

Family Ties

A Two-Round Dungeons & Dragons[®] Living Greyhawk[™]

Regional Introductory Adventure set in the County of Urnst

By Nicholas Carnival, Jean-Philippe “JP” Chapleau & D’Anne
Rooney

Reviewers: All of the above

Playtesters: John Foye, Bard Lower, Murry McEntire, Dennis Stalnaker, Lawrence Thompson

In the wake of the death of the Contessa, a number of contenders to the throne all push their claims forward. But what is the most important thing? Money, influence, information or friendship? The events of this adventure take place AFTER the events of *URC6-05 The Bull and the swan*.

A two-round regional introductory adventure set in the County of Urnst for first-level characters only.

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.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM license, please visit www.wizards.com/d20

This is an official RPGA[®] play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.rpga.com.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, Living Greyhawk, D&D Rewards, RPGA, *Player’s Handbook*, *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc, in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at www.rpga.com.

RPGA® SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D® campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL™ gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

Players Read No Farther

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

Preparing for Play

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5

3	3	4	5	6
4	4	6	7	8
5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10
7	7	9	10	11

- Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs 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 and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

- Enlist a sixth player.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard two-round regional adventure, set in the County of Urnst. Characters from the County of Urnst pay one (1) Time Unit per round, while all other characters pay two (2) Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time

Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check, the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

When Countess Belissica sacrificed herself to save the County in 594CY, the nobles of the County decided upon a successor under pressure from both domestic and foreign sources. A paladin of Heironeous, well-known former adventuress and a distinguished military commander was selected to appease everyone. Baroness Elone Hofre Gellor was crowned Contessa in late 594CY. She had 2 children both about adventuring age. For a time, it seems that a new dynasty was about to begin.

It seems Istus, the Lady of Our Fate, had other plans for the County. And who are we to argue with fate?

Early 596CY... An assassin's blade kills the Contessa's only son, Lord Tristelone. Though justice was swiftly rendered by adventurers, the Hofre-Gellor line was almost extinguished.

Early summer of 596CY... An assassin's blade kills both Contessa Elone Hofre Gellor and her last surviving heir, Lady Cyanna. The two questions on everyone's mind are: "Who did this?" and "Who's next in line to the throne?"

This adventure deals with the second question.

A GAME OF ALLIANCES

The nobles of the County are almost all related to each other through blood or marriage. They are also mixed with the nobility of many neighboring nations: Nyron, the Duchies of Tenh and Urnst and the Bandit Kingdoms.

With the line of the Contessa ending with Lady Cyanna, someone else must be chosen to lead the County. The intermarriage between the major houses of the County means that at least half of the nobles of the County have a valid claim.

However, there is a difference between having a valid claim and the power and influence to back it up. Therefore out of the many candidates, only 4 have sufficient power to make valid bids for the throne.

Many of the County's nobles are wondering who to support, being related to more than one contender. Who they support now will have consequences after the next Count (or Countess) is crowned.

Each of the factions is sending envoys across the County bribing and cajoling their way into obtaining the support of various nobles or factions. In these troubled times, one thing is worth more than gold: information. And in the County few people hold more information than one man: the Lord Mage Jacobus Underley.

THE UNDERLEYS

Lord Jacobus Underley controls a powerful network of spies and informant both in and out of the County known as the Underley network. This network includes adventurers, nobles, artisans, innkeepers, in short anyone who is likely to hear rumors and information. In these times of need, the network is overflowing with information, often contradictory.

The Lord Mage knows just what to do... trickery comes naturally to a spy. And trickery is passed along in the genes.

Lady Melnie Underley, the Lord Mage's eldest daughter (she is the second-born) and a wizard of some power has been given the task by her father to find out as much as she can about the contenders to the throne. As an added difficulty, she cannot call upon the Network to obtain the information. Lord Underley wishes to test his daughter's resourcefulness.

THE TRAP

Lady Melnie has set up a minor merchant, Engbert Farvaren, from Jedbridge, paid him handsomely to bring "spellbooks and rare components" from

Jedbridge to the family estate north of the Copperwood. With the money she promised, half in advance, the merchant understands the sensitive and valuable nature of the cargo. So Engbert hired a small group of adventurers.

Lady Melnie has manipulated a band of evil mercenaries turned bandits into attacking the wagon. Lady Melnie plans to have an agent present to destroy the wagon.

WHY NOT SIMPLY HIRE THE HEROES?

Because of the political situation, if she simply hired the heroes, the family's opponents might learn of it. Her current plan actually blurs her true intentions, at least for a short time.

She knows that after the fact, the merchant will talk and tell everyone about the spellbooks and the components. Most people will assume she is sending the heroes out to collect these items again.

MEANWHILE IN THE COUNTY

Throughout this adventure, four major factions are opposing each other vying for power. The heroes will have a chance to meet all 4 of the contenders.

Lord Terard Duncombe II, is currently the Regent of the County of Urnst. He is pushing forward to have his Council of Peers gather. This Council will occur before the end of 596CY.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

PART ZERO: THE TRAP

Introduction: The heroes are hired as caravan guards to transport something VERY important from Jedbridge to the Underley Estates just north of the Copperwood.

Encounter 1: Ambush: The heroes are attacked by a group of bandits. During the fight, one of the "bandits" (but in fact a member of Lady Melnie's retinue sets fire to the wagon using a fiery arrow, the wagon is filled with alchemist fire to ensure it burns). While the heroes fight, the wagon burns to the ground. The leader of the Caravan asks the heroes to escort him to Lady Melnie's estate so he can try to explain what happened.

Encounter 2: Lady Melnie Underley: The heroes reach the Underley estate. Lady Melnie listens as the merchant details the attack. She insists on being repaid. She explains the spellbooks that were lost in the attack have a very high value and she paid a Dyvers merchant a large sum of money for the book. The caravan leader explains that he cannot repay her, and that he can't even pay the adventurers who defended him valiantly. Lady

Melnie offers a deal to the merchant: she takes the heroes in her employ, and his debt is considered repaid. The merchant agrees and beats a hasty retreat. Lady Melnie tells the heroes that she has a series of mission she wishes them to perform. Upon completion of these missions, the heroes will be free to go as they please, but that until then, they are considered members of his household.

The heroes are given a number of envelopes. Detailing the missions

PART ONE: LORD DANE

Encounter 3: Radigast City: The heroes are sent to meet with Lord Dane. He is supposed to be in Radigast City. The heroes arrive in Radigast and depending on their action, they can obtain the information they want. The city supports Lord Darius Dane, who they see as the most stable and best politician of all. He and his family have a good reputation as advisors and military generals.

Encounter 4: The bullies: as the heroes go about their investigation, they are attacked by a group of thugs working for Dyversian interests.

Encounter 5: Good ol' boys: the heroes are attacked by some thieves of the Birds of Prey thieves' guild.

Encounter 6: The Lord Chamberlain: The heroes meet with Lord Dane. The Lord receives them. This is one occasion for the heroes to get to know the man and his ambitions.

PART TWO: LADY RACHEL

Encounter 7: Trigol: City of Intrigue: the heroes investigate in Trigol and discover that the city's support is mixed, but the Baron supports his cousin Lord Agnard.

Encounter 8: The Nyrondeese: while in Trigol, the heroes are attacked by Nyrondeese spies who want to learn more about Lord Underley.

Encounter 9: A blinding parade: the heroes are confronted by a group of devout Pholtan worshippers. This encounter can turn violent or be resolved peacefully.

Encounter 10: The Knight Paragon: The heroes meet with Lady Rachel at Knight's Hold a short distance away from Trigol. The Knight Paragon receives them in a militaristic fashion. The heroes have a chance to get to know the woman.

PART THREE: LORD AGNARD GELLOR

Encounter 11: Stone Battle: The heroes travel to Stone Battle by to the Fennelmore swamp. The city itself is quite calm, and the banners of the Gellor fly everywhere. Everyone in town wonders

why anyone but their Archbaron could become Count.

Encounter 12: An Archbaron in trouble: As the heroes are about to finish their investigation in Stone Battle a mounted sergeant rides by them and orders them to follow him that he needs soldiers to help the Baron. The heroes are free to help or not. The baron was leading a group of soldiers one the Floating Road when he was attacked by a band of undead. The heroes fight the avant-garde of the undead.

Encounter 13: The Archbaron: The heroes fight a second wave of undead and save the baron.

Encounter 14: The Gellor Patriarch: The Baron talks to the heroes. This is the one occasion for the heroes to get to know the man and his ambitions.

PART FOUR: DUKE GELLOR

Encounter 15: Getting to Ventnor: On their way to the stockade, the heroes are attacked by hungry rats.

Encounter 16: The gates of Ventnor: Before entering Ventnor, the heroes have to pay a special tax to enter. If they pay the tax, they are allowed in; otherwise, they have to fight their way in.

Encounter 17: Ventnor: Lady Melnie sends the heroes to Ventnor Stockade to investigate a series of rumors. The heroes see Ventnor Castle being rebuilt by the Duergar's goblin slaves. At the stockade, they can see a number of merchants and adventurers, many of them from the Bandit Kingdoms. The heroes hear of Duke Gellor who could be a good choice for Count, but he is somewhere in the BK hiding from luz.

Encounter 18: The Duke's Envoy: The heroes meet Sir Vermont one of Duke Gellor's agent.

PART FIVE: EPILOGUE

Encounter 19: Back to the Underley Estate: When the heroes have gathered all the information requested by Lady Melnie, she thanks them for their efforts and sets them free.

Conclusion: The heroes receive their rewards (or not).

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

It is important to know when starting this adventure

- Any County meta-organization the heroes belong to.

- Whether or not the heroes are retainers of one of the houses of the County.
- Whether the heroes have any favors or enmity with any of the major houses of the County (Dane, Duncombe, Gellor, Torquann or Underley).

Part Zero: The Trap

INTRODUCTION

There is a big difference between a life of adventure and the life of a caravan guard. As a child, you remember watching adventurers hiring as caravan guards, thinking. "Wow! That must be the life".

It was with some satisfaction that you signed up as a guard for the Farvaren Merchant house, a small merchant house operating mostly around Jedbridge in the northeast of the County.

Allow the heroes to introduce themselves. They have been on the road for a few days together.

Engbert Farvaren, a Flan merchant in his 40s with a girth that can't be described as modest, was in need of guard to carry some "sensitive" material. The pay is decent, 100 nobles each, to escort a wagon from Jedbridge to some place in Ventnor. Engbert would not reveal your final destination to you.

Engbert has been complaining all through the trip about one thing or another. Clearly, the man is not used to leaving his counter...

If the heroes are in a role-playing mood, feel free to play a little of the trip with Engbert constantly complaining. However, beneath this, he is a very decent man and quite friendly.

The wagon should measure 15ftx10ft. This ensures it cannot turn on itself.

ENCOUNTER 1: AMBUSH

You are now in the Copperwood, in the barony of Ventnor. These woods are known to be hunting ground for humanoids from across the Artonsamay. Devils and demons who escaped Ventnor Castle during the war are also known

to prowl these woods. More recently, rumors of Duergar patrols or Duergar-led groups of humanoids have begun circulating.

Passing a turn in the road, 150 feet ahead of you, a fallen tree blocks the way. A group of three people, two men and a woman are standing around it. As they see you, they turn to face. One of the men, holding a heavy flail steps forward and calls out.

"Leave the cart where it is. We have no desire to fight with you. Leave the cart where it is and by Hextor, you will keep your lives."

Call for Spot checks DC 25 to Spot a lone man hiding in the distance, in the forest (this is the archer sent by Lady Melnie, not the Hextorite archer).

The heroes have a choice to make. Engbert is already hiding under the cart, shaking like a leaf. Leaving now would be anti-heroic (to say the least).

The road is 20 feet-wide with many trees around. It should be possible for the heroes (but not the wagon) to pass through them. Consider the woods around them to be light forest.

APL2 (EL3)

Gareth & Liemm: Male Oeridian War1, hp11 each, see Appendix One.

