



To Save the Scouring Wind

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

by Chris Lindsay

Compassion is a trait born only in those rare individuals who would choose to act on behalf of those who cannot act for themselves.



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

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. Just about any home computer printer should do, but if for some reason yours doesn't see if you can borrow a friend's printer, or visit a copy center that has computer access. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

If possible, read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Each encounter has a sidebar entitled "Points" that presents a set of important things you should keep in mind during an encounter, but it is also good to use mark areas that you, the DM, find important, and want to find with ease when running this scenario.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books while running that adventure: the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Some LIVING campaigns may assume that you have access to other books as well (see the next page). We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20) some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures. Lastly, you will need a place where you, and up to seven other players, will be able to play, and a table to play at.

Next, unless you are playing a LIVING campaign tournament (Such as LIVING CITY, LIVING GREYHAWK, or LIVING FORCE), pass out the player characters record sheets based on class, gender, and/or race. Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game, unless you are running a LIVING event, in which case the maximum number can be seven players.

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

DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

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

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

Scoring

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

- 1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and 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.

After voting give the Voting Packet to your convention coordinator.

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK Tier Structure

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK campaigns, this adventure is tiered. Basically the challenges in this adventure are proportioned to the average character level of the character's participating in the adventure. To determine the tier that you will use to run this adventure, 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. Cross-reference the total and the number of players participating in the game using the chart below to determine the tier used for this adventure.

	<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	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

Adventure Background

Accompanied by Robilar, Rary has settled into the Bright Desert, and has begun recruiting mercenaries in an effort to secure a position of power in his newfound home. In an attempt to expand his base of power via aggressive recruiting tactics, Rary has sent out patrols to harass the tribes of centaurs who call the Bright Desert their home. Enraged by the arrogance of this interloper, the centaurs of the Bright Desert have set about to undermine him at every turn. One tribe in particular, known as the Scouring Wind, stands opposed to Rary's attempted control of the area. Led by a powerful shaman elder, Cheveyo, they have made it difficult for the traitorous wizard to establish a firm foothold in the region. Though Rary could easily decimate this small defense, he has until recently ignored the Scouring Wind tribe.

For reasons known only to Rary, he has sent some small part of his army to secure the area of the Abbor-Alz hills where the centaurs live. Even this small part has made hunting for the tribe very difficult. They are now on the verge of starvation. Through the divining efforts of their venerated shaman they have plenty of water; however, the elderly shaman is incapable of producing enough food to feed the entire tribe.

Calling upon the spirits that grant him power, the aged centaur shaman imbued his bravest warrior with an *invisibility* so that he may more easily pass unhindered through the hills and seek aid from their occasional trading allies in Duchy of Urnst. All was going well until the young stallion became enraged at the jests of the mercenaries amusing themselves by their watch fires, looking for any sign of their quarry. The brave warrior attacked the men, catching them by surprise, but breaking the enchantment that kept him from their sight. He slew many men, but was forced to flee from the skirmish, wounded and bleeding.

Adventure Summary

Encounter One

The PCs encounter the strange half-orc druid named Urukla. They will possibly come into conflict with the farmers local to the eastern Abbor-Alz and Castle Seh. Here the PCs get the opportunity to prove their valor by defending the druid, and diffuse a potentially ugly situation with the local populace.

Encounter Two

The PCs hear Urukla's tale of the Scouring Wind, and get the opportunity to set out on a quest to save a tribe of centaurs. Assuming the PCs leave right away, they may bypass an ambush set up for them by the wily assassin Daerog.

Encounter Three

If the PCs dawdle they will fall victim to a cruel ambush of orc mercenaries.

Encounter Four

The PCs talk to Daerog. The assassin is masquerading as a powerful desert spirit. Assuming that the PCs fall for the assassin's ruse, they are asked three questions and given a riddle to solve in order to escape the magic of the dread blue circle.

Encounter Five

The PCs finally reach the centaurs, and find them under attack by the forces of Rary. They have the opportunity to prove their mettle and vanquish foes who have harried the tribe throughout the Bright Desert.

Encounter Six

The PCs discover that the tribe's shaman, Cheveyo, entered the spirit world seeking guidance and became trapped there. The PCs get the opportunity to follow the shaman into the spirit world, and rescue him. This encounter does not occur if the PCs took part in Encounter Three.

Encounter Seven

The PCs came too late. Cheveyo is dead, killed during his foray into the spirit realm, and the remainder of the tribe seeks retribution within the Bright Desert. Here the PCs have the opportunity to convince the Scouring Wind that they should save themselves by following the PCs into the Duchy, rather than meet the forces of Rary head-on.

Encounter Eight

The PCs encounter a representative of house Teranor on their journey back into the Duchy. The PCs get the opportunity to parley on behalf of the Scouring Wind, who are ignorant to the politics of this land.

Introduction

For whatever reason the player deems best for their character, the PCs are in the Eastern Abbor-Alz March. While players are encouraged to create their own reasons, the following possible reasons are given as examples:

- Their patron House has sent them on a mission to deliver a message to Margren Waithek, the current Warden of the Eastern Abbor-Alz march, living in the capital of the region, Seh.
- They had heard rumors of a dangerous assassin in the area, known only as Daerog. Duke Karll himself has instituted a bounty off 500 gold on the capture of this man. If they want more information, allow them a Gather Information check at DC 15 to learn that Daerog was once a student at the Stalwart Pines Ranger School, but he left without completing the rigorous training.
- They had heard of the hospitality of the people of this area

and spent some time travelling to this region to escape the politics and bureaucracy of the rest of the Duchy of Urnst.

- They had heard that there was a possibility for adventure, with humanoids raiding the March, Rary's troops just over the hills, and numerous abandoned castles that have fallen into disrepair and may house unknown dangers and unknown treasures.

If someone simply cannot determine a reason, then this adventure is not for him or her. They may want to either switch characters, or play in a different scenario.

Once everyone has determined a reason for being in the region, give him or her the following introductory information.

No one ever talks about how gorgeous this area of the Duchy of Urnst is. The rocky rolling hills of the Eastern Abbor-Alz March are rich in natural beauty. Cascading waterfalls, lush forests, and stunning sunsets are a stark contrast to the dirty and cramped cosmopolitan wonders of Leukish or Greyhawk. Taking a breath of good clean air, you continue along the road toward Seh, the capital castle of the March. While this land is beautiful it is also dangerous. Word of humanoids running rampant through the hills and the ever-looming threat of Rary the Traitor's forces in the desert beyond the hills encourages many travelers to travel in groups. You are fortunate to have found companions to accompany you on this trip such as the ones near you now.

Take this opportunity to let the PCs introduce themselves. They may have had some time to get to know each other, so encourage them to roleplay out the introductions as well as give physical descriptions.

When the players are ready, continue to Encounter 1.

Encounter 1: The Voice of Ignorance is Loudest in Groups...

As you travel this morning through the last couple miles toward Seh, you take note of the growing number of farming villages near the castle. Occasionally farmers watch you suspiciously from porches, fields, and fences. None of them bother to wave or give any greeting. They simply continue with their tasks as you walk by. Finally Castle Seh comes into view. It isn't a grand structure, by any stretch of the imagination. At best it is a solid fortification against the dangers of the land. Surrounding the castle, all within an arrow flight of the stone walls, are the many buildings that make up the town of Seh.

Give the PCs a chance to Spot or Listen (DC 10) to hear the commotion on the road behind them. If they all fail these rolls, have

a farmer leaning against a nearby fence turn his head back in the direction they came.

Back down the road you had just been travelling you notice a commotion. Looking back, you see that a number of farmers stand along the road, hurling insults, at a large green-cloaked man-sized figure. It is difficult to make out the features of the individual as its hood is pulled down low over his brow, and he seems to strain under the burden of a large travois. One particularly close throw catches the tip of the person's hood, and jerks her back far enough for you to see. She is a half Orc

The the brunt of the commoners insults is a half-orc woman named Urukla Stonesinger. Urukla is a druid who is known, though openly disliked, by the local farmers who blame her for the particularly bad weather they had last year. They're positive that the bad weather was due to Urukla's orcish heritage (it is not a reasonable idea, but one they cling to), and that if she is allowed to remain, no doubt further devastation of their farming efforts will occur. Urukla is dragging a travois. Upon it rests a blanket-wrapped centaur. She found the injured centaur in the nearby hills, which she protects and roams. The centaur is a young stallion from the Scouring Wind. He was wounded beyond Urukla's power to heal and has since has died. The centaur gave Urukla his message, hoping that she would carry it for him to someone who could help his people. Urukla made an oath aside the centaur's deathbed that she would do so, and has brought his body with her as proof of her tale.

