



Castles & Crusades

SURNE



Into the Unknown Vakhund

Davis Chenault



Death in the Treklant Part 1

Travel south in the goblin kingdoms is fraught with danger. Many will go only so far as the Baron's outpost, the Vakhund, The Watchdog Tower, where they reside in safety while slavers, arms dealers and the like fare their way down the road. But this night, the tables have turned, for a host of Zjerd and their allies have eyed the tower for long and know that a Princess of the blood is in the Watchdog and they have war and death upon their minds. Now it is for the bold to gather arms and hold the tower against the dark unknown.

VAKHUND

AUTHOR: Davis Chenault
EDITOR: Joshua J Ruedin & Nicki Leigh Chenault
COVER ART: Jason Walton
INTERIOR ART: Jason Walton, Peter Bradley
CARTOGRAPHY: Peter Bradley
ART DIRECTION/ COVER DESIGN: Peter Bradley
INTERIOR DESIGN/ LAYOUT: Team Troll



Interested in Castles & Crusades® the role playing game? Want to learn more? There is a large online community of gamers who post home brewed rules, adventure discussion and help incoming players digest the game and its potential. Please visit our online forums at the web address mentioned above and get involved. All are welcome!!!

© 2007 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. Castles & Crusades® is a Registered Trademark of Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. C&C, Castle Keeper, SEIGE engine, Troll Lord Games, and the Castles & Crusades, SEIGE engine, and Troll Lord Games logos are Trademark of Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

ISBN 1-931275-59-9 Printed in the United States of America

OGL

This book is published under the Open Game License version 1.0a by permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The Open Game Content appearing in this book is derived from the System Reference Document v 3.0, copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

DESIGNATION OF OPEN GAME CONTENT: The following is designated Open Game Content: all star block information of characters, monsters, and traps that appears in the parenthetical following the character, monster, or trap, including the names of items and spells; and the general names of monsters, but not any unique named NPC, character, or monster, appearing in any table or preceding any star block. Also, the following open game content related words, phrases, and abbreviations wherever they appear: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), Charisma (Cha), Class, Fighter, Ranger, Rogue, Assassin, Barbarian, Monk, Wizard, Illusionist, Cleric, Druid, Knight, Bard, Paladin, Race, Demi-human, Dwarf, Elf, Gnome, Half-Elf, Halfling, Half-Orc, Hit Dice (HD), Hit Points (HP), Alignment, Lawful Good (LG), Lawful Neutral (LN), Lawful Evil (LE), Neutral (N), Neutral Good (NG), Neutral Evil (NE), Chaotic Good (CG), Chaotic Neutral (CN), Chaotic Evil (CE), Level, “hit”, Damage, Experience Point, Saving Throw, Player Character (PC), Non-player Character (NPC), Turn Undead, Spell, Arcane, Divine, Magic, Spell Resistance, Item, Equipment, Armor, Weapon, Potion, Rod, Staff, Wand, Scroll, Ring, Wondrous Item, Artifact, Cursed,d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20, d%, round, and turn.

DESIGNATION OF PRODUCT IDENTITY: Product identity is not Open Game Content. The following is designated as product identity pursuant to OGL v1.0a(1)(c) and (7): (A) product and product line names and other names, including Castles & Crusades, C&C, Castle Keeper (CK), Castles & Crusades: Player's Handbook, Castles & Crusades: Monsters and Treasures, Castles & Crusades: Castle Keeper's Guide, Into the Unknown: Vakhund (B) logos, identifying marks, and trade dress; (C) all artwork, logos, symbols, graphic designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual representations; (D) logos and trademarks, including Castles & Crusades, Castle Keeper, SIEGE engine, and Troll Lord Games, any and all Trigee Enterprise Company logos, identifying marks and trade dress, or any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as product identity by the owner of the product identity, and which specifically excludes the open game content; (E) the story, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, depictions, likenesses, concepts, world and campaign descriptions, proper names of the characters, creatures, groups, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses, skills, items, deities, and special abilities other than those designated as open game content above, as well as places, locations, settings, and environments and their descriptions and other accompanying text, though not their star blocks.

All text, artwork, and maps appearing in this book is property of and copyright 2006 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. Castles & Crusades, C&C, Castle Keeper, Troll Lord Games, and the Castles & Crusades and Troll Lord Games logos, and products published by Troll Lord Games are Trademarks of Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

OPEN GAME LICENSE VERSION 1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means

P. O Box 251171
Little Rock, AR 72225
email: troll@trolllord.com
web: www.trolllord.com
www.castlesandcrusades.com



This module is designed for 4-8 characters of levels 1-2



You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. System Reference Document Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, Copyright 2005, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.

Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 2nd Printing, Copyright 2006, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.

Castles & Crusades Monsters & Treasure, Copyright 2005, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel Stephen Chenault.

Into the Unknown: Vakhund, Copyright 2007, Troll Lord Games; Author Davis Chenault.

"Greetings my friend. There are no introductions necessary here, for I know well who you are, my intrepid adventurer. A weary traveler indeed? Have a seat my fine fellow and let me speak with you a moment before you enter the Graffenvold and traverse its paths and byways. But first I must ask, have you come here seeking quick glory and easy wealth? Perhaps you have come here to beat down the lords of this land and submit them to your will? Do the muddy tracks and sharp edges of the world weigh heavily upon you? Eh my friend? What was that?

"Regardless, I fear you have gone beyond yourself here in Inzae. This place has neither easy roads nor abundant wealth. The lords of this land are powerful and care not for the lives of the foolish and weak. Here, in Inzae, simple mistakes may be your unmaking and doom. For beyond yonder door is a fearful world clinging desperately to life. Its denizens struggle against a vast array of malignant forces seeking to drag them deeper into the pits of the Maelstrom. And even here, in this backwater region called the Reintier, you will find no respite from this meaningless and overwhelming struggle. So take heed traveler, take heed as you enter the Graffenvold, it will do you well to remember that this is a deadly world and lest you take care, you will be engulfed in its dying spasms."



VAKHUND

This module is designed to be read only by the Castle Keeper, with those sections in boxed text to be read aloud to the players at the appropriate time. The general map of the region should be made available to the players, while the map of Vakhund and Jzunad are for the Castle Keeper's eyes only.

This adventure challenges players tactically and requires a party capable of combat, stealth, cunning and cohesive implementation of strategies and tactics. The party should contain 4-6 characters of levels 1-2, with at least two fighter types and one cleric. Several portions of the adventure involve overland travel and in these areas a ranger or character with wilderness skills enhances the party's chances of survival.

Should you be interested, a free pdf is available at the Troll Lord Games Website with lists of various non-player characters, their stats and motivations and a glossary of terms, a map covering a larger swath of territory as well as a plot overview for the entire Death on the Treklant series. There are also alternate rules contained therein for those interested in using rules particular to this setting. This information was not made available in this module for brevities sake and is not necessary to run the adventure – simply shading to add depth to the setting. It is a password protected pdf to prevent players from accessing this important information. The password is skobber.

INTRODUCTION

Rather than delve into all the details of the adventure and various machinations and plots at work at this juncture, the plot point, non-player character motivations and other information are revealed as necessary. It would behoove the Castle Keeper to read the entire module and familiarize themselves with its contents before beginning play. In short though, the characters begin at a small town called Frisia. It is located near the border of a small barony called Halpveg. The characters are traveling with some traders who are bringing goods for trade with a neighboring goblin kingdom to the south called the Drazkleed. A powerful merchant and his daughter are traveling with the caravan. The caravan stops for several days at an outpost called the Vakhund where the characters are told to wait while the traders go on south. The Vakhund is attacked and the merchant's daughter kidnapped. Her father requests the characters give chase and rescue the princess. Thus begins a series of adventures away from the lands of man and into the goblin kingdoms and perhaps, back again.

INVOLVING THE PLAYERS' CHARACTERS

The Castle Keeper is encouraged to develop individualized reasons for the characters to be accompanying the caravan. However, as that is not always possible or some little bit of guidance necessary, the following is a list of reasons characters may be traveling with the caravan. It is important that the characters have agreed or agree to travel with the caravan; otherwise the adventure may not go anywhere. Further, the adventure beginning should be mundane. Nothing exciting

is *supposed* to happen at Vakhund (though the princess gets kidnapped there), but rather at Jugensborg. The characters ultimately need to get to Jugensborg.

One: The characters are hired on to accompany the caravan as far as The Vakhund and offer it protection along the way. Then from The Vakhund to Jugensborg. Payment is 1sp per person.

Two: The characters are traveling with the caravan for safety until it reaches its final destination at Jugensborg.

Alternately, the characters could be given a vested interest in the location by giving them important missions to undertake. This can provide interesting roleplaying as the characters would have to come back to Frisia (or not) and report on their activities.

Three: The characters have been hired to reconnoiter and determine the nature of the goblin activity in the region, or to map the otherwise poorly known region along the Treklant creek and are traveling with the caravan.

Four: The characters have been hired to locate a stronghold controlled by the infamous Magdole Gang purportedly located south of the Treklant Creek and in the Dampfrat.

PART 1: A COZY BED

The adventure begins in the town of Frisia, a small farming and timber community of no more than 500 inhabitants in the Barony of Halpveg. Frisia lies in the northern periphery of the Graffenvold, sixty miles north of The Vakhund and 100 miles south of the city Halpveg. Surrounding the town is an earthen embankment topped with a wooden palisade with walkways. It overlooks a dry moat, which is in the process of being constructed. Frisia's buildings and houses are one and two story wood or wattle and daub constructions with a few stone ones, either shingled with wood or thatched with hay. Most buildings have simple wood cat chimneys, while the homes of the wealthier inhabitants have rock chimneys.

Frisia is the last human settlement on the road south into the goblin kingdoms. There is a fairly regular trade between the goblins to the south (the Kdyzj of the Drazkleed) and the Barony of Halpveg. Goblin traders come as far as Frisia and no further while the human traders go as far as Mejketek (120 miles south of Frisia) and no further. This trade has brought some wealth to the community but mostly to the merchants who ply their trade here.

Other than for farmers and woodsmen, there are four places in Frisia of interest; the Keep, the Bierkeller, Merkel's and the Kreut. All are described below. The economy of Frisia is run almost entirely on barter. Someone bakes some bread and trades it for firewood or perhaps someone trades firewood for some cheese. Monies come to Frisia by way of traveling merchants and traders who purchase rare woods or are passing through to Mejketek and need food, shelter or other such items.

Kaptane Friger and his retinue administer the town. Other than those laws imposed upon him by his lord in Halpveg and

tradition, Kaptane Friger is free to do as he chooses. He keeps the town orderly, and neither overtaxes nor under-taxes the inhabitants. In times of need, Captain Friger can call upon a small militia to do his bidding.

THE KEEP: The Keep is a large squat round building made entirely of stone with a wooden parapet atop it. It houses the local ruler, Kaptane Niklas Friger, and his retinue. The Keep is circular and 80 feet across. It consists of three levels, the roof and a dunjon. The ground level is the sleeping, cooking, eating and storage quarters for the fifteen troops garrisoned here. Four horses can be stabled here in time of conflict. The second level is used as a meeting hall as well as having separate rooms for the two lieutenants and advisor serving Kaptane Friger. The third floor is reserved as Kaptane Friger's personal residence, eating chamber, chapel and storage (this is where the city's taxes are stored). The roof is wooden with a small cone on it but room enough for a walkway around its circumference. The dunjon is used for storage of food, beer, weapons, building materials and other supplies. All the floors are accessible from two stairways. The dunjon is only accessible from a ground level trapdoor. The Keep is well maintained and flies the banner of Halpveg – a flag split vertically with a black top and green bottom.

Kaptane Friger is responsible for collecting the taxes from Frisia and the surrounding community, enforcing the laws of Halpveg and protecting this town and the outlying community. He is concerned with little else and rarely interacts with the locals. He is, like many rulers in the baronies along this stretch of the Graffenvold, a remote and autocratic leader. He enforces the laws of Halpveg, dealing justice with an iron hand. In all other respects, Kaptane Friger dispenses justice, as he will. He is not considered a good man though he is a capable ruler. Kaptane Friger has a wife and children and all but one lives in Halpveg. His youngest son, Karl, is serving duty at The Vakhund at his father's request.

KAPTANE FRIGER (*This lawful neutral, 6th level knight whose vital stats are: HP 42 and AC 19. His primary attributes are strength, intelligence and charisma. His significant attributes are: str 17, dex 15 and cha 16. He carries a +1 full chain mail suit, a shield that reduces damage from attacks by 2 but never less than 1, a +2 broadsword, spear of wounding that causes +3 damage when it hits and a longbow. He always carries 2-4 one draught healing potions with him if in battle. His personal wealth consists of 1,300gp in various forms of jewelry, gems, adornments, plate gold and silver.*)

Milken Federman is Kaptane Friger's advisor. He belongs to an order of ecclesiastics who act as advisors to many rulers (often called Black Cloaks for they always dress in black frock coats). Milken is an ambitious man and seeks to remove himself from this small town and Kaptane Friger's lordship and go to a larger city with more powerful lords. He is a little greedy and capable of subterfuge to retrieve more monies and influence for himself. In other respects, he carries out his duties with the faith and fervor of one who knows any disobedience to the deities will result in nothing less than his eternal suffering upon the Mountain of Pestilence. He encourages Kaptane Friger to fairly implement the laws of the land, pay homage to the gods and be forthright to his calling as a lord.

MILKEN FEDERMAN (He is a lawful neutral, 4th level cleric whose vital stats are: HP 21 and AC 15. His prime attributes are intelligence, wisdom and charisma. His significant attribute is: wis 16. He carries a steel breastplate, +2 staff, an amulet of +3 protection against charm, an amulet of +3 lie detection, a gold holy symbol worth 300gp, a potion of healing and vial of holy water. When not adorned for combat he wears a black frock coat and carries his staff. He can cast the following number of spells: 0-4, 1st-3, 2nd-2.)

LIEUTENANTS x2 (These are lawful neutral, 3rd level fighters whose vital stats are: HP 23, 19 and AC 16. Their prime attributes are strength, dexterity and charisma. Their significant attributes are: str 14 each. They carry mail hauberks, shields, spear, broadsword, longbows and each have 10-100gp worth of jewelry and items of value.)

KEEP GUARDS x15 (These are humans whose vital stats are: HD 1d8, HP 4 and AC 14 each. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry laminar leather, shields, spears, short bows and broad swords.)

MILITIA LIEUTENANT (This is a neutral good, 2nd level fighter whose vital stats are: HP 14 and AC 13. His prime attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. His significant attributes are: str 14, dex 13 and wis 13. He carries leather armor, a shield and broadsword.)

