

- DC 20-25: The substance does not appear to be a natural phenomenon, however the plant appears to have been altered in some way to produce this substance.
- DC 25+ If any of the powder touches an unaffected plant, that plant will suffer and produce the powder within 24 hours of contact.

Encounter Four: Jared's Farm

DMs will need to modify the descriptions and interactions depending on whether they arrive after camping (assumed option) or if they have ridden horses and arrived a day earlier—arriving late in the afternoon. Assuming the PCs camped and wake up at a decent hour, they will be able to reach the farm without difficulty by late in the afternoon. The weather is good for the walk and the simple wagon trail is very easy to find. PCs that wish to look for additional tracks around the campsite will be disappointed to find that any trail they may have discovered last night has been lost when they joined the road. After several hours of walking, the PCs will reach the small farm.

Ahead of you is the farmhouse that Bukan described as belonging to the father of the missing farm boy Jared. Its simple stone construction and log paneling appear to be well maintained and a small stream of smoke appears to be coming from the hearth. The fields appear well tended and orderly with a scarecrow placed to keep away pests. The crops, primarily wheat, appear to be wilting despite the recent good weather.

The PCs will notice that the farm is typical of those found within this region. A small (3 room) structure is the home of an entire family who works the surrounding lands on behalf of the local feudal lord. There is also a small barn and area for livestock including a pair of dairy cows and four large pigs. There are also a number of small barnyard animals including about a dozen chickens in a coop and a few cats as well.

The farm is home to Owell (hm, Com1) and Milliene (hf Com1) who are simple farmers. They are like most people of the March and believe the same stereotypes outlined in the DM's introduction. They have not seen many non-humans and they have heard that all orcs are evil so they will be fearful of any group that has a half-orc among its number. If the players attempt to bully them in any way, Owell will try and protect Milliene, locking themselves within their farmhouse. They possess no weapons and have no combat skills. If the characters act in a kind and friendly manner, and do not possess any obvious character types that would upset them, they will invite the characters inside for a meal. They have simple fare consisting of eggs, breads, cheese, vegetables, and a small amount of sausage. All of these items come from this farm and they will be insulted if the PCs are rude or insult the food. They will not accept payment for the meal

since it is an act of common hospitality, and they will also be insulted if the PCs insist on paying them.

If the players ask them about their son, Owell and Milliene will react quite differently. Owell will become suspicious, wondering what his son would have to do with a group of adventurers. He will become very concerned and seek to be near his wife (if the PCs have attempted to separate them). He is much more comfortable discussing the recent weather (it has been great), the problems with the crops (strangest thing he has seen – he will point out the white powder mentioned above), or the taxes (how can he pay more with crops failing?). Milliene, however, will be quite willing to chat about Jared and she thinks her husband worries too much about the crops. When the conversation turns to Jared, she is quite hopeful. She does not know too much about her son's disappearance other than that he left for Whittleborough two weeks ago to visit his girlfriend, Illiana who works at the inn. The night before he left, he mentioned to his mother that he was going to ask Illiana to marry him. She was so happy for her son when he left, and now, she hopes and prays to St. Cuthbert that he's alright.

If the PCs brought the ring and flowers with them from the campsite and think to show them to Jared's parents the effect is dramatic. Milliene will break down crying and Owell will stand up demanding they return the ring and leave the farm. The PCs will get no further information from them after displaying the ring.

Specifically, they know following pieces of information:

- Jared left the farm two weeks ago to meet Illiana at the Whittleborough Inn. They are fond of Illiana and think the two of them would be able to get a small parcel of land from the local lord if they asked for it.
- Jared is a tall man with broad shoulders, long blonde hair, and bright green eyes (Cha 13). He leaves about once a week to meet Illiana. He is usually in Whittleborough for only a day before heading back. They have heard that he never arrived but are hopeful that he is alright.
- Two servants of Lord Jacalarn (Hennievier and Bukan) visited separately to ask about Jared. Owen and Millie suspect that something bad has happened, but neither of the Lord's men gave them any information.
- This season's crops are still several months away from harvest, although they are way behind previous year's growth patterns. The weather has generally been good with the exception of a couple heavy storms. The white film on the plants is troubling and has spread throughout the fields like wildfire.

When the PCs ask them about the other farmer's disappearance, they will become even more guarded and worried. At this time, they will begin to shuffle around and the first sign of tears begin to appear in Millie's eyes and Owell will insist the PCs leave. They will provide directions to the farm if the PCs need them – it is just

over a day's walk to the north (away from Whittleborough).

Regardless of the overall questions the PCs ask, Owell and Millienn will be unwilling to put them up for the night. The simple people are not used to people disturbing their routine and they, will politely but firmly insist they leave before nightfall.

Encounter Five: Shadow Attack!