Anya: Female Oeridian Rgr2, hp15, see Appendix One.

Tactics: The bandits hide behind the fallen log for cover and snipe at the heroes. The bandits are after the wagon, and should the heroes flee, they allow the heroes to flee (as long as they leave the wagon).

This encounter can be difficult. However the heroes have a number of strategies they could use to make the encounter a lot easier. Examples include: using the trees as cover to advance on the bandits, exchanging sniper fire from behind the wagon. Anything that could give them an advantage should be rewarded with success or positive circumstance bonuses.

Treasure:

APL2: L: 134gp; C: 0gp; M: 0gp;

Development: These bandits were part of a larger force that was crushed at Durwich in Pikemaster a few months earlier. They have since turned to banditry and been somewhat successful.

Of the 3, only Gareth is a Hextorite, Liemm and Anya don't really care, and are in it for the money.

If any of them are captured and interrogated, they say they have been hired by a man in Ventnor Stockade who told them they would each be paid 1,000 nobles if they brought back the content of the wagon to Ventnor Stockade. They were told to avoid killing anyone, if possible.

WE SAVED THE WAGON! OH NO!

If the heroes saved the wagon, while they are either looting or interrogating the Hextorites, 3 fiery arrows land on the wagon, setting it ablaze immediately. Within seconds, the content of the wagon is reduced to ashes.

Normally the content would not burn down as fast. However, the spellbook was treated with a special alchemical solution that makes it very easy to burn. The solution is such that a *create water* spell will not extinguish it (think magnesium fire).

Proceed to Encounter 2: Lady Melnie Underley.

TROUBLESHOOTING: LET'S GO AFTER THAT MAN IN THE WOODS!

If they made the Spot check earlier they may decide to try and go after the man hiding in the woods. In that case, the man uses his fiery bow and Rapid Shot to send a volley of arrows into the wagon which immediately bursts into flame. Engbert calls for the heroes to help, flailing his arms in all directions, but accomplishing very little.

The man is a high-level (8th) ranger. It is very unlikely the heroes can follow him through the thick patch of thorn bushes that is about 20ft behind him.

The man escapes without talking to the heroes. Once the heroes give up the chase, proceed to Encounter 2: Lady Melnie Underley.

TROUBLESHOOTING: WE'RE OUTTA HERE!

It is possible the heroes (or some of the heroes), decide to flee, leaving the wagon. In that case, Engbert flees with them. The bandits take any money they can find on the fallen heroes, but leave their equipment. EXCEPT for any holy symbols of Heironeous, which they leave defiled a few yards away (and will need to be repurchased).

Proceed to Encounter 2: Lady Melnie Underley.

ENCOUNTER 2: LADY MELNIE UNDERLEY

At this point, the heroes have either abandoned the wagon to the bandits or it was burned down by the hidden archer.

Engbert pleads to the heroes to accompany him to their destination, the Underley estate. Engbert insists that if he and the heroes do not appear before Lady Melnie, that they are as good as dead.

To give you an idea of Engbert state of mind, picture someone who has to report to the Godfather (your choice of Michael or Vito Corleone) that he failed him. Engbert is absolutely terrified, but he thinks it might be better to tell Lady Melnie in person. He asks the heroes to protect HIM until he can leave the estate. He doesn't have the money to pay them, but he'll pay them upon returning to Jedbridge.

Again the heroes have a choice to make. If they decide to abandon Engbert, proceed to "Abandon Engbert", otherwise, proceed to "We'll go with you".

ABANDON ENGBERT

The heroes abandon Engbert. A day later, a group of adventurers (if the players have other characters belonging to the network, then use these) approach the heroes, backed by a dozen soldiers wearing the livery of the County.

If there is no character that could fit, then use Merik, a priest of St Cuthbert working for Lord Underley.

"You are under arrest, by order of the baron of Ventnor. Stealing his property is not something he allows on his land. Come peacefully and you will be given a chance to explain yourselves."

The heroes don't really have a choice, but if they want to fight, they lose. Don't waste time rolling dice. The adventure is over for them as Lady Melnie has them rot in his dungeons for 6 months (26 TUs). Proceed to the Conclusion under "Underley's guests"

If they come peacefully, continue with the following.

Unlike most baronial manors, the gates to the Underley Estate are guarded not by soldiers wearing the livery of House Underley, but by a rag-tag assembly of adventurers.

[Name of one of the members of the Network or Merik] **asks you to leave your weapons and spell components at the door and to dispel any magic currently active you may have.**

Note: we KNOW it is doubtful the heroes have any magic active on them (with the possible exception of *mage armor* spells). However this is a standard warning.

When the heroes surrender their weapons, proceed to “Meet the Lady”.

WE’LL GO WITH YOU

Engbert thanks you the rest of the way, thanking your compassion, your generosity and your friendship.

Unlike most baronial manors, the gates to the Underley Estate are guarded not by soldiers wearing the livery of House Underley, but by a rag-tag assembly of adventurers.

Engbert mutters to a short man wearing studded leather with a rapier at his side. The man asks you to leave your weapons and spell components at the door and to dispel any magic currently active you may have.

Note: we KNOW it is doubtful the heroes have any magic active on them (with the possible exception of *mage armor* spells). However this is a standard warning.

When the heroes surrender their weapons, proceed to “Meet the Lady”.

MEET THE LADY

You are led by two adventurers into the Manor. The first is a short man in studded leather and the other one is a Halfling in leather armor.

Without turning around, the man says to you “When you meet Lady Melnie, I say you be polite.” He doesn’t say more and responds to questions with a groan. The Halfling simply eyes you suspiciously without saying a word.

After a series of corridors and chambers, the man knocks on a door. The door opens by itself. Beyond is a simple sitting room. Flanked by two powerful mastiffs, sits a young woman idly thumbing a book. She is of mixed Oeridian heritage in her early 20s whose black hair flows down to her shoulder. Behind her two massive guards stand. One a Suel with a great axe strapped to his back, the other is a horrible half-orc in full plate armor.

“Ah! At last... I think we should talk... I am Melnie Underley, the Baron’s daughter. Where

are my new spellbooks?” She says matter-of-factly.

Engbert whines the story in a way that makes it impossible to understand. Lady Melnie interrupts him and looking at the heroes asks them to detail what happened.

If Engbert is not present and the heroes are in custody, Lady Melnie asks them for their version of events.

At this time, Lady Melnie does NOT answer questions. She listens to whatever they wish to tell him. She ignores rude individuals and direct insults. Once the heroes are done telling Lady Melnie their side of the story, call for a Diplomacy check (but the result is irrelevant). Read the following.

Lady Melnie ponders for a second. “Whether what you say is true or not, I’m not entirely sure... What I know is that I am now short a number of favors... I need a group of adventurers, and one falls onto my lap.”

If Engbert is present, add.

“You, I have no further need of you. Your fate will be determined by these young adventurers. Now go!” Engbert gives you an imploring look as he leaves the room without turning his back to Lady Melnie.

To all:

“I have signed a death warrant for treachery and banditry in the barony of Ventnor...” Lady Melnie smiles... “Don’t worry I have no intention of delivering them to the Knights of the Swan or the army. That is, unless you fail me.”

“Do I make myself clear?”

Lady Melnie is not joking nor does she leave any doubt that she will do as she said. Any Sense Motive done on her reveals as such. At this point, Lady Melnie agrees to answer questions.

Playing Lady Melnie: Lady Melnie is a woman used to power. Her family has the service and loyalty of many powerful adventurers both in and outside the County. She is a wizard of some power and she inherited her father’s a natural affinity for politics. The woman sweats confidence. She speaks in a slow and calm manner. She does not threaten with anything she can’t back nor does she make a show of her magical aptitudes.

- **Why are you doing this?** Who is it that failed in the first place? I offer you a chance to

redeem yourself in my eyes. It is a strong possibility that young people like you have been bribed by unscrupulous agents to allow the theft of my property.

- **Who do you think you are?** I am the Lord Baron's daughter, member of House Underley and member of the Obsidian Conclave. You have committed a series of crimes on my father's lands. Who are you going to complain to? The Contessa?
- **What is it you want us to do?** I have a series of simple tasks. Gathering information and reporting it to me, I think you can do that.
- **Doesn't your father have a network of informant for this?** Yes, like every noble in the County. But I need adventurers for this task.
- **What about those adventurers guarding your estate?** These are required for our own protection. In case you haven't noticed, the County is not safe for a woman like me.
- **What do we get in return?** Your lives... Trust me, there is nothing I would like more than destroying those warrants.
- **Why don't you?** I'm still not convinced you aren't guilty.
- **What do you get out of this?** A replacement for the cargo you failed to protect.
- **How long do we have to serve you?** Until you have completed the tasks I have for you.
- **Will this violate any moral code?** No.
- **Can these tasks put us in any more trouble?** No.
- **What if we refuse?** I'll give these to my father's seneschal who will swiftly administer justice. Please, let's be reasonable.
- **Do YOU want to become Countess?** HAHAHA Heavens no! House Underley is not powerful enough to gather the support needed. Plus, I'm perfectly happy as a baron's daughter.
- **Are you married?** No, not yet.

The heroes CAN refuse Lady Melnie. However, Lady Melnie does NOT have them executed. She sends her goons after them to subdue them. Don't waste time rolling dice, the heroes loose. The adventure is over for them as Lady Melnie has them rot in her dungeons for 6 months (26 TUs).

Proceed to the Conclusion under "Underley's guests"

When they agree, proceed to "The Tasks".

THE TASKS

Lady Melnie pulls out four small envelopes. She hands them to you.

"The envelopes include the four missions I need you to complete in order to be free of me. Notice they have no names or anything on them. You are to open them one at a time. Complete the mission before opening the next one. These envelopes are magically linked together."

"When you are done, report back to me, and I will dispel any ties that bind you to me. Understood?"

Lady Melnie is again willing to answer questions (see above). When they heroes are done, she bids the heroes farewell as they are escorted out of the Estate by the two goons.

THE LETTERS

It is important, at this point to explain to you the letters. They have been magically imbued, but with a divination spell that lets Lady Melnie know which one and where it has been opened. They radiate a faint aura of divination magic.

Nothing prevents the heroes from opening them all at once.

THE INTERLUDES

The next four parts of the adventure include one or more interludes. These mini-encounters happen on the road while the heroes travel between cities. They are designed to give some of the flavor of the County.

If you are running this with a time limit, you may want to skip them. They are definitely optional events.

Part One: Lord Darius Alan Dane

INTERLUDE 1: THE SUN-PRIEST

The heroes encounter a priest of Pelor named Edmund sitting by the side of the road. He seems to be resting, enjoying the sunshine.

He tells the heroes that he is waiting to meet with a group of adventurers who should join him in a few days. He says that, along with a few fellow worshippers of Father Pelor, they are headed to the Gray Hills to explore a series of Cairns Malachite has apparently fouled.

If asked where he is going, the priest refuses to say, telling the heroes that they should gain some experience before taking on the Mad Lich's forces. Edmund works for Bishop Andre Trabreaux and Lady Rachel Duncombe in fighting Malachite.

When playing Edmund, he talks down to the heroes, in a paternalistic manner. He uses phrases like "kids like yourself" or "when you become seasoned adventurers". Edmund is a good guy but like most veteran adventurers speaks down to the "newbies".

APL2 (EL6)

Edmund of Pelor: Clr6

INTERLUDE 2: THE AGITATOR

This young priest of Trithereon called Bort has set up a small podium by the side of the road and he calls out to any who wants to hear that the murders of the Gellor family was a sign from the Heavens that the County should turn away from the stuffy worship of Heironeous and declare the Summoner as the state religion.

Think of a TV evangelist who justifies everything by the (often-changing) whims of Trithereon. This man is quite convinced of what he is saying and cannot be deterred.

APL2 (EL2)

Bort of Trithereon: Clr2, AL CG

ENCOUNTER 3: RADIGAST CITY

WORD ON THE STREET

In this section, the heroes can get some hints as to where to look for information by making a Gather Information check with a variable DC. Making a check takes 1d4+1 hours. Give a +1 bonus for each gp spent, to a maximum of +4.