Urukla Stonesinger (NG female half orc Drd4; Str 18, Cha 10; Feats: Scribe Scroll)

If the PCs just watch:

Urukla will take several bumps and bruises, though nothing serious. She will not be particularly talkative with the PCs as she advances to the town. If the PCs attempt to talk to her at this point, they will have to get past a gruff exterior, of "What do you care? Men not treat Urukla fair." "Don't you have business of your own? You reap the trouble you have sown." They will note that the centaur is obviously dead, and if they keep at it, and attempt to be soothing (Diplomacy at DC 10) Urukla will open up and speak with them. Proceed to Encounter 2. Again, if the PCs are rude, or hostile in questioning Urukla, the DC increases to 20, and failed checks mean that the half-orc will simply ignore the PCs as she waits for the guard.

If the PCs intervene with the farmers:

There are three farmers that particularly dislike Urukla: Toras, Appery, and Vhen. If the PCs talk to the farmers, they stop throwing insults and rocks and attempt to convince the PCs of how wicked Urukla is. The three of them will carry on, telling the PCs that "Urukla is a blight on the land," and that "she is bad luck for

good weather.” If a PC is patient with the three, and talks to each in an understanding, yet non-condescending, fashion, he or she may get them to calm down enough to leave Urukla alone. Have the speaking PC making a Diplomacy check (DC 10). If the speaking PC is abrupt, snide, rude, or otherwise impolite, calming the trio will be much harder (Diplomacy, DC 15), but an appropriate Intimidate check (DC 10) may get them to back off from the half-orc. If the PCs get the farmers to stop harassing her, Urukla immediately thanks them. She will assume that they are heroes and offer to tell them her troubles. Proceed to Encounter 2.

If the PCs attack:

Urukla will drop the centaur and flee with all speed. She will only return reluctantly, and only if the PCs promise to put away their weapons and talk. She will stand at a distance while the PC try win her over (Diplomacy, DC 25).

Encounter 2: The Beauty of the Earth Mother Lies Within...

As she begins her story, Urukla, obviously shaken, begins to sob. Coupled with a deep voice and poor command of the common tongue, it makes her somewhat difficult to understand. In addition, she learned common from a traveling bard named Manerill, who thought it would be funny to teach her to speak in rhyming couplets. She doesn't know that this is odd, as she is convinced that it is how a proper druid should speak.

While she is telling a serious story and is obviously distressed, have fun with the encounter. She has some difficulty making up rhymes, and so will sometimes say words to rhyme just for the sake of saying them...not that they have any meaning at all; a fact that should make this encounter easier to judge.

The woman turns a tear-streaked face towards you and speaks.

“This horse-man die as I took care. His wounds were bad and his story a scare.”

“He come from the desert in the south, he say. Below the rock like a jackal his people wait and pray.”

“I know this rock, on a desert hill it welcomes the day. So big it is, can be seen from miles away.”

“Someone from here must come and bring them food to eat. Hunting scarce because warriors of desert army take all meat.”

“I say I get help and send food there. To save his people, every stud, foal, and mare.”

“Thank me he did from his tribe, the Scouring Wind. He died then, sad and proud at the same time...Ind.”

“So go you must and take these prayers. To feed his folk, and get them out of theres.”

She will offer a rough leather scroll case to the first PC that says they will help her. If no PC offers to help, she will repeat her request again. If still no PC offers to help, she will start to cry harder until the guards arrive. The scroll case contains seven scrolls, each containing a *create food and water* spell (4th level).

“Bring them out of danger to the Duchy up north. Dying they are right now, so very soon you must go forth.”

Obviously, speaking with Urukla can be somewhat tedious. If anyone in the party can speak orcish, Urukla switches to that language, and explains the problem to them in plain language. Likewise, another druid can easily convince her that druids do not always speak in rhyme. If anyone else tries to convince her, she will say:

“Good human said druids must rhyme, and so I do, all the time.”

While this conversation is taking place, two guards arrive from the town to investigate the commotion. When the PCs have finished speaking with Urukla, proceed with the following:

Two guards from the town of Seh approach you. Both wear chain shirts under their tabards and carry long swords at their sides. One of them has a grin on his face as he approaches. The grinning man hollers out to you.

“What is your business at Seh? How long do you plan to stay?”

The guard then bursts out laughing at his own joke. The other guard clasps him on the shoulder to quiet him. He says, “do not make jokes at Urukla's expense, Rigen, she is a friend.”

This guard moves forward to Urukla and gives her a big bear hug. He is a burly human with platinum blonde curls and piercing gray eyes.

“Much joy have I at seeing you, Kayrn Kilbourne. Strange troubles this day have I worn,” says Urukla, turning to look at you. “The story to them I have told, listen and they will unfold.”

The guard Kayrn turns to you with a look of concern, “what news do you bring?”

The PCs may recognize the name Kilbourne. Viclef Kilbourne recently received a share of fame for attempting to claim the empty seat on the Honorable Chamber in the event *An Empty Seat*. If they ask about that, Kayrn will inform the PCs that his family has had some political trouble since then and he was sent away to Seh to stem further political problems. He misses the docks of Leukish and working with the Duchy navy, but he finds the people of this area to be honorable and courageous.

Rigen will be quiet after having his joke so quickly shut down by Kayrn. He will stay by the area, keeping the farmers away, but remain quiet and polite while the conversation takes

place. He is on duty and partnered with Kayrn and will not leave him unless he can be convinced that nothing bad will happen here.

After hearing the story from Urukla and the PCs, Kayrn is sympathetic, but duty currently binds him to the castle, and knows the Warden of Seh will not be able to send any troops. Recently the town has had trouble dealing with bandits and humanoids.

When hearing that the PCs have offered to go, Kayrn applauds their bravery, but warns them that the trip through this part of the country could be perilous. Kayrn can only offer them a map of the Eastern Abbor-Alz March and show them a couple of possible routes that they could take to the desert. Urukla does not know the exact location of the rock the PCs seek, but she has heard of the rock and gives a general direction for the PCs to look. The map is an excellent copy drawn up and signed by the Chief Cartographer in Nellix.

Kayrn Kilbourne (male human Ftr6; Cha 16).

When the PCs are deciding what to do next, Kayrn will ask them to leave very soon.

"If those centaurs are dying as we speak, you must set off as soon as possible. Anything you can do to speed your travel is very important. Unfortunately, I cannot offer you horses to speed your travel. Every one of them is needed to help defend the border."

Determine the PCs' Overland Movement Rate (see Travel In The Abbor-Alz Hills, below). If the PCs leave right away and move quickly, they will bypass Encounter 3 and move directly to Encounter 4. However, if they wait to leave, or are forced to hunt for food while they travel, they will be caught by the orcs and move to Encounter 3.

Travel In The Abbor-Alz Hills

The PCs are travelling roughly southwesterly from Castle Seh into the Bight Desert. The total travel distance is 30 miles. It's tough going, and make sure the PCs are aware of it. For the first half of the journey, the PCs will go through very hilly terrain, which eventually turns into very hot and arid desert lands. This is not ideal weather for travel.

The PCs may notice that as the land about them becomes progressively more barren, the life around them slowly diminishes. This will start simply as the sound of birds, insects, and small burrowing mammals gradually drops off over the first couple of days. If they do not notice sooner, by the end of the second day they will certainly note a lack of night sounds. The silence is nearly maddening, making it difficult to get restful sleep.

When determining the PCs Overland Movement Rate, consider the base movement (don't forget encumbrance modifiers) of the slowest PC and consult the chart below. The daily movement rates have been halved from what you will find in the DMG

because the PCs will be travelling through trackless hilly or desert conditions.

Base Speed	Miles per Day	Miles per extra hour's march
15 feet	6 miles	1/2 mile
20 feet	8 miles	1 mile
30 feet	12 miles	1 1/2 mile
40 feet	16 miles	2 miles

For purposes of this scenario, if the PCs can manage to travel at least 10 miles in a day, they will be travelling fast enough to avoid Encounter 3 and get to the centaurs in time to save their leader. This will get the PCs there in three days.