Based on the report from her songbird familiar, which has been traveling around the area, Velladenna has discovered the presence of a group of strangers in the land. Assuming that they must be trouble, she has used her a magical figurine to call forth a powerful creature. Following the guidance of her familiar, she has sent the creature to the area of the PCs camp. Deep in the night, a couple hours after midnight, the beast will make its move. The creature will stalk the camp, trying to eliminate sentries first, before attacking the entire camp. The beast is magical in nature and is considered "summoned" for the purposes of determining the effects of protective magic.

The panther is a powerful and experienced hunter. Due to its dark color and its stalking ability, there is a chance the creature will surprise the PCs.

DMs should remember that if the creature surprises the PCs, they will be "flatfooted" (PHB Chpt 9 pg. 3) and unable to act or add their dexterity modifier to their armor class. All creatures and characters act in initiative order during the surprise round, however only those characters not surprised may act. Those who are surprised, remain "flatfooted" until their turn in the initiative order is reached, at which time they may act and add their dexterity modifier (if any) to their armor class however they still cannot act until the following round.

Tier One:

Panther, Fiendish: CR 2; Medium-size animal (outsider); HD 3d8+6; HP 23; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural); Atks: +6 (1d6+3, bite), or +1 (1d3+1, 2 claws), SA Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d3+1, smite good; SQ scent, darkvision; SR 6 AL NE Saves Fort +5 Ref +7 Wil +2

Str 16 Dex 19 Con 15 Int 2 Wil 12 Cha 2

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6; **Feats:** Weapon Finesse (bite, claw)

SA: Pounce—If leaps on foe during fist round of combat, it may make a full attack even if it already has taken a move action; Improved grab—must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold it may rake; Rake—when it gets a hold it can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d3+1 each; Smite good—Once a day may make a normal attack to deal an additional +3 damage to a good foe.

SQ: Scent—can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. The exact location is not revealed only presence within range.

Speaks: Infernal

Tier Two:

Panther, Fiendish: CR 2; Medium-size animal (outsider); HD 4d8+8; HP 40; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural); Atks: +6 (1d6+3, bite), or +1 (1d3+1, 2 claws), SA Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d3+1, smite good; SQ scent, darkvision, resistance, damage reduction; SR 8; AL NE Saves Fort +5 Ref +7 Wil +2

Str 16 Dex 19 Con 15 Int 2 Wil 12 Cha 2

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6; **Feats:** Weapon Finesse (bite, claw)

SA: Pounce—If leaps on foe during fist round of combat, it may make a full attack even if it already has taken a move action; Improved grab—must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold it may rake; Rake—when it gets a hold it can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d3+1 each; Smite good—Once a day may make a normal attack to deal an additional +3 damage to a good foe.

SQ: Scent—can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. The exact location is not revealed only presence within range. Resistance—ignores 10 points of cold or fire damage each round; Damage reduction—reduce 5 points of damage for each hit unless weapon is +1 or above.

Tier Three:

Panther, Fiendish: CR 2; Medium-size animal (outsider); HD 5d8+10; HP 50; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural); Atks: +6 (1d6+3, bite), or +1 (1d3+1, 2 claws), SA Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d3+1, smite good; SQ scent, darkvision; SR 10; AL NE Saves Fort +5 Ref +7 Wil +2

Str 16 Dex 19 Con 15 Int 2 Wil 12 Cha 2

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6; **Feats:** Weapon Finesse (bite, claw)

SA: Pounce—If leaps on foe during fist round of combat, it may make a full attack even if it already has taken a move action; Improved grab—must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold it may rake; Rake—when it gets a hold it can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d3+1 each; Smite good—Once a day may make a normal attack to deal an additional +3 damage to a good foe.

SQ: Scent—can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. The exact location is not revealed only presence within range. Resistance—ignores 10 points of cold or fire damage each round; Damage reduction—reduce 5 points of damage for each hit unless weapon is +1 or above.

Given the creature's magical nature it will attack until killed. When the beast is destroyed, use the following description.

The final blow is struck and the beast begins to shudder violently. Its jade green eyes begin to go dim and

small fissures form over its body. The beast shatters into thousands of pieces that scatter in the wind.

PCs that wish to track the creature may attempt a tracking skill check at DC 25. The beast traveled along a stream nearby for several miles and cannot be tracked back to its place of origin.

Following the battle, the PCs will be able to rest and regain spells normally. The following morning is another sunny day with mild temperatures. When the PCs are ready to head for the second farm, proceed to the next encounter.

Encounter Six: Lunth's Place

If the PCs were terribly wounded in the battle, they may wish to rest for an additional day or two to recuperate. The timing of this adventure is flexible since Velladenna will be using her cave base for a few days. Eventually the PCs will be ready to travel to the second farm and continue the adventure. The morning sunrise(s) is beautiful and the PCs will have good weather or the short trip. The journey to the farm takes several hours, but the PCs will make it shortly after midday if they do not dawdle.