- **DC5** Radigast is the most beautiful city on Oerth. Its architecture is unique in that it combines all sort of style into one harmonious whole.

- **DC6** the Count's palace is located in the center of town. It is currently occupied by the Knights of the Swan and the Lord's Fists. The Regent has returned to Charn where he holds court.
- **DC7** the Council of Lords still gather together at the Temple of Pelor, in spite of the Regent's edict. All of them back Lord Dane, except Lord Underley who has barely been seen.
- **DC8** The temple of Pelor is still trying to divine the next Count, despite the Regent's commands.
- **DC9** when Lord Duncombe took over, I thought there would be hell to pay, but so far his regency has been rather benevolent. What a strange man!
- **DC10** Lord Dane's family is known to worship Heironeous. Lord Darius Dane however is a known Zilchian.
- **DC11** The Gellors have ruled us for many years. However, I think Lord Dane would make a very good Count.
- **DC12** Lord Dane's family has a long history of serving the Gellors. They are loyal and gifted politicians. They have a house on the Hill here in Radigast
- **DC13** Following the Council's defeat, most of the mercenaries were hired by Sir Whittenbock and headed to Starkwall.
- **DC14** the Lord Mayor, Dekram Gellor is a staunch supporter of the Lord Dane.
- **DC15** The temple of Zilchus has made a number of loans to Lord Dane. I think there might be something there.
- **DC16** The Birds of Prey (Radigast's thieves' guild) have become very aggressive lately. It's like they want to run the place.
- **DC17** the Knights of the Swan are no longer a cohesive unit. They have broken up into three factions. Most of those in Radigast are loyal to Lady Rachel Duncombe.
- **DC18** With Lord Duncombe's departure from Radigast, crime has gone unchecked in town. Colonel Relova who was given command doesn't care about the population, only about the nobles.

- **DC19** many of the Nobles in town have assured their fealty to Lord Dane. I think they just want to keep their privileges.
- **DC20** Lord Dane has been paying for improvements in the seedier districts of Radigast. The slums may soon disappear.
- **DC21** Lord Dane's parents are currently in Leukish, gathering support for their cause.
- **DC22** the King of Nyrond has sent a number of emissaries to all the contenders. He demands the return of the Barony of Starkwall to Nyrond. All of the contenders refused, the Embassy is now closed.
- **DC23** Lord Duncombe is trying to put his daughter on the throne. He will stop at nothing to do so.
- **DC24** Lord Underley is rarely in Radigast. I heard he works with demons to find the murderer of the Contessa.
- **DC25** Lord Dane and the Lord Mayor met with the envoys of the King of Nyrond. The King's envoy slammed the doors and left looking more than a little angry. Dane has also met with a number of merchants from Ahlissa, who have just opened an embassy.

KNIGHTS OF THE SWAN & LORD'S FISTS

Both of these groups are based around the Palace. Lord Duncombe has left a trusted soldier in charge of the garrison: Colonel Relova. Heroes wishing to speak with either of these groups are quickly shown to the Colonel. The men themselves are on active duty.

The Colonel is human man. He served Lord Duncombe during the Civil War. During the battle of Radigast, he commanded a large number of troops who had moved into the city. (*URC4-02 the Making of a Lord*)

At the second battle of Radigast (*URC6-05 the Bull and the Swan*), he was given a command on the left wing of the Regent's army.

Colonel Relova is a competent man, but understaffed. He has never had to command something as large as the garrison of Radigast City. He has no problem with the Knights of the Swan or the Lord's Fists, but the city guard and the Dyvarna troops have been less than cooperative. Therefore, he has kept his loyal troops at the most important locations: the Palace, main temples and to protect the major nobles of

Radigast (including Lord Dane). The Colonel is not well-liked by the populace.

The Colonel is very busy and only agrees to see the heroes because of their writ by Lady Melnie. The Colonel knows the following things:

- The populace of Radigast City is strongly behind Lord Dane and his bid to power
- Lord Dane has received a number of foreign envoys, including people from the Duchy, Nyrond and far away.
- The local garrison is not responding to his authority. They have refused or delayed following his orders many times.
- He knows that foreign interests are converging on Radigast. He believes Nyrond, the Duchy, Greyhawk, Iuz and Dyvers all are trying to further their agenda.
- There are no purges or retaliation made on anyone, as per Lord Duncombe's orders.
- As per Lord Duncombe's orders he has placed Knights of the Swan to guard important locations and persons.
- To any member of the College of the Divine meta-org and a worshipper of Heironeous, St Cuthbert, Pelor or any warrior-god, or Knights of the Swan or Members of House Duncombe, he confides that he fears Radigast may explode into open rebellion if a new Count isn't chosen. Though he has the military might to quell a rebellion, he fears that doing so might make the situation worse.

LORD MAYOR DEKRAM GELLOR

The Lord Mayor of Radigast lives in town. His house is very easy to find. Two soldiers from the Lord's Fist stand guard outside the door. The outside of the house is somewhat ordinary, the inside is richly decorated, somewhat reminiscent of a 17th century baroque décor.

The servants immediately usher the heroes to meet with the Lord Mayor once they are presented with the letter from Lady Melnie.

***"Milord, envoys from the Underley Estate..."
The servant calls out through the door before opening it.***

An Oeridian man in his 50s with graying hair is seated at a desk that's covered with papers. He stands and approaches you his hand extended in friendship. "Excellent, tell

me did Lord Underley succeed. Does he have everything in hand?"

The Lord Mayor does not explain his words and is somewhat puzzled to see Lady Melnie's note. At that point he realizes the heroes are not the heralds he was expecting and he returns to being somewhat aloof.

The Lord Mayor is willing to share the following information. Do remember that he wishes to show Lord Duncombe and any of his supporters in a negative light. The Lord Mayor is very engaged politically.

- His support is to Lord Darius. He has worked closely with the Lord Chamberlain and he has the greatest respect for him.
- Being a Gellor, he does also support Lord Agnard.
- He is strongly opposed to Duke Gellor (he can't hold on to his domain) and Lady Rachel (he doesn't want Lord Terard to be in charge).
- Envoys of the King of Nyronnd did approach him. They wanted the barony of Starkwall returned to the crown, but Lord Dane refused stating it was acquired by treaty. The envoys did threaten war, but Lord Dane remained undaunted. The Nyronndese ambassadors have left the City, leaving the Embassy vacant.
- Many people believe King Lynwerd is behind the Contessa's murder.
- His city is on the verge of rebellion, due to the occupation by Lord Duncombe's forces.
- He hints that Lord Duncombe wishes to move the Capital to the Archbarony of Eastmarch.
- He WAS present when the Contessa was killed, but he was too far away to do anything and that "wall of Knights prevented him from seeing."
- He knows that many foreign powers are trying to increase their power in Radigast. He is aware that Dyvers, Greyhawk and Iuzians are very active.
- He did see Lord Nimar amongst the crowd, but was not able to speak to him.

LORD DARIUS ALAN DANE

Proceed to Encounter 6: The Lord Chamberlain.

TEMPLE OF PELOR

The temple of Pelor is very active. People walk in and out on a regular. While most people are here for healing and guidance, there is a number of the Lord's Fists standing guard outside. The atmosphere here is calm and peaceful. The Temple of Pelor in Radigast is definitely one of the largest temples in all of the County of Urnst (so claim the Pelorites, who may be right). Only the Halls of Heironeous in Count's Markham may challenge its sheer size.

If the heroes mention they are here to enquire about the research done by the temple or if they show Lady Melnie's writ, they are brought into the Everbright Chapel, where they meet with Agnes Veltuer, a Priestess of Pelor.

The Everbright Chapel received its name from the numerous permanent *daylight* spells that light it. It is used a lot by priests researching points of doctrine and in special cases, research important to the County.

Agnes is a Suel woman beyond her 60s. She is the lore mistress of the Church of Pelor. She has left the family practice of commerce to devote herself to knowledge and Father Pelor. She lives a life of fasting and prayer. When the heroes are shown in, she has drawn a family tree identical to Player handout 1: The contenders. She stands to greet the heroes in a polite fashion and invite them to make a short prayer before they get down to business. She then is willing to answer questions. Play her as a grandmotherly figure, everything she says is said as if she was confiding a secret.

- She cares little for politics. She just wishes to find who Father Pelor thinks is the best choice. So far she has not been able to decide from the 4 contenders. She doesn't know whether all the choices are bad OR if all the choices would be good.
- Yes, Lord Duncombe himself has ordered her to stop this research, and she is willingly disobeying him. Who is he to command the will of Father Pelor?
- She has met with Lord Dane and Lord Agnard's daughter (who is a priestess of Father Pelor). She has fond memories of both.

TEMPLE OF ZILCHUS

Like most temples of the Money Counter, the temple of Zilchus in Radigast is a walled enclave with many guards wearing plumed helmet, half-plate and carrying halberds.

There is nothing of value to learn here. The priests refuse to discuss any contracts or arrangements with other clients, such as Lord Dane.

THE BIRDS OF PREY (RADIGAST'S THIEVES' GUILD)

If you haven't run the heroes through Encounter 4: The bullies or Encounter 5: Good ol' boys do so now.

Finding the Birds of Prey is easy. Finding someone who knows something and is willing to tell the truth is a different story... To meet someone important, at least one of the heroes needs to be a member of the Birds of Prey or any non-rival guild in the Shadow network. Otherwise, the heroes need to succeed a Gather Information or a Knowledge (local/nmr) check DC15. Finally, the heroes may spend 10 nobles (gp) AND go through Encounter 4: The bullies or Encounter 5: Good ol' boys first.

The meeting with one of the Birds of Prey takes place in a dark alley, close to the Temple of Norebo. A man calling himself Alfred "the Shovel" (for the time he killed an imp with it during the Siege of Radigast) who carries a shovel over his shoulder meets them.

Alfred tells the heroes that someone from abroad is pouring a lot of money to take control of the Birds of Prey. He is pretty much convinced that the Guild's #1 rival, the Trigol-based Black Claw isn't responsible. That kind of operation requires more patience, money and manpower than the 'Claw can muster. He suspects one of the following may be responsible: the Ahlissans, the Dyversians or the luzians. However, he believes the first 2 may be more likely.

EMBASSY OF THE DUCHY OF URNST

The Ducal embassy is located near the Count's Palace. The Bear rampant on a green field flies over the embassy.

The ambassador is not available to receive the heroes, but the heroes can ask questions around the embassy.

- The Duchy itself has a succession crisis. However, the whereabouts of Duke Karll are unknown as present. There is a power struggle between the Duke's sons and the Lord Regent.
- The Duchy is more or less interested in the internal politics of the County.

- The Duchy has no intension to intervene as long as things in the County don't spill to neighboring regions.
- The Duchy could be satisfied with any of the pretenders.

EMBASSY OF NYROND

The Nyrondeese embassy is closed and it is guarded by a few local mercenaries in Nyrondeese employ. They only know that their employers want to keep people out of the complex. A sign nailed to the door reads "Closed until further notice". Someone painted in large red letters "Murderers" on the doors.

There is nothing for the heroes to find here.

EMBASSY OF AHLISSA

The "embassy of Ahlissa" is a misrepresentation. The County maintains distant relations with the Overking's nation, and as such there isn't an ambassador in the County however. Everything about this place is run just like an embassy.

The "embassy" really is the Radigast base for the Royal Merchant Guild. This building has been recently completed. Immaculately-groomed Ahlissan soldiers clad in green and gold tabards over chain mail with halberd and bucklers stand guard. One of them, obviously an officer clad in a banded mail with a longsword and a buckler, patrols the perimeter to inspect the soldiers on a regular basis.

They politely salute every passerby with their foreign accents. A few of young girls hide in the nearby recesses eyeing the soldiers and giggling when a guard returns a wink or a smile.