MILITA x30 (These militiamen's vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP3 and AC 12. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry spears or polearms that inflict 1-6 damage and wear leather armor.)

MILITA x10 (These militiamen's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP3 and AC 12. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry spears and short bows and wear leather armor.)

MERKELS: Merkel's is little more than a large rambling wooden house with a smithy attached to it. The front portion of the house has been given over as a shop. Merkel, the owner, has a keen eye for a deal so buys and trades items to and from caravans for a slim profit. Merkel is an older man with a wife and several grown children, some of whom have children of their own, who live with him. Sixteen people live in this house. All help where they can, cutting timber, working in the smithy or bartering with travelers.

Merkel and several members of his family are a good source of information about the goblin kingdoms to the south. Should the characters have the time or inclination, he can tell them of Mejketek, the tribal differences of the Zjerd and Kdyzj, a little about the trade and how it occurs. Also, one of Merkel's older kids, Stoffel, knows the location of a group of bandits to the east. He has told Kaptane Friger, but Friger has yet to do anything about the bandits until help arrives from Halpveg. The bandits are located in a remote and marshy area 60 miles east of Frisia in the ruins of an old fort. Stoffel shows the characters the location of the fort should they care to know.

The goods Merkel sells are most useful to travelers and caravans. His smithy, though used to helping the locals, provides much income by repairing items for the caravans. There are harnesses, ropes, wheels, nails, dry goods, cloaks, blankets, lanterns, pitch and some tools in his stock of goods for sale. In all, Merkel's inventory is small and limited. Importantly, oil is difficult to come by and costs 4gp per pint. The Castle Keeper should use their discretion in deciding whether an item is in his shop or not. Also, prices are really cheap, generally being 70% less than those listed in the *Castles and Crusades Players Handbook*. Merkel has 200gp worth of plate, ornaments and coin in his house.

He has a few swords, shields and common weapons he has acquired over the years though by no means are selling these items a significant source of Merkel's income. He has no armor, though can do minor repairs in his smithy. The weapons Merkel does own are old and have not been well cared for. Each weapon purchased suffers a -1 to damage. His arrows are not well made and they suffer a -2 to hit. With any weapon purchased there is a 50% chance these penalties are doubled. Finally, Merkel is keen judge of men's wealth. When bartering he makes a charisma check (minus the charisma modifier of the customer). If successful, he will be able to ascertain if the customer can pay more and will charge 50% more for the item than he regularly would.

MERKEL (He is a chaotic neutral commoner whose vital stats are: HD1d6, HP 5 and AC 11. His prime attribute is mental. He wears a wool cloak and trousers and carries a dagger and 10sp.)

STOFFEL (He is a chaotic good, 2nd level ranger whose vital stats are: HP 13 and AC 13. His prime attributes are strength, dexterity and wisdom. His significant attributes are: dex 13 and wis 16. He carries leather armor, a broadsword, shield and short bow.)

BIERKELLER: The Bierkeller is Frisia's only tavern. It is a large wooden building with two floors and a slate roof. The lower floor is broad and deep with a common room stretching from one end to the other. Having gained a little wealth from those traveling through Frisia to Mejketek, Ronart Tonnahor, the owner, adorned the common room with two stone fireplaces, a stone floor and even plastered the walls. The common room is crowded with tables. The rear of the lower floor is given over to a kitchen and storage. The upper floor is half the size of the lower floor, has four rooms and one large common room, all but one of which are rented to travelers. A barn, stables and a large barnyard are in the rear.

Ronart, whose entire family died of a plague years ago, has, depending on the number of customers, 2-4 people from Frisia helping him cook meals and serve food. Many of the Frisia's inhabitants come here on a daily basis to have some beer. They often trade foodstuffs, blankets and other items for the courtesy. The busiest time is after the sun sets when everyone is finished working.

Ronart is a gangly and friendly fellow who constantly busies himself with the daily chores necessary to run the Bierkeller efficiently. He spares little time for small talk though and takes an active dislike to rumor mongers, braggarts and the like. A lifetime of keeping bar in this region, serving in the militia and travels to Mejketek, Halpveg and other places has garnered Ronart an encyclopedic knowledge of the area, though he rarely parts with this information unless to his benefit. He makes decent coin off of the merchants who make their way to Frisia and has accumulated 140gp in various coin and valuables. He keeps this in his kitchen, where he sleeps, under the floor beneath his bed.

One of the rooms on the upper floor has become permanently occupied by a goblin, Geejzndarn. This is a goblin from the Drazkleed. They are known as the Kdyzj. This is an old and friendly, though well guarded, goblin who acts as a translator for other goblin merchants plying their trade in Frisia. He has

become, to the chagrin of many of Frisia's residents, a permanent fixture in the community. He speaks Inzaen and goblin fluently. Geejzdnard has a few personal possessions in his room but nothing of value or interest.

RONART TONNAHOR (He is a neutral, commoner whose vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 5 and AC 11. His prime attributes are strength, wisdom and charisma. His significant attribute is: dex 13. He wears normal cloths, a smock and wields a dagger or club in combat.)

GREEJZDNARD (This goblin's vital stats are: HD 2d4, HP 6 and AC 12. His prime attributes are mental. He can perform the following actions as if a 2nd level rogue: conceal, move silent, pick pockets and backstab. He carries a dagger, leather armor and 3-12gp on his person.)

KREUT: In the center of the village is a large stone. It is about the size of a man in height and as broad as small house. It is covered in carvings and glyphs. This is the Kreut. It is a holy relic and conduit to the gods. People come to pray here, touch it for luck and leave offerings around it.

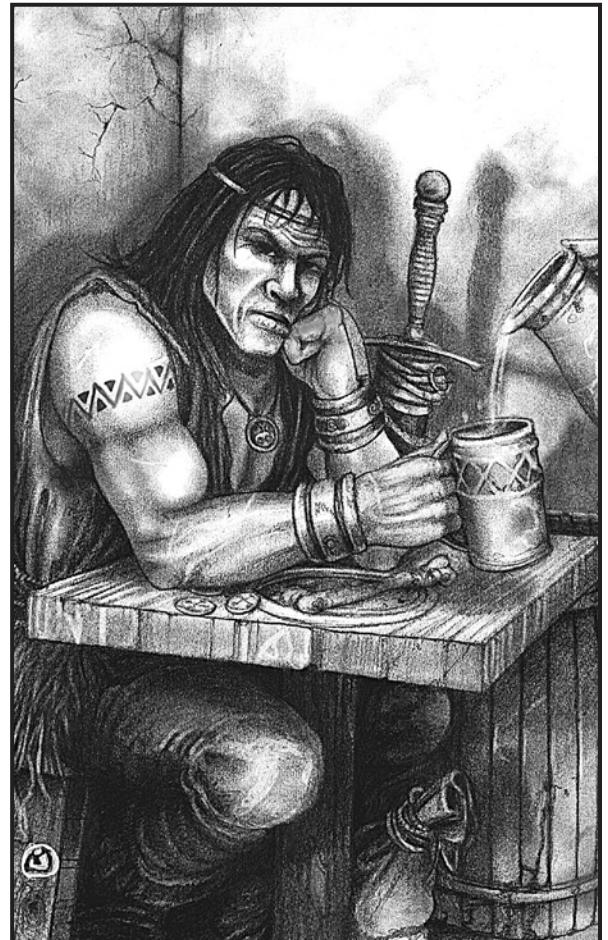
There are two people of note who live in Frisia. All live with their families in small houses. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to create a few other people with whom the players can interact and to propel the game in whatever direction he or she desires.

Gunther is a woodsman who works with six others in Frisia. They search out rare woods and trees for lumber or other needs. He is gruff and disagreeable most of the time, though friendly to those who spend much time in the woods. He has seen many a battle in his years and served several lords in Halpveg in the militia. He is familiar with the Dampfrat and its ways.

GUNTHER (He is a chaotic neutral 3rd level ranger whose vital stats are: HP 25 and AC14. His prime attributes are strength, wisdom and dexterity. His significant attributes are: str 17, wis 16 and cha 8. He carries reinforced laminar leather armor conferring +4 to AC, an expertly made +1 bow, 20 expertly made arrows which cause +1 to damage, a broadsword, hand axe and has 80gp worth of valuables in his house.)

Hempel is a priest. He is from Frisia though lived in Kreutzmark for so many years he is almost considered a stranger. He returned here to care for his aging parents. After their death he remained. He tends to the Kreut and various other holy relics in Frisia. He takes care of the wounded and offers what services he can for his fellow villagers. He does not volunteer nor desire to travel far from Frisia for any reason, though will be active in its defense. He expects material return for any services rendered. Coin is not considered an adequate return.

HEMPEL (He is a chaotic good, human, 4th level cleric whose vital stats are: HP 21 and AC 14. His prime attributes are strength, wisdom and charisma. His significant attribute is: wis 14. He carries a metal breastplate and broadsword. He has 50gp in various items of value at his house. He can cast the following number of spells: 0th-4, 1st-4, 2nd-2.)



THE LAST WARM MEAL

The adventure should begin on a blistering winter's morning in the common room of the Bierkeller. However, the Castle Keeper should not feel constrained by this and may want to begin the adventure a few days earlier to allow the characters to become familiar with Frisia and several of its inhabitants. In any respect, the characters are making their way south to The Vakhund with a caravan and their morning begins as such....

A chilly early morning mist rises off sodden fields stretching away from a wooden palisade and earthen embankment wrapped tightly about a cluster of small clapboard houses, rambling barns and squat stone buildings. This is Frisia. The bellowing of cattle mixes with the dull clang of metal bells, awakening any who might be sleeping past the sun's rise. Misty tendrils of smoke rise from Frisia's many chimneys then, lingering momentarily above graying rooftops, before disappearing into the massive dark green firs ringing the fields and crowding the horizon. Then the clanging of bells is interrupted by the braying of oxen that have been tacked too early to a harness.

Once the characters have awoken and come down to the common room....

The hall of the Bierkeller is cold. The morning's sun barely shines through the open door and Ronart, the gangly tavern keeper, has just started a fire in one of the tavern's two fireplaces. Outside, the noise of the drovers barking orders as they load their wagons is periodically drowned out by the braying of steers protesting their job. At the far end of the hall, wrapped in a thick sheepskin cloak, sits an old wrinkled goblin. He is balanced precariously on a tall stool and hurriedly eating out of a steaming bowl.

Ronart will spare some time to talk with the newcomers, but is busy preparing for the day gathering wood, starting fires, cooking meals and cleaning, so is constantly stopping to work rather than talk. He is not unknown to quit a conversation in mid-sentence should work need done. He has little valuable information he is willing to impart to strangers and mostly bemoans the arrival of another cold winter. He will offer that the Kdyzj goblins of the Drazkleed are friendly enough and Mejketek a fine place for goblins or their kin. He will also warn the characters that the Zjerd goblins of the Dampfrat are notoriously violent though often too lazy to actually fight.

Geejdnard, the goblin, speaks to the characters obsequiously trying not to offend anyone. He knows much about The Drazkleed and trade in the south and clearly indicates that travel south of the Treklant Creek and to Mejketek is very dangerous as there are groups of marauding bandits and horrible monsters about. He also intimates that his kin at Mejketek's might feel threatened by well-armed groups of travelers arriving at their doorstep.

While the characters gather in the common room, Meister Rothenheimer and Evanna appear.

From the dark hallway emerge two stunningly dressed people, nobles or merchants by their clothing. A tall man, hefty yet handsome, with a graying mustache flowing over his mouth and down his cheeks smiles broadly with gleeful eyes as he enters the common room. He laughs quietly as he places a hand on the shoulder of a young maiden with rivers of blonde hair cascading down her shoulders. She is a lean, even thin figure, moving gracefully though weighed down by a thick ermine-lined cloak. She laughs demurely and glances backward at the two drovers struggling up the hallway, each managing elaborately decorated large wooden trunks.

Meister Rothenheimer and Evanna are gracious and in good spirits. While the Meister oversees the loading of his baggage, Evanna waits inside. Both have a meal before leaving. The Meister is more than willing to converse with anyone. Evanna, however, is very reserved about speaking with anyone without her father in the room. The Meister claims to be traveling to Jugensborg and then on to Firstenfeld for business and in an effort not to alarm his daughter, claims that he is checking the trade routes for safety and efficiency and meeting with fellow merchants in Firstenfeld. Any of the characters from this region recognize the name Rothenheimer as one of Bergholt's ruling families.

After finishing their meal, Stansley, the lead driver of the caravan, enters the common room and announces it is time to pack and leave.

"Allo, my friends!" Stansley hollers into the room, his haggard face cheerful, despite the cold and the long journey ahead. "We are about at it, so throw your belongings on the wagon and lets away to the land o' the Kdyzj." With this, Stansley turns and goes back outside.

Outside, Stansley and Klamart help Meister Rothenheimer and Evanna onto the lead wagon. The drovers, Milter, Arkus and Frieland are gathered in the square stomping away the cold and joking loudly with one another. The steers stretch in their harnesses, anxious to be on the road. Ahead, the gates of Frisia stand open beneath a churlish sky and the muddy track known as the Unterbasser beckons travelers and merchants alike.

There are two wagons in the caravan. The drivers are Stansley and Klamart. The drovers, Milter, Arkus and Frieland, provide the help. The lead wagon carries barrels of salted carp and the famous mead, Gaddners, as well as the Meister and Evanna's belongings. The other wagon carries several large burlap bags of pepper (16gp), numerous crates of bronze ingots (30gp), a large ceramic vase filled with vellum (8gp), a chest with a bolt of purple cloth (100gp), and a chest with purple glass jars (10gp).

The Unterbasser is well traveled during the summer months, but as winter closes in, fewer and fewer caravans enter The Drazkleed. Winter weather in the region is harsh and unpredictable often bringing sleet mixed with wet snow that piles deep on the gloomy forest floors making travel increasingly difficult. Stansley's winter route usually takes him from Halpveg to Mejketek, back to The Vakhund, thence along the Treklant to Jugensborg, on to Firstenfeld, and finally back to Halpveg.

Concerning the plots and machinations of Meister Rothenheimer and his daughter Evanna.

Evanna is the somewhat naive daughter of Herbert Rothenheimer. She is a young, blonde haired, women of obvious refinement and fine dress. She is well educated, well mannered and very well aware of what is expected of a wealthy merchant's daughter. If addressed, she makes pleasant conversation in a soft voice that reveals her high level of education. She never complains nor inquires as to other activities or intents and tries to keep all conversation simple and neutral in tone.