The PCs can add to their daily movement rate by a forced march. For each extra hour of movement, have the PCs roll a Constitution check (DC 10, + 1 per extra hour) or take 1d6 points of subdual damage. Each hour will move them as far as indicated in the table above.

Also, it is hot in these hills and food is scarce. Make sure the PCs have enough food and water to keep them from starvation in these conditions. A character will need 1 gallon of water per day for the first 15 miles, and 2 gallons per day during the last 15 miles. Horses need twice this much. A PC can go for one day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score without water, after which they need to make a Constitution check (DC 10, + 1 cumulative) to avoid taking 1d6 points of subdual damage and becoming fatigued.

PCs can go for three days without food, at which point they need to make a Constitution check (DC 10, + 1 cumulative) to avoid taking 1d6 subdual damage and becoming fatigued.

Characters who are fatigued cannot run or charge and suffer an effective -2 to both Strength and Dexterity. In addition, they cannot use the optional forced march rules defined above.

Encounter 3: Turn on Your Heel and the Jackals will Bite

This encounter occurs after about 15 miles of travel and only if the PCs are at a rate of less than 10 miles a day. While travelling in the hills, Daerog encountered a band of orcs that he convinced not to fight him. Instead, the ever-cautious assassin set the orcs in the hills to waylay anyone trying to earn the bounty on his head. The orcs believe that Daerog is an orcish warchief from the north named Gurblechaw, as the clever elf used his *ring of chameleon power* and considerable Bluff score to appear as such when he was dealing with them.

You are already tired from your travels and as the miles roll by, you find the terrain gradually gets less rocky and sandier. Soon, you will be in the Bright Desert itself, and you can already feel the dry desert winds blowing at you from this distance. As you are travelling along an old, dried up riverbed, you are startled to hear hoots and hollers up ahead. Amid the rocks and brush in the ravine, you see humanoid shapes emerging, one of them pointing at your group and shouting, "asthrack!"

Any PC that speaks Orcish understands that word translates roughly to "surround them and kill them." In other words, it's time to roll initiative.

The charging orcs spread themselves out so as not to make themselves convenient targets for area effect spells, and the crossbowmen have taken up flanking positions, hidden on a ridge to either side of the valley (Spot, DC 15). In these positions, the archers have 75% cover, which gives a +7 cover bonus to AC, and a +3 bonus to reflex saves.

Crossbowmen on either side will hold their actions until either the PCs advance on the melee troops or until they are spotted. Once a crossbowman has fired, it becomes an opposed Spot/Hide check for the PCs to spot the orc.

Once a spellcaster casts a spell, one orc will cover that PC until he tries to cast another spell, hoping to disrupt the next spell. Since the orcs do not have the Precise Shot feat they take the standard -4 attack penalty against opponents engaged in melee.

Keep in mind that these orcs will attack the PCs in the daytime, thereby suffering the -1 penalty for being in bright sunlight. Use this only if the PCs have traveled their 15th mile in the daylight, however.

Tier 1 (EL 4)

Orcs (6): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4 (each); Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (+3 armor); Atk +2 melee (1d12+4 [crit x3], greataxe) or +0 ranged (1d8 [crit. 19-20] light crossbow); SQ Darkvision 60'. light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +3; Feat: Alertness.

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

Equipment: Scale mail, greataxe, light crossbow, 10 bolts each.

There are four orcs with crossbows, two on each ridge. The other five orcs charge the party, spacing themselves to limit the damage from area of effect spells.

Tier 2 (EL 6)

Orcs (12): Use the above stats.

Tier 3 (EL 8)

Elite Orcs, Ftr2 (7): CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 2d10+2; hp 15 (each); Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 chain shirt; Atk: +5 melee (1d12+4 [crit x3], greataxe) or +2 ranged (1d8 [19-20, x2] light crossbow); SQ Penalty to attack in bright light; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1

Str 16, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +3; Climb +5, Jump +5; Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

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

Equipment: Scale mail, greataxe, light crossbow, 10 bolts each.

There are four orcs with crossbows, two on each ridge. The other five orcs charge the party, spacing themselves to limit the damage done by area of effect spells.

If the PCs manage to cut down more than half of the orcs, make a single Will save (DC 10) for the entire band each round. If the orcs fail their save, they flee. If any of the orcs are captured and interrogated, they tell the PCs that their band was running from the army in the desert, and were saved by a powerful orc warlord named Gurplechaw.

Should the PCs investigate any fallen orcs, they discover that each wears worn armor and uses battered weapons. Additionally each of these orcs has two days worth of iron rations, one full waterskin holding two gallons of fresh water, and a lizard skin pouch that contains 10 sp. The pouches, weapons, and armor appear to be of identical manufacture (they were all looted from the army they were against). A successful bardic Legend Lore (common) or Knowledge, Local (DC 10) will reveal that the rations were from Seh, however. Those rations were the ones given to the orcs from Daerog when he was posing as Gurplechaw.

When finished, move to Encounter 4.

Encounter 4: Sleep at Night, for Demons Dance in the Darkness...

The assassin Daerog will notice the PCs travelling through the hills and assume that they are after the bounty on his head. He won't feel at all threatened by them. Rather, he will be curious as to who they are.

Being the crafty assassin that he is, Daerog seeks to glean information regarding the PCs from their own mouths. He is interested to know more about them personally, as he enjoys using this kind of information to his benefit, when dealing with an adversary, or in this case, adversaries. He doesn't intend to kill them yet. He believes that they will be useful later on.

With that in mind, Daerog will surprise the PCs while they

sleep. He will approach on the night after they cross the 15 mile mark (if the PCs were travelling slowly, this would be the night of the same day they fought the orcs). Beginning at midnight, while the PCs sleep, he will lay five pounds of powdered blue chalk on the ground in a circle around the group's camp. He is extremely stealthy, though PCs on watch might notice him attempting to do this (Listen or Spot check, DC 30). When finished with the chalk, he will place four small wooden boxes in each cardinal direction.

Before laying the chalk, Daerog has cast *Nystul's magic aura* on it. Further, he has cast *Leomund's trap* on the four small wooden boxes. In this manner, should they cast *detect traps* or *detect magic*, they will detect positively for both. Additionally, anyone attempting to find traps on the boxes will be 100% certain that a trap exists.

In the morning, when the PCs awaken and notice the ring of chalk surrounding the camp, Daerog will act.

First, he will cast *expeditious retreat* and *pass without trace* on himself. He is a crafty man and understands that running is often the best way to live. Note that *pass without trace* will also mask his scent, if a PC has an animal companion with the Scent ability (if he noticed such a companion, he will cast the spell before laying down the chalk). Immediately thereafter, he will cast *detect thoughts*, giving him an edge should the PCs be thinking of attacking.

Next, he will cast *ventriloquism* to create the audible illusion of his voice coming from the opposite side of the circle from where he hides, thus getting the PCs to look away from where he watches them. Unless they have reason to disbelieve the illusion, then they should not get an opportunity to disbelieve. He glibly informs the PCs that he is a desert spirit who has placed a magical ward about the camp using a mystical *azure powder*. He also informs them that if they should care to cross the boundary of the ward, the magic will be released, incinerating everyone inside the circle as well as those who crossed the line. He states that they should not touch the line, or even come within a hand's reach of it to prevent setting off the trap. This is all complete hogwash, of course, and he is trying to see how gullible they are. Should the PCs be stymied as Daerog expects, he will begin the conversation, making a special effort to appear amiable.

In order to pass the ward you must do two things. First you must answer three questions that I will pose to you. Second, you must solve a riddle. Once the riddle is solved you may pass, though I cannot tell you the riddle until you answer the questions.

If the PCs ask Daerog who he was in life, he will state that he was a simple desert hunter who died an unjust death at the hands of Rary's troops, and was cursed to haunt the Bright Desert. The players may see through this by the very wording of his questions which sound too educated for a common hunter. They should figure this out on their own however. Do not lead them to this realization, and do not confirm it should they state or ask. If at

any point in this encounter one of the PCs crosses the line before Daerog has asked the riddle and left, he will fire a whistling long-bow arrow at the offending PC, and then leave. At Tiers 1 and 2 this is a regular Sneak Attack, but at Tier 3 it is a Death Strike. If the arrow misses the PC, it strikes a large boulder, just off to one side, imbedding itself.