While they are making their way to the second farm, the PCs will notice that the crops in the area seem to be suffering the same effects as those near Jerad's place. Wildlife appears to be unaffected and numerous small animals and birds are found throughout the area (including a certain songbird). PCs may wish to take special precautions on the journey and DMs should note the PCs efforts even though they will not be needed. The journey to the farm is safe and pleasant in the early day sun. When the PCs arrive, use the following description:

Following the directions you were given you reach the farm where the second missing worker lived. The farmhouse is typical of those found throughout the area and is made of simple stone work. The fields appear well tended, however the crops, wheat primarily, do not appear to be growing well despite the good weather.

As you approach the home, a large farmer standing well over six feet tall exits the barn with a chicken under one arm and a pitchfork under the other. Noticing your presence, the man strides over quickly with a small look of displeasure coming over his face.

"Obviously you are not from around these parts, what business brings you to my simple farm? Mind you, this is no place for charity."

The man is Lunth's father, Aniradal (Com4, Str 16 Int 14), who lives and works this farm for the local lord. DMs should note that he has the same reaction adjustments to non-humans and strange looking characters outlined in the DM Background. Since his son's disappearance, Aniradal has been forced to work the lands himself while looking for a hired hand. If the PCs wish to speak with him at length or win his trust, they are going to have to pitch in around the farm. Aniradal will exchange only a

few pleasantries (if any) with the PCs before returning to work. He is very intelligent and polite, but is a very busy man with many chores ahead of him.

Among the many chores to be completed are tending the livestock (feeding cows and chickens), cleaning the barn (sweeping out old hay and manure), repairing a stone fence, baking bread, and chopping wood. Aniradal will not directly ask the PCs for any help in the tasks, but will smile kindly at anyone who takes the hint and initiative to pitch in and talk while the work is getting done. In fact, this is the only way the PCs will be able to get any helpful information other than resorting to unethical tactics such as *charm* spells. Although he appreciates the assistance, he takes a dim view of any PC that uses magic in place of a few hours labor. Aniradal is well educated for a farmer (we can read and write and insisted that his son learn these skills as well) and is too wise to fall for common tricks and persuasion such as a flirtatious PC. His wife died several years ago of illness and Aniradal is content to take his pleasure from a hard day's labor.

After a few hours of work (DMs should feel free to add their own descriptions to the tasks at hand), Aniradal will suggest the "workers" take a break and he will draw cool clear water from the well.

"Well I must thank you for the assistance today. As you can see this is quite a lot of work for one man, especially one of my age. You have the look of people in search of something that you think I can help with, otherwise you would have left hours ago. Now, what can I do for you?"

Aniradal will listen attentively to the PCs as they begin to tell their story. He will focus his attention on those PCs that pitched in while politely ignoring those that did not help. When the PCs mention his missing son, they will notice that he shakes his head in disbelief a bit before responding. Through conversation with Aniradal, the PCs may learn the following:

- Lunth has only been missing for a short time (5-6 days depending on how long it took the PCs to make it to the farm), and Aniradal thinks he will return shortly. This is in fact, what he told the Lord's man (Bukan) when he stopped by a few days earlier.
- Aniradal believes that Lunth simply could not stand life on the farm any more. Lunth is a headstrong lad with a few too many brains and not enough sense for his own good. He was always dreaming of a bigger life and making it rich. Since his mother passed away a few years ago, he hardly stopped talking about leaving the farm.
- Lunth was always fascinated with magic despite being warned about the dangers the pursuit of magic often brought about. Shortly after his mother taught him to read (at age 6), he began saving money to buy books about magic from travelers in Whittleborough.
- Lunth left the farm in the middle of the night following a particularly hard day of work. He and his son had a late dinner and turned in. When Aniradal awoke, Lunth was gone with a small bag of clothes

and belongings. He left no note (that he has found) and did not take anything else from the farm.

The PCs will be unable to convince Aniradal that his son has fallen into ill luck, even if they describe their findings from the camp, the other missing farmer, and the creature from the night before. There have been no sightings of unusual creatures in the area and if pressed on the subject, he will simply respond that if one leaves his home seeking trouble, trouble often finds him.

If the PCs were polite and wish to see Lunth's room, Aniradal will let them take a look around. Inside the room, which is a small area with a simple bed and a chest of drawers. Located under a loose floorboard underneath the bed is a clue to Lunth's disappearance—a letter he left for his father (Player Handout 1). The secret compartment was made by Lunth and is therefore not exceptionally well hidden. PCs that are searching the area under the bed may attempt a *Search* skill roll at DC 15 to detect the compartment. DMs should remember to add +2 if the searching character is an elf or half-elf. The contents of the letter are as follows:

Dear Father,

I know you would not approve of my decision to leave so I am leaving without your approval. I am sorry, I know how much this must upset you. Over the last few years on the farm I have slowly realized that there is more to my life than working the land for someone else. I wish to set forth and have a new life, one of my own.