Evanna loves and respects her father and is accustomed to looking to him for guidance and care and rarely questions his opinions and actions. However, if left unattended by her father and prompted, she wonders aloud where her father is going and why they left Bergholt in such "unusual circumstances." Evanna is at an impressionable stage in her life and is easily influenced by anyone that takes her into his or her confidence. She speaks Inzaen, Leucrotian, Orillian and Todavian fluently.

EVANNA (She is a lawful neutral commoner whose vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 3 and AC 10. Her primary attributes are intelligence, wisdom and charisma. Her significant attributes are: dex 16, con 15, int 16 and cha 18. She wears expensive clothing and jewelry worth 280gp.)

Meister Herbert Rothenheimer is the nephew of the head of the Rothenheimer family. This is an influential and powerful merchant clan and one of the lesser of the eleven families that rule Bergholt. The Meister is a gregarious person who enjoys telling tales of Bergholt's docks and its patrons. He attempts to make friends wherever he goes, and willingly drops gold coin if necessary. He jokes constantly and while his sense of humor borders on crass, it is never vulgar. He enjoys good drink and food but rarely overindulges.

The Meister is the son of Meister Jurgen Rothenheimer. Jurgen married Henrette Gabel. She, unbeknownst to Jurgen, was the last living child of the Steffens family in Esterheim. The Steffens family was, some many decades prior to now, a very powerful family within the elites of Juttaland. Their influence spread to many regions within the Juttaland and were believed to be the power behind many a corrupt monarch. Despotic, vengeful, greedy and avaricious are all adjectives that would readily suit a description of that family.

In time, many lords and others of the Juttaland grew weary of the Steffens family and their ways. So weary they were that a secret society developed to bring them down. This society is commonly known as the Geis' Tot. Called such after their calling card was placed upon anyone they killed. This calling card was a card from a deck common to the region and depicted a dying jackal. The Geis' Tot simply means the 'killing jackal.'

It just so happens that in the assassinations, murders and general slaughter that occurred to rid the Juttaland of the Steffens, one young girl was overlooked. Henrette Steffens survived by being spirited away from her house by a friendly (or mischievous) fay. He took her to Bergholt and with much gold, bought her a house, renamed her Henrette Gabel and proceeded to lay the groundwork for her ascension to power.

The plan of the fay worked well. Henrette grew up well attended, well educated and wealthy. So wealthy in fact that the Rothenheimer family decided she should be married into their clan. A marriage was arranged and Jurgen became Henrette's husband. She bore one child to Jurgen, Herbert (the fay, having done what it needed to do, promptly disappeared). Shortly afterward she died but not before revealing her true identity to Jurgen. Many years later, when Jurgen was old and Herbert a strapping youth, Jurgen told Herbert about his maternal lineage. Herbert, sensing an opportunity to make money, began to inquire about the Steffens family. As his inquiries became more specific and occurred in ever more places, it goes without saying that some ears that should not have heard, heard.

Although the purpose of the Geis' Tot had long since passed, as it happens with these organizations, it lingered and grew in power and influence – an influence it cares not to share nor have challenged. Upon hearing of the inquiries of this Meister Herbert Rothenheimer and some delicate investigation, a decision was made to find this

Meister Herbert Rothenheimer and kill him and all his children. An attempt on the life of Herbert Rothenheimer was made but failed. The Meister, sensing something more than mere thuggery, feared for his and his daughter's lives and immediately fled Bergholt, taking his daughter with him. Unknown to Rothenheimer, a Geis' Tot assassin, Markus, followed him to the hinterlands and has joined with a band of pirates (see below) who are also seeking Rothenmheimer.

You must know that Meister Rothenheimer's has many associates of a nefarious nature. One such is Ubert von Beck, a notorious pirate. Rothenheimer's escape departure from Bergholt complicated his attempts to pay a debt to Ubert von Beck. (Herbert Rothenheimer purchased stolen goods to sell in other cities). Upset with being unpaid, Von Beck sent several men (Klaus and Tindle) to find Rothenheimer and retrieve the money he was owed. If the Meister refused to pay, von Beck ordered that he be slain.

And, to further his ambitions, von Beck also commanded that Evanna be taken and returned alive to Bergholt. His intention is to marry Evanna. For, as it turns out, Von Beck has two identities. On the one hand he is Ubert von Beck the notorious pirate and on the other, the wealthy Baron Ildin Savil from the Troke. A landless noble, von Beck took to pirating for income but kept his identity hidden and trounces around Bergholt and other cities as Baron Ildin Savil. His marriage to Evanna will allow him to enter into the local mercantile classes and become an accepted member of the community.

MEISTER ROTHENHEIMER (He is a lawful neutral commoner whose vital stats are: HD 1d8, HP 5 and AC 10. His primary attributes are intelligence, wisdom and charisma. His significant attributes are: con 7, int 16 and cha 13. He has expensive clothing and a stout walking cane that he can wield for 1d4 points of damage. He has 120gp worth of jewelry and coin on him as well as his signet ring – described below.)

The Meister's trunk is large and ornately carved, bound with brass straps and locked with a large padlock (the key to which is in the Meister's purse). The trunk contains several pairs of pants, a fine heavy cloak worth 150gp in coin, a few hats, several dozen sheets of vellum, an ink well with several quills, a pair of gloves, a large belt and one pair of boots. There is a false bottom that contains two letters of debt from merchants in Firstenfeld and a note guaranteeing a loan of 1,000gp from a Baron Savil.

Evanna's trunk is similar to her fathers. She has the key in her purse. It contains dresses and clothing as well as one book, "The Geometries of Inzae, the Angles of the Heavenly Objects as Determined by Melequintus, Servitor of Narsitibus".

Stansley is the caravan's manager and lead driver. He owns both wagons and is very careful with them. He has been trading in this area for many years and has friends in every town along his routes. Stansley is old, but strong and thickly muscled from years of hard labor. He speaks goblin fluently, but only resorts to its use when absolutely necessary. He has a short sword in the wagon.

STANSLEY (A neutral commoner whose vital stats are: HD 1d8, HP 6 and AC 11. His primary attributes are physical. His significant attribute is: str 16. He carries leather armor, shield and 200gp worth of coin and jewelry in pouches around his waist.)

The driver of the second wagon is Klamart. He is an unusually quiet person and speaks only if spoken to. He then tends to talk incessantly until distracted by a job to which he must turn his mind and hands. He is also a petty thief. If it so happens, he will pilfer small items left unattended. Stansley only recently hired Klamart and has yet to develop an opinion of him.

KLAMART (*He is chaotic neutral and his vital stats are: HD 1d4, HP 3, AC 10. His primary attributes are mental. He carries clothing and 1-2gp in coin.*)

Milter, Arkus and Frieland are the drovers. They are friendly but know they are low in the pecking order and act accordingly. At night Frieland tells good stories, Arkus laughs a lot while Milter curses an inordinate amount.

DROVERS x3 (*The drover's vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 3 each and AC 10. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry clothing, food and 1-2gp in coin.*)

MUDGY ROADS

And so begins the characters trip to The Vakhund. It takes three days to get there from Frisia if nothing unusual occurs along the way. Other than a chance encounter with wandering monsters, the trip is uneventful. The referee should encourage roleplay to create an affinity between the players and members of the caravan. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to instill a sense of drudgery in the days that pass as well. This is simply the calm before the storm and the players should be restless by the time the action begins.

The Unterbasser meanders south beneath the majestic green firs of the Graffenvold. The days pass with moody skies alternating between rumbling dark clouds and cold drizzles to bright winter afternoons filled with warm breezes coming off the marshes of the Dampfrat. Stansley and Klamart drive their wagons hard and the oxen pull with might along the track. Yet, despite their efforts, the wagons occasionally become mired in the slick mud requiring the efforts of all to push and pull them free.

The wagons become stuck a few times each day. Each time, the drivers ask for the characters help, though they pointedly do not ask help of the Meister and Evanna. Each evening, the steers are unhitched and tethered, and a large fire built. The drovers do most of the cooking and offer to cook for the characters if they supply their own food. The drivers and drovers make themselves comfortable wherever they can, sleeping as close to the fire as possible. Evanna sleeps near her father, underneath a tarp attached to a wagon. On the second evening the Meister cheerfully offers to purchase a barrel of beer from Stansley. He shares it with everyone in an effort to make friends with his traveling companions. Storytelling by both the Meister and Frieland is a constant around the fire.

WANDERING MONSTERS

There is a chance for encountering wandering monsters while on the trip to The Vakhund. In general, if the players' stay with the caravan, nothing occurs as the monsters simply go away.

However, there are a few that may prove problematic and, should a lone character stray from the caravan at the right moment, an encounter can be deadly.

There is a 2 in 10 chance for encountering monsters. This should be checked once during the day and twice at night. Some encounters can occur only while the caravan is moving, during the day or at night. These are noted and if they occur when the caravan is still, simply roll again. Also, no encounter can occur more than once so simply roll again should this happen.

1 HUNGRY WOLF: This wolf attacks any small sized character that appears vulnerable. Otherwise, it will run away once spotted.

WOLF (*This creature's vital stats are: HD 2d8, HP 14 and AC 13. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks by biting for 1d6 points of damage.*)

2 MORTZVA THE GOBLIN: This encounter can only occur north of the Treklant Creek. This is a goblin spy who works for Ubert von Beck. He has followed the caravan from Halpveg. At the moment he is encountered, Mortzva has decided to race ahead to Jzunad and inform his companions of the caravan's location and what he believes to be its likely destination – as if there were any question. If encountered and captured, he reveals little and lies as much as possible to conceal his true identity. The only item of value on him is a necklace with a pendant hanging from it. The pendant is a tiny platinum inverted dagger and is worth 30gp. By showing it to the Apothecary in Isenborg one can gain access to one of Ubert von Beck's safe hold's.

MORTZVA, GOBLIN (*He is a chaotic evil creature whose vital stats are: HD 2d4, HP 7 and AC 13. His prime attributes are physical. He carries leather armor, shield, small bow, dagger, shortsword and 5gp. He can hide and move silent like a 2nd level rogue.*)

3 OWLS: The owls are active only at night. The hooting of these owls is strange and other worldly. Any character not familiar with the local wildlife must make a wisdom check or mistake the sound for the groaning and screaming of humans. Searching for the 'humans' will, of course, reveal nothing. Stansley and the other locals know that it is an owl. This encounter can be used to heighten tension in the party. Allow for some question to arise as to whether or not the locals are telling the truth or bending it to avoid trouble. Though the characters do not see any of the owls, they are called Yanule and are commonly known as the sign of death.

4 COYOTES: Coyotes are generally only active at night. A large pack of coyotes gathers around the camp hoping to find easy prey. Initially, one howls, calling others to the campsite. Within a few minutes, nearly 15 coyotes show up yipping and howling. Though they will linger for a while, any aggressive action scares them off. They only attack lone individuals who wander outside the camp or away from the others.

COYOTES x15 (*These neutral creatures vital stats are: HD 2d4, HP variable and AC 12. Their prime attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d6 damage. They have scent and move silent abilities.*)

5 MELEDONT: These cats are active day and night. These are massive saber-toothed tigers with mottled black and gray hides. This immature male meledont has decided to make a meal of one of the people in the caravan if possible. The meledont stalks the caravan and attacks any average sized or small humanoid that is alone or far removed from anyone else. Larger and/or numerous foes are attacked only if the meledont is pressed and guarding a kill or very frightened and cornered. Should the characters (even an individual) act aggressively towards the meledont before it attacks, it must make a successful charisma check or run away. The check is penalized by the number of foes it faces and the highest hit dice or level of any one individual in the party.

MELEDONT (This neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 4d10, HP 28, AC 14 and MV 50ft. Its primary attributes are physical. A meledont attacks with two claws for 1d8+8 points of damage and a bite for 3d6 points of damage. These creatures are able to grab and rake an opponent for double damage once they score a successful hit with both claws.)

6 DEER AND HURIN: These are active day and night. A small herd of deer moves through the area. On a successful wisdom check at (CL 5) any character that successfully moves silently up to the deer notices a "man" walking with the herd. A successful intelligence check reveals the true nature of the "man." It is half elk and half man, a hurin. Any movement or noise sends them scattering. The hurin speaks no known tongue and cares not for man or their ilk and makes its way as quickly as possible into the depths of the wood.

HURIN x1 (This neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 3d10, HP 21 and AC 14. Its primary attributes are physical. It carries a short bow with 20 arrows and a club.)

7 WORG: Worgs are active day and night. This lone worg seeks easy prey. It follows the group for some time until a straggler or someone becomes an easy target. If espied prior to an attack and beaten off, everyone seeing the animal that makes an intelligence check notices that the "wolf" had a bit and harness still in its mouth. This worg was once ridden by a Zjerd warrior.

WORG (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 4d8, HP 25 and AC 14. The worg's primary attributes are physical.)

8 CORPSE OF A WOODSMAN: This encounter can occur only north of the Treklant Creek. This is the body of a recently killed woodsman. The wounds are punctures, but are obviously not from animals. A large chopping axe and a small knapsack with some crusts of bread and dried meat in it lie nearby. He is from a town near the Vindig though no one knows him.

9-11 DEER: These are common woodland deer encountered day or night. They run if disturbed.

12 BEAR: This encounter can occur at any time. A small black bear is encountered. The only way to get near it is by surprise and stealth. Unless cornered, the bear runs away as soon as it is aware there are people nearby. If tracked, killed and skinned, its hide brings 5sp in Frisia and 1gp in Halpveg.

BEAR (This neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 3d8, HP 19 and AC 13. Its primary attributes are physical.)

13-19 ELK: These are common woodland elk. They run if disturbed.

20 GOBLINS: There are 6-13 goblins on a raid. These are Zjerd goblins from the Dampfrat. They enter into battle naked excepting some feathers tied to their hairy heads and gold earrings or nose plugs. They all carry a lot of arrows and try to use them to great effect before entering into combat.

GOBLINS x6-13 (These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 10. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, short bows, small round shields and 1-2gp worth of jewelry.)

A SHORT RESPITE BEFORE A PERILOUS JOURNEY

The Vakhund rests ponderously in a very lonely, wide pasture. It is a squat tower constructed half of stone and half of wood, no taller than the great fir trees hemming in the glade. Nearby, an aged but sturdy bridge crosses the Treklant Creek. All about, the land is trampled and muddy from the recent rains. Stumps of trees and the refuse from hundreds of merchant camps clutter the pasture. Fire rings, piles of chopped and half burnt wood, tethering posts, broken and busted barrels and boxes, shreds of cloth and other debris mark where the Unterbasser begins its treacherous journey into the Drakkleed.

