

SHL2-07



OBSIDIAN

A Two-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Shield Lands Regional Adventure

Version 1

ROUND 1

by Brandon Kaya

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Your party is returning from a two-week patrol in the occupied lands controlled by the wizard Vayne when captured members of the army of Iuz offer to give you information that may be important to the Shield Lands. Looks like your return to the safety of Fort Vigilance is going to be delayed...An adventure for characters level 1-10.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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

PREPARATION

First, print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided works as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before running the event. Familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It's also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. You cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for both the players and the DM to keep track of who is playing what character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. But, as the DM, you can bar the use of even Core Rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, usually the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Text that appears in ***bold italics*** is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in appendixes contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and nonplayer character (NPC) statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end

of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh your memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

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

1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

2-Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the DMs are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.

3-Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

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

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

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. As a LIVING™ adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site (www.wizards.com/rpga), and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the character participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.

2) If characters bring animals that have been trained for combat (usually war horses and riding dogs), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars, a paladin's mounts, and so forth) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single character may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 and 1/6 0	0	0	1	
1/3 and 1/2 0	0	1	1	
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.

4) If you are running a table of six characters, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you have determined the modified APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge that the characters face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that

either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1) Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.

2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. Characters who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is usually a free action (see DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide Chapter 2: Characters) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Miale, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to join them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard two-round Regional adventure set in the Shield Lands. All characters playing in region pay two Time Units to participate in the adventure. Adventures' Standard Upkeep costs 24 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 100 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 200 gp. Characters playing out of region pay double these amounts.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

A group of wizards calling themselves the Union of Erudite Scholars recently allied themselves with the wizard Vayne. Both sides of the agreement have their own reasons for the alliance and believe they can use the other side to their advantage. The Union of Erudite Scholars, with the help of their personal mercenary group the Black Hand, immediately began searching the occupied lands, but neglected to tell Vayne for exactly what.

The Union of Erudite Scholars and Black Hand mercenaries quickly gained a reputation for evil even amongst the troops of Iuz's armies. There have been desertions amongst the troops assigned to accompany them. The deserters who were caught were dealt with severely and tales of the cruel punishments spread quickly amongst the troops. The desertions have slowed,

now the troops actively try not to be assigned to those serving with Vayne's new allies.

One member of the Union of Erudite Scholars has apparently found what they are looking for. An obelisk lies buried underneath a hill north of Gensal. It is similar to the one found in Ringland except that it is obviously evil.

Its evil has attracted a group of minotaurs who dug an underground complex around the obelisk trying to work out exactly what attracted them. The long term exposure to the obelisk caused some of them to begin having strange dreams, all related to the obelisk and to black robed individuals. The fervent nature of those granted dreams caused the minotaurs to start worshipping the obelisk as a god.

The Scholar who found the location of the obelisk gathered a group of hobgoblins and is currently heading toward its location. Thus the adventure begins.

Introduction

The party is returning from a two-week long patrol in the occupied areas controlled by the wizard Vayne. They have spent much of the time dodging large patrols of Iuz's troops under Vayne's command. A group of normal soldiers accompanies the Pathfinders.

Encounter 1: Strange Hobgoblins

The party encounters a group of hobgoblins hiding in the tall grasses of the plains who surrender as soon as they see that the Pathfinders are not part of Iuz's army.

They tell the party that they have run away from the "evil robed one". "The robed one is too cruel!" they say and they are sure that some horrible fate awaits them if they stay with this individual. The group is not running from priests of Iuz, which might be the most obvious answer. Instead the leader of the hobgoblins tells the party that the "Yurflun" are what they are running from. The hobgoblins have heard the blacked robed one speak of this "Yurflun" with awe, so they have started calling him that behind his back. The only thing they know about these Yurflun are that they are vile, necromancers, of which the black robed one is only one.

The hobgoblins point the party towards a hill to the east. That is the goal of the black robed one they were accompanying.

The soldiers in the group volunteer to take the hobgoblins back to Fort Vigilance if the party wants to investigate. The party then follows the directions that the hobgoblins give them and track them back to the hill in the east.

Encounter 2: The Black Robed One

The characters come upon a battle raging between a group of orcs and a group of hobgoblins with a black robed figure. The fight ends as the characters come into view. The surviving hobgoblins and the black robed figure enter an opening in the side of the hill.

Investigation of the bodies outside reveal that they are all part of Iuz's armies. The party knows that orcs are

generally aligned with Waqounis and hobgoblins with Vayne, so Vayne's troops must have been victorious.

The ground begins shaking as the hobgoblins retreat into the hill. The shaking then subsides, but not before causing parts of the hill to collapse, including the entrance. A search of the hill reveals a small opening that permits entrance to whatever is underneath.

Encounter 3: Into the Hill

The characters enter the hill and find a complex dug into the dirt of the hill. Most of the complex has collapsed from the shaking, but the characters are able to follow a corridor to the center of the complex. There they find an obelisk. On the far side of the obelisk is magical darkness from which chanting is heard. On the near side there are the surviving hobgoblins and minotaurs.

A fight ensues as the hobgoblins and minotaurs seek to protect the obelisk while the blacked robed one continues his ritual.

Encounter 4: The Scholar

As the last of the defenders fall, the magical darkness dissipates. Where the darkness once stood, there are two figures. They are both dressed in black robes of similar design, but the Guardian of the Obelisk is transparent and merely watches. The other figure is the Union of Erudite Scholars member called "Yurflun" by the captured hobgoblins. He attacks the party.

Encounter 5: The Ancient One

When the characters defeat the Scholar, the transparent one begins to speak in ancient Flan. When the party fails to understand him, he repeats his message in Draconic. Regardless of understanding at that point, the figure indicates that the characters should touch the obelisk.

If it looks like the entire party is not going to come along, then the Guardian indicates that all who have approached the obelisk must join in the test. When the entire party touches the obelisk, they enter a series of tests.

Encounter 6: The Tests

The party enters a series of tests used by ancient Ur Flan necromancers to gain undead-like powers. Since the party has never undergone any of these tests, nor has anyone in centuries, they are given the first four tests. The first one is to properly prepare a body for animation. The second is to bath their arms in a pool connected to the negative material plane to prove their seriousness to serve the dark powers of death and evil. The third is to answer a series of questions concerning the group of necromancers and finally, they must animate the bodies that they have prepared.

The first question of the fourth test shows the party series of symbols and an image of an obelisk in Critwall. The Guardian asks if the party what the correct sequence to activate and deactivate the "fear that controls the weak minded." This is an important clue to stopping the chaos the party encounters in Round 2 of the adventure.