The officer is very business-like but extremely polite and speaks with a foreign accent. He enquires who the heroes wish to see and if they have an appointment, since the heroes have none, he can arrange one for later in the day. Once satisfied, he asks the heroes to follow him inside.

The inside of the Royal Merchants Guild has the overstuffed look and feel of opulence. The barely-completed walls have many frescoes depicting merchants trading with people from around the Flanaess throughout history. Gold, gold, gold its color covers each surface! Many beautiful statues of attractive men and women have gold bracelets or tiaras. It is more than obvious that the Ahlissans have a lot of gold.

The officer knocks on a door before showing you in. Beyond, an Oeridian man in his 40s dressed with perfect taste but a size

too small sits in an overstuffed chair. His shirt hugs his body very tightly and forms patterns of 8s on his belly. From his neck hang no less than 10 gold chains; his fat fingers appear even bigger with the many bejeweled rings that adorn them.

With a groan, the man stands up from his chair and approach, extending a friendly hand. "Welcome to the Royal Merchant Guild of Ahlissa's house in Radigast! My name is Purmur Volksmeer of House Volksmeer. May I offer you something to drink? Wine? An ale perhaps?"

Purmur is anxious to know what the heroes are here for.

They can learn the following:

- Purmur IS the local leader of the Ahlissans.
- He has invested a lot of his own money in the Radigast venture and he hopes this will make his fortune.
- The Royal Merchants' Guild has been trying to find a stable port in the Nyr Dyv for years. They hope the new Count will give them trade rights and lowered tax rates.
- The establishment of their current base has been made possible through intense negotiation with the *then* Lord Chamberlain Lord Darius Dane with the sanction of Contessa Elone.
- They are NOT the Ahlissan government, though the Ahlissan government of Overking Xavener is interested in the current situation. (Purmur mentions that he believes the Overking and Nyrond don't like each other and the current crisis between the County and Nyrond interests the Overking).
- They speak highly of Lord Dane as a diplomat and hope he will be the new Count. The merchants have met with Lord Dane on a number of occasions, and both parties are quite friendly to each other.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE BULLIES

With the current state of flux in Urnstian politics, some foreigners come in and try to make some easy money. As the heroes pass through a crowded alley (15 feet-wide), two thugs working for Dyversian money come up from behind the party. Allow a Sense Motive or Spot check DC15

to notice the two men before they spring their attack.

APL2 (EL2)

Groushky: Male Rhenee War2, hp20; see Appendix One.

Baldwin & Myrel: Male Oeridian Rog1, hp12 each; see Appendix One.

Tactics: Both try to take on easy targets first using their saps. They try to flank to allow Baldwin & Myrel to use their sneak attack. They stick to their saps, switching to their clubs only if disarmed.

Treasure:

APL2: L: 4gp; C: 96gp; M: 0gp;

Development: the heroes could bring the thugs to a number of local authorities, or leave them there. Because of the state of unrest, no charges are pressed against the heroes if the thugs are dead, but they are given a stern warning.

If interrogated, the men are willing to trade their freedom for information. They work for a series of wealthy Dyvers merchants (who aren't in town at the moment). The men know VERY little of their employers. However they were asked to mug people and create chaos and havoc. It should be obvious that these men aren't too bright and could have been hired by anyone faking a Dyvers accent.

At another opportune moment, you may spring Encounter 5: Good ol' boys on the heroes.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOOD OL' BOYS

This encounter can only be played AFTER Encounter 4: The bullies has been played by the heroes.

A group of young thieves from the Birds of Prey spot the heroes and somehow get into their heads that they are foreign agents (or agents of Lord Duncombe) trying to spy on the guild. And they decide to do something about it.

This encounter also takes place on the streets, but this time, the street is 20-feet wide and there is no clutter.

"So... spies are ye? We don't like people like you in Radigast. So... who yer werkin for?"

Only at this time do you notice that the street is filled with dirty street bums covered in

thick layers of filthy rags. Though they are unharmed, they seem unhappy, very unhappy.

Though the thugs are initially set on giving the heroes a good beating, they can be convinced not to. If one of the heroes belongs to the Birds of Prey, they can simply wave the thugs away. Otherwise, the heroes must succeed at a Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check DC15

APL2 (EL2)

Bird of Prey street thugs (6): male and female human Com1, hp7 each; see Appendix One

Tactics: Half the thugs try to grapple the heroes, while the other half concentrates on those grappled. They only do non-lethal damage and disperse if the heroes use lethal damage.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN

The Lord Chamberlain's house is located on the Hill district. It is richly decorated. Two Knights of the Swan guard the entrance to the house, there are a number of Broton Banshees, the Elite all-female guard of House Dane guarding the residence.

Seeing Lord Dane is simple, the heroes simply need to present their paperwork at the door. They will be escorted to see Lord Dane.

You enter what must've been a grand salon just a few years ago. The portraits on the walls show Suel men and women in all types of clothing, from military to clerical to scholarly. The Banner they hold varies from the Great Kingdom, to Nyronnd, to the Duchy and finally the White Swan of the County. It seems the Dane family has had a long and prosperous history.

As you admire the gallery, a portly Suel man with a vague resemblance to many of the people on the portraits enters the room. His hair is a dark blonde and his eyes steel-blue.

"Fascinating isn't it? To think that my family has been here almost a millennium! Here are my great-grandparents, Lord Emeris Dane and his wife Lady Anya. They are the parents of Countess Belissica's grandmother."

"Here is my father, Lord Marcus Alan Dane. This is my favorite portrait of him. It was done when he returned from the Wars. He led troops against Ivid's armies during the Greyhawk

wars you know..." The man pauses, admiration evident in his eyes.

"Well I was told that you came on behalf of Lord Underley..."

Lord Dane is very business like and focused. He does not hesitate when he talks. His demeanor is *just* a little tinted by the Suel's arrogance. He radiates power and confidence.

Lord Dane doesn't like Lord Underley. The Lord Mage's manipulations of the Council during the civil war led to Lord Dane's father becoming ill (and he hasn't still fully recovered).

- **Are you Lord Darius Alan Dane?** Yes, I am.
- **Where are your parents?** They are currently in Leukish, in the Duchy of Urnst.
- **Why do you think you have a valid claim to the throne?** As I showed you, I share common grandparents with Countess Belissica.
- **Do you have any special credentials?** Have served under Countess Belissica and Contessa Elone as Lord Chamberlain. In this function I have effectively run the County for the last two years.
- **Do you want to be Count?** Yes, I do.
- **What would you do if you were Count?** There are a number of issues to care of. Lord Underley is as keenly aware of them as I am, maybe moreso.
- **Don't you think Lord Nimar should be crowned Count?** HAAAAHA Lord Nimar should never have been placed as Regent in the first place. I'm not saying he is a bad man, but his political skills are... limited to say the least.
- **Don't you think a Gellor should inherit the title?** House Gellor has had a benevolent rule, but unfortunately, we need a more powerful house to rule now. House Dane has always maintained its independence and a long history of faithful service.
- **What do you know about the murder of the Contessa?** (At this point Lord Dane's tough façade breaks down for a moment) I... I should've seen this coming. I was busy. (He regains his composure) We were all played for fools. And I will NOT let her murder go un-avenged.
- **About the treaty the Contessa signed with the Duergar?** Yes, what about it? It was her last decision as ruler of the County. No one, not even Lord Duncombe, has the power to reverse that, only the next Count. We may not

agree, and trust me, I do not agree with such an alliance. But is the County really in shape to fight the Duergar at this time?

- **What about Nyronde?** What about Nyronde? We are not at war with them and I hope it remains so.
- **What about the Duchy?** I have on good intelligence that they are having their own problems over there. I have no desire to bring their problems here or to intertwine ours with theirs.
- **We heard you were in contact with the Ahlissans...** Yes though Lord Duncombe has dissolved the Council of Lord, I think that I should assure the County's trade future. I have continued talks with the Royal Merchant's Guild of Ahlissa to export our products and import some of theirs.
- **Who do you worship?** I pay homage to the temples of Father Pelor and the Money Counter (Zilchus).
- **What about the rumors that the Contessa turned to Hextor?** That is preposterous. I mean sure, since the death of Tristelone she has been prone to fits of anger and her demeanor changed, but such claims are slanderous!!! The Contessa's blood has barely dried upon the land that slanderers begin to sully her name. Shame on you for spreading these rumors.
- **Who should be the next Count?** Lady Cyanna should've been... Had Lord Duncombe not decided to invade Radigast City, I'm sure we would've found the right person. However, I would make a good choice.
- **Would you gather the Council of Lords?** Yes, I would recall all of them.
- **Do you think any of the other candidates could make good Counts?** Lord Agnard and Lady Rachel are both people I respect very much.
- **Are you married/can you assure the line of succession?** If I become Count, finding a wife will be one of the first things I will need to do.
- **Would you be willing to marry?** Yes, I would.
- **I mean a political marriage!** Yes, I would. The teachings of the Money Counter say that profit may require a little spending.

Part Two: Lady Rachel Duncombe

INTERLUDE 3: THE BOCCOBITE

The priestess of Boccob walks around without looking around. Using an *extended unseen servant*, she holds a book steady in front of her eyes as she reads while walking.

Her name is Bertha, and she hails from Radigast City. Bertha is highly focused on her reading and she ignores people around her, unless disturbed.

The book she is reading is called "Invoking the outer planes: a treatise on elemental summoning and binding, Vol 3 (of 34)". Heroes making a Knowledge (arcana or the planes) or Bardic Knowledge DC 20 know that this book has been declared as dangerous by the Churches of Pholtus and Lydia.

Bertha is interested in knowledge for its own sake, and doesn't care what the other churches think of it. The church of the Uncaring teaches that knowledge is an end in itself. She is heading to Trigol to assist the Bishops.

APL2 (EL10)

Bertha of Boccob: CLR 10; AL N;

ENCOUNTER 7: TRIGOL: CITY OF INTRIGUE

When the heroes arrive in Trigol, they find the city looking like a military camp.

Give the heroes Player handout 4: Map of Trigol. It has a number of interesting locations they may wish to investigate.

While the heroes are doing their investigations, run them through Encounter 8: The Nyronde and Encounter 9: A blinding parade at your convenience.

ABOUT TRIGOL

Trigol has always been a city known for its religious tolerance. The formation of the Pholtan-worshipping Shining Regiment is therefore viewed

with relief by most of the populace. The Pholtan soldiers are disciplined and don't cause trouble.

Trigol's major power comes from the College of the Divine. The College is opened to any religion who does not teach evil or bigotry. Thus almost any religion can be found here. The priests often engage in endless debate over points of religion.

Trigol has received more than its share of refugees from the many conflicts: Tenh, Nyrond Imperium and even some refugees from the Northern County fleeing Lord Duncombe's army. Though many of the refugees have begun returning to their homes, there still is a sizeable community around the city.

Trigol has remained neutral in the conflict between Lord Duncombe and the Council of Lords. But its Baron has not been idle. Tapping on the potential to raise a regiment of loyal troops to House Gellor, he formed levies with the many refugees, promising them citizenship and gold in return for military service. Thus at this point, Trigol is heavily defended and reinforced with fresh troops, even if most of them are still raw recruits.

Pholtan priests here have a good standing. Very few local Pholtans are the fanatical zealots known everywhere. They are generally intelligent and well-informed. Many refugees converted to Pholtus when General Zylynchin sent many preachers to the city (See the Tradewinds series *NMR5-03 Borne upon an ill wind*, *NMR5-05 Winds of change* and *NMR5-08 Fighting the headwind*). Many of the converts chose to remain in or near Trigol.

The population in general isn't very concerned about the selection of the next Count. Most are sympathetic to all. Most of the Nobles back House Gellor because they don't want to lose their privileges.

WORD ON THE STREET

In this section, the heroes can get some hints as to where to look for information by making a Gather Information check with a variable DC. Making a check takes 1d4+1 hours. Give a +1 bonus for each gp spent, to a maximum of +4.

- **DC5** Trigol is the most important city in the South of the County
- **DC10** the College of the Divine is located in the center of town.