The tower is the only structure in the vicinity. The ground level walls, constructed of stone, bear no windows. A thick wooden door set in the center of the east wall and bound with iron straps provides the only entrance. The upper level is faced with stout wood and has an arrow slot cut in each wall. An overhanging wooden battlement tops the tower where a guard stands solidly beneath the unfurled black and green banner of Halpveg.

A sign between the tower and bridge lists the costs to those wishing to travel across the Treklant Creek.

BY ORDER OF THE MEISTER PREMIGER OF HALPVEG

Man on foot	— 1 copper
Man with load	— 2 copper
Cart pulled by man	— 2 silver
Cart by animal	— 6 gold
Wagon	— 10 silver

About 50 feet to the east of the tower is a large tree with a bench and table beneath it. When not in the tower or attending other business, this is usually where everyone spends their time. There are five militiamen stationed at The Vakhund, including the leader, Kaptane Steigler. They remain at the tower at all times except when hunting or when accompanying merchants to Mejketek.

Kaptane Steigler is the haggard militia leader at Vakhund. Though old and graying, Steigler is a striking and powerfully built warrior. After serving for many years with the armies of the east, Steigler finds his current assignment on this desolate border

post boring. As a result, he has resorted to excessive drink to pass the time. He welcomes everyone to The Vakhund in a stern way and is unyielding on the taxes (see below). If slighted, insulted or his authority challenged, Steigler lashes out violently and is not unwilling to put anyone in irons for a few days.

STEIGLER (*He is a neutral, 4th level fighter whose vital stats are: HP 28 and AC 17. His primary attributes are strength, wisdom and dexterity. His significant attributes are: str 15 and con 14. He carries a longsword, full chain suit, large steel shield, broadsword and a pouch with 12gp.*)

Gottfried von Frisia is a young militiaman who is very excited about his first posting at Vakhund. Poorly educated, Gottfried's speech is simple but colorful. He is a loyal friend to Karl.

GOTTFRIED (*He is a neutral good, 1st level fighter whose vital stats are: HP 4 and AC 13. His primary attributes are strength, dexterity and charisma. He carries a small battle-axe, leather armor, shield, knife and short sword.*)

MILITIAMEN x2 (*These are neutral good militiamen whose vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 3 and AC 13. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry leather armor, shields, light crossbows and broadswords.*)

Karl is another militiaman from Frisia assigned to the Vakhund. Karl is the youngest son of Kaptane Friger and is very aware of the duties required by his position. He is friendly and of honorable bearing though somewhat aloof. His loyalty to Gottfried is matched only by his loyalty to his family. In combat he is steadfast. Only under the greatest of duress will he or Gottfried leave the protection of the tower. Karl will tell his father (should he survive) of the deeds of the characters – whether good or bad. This can gain Kaptane Friger's undying gratitude or enmity depending on how they act.

KARL (*He is a neutral good, human, 1st level fighter whose vital stats are: HP 6 and AC 12. His primary attributes are strength, intelligence and constitution. He carries a scimitar, leather armor, a large iron shield and small metal helm.*)

Dominating the ground floor of the tower is a large fire ring. It sits in the center of the earthen floor. An open staircase runs up the north wall to the first floor. Neatly stacked in the room are 2 barrels of fresh water, 3 large burlap sacks filled with flour, a crate of dried meat, a large burlap sack of grain and another full of beans, several tin pans, some wooden spoons, a pile of fire wood, two chopping axes, a pile of kindling, a tinder box, a lantern, 12 torches, a small barrel of oil (equivalent of 12 flasks), and a pile of ten wool blankets. The door can be barred with a stout crossbeam. The door can take 50 points of damage before being shattered.

Vakhund's first floor is constructed of wooden planks. There is a narrow arrow slit in each wall. The slit in the east wall is placed directly above the door on the ground floor. Inside, along the edge of the northern wall, an open wooden staircase leads to a trapdoor between the first floor and the roof. On this floor there are two small barrels containing 50 crossbow bolts each, 4 light crossbows, 4 shields, 4 spears, 4 small helms, 20 torches, an iron brazier, and 4 empty barrels. The Kaptane's bed sits next to the west wall. It bears a hay mattress. Underneath the bed is the iron tax box, locked with a padlock. Inside are 13gp, 56sp and 120cp.

The roof of the tower has a low wooden battlement, 2 iron braziers and a flagpole in its center flying the banner of Halpveg. One can see as far as the tree line in every direction.

The day following their arrival, Stansley asks the characters, Meister Rothenheimer and Evanna to wait at Vakhund until he returns from his trip to Mejketek. He assures everyone he will return within the week. The two militiamen accompany the caravan to Mejketek, while Karl and Gottfried remain at the tower. This is the custom. Stansley neither asks nor does he want anyone to accompany him to Mejketek. It may upset the trading and his hosts. Kaptane Steigler backs up this request.

Three uneventful days pass after the caravan leaves. Any character straying far from the tower has a 2 in 10 chance of encountering a Wandering Monster (see TABLE 1, Unterbasser Encounter Table).

PART II: THE SWIFT AXE

Unbeknownst to the characters, two days into their trip, Stansley's caravan crossed paths with the Magdole Gang and some of Ubert von Beck's Reavers. The Magdole Gang belongs to a larger organization of bandits headquartered far to the east of The Dampfrat and have traveled this far to locate and slay the members of a band of "sheriffs" who attacked their stronghold some weeks back.

They met up with Ubert's Reavers at Jzunad (described below) and joined them because, as Gratva put it, "we being so close to human lands tis far more dangerous alone ya see." Though the Magdole Gang succeeded in killing the last of the sheriffs when attacking Stansley's caravan, Gratva agreed to help Ubert's Reavers with their attack on The Vakhund in exchange for a percentage of the loot gained there.

The bandits slew everyone in the caravan except Frieland, who escaped and is making his way back to The Vakhund, thinking he has outrun the bandits. However, late on the morning of the 4th day after the departure of Stansley's caravan, the Magdole Gang arrives at The Vakhund just prior to Frieland's.

So, the Magdole Gang, Ubert von Beck's Reavers and the assassin Markus are lurking together just south of Jzunad. Each have their reasons for attacking The Vakhund and each intends to fulfill their particular desires. Each group and its major members are described below. This is followed by the initial plan of attack. The Castle Keeper should bear in mind the various motivations, moral and personalities when playing out the attack on the Vakhund and then its aftermath.

THE MAGDOLE GANG

The Magdole Gang is little more than bandits or marauders who reside in an old keep on the eastern fringes of the Dampfrat. This group is but a small band of the Magdole Gang. It is a motley collection of races under the command of an urk warrior named Gratva. They killed the last of the 'sheriffs' with the attack on Stansley's caravan so their only real interest here is the loot to be gathered from The Vakhund. Gratva is not that intent upon the purported treasure though. He and his retinue would really rather

just head back to their keep but being so close to what may be an easy haul is too tempting to pass up. Ultimately, Gratva is not willing to sacrifice too much on this attack and the two human bandits traveling with him care even less about the treasure.

GRATVA, URK (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are: HD 5d8, HP 25 and AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. He carries a chainmail shirt, large wooden shield, small metal helm w/nose guard, expertly made heavy mace conferring +1 to hit, heavy crossbow, 12 bolts, dagger, pouch holding 30pp, and a jeweled necklace worth 200gp.*)

There are six urk warriors that are itching for some combat. They have very high moral and will fight ferociously and attack with near reckless abandon caring nothing for their lives.

URK x6 (*These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d10, HP 8, AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with scimitar and carry leather armor, a small wooden shield and 1d8gp in jewelry or coin.*)

The zjerd are primarily used for missile support. These goblins are miffed about this "excursion" and flee if they have a chance.

ZJERD x5 (*These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 3 and AC 11. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry small round shields, short swords and short bows.*)

Two human bandits travel with Gratva. These two are thoroughly evil sorts who are wanted south of the Treklant Creek. They have been traveling with the Magdole gang for some time. They will fight, but they have little loyalty to Gratva and great loyalty to themselves.

BANDITS x2 (*These are neutral evil, 1st level fighters. Their vital stats are: HP 6 each and AC 13. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. They carry leather armor and shield, longswords and knives. One of them has a short bow with 14 arrows. They have heavy, woolen cloaks and 1d10sp apiece.*)

There are 5 urk zealots from Jzunad here as well. They accompanied the bandits (for their master the urk priest) to gather corpses and to fight. They do not fear death and fight accordingly. A spell cast on the urks, the protection of Kleedj, bestows upon them a high armor class but reduces their movement. The spell causes the skin to turn hard and become ochre colored. (See 'The Protection of Kleejd' and the urk priest for details.)

URK ZEALOTS x5 (*These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d10, HP 8 and AC 18. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry scimitars and axes. They are under the spell Protection of Kleedj.*)

UBERT VON BECK'S REAVERS

Klaus, von Beck's right hand man in Bergholt, leads several of Ubert von Beck's pirates on this venture. Klaus and his friend Tindle are both familiar, though uncomfortable, with this area as von Beck occasionally works with the Magdole Gang on raids near the coast or trades with them. So, Klaus and Tindle pick up a few thugs in Bergholt and meet up with some of von Beck's privateers and headed to this region after receiving word Rothenheimer was in Halveg and heading south. Having propitiously encountered some of the Magdole Gang at Jzunad,

Klaus promised them a large portion of the loot if they helped him attack The Vakhund. Klaus did not tell Gratva that he is really after Herbert Rothenheimer and his daughter.

Klaus is here to kill Herbert Rothenheimer or get his payment and kidnap Evanna. Nothing else concerns him. As soon as this is accomplished, he is ready to leave. To slake Gratva, he stays throughout the day of the attack and helps where he can but under no circumstance will he or Tindle place themselves in harms way.

Klaus is a tall and thin man with wisps of hair on his head and chin. He is acne scarred, beady eyed, and thin lipped. His clothing is simple, fairly dirty and unkempt but quite functional. He speaks with a lisp and gesticulates wildly when excited. Klaus is motivated by little other than Ubert von Beck's desires. He is wily and quite unwilling to lay his life down for anything, obsequious when necessary, and blustering when useful. Klaus carries a longbow and spiked chain into battle. In combat, he uses the spiked chain to disarm or trip an opponent while Tindle moves in for the kill.

KLAUS (*He is a chaotic neutral, 5th level rogue whose vital stats are: HP 15 and AC 14. His primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence and constitution. His significant attributes are: str 15, dex 15 and int 13. He carries a +2 short sword, a spiked chain that deals 1d4 points of damage and can be used to trip opponents at the same time, an expertly made suit leather armor that confers a +1 to armor class, longbow, 12 arrows, thieves tools, and 100gp in coin and jewelry.*)

Tindle is a fairly handsome man with stubble covering his face. His eyes are a piercing blue and his voice firm and powerful. Tindle walks "tall" and carries himself pompously, glowering at most that bother to talk to him. He is fairly loyal to Klaus, having traveled with him for nearly five years. Tindle carries a battle axe or a longsword with a shield into combat. As a combat tactic, he tries to knock opponents prone with his shield and deal with them one at a time or attack those Klaus has tripped.

TINDEL (*He is a chaotic neutral, human, 5th level rogue whose vital stats are: HP 30, AC 17. His primary attributes are strength, dexterity, and wisdom. His significant attributes are: str 16, dex 15, wis 13 and con 15. He carries a longsword, a suit of expertly made scalemail conferring an extra +1 to armor class, an expertly made spiked large metal shield which he uses to bash opponents with and which causes a 1-2 points of damage when it hits, a battle axe, thieves tools, platinum armlet worth 25gp, 2 nice rings worth 10gp and 15gp, a belt with silver emblazoning on it worth 30gp, and 50gp in various coin.*)

Krees is a human bandit working for Klaus. Krees is a difficult person to like. His asinine and pointlessly insulting comments invite hatred and anger. His immediate intention is to leave the Dampfrat and make his way to a bandit stronghold near Frisia.

KREES (*He is a chaotic neutral, 1st level fighter whose vital stats are: HP 4 and AC 15. His primary attributes are dexterity, wisdom and constitution. His significant attribute is: dex 17. He carries a short sword, longbow, studded leather armor, traveler's clothes and a pouch holding 10gp in coin.*)

Nurjd is a veteran orc warrior, loyal and stalwart servant to Ubert von Beck and relentless enemy in combat when bent on revenge.

He is a quick thinker who has survived many years as a pirate on the Interzae due to his uncanny ability to estimate his enemies' will in combat.

NURJD (*This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 3d8, HP 16 and AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It carries splint mail, a large, iron shield with painted markings on it that cause opponents a -1 to hit on a failed wisdom check, a spear, scimitar and 35gp worth of jewelry and coin.*)

There are three humans in the band who were hired by Klaus in Bergholt. They are uncomfortable working with the orcs and goblins and presently feel that this job presents more risk than they are willing to undertake. One, Markus, is a spy for the Geis'tot and does not risk himself. He is going to try and kill Evanna as soon as he can and attempt to make an escape.

MARKUS (*He is a chaotic evil, 3rd level assassin whose vital stats are: HP 14 and AC 13. His prime attributes are dexterity, intelligence and constitution. His significant attributes are: dex 14. He carries leather armor, a short sword and dagger.*)

BANDITS x2 (*These are neutral evil, 1st level fighters. Their vital stats are: HP 6 each and AC 13. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. They carry leather armor and shield, longswords and knives. They have heavy, woolen cloaks and 1d6sp apiece.*)

There are five orcs here. They are pirates from von Beck's flagship, are very loyal to von Beck and generally carry out his orders but are ready to return to the open seas as the land is not their friend.

ORCS x5 (*These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d8, HP 5 and AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry scimitars or axes, polearms, leather armor, small wooden shields and 1d4gp in coin and jewelry.*)

THE PLAN

Everyone has agreed to allow Gratva to be in charge of the attack on The Vakhund. Not everyone intends to adhere to Gratva's plan. Nevertheless, he plans to attack the tower from the east, the west and the south all at once. He splits the lot under his command into three groups. The smallest group crosses the Treklant west of The Vakhund; another group, lead by Klaus, crosses the Treklant east of the tower and attacks; and the largest group remains in the tree line south of the Treklant and awaits the other two groups appearance before attacking. The idea is that Gratva, who is near the bridge, is to draw the defenders out of the tower and the others move into attack when everyone is out of the tower. He will blow a horn when this attack should commence. That, off course, is the plan. Yet, as everyone knows, the fog of battle causes many disruptions.