If at any time the characters seem unable or unwilling to finish the current test, they are ejected back to the obelisk room with severe pain and loss of intelligence. It is unlikely that a party finishes the tests, but they gain important information about the obelisks and why the Union of Erudite Scholars might be interested in them.

Encounter 7: The Emergence

The party returns to the underground chamber, which begins shaking again. The party has only a short amount of time to evacuate the hill before it collapses. The obelisk is rising from the ground and is causing the shaking.

When the characters are outside, they are hit by waves of fear from the obelisk. They must make a difficult Will save or flee from the area around the obelisk. If they figured out the order for the symbols, then someone who is not affected by the fear can touch the correct symbols and shut off the fear. In addition, there are undead creatures chasing them. The orcs and hobgoblins killed in the fight in front of the hill have reanimated from the power of the obelisk.

Conclusion

The characters arrive at Fort Vigilance and report. They are immediately sent to Critwall with their information. End of Round 1

INTRODUCTION

You are returning from a two-week patrol of the area north of Gensal. The past several days have started with below freezing temperatures and frost on the ground. The days are always chilly and cold winds make it seem like the temperature never gets above freezing.

These are lands controlled by the wizard Vayne. Unlike Waqounis to the southeast, Vayne controls his lands with an iron fist. You spent much of the last two weeks dodging his patrols or killing those you could not escape. The ten soldiers accompanying you have made no secret of their desire to be back in the relative safety of the liberated lands. You are currently about a day away from Fort Vigilance, a border fort commanded by members of the Order of the Northern Guard.

Allow the players to introduce their characters. They have been on a two-week patrol with these people and should know something about each other.

The soldiers are considered to be under the command of the Pathfinders. They take their orders from any knights first, followed by paladins, clerics of Heironeous, Pholtus, St Cuthbert or Mayaheine, fighters, other clerics, then anyone else. Go down the list until someone in the party is a member of that group. Ties go to the one with the highest Charisma. Further ties go to the highest-level character. Roll a die if there it is still undetermined who is in charge of the soldiers.

Fort Vigilance is the border fort controlled by the Order of the Northern Guard. They are a new knightly order formed specifically for the re-conquest of the Shield

Lands. This is the same fort that the characters left two weeks ago.

After introductions and any questions, move onto Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: STRANGE HOBGOBLINS

The grass in front of you suddenly moves as several figures stand up. Hobgoblins dressed in the armor of Iuz. Before you have a chance to react, they hold up their arms. The larger one in the front shouts, "We surrender!" in rough common.

The hobgoblins are indeed surrendering. They stand patiently and wait for the characters to react. The soldiers look to the characters for guidance.

If the characters do not accept their surrender after a short time, the hobgoblins begin muttering amongst themselves. Then the apparent leader seems to figure something out and they all slowly undo their weapon belts and drop them to the ground.

If they are attacked the hobgoblins attempt to flee. Conversation with the hobgoblins reveals the following:

- They are running from the "black robed one." They left their group last night because the black robed one with them did many vile and evil things. They feared that they were going to have terrible things done to them. They do not tell exactly what those things are, but they shudder and shake their heads.
- The black robed one is not a priest of Iuz. They are necromancers that recently joined Vayne.
- The black robed one often speaks of something called the "Yurflun," so many of Iuz's troops including these hobgoblins have begun calling them that.
- They were accompanying the black robed one to a nearby hill to look for something. The leader can direct the party to the hill, which is to the east.

The soldiers volunteer to take the hobgoblins to Fort Vigilance. They assume that the party is going to investigate what could be so interesting about the hill.

If the characters go to Fort Vigilance and then return to the hill, they find nothing but a collapsed complex and the obelisk rising out of the top of the hill; they have missed their opportunity to stop the black robed one; Round 1 is over, proceed to Round 2.

A successful Knowledge (history) check or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 35) connects the undead with the name Yurflun as probably meaning the Ur Flan an ancient civilization of pre-Flan peoples of who little is known. Part of what is known is that a group of necromancers played an important part in their society.

ALL APLS

☛ **Hobgoblins (6):** hp 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The hobgoblins have no interest in fighting. They just want to leave the occupied lands. They know a severe punishment awaits them if caught. They do not fear being killed by the Shield Landers, in fact, they seem to think that is a better fate than whatever would happen if the black robed one catches them. If the party attacks the hobgoblins, they attempt to flee, but fight if they have no other option.

Development: If the characters kill the hobgoblins, they are going to have to track them if they intend on continuing the adventure. A successful Track check (DC 10) is required for this. It leads the party a couple hours to the northeast, where the hobgoblins camped for the evening. A second group of tracks goes south another couple of hours to the hill. Continue with appropriate changes to Encounter 2. If these are the circumstances, then the soldiers volunteer to return to Fort Vigilance in order to report.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE BLACK ROBED ONE

You have been traveling for a couple of hours and the hill that the hobgoblins described should be near. Off in the distance, in the direction that you are heading you hear the faint sounds of combat and the earth trembles slightly under your feet.

The combat is actually just over the next hill. When the party investigates, they see a group of orcs fighting a group of hobgoblins. A black robed figure stands behind the hobgoblins watching the battle. The fight ends just as the party catches sight of it; the orcs have been defeated. Immediately afterward, the hobgoblins and the robed figure move through an opening in the side of the hill.

The trembling has continued and grows slightly stronger as the party approaches the scene of the fight. After the hobgoblins enter the hillside, the trembling grows even stronger and the entrance collapses. Shortly after the collapse, the trembling subsides.

Investigation of the bodies reveals that both sides are in the army of Iuz. A successful Knowledge (Shield Lands) check (DC 10) reveals that orcs are generally under the banner of Waqounis and hobgoblins under Vayne.

The robes the figure wears are similar to those seen in the vision at the obelisk in SHL2-01 *A Message from Ringland*, but don't tell this to the characters unless they ask.

A search around the hill reveals a recent opening caused by the trembling. It is a smallish opening, but opens up into a ten-foot high dirt passageway on the other side. The opening is a little way up the side of the hill, but easy to access, requiring only a successful Climb check (DC 10).

Unearthing the original collapsed tunnel is certainly possible, but it takes several hours and a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC

15). Failure or lack of such knowledge causes the tunnel to collapse on the diggers causing 1d6/APL damage.

When the party enters the hill go to Encounter 3.

ENCOUNTER 3: INTO THE HILL

The tunnel leads off into the darkness. There seem to be no straight portions of any significant length. Occasionally there are side tunnels that have collapsed during the tremors.

The tunnels have been built by minotaurs and weave and turn because of their racial preference for such things. There are no accessible side tunnels since the complex has no support beams. The tremors caused most of the tunnels to collapse, killing a majority of the minotaurs that once lived here.