- **DC12** the Baron has openly given his support to Lord Agnard Gellor, Archbaron of Fennelmore.
- **DC13** after the murders of the Contessa, the Baron of Trigol, Karsten Hershold Gellor has begun to recruit refugees into his army.
- **DC14** the Knights of the Swan are no longer a cohesive unit of soldiers. They have broken up into a number of factions.
- **DC15** Lady Rachel Duncombe runs and still operates Knight's Hold about 20 miles from Trigol. Since her family has declared her candidate, many Knights have flocked to her banner. The city is well defended by having all these knights and the increased army.
- **DC16** many Pholtans have flocked to the Baron and formed a unit called the "Shining Regiment". These troops are composed mostly of Tenhas and Nyrondese exiles.
- **DC17** Lord Dane and his mother came here last year. He seemed like a good man. He made a speech about the Contessa's alliance with Nyrond. He said something about commerce being the life of the County. I never pay too much attention to those speeches.
- **DC18** a number of Bishops and scholar of the College of the Divine have been pondering over a text that has recently been sent to them.
- **DC19** many of the Nobles in town have assured their fealty to House Gellor. I think they just want to keep their privileges
- **DC20** I heard that many of the head merchants want to support Lord Dane. He seems to be the only one who understands commerce.
- **DC21** the King of Nyrond has sent many spies into the County. He is really interested in the next Count. I believe he wants to involve himself in the County's affair.
- **DC25** the Council of Bishops has called upon Dennen Astralstaff and Lord Nimar Gellor. Lord Astralstaff is here in town meeting with the Bishops. Lord Nimar Gellor has not responded to the summons from the Council of Bishops.

THE TRIGOL ARMED FORCES

Trigol is heavily defended, with troops from House Gellor and the Baron's new levies. Morale is high

and most soldiers don't expect to fight anytime soon.

Most of the soldiers are loyal to the Baron and support whoever he supports. Making a Sense Motive check DC15 while talking to the soldiers reveals that most of them would rather not fight against fellow soldiers from the County. They wouldn't mind fighting against Nyronde.

THE COLLEGE OF THE DIVINE

The major event at the College right now is the discovery of a series of texts. These texts were given by the Baron of Pikemaster, Baron Fennin Duncombe (following the events of *NMR5-02 Mad Baron of Pikemaster*). The greatest scholars of the County, including Dennen Astralstaff are here in town.

The Church of Pelor is mostly involved in the pursuit of Malachite. However, their efforts are currently limited because of the fractioning of the Knights of the Swan.

Lord Agnard's daughter is currently away on pilgrimage and cannot be found during this adventure.

The following churches have placed their backing behind the following candidates. The church of Pelor has many members backing different contenders. As such, the church should be considered "split".

Lord Agnard: Lydia, Pelor (split), Norebo, Trithereon

Lord Darius: Pelor (split), Xerbo, Zilchus

Lady Rachel: Heironeous, Mayaheine, Pelor (split), St Cuthbert

BROTHER MYRTIN (AT THE COLLEGE)

Brother Myrtin, Sir Tarek's friend (**Error! Reference source not found.**) is a priest of St Cuthbert who works for the Underley Network (though the heroes have no way of knowing). Brother Myrtin suffered a grievous injury while fighting the devils during the civil war. As a result, he lost an arm and a leg (the irony of his situation isn't lost on the priest).

Brother Myrtin listens to the heroes and takes notes. He does not tell the heroes what he plans to do with the information, except that "the spies will get the righteous retribution that should come to them."

Brother Myrtin should come across as a friendly and capable man who suspects what everyone says. The only information he can

provide the heroes is about which churches support which candidates (see above).

APL2 (EL8)

Myrtin of the Cudgel: Clr8 (St Cuthbert), AL LG

ENCOUNTER 8: THE NYRONDESE

As the heroes are investigating in town, the heroes are jumped on the street by a group of thugs. These thugs want to subdue the heroes to interrogate them and find out what they know.

This combat takes place in a tight street (15 feet wide). The EL for the encounter has been lowered by one to take into account the tactics of the Nyronde.

APL2 (EL3)

Wilfred: male Oeridian Rog1, hp7; see Appendix One.

Filbert and Ox: male Oeridian Ftr1, hp15 each; see Appendix One.

Tactics: The goons try to block the forward progress of the heroes while the spy appears behind them trying to surprise the heroes.

The Nyronde flee if the heroes attack them with lethal damage. The Nyronde have a number of safe houses nearby that should allow them to escape the heroes. The heroes receive the "Violent Target" AR Reward.

Treasure:

APL2: L: 124gp; C: 0gp; M: 0gp;

Development: If the heroes capture one of the Nyronde agents, they all claim to be working for the temple of Pholtus (they have tokens of Pholtus on them) here to force the heathens into conversion. A Sense Motive check DC15 will reveal it to be false.

Only Wilfred knows who he really works for: a master operating in Trigol. He doesn't know the name nor has he ever seen the man. He receives his orders by messenger.

Filbert and Ox work for Wilfred who they believe is the mastermind.

TROUBLESHOOTING: PRISONER OF THE NYRONDESE

The heroes wake up tied to a chair (Escape Artist DC18) with the Nyronde around them.

(Remember the scene in Pulp Fiction where Bruce Willis wakes up in the store...).

Wilfred asks the heroes the following questions. It is strongly encouraged that you separate the heroes while you do this.

- Who are you?
- Who sent you here?
- What is your current mission?
- What have you discovered?

If anyone gives him any information, he nods as if he already knew. In the end, once satisfied the heroes have told them the truth; they knock the heroes unconscious again and hide them in a pile of trash. They steal nothing from them. The heroes wake up under a pile of foul-smelling trash with 1hp.

ENCOUNTER 9: A BLINDING PARADE

The heroes are walking down a street when a group of worshippers of Pholtus, mostly recent converts decide to throw an impromptu parade, heading towards the temple of Pholtus in the center of town. This parade is headed straight for... the heroes!

Note: "O Blinding Light!" is a common worship song. The tune is famous on Oerth, but those native to Earth can sing along using the tune of "O Canada!"

At first it was just another noise over the street sounds. But now, it begins to form a clear chorus of voices.

***O Blinding Light! To our devoted eyes
Show One True Path that soars to shining
skies.***

***By faith defended, armed with Law,
The Pale undaunted stands,
A blessed beacon, blazing bright
Above all other lands.***

***O Blinding Light! Let saint and heathen
see,***

***Steadfast we march for Pholtan victory.
O Blinding Light, shine forth to victory!***

***As the song ends, you can see that a
number of people are wearing mostly rags but
each of them carry a white piece of cloth. It
seems most of those forming the parade are
disposed and poor. A few better-dressed***

***priests walk among them, motivating the
crowd.***

The Pholtans are not looking for trouble but obviously, they are looking to spread the faith.

***A flan man, wearing breastplate armor and
holding a glowing quarterstaff stops in front of
you and raises a hand in greeting.***

***"May Pholtus's light your path and may
your lives be ordered and peaceful."***

The man looks for any warrior-types or cleric-types in the party. He also looks for any obvious holy symbols. The man is Cierregh of the Tenha (pronounced Kee-rey), a former refugee turned adventurer after converting to Pholtus.

Cierregh is as devout as any Pholtan, but he wishes to prove to his fellow worshippers that Pholtus is superior to all other gods. Due to the faith and strength he found in the Faith, he has become a leader of the local refugees. Cierregh tells the heroes the tenets of the faith (whether they want to hear it or not). You can give them Player handout 5: Tenets of the Faith of Pholtus.

If the party includes a cleric of Pholtus, and the cleric vouches for the other heroes, Cierregh passes along with a respectful bow.

The heroes may try to engage him in a discussion of religion and the intermingling of the faiths, especially here in Trigol. In that case, make an opposed Diplomacy check. The heroes can retry as long as they come up with decent reasoning, up to three times. If Cierregh and the heroes tie or if the heroes beat him, he smiles and says that the heroes are blessed by Pholtus and after a handshake leaves with his followers.

It is possible the heroes try themselves off as worshippers of Pholtus, or willing converts. Have the heroes, make an opposed roll against Cierregh's Sense Motive. On a success, the Paladin walks on, with his followers.

The heroes may try to avoid Cierregh, in that case, he calls them chicken and says they must be agents of Chaos and Evil to flee before the Blinding Light of Pholtus and goads them into a fight.

APL2 (EL3)

Cierregh of the Tenha: male Flan, Pal3; Diplomacy +10, Sense Motive +5; see Appendix One.

Tactics: Cierregh tries to focus his attacks on any clerics of a Chaotic, human deity first. However,

he has no interest in killing the heroes. He only uses non-lethal damage unless the heroes use lethal damage first. In that case, he uses his Power Attack feat to take down those heroes first.

If, during combat any hero falls unconscious, the worshippers of Pholtus pull him away and automatically stabilize the hero.

TROUBLESHOOTING: DEFEATED BY CIERREGH

If Cierregh defeats the heroes, they wake up in the Temple of Pholtus under a Blinding Light. The heroes have been healed up to 1hp. The priests offer the heroes to cure them, at the standard LGCS price. If the heroes can't pay, they may work for the temple to pay for *cure light wounds* spells at a cost of 1TU per *cure* spell. This is a special offer that is NOT available to heroes who are not good or chaotic-aligned (so N, CG and CN can't take advantage of this offer).

During that time, the heroes are sent to do some good works among the poor and the refugees of Trigol. The heroes are assumed to perform these tasks after the completion of this adventure.

Development: If Cierregh falls, he is swarmed by the crowd who gathers his equipment and carries him to the temple to more Pholtan chants. The Pholtans do not bother the heroes.

ENCOUNTER 10: THE KNIGHT PARAGON

Knight's hold is about 20 miles southwest of Trigol overlooking the Franz River. The place is abuzz with Duncombe retainers and Knights of the Swan who have decided to support Lady Rachel's bid for power.

Messengers ride to and fro in an endless stream. The place has definitely grown busier in a few short. Obtaining an audience with Lady Rachel is a long and arduous process. They are asked to wait hours with frequent interrogation as to who there are, why they are here, who sent them, etc.

UNLESS one of the heroes belongs to the following meta-orgs: army of House Duncombe or Knights of the Swan. In that case the heroes have a short wait before being brought before Lady Rachel. (The heroes still get to see Lady Rachel either way.)

An Oeridian woman in her mid 20s her copper hair tied in a tight bun in the back of her head

and wearing the green livery of the Knights of the Swan is seated before a great desk where she reads a letter. Her eyes tell you that sleep has been a commodity she hasn't had much in the last few days.

Four knights dressed in green livery escort you as you approach her. Raising her eyes up from the paper, she says.

"Yes, what is it you want?"

Lady Rachel does not reply to any questions before the heroes answered her. After that she answers the questions of the heroes. Make sure this doesn't drag on too long. Lady Rachel is straight and to the point. She does not want to speak about her father or her relation with him.

Lady Rachel is not overly interested in the title of Countess, but she would take the mantle if it were offered to her.

Lady Rachel has resigned herself to becoming Countess. Her real intention should be unclear, though it is likely that she would not want the crown.

- **Are you Lady Rachel Duncombe?** Yes.
- **Why do you think you have a valid claim to the throne?** My now-deceased mother was the sister of Countess Belissica. Being her first child, I am the next in line for the throne, with the death of Lady Cyanna and Lord Tristelone.
- **Do you have any special credentials?** I am Knight Paragon of the Knights of the Swan. I have defended the County for many years. Ever since I left my father's estate to join the knights.
- **Do you want to be Countess?** What I want matters little. I am the next in line for the throne.
- **What would you do if you were Countess?** My first goal would be to make sure the Lich Malachite and his minions were destroyed and to make sure our borders are secure.
- **Seriously, do you REALLY want to be Countess?** Duty and honor are the tenets of Heironeous. My lineage makes me the person to be in line for the throne.
- **Who do you worship?** I worship the Archpaladin, Heironeous the Invincible.
- **Don't you think Lord Nimar should be crowned Count?** No. Rumor has it that he was present when the Contessa was murdered and no one has seen him since.
- **Don't you think a Gellor should inherit the title?** I did not know the County belonged to

the Gellors. Sure they ruled for many years, but before them, the Whittenbock were in power, and they are now but a minor house!