A few nights ago while near Whittleborough I met an amazing woman. She is as beautiful as the sky at twilight. She has started to show me how to control the first touches of magic! At last I have found my true calling in life. Tonight I meet her at Trovel's Grove, she has promised to share with me a secret of magic that has given her everlasting life. Imagine it Father, to live forever while studying magic with such a beautiful woman.

I promise to return when I have established myself as a magician. I will buy us a new home and we can live a better life.

Your Son,
Lunth

PC who share the letter with Aniradal will earn a sincere thank you from the farmer. He will initially scold the boy for being so foolish as to run off, but will then comment that each boy becomes a man and has to venture off someday. If asked about the grove, he will also give the PCs directions to the grove under one condition. Aniradal will insist that the PCs do not mention him or the farm. Aniradal believes that his son should have the opportunity to make up his own mind about what he wants to do with his life, after all, the farm will always be here.

If the PCs ask him about the grove, Aniradal will tell them the local folklore.

Trovel's Grove is the site of an old hangman's tree where over a hundred years ago evil men were hung for their crimes. It is a simple superstition held among most

of the common folk of the area, although no one knows if it is true or not. The grove is on the top of a plateau overlooking several local farms nearby, about two-hour hike to the west.

If the PCs leave soon after finding the letter, they will arrive just before nightfall. If the PCs wish to attempt and contact Bukan, they may send word with a local farm boy for 2 cp. Bukan will arrive the following afternoon and be available to approach the grove that evening. He will have no new information upon his arrival.

Encounter Seven: Trovel's Grove

The trip to Trovel's Grove is a fairly easy hike to the west of the farm. The PCs can take one of the wagon trails for the first hour before turning off on an animal trail for the last portion of the journey. When they leave the wagon trail, they will be able to see the plateau upon which the grove sits more clearly.

In the distance you can see the ridge upon which stands Trovel's Grove. The landscape here is a bit rockier and an animal trail leads through the field up the slope to the stands of trees. The top of the plateau looks heavily wooded and there is no sign of the hangman's tree that Aniradal described from this distance.

By the time the PCs arrive at the turn off, it will be late in the afternoon. The animal trail is a well-established run for deer and other animals common to the area. There are no signs of large or unusual creatures along the trail. If the PCs search for tracks along the trail, they may discover (Track, DC 18) several sets of human footprints along the trail. There are three sets larger sets of tracks (Jared, Lunth, and another farmer) and a smaller set of tracks (Velladenna). All the tracks appear to be roughly human size and are booted. All of the tracks lead up the game trail towards the top of the ridge.

Clever PCs may think to scout the surrounding area around the hill for other signs of tracks. The plateau is fairly large and can be accessed from several points without difficulty. A careful inspection of the base of the plateau will take the PCs several hours of tracking time—meaning they will have to spend more than a single day performing this task. If the PCs elect to spend the time searching, make a Tracking check (DC 20) to discover another set of tracks. If successful, the PCs will find a second trail consisting of the small booted feet identified earlier and another larger set of boot prints obviously leading a horse. These tracks are difficult to spot because the persons making them took care to pass through with minimal disruption to the surrounding area.

Eventually, the PCs will approach the top of the ridge and Trovel's Grove. When they are near the top, the sun will be getting ready to set. Read the following description (modify it if the PCs are not approaching at night as appropriate):

The top of the plateau is not far off and the trees on the ridge are fairly heavy. Although not appearing to be very healthy terrain, over a hundred large oak trees fill the area. Their dark trunks and ample leaves provide heavy shade from the typical March sun. As the sun begins to go down the trees appear to stand silent vigil of the surrounding countryside. Somewhere deep within the grove is the area described in Lunth's letter and the local legends, the hangman's tree.

PCs that wish to continue following the small game trail will have little difficulty keeping site of it. The trees are very thick and the PCs will have an exceptionally difficult time (+4 DC) keeping quiet using the move silently skill due to the heavy branches and thick undergrowth.

Located a few hundred yards inside of the tree line is the hangman's tree. When the PCs reach the area, use the following description:

Making your way through the trees you notice the signs of a small clearing in front of you. Dominating the clearing is an ancient oak tree standing well over 100 feet high. Its thick trunk burrows deep into the rocky soil and its roots appear to have ripped the stones apart to reach the soil beneath. About twenty feet off the ground is a wide branch, about the width of large barrel that runs parallel to the ground, an ideal hangman's tree.

The clearing has seen some use lately, and a small fire pit has been dug about twenty feet away from the tree. A strange odor seems to emanate from the clearing—the soft evening wind carries the scent of rose petals although you have seen no rose bushes on the plateau...