You hear a whistling sound and then there is the crack of sudden impact as...

Hit: ... (name) takes an arrow in the back.

Miss: ... a large black arrow flies over (name)'s shoulder, striking a large boulder just ahead and imbedding itself into the stone.

Daerog's questions are asked as follows. It doesn't really matter what the PCs answer, as long as they hear the question. Daerog is using *detect thoughts* to read the PCs' surface thoughts. Unless they specifically state that they are careful about what they are thinking, Daerog will glean the answers from their unguarded minds (without letting the players know why, have them roll a Wisdom save, DC 15 to avoid the effect of the *detect thoughts*).

What are your names and whom do you serve?

Simply, he wants to know their names and the name of their employer, and whether or not the PCs are in the desert for more clandestine reasons, and what those are.

What is your purpose for traveling in this blighted wasteland?

Daerog is looking for their reason for traveling so close to the conflict between Rary and the centaurs

What abilities do you possess that qualify you for such a task?

He is looking specifically to confirm who the wizards, rogues, priests, and warriors of the group are.

Another clue that may tip the PCs off to the fact that something isn't right about the spirit is that Daerog actually asked them four questions.

If the PCs answer Daerog's questions to his satisfaction, he decides to help them. If they are rude, or fail to indicate that they wish to help the centaurs, then he will not assist them at all and quietly leave them as they are talking to him.

If he helps the PCs, he casts a *silent image* spell (silently, because it was prepared with the feat Silent Spell), creating for them the image of a map. He indicates where they are on the map with a glowing marker, and then shows them where the centaurs they seek are, creating a dotted line to indicate to them a safe path to take to the tribe. If they question his ability to do so, he

explains that as a spirit, he is tied to the land he haunts, and it gives him a small measure of power.

Daerog is helping the PCs because he owes the Scouring Wind a favor. When the elf was young he was caught wandering in the Bright Desert, an escaped slave from Ul-Bakak on the coast of Wooley Bay. The centaurs found him, nursed him back to health, and sent him on his way. Though they asked for no recompense, Daerog feels as though he owes them a life-debt, and means to pay them back by pointing the PCs in their direction.

After he shows them the way, Daerog asks them the following riddle, hoping to get a chance to get away from them once and for all.

The man who created it, doesn't want it.
The man who bought it, doesn't need it.
The man who needs it, doesn't know it.

The answer to the riddle is "a coffin," although the PCs will never get confirmation of a correct answer. After asking the riddle, Daerog skulks off to resume his work in these lands for House Teranor. When the PCs come back with an answer, they are confirmed with silence. This should keep them guessing until someone either figures out what is going on, or becomes impatient enough to cross the line, at which time, nothing happens.

After the PCs have gotten a little impatient with the mysterious spectre, allow them a Spot check at DC 15 to spot the small wooden box at the edge of the blue chalk.

Should the PCs try to open the box, they will find a blue silken handkerchief, on which are written the words:

You bounty hunters are not nearly as clever as the last group that was after me, and they are dead. Leave me in peace and give up this merry chase.

Daerog

The script vanishes as you read it, leaving you with a blank piece of blue cloth. Apparently, this "spirit" was more than it claimed.

Daerog has left the area right after speaking the riddle, making good time over the terrain.

Between the *expeditions retreat* spell and the *pass without trace* spell, Daerog should manage to escape. If the PCs should choose to chase the assassin at this point, they will most likely lose him as well as fail in their mission to help the centaurs. However, if they do decide to chase Daerog, feel free to give them the chance. He has as much lead-time as it took the party to figure out that he left. He is moving at full movement over the rocky terrain. Attempting to Track him will fail, due to the *pass without trace* spell.

For Daerog's full stats, see the appendix to this adventure.

Encounter 5: Save the Scouring Wind, It Will Cleanse the Sands...

If the PCs decide to save the Scouring Wind tribe, they will traverse the last 15 miles through the desert southwesterly, without incident. Daerog being true to his word this time, has given them directions to where the centaurs should be, and leads them safely out of the foothills of the Abbor-Alz to where the Scouring Wind have camped.

If the PCs did not manage to get the exact location of the Tribe from Daerog, they will not be able to reach the Tribe in three day's time because of the effort spent searching the desert for the rock, thereby not allowing them to save the tribe's leader.

You have traveled far, through hills and desert, when in the distance you spot a large rock in the shape of a jackal. The sandstone has naturally formed into the shape of a hunched dog facing east, as though greeting the dawn.

At this point the PCs are traveling across a trackless wasteland of sand and heat, and the wind is carrying the sound of battle over some distance.

As you top the next hill of sand, you see in the distance, several centaur warriors who have engaged in battle with strange warriors wearing loose fitting black garments that completely cover their bodies and faces. Each appears to be wielding a scimitar in one hand, and a wickedly curved dagger in the other.

These dervish-looking warriors are an elite band of evil rangers, except for their commanding officer who is a sorcerer. They are in the employ of Rary, and have been hunting the centaurs for the last couple of weeks. These centaurs are the survivors of a defensive scouting party. They are losing the fight. They engaged their enemies in combat only after they were spotted, as they fear that this advance group will bring more soldiers to the hiding place of the Scouring Wind.

If the PCs investigate the dervishes after combat, under their desert garb it is apparent that they are pure Suel. If any dervishes are captured or if a *speak with dead* spell is used, the dervishes speak an odd variant of the Suel tongue. PCs that speak a dialect of Suel can understand the general meaning of the dervishes' speech.

If the PCs attempt to help the centaurs a number of the rangers and the sorcerer break off to deal with these new interlopers. This leaves the remaining centaurs with opponents, though not as pressed as they were a moment ago. The rangers prefer to fight individually with PCs rather than as a group. If half of the rangers go down, the sorcerer will attempt to flee the combat.

Tier 1 (EL 4)

Desert Dervishes, male human Rgr1 (4): CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d10+2; hp 7 (each); Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+2 leather armor, +2 Dex); Atks +2 melee (1d6+2 [crit. 18-20], scimitar), +1 melee (1d4+2 [crit. 19-20], dagger); SA Favored enemy (humans); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2.

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

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +6, Intuit Direction +4, Jump +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +4; **Feats:** Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

SA Favored enemy (humans): +1 to damage when attacking a human.

Equipment: scimitar, dagger, leather armor

Sorcerer, male human Sor1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d4+2; hp 7; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks +2 ranged (1d8 [crit. 19-20], light crossbow); SA spells; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2.

Str 10 Dex 14 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 16

Skills: Concentration +8, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Spellcraft +4; **Feats:** Toughness, Skill Focus (Concentration)

Spells known (5/4): 0 lvl—*daze, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1-lvl—*mage armor, grease*.

Centaurs (2): CR 3; Large-Size Monstrous Humanoid; HD 4d8+8; hp 26 (each); Init +2 Spd 50 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +2 Natural, +2 large shield); Atks +7 melee (1d8+4 [crit. x3] long-spear) or +4 melee (1d6+2, 2 hooves) or +5 ranged (1d8+4 [crit. x3] mighty composite longbow; AL N; Face/Reach: 5 ft by 10 ft/5 ft; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4

Str 18 Dex 14 Con 15 Int 8 Wis 13 Cha 11

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +6; **Feats:** Weapon Focus (hoof).

Tier 2 (EL 6)

Desert Dervishes, male human Rgr2 (4): CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 14 (each); Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 chain shirt, +2 Dex); Atks +3 melee (1d6+2 [crit. 18-20], scimitar), +2 melee (1d4+2 [crit. 19-20, x2], dagger); SA Favored enemy (humans); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2.

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

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +6, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +5; **Feats:** Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

SA Favored enemy (humans): +1 to damage when attacking a human.

Equipment: scimitar, dagger, chain shirt

Sorcerer, male human Sor3: CR 3; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 3d4+6; hp 15; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks +3 ranged (1d8 [crit. 19-20] light crossbow); SA spells; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3.

Str 10 Dex 14 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 16

Skills: Concentration +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Spellcraft +5; **Feats:** Combat Casting, Skill Focus (Concentration), Toughness

Spells known (6/6): 0 lvl—*daze, detect magic, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1-lvl—*mage armor, grease, ray of enfeeblement*.