Minotaurs dug the tunnels after being attracted to the evil of the obelisk in the center of the hill. Long exposure to the obelisk caused some of the minotaurs to begin having dreams of the obelisk and its black robed servant. The minotaurs started worshiping the obelisk and waiting for a black robed messenger to arrive.

That day has arrived. Vernas Urenth, who the hobgoblins call "Yurflun," entered the tunnels with the hobgoblins and followed them to the center of the hill. There he immediately began performing a ritual on the obelisk. At higher APLs, the minotaurs who survived the collapse immediately began giving thanks to the obelisk. At lower APLs, all of the minotaurs were killed in the collapse.

The party hears chanting from the ritual shortly before they see the light emanating from the central chamber. As they round a corner, they see a chamber that is about forty feet in diameter.

A pillar of black rock stands in the center with both ends still buried in the dirt. The entire surface of the pillar is covered in faintly glowing runes that constantly shift and change. This is actually a black obelisk that is buried in the ground.

The far half of the room is covered in darkness. This is where the chanting is emanating. The surviving hobgoblins and minotaurs, if present, occupy the lit part of the room. The minotaurs kneel facing the obelisk while the hobgoblins are keeping an eye out. When they become aware of the intruders both groups attack the party.

The darkness on the far side of the obelisk is alchemical in nature and cannot be dispelled. It is basically a special smokestick with a larger radius. Normal sight and darkvision do not penetrate the darkness. Nor does light of any sort.

The creatures in the room try to prevent anyone from entering the darkness. If someone does enter the darkness, the ritual is completed early, and Vernas Urenth steps out of the darkness to join the fight. In this case, the party has to fight both encounters at once, and the darkness still dissipates at the end of the fight with

just the Guardian appearing, assuming the characters are victorious.

The entire complex is extremely unstable. Damage causing area affect spells cause minor collapses throughout the complex. The effect of this is that everyone in the complex must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + APL). Those that fail take 2d6/APL damage. Those who succeed take half damage. The second time this happens, the DC is 10 + 2/APL and the damage is 1d6/APL. The third time this happens the entire complex collapses and the party is buried under tons of dirt.

When the party finishes the fight go immediately to Encounter 4. There is no time for them to rest or recuperate before the next encounter.

APL 2 (EL 3)

🔥 **Hobgoblins (4):** hp 7, 6, 6, 5; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 5)

🔥 **Hobgoblins (4):** hp 7, 6, 6, 5; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥 **Minotaur:** hp 45; see *Monster Manual*.

Note: The minotaur is wearing breastplate armor: AC 19 (touch 9, flat-footed 19).

APL 6 (EL 7)

🔥 **Hobgoblins (6):** hp 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 5; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥 **Minotaurs (2):** hp 45, 45; see *Monster Manual*.

Note: The minotaurs are wearing full plate armor: AC 22 (touch 9, flat-footed 22).

APL 8 (EL 9)

🔥 **Hobgoblins (6):** hp 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 5; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥 **Minotaur:** hp 45; see *Monster Manual*.

Note: The minotaur is wearing full plate armor: AC 22 (touch 9, flat-footed 22).

🔥 **Minotaur Fighters (3):** Male minotaur Ftr1; hp 67; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 11)

🔥 **Hobgoblins (6):** hp 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 5; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥 **Minotaur Fighters (4):** Male minotaur Ftr2/Bbn1; hp 88; see Appendix I.

Tactics: Remember that minotaurs cannot be caught flat-footed. Also remember that they have scent and are extremely unlikely to have anyone approach them completely unnoticed. They stand and look around if they detect any unfamiliar scent. If someone does manage to approach them unnoticed then they are considered prone until they act.

The hobgoblins, at APL 8 and higher, attempt to flee as soon as they figure out they are completely outmatched. They know the tunnel collapsed so they try to run past the party and out the way the characters entered.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE SCHOLAR

As your last opponent falls, the darkness fades and the chanting stops. Where there used to be darkness, you see two figures. Both are dressed in the now familiar black robes.

The first is an elderly man, arms crossed impassively in front of him. The strangest thing about him is that he is transparent. Another exit out of this room is visible behind him.

The second is a middle-age man who looks quite angry. He moves to attack!

The first figure is the Guardian of the Obelisk. He does not attack. Instead he waits for the winner of the conflict. If he is attacked, he moves to the ethereal to wait.

The second figure is Vernas Urenth. He is upset that he has to fight for his right to take the test and wants to finish the party as quickly as possible.

The entire complex is extremely unstable. Damage causing area affect spells cause minor collapses throughout the complex. The effect of this is that everyone in the complex must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + APL). Those that fail take 2d6/APL damage. Those who succeed take half damage. The second time this happens, the DC is 10 + 2/APL and the damage is 1d6/APL. The third time this happens the entire complex collapses and the party is buried under tons of dirt.

When the party finishes the fight go to Encounter 5.

APL 2 (EL 3)

🔥 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec3; hp 22; see Appendix I.

APL 4 (EL 5)

🔥 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5; hp 34; see Appendix I.

APL 6 (EL 7)

🔥 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5/Blood Magus*2; hp 46; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 9)

🔥 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5/Blood Magus*4; hp 58; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 11)

🔥 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5/Blood Magus*6; hp 81; see Appendix I.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE ANCIENT ONE

As you finish the wizard, the other robed figure turns his gaze toward you. The knowledge and ability of many lifetimes is reflected in his eyes. He begins speaking in a whispery voice.

The figure speaks in ancient Flan. Characters who speak Flan may make an Intelligence check (DC 15) to understand him.

"The contest between those who wish to join the us is complete. The victors may now attempt to prove themselves worthy for our gifts. Place your hands on the obelisk."

If no one appears to understand what he is saying he switches to Draconic.

"It is strange that you do not understand my words, but perhaps it is more fitting that we speak in the language of magic. The contest between those who wish to join the us is complete. The victors may attempt to prove themselves worthy. Place your hands on the obelisk."

After he finishes speaking, whether someone understood him or not, he gestures to the obelisk and indicates that the party should touch it.

If only part of the party touches the obelisk, then he speaks again in the same languages as was understood before:

"All must touch the obelisk. The test cannot continue until all who were part of the contest touch the obelisk"

If the group doesn't understand either of the languages, then the Guardian points directly at each character that is not touching the obelisk and then points at the obelisk.

Everyone who touches the obelisk sees an image:

You see a time when the obelisk was above ground. Somehow you know that the power of this obelisk is tied to another, perhaps many more. The scene shifts and you see another obelisk. It is in the grasslands near the turning of a great river. The name, Grayling Fields appears in your mind. You're not sure where this name came from, but as you watch, you see both of the obelisks sink into the ground at the same time.