Gratva intends to use a survivor from the attack on the caravan to draw the defenders out of the tower. Frieland escaped the attack. No one gave chase initially, thinking to have sport with him later. Gratva realized that the escapee could be used in a ruse to draw out Vakhund's defenders. By racing ahead of the escaping Frieland and positioning his troops correctly, Gratva could shoot Frieland as he approached the tower and leave him wounded and on the ground. When the defenders come to rescue him, the attack would commence.

The group attacking from the west stumbles across Steigler, who is drunk to the point of passing out. Steigler puts up a fight but is killed. This delays the group's movement somewhat, but they continue going forward towards the tower. Whenever the fight begins, they come in 2-8 rounds later.

After crossing the Treklant, Klaus's group propitiously finds the Meister and Evanna on their walk. A scuffle ensues that leaves Rothenheimer mortally wounded and Evanna prisoner. Klaus and the others then move back across the Treklant and do not join in the initial attack on The Vakhund, much to Gratva's dismay.

Gratva and his men remain in the treeline until Frieland runs out of the woods toward the tower. Gratva then orders the goblins to shoot Frieland before he reaches the bridge in the hope that the wounded person draws out the tower's defenders. If the characters opt to rescue Frieland, as soon as they reach him, Gratva's troops attack. If no rescue attempt is made, Gratva waits until the band from the west is in sight. He slays Frieland along the way as an after thought.

It is best that the Castle Keeper determine the composition of each attacking group bearing in mind the player character's capabilities and the following factors: Gratva leads the largest group which contains at least two goblin archers, Klaus leads the group which crosses the Treklant east of the tower and his unit should contain Markus, while the group crossing west of the tower should contain several zealots. However, the following is a suggested composition.

There are three groups. One group is moving to the east, one in the center and one to the west. The eastern group should contain Klaus, Tindle, Markus and three orcs. The central group should contain Gratva, Krees, three urks, 2 zealots, 5 zjerd and two bandits. The western group should contain Nurdj, two orcs, three zealots and three urks.

A MORNING AT THE VAKHUND

When the attack begins, Meister Rothenheimer and Evanna are on a walk east of the tower, and Kaptane Steigler is fishing on the Treklant about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of the tower. Only Karl, Gottfried and the characters remain at the tower.

To build suspense and surprise for the players, the Castle Keeper should ask the players for their daily routines and position the characters accordingly prior to the attack or use the table below to randomly place the characters. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to place the characters in such a manner as to make the initial attack challenging, though not deadly.

- 1 Roof of the tower
- 2-3 Inside the tower
- 4 Several hundred yards west of the tower
- 5 Several hundred yards east of the tower
- 6-8 At the table outside the tower
- 9 On the creek bank or at the bridge washing
- 10 In the tree line south of the tower

The attack begins in this manner....

The rains have chilled the air and the afternoon's sun is hidden behind boiling gray clouds. A brisk wind whips from the north carrying the crisp smells of the Interzae. Earlier, Kaptane Steigler meandered down the Treklant Creek, promising to bring back trout for the noonday's meal. The Meister Rothenheimer, in an ochre cape, and Evanna, brilliant in a white ermine overcoat, just disappeared behind the trees at the pasture's edge on a morning walk up the creek.

"AAHHEEEEEE! Beware! We are set upon! Heeeelllllp!?" Frieland's voice shreds the air as he races down the road across the creek, screaming desperately. His clothing is tattered and his face streams with blood.

A few heartbeats pass and arrows course through the air. From the treeline across the creek emerge several savage goblins hefting bows. They let fly deadly shafts and one pins Frieland in the back. He falls to the ground, screaming in agony.

Gratva uses several strategies in the attack on Vakhund, but is not willing to sacrifice many of his group for the purported treasure. He first attempts to draw the defenders out of the tower by staying on the south side of the bridge and pelting the tower with arrows. If this does not work, he tries threatening the defenders with torture should they not give over the treasure. He will use subterfuge and make any promises to retrieve the gold without being killed. If unsuccessful, Gratva finally resorts to a direct assault. The archers are used to pin down anyone on the roof while the remainder of the bandits attack from several directions. While Gratva is bargaining, his troops will be busy constructing makeshift ladders and a battering ram.

The attackers remain near the tower throughout the day, launching attacks as necessary. At nightfall, Gratva pulls the bandits back to the south side of the Treklant, and makes camp in the woods near the road. An argument between Klaus and Gratva over the fate of Evanna breaks out. Klaus claims he wishes to ransom her to the Rothenheimer family in Bergholt and bring the money back. Gratva wants an assurance that he will get his money and refuses to allow Klaus to take the girl. The argument ends when Markus, as instructed, makes an attempt on Evanna's life. Before Markus succeeds, Tindle slays him. After the scuffle, Gratva and Klaus agree to take the girl to Jzunad to determine her fate. They leave early on the morning following the attack.

THE CLOSING

The Meister Rothenheimer yet lives, and it is imperative that the characters find him as the remainder of the adventure hinges upon this. There are two means of accomplishing this. The first is to have him wander back to the tower, falling mortally wounded into the hands of the characters or the characters can search the woods east of the tower and find him. Each encounter is described separately, but the outcome of both will be the same.

In this encounter, the Meister returns to the tower.

Night has fallen and a deadly black pall hangs over the tower. A reddish light spills out of the thicket of trees across the creek and carries with it sounds of camp, and songs of war and death common to both goblinoids. Violent intent spills over the open spaces while a lone, hulking figure emerges from the shadows, moving toward the tower. The Meister Rothenheimer's arm raises, but no sound escapes him. He collapses outside Vakhund's door.

In this encounter, the characters find the Meister in the woods where he was attacked.

The Meister Rothenheimer lies propped up against a tree, his body broken and shattered. Blood pours from many wounds, his clothing is soaked a dark red. Words bubble out of his mouth in bloody spasms between haggard breaths, "Evanna... Evanna...."

The Meister has been shot with an arrow and will bleed to death within a day. He makes a dying request of the characters that they find his daughter. He promises that returning her safely to his family in Bergholt will earn them a great reward. Should the characters hesitate in accepting the Meister's passionate plea, he assures them that any request will be met by his family and offers them his signet ring as a sign of faith and tells them to give it to his uncle with the words 'my body, my blood, my family.'

He has nothing else of value on his person, other than his signet ring (which he has not worn but kept hidden in a false pouch in his pants). There is a letter tucked in the same pouch, which the



PETER BRADLEY 2007

characters may take from Herbert (he does not willingly give it). It reads: "R. Our failed communication of late has left me little choice, either return to me what is mine or I shall have my Klaus settle the account permanently. V. Beck."

The V. Beck will need no explanation as everyone in this region knows of this famed pirate. If pressed about what is owed to V. Beck, Rothenheimer says that 'tis only gold, that greedy man could not wait but one settling moon for it.'

Meister Rothenheimer's signet ring is one of only seven family rings. It is worth 1000gp. Selling it in Bergholt could be problematic as it will bring attention to the characters and some might wonder where they procured such an item. Crimes committed against citizens of Bergholt are prosecuted quickly and violently. Justice in Bergholt is unrelenting, unfair and deadly. Returning the signet ring to the Rothenheimer family will garner the characters the beneficence of the family. Selling the ring in Halpveg will at best bring 50% of its value. Selling the ring in Firstenfeld or further afield will bring its full value, if not more.

PART III: THE CHASE

Should the characters decide to rescue Evanna, take revenge on the attackers, or discover what happened to Stansley, they must follow the bandits across the Treklant Creek down the Unterbasser and into the Sothron Vold. The trail leads them to the site of the attack on the caravan and thence to Jzunad, a holy place for many goblins and their kin. The bandits have made no effort to conceal themselves or their movements so they should be easy to track. The Wandering Monster Chart should be checked twice per day with a 2 in 10 chance of an encounter each time. Again, there is no duplication of encounters and Mortzva should be excluded. It is 30 miles from the Vakhund to the site where the caravan was attacked and 60 miles from there to Jzunad.

The Unterbasser stretches into the dreary south. Its muddy trails and byways are traveled by few other than merchants, goblins, and those of ill intent. There is no law here to protect the honest, so it is with much haste that wise travelers make their way between The Vakhund and Mejketek.

The surviving bandits move with great haste south along the Unterbasser and then break off east to Jzunad at that point where the caravan was attacked. It is unlikely the characters would be able to catch them since they are moving so fast. The place where the caravan was attacked and the one encounter between the caravan site and Jzunad are described below. Mejketek is also described as the characters may make their way to this goblin trading post should they not locate the trail leading to Jzunad.

The Campsite: This is the site where the bandits camped after attacking the tower. It is on the south side of the river, just inside the tree line and near the road. There are two stakes in the road, just up the road, with heads on them.

As you cross the bridge where the Unterbasser disappears beneath the dark bows of the Graffenvold, a grizzly reminder of the previous day's battle sits in the middle of the road. Two heads placed atop small poles rest awkwardly in the middle of the road. Kaptane Steigler's eyes stare blankly at the tower and an unfamiliar dwarf's head mimics his gaze. Beyond are the dying embers of a large fire, and the discarded scraps of a night's meal.

The encampment provides little valuable information. Several yards beyond the smoldering fire, in a pile of brush, lies the body of Markus. Markus has no valuables, but a tattoo of two quarter-moons facing each other can be found on his back. Several pieces of Evanna's cloak can be located. The Kaptane's body can be found down the creek about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. The dwarf's head belongs to one of the "sheriffs" Gratva was after. His body can be found with the caravan wreckage. The dwarf is goblin slayer. There are a series of small dots on his forehead. These are indication of the number of goblins he has slain. Each dot representing one dozen goblins. He has 7 dots. The bandits left obvious tracks on the road leading south.

THE DEAD AND WASTED FOOD: Two days travel further south the Unterbasser brings the characters to where Stansley's caravan was destroyed by the bandits.

Rounding a bend in the road, you are greeted by a long stretch of the Unterbasser hemmed in tightly by massive green firs dusted with snow. Down the road are the burnt husks of two wagons. Peaceful and still, the charred remains are the sole marker of those you traveled with merely a week earlier. The crates, boxes, sacks, and barrels are spilled, broken and scattered up and down the road, and the steers, tack and harnesses are gone.

Several days before, Klaus and Tindle were disappointed to discover that Meister Rothenheimer and Evanna were not with the caravan and decided that they must be at the tower, hence the attack on The Vakhund. A search of the area reveals few useful items as the bandits have thoroughly ransacked the caravan for anything of value. Conspicuously, only one corpse can be located. That is the headless corpse of a dwarf. It is the body belonging to the head at the campsite. The dwarf, a goblin slayer, had come upon the caravan and decided to travel with it for safety. Searching him reveals nothing other than a body scarred from many years of horrible fight. Again, the tracks are easily followed. They lead east into the woods towards the Dampfrat.

UBERT VON BECK'S REAVERS: Should the characters try to back track the bandits who attacked The Vakhund, they must leave the Unterbasser and travel through the woods along an animal trail. The gang is easy to track for a ranger, as they are not making any effort to hide their passing. All tracking checks are conducted with a +3 modifier. If it happens to be raining or snowing that day, the checks are at +6.

After leaving the Unterbasser and a little over midway to Jzunad, the players encounter three orc reavers, Nurjd and Krees, traveling along the same trail but heading back to the

Unterbasser (for stats see previous section). This group split from the others after reaching Jzunad and is heading back to the Unterbasser and thence down the Treklant Creek to the Interzae. Their intention is to bring word of their actions to Uber von Beck. If possible, these are survivors from the attack on The Vakhund. If Krees has already been killed, the human is Jeester Strumbert.

None of these are attentive to their surroundings because they are in an argument and are easily surprised (+2 on surprise checks). Characters capable of speaking orc discern that the three orcs are arguing about the quickest route back down the Treklant to the Interzae. An observant character notes the lead orc has a limp, and the human has a bloody bandage dangling out from under his hat.

The Dampfrat is a dark and silent place. The massive green bows of the firs smother most noise and cast dark shadows even in the brightest of afternoons. A light snow filters from the sky, whipped by a spiteful wind that, for once, brings more than chill and bitter cold. The wind carries a noise, the muffled grumbling of voices not far in the distance.

From around the trees stomp three fierce orcs hefting long, thin curving blades and hauling small packs upon their backs. Their dress is unusual outside the bays and ports of the Interzae as they wear padded armors of bright colors and hats of colorful hue. With them is a lone human, attired in a similar fashion but with a great hooked polearm in tow and behind the lot is a very tall orc growling at the others and carrying a spear in one hand and shield in the other. The orcs are barking at each other in their angry tongue while the human limps quietly behind.

If confronted by obviously superior foes, the Reavers offer no resistance and ask for mercy and even offer their monies for safe passage. If interrogated, they may impart valuable information to the party. Bare in mind, these are life-long pirates. They have been interrogated in the past and have interrogated foes. They can instinctively sense danger and give the players false and misleading information to escape unharmed. If pressed or attacked they fight as is necessary, but flee at the first possible moment.

The leader, Nurjd, only divulges what is necessary to ensure his survival. The human, Krees, is quite willing to talk about what he believes to be Evanna's current location. Other than that, Krees knows little, as he is a newcomer to the group. The others divulge information as the Castle Keeper deems necessary to propel the game forward.

All of the Reavers know that "the blonde human woman" is being held at Jzunad. No one knows exactly where. Nurjd does not guess, but one of the orcs claims she is at the bar. Krees thinks she has to be taken deep into the Dampfrat to a stronghold named Magdole. They all claim to be working for Uber von Beck, hoping the name will cause fear in the players and therefore save their lives (Uber von Beck is a well known pirate). They say they were sent here to get money from Rothenheimer but they have no idea why the girl was taken prisoner. They impart that Jzunad

is a temple complex erected to the god Kleejd. They tell the players of Klaus and Tindle, their leaders.

Krees, tired of the company of orcs, gladly joins the party if given the opportunity and disavows his loyalty to von Beck, offering to turn over his weapons and change his ways if offered a chance. He will not, however, go back to Jzunad. "A death sentence, ya see!" If allowed to travel with the party, he escapes at the first possible moment seeking to join another group of bandits that reside near Frisia. For Nurjd and Krees' stats see Uber von Beck's Reavers above.

MEJKETEK

Deep in the wilderlands beyond the Treklant Creek lies the famed goblin trading post Mejketek. This is the northernmost outpost of the Kdyzj. These are goblins of the Kingdoms of the Sothron Vold and hale rule over the lands they name Drakkleed. Merchants from the far ends of the Interzae come here and trade in all manner of goods, the most prized of which and for which the Kdyzj are famous are the small mechanical contraptions used for keeping time.