The PCs will have several minutes to investigate the area before any of the NPCs return. If the PCs post a look out, they will notice the small party including a warrior (Hennevier), a woman (Velladenna), and three monks approaching (no skill roll needed). If they do not post a look out, the PCs will be unprepared for their arrival.

The clearing is a well-used and maintained campsite. There are places where two bedrolls have been placed and numerous sets of tracks. Several man-sized tracks can be seen about the area matching the tracks the PCs may have found on the trail earlier. Although the campsite looks fresh, there are no items lying strewn about.

Upon careful inspection of the area, PCs will notice that there is an opening leading underground at the base of the tree. Several of the main roots have formed a natural ceiling to a cave underneath the hangman's tree. Several sets of tracks are clearly visible leading into the area and the scent of rose petals emanates from the cave. PCs with darkvision will be able to see clearly in the cave while those without will require a light source.

DM Note: Use of a light source will alert Velladenna to the presence of someone within her campsite.

The cavern underneath the tree is natural earth and leads about twenty feet underground before leveling out to a domed cave. The smell of rose petals is nearly overpowering in this area. Inside the small cave are several objects carefully packed away. A travel bundle is

stashed near the wall that includes a bedroll, cooking kit, two black robes, and other travel supplies. Carefully hidden within the bundle are three items of potential value to the PCs: The first is small pouch of coins (no mintage printed) with 100 gp is tucked in a small pocket. Further inspection will reveal the other two items—two carefully packed vellum sheets with odd writing. These sheets are copies of two arcane spells stolen from a mage years ago with a single spell on each page. The writing is legible with read magic and the spells are sleep and charm person. Certificates for these spells are contained in the end of the adventure.

Located on the center of the floor is a wrought iron brazier with ashes from burning incense that has a foul smell. In the rear of the chamber are three large spring fed pools with uncomfortably cold water. Each of these pools has clear water and a slight current indicating the direction of the spring. Hundreds of rose petals can be found all around the pools and footprints leading around the edges and into them are visible if the PCs have ample light.

If the PCs waited for the following day to investigate (they may or may not have Bukan with them), Velladenna and company will not arrive until that evening. If the PCs traveled directly to the grove after meeting Lunth's father, Velladenna and her entourage will return to their campsite while the PCs are investigating the cave. If the PCs have left obvious signs of their presence (such as disturbing the area too much or igniting light sources), the NPCs will be prepared for a confrontation as outlined below.

Encounter Eight: Velladenna

The final confrontation with Velladenna can take many forms depending on the actions and locations of the PCs (her statistics are provided in the following encounter). Velladenna will return to the grove about twenty minutes after nightfall. She will be accompanied by her three servants dressed in simple monks robes (the animated farmers) and the guard captain Hennevier. Descriptions of each of the NPCs are listed below.

Velladenna,

Dressed in dark clothes of better than average make, this woman is truly striking. Her pale skin is offset by jet black hair and dazzling green eyes. She stands well over five feet tall and has a slim, but athletic build.

Hennevier

Standing over six feet tall this man has the walk of a trained soldier. He is dressed in chain mail armor adorned with the livery of the local Lord Jacalarn. His shield bears an identical similar symbol and he carries a fine longsword in a sheath. The man is fairly handsome, in a rugged manner, with long brown hair and deep brown eyes.

Monks

Three solemn figures are dressed in simple robes of plain brown fabric, tied with a simple rope around the waist. They wear sandals and walk with a slow purposeful gait. Their long hoods cover the bulk of their features, although each of them stands nearly six feet in height or more. All three figures smell strongly of rose petals.

The finale of the adventure can proceed along one of the following paths. Regardless of how the finale encounter is staged, DMs should remember that Velladenna's first priority is survival. She will seek to parlay with PCs first, escape if pressed, or fight if no other alternative presents itself.

If the NPCs are Unaware of the PCs:

Upon their arrival, the "monks" will head into the cave located at the base of the tree and begin preparations for their evening restorative bath. If there are PCs in the cave, they will be detected unless they are capable of Hide (zombie's spot check at -3) or are invisible. If they are detected, a fight ensues in the cave.

If Bukan is with the PCs, he will insist they announce themselves when Velladenna arrives. This will alter the encounter to the thread of having the NPCs aware of the PCs with the exception that Velladenna will not have pre-cast her Protection from Good spell. Her first action will be to cast this spell and then engage the PCs in a deadly spell laden dialogue.

If uninterrupted, Velladenna and Hennevier will start a small fire and continue talking in soft voices. She will touch his arm in a soft manner and the two speak with their heads held very closely together. Unless prevented, they will continue to become more intimate and begin softly kissing by the fire. As their passion begins to increase, Hennevier suddenly screams in agony as Velladenna removes a small blade from the captain's beating heart—there is nothing the PCs can do in time—Hennevier dies in her arms as she begins to laugh.