Centaurs (2): CR 3; Large-Size Monstrous Humanoid; HD 4d8+8; hp 26 (each); Init +2 Spd 50 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +2 Natural, +2 large shield); Atks +7 melee (1d8+4 [crit. x3], long-spear) or +4 melee (1d6+2, 2 hooves) or +5 ranged (1d8+4 [crit. x3], mighty composite longbow; AL N; Face/Reach: 5 ft by 10 ft/5 ft; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4

Str 18 Dex 14 Con 15 Int 8 Wis 13 Cha 11

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +6; **Feats:** Weapon Focus (hoof).

Tier 3 (EL 8)

Desert Dervishes, male human Rgr4 (4): CR 4; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 4d10+8; hp 28 (each); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 chain shirt, +3 Dex); Atks +5 melee (1d6+2 [crit. 18-20], scimitar), +4 melee (1d4+2 [crit. 19-20], dagger); SA Favored enemy (humans); AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2.

Str 14 Dex 16 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 10

Skills: Climb +6, Hide +8, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +5; **Feats:** Track, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Dodge.

SA Favored enemy (humans): +1 to damage when attacking a human.

Equipment: scimitar, dagger, chain shirt

Sorcerer, male human Sor6: CR 6; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 6d4+12; hp 27; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks +4 ranged (1d8 [crit. 19-20] light crossbow); SA spells; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +5.

Str 10 Dex 14 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 18

Skills: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Spellcraft +8; **Feats:** Combat Casting, Skill Focus (Concentration), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Toughness,

Spells known (6/6/5/3): 0 lvl—*daze, detect magic, flare, light, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1-lvl—*mage armor, grease, ray of enfeeblement, magic missile*; 2-lvl—*invisibility, levitate*; 3-lvl—*hold person*.

Centaurs (4): CR 3; Large-Size Monstrous Humanoid; HD 4d8+8; hp 26 (each); Init +2 Spd 50 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +2 Natural, +2 large shield); Atks +7 melee (1d8+4 [crit. x3], long-spear) or +4 melee (1d6+2, 2 hooves) or +5 ranged (1d8+4 [crit. x3] mighty composite longbow; AL N; Face/Reach: 5 ft by 10 ft/5 ft; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4

Str 18 Dex 14 Con 15 Int 8 Wis 13 Cha 11

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +6; **Feats:** Weapon Focus (hoof).

After the battle, the centaurs will visibly relax, smile, and begin a round of shoulder clapping, and hand shaking. They will immediately lead the PCs back to their hidden encampment, which is nestled in the crook of a large rocky outcropping.

They will introduce the PCs to their warchief, Cha`ak, a particularly large centaur with long black hair that is braided at the temples and adorned with beads and feathers. A long spear is strapped to his back with a leather thong. After being introduced to the characters, Cha`ak asks after the welfare of the centaur warrior who they sent. He does not give the warrior a name as he was stripped of all his worldly possessions before he left his people. They presumed that he would not return, and so count him among the dead already. Cha`ak has always been an optimist however, and tends to forget the protocol of his people in the face of hope. He will be saddened to hear of the warrior's death, but immediately proceeds to apprise the PCs of their current situation.

If the PCs took too long in getting to the Scouring Wind and were ambushed by Encounter Four, Cheveyo is already dead and the remaining centaurs decide to attack Rary's troops with honor. Proceed to Encounter Seven. If the PCs managed to move quickly enough, Cheveyo is still alive, in his trance, and can still be saved. Proceed to Encounter 6.

Encounter 6: Dance with the Spirits, Sing Your Soul's True Song...

Cha`ak turns a saddened face toward you and speaks. "It is good that you are here, but we have a serious matter. Our leader and spirit guide, Cheveyo, has entered the land of the dead, looking for answers to our problems that he could not find among the living. For three days has his spirit been gone, and we fear for his safety."

With that, Cha`ak leads your group back further into the camp. The rock walls are tall here, and a feeling of oppression hangs on you as you approach a large tent made from tall wooden poles and the hide what have must been a very large beast. Leading you into the tent, you immediately notice an aged centaur, his legs folded underneath him, and his eyes closed. He rests on a thick pile of furs in front of a fire that is being tended by an elderly female centaur.

Cha`ak speaks, "His spirit walks among the dead even now, looking for the answers to our problems, though he has never been gone for this long before. We have warriors who are prepared to enter the spirit world, and seek him out, but if we could send heroes such as yourselves..." Cha`ak's voice trails off as you take in the scene and his unspoken request.

Cha`ak will not force the PCs to enter the spirit world in search of Cheveyo, but believes that their chances are better as they must be great heroes

Being Cheveyo's student, and a shaman himself, Cha`ak is

perfectly capable of using the scrolls that the PCs bring, to feed his people. He is most grateful to receive them, but he is fearful for the spirit of his mentor and leader. Rightly so, as even now, an evil owl spirit called Kotori has trapped Cheveyo in the spirit world.

Should the PCs choose to go, proceed to with this encounter. If they do not go, Cha`ak will send several of his strongest warriors into the spirit trance, and they will fail. The PCs will be thanked for their help, and witness a sad procession as the warriors and Cheveyo are consumed in flames from funeral pyres built from dead wood taken from the Celadon.

Cha`ak motions for each of you to be seated around the fire on furs that have been spread there. "Please try to relax as I perform the ceremony. The spirit world is filled with those who would help, and those who would seek to do you harm. You must be wary." With that, the warchief begins to chant in a low voice while dropping all manner of herbs into the fire. A smoke begins to drift through the tent, and its spiced fragrance makes you dizzy. Somewhere in the distance you hear drums beating in an intricate pattern that carries your consciousness beyond yourself...

You are standing in the midst of a seemingly endless plain. The ground here is hard and cracked like that of the Bright Desert, and the sun beats down upon you like a mallet beating a drum. In the distance you can see a cool spring of water welling up from the parched earth. Next to the spring is a tree, dry and cracked despite the liquid sustenance mere feet away.

At this point, ask the players what they'd like to do, though it is apparent that they should go to the tree, they may attempt to do otherwise. If they should choose to go a different way, the tree seems to appear in front of them each time. This happens until they walk toward it.

As you step toward the dead tree, your senses are a blur, and you suddenly find yourselves standing just under its cracked branches. You notice that an owl has perched in one of its branches, though it doesn't appear to be any more alive than the tree. Its legs end in jagged bony claws, its feathers are all but gone. Looking closer it appears as if the remaining feathers bear strange markings and swirls. The pool, though clear from a distance, is black, murky, and lifeless.

This pool is made of the essence of despair and thoughtlessness. Any who drink from its waters risk losing their lives. For every drink taken the PC must make a Fortitude saving throw gain one negative level temporarily (for the duration of the adventure).

"Whoooo" the owl's voice is cracked and twisted like the tree it's perched on. You watch as its head swivels around, and it lowers a malevolent gaze upon your group. "Whooo?"

The owl is asking a question and it expects an answer before it proceeds. Continue with the Whooping until they get it. If the group is particularly slow, the owl will stretch out one bony wing to indicate whoever is closest and ask... Whoop? Once the characters have introduced themselves, read or paraphrase the following.

After you have finished with introductions, the owl stretches its bony wings out to full span, and then leaps into the air, silently circling once before landing on a higher branch. Then, turning its head so as to nearly look at you upside down it speaks in a dry, cracked voice, "I am Kotori, your spirit guide, why do you come?"

At this point, the group must answer truthfully, the intent of their mission. If they attempt to deceive Kotori, the Owl screeches, "LIAR!"

The aged Shaman has wandered into a deadly trap where he will remain until freed by mortal spirit travelers. Will you be tested heart, mind, and soul that he be free?

If the PCs answer no, then they are immediately ejected from the spirit world, having failed in their task. Cheveyo passes away before their eyes, and the end of the adventure proceeds as previously, with but a single funeral pyre.

Assuming they answer in the affirmative, Kotori continues.

Excellent... you must retrieve the stones Heart, Mind, and Soul, and touch them to one another that they may break his bonds... Ready? Here we go..." Kotori takes off from the branch and flies up and over your group, descending in a spiral, ever faster, till he wings directly around you. Your sight dims momentarily, when it clears, Kotori is gone.

Heart...