Mejketek is 60 miles south of Vakhund and about 2 days walk from where the caravan was attacked. Movement is slowed due to the sodden track and slick viscous mud. Use the Random Encounter Chart. Again, there is no duplication of encounters and Mortzva should be excluded.

As you top a rise in the road, a valley expands before you. It is broad and shallow with the Unterbasser twisting down its sodden middle. The valley is bare, except for one structure, and hemmed in by dark green firs on all sides. In the center of the marshy expanse is an almost round building with a conical roof. Smoke lazily billows out of its center and floats off into the skyline. Muddy tracks cover it all around and piles of debris are scattered hither and yon. Atop the roof is a small banner with the two curved blades, in black, crossed over and on a white background. There is a small woodshed attached to the rear of the building. In front of the building are three green skinned goblins dressed in thick furs and hefting long spears.

Mejketek is a trading and guard post used by the Kdyzj. No one is allowed further south of Mejketek without the goblins permission or a fight. The goblins here are guarded but not entirely unfriendly. Much trade takes place between these goblins and the humans to the north. They receive grains, beers, metal, worked items and other material they consider valuable. In exchange, they sell clocks, gems, iron ingots and other material besides.

The goblins here are a mixture of warriors, merchants and servants. Each one has their own place within the hierarchy of Mejketek, but overall leadership belongs to an old grizzled goblin name Cherktrag. He is keenly intelligent, capable of speaking Inzaen and his own tongue, enjoys barter and can 'read' a human face like an open book. The remainder are discussed below as warrants.

The characters, should they come in peace and make it obvious they are doing so, will be cautiously welcomed. In time, if the characters gain the goblins trust, they will be invited into the Hall for the near nightly gatherings. If not, the characters must stay outside while under the obtrusive watch of several of the guards.

There are perhaps 30 kdyzj staying in Mejketek at the moment. This number swells significantly during the busy trading months, but this is nearly the slowest time of the year. There is one kdyzj merchant and his retinue of seven helpers here. The merchant was going to meet Stansley to purchase some goods. His wagons and other help are to arrive in about a week. Ten of the kdyzj are warriors and lead by Gzeejert. The warriors switch watches outside the building. There are three at a time and they hold watch for about 6 hours at a time. Finally, there are ten servants of Cherktrag's. These are permanent here and maintain the building, gather food and do other chores as necessary.

CHERKTRAG x1 (This chaotic neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 2d4, HP 7 and AC 12. His prime attributes are mental. He carries clothing and a thick leather jerkin that acts as leather armor, a dagger and 55gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

MERCHANT x1 (This chaotic neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 1d4, HP 2 and AC 10. His prime attributes are mental. He carries clothing, a dagger and 155gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

MERCANT'S HELPERS x7 (These chaotic neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 1d4, HP 1 and AC 10. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry clothing, tools and a dagger.)

GZEEJERT x1 (This chaotic neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 3d4, HP 10 and AC 15. His prime attributes are physical. He carries scale mail, shield, spear, small mace, a dagger and 25gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

WARRIORS x10 (These chaotic neutral creature's vital stats are: HD 2d4, HP 6 and AC 13. Their prime attributes are physical. They carry leather armor, shield, spear, small mace and a dagger.)

The inside of the structure is not subdivided, all of the goblins live, sleep, eat, cook and undertake all other activities together in this one room. It is a crowded, filthy, noisy wreck in here at all times. A huge stone lined fire pit takes up the center of the room. The floor is bare (that is, those parts which can be seen) but covered in hay, old blankets, and a mess of other things like blankets and rugs. There are long benches around the fire pit and pushed up against the walls. At the southeast end of the room is a large wooden chair draped in loose, red, silken cloth and framed by two braziers. Crates, barrels, boxes and other assorted storage devices lie akimbo about the place. A dozen kettledrums sit on the floor to the west of the fire pit.

The most amazing object in the room however, is the ceiling. It has a burnished copper interior. It appears that a massive copper cone is suspended precariously from the roof. The item stretches nearly the entire length of the chamber. It is as if one were in a teapot and looking up at the lid. The copper cone suspended from the ceiling serves to heat the room. When a fire is lit inside the heat is reflected back by the copper. There are dozens of small holes drilled into it that let some smoke escape through the roof though generally this room becomes a haze of smoke fairly quickly should a fire be lit.

Should the characters be friendly, the goblins take them in and converse with them. The Kdyzj know a lot about the region and can impart that to the characters. They are very willing to divulge the whereabouts of Jzunad and speak of the zjerd in the Dampfrat. Cherktrag will tell the characters to travel north to the Mammoth Tusk and take the trail heading east from that location. If they follow that trail, they will arrive in Jzunad in a couple days time. They tell the characters that an urk priest is now in residence at Jzunad. They are not aware of Evanna. They know of the Magdole Gang and that they are headquartered in a large fortress on the east end of the Dampfrat known as the Magershole. Any other information that the goblins reveal is up to the Castle Keeper.

The characters may be invited to the goblin's nightly feasting. This is a raucous affair in which the goblins drink copious amounts of grog, sing songs, play the drums and cook mushrooms. The characters will be invited to join in the affair. The mushrooms are hallucinogenic and incapacitate any who eat them for 2-24 hours (they work on goblins only 1-4 hours). A successful constitution check reduces the length of time by a half.

Should the characters show ill intent or be terribly disrespectful, the goblins will fight back. They will try several gambits though. The first is to feign surrender and then attack or perhaps even leave the building and come back at night or when the characters are vulnerable. They will also, if circumstances permit, feign friendship and get the characters drunk on the mushrooms and slay them while they are incapacitated.

THE MAMMOTH TUSK

If the characters take the advice of Cherktrag and travel north for one day, they will come upon a Kdyzj holy spot. A great mammoth died here many years ago and all passing Kdyzj stop to pay their condolences to the Great Mammoth, Chachkuk. There is a trail heading east and south from this spot. Traveling south takes the characters deeper into the lands of the Zjerd where they are not welcome. Heading east takes the characters to Jzunad. This trip should take a little over a day.

The Unterbasser rises and falls with the hills in the region. Upon one such rise all the trees have been cleared and the debris common to the forest floor removed. To the side of the road lie the massive skeletal remains of a mammoth. It sits there, as if keeping watch over the road and all those who pass. Its bleak bones are festooned with small colorful ribbons of silk and cloth; all the mammoth other than the tusks that is.

This is where a great mammoth fell and died. Mammoths are revered by the Kdyzj and are used as pack animals and war beasts. However, this is very rare. To maintain the good graces of the 'lord of beasts' they pay homage to their dead. The little slivers of cloth all contain prayers for bringing the Kdyzj a new mammoth to serve them.



JZUNAD

It is important that when the characters arrive at Jzunad, the Castle Keeper decide whether to end the adventure here or to continue it in the second part of the Death on the Treklant series, "Dzeebagd." If the Castle Keeper is of a mind to end the adventure at Jzunad, Evanna is located in Barrow A, Area 3. Gratva, Klaus, Tindle and the other bandits have moved on to the abandoned fortress of Dzeebagd. If the Castle Keeper has decided to continue the adventure, the characters should discover that Evanna has been taken to an old goblin stronghold deep in the Dampfrat called Dzeebagd. The adventure then continues in **PART 2, DZEEBAGD: Under Dark and Misty Ground.**

Jzunad is a holy site to the goblins and the red pylon at its center has been here for ages. The complex of buildings surrounding it, however, is of recent construction. A powerful urk priest and several religious zealots manage it. Jzunad, though a goblinoid temple, is not a closed place. Goblins, humans, giants and other nefarious agents of the Dampfrat frequent it to trade information, goods and conduct other activities peculiar to their lifestyles.

The characters arrive by a trail that leads to the temple itself. In addition to the temple, there is an encampment for the urk zealots, a bar/storehouse, and several barrows. The encounter areas are arranged in such a manner that there is no specific chronological or special order of encounters, but events in one area will almost always effect other areas of the complex.

Though by no means safe, Jzunad need not be considered unapproachable. Most of the inhabitants are accustomed to strangers coming here (including humans – though not dwarves or elves) and will not act violently unless provoked. They initially do not recognize

the players as the defenders of the tower. The majority of the Magdole Gang has already departed, though several of those who attacked The Vakhund are staying at the bar.

THE TEMPLE

The trail ends at an open glade of vibrant green grass. In the center of the glade is a large, round earthen mound, built to a man's height and covered in thick flowing grass. Thrusting out of the embankment's center is a massive red column topped by a slab of black slate like a saucer atop an upturned cup. A rough hewn, ebony stoned staircase rises up the mound's side. At the steps end are two ochre hued statues of an urk hefting broad-bladed spears.

On the far side of the glade is a small wagon set amidst a bewildering array of stakes and poles roped together. The wagon has been formed into a cage with wooden bars. Clearly discernable from this distance are three human figures and a dwarf with their arms held aloft by heavy chains.

On the opposite side of the glade, a massive octagonal shaped building rests upon beaten and churned ground. Its split-log sides and thatched roof seem hastily constructed. From a hole in the center of the roof a ghastly smoke lingers and spills liquidly into the sky.

The temple consists of a recently constructed earthen embankment in the shape of a circle, with a large red column atop it. The column has a large, oblong black disc on top of it. It is made of an otherworldly material that defies common perceptual understanding, but appears as red marble with white veins. Close examination reveals its exotic nature. The massive column is in motion. The white veins wriggle like small worms and the column grows and shrinks up to two feet within short periods of time. When touched by anyone who does not worship Kleejd, the column delivers a shock causing 1-4 points of damage. The only access to the top of the slab is through the shaman's room in Barrow B, Area 3.

There are four urk zealots who are always on duty at the temple. There are 1-4 zealot guards on the temple platform while the remainder are within the vicinity and only 1-3 rounds away. These guards wear no armor, but are under the shaman's protective spell (see *The Protection of Kleejd, below*). They carry huge spears and cleavers. Their mission is to protect the temple, and unless the temple is approached or the wagon tampered with, they ignore any travelers.

One guard carries a horn and he will sound it if an attack occurs. This brings the urk priest (see Barrow A, Area 2) and the urk zealots from their encampment. The Shaman teleports onto the black slab atop the column in 3-6 rounds (see Barrow A for the shaman's teleportation ability).

The urk zealots on guard duty at the temple are under the thrall of the urk high priest and the protection of Kleejd. They worry only about their prisoners and those approaching the temple and threatening them or their prisoners. Because of the spells, they speak only when necessary and fight to the death if challenged.

URK ZEALOTS x4 (These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d10, HP 6, AC 18. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with scimitar or axe. They carry nothing other than their weapons.)

THE PRISON WAGON

The prison wagon sits north of the temple. Its wheels, harness and tacking have been removed and is now a temporary holding cell for those destined to be sacrificed to Kleedj. Stansley, the sole survivor from the caravan, is being held here along with two other humans and one dwarf. Stansley, though injured and grieving for the loss of his friends and goods is eager to help the party and will energetically assist them whenever possible. The other two humans are Urlich and his wife, Marrianna. They traveled from the east by coach and were attacked near Jugensborg. Although they try to be helpful, between age, wounds and Urlich's resignation to death, they can manage very little. The dwarf, Nilfur, is in descent health, and as soon as he sees the characters, his spirits immediately rise. He will join the party but he knows little about Jzunad because he was brought here unconscious and has seen nothing other than his cell.

Additionally, the Castle Keeper can place any number of other persons in the wagon, to replace player characters, for plot devices, to increase the party's strength, or to enhance the game. The guards at the temple watch any characters that approach the wagon, but they do not interfere unless the characters tamper with the wagon or attempt to free the prisoners. If the guards observe the characters attempting to free the prisoners, one will sound the horn, bringing the urk priest and the remaining zealots from the encampment.

Marianna is an older woman with graying auburn hair and a face etched with the wrinkles of a hard life. She is stalwart and has accepted life's twists and turns with grim resignation. If given the chance, she fights viscously to make her escape and gladly introduces the characters to a very grateful family and community if they ever make it to Bergholt or Firstenfeld.

MARIANNA (Her vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 3 and AC 10. She has no primary attributes. She has no equipment.)

Urlich is Marianna's husband, was grievously injured and is barely capable of walking. The older man is pained and believes his life is spent. This resignation remains despite his wife's pleas. It is only overcome if escape appears certain.

ULRICH (His vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 1 and AC 10. He has no primary attributes. He has no equipment.)

Nilfur, the dwarf, was kidnapped recently as he wandered lost in the Graffenvold. He had been tracking a group of people headed into the Dampfrat for a lord in Bergholt. Though he will try his best to lie and obscure the nature of his business in the Dampfrat, the dwarf is very helpful to the party. He is an experienced traveler and warrior.

NILFUR (He is a neutral good, dwarf, 3rd level ranger whose vital stats are: HP 24 and AC 11. His primary attributes are strength and dexterity. His significant attributes are: str 14, dext 15 and con 13.)

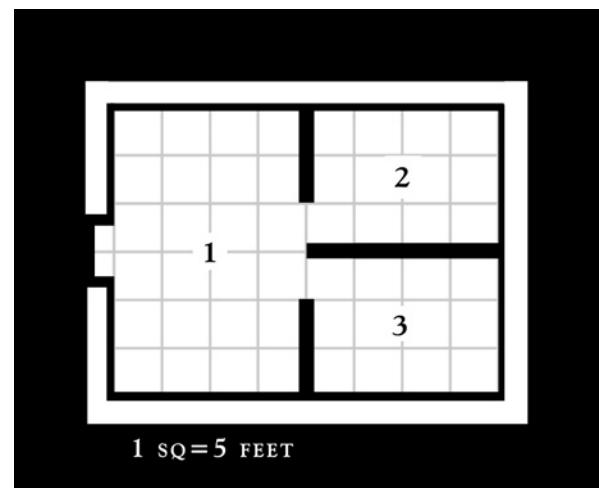
THE PREPARATION HOUSE

A split-log, octagonal structure sits in a trampled clearing near the red column and mound. It is a broad low building with a thatched roof and no windows. Its large wooden door faces the temple and another faces away. The foul stench of decay and rot pervades the air around it. The ground in the front of the complex is muddied with bits and pieces of bone and flesh scattered haphazardly while the mud bears a crimson hue.