- **What do you know about the murder of the Contessa?** I was not present. Sir Karl Whittenbock and Lord Dane were in charge of her protection.
- **Do you think any of the other candidates could make good Counts?** What I think matters little. Though they are all good men, I am the next in line to inherit the throne.
- **Would you gather the Council of Lords?** Yes, I would recall the Contessa's council.
- **What do you think of the treaty with the Duergar?** This treaty will not stand for very long.
- **Are you married/can you assure the line of succession?** I am unmarried but one day I wish to have children, whether it is to assure the line of succession or not.
- **Would you be willing to marry?** Yes, I would.
- **I mean a political marriage!** Yes, I would. Heironeous teaches that the powerful must sacrifice themselves for the weak. If that is the case, then I accept the task.
- **Are you sure you aren't just being Daddy's girl? Don't you think your dad is going to run the show?** I will not sit here and be insulted by Underley's lackeys. Leave. (this ends this interview)

Part Three: Lord Agnard Gellor

INTERLUDE 4: THE HEIRONEAN

On horseback, a warrior of great stature whose shield bears the fist holding the thunderbolt of Heironeous comes towards the party from the direction of Trigol.

Unless hailed, he continues forward. The warrior is Sir Tarek Damian, he is a wandering adventurer who is just returning from Nyronde and heads to his home in Brotton. Sir Tarek has traveled to many places of the Flanaess and is well informed about the problems on the Nyronde border.

He is aware of the murder of the Contessa, but not of the recent happenings. He is quite willing to exchange information with the heroes.

Sir Tarek tells the heroes that peace isn't assured on the Nyronde border and that they should be wary when in Trigol. Trigol he says is filled with spies. Sir Tarek judges the heroes' reaction.

If they show patriotism towards the County and express a desire to unmask the Nyronde spies, he tells them that a friend of his, at the College of the Divine may help them. His name is Brother Myrtin of the Cudgel.

The heroes have no way of knowing, but Sir Tarek is a member of Lord Underley's network and he has given them a contact within the network.

APL2 (EL6)

Sir Tarek Damian: Pal 9

ENCOUNTER 11: STONE BATTLE

Stone Battle lays next to the Fennelmore Swamp, a vest fetid and foul place between the County and Duchy of Urnst. You have heard many stories of undead, bandits, lizardfolk and other horrors about the place. But fortunately for you, your current mission does not involve visiting that foul place.

A powerful-looking yet squat castle was built atop a hillock giving the castle a great view of not only the town but the Fennelmore swamp.

The swan on a green field of the County and the Swan with 3 roses of the Gellor family fly everywhere, the city looks as if a great festival was about to begin. Everyone you cross harbors a smile.

Everyone in Stone Battle expects the Archbaron to be named Count. Most people in town are pretty happy about this. The unscrupulous hope that an absentee Archbaron will give them more leeway. The merchants and craftsmen hope the Archbaron will command new buildings or monuments to be built. For the military, it may mean prestigious promotions.

WORD ON THE STREET

In this section, the heroes can get some hints as to where to look for information by making a Gather Information check with a variable DC.

Making a check takes 1d4+1 hours. Give a +1 bonus for each gp spent, to a maximum of +4.

- **DC5** Stone Battle is a key location and the key to the southern County. It is a major stop for any cargo travelling through the Fennelmore Swamp on route to the Duchy or southern Nyrond.
- **DC7** the Floating Road ends in Stone Battle. It is a pontoon bridge road that links a number of islands. It spans for many miles.
- **DC10** adventurers have reported a number of undead forces in the Swamp. They contacted the adventurer's guild in town, just off the fish market.
- **DC11** The church of Obad-Hai has resisted a recent plan to drain part of the swamp to open new lands. I encourage you to stay away from there.
- **DC12** following the death of Contessa Elone, the Archbaron supported the Council of Lords.
- **DC13** after the murder of Contessa Elone, the Archbaron has become the patriarch of the Gellor family.
- **DC14** the local head of the Knights of the Swan, Lady Renee Camis-Rouge has announced that her knights would not get involved in politics and that they would enforce the curfew declared by Lord Duncombe.
- **DC15** the Archbaron lives in the castle.
- **DC16** many knights and adventurers from the guild have headed into the swamps and few have returned. Most of them went straight to the temple of Pelor for healing.
- **DC17** Pelor has a very powerful following in the area. The Archbaron's daughter is training in Trigol.
- **DC18** the Archbaron eldest son fought against the Torquann at the battle High Mardreth during the One-Year War.
- **DC19** many of the Nobles in town have assured their fealty to House Gellor. I think they just want to keep their privileges
- **DC20** there have been rumors about a "Black Man in the Swamp" for some time. Some people think he is a geomancer. What ever he is, he seems to be fighting Malachite, however someone told that this was but another of the Lich's tricks.

- **DC21** this cleric of Obad-Hai told me that the Swamp should be left as they were because they keep many things asleep.
- **DC22** adventurers have reported that some of the lizardfolk in the Swamp are not evil! I think they have fallen prey to some swamp sickness.
- **DC23** the adventurer's guild has been paying adventurers to map the swamp. Only adventurers would be crazy enough to do such things!
- **DC24** the Archbaron sent a delegation to all the major factions in the Duchy. His envoys were met with indifference.
- **DC25** the Archbaron has sent a delegation to the King of Nyrond. The King is said to have refused to meet his envoys.

THE ADVENTURERS' GUILD

The adventurers' operate out of a tavern just off the fish market has a painted sign showing a dwarf sleeping under a table, with the word "Guzzler" written under. The owner, a Halfling calling himself Guzzler (for the time he managed to drink a large dwarf under the table).

Guzzler used to be an adventurer but one day while exploring a dungeon, he was hit by a trap and suffered a horrible disease that left him crippled for many months. Asking for the help of a cleric would have meant admitting he hadn't found the trap. Unacceptable! So he began buying and selling adventuring supplies. Before he knew it, he was raking in more money than he knew what to do with. He serves as the local fence and a general meeting point for members of the adventurers' guild.

The ale is refreshing and the meal Halfling-size. The atmosphere lends itself well to speaking privately.

If the heroes visit Guzzler, he knows the information that gives the equivalent of a +5 to their Gather Information.

APL2 (EL8)

Guzzler: Rog8, AL N.

THE TEMPLE OF PELOR

The temple of Pelor is located at the center of Stone Battle. The temple is made of a simple building of stone and mortar. An archway gives one access to the small compound. At the top of the archway, a golden symbol of the sun engulfed in a continual flame looks down at anyone who

passes underneath. A beautiful garden surrounds the temple. An aura of calm and serenity, reminiscent of a beautiful day, fills the garden day and night.

The local priest of Pelor is an aging Flan man named Father Geirhart whose face shows about as many scars as age spots. He spends his time helping his flock or tending to his garden. In his old age, he is suffering from a number of pains. When first encountered, he asks the heroes if they were sent by Trigol to allow him to retire. His idea of retirement is really to spend times with the kids and show them the glory of Pelor.

Father Geirhart remembers that many adventurers came to see him for healing after venturing into the swamp. They told him about a series of caves and crypts in there. His memory is fading. Father Geirhart sent a letter to Trigol. He doesn't remember receiving anything from them, however.

The letters Father Geirhart sent to his superiors led to the expedition in *URC6-103 Blast from the Past*. Any hero who took part in that adventure knows this, as can those who succeed at a Knowledge (local/nmr) or Bardic Knowledge or heroes who belong to the College of the Divine who can succeed at an Intelligence check DC15.

APL2 (EL5)

Father Geirhart of Pelor: Clr5, AL (C) NG.

THE TEMPLE OF OBAD-HAI

The temple of Obad-Hai is located outside the city, in the Swamp itself. A path made of turf, wooden bridges and stones has been built. The path leads to a simple grove of willow trees surrounding a pool of surprisingly clear water.

The local priestess a Suel woman named Oriesne wears a simple tunic. A barn owl serves as her animal companion. The owl flies around as the heroes approach.

If asked about the swamp and why she opposed the draining of it, she tells the heroes that she has been having dreams of dark days to come if man disturbs the swamp. The swamp is very old and it must not be disturbed. Oriesne says that should any such plan be made, that retribution would happen. There is currently a balance and that it must be maintained.

APL2 (EL7)

Oriesne of Obad-Hai: Clr4/Drd3, AL N.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE SWAN

Lady Renee Camis-Rouge leads a detachment of Knights in Stone Battle. She and her men are usually out on patrol protecting the citizens against the horrors of the swamp.

A devoted member of the Citadel faction, she has little to say about the current political situation. However, if asked, she thinks that Sir Karl is overstepping his authority and that Lady Rachel's bid for power is out of place. She does not allow any of "her" knights to engage in politics.

Any local knights send the heroes to Lady Renee.

THE CASTLE

Proceed to Encounter 12: An Archbaron in trouble when the heroes head to the castle.

ENCOUNTER 12: AN ARCHBARON IN TROUBLE

When they arrive at the gate of the castle, the guards stop them and enquire about their business. They tell the heroes they have to come back later, because Lord Agnard is not currently present, but that he will return shortly after nightfall. Only heroes who are retainers of the Gellor family are allowed inside the castle.

As you are about to turn back towards some other destination, a single rider appears, beating his horse as if pursued by all the hordes of the Abyss. He stops at the gate. "Lord Agnard needs help! Quick!"

If the heroes do not volunteer to help, a lieutenant rushes outside and volunteers them.

The messenger relays the following:

- Lord Agnard was out in the Swamp with his usual escort of riders.
- A horde of undead creatures appeared and attacked them.
- Lord Agnard sent him to get help.
- Lord Agnard was on the Floating road. With his knights, it would be surprising that he'd venture far from it. Follow the Floating Road for about 20-30 minutes.

The lieutenant orders the heroes to go while he gathers troops and clerics to mount a rescue operation.

THE FLOATING ROAD

The Floating Road links Stone Battle and the rest of the County to Nesserport on the Nesser River.

Of unequal build, the Road is a vital for strategic operations in the Fennelmore Swamp and to keep Nesserport supplied. The Floating Road is a mixture of bridges made of wood or stone, planked over boats or rafts and marsh islands passages. It is dangerous, to cross and is used mostly by the County military and heavily-armed caravans.

THE UNDEAD

As the heroes push forward, they can see a horse floating in the fetid waters. As the heroes see it, a number of small-sized zombies rise from the swamp onto the Road and attack the heroes.

APL2 (EL2)

Kobold Zombie (4): hp16 each, see Monster Manual p. 265

Tactics: they're zombies... why are you looking here?

Development: Once the zombies are defeated, allow the heroes to heal up before proceeding onward. The horse does belong to one of Lord Agnard's retainers and bears the colors of House Gellor. When the heroes are ready to continue, proceed to Encounter 13: The Archbaron.

TROUBLESHOOTING: COWARDS AND SLOWPOKES

If the heroes do not hasten to the Archbaron, they arrive too late. Note that as long as the heroes say they are picking up the pace, their movement rate is irrelevant. This section is really for those who don't want to go or who willing slow down the pace, or who wait for the soldiers in Stone Battle.

By the time they get there (IF they get there), the soldiers have already rescued the Archbaron. Proceed to Encounter 14: The Gellor Patriarch. The heroes do NOT gain his favor nor do they get any experience for this or encounter 14.

ENCOUNTER 13: THE ARCHBARON

Continuing along the Floating Road, it is but a few minutes later that you come across a terrible sight. Amidst a series of dead retainers and a large pile of bone, you see an aging Oeridian man get hit by a vile, muck-colored humanoid. His tabard is embroidered with the 3-rosed Swan of the Gellors. The man falls on the bones pile, unconscious. Just then the creature sees you and snarls in your direction.