Your senses reel as you stand amidst a vortex of swirling colors. Faces are seen and voices heard coming out of the tempest around you. They are faint, saying things like, "Beware the screeching wings," "bravery is for the foolish," "death comes upon a foul wind," and "in order to succeed you must sometimes risk everything."

The voices grow more and more silent until again, you come to a gut-wrenching stop. Looking about, you guess that it must be night as the land about you is shrouded in darkness, shadows playing across the sand. Your group is perched atop an immense sand dune. Looking down at yourselves, you see that you are swathed entirely in loose black linens—the clothes of the desert warrior. You are brought to your senses as an explosion rocks the sands below you. Looking up into the dark sky you watch as a monstrous blue wyrm, his body crackling with lightning, dives down upon a small band of desert warriors such as yourselves, and obliterates them, searing streams of lightning cutting them down where they stand. In the distance you see a tower that they

were trying to reach. The tower's entire surface is a deep crimson. The only portal in or out is a small opening at its base—if you could only make it across the sands to the safety of the tower...

You hear the flapping of feathered wings, and suddenly perched upon the dune is Kotori. "Heart is within the tower below. In order for you to succeed, all must make it into the tower. Stand upon the threshold as a group, and passage will be yours." The bony owl launches itself into the sky with a screech, and disappears. Down below, you watch as the great blue dragon makes another pass, looking for victims.

The PCs have only the loose fitting garb of the desert warrior. Their other possessions are missing. As the PCs descend from the dune to desert floor, and earth shattering roar shakes the very sand loose, reminding them of their peril.

The PCs will be under the effects of the blue dragon's Frightful Presence ability as they set out across the desert floor. Each PC must succeed a Will save (DC 20) or be shaken, suffering a -2 penalty saving throws for the duration of the encounter.

At the beginning, have each player roll initiative, rolling for the dragon secretly. Due to the Frightful Presence of the dragon, even if the PCs made the Will save, they will be unable to run faster than double their normal movement. (i.e., 60 ft. for medium sized; 40 ft. for small sized, etc.) The distance from the base of the dune to the tower is 360 ft., making the trip six rounds long at the very least.

As the PCs are running, the dragon will attempt to attack each one of them once, starting with the PC who rolled the highest initiative, and moving in descending order down the list. This is one encounter where it doesn't necessarily pay to be the quickest.

This is a spirit dragon, and though his strikes are considerably less powerful than its live counterpart, it gets as many as it needs. Damage will be according to Tier: 1st (2d4); 2nd (2d6); 3rd (3d8); if the PC succeeds a Reflex saving throw they only take half damage. Don't forget penalties for being shaken. Tier 1 DC 10, Tier 2 DC 15, Tier 3 DC 20.

Interference: For each PC there is a 20% chance cumulative with the number of times they are breathed at, that a friendly spirit will jump in the way, knocking them to the ground and take the damage themselves. If this occurs, the spirit screams horribly, and is gone once the blast takes place. Feel free to give each one a unique description... (i.e., a bold half orc jumps from the shadows and knocks you to the ground... he is immediately incinerated as the breath of the dragon strikes him when it should have struck you.)

Do not forget, that they all must make it to the tower in order to be allowed within. It is entirely possible for some PCs to be exposed to the dragon while waiting for the remainder of their companions to make it. There is an impenetrable forcewall blocking passage within... nothing the PCs do short of touching it as a group, will allow them entrance.

Once the entire group makes it to the threshold, they are allowed within the tower, probably tumbling in as a group, as they try to

avoid the dragon.

Stumbling into the main chamber of the tower, you see that the entire structure is hollow. In the center of this large circular room is a pedestal upon which rests a large ruby. Engraved in the base of the pedestal is the word "Heart" in many languages.

This is their goal. Once they grab the gem, the scene fades away, and their senses reel.

Mind...

The vortex swirls about you once again, and you hear the voices of the dead. "Trust is a stone, hold it tightly. Once thrown into the pond, it will disappear forever." and "hunger has many forms, but in all of these, greed is involved". You come to a gut wrenching stop, and find yourselves sitting at the base of the great cracked tree, feeling none the worse for wear. Any wounds you may have received are completely healed, and fallen comrades are alive, conscious, and well. It's as if it were all a bad dream.

Screech for the owl at this point, alerting the PCs to the presence of Kotori.

Looking up, you see Kotori resting on the same branch he was before your trip. In his cracked voice, "I see you have Heart. Very well, very well indeed." (The owl cackles at his own joke.) But keep your wits about you and you may obtain Mind as well." Looking, you notice indeed the sun is absent, and a full moon paints the cracked ground in strange shadows that shift and move all about you. The air is very cool, and you can see your breath as you rest against the tree trunk. A series of low growls can be heard coming from the shadows around the trees. They grow louder and louder until you can see many dog's shadows circling you. You aren't sure how many there are, but you know they outnumber your group. Then without warning, one of the "dogs" steps directly into the moonlight so you can see him, boldly walking up to your group. As you look more closely, you can see that he is definitely a jackal. He grins maliciously at the party, drooling from one side of his mouth. His eyes have a menacing red glow to them, and he wears a large black leather collar, to which is attached a huge emerald. His voice is a whine as he speaks to your group:

"What have we here? hmmm? Tasty morsels for the pack? You all look juicy enough."

The PCs are being circled by a large pack of fiendish jackals, though from the darkness, they wouldn't know it. Even dark vision is blocked by the dark shroud of night.

After the spirit jackal addresses the PCs, they have an opportunity to speak to their purpose. Should they announce that they seek Mind, the jackal howls with glee. This is chorused by the

pack as they circle the party, looking in from the shadows.

"I see, you seek to challenge. Very well, the gauntlet is thrown, a battle it shall be." With that the jackal lays down in the moonbeam, crossing its front two paws casually, and stares at the PCs.

"A riddle I shall ask you.

You must answer me true.

Then Mind will I give you.

Take care now, for if you give me the wrong answer, my pack will attack, and we'll have a fine supper this evening. Are you ready?"

When the PCs answer in the affirmative, the jackal poses his question.

Pronounced as one letter,
Oh, what can I be?
Two letters there are,
And two only in me.
I'm double, I'm single,
I'm black, blue, and gray,
I'm read from both ends,
And the same either way.

Only read this once, but make sure you do so clearly. The answer is "eye." Give the players five minutes to figure this out if they are having problems, then a spirit will slide up next to one and whisper. "It's easy can't you see?" Give them another minute. If they are still having problems, another spirit will hint, "It's so very clear if you just look." They only get one guess, and after the last clue, the jackal begins to whine incessantly until they answer.

If the PCs successfully answer the riddle:

"Aaaaauuuuoooooooo... the Jackal howls. You are smarter than you appear... very well then, Mind is here." With that, the emerald drops to the ground and the spirit steps back into the shadows. All movement ceases and your senses reel once again.

If the PCs answer incorrectly..

"Eh heh heh heh... you are wrong... aaaaauuuuoooooooo...."

The pack converges on the PCs, and will fight to the death. If the PCs successfully defeat the jackal spirits in combat, the leader steps forward, even if struck down.

Tier 1 (EL 4)

Fiendish Jackals (6): CR 1/2; Small Animal: HD 1d8+2; hp 6 (each); Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural); Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, bite); SA Smite Good; SQ Darkvision, spell

resistance (2); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1
 Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +5
SA: Smite Good (+1 damage, once per day)

Tier 2 (EL 6)

Fiendish Jackals (6): CR 1; Small Animal: HD 3d8+6; hp 18 (each); Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d4+2, bite); SA Smite Good; SQ Darkvision, spell resistance (4); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +2
 Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +6
SA: Smite Good (+3 damage, once per day)

Tier 3 (EL 8)

Fiendish Jackals (6): CR 3; Small Animal: HD 5d8+10; hp 30 (each); Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +7 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA Smite Good; SQ Darkvision, spell resistance (6); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +2
 Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +7
SA: Smite Good (+5 damage, once per day)

“You are not terribly bright, but it seems as though you’ve won the fight. Very well then...” With that, the emerald drops to the ground and the spirit steps back into the shadows. All movement ceases and your senses reel once again.

Soul...

The vortex swirls about you once more making you close your eyes as vertigo takes over. The spirits speak to you again, “A clear path is not necessarily the straightest” and “Once you make a choice the consequences are set for all time.” Everything comes to a screeching halt again, and you stand in the blazing sun beside the great cracked tree. Looking up you can see the skeletal owl Kotori resting on a branch “Well, you’ve come for Soul at last, heh heh heh. I suppose you’re expecting something mystical or spectacular for this test as well... but it is very simple really... all you have to do... is take it from me!