The Guardian of the Obelisk is a creature of immense power. The party should not attack him. He does not attack the party unless they attack him first. If they do so, he uses all of his abilities and power to destroy them. However, he cannot move farther than 100 feet from the obelisk. Try and make the characters understand that they cannot defeat this creature, but don't just come out and tell them directly.

Go to *Encounter 6* when the party touches the obelisk.

If the whole party does not touch the obelisk, then eventually the Guardian gets impatient, and disappears. At this point the party suffers the effects of failing the tests in *Encounter 6*, in which case, move on to *Encounter 7*.

ALL APLS

☞ **Guardian of the Obelisk (Ghost):** Male human Nec20; hp 145; see Appendix I.

Development: If someone casts a *detect magic* or *comprehend languages* on the obelisk, the spell fails and they receive the following vision:

You stand some distance away from a barren hill. On the top of the hill you see a familiar looking obelisk with shifting runes. In front of the obelisk you see two groups of black robed figures fighting each other. Standing watch over the fight is an ethereal, black robed figure.

One of the groups is finally triumphant. The watcher seems to speak to the group and they all climb the hill and touch the obelisk and then disappear.

Time seems to pass and you see the group suddenly appear by the obelisk again. They all hold up their hands in triumph. You can see that they all have some sort of symbol on either their right or left hands.

The vision ends.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE TESTS

You appear suddenly in a room about forty feet on a side. The walls are lined with shelves full of jars. The jars contain a wide and varied selection of liquids and powders.

In the center of the room are nine sturdy wooden tables. A cadaver lies on top of each table. The bodies have been placed neatly on tables with their arms at their sides. All are naked, making it obvious that they were killed through violence. Numerous wounds cover the bodies. The bodies seem to be recently dead, since they still maintain the color of life.

The elderly robed-man appears and speaks.

Once again he speaks in either ancient Flan or Draconic.

THE FIRST TEST

"This is the first test. You must prepare the bodies for future use. All of the materials you need are here."

This is the first of four tests to determine whether the individual is worthy of receiving the gifts of the Obelisks.

The party must simply prepare the bodies to become minor undead. In order to succeed, the characters must have either *create undead* or *create greater undead* on their spell list or make either a Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (undead) check (DC 8 + APL). If no one in the party has these abilities, then a general Intelligence check (DC 15 + APL) allows them to succeed.

The bodies appear to have been killed by blows with long cutting weapons. They are all the bodies of humans with strong Flan features, but with subtle and unidentifiable differences.

The room radiates a faint aura of necromancy if anyone detects for magic. Each wall has one or more ancient holy symbol of Nerull. A Knowledge (religion)

check (DC 13 + APL) reveals to the characters that the symbol is of a god of death and undead. At (DC 23 + APL), the characters learn that it is an ancient version of Nerull's symbol from long before the Invoked Devastation and Rain of Colorless Fire.

If the party is successful at preparing the bodies, proceed to the next boxed text. If the characters fail or they are unwilling/unable to do so, go to the development section.

The elderly man watches your work on the bodies and nods in acceptance when you finish. He points to one of the walls and it turns into a door. He gestures for you to pass through the doorway.

Once the first person passes through the door, everyone appears in the next room.

THE SECOND TEST

Suddenly all of you are in another room about 20 feet on a side. The room glows with an eerie black light. In the center of the room is a round opening encircled by nine arcane symbols. About a foot below the lip of the opening is a liquid that is so black it absorbs the light around it. Directly above the pool on the ceiling is the same symbol you found on the walls of the room you just left.

The elderly man speaks again, "Excellent. You have proven your knowledge of the undead. In the second test you must prove your dedication to us by bathing your arms in the Pool of Oblivion."

The pool detects as overwhelmingly evil. Anyone who detects for evil for more than one round is stunned for one round. The symbols are unfamiliar to the characters.

The pool is a direct connection to the negative material plane. Anyone who bathes their arms or any other part of their body in the pool immediately suffers energy drain as they feel their life being absorbed by the pool. The pool costs a charge per round on magic items that protect from energy drain and overwhelm spells that protect from energy drain in one round. The affects of this depend on the APL.

The Guardian waits until the primary individual who prepared the bodies bathes his or her arms in the pool. He does not consider the test successful until that person takes the damage from the negative energy of the pool. When the test is successful another door opens. Continue with the next set of boxed text. If that person is unwilling to do so, go to failure in the development section.

APL 2

✂️ **Negative Energy Pool:** 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage.

APL 4

✂️ **Negative Energy Pool:** 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage and 1d6 temporary Charisma damage.

APL 6

✂️ **Negative Energy Pool:** 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage, 1d6 temporary Charisma damage, and 1d6 temporary Dexterity damage.

APL 8

✂️ **Negative Energy Pool:** 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage, 1d6 temporary Charisma damage, 1d6 temporary Dexterity damage, and 1d6 temporary Intelligence damage.

APL 10

✂️ **Negative Energy Pool:** 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage, 1d6 temporary Charisma damage, 1d6 temporary Dexterity damage, 1d6 temporary Intelligence damage, and 1d6 temporary Strength damage.

THE THIRD TEST

Once again a door opens as the elderly man nods at you, and once again when the first person passes through, you all find yourself in another room.

This room is small, perhaps ten feet on a side. You are standing behind a short wooden barrier with a raised dais holding a wooden chair in front of you.

The elderly man appears in the chair and speaks, "You have proven your loyalty to us. Now you must prove your knowledge of our ways."

The party is free to talk amongst themselves, but only when the character that had to place his arms in the pool answers does the Guardian acknowledge it.

The characters can make Knowledge (history) or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 35) to get the answer to the question. The first question they get wrong results in the failure section of the development section. Basically no one should be able to get past this test.

"Why do you feel you are worthy of joining us?"

Any answer is pretty much acceptable here as long as the character makes some attempt to act like they want to join an evil group of necromancers.

The robed figure raises his arm and makes a slashing motion with his hands. As he does this, a set of symbols appears in front of him. There is a swirl of four lines forming an 'X' a star made of six 'Y's' with their bottoms in the middle, a set of four squares making a larger square and a confusing swirl of eight separate lines. He stops waving his hands and the four symbols float toward you until they are within reach.

"The twin obelisks are able to cause fear in the weak minded. However, we need to be able to control this fear so they may serve us. These are the symbols on the obelisk that control the fear. What is the order they are touched to turn off the fear?"

There is no way to figure this out other than guessing. The symbols have no known meaning, they are simply used to control the fear power of the obelisks. The correct

order is as follows: swirls of eight lines, swirls of four lines, star of Ys and four squares.