If the PCs initiate combat at any time, refer to the combat tactics in the following encounter.

If the NPCs are Aware of the PCs:

If the NPCs are alerted to the PCs presence, either due to the PCs making too much noise or using a light source around the camp, they will be more prepared for a conflict. Velladenna will be prepared for a wide variety of situations seeking first to parlay, then to flee if danger threatens, and as a last resort attack. She is willing to sacrifice her zombies to protect her escape. During her approach she will cast *protection from good* (adding a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 resistance bonus to saves from good creatures). If a PC is watching her approach they may notice this spell being cast with a successful Spellcraft check at DC 16.

Velladenna will attempt to play the role of the mysterious pilgrim and traveling mage when she first encounters the PCs. She will look for opportunities to cast her spells to the greatest effect. The longer the PCs speak with her, the greater danger they face. Throughout

the conversation she will carefully weave half-truths about magic and her story regarding her search for apt pupils in the magical arts. She will refuse to allow the PCs to speak with her other students. She possesses strong Diplomacy (+8) and Bluff (+6) skills that will make it difficult for PCs to sense her true nature.

She will hope to avoid combat and will attempt to parlay with anyone she finds in her camp using several well-placed spells potentially including *Enthrall* (hopefully allowing her zombies to move into better position to attack flatfooted PCs), *charm person*, and *sleep*. DMs should note that all of these enchantment spells are Charisma based so the difficulty to resist their effects is a minimum of DC 17 (10 (base) + 4 (ability modifier) + 2 (spell focus) + the spell level).

The Monks:

While Velladenna is speaking with the PCs, the "monks" stay close to those PCs that appear to be obvious warriors. When the PCs get a better look at the monks they notice that two of the three are definitely the missing farmers Jared and Lunth. They will not recognize the third figure. All three have glassy-eyes and smell strongly of rose petals but do not reek of death due to the *Gentle repose* baths. If the PCs attempt to speak to the monks, Velladenna will interrupt and inform the PC that they have taken a vow of silence. These poor souls are zombies animated by Velladenna.

Hennevier:

The guard captain will seek to remain near his "beloved". When they approach the camp, they can be seen walking arm in arm. He has fallen victim her many charms and, in addition to feeling in love with her, is currently under the effects of a *charm person* spell. This spell effect is detectable with a successful Sense Motive check (DC 25). He will say very little during the conversation unless it appears that another male PC is acting overly flirtatious with Velladenna at which time he will let the offending PC know that they are treading on unsafe ground. He will react similarly if any PC insinuates that she has been acting improper or accuses her of wrongdoing.

If Bukan is with the PCs, he will correctly detect the enchantment on his friend 3 rounds after the groups begin talking. When he discovers this fact, he will notify whichever PC is closest that he fears that his friend is under magic influence.

Velladenna will continue chatting with the PCs until she has either charmed them all (through guile or magic) or is running low on spells. If this occurs, she will inform the PCs that she is tired from a long day of traveling and desires to sleep. She will politely insist that the PCs give her and her friends privacy by camping elsewhere. They will set up camp and Hennevier will keep careful watch over his sleeping beloved. It is possible for the PCs to sneak back into camp and continue their investigations since Hennevier does not possess either the Spot or Listen checks (no modifiers to opposed checks).

If the PCs express interest in joining her traveling group of students, she will grow very intense while

talking to them. She will refuse to reveal any of the true secrets of magic while non-believers are around. If she is able to separate the group, she will use any remaining charm spells on those left behind to win them over. Once she is convinced they are within her power, she will concoct a powerful brew over the fire and invite the PCs to drink the brew to take their first step towards greater awakening. Charmed PCs will be unable to resist this simple request. The potion is a powerful sleeping poison (Fort save, DC 22 to resist). PCs that fail the save will fall into a deep sleep and cannot be awoken for 1D2 hours. If left alone with the sleeping bodies, Velladenna will kill them and animate them over the next few days.

If the PCs all succumb to her charms or see to leave her alone, the adventure may end. She and her minions will only stay in the area for another day before moving on and leaving the March behind. PCs may revisit the grove the following night and DMs should use the text above to run the dialogue. DMs should remember that Velladenna is very intelligent and may sense that she is in danger, in which case she will flee.

Encounter Nine: Evil Revealed

The dialogue with Velladenna can prove exceptionally dangerous for the PCs the longer it continues. If the group does not sense her intent and confront her, it is highly likely the group has either been convinced that she is a genuine pilgrim or she has placed the PCs in a sleep trance and ceremoniously killed them one at a time. Hopefully the PCs are clever enough to avoid either of these potential outcomes and force her hand. If combat ensues, each of the NPCs actions are outlined below. DMs should remember that Velladenna's priorities are to escape first and fight to the death in order to avoid capture.