Kotori hovers before you. A great diamond visible beneath his bare rib cage. It must have been hidden from you before. The skeletal owl turns a malevolent gaze upon you and your senses reel. As you regain your equilibrium, you see yourselves standing on the banks of a great black watered river. It’s steaming and pungent. Kotori hovers just out of reach, and fluttering back and forth he screeches at your group, “You stand before a river of Despair and Thoughtlessness. Its waters will cleanse you of your memories, numbing your mind and reducing you to helpless idiots. Catch me if you can.” Kotori shrieks and skeletal forms begin to rise from the black murky waters to attack.

One skeleton per PC rises from the water to attack the PCs. If you are short on time, you can half the number of skeletons, or remove them altogether, and merely taunt the PCs from over the river with Kotori until one of them jumps.

Tier 1 (EL 1-3)

Skeleton: CR 1/3; Medium-Size Undead; HD 1d12; hp 6 (each); Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +0 melee (1d4, 2 claws); SQ Undead Immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2
 Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int — Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feat: Improved Initiative

SQ: Undead—immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage; *Immunities (Ex)*—Skeletons have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh or internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Tier 2 (EL 4-7)

Ogre Skeleton: CR 1; Large-Size Undead HD 2d12; hp 13 (each); Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size); Atk +2 melee (1d6+2 [x2], 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SQ Undead Immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3
 Str 14, Dex 12, Con —, Int — Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feat: Improved Initiative

SQ: Undead—immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage; *Immunities (Ex)*—Skeletons have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh or internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Tier 3 (EL 8-10)

Ogre Skeleton, Bbn3: CR 4; Large Undead (9 ft. tall); HD 2d12 + 3d12; hp 30 (each); Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size); Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Rage 1/day; SQ Fast Movement, Uncanny Dodge, Undead Immunities; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4

Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int — Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feat: Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

SA: Rage (Ex)—temporarily gains +4 to Str, and a +2 morale bonus on saves, but suffers a -2 penalty to AC. Lasts for 4 rounds and the skeleton suffers a -2 to Str and Dex after it is over; Uncanny Dodge — does not lose Dex bonus to AC when flat footed or attacked by an invisible attacker.

SQ: Undead—immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage; *Immunities (Ex)*—Skeletons have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh or internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Because of the strange nature of this other world the undead turn as though they were 2 HD tougher.

The undead will fight the PCs, attempting to push them back from the riverbank.

In order to get Soul someone is going to have to make a sacrifice—a leap for the owl. Magic that allows a PC to transport themselves by any other power other than their own body will not work in this encounter. It is the nature of the test to disallow magic as an aid for making the “leap of faith”.

When someone declares this as his or her action, grab a d20 and make a production of rolling it... out of view. Don't tell them what it's for, because it isn't for anything. Play up the moment as dramatic, but whoever jumps for the owl automatically gets the gem for their sacrifice. Of course, they have to get past the undead to do so.

Leaping for the owl, you see the black waters looming before you. As you clutch Kotori, he disappears, leaving you holding Soul in your outstretched hands. Sploosh...you fall into the black waters and your consciousness fades.

At this point, the group will need to fish their friend from the river. The body will be close enough that they don't actually have to go in to get him. Once they've pulled him/her out of the water, move on to Success.

Failure

If for any reason the entire party dies in one of the tests, they are dead and lost to the real world forever.

Success

As you gain possession of Soul the scene fades, spinning one last time until you come to a final gut wrenching halt. As your vision clears, you see Cha'ak standing near you, the three gems, Heart, Mind, and Soul resting in front of you in the tent. (PCs name who was dunked) lies on the floor of the lodge unconscious.

At this point the PCs need to touch all three of the gems together at once, and then touch Cheveyo with them joined. If they don't get it, Cha'ak will suggest that course of action. When they do so, the elderly Shaman awakens.

The Cheveyo's eyes snap open, and he draws in a sudden deep breath. Looking around at you, he smiles, “Thank you friends for your efforts. I sensed your presence in the spirit world, but my trap forbade me from assisting you.” Looking down at your fallen comrade, “What is this? How did he come to be like this.” Cheveyo's face is creased with concern.

If a PC describes how his or her friend leapt into the river in order to gain possession of Soul. Cheveyo will ask to see the gems. Placing them on the fallen PC over the head, chest, and abdomen, he will chant a lengthy prayer to Obad-hai. After which the PC will awaken alive, though changed.

Encounter 7: Honor is a Two Headed Spear, Striking Both Ways...

If the PCs failed to arrive in time to save Cheveyo, read the following:

Cha'ak turns a saddened face towards you and speaks, “we have lost many warriors and elders, now our tribe is weakened and we cannot hope to spend another night in our homeland. The food you have provided us will only slow our eventual deaths. We plan to strike deeply into the desert; we will die, but die with honor and hopefully some good will come from our deaths. The food you have provided will give us the strength to fight this last fight.

The PCs now have a choice, they can offer to take the tribe back to the safety of the Duchy of Urnst or they can let the centaurs die honorable warriors' deaths at the hands of Rary's troops.

If the PCs offer to take the centaurs back to the Duchy:

Cha'ak looks at you for some time, considering your words. “I am a war chief, not a diplomat. You speak words with wisdom, this I can hear.” He looks around at the remaining centaur tribe, gathered around him. Most of them are wounded and tired. “We will accept your offer. Guide us to your land of safety and we will die with honor another day.”

Proceed to Encounter 8.

If the PCs let the centaurs battle Rary's forces:

The Scouring Wind tribe finishes off the last of the food prepared by the scrolls and readies for war. Cha'ak turns to you and offers you his thanks. “Our tribe will do what we can in this war. Thank you for letting us die with honor and giving us the strength to battle with courage. With the food you have provided, we will cause great damage to this wizard's troops. I salute you.” He raises his spear in a salute to you and shouts back at his tribe. Great hoots and hollers echo throughout the canyon as Cha'ak turns and charges out into the desert, his tribe of centaurs in formation behind him.

Surely, these powerful creatures will do great damage to Rary's forces. Now, however, you must travel back to your homeland. It is up to you to tell the story of their bravery.

If the PCs allow the centaurs to battle Rary's forces the adventure ends here. Proceed to Conclusion.

Encounter 8: Life is a Journey, Not a Destination...

You have traveled long and hard, leading the centaurs of The Scouring Wind out of the Bright Desert, and into the Abbor-Alz towards castle Seh. Coming across the pass, about a day's ride from the castle, you notice a group of riders approaching. The riders appear to be Duchy soldiers. At their head is tall man with platinum blonde hair and piercing sky blue eyes. While the other riders wear chain shirts and bear shields with the Duke's device emblazoned on them, he appears to be wearing only leather armor, and wears a sword on each hip. Stopping at a distance the man hails you, "Greetings good adventurers, I am glad to see that you made it to the Scouring Wind in time to save them. I am Drenylyn of House Teranor, and I come here on behalf of my House to offer the Scouring Wind sanctuary in our lands. We know of a place within the Duchy called Bessenland. It is largely uninhabited and would serve as a wonderful place for your people to live and prosper in peace."

PCs who wish, may make a Knowledge (nobility and Royalty) Check at DC 10 to recognize the name of the infamous house Teranor. It is widely suspected that House Teranor traffics with some rather unsavory folk in order to secure their base of power, which is thought to be the largest within the Duchy.

Should the PCs question Drenylyn as to why House Teranor would want the centaurs, he claims that House Teranor doesn't truly need the centaurs, but thought that the House could help the tribe.

If the PCs need more, Drenylyn states that House Teranor wants to make reparations to the centaurs for the troubles they have been through. If the PCs think that the wicked House Teranor is trying to pull a trick on them, allow them a Sense Motive check DC 10.

When the issue is pressed, Drenylyn pulls the PC aside, and in an effort to appear as though he is taking them into his confidence, he explains that House Teranor's image has taken some blows recently and could use some cleaning up. Saving a group of centaurs could give the House a political advantage, specifically when it comes to relations with Duke Karll.