The party cannot use the Knowledge or Bardic Knowledge checks to figure this out, but let them try. They learn nothing on any attempt, but don't let them feel totally useless.

The character gets one chance to get the order right.

"We are the most powerful casters in the land, what do you have to contribute to our cause?"

The correct answer is "Anything you require, including my life, death or undeath." or something similar.

"Who are we?"

The correct answer is "Servants of the Bringer of Darkness." The characters have no way of knowing this, except to guess based on the clues found during the other tests.

"How many are on this council and what are their titles?"

The correct answer is nine. Once again, the characters have no way of knowing this, except to guess based on the clues found during the other tests.

"What is the purpose of our organization?"

The correct answer is "To serve the Hater of Life and achieve the great powers of the Nightwalker." Once again, the characters have no way of knowing this, except to guess based on the clues found during the other tests.

Obviously, it is highly unlikely the party will pass the third test. If for some amazing reason they do, move on to the fourth test. References to the "Bringer of Darkness" and "Hater of Life" both refer to Nerull.

THE FOURTH TEST

A doorway appears on the wall behind you as you answer the last question. A repeat of the last two doorways occurs and you appear in the original room with the bodies lying ready.

"You must now make these bodies your servants. Do this and you have passed the final test of the Ur Flan."

All the party has to do at this point is cast *create undead* or *create greater undead* on the bodies. If they do so then go to passed the test in the development section. If they fail, then go to failure in the development section.

ALL APLS

👤 **Guardian of the Obelisk (Ghost):** Male human Nec20; hp 145; see Appendix I.

Tactics: If the characters attack the Guardian he first dumps them out of the test as described in the development section. Then he appears and attacks them. Once again, try to impress the power and invincibility of this individual.

Development: If the party somehow successfully finishes the tests, then they appear outside of the obelisk. The character that the Guardian thought of as the primary character receives the Primary Mark of the Ur Flan. The rest of the party receives the Mark of the Companion of the Ur Flan.

If the party fails at any point the Guardian shakes his head, points angrily at them accusing them of wasting his time and they appear outside the obelisk in excruciating pain. At higher APLs they also take some Intelligence damage.

Either way, go to *Encounter 7*.

APL 4+

👤 **Intelligence Loss Punishment:** 1d10 temporary Intelligence damage.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE EMERGENCE

You appear outside of the obelisk. The elderly figure appears briefly, looks at you and then disappears.

The trembling from earlier has grown stronger in your absence. In fact, it is quite obvious that the unstable complex is going to collapse at any moment.

Leaving the complex you feel the trembling getting stronger. Looking back at the hill you see the obelisk is rising out of the hill as the sun sinks below the horizon. As it rises out of the hill, images of towns and villages being swarmed by armies of undead batter your mind. You see everyone you know being consumed by the unending hunger of the creatures as they flow across the world.

At this point, the characters should make a Will save (DC 18 + APL). Any character that fails the Will saving throw runs in fear from the obelisk as waves of fear assault their minds. To make things worse, the dead orcs and hobgoblins have been turned into undead by the obelisk and they pursue the party.

They do not catch them until about half a mile away from the obelisk. At that point they attack. If the party continues to run, use the rules for taking subdual damage for travel in the *Player's Handbook*. The characters are 20 miles from the safety of Fort Vigilance.

APL 2 (EL 4)

👤 **Medium-size Skeletons (5):** hp 6, 6, 6, 6, 6; see *Monster Manual*.

👤 **Medium-size Zombies (3):** hp 16, 16, 16; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

👤 **Ghouls (3):** hp 15, 14, 13; see *Monster Manual*.

👤 **Shadows (2):** hp 20, 19; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Wraiths (3):** hp 35, 33, 32; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Bodaks (2):** hp 65, 58; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Bodaks (4):** hp 65, 63, 58, 55; see *Monster Manual*.

Development: If one of the characters is able to shake off the fear, it is possible to turn off the fear affect of the obelisk. Looking at the obelisk, it is possible to find the symbols from the test on it. The correct order is as follows: swirls of eight lines, swirls of four lines, star of 'Ys' and four squares.

When the correct order is touched, there is a definite change in the way the runes on the obelisk shift around. There still doesn't seem to be a particular pattern, but it is a different sort of randomness.

Otherwise, the obelisk is on a default mode that causes it to radiate the fear effect for three hours, then the effect stops for three hours. This pattern repeats itself indefinitely.

If someone casts a *detect magic* or *comprehend languages* on the obelisk, the spell fails and they receive the following vision:

You stand some distance away from a barren hill. On the top of the hill you see a familiar looking obelisk with shifting runes. In front of the obelisk you see two groups of black robed figures fighting each other. Standing watch over the fight is an ethereal, black robed figure.

One of the groups is finally triumphant. The watcher seems to speak to the group and they all climb the hill and touch the obelisk and then disappear.

Time seems to pass and you see the group suddenly appear by the obelisk again. They all hold up their hands in triumph. You can see that they all have some sort of symbol on either their right or left hands.

The vision ends.

CONCLUSION

Fort Vigilance finally comes into view. Like most of the border forts, Fort Vigilance is made mostly of wood. The great timbers that make up the outer wall show that the enemy has attacked more than once.

The guards question you and verify that you are actually the rest of the patrol that left a couple of weeks ago, but eventually you are let into the safety of the fort.

You report to Lieutenant Jael, the ranking member of the Order of the Northern Guard currently in the fort.

Let the party report to Lieutenant Jael about what they saw and found. The exact amount could vary depending on how far they made it into the tests.

After receiving their report, Jael writes a quick letter, seals it and hands it to the party. He tells them to head to

Critwall in the morning and deliver the message to Sir Arinson at Critwall Keep.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value to each character.

Encounter 3: Into the Hill

Defeat the hobgoblins (and minotaurs).

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP

Encounter 4: the Scholar

Defeat Vernas Urenth.

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP

Encounter 7: The Emergence

Defeat the undead.

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP

Story Award

Attempt the tests.

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	120 XP
APL 10	150 XP

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Good roleplaying and investigation.

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	90 XP
APL 8	120 XP
APL 10	150 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 2	300 XP
APL 4	600 XP
APL 6	840 XP
APL 8	1080 XP
APL 10	1320 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasurer.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (that is., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer*, or similar spell to determine what the item does, and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasures from each encounter add it up and that is number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the Gp Gained field of the adventure certificate.

TREASURE KEY:

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 3: Into the Hill

Defeat the hobgoblins (and minotaurs) and strip them of their gear.

APL 2: L: 18 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0
APL 4: L: 40 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0
APL 6: L: 331 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0
APL 8: L: 635 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0
APL 10: L: 635 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0

Encounter 4: the Scholar

Defeat Vernas Urenth and strip his gear.