This is the Preparation House, the area where prisoners are shredded in preparation for the urk priest's needs. The complex consists of three rooms. The overseer, Pejznog, is inside going about his ghastly work. He pays little attention to those who enter the abode, for this is not a sacred place and many make their way into its confines. He only glances occasionally at any intruders to make sure they are not interfering with his work. If disturbed, bothered, questioned or distracted from his work, however, he will go beserk and attack the party.

PEJZNOG: "The flayer of the dead and living." This great urk, huge after years of working Preparation Houses for the god Kleedj, loves inflicting pain on all those around him. Pejznog is blithely unaware of his surroundings the majority of the time as his mind is blurred by the constant use of exotic herbal teas and potions. Only when distracted from whatever business he is at, does he react. Then, his anger rises and he attempts to kill whoever pestered him. Only the urk priest has any control over the flayer.

PEJZNOG (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 4d8, HP 27, AC 14. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a massive, jagged-edged meat cleaver that does 1-8 points of damage. The weapon's edge flakes constantly and leaves slivers of metal in inflicted wounds so that on a roll of 19 or 20 it inflicts a further 1d2 points of damage. He has a leather smock, heavy pants but is otherwise unadorned.)



AREA 1

This door swings inward onto a grisly site as the horrid smell of a slaughterhouse engulfs you. A massive red stained wooden table sits heavily in the center of a large triangular room. Upon it and on the floor are piles of bone and heaps of rotting flesh. The fetid remains of innumerable creatures are piled about the room as if an orgy of butchery had occurred here. A gigantic cleaver and saw, encrusted with blood, hang on the wall to the right, while a brazier smolders to the left. At the apex of the triangle is an open space, entry into rooms that lie beyond. A rustling can easily be heard as shadows dance in the entryway.

This is the chamber in which the bodies of those used by the urk priest are prepared. Generally all the tissue is removed and the bones kept separate. From the tissue certain organs are kept separate – the heart, liver, brain, etc. The priest also uses these in rituals.

If Pejznog comes in here, he will use the cleaver as a weapon. With it he deals 1-10 points of damage.

AREA 2 Storeroom

Looking beyond the open portal into this room is a bizarre sight. There are three skeletons laid on large wooden tables. In front of the tables is a huge, pale orc, with rolls of fat like cascades of lava. It grunts and groans as it picks up a barrel of bones. Hanging on the walls about the room are all manner of ghastly instruments illuminated red by a brazier of blazing coals.

This is the flayer, Pejznog, and it is the only time the characters will catch him by surprise. For several rounds he tries to pick up the barrel. When finished, he notices the players. Although he remains busy, he keeps an eye on the characters and never turns his back to the entrance again. Other than directly pestering Pezjnog, he is not bothered unless someone enters Area 3. It is his personal room. Pezjnog is a powerful fighter though somewhat slow. His hands are powerful weapons but he uses the instruments on the wall if a fight ensues.

AREA 3 Pejznog's Bed Chamber

Beyond the opening to this room is a huge pile of hay with many tattered woolen blankets thrown upon it. A fire pit has been dug into the floor and a small fire burns within. A pot of thick steaming soup rests beside it.

A search of the bedding reveals several pouches of valuables that the flayer has filched from his victims. There is an assortment of coins totaling 100gp and jewelry valued at 200gp.

A COLD DRINK AT DZEEGLE'S

This building was formerly a stable and storehouse for those constructing the embankment, barrows and other places at Jzunad. Since construction has stopped, it has now become a bar for the urks, goblins and others that gather at Jzunad. Though no one owns the establishment, Dzeegle, an urk, currently runs it.

He has several large vats sitting outside the rear of the building in which he brews a foul tasting though stout brew.

The trail leads to a large trampled clearing in which stands an expansive, ramshackle structure. Its thatched roof, split-log and bark siding and single mud chimney rest upon each other as if each was constructed independent of the rest and were simply dumped here for convenience. In front of the building is a broad porch with a stone fire ring built in its center. Several chairs and tables are scattered upon the porch, with mugs, plates and the rubbish of a recent dinner upon them. The bitter rumbling and choked laughter of goblins echoes from within.

In the mud next to the porch lies a single urk. His fat vicious head rests upon his arms and his bloodshot eyes look skyward. Uhhhhhhhh... "deeg'thud" he says, and continues to peer upwards.

This urk is harmlessly drunk and offers little resistance if ruffed up. He can only speak urk and if the characters choose to wake him, he just blabbers on about the recently arrived mead. Those inside hear any commotion or conversation and investigate. Anyone who looks through the doorway is likewise to be spotted. Though everyone is suspicious, none of the occupants initially act with hostility. Bandits and others passing through have accustomed them to strangers.

Beyond the loose hung doors is a large room with a planked floor rotting in many places. Darts of light shoot through many cracks in the ceiling, and a blue haze of pipe smoke lingers thickly in the air. In the center of the room is a stone lined fire pit and a long thin table piled high with dried meats, mugs and other refuse of drinking and mealtime eating. Around it is gathered four hulking urks and two haggard looking humans. A tapped keg sits alone near the table of urks, slowly dripping its contents into a puddle on the floor. Sitting at a low table perilously close to the door, playing cards, are four goblins. The room silences immediately, and one of the urks stand as you enter.

As soon as the goblins realize there is no danger, they return to their game, ignoring the party. The two urks are not currently under the spell of the priest. Though drunk, they manage to fight if challenged. The two humans are part of the Magdole group, but they do not recognize the characters. The urk rising from his seat is Dzeegle, the bartender. To make sure the characters are legitimate customers, he walks toward them in a threatening manner.

Though aggressive, Dzeegle does not want to fight. He sizes up the party before serving them and asks sidelong questions to determine where they have come from and where they are going. An astute beer taster may notice that the beer is the same as that from the caravan.

The three urks playing cards pay little attention to the newcomers unless a fight breaks out. They continue gambling

and drinking. The tone of their conversation is muted and dull. However, it does concern the recent attack on the tower and, by careful listening, or joining in the conversation, it can be gleaned that a girl has been taken to Dzebagd by the Magdole Gang (or that the urk priest has taken her - depending on the ending the Castle Keeper chooses). Other information is left to the Castle Keeper's discretion, such as the names of those involved in the various activities over the past week, the argument at the tower, and false information to throw the players off the trail.

Dzeegle the urk runs the bar. He is an average sized, ugly, green skinned urk and of a decidedly evil temperament. He is unfriendly though well disposed towards gathering copper and silver. He is always open to the possibility of beneficial financial arrangements resulting from new found acquaintances and will betray his kin and acquaintances in a breath should coin present itself. He treats most patrons with a level of disrespect commonly reserved for mortal enemies.

DZEEGLE (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d8, HP 8 and AC 14. Its primary attributes are physical. He carries scale mail, club, small axe and 1d4gp in coin and jewelry.)

URKS x3 (These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d10, HP 8 and AC 10. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry scimitars and axes. They are currently drunk and receive a -2 penalty to all to hit rolls and attribute checks.)

GOBLINS, DZJERD x4 (These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 11. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, short bows and small round shields. Otherwise they are generally naked.)

BANDITS, 2 (These are neutral evil, 1st level fighters whose vital stats are: HP 6 and AC 12. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. They carry leather armor, longswords, knives and 2-8gp in various coin.)

This is a one-room structure. At the far end of the bar are piles of boxes, crates and sacks. If investigated, several of the newer crates have the stamp of Halpveg upon them. They contain apples, potatoes, metal ingots, crossbow bolts and silk. These were stolen or legitimately purchased from goblin merchants. What remains of Stansley's goods are in here as well. The far end of the bar is piled high with boxes, sacks and racks of drying meat.

A WARM TENT AND DECENT MEAL

The tangy smell of burning pine wisps through the thick firs ahead. A well-beaten path twists amongst the trees and leads to a small clearing with a large fire raging in its center. Several crimson colored urks stand near the fire, their massive hands outstretched to the flames and their great guffaws of laughter breaking the silence. Surrounding the clearing are black canvas bedrolls tucked neatly between and underneath the trees. A large grinding stone sits near the fire and a stack of spears and assorted polearms rests nearby.

The zealot's camp consists of 18 sets of bedrolls. There are 5 urks at the camp when the party arrives. Two are at the fire, one is asleep, one is dressing a recently killed steer, and one is in his tent mending his armor. They are very aggressive and attempt to scare the players away with threats and resort to violence if

necessary. There is little information to be gained from these urks. The guards know little about the recent events and care less. Their conversation consists of joke after joke.

There is treasure spread throughout the sleeping blankets that include trinkets and coin collected over years of travel and plunder worth 97gp. There is one particularly fine expertly made battleaxe (+2 to damage) in the area with the sleeping urk. Seven of the remaining oxen are tethered up nearby.

URK ZEALOTS, x5 (These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 8, 5, 5, 4, 1 and AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with club or small axe for 1-6 points of damage. They carry leather armor, small wooden shield and 1d4gp and 2d12sp.)

BARROWS OF THE DEAD

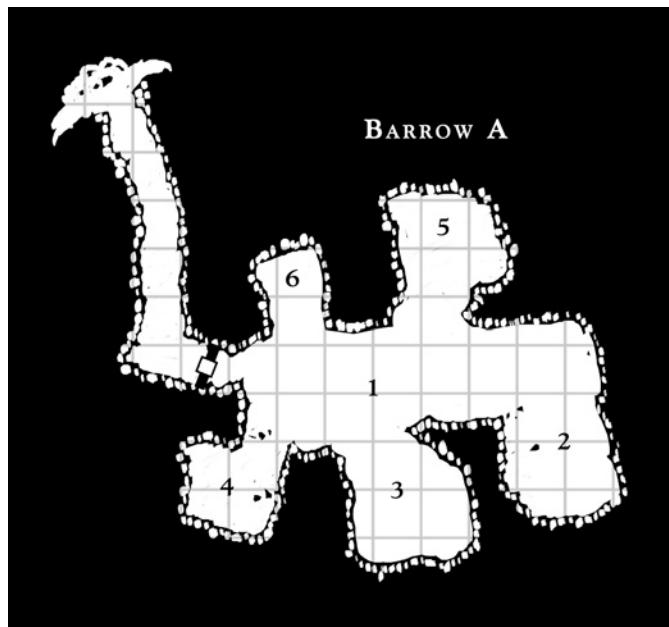
The dense branches of the fir trees open to reveal two large earthen mounds, starkly bare of any vegetation. The mounds are surrounded by muddy trails, pools of brackish water, shafts of wood and broken tools. The pall of death lingers over them like an abysmal cloud.

These barrows house the Shaman and the first few 'Children of Kleedj' that he has summoned. If Gnarjd has not been warned either by the guards, the bell, the glyph or some other method that interlopers are in Jzunad, he is located in Area 2.

BARROW A

Giant obsidian slabs frame the entry to this mound. The narrow passage beyond is dark, moist and cramped. From within its confines, a low pitched, barely audible keening is heard.

The entryway is just over three feet wide and six feet high. The hall extends 20 feet then swings left to a wooden door. Fighting in the passage is cramped and combat modifiers should be adjusted accordingly. New rules discussing these modifiers are available on PDF.



A rune of protection is upon the floor in front of the door. Anyone making a successful intelligence save (CL 2) notices the rune. It is a spiral set within a cloudbank, the sign of Kleejzd. When the rune is passed by or stepped on by any other than a zealot or the urk priest, the rune releases a bluish gas in the shape of heavily muscled arms. The arms wrap around the person stepping on the rune and immobilize them causing 1-2 hit points of damage per round for 1-4 rounds unless they make a successful wisdom saving throw (CL 2). A held individual must make a successful strength save to escape (CL 2) the arms. At the same time, it emits a loud whistling sound. The gas cannot be physically attacked, but it can be dispelled. The mist dispels automatically in 1d4 rounds. A *bless* or *consecrate* spell will also dispel the mist. The arms can hold only one individual and, unless the character is very large and blocks the entire passage, others can pass around him. The door opens freely.

If this ward is activated, the priest investigates and attacks the interlopers if he feels he can win the combat. Otherwise, he runs to Area 3 and transports to the black slab atop the column. From there, he calls upon all the zealots to attack the intruders.

Gnarjd is an old and powerful urk priest. His travels have taken him over several thousand miles and many decades to come to this area and fulfill a mission given him as a youngster. His mission has not been revealed to any, but the genesis of his holy war is in the making. All his life has been spent looking for the blood column at the center of Jzunad and accumulating the knowledge to cast the incantations to bring forth the "Children of Kleedj." He now intends to build his army and begin his war.

GNARJD, URK (This is a chaotic evil urk priest whose vital stats are: HD 4d8, HP 28 and AC 18. Its primary attributes are constitution, intelligence and wisdom. His significant attributes are: con 14, int 16 and wis 15. He carries a +2 scimitar, thick gray wolf skin cloak and staff. He can cast spells as a 4th level cleric. He can cast the following number of spells 0th-4, 1st-4, 2nd-2.)

Special: Gnarjd suffers from a peculiar lycanthropy brought on by his religious zeal. When particularly aggrieved or desirous of combat he begins to change form and begins to assume some of the aspects of a jackal. Gnarjd appears as a large jackal with red scaly skin on his underside and tail, with bristling white hair on his back and shoulders. His long claws and gnashing fangs can deliver terrible blows while his very continence may strike fear into the hearts of the bravest of men. While in this state, his movement rate is doubled and he receives a +2 to hit and damage. He cannot cast spells nor can he break off from combat. He can voluntarily undertake this once a day and it takes him two rounds to assume the form. While assuming this form he is considered AC 5 with normal hit points. When he finally assumes the new form, he heals all damage taken previously.)

AREA 1 Entry

The door opens into a large room quivering with the deep red light from several braziers. The floor is paved with small gray rocks and the walls are constructed of the same massive black slabs as those in the passageway. In the center of the room is a broad, rock-lined pit. There are five portals leading out of the chamber, each with a brazier next to it.

Although there are several separate chambers, they are situated so that all areas inside the mound are at least partially visible from the others, excepting the inner portion of Room 2. The Castle Keeper should bear this in mind when running the encounter.

AREA 2 Sleeping Chamber

This is a small, narrow chamber with a fireplace and rock chimney. It bears a wood-framed chair, and a plain bed with a wooden trunk at its foot. A large gleaming scimitar leans against the wall next to the bed.

This is the Shaman's sleeping chamber. The simple wooden trunk banded with metal is not locked. Within are two ceremonial bearskin cloaks with the heads still attached, thick boots and wool pants, a pair of fur gloves, a huge fur hat, a small metal box about arm's length and no taller than a mug for beer. The scimitar is a +2 enchanted scimitar that never dulls or rusts. He carries this scimitar with him into battle.