As it begins to move in your direction, you see six skeletal things stand up from the muck around you.

This battle takes place in the swamp where there is about 6-12 inches of water. The water does not impede movement to reduce speed, but it does prevent charges and run actions, but NOT 5-foot step.

The lacedon begins 150 feet away. The skeletons roughly surround the heroes.

APL2 (EL3)

Lacedon (aquatic ghoul): hp13, see Monster Manual p. 118

Human Commoner Skeleton (6): hp6 each, see Monster Manual p. 225

Tactics: the Ghoul tries to paralyze as many heroes as it can, even to the point of splitting its attacks among many heroes. The skeletons simply move in and attack who ever is closest to them.

The man (Baron Agnard) is pretending to be unconscious. Once the undead have left his side, allow the heroes to make Spot checks DC15 to see him drink a potion discreetly. He begins the battle at 0 hit points.

Treasure: Lord Agnard, even if angered, sends a pouch containing a single swan made of crystal to each of the heroes.

APL2: L: 0gp; C: 300gp; M: 0gp;

Development: The heroes all receive the "Gratitude of Lord Agnard". Proceed to Encounter 16

TROUBLESHOOTING: THE HEROES ARE DEFEATED BY THE UNDEAD

If the heroes all fall to the undead, they wake up in the castle, having been saved by Lord Agnard and his men. Lord Agnard is nevertheless thankful for the heroes to have tried to save him.

ENCOUNTER 14: THE GELLOR PATRIARCH

Lord Agnard Gellor is a man of mixed Suel/Oeridian origin. He has pale gray eyes and is in his mid-50s with a crown of gray hair. He has great personal presence that command respect. He is polite and his relaxed attitude makes one feel important.

- **Are you Lord Agnard Gellor?** Yes.
- **What happened here?** We were attacked by about 40 undead. My men and I managed to

kill most of them, but that last one landed a lucky blow and brought me down. Lucky you showed up.

- **What were you doing here?** I was out visiting my lands. Making sure they were free of bandits and other undead creatures. Unfortunately, my men were killed in the battle.
- **Do you think these creatures are related to Malachite?** Evidently. My reports tell me the Lich hasn't been here in months however. Who else would use these things?
- **Will you compensate us?** I feel insulted that you would doubt for a moment that I would not repay you. I value my life very much.
- **Why do you think you have a valid claim to the throne?** I am the first cousin of Countess Belissica. My mother was her father's sister. This relation has made me the head of the Gellor family in the County and therefore the next Count by birthright.
- **Do you have any special credentials?** I am the Archbaron of Fennelmore, and have held the title for more than 15 years.
- **Do you want to be Count?** I WILL be Count. There is no doubt.
- **What would you do if you were Count?** AH! You have not ruled over lands, and it shows. One does not decide ahead of time what he will do. The crises are what forces you to act and show who you truly are.
- **Isn't that a little shortsighted?** The borders must be secured and peace assured with our neighbors.
- **Who do you worship?** I am not a man of religion, but would have to say... (The Baron thinks for a long time.) Father Pelor.
- **Don't you think Lord Nimar should be crowned Count?** No. That Bumbling fool!? He should not be wearing the name of Gellor. I think he may have been being the murder of (Contessa) Elone.
- **Don't you think a Gellor should inherit the title?** We have rule the County for nearly a century. The Gellors have ruled in a benevolent fashion and because of our works, the County is now more independent than ever before.
- **What do you know about the murder of the Contessa?** I was not present. I think Nimar may have been behind it.
- **What do you think of the treaty with the Duergar?** This treaty is a slight on the honor of any good Countyman.

- **Do you think any of the other candidates could make good Counts?** Each of them would make fine vassals, yes.
- **Would you gather the Council of Lords?** Very likely. I would have to discuss with them first.
- **Are you married/can you assure the line of succession?** I have two sons and a daughter. The line of Gellor is assured through me for another generation. My sons have served one in the army and one in the navy. My daughter attends the College of the Divine. (She is studying to become a priest of Pelor).
- **Did you send a delegation to King Lynwerd of Nyrond/leaders of the Duchy?** I fail to see the relevance of this question. It is my right to send delegations abroad. (A Knowledge (nobility) check DC15 informs the player that any diplomatic envoy outside the County requires the approbation of the Count, or his Regent)
- **Did you obtain Lord Duncombe's approval before sending your envoys?** *annoyed* I owe him nothing. (A Knowledge (nobility) check DC15 informs the player that yes, he owes the Regent allegiance.)
- **But, that is a power reserved to the Count! You can't send ambassadors to Nyrond/the Duchy!** "A simple adventurer like you will NOT tell me how to run my Barony. I will NOT be spoken to that way." The Archbaron refuses to answer any more questions.

Part Four: Duke Gellor

INTERLUDE 5: THE PHOLTANS

The heroes come across a small gathering where a number of children dressed in white robes sign a chorus led by a group of nuns. Around them, men in polished white armor look sternly at a small group of people assembled before them.

As the children finish their song; the gathering applause politely. One of the armored men, stands atop a table and begin preaching the word of Pholtus and passing tracks and pamphlets.

You can give the heroes Player handout 5: Tenets of the Faith of Pholtus.

ENCOUNTER 15: GETTING TO VENTNOR

The Duergar of Clan Mithraldeath may have allied with the County, but they are in no way the friends of the County's people. To that end they have marked the limits of their domain and guard it jealously.

The boundaries of Clan Mithraldeath's enclave are impossible to miss. Behind a line of rubble (one can't call a wall) on both sides of the roads are two rotting carcasses impaled on tall pikes. One is a human upon whose chest has been craved in Common "Lands of Clan Mithraldeath, obey our laws or die". The other carcass is a black-skinned elf on whose chest has been carved "trespasser".

The land beyond is like a desert. Mounds of stone rubble form tall dunes, higher than two men in many places. The road is the only place free of rubble. The road snakes through the dunes, obscuring the town ahead. Whatever the Duergar are doing here, they haven't lost any time getting to work. The quantity of rock and dirt moved is quite impressive.

Clan Mithraldeath has been using earth elementals to dig under Ventnor castle. The moved rubble is filled with all kinds of little creatures including rats.

APL2 (EL3)

Dire rats (3): hp5 each, see Monster Manual, p.64

Rat Swarm: hp13, see Monster Manual p.239

Tactics: The rats move in and attack aggressively.

Development: the heroes are free to continue towards Ventnor. Proceed to Encounter 17.

ENCOUNTER 16: THE GATES OF VENTNOR

The heroes finally arrive at the gates.

Ventnor has changed a lot in the last 3 years: from a mighty fortress to a pile of rubble to a stockade and finally into a fortress of Clan Mithraldeath. Tall stone walls, no doubt built using magic and earth creatures, enclose the city itself.

Almost obscenely the White Swan of the County and the broken bolt on red field of Clan

Mithraldeath can be seen floating over all important-looking structures.

Beyond the walls you can see an orderly town, where the buildings of what was once Ventnor Stockade have been integrated into the new town. The gate house has 3 goblins charging a toll for all who enter.

Beyond the gate, you can see goblins, gnolls and orcs mix with humans, devils and stone creatures walk around the streets. Many humanoid guards of all types patrol the walls. It would be very difficult, even for a skilled rogue to bypass the guards.

The heroes should enter the town by the doors. The goblins charge a toll of 10 nobles per adventurer. Dwarves, elves and anyone with a holy symbol they can recognize (the goblins can recognize the most common deities of the County and the Bandit Kingdoms, but have no idea who or what they represent) has to pay an extra 15 nobles "religious tax". If they refuse to pay, the goblins threaten the heroes.

The goblins tell the heroes they may work for the Duergar in exchange for the toll. The heroes pay 1 week (1TU) for every 15 nobles they have to pay. If the party agrees, they must IMMEDIATELY work out their time. The heroes receive the "Worked for the Duergar" AR Reward.

SKULLDUGGERY

It is possible for the heroes to bluff or order their way in. If the heroes succeed at a Bluff or Intimidate check DC15, the goblins allow the party to pass. If either of these checks is successful, then the goblins do not ask for the usual toll.

Another option is to have one of the heroes come up to the gate disguised as a Duergar (through use of the Disguise skill or the *disguise self* spell for example). In that case, the goblins say nothing and let the heroes into the town.

FIGHTING THE GUARDS

Fighting their way in is also an option, but this may not be the obviously easy fight the heroes may have anticipated.

APL2 (EL4)

Duergar overseers (2): hp9 each, see Monster Manual p.91

Goblins (3): hp5 each, see Monster Manual p.133

Small earth elemental: hp 11, see Monster Manual p.95

Tactics: The goblins are the first to fight the heroes. One round later, the elemental emerges from under the ground, behind the party and attacks the heroes. Two rounds later, the Duergar overseers who were nearby enter the fray, now *invisible* and *enlarged*.

This is a very difficult battle, so bring in the Duergar once the goblins are all dead and the elemental is hurt.

Treasure: There is no treasure linked to this encounter.

Development: Inform the heroes that it would be in their best interest to conclude their business here as fast as they can.

TROUBLESHOOTING: SNEAKING IN

It's NOT a good idea. The heroes are quickly discovered and have to face a very large number of guards. Make sure the heroes are aware of the dangers and the risks of doing so.

APL2 (EL6)

Duergar overseers (4): hp9 each, see Monster Manual p.91

Goblins (6): hp5 each, see Monster Manual p.133

Small earth elemental (2): hp11 each, see Monster Manual p.95

Tactics: The goblins are the first to fight the heroes. One round later, the elementals emerge from under the ground, behind the party and attacks the heroes. Two rounds later, the Duergar overseers, who were nearby enter the fray, now *invisible* and *enlarged*.

TROUBLESHOOTING: LOOTING THE GUARDS

It's NOT a good idea. The heroes are quickly discovered and have to face a very large number of guards. Make sure the heroes are aware of the dangers and the risks of doing so. The heroes face the same number of guards as the previous Troubleshooting section.

ENCOUNTER 17: VENTNOR

VENTNOR HISTORY

Ventnor Castle used to be the County's main prison. In the depth of the keep was where all the most dangerous criminals were literally hidden away to protect the citizens of the County. Many demons, devils were locked away in there. Other known prisoners included the Butcher of Dryburgh and the renegade Boneheart Lucius Grakon.

In 593CY, Ventnor castle was the site of a major prison break (*URC3-06 Flames of Ventnor*). The devils and demons bound in the depth of the Castle managed to escape. As soon as they were free from the wards and bindings, they quickly began to fall upon each other, continuing the Blood War that has gone on for eons.

In the chaos that ensued, Lucius Grakon managed to escape, with the help of some unknown forces. Lucius has not been seen since in the County.

Though ordered to hold the city Sir Perthian Dane (*URC3-06 Flames of Ventnor* and *URC6-05 the Bull and the Swan*) had his men evacuate the city to escort a long column of refugees, heading south abandoning the city to the battling creatures. Sir Perthian decided to save his troops rather than seeing them be destroyed in a futile battle.

VENTNOR TODAY

Since the signing of the Richfest Treaty by the Contessa with the envoys of Clan Mithraldeath, the Duergar wasted no time in organizing the place to their liking.

First, they had some of their humanoid slaves clear out the debris that had been left. Then, they hired humanoid tribes from beyond the Artonsamay to increase their defenses. They have also invited a number of Duergar from other clans to join them. Thus the numbers and power of the clan are difficult to ascertain.

Through their use of slaves and unwavering work, they have managed to clear out the town and the lands under the castle. The priests of the Clan have been driving everything and have opened a wide cavern under the current town. They are working tirelessly for an unknown goal. But working for the Gray Protector Laduguer (LE Intermediary god of the Duergar, Magic weapons, crafts and protection), is a tireless and constant work. Clan Mithraldeath is up to something, but what?

The streets of Ventnor are now a mix of all kinds of bandits, humanoids, Duergar and the occasional devil. Worshipers of Hextor openly patrol the streets, in support for the local government.