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of magic missiles* (1st) (25 charges) (Value 56 gp per character).

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of magic missiles* (1st) (50 charges) (Value 113 gp per character); *scroll of hold person* (Value 56 gp per character).

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character); *pearl of power* (1st) (Value 150 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character); *pearl of power* (1st) (Value 150 gp per character); *ring of protection +1* (Value 300 gp per character); *amulet of natural armor +1* (Value 300 gp per character).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character); *pearl of power* (1st) (Value 150 gp per character); *ring of protection +1* (Value 300 gp per character); *amulet of natural armor +1* (Value 300 gp per character); *scroll of acid fog* (Value 248 gp per character); *scroll of flesh to stone* (Value 248 gp per character); *wand of lightning bolts* (8th) (10 charges) (Value 540 gp per character).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: 74 gp
APL 4: 209 gp
APL 6: 631 gp
APL 8: 1535 gp
APL 10: 2571 gp

Adventure Certificate Items

Primary Mark of Death – A mystic mark has appeared on the back of your left hand. Followers of Nerull and other necromancers who see the mark react positively to you as a kindred spirit. You have a +4 circumstance bonus to any Charisma based checks with such individuals. Followers of deities opposed to Nerull react at –4 to all Charisma-based skill checks if they see the mark, even if they don’t recognize its origins.

Secondary Mark of Death – A mystic mark has appeared on the back of your right hand. Followers of Nerull and other necromancers who see the mark react positively to you as a kindred spirit. You have a +2 circumstance bonus to any Charisma checks with such individuals. Followers of deities opposed to Nerull react at –2 to all Charisma-based skill checks if they see the mark, even if they don’t recognize its origin.

APPENDIX I: NPCS

ENCOUNTER 3: INTO THE HILL

APL 8 (EL 9)

🐉 **Minotaur Fighters (3):** Male minotaur Ftr1; CR 5; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 6d8+1d10+28; hp 67; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23 (touch 10, flat-footed 23); Atk +13/+8 melee (2d8+9/x3, huge greataxe) and +7 melee (1d8+3, gore); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./10 ft.; SA Charge 4d6+9; SQ Scent, natural cunning; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Listen +8, Search +6, Spot +8; Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: full plate armor, huge greataxe.

APL 10 (EL 11)

🐉 **Minotaur Fighters (4):** Male minotaur Ftr2/Bbn1; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 6d8+2d10+1d12+36; hp 88; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23 (touch 10, flat-footed 23); Atk +15/+10 melee (2d8+9/19-20/x3, huge greataxe) and +9 melee (1d8+3, gore); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./10 ft.; SA Charge 4d6+9, rage (1/day); SQ Scent, natural cunning; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +7, Jump +6, Listen +8, Search +6, Spot +8; Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greataxe), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: full plate armor, huge greataxe.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE SCHOLAR

APL 2 (EL 3)

🧙 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d4+12; hp 22; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atk +0 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, thrown dagger); SA Spells; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Heal +4, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (undead) +9, Knowledge (Ur Flan history) +9, Spellcraft +9; Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Toughness.

Possessions: dagger, wand of magic missile (1st level) (25 charges).

Spells Prepared* (5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Necromantic): 0 – daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic; 1st – comprehend languages, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd – melf's acid arrow, scare, web.

*Vernas begins combat having already cast *comprehend languages*, *mage armor*, and *shield*.

APL 4 (EL 5)

🧙 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d4+18; hp 34; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/19-

20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, thrown dagger); SA Spells; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Heal +5, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (undead) +11, Knowledge (Ur Flan history) +11, Spellcraft +11; Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (*scare*, *false life***, *vampiric touch*), Toughness.

Possessions: dagger, wand of magic missile (1st level) (50 charges), scroll of hold person.

Spells Prepared* (5/5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Necromantic): 0 – daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic; 1st – comprehend languages, mage armor, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd – melf's acid arrow (2), scare, web; 3rd – haste, flame arrow, vampiric touch.

*Vernas begins combat having already cast *comprehend languages*, *mage armor*, and *shield*.

**See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 6 (EL 7)

🧙 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5/Blood Magus*2; CR 7; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 7d4+24; hp 46; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atk +2 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, thrown dagger); SA Spells; SQ Blood component, stanch, scarification; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (undead) +13, Knowledge (Ur Flan history) +13, Spellcraft +13; Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (*scare*, *false life***, *vampiric touch*), Toughness, Weapon Finesse (touch attack).

Possessions: dagger, cloak of resistance +1, pearl of power (1st).

Spells Prepared* (5/5/5/4; base DC = 13 + spell level; 15 + spell level for Necromantic): 0 – daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic; 1st – cause fear, mage armor, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd – ghoul touch, melf's acid arrow (2), scare, web; 3rd – haste, flame arrow, suggestion, vampiric touch.

Scars Inscribed: cat's grace, false life, flame arrow, slow, vampiric touch.

*Vernas begins combat having already cast *mage armor* and *shield* from his prepared spells, and *cat's grace* and *false life* from his scars spells.

**See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 8 (EL 9)

🧙 **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5/Blood Magus*4; CR 9; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 9d4+30; hp 58; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 13, flat-footed 11); Atk +3 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, thrown dagger); SA Spells; SQ Blood component, stanch, scarification, death knell, blood draught; AL NE; SV Fort

+9, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +10, Concentration +15, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (undead) +15, Knowledge (Ur Flan history) +15, Spellcraft +15; Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (*scare, false life***, *vampiric touch*), Toughness, Weapon Finesse (touch attack), Weapon Focus (touch attack).

Possessions: dagger, cloak of resistance +1, pearl of power (1st), ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1.

Spells Prepared (5/6/5/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level; 16 + spell level for Necromantic): 0 – *daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic*; 1st – *cause fear, grease, magic missile* (2), *obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd – *ghoul touch, melf's acid arrow* (2), *scare, web*; 3rd – *haste, flame arrow, suggestion, vampiric touch*; 4th – *enervation, fear, stoneskin*.

Scars Inscribed: *dispel magic, magic missile, flame arrow, slow* (2), *vampiric touch*.

Blood Draughts*: *blink* (2), *cat's grace, comprehend languages, endurance, false life* (2), *mage armor* (7th level), *shield* (7th level)

*Vernas begins combat having already used *cat's grace, comprehend languages, endurance, false life, mage armor, and shield* from his blood draughts.

**See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 10 (EL 11)

➤ **Vernas Urenth:** Male human Nec5/Blood Magus*6; CR 11; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 11d4+47; hp 81; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 13, flat-footed 11); Atk +4 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d4-1/19-20, thrown dagger); SA Spells; SQ Blood component, stanch, scarification, death knell, blood draught, infusion, gore; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +12, Concentration +18, Heal +8, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (undead) +17, Knowledge (Ur Flan history) +17, Spellcraft +17; Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (*scare, false life***, *vampiric touch*), Toughness, Weapon Finesse (touch attack), Weapon Focus (touch attack).