The metal box is locked. The lock is easily picked, but if picked without the correct key, a small glob of poison in a glass tube inside the mechanism breaks and spills onto the lock. An ungloved touch of the lock imparts a mild poison, time having reduced its effect, which causes 2-5 points of damage, the damage accruing at one point per round. Within the box is a small pouch containing 15 gems (each valued at 50gp), 60gp and a gold ring with a ruby (500gp).

AREA 3 Workroom

This chamber is the Shaman's workroom. If the adventure is to end with this module, Evanna will be here, tied and gagged in a chair.

Two long wooden tables dominate this broad room. A plush chair, hung with thick blankets and skins is in the corner, and a cauldron filled with a black liquid sits over a low fire. A shelf against the back wall is full of boxes, cases, and small ceramic jars.

The urk priest is currently preparing a concoction for his protection spells. The jars and boxes contain various materials such as Hogswart, rat jaws, cockroach shells, hemlock and aspen leaves, roots and other items used for mystical purposes. There are some rare items, such as the scale of an Amber Dragon, the tooth of a paladin, the beak of an eagle, and ruby dust (the value of these items vary but collectively range up to 1,500gp). There is also a huge vat of blood and entrails.

AREA 4 Library

This small aperture contains nothing more than a rickety wooden shelf bearing a few scrolls, vials and a box. On the center of the floor, carved into the flagstones, is a bizarre series of glyphs forming a circle.

This is the Shaman's library. Three scrolls bear instructions, written in urkish, detailing various and sundry concoctions including the protection spell the Shaman casts on the zealots to increase their armor class. The box contains several quills and a small sharpening knife. The vials contain writing ink.

The engraving on the floor is a teleportation rune. Speaking the urkish command word for war transports the speaker to the black slab on top of the column at the temple.

AREA 5 Store Room

This room is crammed with boxes and crates and a pile of polearms.

The boxes and crates contain foodstuffs, clothing, armor and the bric-a-brac of day-to-day living. There are 6 halberds in decent condition.

AREA 6 Guard Chamber

A wooden table with a pile of meat on it, two chairs, and a large open barrel are in this room.

Two orcs are usually in this room. In the event the characters have made it this far though, it is unlikely they are here. However, this is best left up to the Castle Keeper. The barrel contains water.

BARROW B

This barrow is used to house and raise the "Children of Kleedj" which the urk priest plans to use in his holy war.

A huge slab of black rock covers the entry to this mound, locked in place by smaller square stones. A black space peers out from around its imperfect fit and the smell of death coalesces here. The area around the mound is eerily quiet.

The slab of rock can be rolled to the side once its supports are removed. It reveals a muddy, cramped passage. If entered, creaks and moans rise from within the bowels of the mound. The children of Kleedj below sense the characters and are immediately drawn to them.

The descending passage rapidly expands into a wide, low-slung room. An appalling sight greets your eyes. Several figures saunter out of the shadows toward you, ghastly creatures half man and half jackal with red and white fur, large gnashing teeth and slender hairless tails.

A horde of the children of Kleedj inhabits this lower room and attacks any who enter other than the priest. The wide room has a low ceiling, which hampers combat. Several of the children, yet to be completely summoned, litter the corners. The only interesting object in the room is a banner. It leans against a wall, tightly furled. When unfurled, the emblazoned symbol of the urk god of death, a blood red bone set on a black background, stares at the characters.

CHILDREN OF KLEEDJ, x4-16 (*These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are: HD 1d12 and AC 11. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with one bite for 1-6 damage and two claws for 1-4 damage.*)

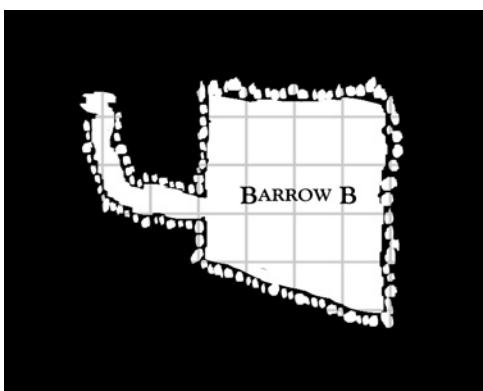
CLOSING THE ADVENTURE

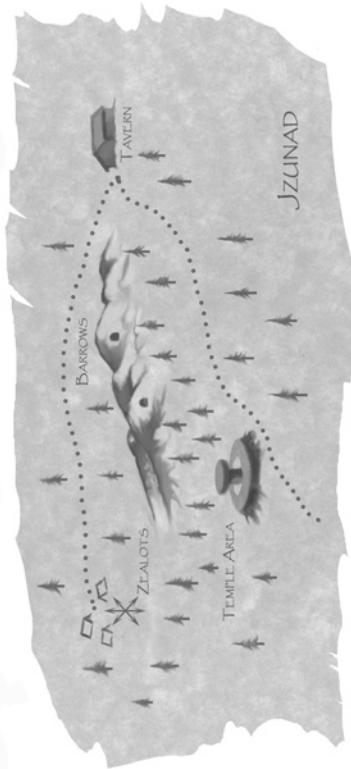
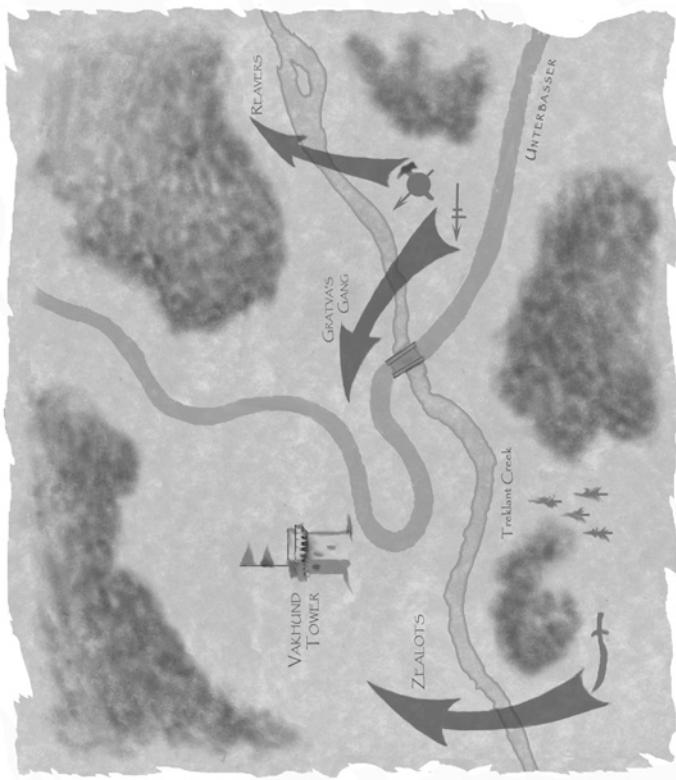
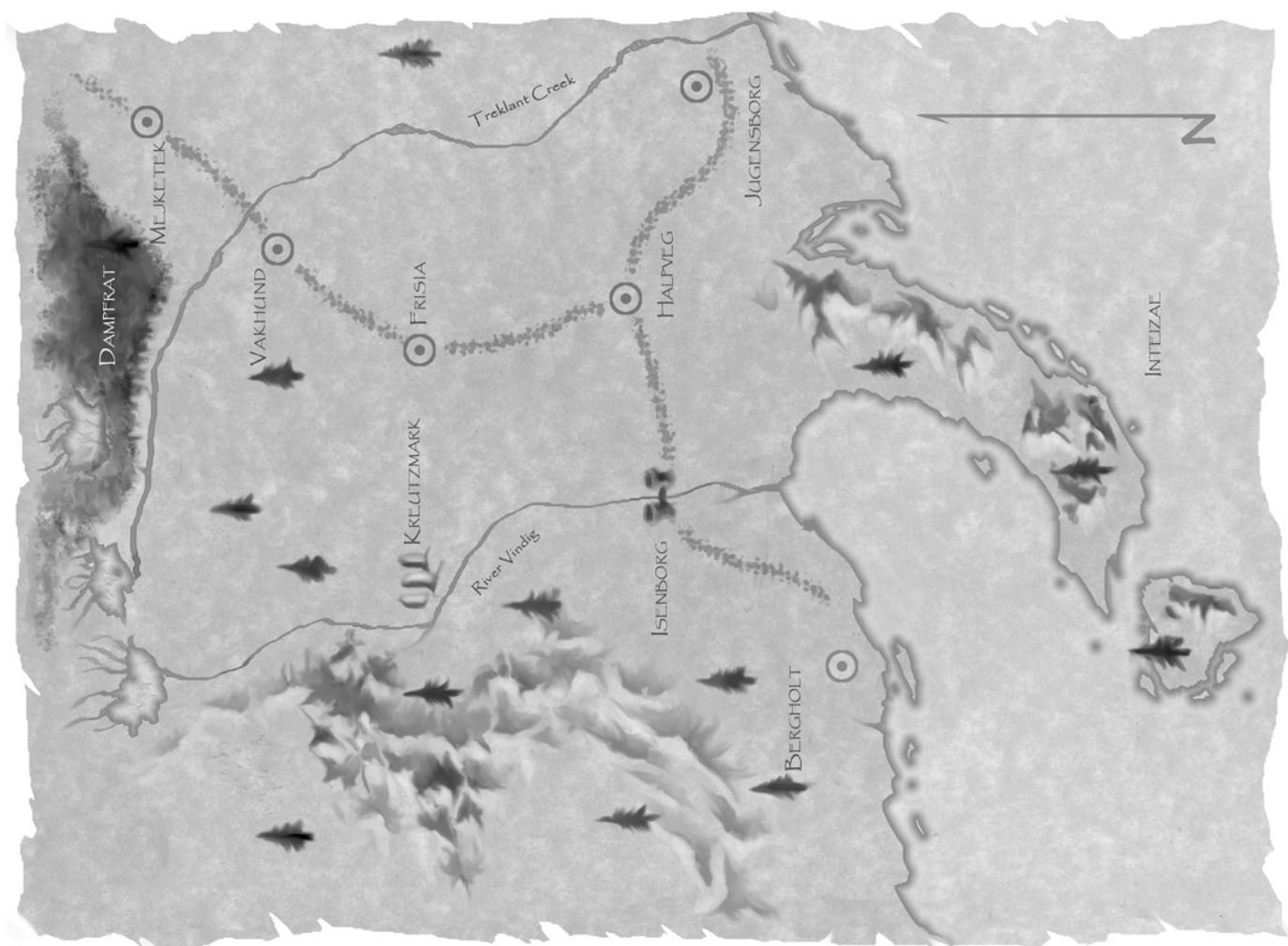
The first decision the Castle Keeper must make when closing this adventure, is whether or not to continue it with the next adventure in the series. If continuing it, the players must be given a reason to go further into the Dampfrat and on to Dzeebagd. The easiest and most convenient method is to have Evanna taken there and the characters find out and then give chase. Other than this, the characters could learn of Dzeebagd through any number of the inhabitants (to include Marianna and Dzeegle) and make the decision to go there and kill off the rest of the Magdole Gang.

Should the adventure end here and the characters manage to escape Barrow A with Evanna or immediately vacate the area of the temple, the Gnardj does not give chase. He does not have enough power for a prolonged search and fight at this juncture, and only tries to control events at the temple. Also, he has traveled a long time and over great distances to come here. He will not sacrifice himself senselessly in revenge or to regain some lost prisoner. His mission is far more important than defeating the party.

The trip back to Vakhund is uneventful unless the Castle Keeper chooses otherwise. However, the repercussions of the raid on Jzunad are far reaching. The priest, should he survive, goes to the zjerd capitol and begins to raise the ire of the goblins there and instigates war. He then returns to Jzunad in force and continues the process of summoning the children of Kleedj.

The players, if Evanna is not rescued and continue their search for her, become embroiled in a war that forever changes the political landscape of the southern Interzae. The adventure continues in Part II of The Death on the Treklant Trilogy, **DZEEBAGD: Under Dark and Misty Ground**.







Castles & Crusades®



Alea lacta ēst

The Kellerwald

The Die is Cast!

All of these fine products are available for the Castles & Crusades Role Playing Game. Contact your local retailer for details or visit us on the web at www.trolllord.com.

8000	Castles and Crusades Boxed Set	\$29.99	1-931275-83-1
80102	Castles & Crusades Players Handbook (2nd PR)	\$19.95	1-931275-19-X
8010S	Castles & Crusades Deluxe	\$75.00	1-931275-45-9
8011	Castles & Crusades Monsters & Treasure	\$19.95	1-931275-61-0
8013	C&C Slip Sleeve (for CZ, CCPH, CCMT)	\$5.95	1-931275-09-2
8014	Castles & Crusades Character R. Sheets	\$9.95	1-931275-39-4
8016	CS1 The Rings of Brass CS: Intro to Ahrde	\$8.95	1-931275-46-7
80SP	A0 The Rising Knight	FREE	PDF
8020	A1 Assault on Blacktooth Ridge	\$8.95	1-931275-62-9
80201	A1.1 Return to Assault on Blacktooth Ridge	\$1.00	UPDF
8021	A2 The Slag Heap	\$8.95	1-931275-78-5
8022	A3 The Wicked Cauldron	\$8.95	1-931275-79-3
80501	D 1.1 Dwarven Glory I	\$1.00	PDF
8090	I1 Vakhund: Into the Unknwon	\$8.95	1-931275-59-9
8201	U1 Shadows of the Halfling Hall	\$8.95	1-931275-65-3
8203	U2 The Fingers of the Forsaken Hand	\$8.95	1-931275-30-0
8220	DB1 Haunted Highlands	\$8.95	1-931275-21-1
8221	DB2 Crater of Umeshti	\$8.95	1-931275-57-2
8210	C1 Mortality of Green	\$8.95	1-931275-34-3
8050	CZ1 Castle Zagyg Part I: Yggsburgh	\$39.95	1-931275-68-8
8060	CZA1 Castle Zagyg: Dark Chateau	\$12.95	1-931275-69-6
1100	The Crusader Vol. 1, No. 1	\$3.50	1-931275-40-8
1101	The Crusader Vol. 1, No. 2	\$3.50	1-931275-41-6
1102	The Crusader Vol. 2, No. 3	\$3.50	1-931275-42-4
1103	The Crusader Vol. 2, No. 4	\$3.50	1-931275-43-2



www.trolllord.com

P.O. Box 251171
Little Rock, AR 72225

ISBN 1-931275-59-9

50895



9 781931 275590

EAN



This module is designed
for 3-5 characters with
a challenge level of 1-2.
Overland