The major differences in the staging of this combat encounter center on whether the PCs have brought along Bukan and what tier the PCs are playing in. These variables affect how long it takes for Hennevier to break free from the charm spell. If Bukan is present, he will occupy the guard captain until he is able to break free from the charm spell.

The guard captain will break free based on the chart below. Until he is free, he will attempt to defend Velladenna – he will only attack the PCs if they successfully attack her of him.

Bukan Present	PC Tier	Round Free
Yes	1	2
No	1	3
Yes	2	3
No	2	4
Yes	3	4
No	3	5

Use the following statistics regardless of PC tier. The presence of NPCs dictates the variation in the tier of the event.

Velladenna will use her abilities to escape if possible. She will use her *animate dead* spell to bring forth skeletons described below.

Velladenna Delinener, Servant of Nerull

Female human, Sorcerer CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d4+5d8; HP 26; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (chain shirt & Dex); Atks: +1 melee (1d66, sickle); SQ Trickery and Death domains; AL NE; SV Fort +4 Ref +2 Will +7

Str 10 Dex 13 Con 10 Int 12 Wis 12 Cha 16

Skills: Diplomacy +8, Spell craft +7, Gather information +7, Knowledge (religion) +2, Concentration +9, Bluff +6; **Feats:** Still Spell, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Spell Focus (x2) (Enchantment and Necromancy)

Equipment: Sickle, Holy symbol of Nerull, Spell components, Incense, Dagger, Cloak, Fine clothes, Perfume, Riding horse, Saddle, 100 gold pieces

Arcane Spells (6/4): 0-lvl—*daze**, *ray of frost*, *detect magic*, *ghost sounds*; 1st-lvl—*charm person**, *sleep**

Spell focus spells marked with an * (20% chance of arcane spell failure w/armor)

Divine Spells (6/4+1/3+1/2+1): 0-lvl—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *mending*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *guidance*; 1st-lvl—*cause fear*, *doom*, *cure light wounds*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*; 2nd-lvl—*invisibility*, *enthrall*, *gentle repose*, ~~Undetectable alignment~~ (already cast obscuring her alignment for 24 hours); 3rd-lvl—*non-detection*, *monster summoning III*, *animate dead*

Familiar: Songbird (Int 6), speaks *Infernal*, Benefits: Alertness skill, Improved evasion, Share spells, Empathic link (1 mile range) to Velladenna

Velladenna is dressed in dark clothes of better than average make. She is truly striking. Jet-black hair and dazzling green eyes offset her pale skin. She stands well over five feet tall and has a slim, but athletic build.

Due to its history of being a hangman's tree, the area around Trovel's Grove is filled with the remains of bodies from those criminals hung on the tree. If Velladenna is forced into combat, she will cast *animate dead*, creating additional undead creatures to aid her. The number of skeletons available varies by the PC Tier. Use two skeletons for Tier 1, four skeletons for Tier 2, and five for Tier 3. These skeletons have the following statistics (summoned creatures are included within the casters Encounter level):

Skeletons (2/4/5): CR 1/3; Medium-sized undead (HD 1D12; hp 8 (each); Init +5 (Dex & Feat); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+ 1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks claws +0/+0 melee (1d4, 2 claws); SD Undead, Immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feats: Improved initiative (+4 added)

SD—Undead Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralyzation, stunning, disease, and necromantic effects. Not subject to critical hits, sneak attacks, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to anything requiring a Fort save (including

subdual attacks). Immunities – No damage from cold and piercing weapons. Take only half damage from slashing weapons.

Ripping through the rich earth, these horrid skeletal figures answer the call of the dark priestess. Their bones are white and the remains of a few tattered rags hang loosely from their bones. A look of pure evil radiates from their empty eye sockets.

Zombies (3): CR .1/2; Medium-size undead; HD 2d12; hp 9 (each); Init –2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +2 melee (1d6+1, buffet); SD May only take Partial Actions in any given round, undead immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2
Str 13, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feats: Toughness.

SD—Undead Immunities. Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralyzation, stunning, disease, and necromantic effects. Not subject to critical hits, sneak attacks, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to anything requiring a Fort save (including subdual attacks).

Three solemn figures are dressed in simple robes of plain brown fabric, tied with a simple rope around the waist. They wear sandals and walk with a slow purposeful gait. Their long hoods cover the bulk of their features, although each of them stand nearly six feet in height or more. All three figures smell strongly of rose petals.

These zombies are the animated corpses of Jared, Lunth, and another missing lad from a distant farming community. Due to the special *gentle repose* bath used on them, they do not have any features that give them away as zombies other than their slower movement rate. Although their eyes are glassy, their bodies are not rotten or decaying in any way. It is very likely the PCs will not realize they are facing undead unless the attempt to turn the creatures.