Possessions: dagger, cloak of resistance +1, pearl of power (1st), ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, scroll of acid fog, scroll of flesh to stone, wand of lightning bolt (8th) (10 charges).

Spells Prepared (5/6/5/5/4; base DC = 14 + spell level; 16 + spell level for Necromantic): 0 – *daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic*; 1st – *cause fear, grease, magic missile* (2), *obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd – *ghoul touch, melf's acid arrow* (2), *scare, web*; 3rd – *haste, flame arrow, suggestion, vampiric touch* (2); 4th – *confusion, enervation, fear, stoneskin*.

Scars Inscribed: *dispel magic, magic missile, flame arrow, slow* (2), *vampiric touch*.

Blood Draughts*: *blink* (2), *cat's grace, comprehend languages, endurance, false life* (3), *mage armor* (8th level), *shield* (8th level), *protection from elements* (8th level) (2).

*Vernas begins combat having already used *cat's grace, comprehend languages, endurance, false life, mage armor, and shield* from his blood draughts.

**See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE ANCIENT ONE

All APLs

➤ **Guardian of the Obelisk (Ghost):** Male human Nec20; CR 22; Medium-size undead (incorporeal); HD 20d12; hp 145; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 22 (touch 16, flat-footed 19); Atk +9/+5 melee touch or +13/+8 ranged touch; SA Spells, manifestation, corrupting gaze, malevolence, telekinesis; SQ Rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +16; Str 8, Dex 16, Con –, Int 27, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +13, Concentration +23, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (Ur Flan history) +28, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Knowledge (undead) +23, Listen +9, Scry +28, Search +16, Spellcraft +28, Spot +9; Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Enlarge Spell, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Necromancy), Still spell.

Possessions: bracers of armor +6, cloak of resistance +3, gloves of dexterity +2, headband of intellect +6, ring of protection +3, ring of wizardry III, rod of absorption, staff of frost.

Spells Prepared (5/7/7/11/7/6/6/6/6/5; base DC = 18 + spell level; 20 + spell level for Evocation, Enchantment, and Necromancy spells): 0 – *daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic*; 1st – *burning hands, cause fear* (2), *charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd – *blindness/deafness, darkvision, flaming sphere, scare, see invisibility, shatter, web*; 3rd – *clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, fireball* (2), *halt undead, haste, lightning bolt* (2), *slow, suggestion* (2); 4th – *confusion* (2), *Evard's black tentacles, fear* (2), *ice storm* (2); 5th – *cloudkill, cone of cold, feeblemind, magic jar, teleport, wall of force*; 6th – *acid fog, disintegrate, flesh to stone, greater dispelling, circle of death, true seeing*; 7th – *delayed blast fireball, finger of death, insanity, Mordenkainen's sword, prismatic spray, spell turning*; 8th – *horrid wilting, maze, Otto's irresistible dance, power word-blind, symbol, trap the soul*; 9th – *energy drain, Mordenkainen's disjunction, power word-kill, timestop, wail of the banshee*.

Description: an elderly man with thinning white hair and as superior look in his eyes. He wears black robes.

APPENDIX II: NEW RULES

FALSE LIFE AS PRESENTED IN *TOME AND BLOOD*

Necromancy

Level: Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V; S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Touch

Target: Living creature touched

Duration: 1 hour/level or until discharged (see text)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You grant yourself limited power to avoid death.

While this spell is in effect, you gain 1d10 temporary hit points, +1 point per level (maximum 1d10+10).

Material Component: A small amount of alcohol or distilled spirits, which you use to trace certain sigils on your body during casting. These sigils cannot be seen once the alcohol or spirits evaporate.

BLOOD MAGUS AS PRESENTED IN *TOME AND BLOOD*

Fad to red, then nothing. What happened? Where are you? No sound, no light, nothing. You can't see or hear, or even feel your own body. The awful truth of your plight steals over you... you're dead!

An eternity passes, then you feel a call from beyond this nothingness. Something beckons, and you are drawn up out of the endless gray, happy to leave your final fate undecided. A swirl of color streaks toward you, enveloping, bathing you. You have come back! A sound breaks into your ears, the sweetest sound you will ever hear. It is the renewed pulse of blood through your veins – blood music: the sound of your life. You can feel it reenergizing every particle of your form, flushing death from you and leaving life in its place. It is thick and warm, and you greedily embrace it.

Blood magi are formerly deceased spellcasters who, when returned to life, gain an understanding of their blood's importance, bequeathed by their close call. They learn to evoke magic from this vital fluid that sustains their lives. A blood magus cannot be trained, owing to the unusual nature of his enlightenment, and is most likely to be a sorcerer. NPC blood magi are thus rarely if ever found in groups but are thinly scattered throughout the population of spellcasters.

Hit Die: d4.

Requirements

To qualify to become a blood magus, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nonlawful

Heal: 4 ranks

Feat: Toughness

Spells: Ability to cast arcane spells of 3rd level or higher.

Special: The blood magus must have been revived after death through another's use of raise dead, resurrection, or other methods of returning life to a dead body.

Class Skills

The blood magus's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Scry (Int, exclusive skill), and Spellcraft (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Blood component, stanch	
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Scarification	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+1	Death knell	
4th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Blood draught	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Infusion	
6th	+3	+5	+2	+2	Gore	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+5	+2	+2	Thicker than water	
8th	+4	+6	+2	+2	Awaken blood	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+6	+3	+3	Homunculus	
10th	+5	+7	+3	+3	Bloodwalk	+1 level of existing class

Class Features

All the following are class features of the blood magus prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A blood magus gains no additional proficiencies in any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: At every second level gained in the blood magus class, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creature feats, hit points beyond those he receives from the prestige class, and so on), except for an increased effective level of spellcasting. If a character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a blood magus, he must decide to which class he adds the new level for purposes of determining spells per day.

Blood Component (Su): A blood magus may substitute a drop of his own blood for a spell's material components, if any. The pinprick or minor knife cut to draw the requisite blood is a free action that becomes a normal part of casting the spell. The magus does not need to make a Concentration check to complete the spell, despite the wound. Using this ability deals the blood magus 1 point of damage but raises the spell's save DC by 1.

Substituting blood for a costly material component requires drawing a greater amount. The blood magus deals more damage to himself when doing so, according to the table below.