If the PCs still think Drenylyn is lying, give them DC 28 Sense Motive check (this is versus Drenylyn's significant Bluff score). If the PCs call him on his lie, he will state that the House has its own reasons for wanting the centaurs free of the Abbor-Alz and the PCs need not worry about it.

Ultimately, the centaurs will be the ones making the final decision, not the PCs. The centaurs like the idea of a land where they could live in peace from the roiling forces in the desert.

If the PCs are violent, the centaurs immediately side with Drenylyn. Use the stats given for centaurs earlier in the adventure. There are five warriors per tier available. If the PCs attempt

to convince the centaurs that House Teranor isn't the best group of people to be working with, give them a Diplomacy check at DC 10. If they succeed, the centaurs will agree with the PCs, causing Drenylyn to promise the centaurs a total of 1,000 gold pieces in immediate reparations.

In order to convince the centaurs not to take the deal at this point would require a Diplomacy check at DC 20.

However things resolve themselves, Cheveyo will express his deepest gratitude to the PCs for their help, gifting them each with a large beaded feather as a token of the favor of the Scouring Wind.

Drenylyn Teranor male human Rgr6: CR 6; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 6d10+12; hp 52; Init +3; Spd 30; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 Leather); Atks +5/+0 melee (1d8+1 [crit. 19-20], longsword) and +5/+0 melee (1d6+1 [crit. 19-20] shortsword); SA Favored Enemy, Spring Attack; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff 8, Diplomacy 7, Hide 6, Listen 6, Move Silently 6, Ride 9, Sense Motive 4, Spot 6, Wilderness Lore 8; Feats: Dodge, Expertise, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track.

SA Favored Enemy (orcs): +2 to damage; Favored Enemy: Ogres +1 to damage

Equipment: leather armor, longsword, shortsword

Duchy Militia Ftr1 (10): CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d10 +2; hp 12; Init +4; Spd 20; AC 16 (+4 Chain shirt, +2 large shield); Atks +4 melee (1d8+2 [crit. 19-20], longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0

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

Skills: Climb +6, Jump +6, Ride +4; Feats Improved Initiative, Dodge, Weapon Focus – longsword

Equipment: Chain shirt, large shield, longsword

Conclusion

There are two possible conclusions to this scenario, the most favorable being where the PCs save Cheveyo, and lead The Scouring Wind out of the Bright Desert into the Duchy. Doing this should net the party Heart, Mind, and Soul, three minor magical talismans, and the Favor of the Scouring Wind. The second possibility is that the PCs take too much time getting to the centaurs, and while they may be successful in leading them into the Duchy, the centaurs will be lost as a group without their shaman.

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

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

Encounter One

Diffusing the situation with the farmers 25 xp

Encounter Three

Defeating the orcs 50 xp

Encounter Four

Figuring out the Riddle 25 xp

Determining that the circle is fake 25 xp

Getting the map from Daerog 25 xp

Encounter Five

Defeating Rary's Rangers 50 xp

Encounter Six

Retrieving Heart 50 xp

Retrieving Mind 50 xp

Retrieving Soul 50 xp

Rescuing Cheveyo 50 xp

Encounter Seven

Offering to Lead the Scouring Wind into the Duchy and to safety 25 xp

Encounter Eight

Suspecting Kayrn's motives and voicing their suspicions 25 xp

Total experience for objectives 475

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-50 xp

Total possible experience 500 xp

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

Encounter Two

- **Map of the Eastern Abbor-Alz March** (value 75 gp): The map is an excellently detailed map of the Eastern Abbor-Alz March, depicting parts of the Duchy of Urnst, the Celedon forest, and the Bright Desert. It is drawn up and signed by the Chief Cartographer of Nellix.
- **Seven Scrolls of Create Food and Water** (value 25 gp each).

Encounter Three

- One set of: great axe, light crossbow, studded leather, 2 days iron rations, waterskin, 10 sp; per orc defeated.

Encounter Four

- **Blue Silk Handkerchief** (value 5 gp): This blue silk handkerchief measures eight inches square and bears no writing or magical enchantment.

Treasure Summary

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

Encounter Six

- **Corundum Heart Gem** (value 25 gp): This blood red corundum gem will *remove fear* on the user as the spell cast at first level, once. The command word is “chemenya.” Once used, the gem crumbles to dust, worthless.
- **Sapphire Mind Gem** (value 25 gp): This sky blue sapphire gem will allow the user to *detect secret doors* as the spell cast at first level, once. The command word is “evenalq.” Once used, the gem crumbles to dust, worthless.
- **Quartz Soul Gem** (value 25 gp): This clear sparkling quartz gem will create a *protection from evil* on the user as the spell cast at first level, once. The command word is “mechevan.” Once used, the gem crumbles to dust. Until it is used, this gem is a high-enough quality prism that it can also serve as a focus for the *Read Magic* spell.
- **Taint of the Ebon Waves** (non-tradable): This character has been immersed in a river of pure despair and thoughtlessness, causing them to permanently lose the memory and use of one skill that they had, determined randomly. They do however gain the life taking force of that conduit in a supernatural ability to cast *chill touch* as the spell cast at 1st level, once per week.

Encounter Eight

- **Ornate Beaded Feather** (value 10 gp, one per PC, tradable): This ornately beaded feather is well crafted, combining many brightly colored beads with the tail feather of a desert eagle.

Appendix One: Daerog

Daerog, male elf Rgr5/Wiz3/Asn2: Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. tall); HD 5d10+5 + 3d4+3 2d6+2; hp 61; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 Ring of Protection); Atks +6/+1 melee (1d8+2 [crit. 19-20], longsword) and +6 melee (1d6+2 [19-20], shortsword) or +9/+4 ranged (1d8+2 [crit. x3] mighty composite longbow); SA Favored Enemy, Sneak Attack, Death Strike; SQ Immune to sleep; AL NE; SV Fort +6(+9), Ref +8(+11), Will+6(+9): With Ring of Protection

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 10

Skills: Alchemy +6, Balance +5, Concentration +4, Decipher Script +5, Disable Device +5, Disguise +6, Hide +10, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +5, Read Lips +5, Search +8, Spellcraft +11, Spot +8, Swim +6, Tumble +5, Wilderness Lore +10; **Feats:** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Silent Spell, Spring Attack, Track

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Sylvan

SA: 1st Favored Enemy (Humans): +2 Damage when attacking a human; 2nd Favored Enemy (Elves): +1 Damage when attacking an elf; **Sneak Attack** +1d6; **Death Strike:** Must study victim for 3 rounds prior to an attempt. Assuming he hits they must make a Fort save at DC 15 or either die or be paralyzed for 1d6+2 rounds (Daerog's choice). If save succeeds, the attempt is treated as a successful Sneak Attack.

SQ: Immune to sleep – as per elven ability; +2 to save vs enchantment spells. Daerog is a specialist wizard favoring Illusion spells above others. He is prohibited from casting or using conjuration spells and magic.

Spells known—ranger (0/1): 1st-lvl—*pass without trace*.

Spells prepared (5/4/3): 0 lvl—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, read magic, resistance*; 1st-lvl—*expeditious retreat, nystul's magic aura, ventriloquism*; 2nd-lvl—*detect thoughts, silent image* (prepared as Silent Spell), *levitate*;

Spells known—assassin (0/1): 1st-lvl—*spider climb*.

Equipment: *ring of chameleon power, ring of protection* +3, longsword, shortsword, mighty composite longbow, quiver: 30 arrows, satchel: traveling spellbook, spell components, and various other odds and ends which aren't important for this adventure.

Background:

Somewhat of an enigma, even to his employers, very little real knowledge is available regarding this exceptionally dangerous individual. His name means "shadow demon" in the elven tongue, and was self chosen after a young elf, who had finally won his freedom from slavers on the Wild Coast had struck out across the Bright Desert on his own. He was, during the journey aided once by the centaurs, and he has always had a soft spot in his heart for those noble creatures. Daerog does however, have an undying hatred of

humans, and a general distaste for his elven brothers as well. He did, for a time, train with the rangers at Stalwart Pines, successfully masking his hatred for humans, as well as his motives.

Eventually he grew bored of their lessons, and left the school in search of employment. Currently, he is in the employ of House Teranor.

Who knows what that powerful Suel house has planned, but at this point, Daerog is a part of it.

Player's Handout 1: Map of the Eastern Abbor-Alz March