Hennevier, Guard Captain

Male Human Fighter4: CR 4; SZ Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d10; HP 33; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (chainmail, shield & Dex); Atks: +7 melee (D8+2, longsword threat 19-20,x2), SA Nil; SD Nil; AL NG*; SV Fort +6 Ref +2 Wil +1

Str 14 Dex 12 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 11

Skills: Ride (+8), Profession / Solider (+4), Spot (+2), Swim (+4), Climb (+5); *Feats:* Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (longsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Blind-Fight
Equipment: chainmail armor, medium shield, long sword, dagger, light war horse w/Saddle

Standing over six feet tall this man has the walk of a trained solider. He is dressed in chain mail armor adorned with the livery of the local Lord Jacalarn. His shield bears an identical similar symbol. The man is fairly handsome in a rugged manner and has long brown hair and deep brown eyes.

Encounter Nine: Epilogue

Based upon the complications the PCs face in the final encounter with Velladenna, there are a number of ways the adventure can end. DMs should take a few moments to record the outcomes of any of the Critical Events outlined in Appendix 3 at the end of the adventure.

If the PCs were able to avoid Velladenna's charms and engage her in combat, they will have either been successful (either by capturing or killing her) or they will have failed (if she gets away). In addition, an added degree of success is gained if the PCs were able to deal with Velladenna and avoid killing the Hennevier. The experience point chart below outlines the benefits of each of these options.

Following the battle, the PCs will be able to return to Whittleborough with Bukan or meet him there. He will gladly pay the PCs the agreed upon fee for their services and will mourn the loss of the farmers and potentially his friend. If the PCs mention the silver ring, Bukan will suggest they give it to Illiana if they do not think of it.

If Hennevier survives the battle, he will not return with the PCs to the town. Rather he will head for the lord's keep. If Velladenna escaped, Hennevier will have fallen from grace with his lord and this outcome should be recorded in the Events Summary. If this is the outcome of the event, DMs should try and keep the mood of the ending a somber one, especially if Velladenna escaped to continue to plague the lands of Furyondy!

Here Ends “Shadows on the March”

Experience Point Summary

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

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

Gathering Information at the Inn	25 xp
Accepting the mission	25 xp
Finding the items at the old camp	25 xp
Returning the ring to Illiana	25 xp
Talking with Jared's family	25 xp
Defeating the Panther	100 xp
Finding the Letter	25 xp
Investigating the Cave	50 xp
Capturing or Killing Velladenna	150 xp
Avoiding killing Hennevier	50 xp

Total possible experience **500 xp**

Treasure Summary

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

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 500 gp are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

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

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

- Payment from Bukan 60 gp
- Furyondy Medallion (from Bukan) 10 gp
- Small silver ring 5 sp
- Riding horse (unless used in the escape) 75 gp
- Traveling Pack Coin Purse 100 gp
- Velladenna's Arcane Spell Sheet with *charm person* (Value 100 gp): This sheet may be copied into a wizard spell book or learned by a sorcerer or bard provided the character is able to learn and translate the spell. This sheet may be traded between players, though all players who learn this spell must retain a photocopy of this certificate as documentation that they have copied or learned the spell.
- Velladenna's Arcane Spell Sheet with *sleep* (Value 100 gp): This sheet may be copied into a wizard spell book or learned by a sorcerer or bard provided the character is able to learn and translate the spell. This

sheet may be traded between players, though all players who learn this spell must retain a photocopy of this certificate as documentation that they have copied or learned the spell.

Appendix 1: Player Handout

Dear Father,

I know you will not approve of my decision to leave so I am leaving without your approval. I am sorry, I know how much this must upset you. Over the last few years on the farm I have slowly realized that there is more to my life than working the land for someone else. I wish to set forth and have a new life, one of my own.

A few nights ago while near Whittleborough I met an amazing woman. She is as beautiful as the sky at twilight. She has started to show me how to control the first touches of magic! At last I have found my true calling in life. Tonight I meet her at Trovel's Grove, she has promised to share with me a secret of magic that has given her everlasting life. Imagine it Father, to live forever and study magic with such a beautiful woman.

I promise to return when I have established myself as a magician. I will buy us a new home and we can live a better life.

Your Son,

Lunth

Appendix 3: Critical Events Summary

The following events may be important to future adventures planned in Furyondy. DMs should circle the appropriate response to the following questions or fill in the information as appropriate and submit it with the scoring materials. This form should be used only during the convention at which the adventure debuts.

1. What happened to Velladenna? Escaped Killed Captured Other _____

2. Did Hennevier survive the final battle? Yes or No

3.. Did Hennevier "fall from grace" by allowing Velladenna to escape or by killing a PC?
Yes or No

4. Did any PCs die in the event Yes or No

4b If so, complete the following:

PC Name & Player	Cause of Death
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____

5. How many players participated in the event? 4 5 6 7

6. At which Tier was the event played? 1 2 3