Component Cost (gp)	Damage Dealt
1 – 50	5
51 – 300	11
301 – 750	17
750+	23

Stanch (Ex): The blood magus automatically stabilizes his wounds when his hit points drop below 0. He still passes on if he reaches –10 hit points or below.

Scarification (Ex): At 2nd level, the blood magus learns to inscribe spells on his own skin for later use. This involves deeply scratching the skin (which deals no damage but often leaves scars). The scratches remain fresh until the inscribed spell is cast, at which time the minor wound heals normally. Effectively, the blood magus gains the Scribe Scroll feat using an alternative medium (see the *Player's Handbook*). All rules, XP costs, and expenses that apply to Scribe Scroll also apply to this ability. Likewise, "reading" a scar follows the same rules as reading a scroll, but only the blood magus can decipher his own scars.

One's own skin leaves a limited amount of room to easily inscribe and later "read," magical scars. Thus, a blood magus can have only six active scars at any one time.

Death Knell (Sp): At 3rd level, the blood magus gains the spell-like ability to use *death knell* as the spell once per day.

Blood Draught (Ex): At 4th level, the blood magus learns how to store spells of up to 3rd level in his own blood. Effectively, he gains the Brew Potion feat using an alternative medium (see the *Player's Handbook*). All rules, XP costs, and expenses that apply to Brew Potion also apply to this ability, with the following exceptions. Once "brewed," a blood draught remains in circulation within the magus's body. The maximum number of draughts stored at one time is equal to his levels of blood magus plus his Constitution score, but if he is ever slain, they are all immediately ruined – even if the blood magus is subsequently returned to life. Blood draughts are never accidentally lost through major blood loss or by a blood-draining attack.

To consume the draught, the blood magus pricks his skin, automatically bringing forth the desired effect. This is a standard action that draws an attack of opportunity, like drinking a potion. Others can also partake of a given blood draught (if they have a strong stomach) – the blood magus concentrates to draw the desired draught to the surface.

Infusion (Ex): At 5th level, the blood magus prepares a special one-time distillation of his own blood. Partaking of the infusion, he permanently gains 2 points of Constitution.

Gore (Su): At 6th level, a blood magus can draw more blood with any spell that successfully damages a living target. This is a supernatural ability. The blood magus inflicts a minor wound on himself; the pinprick or knife cut is a free action that becomes a normal part of casting the spell. Using this ability deals the blood magus 1 point of damage. The spell becomes "blood seeking" and deals 1d6 points of damage in addition to the damage the spell normally deals, as extra blood is drawn from the wound. The magus does not need to make a Concentration check to complete the spell, despite the wound. The blood magus can use the gore and blood component abilities to enhance the same spell, suffering cumulative damage. This causes a spell that normally takes 1 action to cast to become a full-round action.

Thicker Than Water (Su): At 7th level, the blood magus's vital fluids are partially under his conscious control. When the blood magus is injured, his blood withdraws from the wound, preventing some damage. Thus, he always takes 1 less point of damage than normally indicated. Effectively, the blood magus gains a "hardness" of 1.

Awaken Blood (Su): At 8th level, the blood magus gains the supernatural ability to bestow momentary consciousness on an opponent's blood. Once per day, he can make a melee touch attack against a living foe. If he hits, the opponent's blood attempts to get free – all at once. The hydrostatic pressure disrupts the victim's tissues, dealing 10d10 points of damage. If he misses, the blood magus can try again until he is successful against an opponent. "Conscious" blood returns to its natural state after 1 round.

Homunculus (Sp): At 9th level, the blood magus uses his own blood to give life to a new companion creature – a homunculus. The homunculus created by a blood magus has the same abilities as those listed in the *Monster Manual* but is more robust. It has 6 Hit Dice, its bite attack bonus improves to +5, and its Fortitude save increases to +2, its Reflex save to +4, and its Will save to +3.

To build his homunculus, the blood magus does not use the normal construction rules listed in the *Monster Manual*. The only requirements are 1 hour spent in the ritual and the permanent loss of 1 hit point, as the caster instills more personal blood in his creation than is usual. This stronger link provides a special advantage. The blood magus can transfer his own wounds to the homunculus via touch as a supernatural ability. This is a standard action that allows the blood magus to transfer 1d4 points of damage. No limit exists on the number of times he can take this action, but the blood magus should observe caution: If he transfers enough of his own wounds to his homunculus to kill the creature, its destruction deals him 2d10 points of damage (as noted in the *Monster Manual*). Damage transferred to the homunculus can be cured or healed normally. A blood magus may only have one homunculus created in this fashion at a time.

Bloodwalk (Su): At 10th level, the blood magus is perfectly attuned to the song of blood. He gains the supernatural ability to transport himself great distances via the blood of living creatures. Once per day as a standard action, he can seamlessly enter any living creature whose size equals or exceeds his own and pass any distance to another living creature in a single round, regardless of the distance separating the two. The blood magus merely designates a direction and distance ("a living creature 20 miles due west of here"), and the bloodwalk ability transports him to a destination creature as close as possible to the desired location. He can't specify a named individual as the endpoint unless he has previously obtained a sample of that creature's blood, preserved in a small vial that must be carried on the blood magus's person.

The entry and destination creatures need not be familiar to the blood magus, but they must be alive and possess blood in their veins. (Thus, plants and the more bizarre outsiders are not eligible targets.) The blood magus may not use himself as an entry creature. If the intended entry creature is unwilling, he must hit with a melee touch attack to enter. When exiting a creature, the blood magus chooses an adjacent square in which to appear. Entering and leaving a creature is painless, unless the blood magus wishes otherwise (see below). In most cases, though, the destination creature finds being an endpoint of a magical portal surprising and quite unsettling.

If he desires, the blood magus can attempt to make a "bloody exit" from the destination creature. If the creature fails a Fortitude save (DC 18), the exiting blood magus takes on solidity a little too soon. He bursts forth explosively from the creature's body, dealing 16d6 points of damage. The blood magus must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 13) or take 2d4 points of damage from the shock of his exit.

Except where noted above, this class feature resembles the dryad's ability to move from tree to tree (see *Monster Manual*).

EVENT SUMMARY

Did the party talk to the hobgoblins to get the information?	Yes / No
Did the party find out that the obelisks raise in pairs?	Yes / No
Did the party figure out that the pair to the obelisk is around Critwall?	Yes / No
How many of the tests did the party finish?	One / Two / Three / Four

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☛ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☛ **Miale, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or –6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and –10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—daze, ray of frost, read magic; 1st—mage armor, sleep.

Spellbook: 0—all of them; 1st—charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☛ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☛ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or –1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref –1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level); 0—detect poison, guidance, read magic; 1st—bless, protection from evil*, shield of faith.

* Domain spell; Deity: Pelor; Domains: Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.