The town is extremely orderly and anyone who causes problems is immediately taken as a slave by the Duergar (many are never seen again).

Most of the local (mostly human) population feels abandoned by the leaders of the County. They feel the Contessa betrayed them and sold

them to the Duergar for nothing. That Lord Duncombe doesn't care about them and that Lord Underley is only concerned with politics in Radidast.

WORD ON THE STREET

In this section, the heroes can get some hints as to where to look for information by making a Gather Information check with a variable DC. Making a check takes 1d4+1 hours. Give a +1 bonus for each gp spent, to a maximum of +4.

- **DC5** Ventnor is a key location along the Artonsamay River.
- **DC10** just across the river is the foul city of Stoinck and his infamous leader, Boss Renfus.
- **DC11** Lord Underley has abandoned this barony. All he's interested in is politics and Radigast City.
- **DC12** since the Knights of the Swan have abandoned Ventnor, the Hextorites have been running the place in the name of Clan Mithraldeath.
- **DC13** Duke Gellor of Artonsamay in the Bandit Kingdoms has sent a number of envoys to Ventnor. I think he is looking to make a deal with the Duergar.
- **DC14** Clan Mithraldeath have invited a number of Duergar from other clans to join them. This has nearly doubled their numbers.
- **DC15** The Duke's people, usually hang around the temple of Zilchus.
- **DC16** Clan Mithraldeath have been summoning elementals upon elementals to dig something from under the Castle. That's how they created the dunes outside of town.
- **DC17** two luzians came to meet with the clan leaders when they took control of Ventnor. Shortly after, I saw a beautiful winged woman (an Erinye but the person doesn't know what it is) carrying two heads fly across the Artonsamay heading for Stoinck. It's a good thing that the Duergar don't want the luzians here!
- **DC18** My brother-in-law was caught stealing, and the Duergar brought him down into their caves under Ventnor. I never saw him again.
- **DC19** Clan Mithraldeath don't like Drow. I saw a number of the Drow on pikes near the entrance to the castle.

- **DC20** The Duergar don't seem too interested in the surface. They only seem interested in what lies under the castle's ruins.
- **DC25** Duke Gellor has disappeared, some say he is dead.

TEMPLES IN VENTNOR

The town houses a number of temples (in order of importance): Hextor (converted from the Temple of Heironeous), Zilchus, Boccob, Norebo, Kyuss, Nerull and shrines to humanoid deities (such as Gruumsh & Maglubiyet). Many of the priests of evil deities have made their way here and joined the Duergar to escape religion persecution from the County or Bandit Kingdoms. The usual services from temples (scrolls, potions and NPC spellcasting) are all available at these temples.

Even if some of the temples are dedicated to evil deities, as long as the heroes don't look for trouble, it won't find them.

Notably absent from the town is the temple of Laduguer, god of the Duergar. His priests are all based in the underground portion of the castle. And that is where most people think his temple is located.

ENCOUNTER 18: THE DUKE'S ENVOY

The heroes can meet with one of the Duke's envoy. His name is Sir Vermont. He is dressed like a number of local fighters: half-plate with a greatsword strapped to his back. He wears no distinctive emblem or signs. Sir Vermont heard the heroes were looking for him and he decides to approach them.

His first worry is to ascertain the heroes' loyalty. Who they work for? Why? Why are they seeking the Duke's men? Note that at this point, he does NOT answer questions. The heroes are seeking HIM, not the other way around.

Sir Vermont is very cautious of such things. Any stupid response has him leave, telling the heroes to go to a seedy tavern by the river. He uses that time to leave and cannot be found. Sir Vermont is used to priests of luz breathing down his neck and he doesn't take chance.

Once satisfied, he asks the heroes to follow him to a newly built tavern close to the Duergar dig. He assures the heroes that it's "safe enough" and that they can talk freely.

- **Who are you?** I am Sir Velmont, envoy of His Grace Duke Gellor of Artonsamay.
- **What are you doing here?** I am here to gather support for the Duke. Adventurers and the like, but with the change of power, I have been having a difficult time.
- **Why do you think the Duke has a valid claim to the throne?** The Duke was the uncle to your Countess Belissica. He is the first male heir to the Gellor family.
- **Does he want to be Count?** Yes.
- **What would he do if he were Count?** No doubt he would free his people from the yoke of the Old One.
- **Who do you worship?** I worship Pelor; His Grace keeps his worship to himself.
- **Where is the Duke?** I do not know.
- **Have you see the Duke recently?** No, I haven't seen him in months.
- **You mean he's not even here?** No, he's not
- **You mean he's not the one giving you orders?** No, but I'm sure that he would be a great Count.
- **I heard the Duke was dead...** That's hogwash! I'm sure he's alive!
- **WHAT!? You mean you don't even know if he's alive?** It is very difficult to be sure. The luzians are very good at hiding the truth. And people are good at hiding things from them.
- **Don't you think a Gellor should inherit the throne?** His Grace is a Gellor.
- **What do you know about the murder of the Contessa?** It is a tragedy. She was a very active ruler. Until she gave this away, she was very well-liked.
- **When did you come over?** I have been here for over a year looking for sympathizers to help His Grace's cause in his Duchy.
- **Did you find any?** Yes, I have, but since the Duergar have come, I found friendly ears to be on a steady decline.
- **Do you think any of the other candidates could make good Counts?** I guess so, I know little of them.
- **Is the Duke married/can he assure the line of succession?** His Grace is stable on his throne.
- **Would you gather the Council of Lords?** I guess so.
- **What do you think about the Duergar?** Well... they are better than the luzians...

Part Five: Lady Melnie

ENCOUNTER 19: BACK TO THE UNDERLEY ESTATE

As soon as you show up to the Estate, you are escorted inside. Walking down a long hall, where the fox banners and statues of dragons are predominant. Finally, your escort shows you into a small room. The guard closes the door behind you once you are all inside. The room is bathed in light coming from luminous orbs in the walls.

On the walls hang portraits of members of the Underley family. On the far wall, large fresco depicts an army of metallic-colored dragons fighting against a horde of chromatic dragons.

The room has 6 chairs and a large armchair at one end arranged around a central table. The Underley crest has been embroidered in the back of the large chair. On the table is a single scroll.

This scene is purely role-playing between the heroes. The scroll is Player handout 6: Report to Lady Melnie.

Don't steer the heroes in one direction or another, there are no good or bad answer here. This scene should be somewhat reminiscent of the play "12 angry men".

Your job as a DM is to make sure the heroes fill in the paperwork correctly. In fact Lady Melnie is really interested in one thing: who the heroes think would be the best choice for Count. The answers to other questions, she knows already, through her father's network. The instinct and gut feeling is really what he is after.

Make sure they are ALL happy with the decision of the final question. This might mean the heroes decide on two of the contenders.

Every one of the paintings has a *permanent image* that covers the many eyeholes the Lady Melnie uses to spy on his guests. If asked about the magic on the image, he replies matter-of-factly that it is cheaper than to hire a painter to restore old paintings.

When the heroes have completed the report, proceed to “Enter the Lady”.

ENTER THE LADY

The door opens smoothly and Lady Melnie enters the room. Her gown is embroidered with dragons: chromatic on one side and metallic on the other. Behind her is a small creature seemingly made of air that prances in the air. Lady Melnie heads for the large chair.

“I see you have completed the missions I asked of you and you have a report for me.”

Lady Melnie extends a hand towards your group, it is obvious he expects the report you just finished.

The little creature can be identified as an air mephit with a Knowledge (the planes) DC13. The air mephit is NOT Lady Melnie’s familiar, it is merely another of Lady Melnie’s “friends and contacts”.

Once she has the report in hand, Lady Melnie looks at it briefly. Then she adds with a smile. “I am satisfied with you, our business together concludes here. You are free to go and should consider your debts to me repaid. The County and I may have need of you in the future. Do accept this token of my gratitude.”

Lady Melnie throws a small purse that opens on the table revealing a series of small gems.

The heroes may have questions for Lady Melnie. You can also refer to Encounter 2 for additional answers she may give.

- **Are you satisfied with us?** Yes, I am.
- **Why did you make us do this?** You were young and inexperienced enough to have a fresh view of the situation. If I wanted the same answers and the same views, I would’ve asked other people.
- **Who do you support?** I will ponder over your report and make a decision. House Underley remains neutral in the current conflict.
- **Are our death warrants really destroyed?** Yes.
- **Are you SURE they have been destroyed?** Yes.
- **Can we share spells?** Maybe when you find some I may be interested in.

- **Can we join your spy network?** No, not at this time. But I will keep a close eye on you.

Treasure:

APL2: L: 0gp; C: 400gp; M: 0gp;

When the heroes are done, proceed to the Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

If the heroes refused to work for Lady Melnie, and were imprisoned, proceed to Underley’s Guests.

If the heroes performed all the tasks Melnie asked of them, proceed to Underley’s Lackeys.

UNDERLEY’S GUESTS

The heroes fought against Lady Melnie or refused to go with his plan.

Lady Melnie has been terribly displeased. He ordered you all to be bound and locked away in his personal dungeons. Days, weeks, months, perhaps even years have passed before your jailer opens the door and releases you. “You’re free.” He simply says. You equipment is returned to you and you are lead outside of the Underley estates.

Proceed to AR Rewards.

UNDERLEY’S LACKEYS

“This concludes our business. I thank you for your services. I apologize for any ruffled feathers. But do understand the anger I felt at the destruction of my new spellbook.”

“I’ll keep an eye on you in the future.” With that Lady Melnie exits the room followed by the small air creature.

In the end, things turned for the better, even though you have a strange feeling that Lady Melnie was not entirely truthful in her dealing with you.

Isn’t it strange how life turns a group of young caravan guards into a band of adventurers? What was Lady Melnie’s goal? Why would she use a band of young and untrained adventurers when she has a number of adventurers at her disposal?

But these are questions for another day. Tonight, you rest... with a weapon close at hand.

Treasure:

APL2: L: 0gp; C: 100gp; M: 0gp;

Proceed to AR Rewards.

AR REWARDS

Heroes who spent time in jail for refusing to serve Lady Melnie received the “Lady Melnie’s Guest” AR Reward. These heroes also get the “Death Warrant” AR Reward.

Heroes who used lethal damage against the Nyrondeese spies receive the “Violent Target” AR Reward.

Heroes who paid for their healing by working for the Church of Pholtus in Trigol received the “Worked for the Blinding Light” AR Reward. Make sure you indicate the amount of TUs spent.

Heroes who went to save Lord Agnard receive the “Gratitude of Lord Agnard Gellor” AR Reward.

If the heroes complete all the quests according to Lady Melnie’s wishes, they receive the “Gratitude of Lady Melnie Underley”.

Heroes who do not abandon Engbert and who escort him to meet Lady Melnie receive the “Gratitude of Farvaren Merchant House”.

Check whoever the heroes have chosen to make the best Count under the “Best (wo)man for the job” AR Reward. If there is more than one, then check all those they said on the report.

If the heroes paid their way into Ventnor by working for the Duergar, they earn the “Worked for Clan Mithraldeath” AR Reward.

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 (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 1: Ambush

Defeating the bandits

APL 2 90 XP

Encounter 4: The bullies

Defeating the bullies

APL2 60XP

Encounter 5: Good ol’ boys

Defeating the street thugs

APL2 60XP

Encounter 8: The Nyrondeese

Defeating the Nyrondeese spies

APL 2 90 XP

Encounter 9: A blinding parade

Dealing with the Pholtans (through combat or diplomacy)

APL 2 60 XP

Encounter 12: An Archbaron in trouble

Defeating the first wave of undead

APL2 60 XP

Encounter 13: The Archbaron

Defeating the second wave of undead

APL2 90XP

Encounter 15: Getting to Ventnor

Defeating the rats

APL2 90XP

Encounter 16: The gates of Ventnor

Dealing with the goblins (either paying or fighting)

APL2 120XP

Story Award

Meet with Lord Dane

APL 2 45 XP

Meet with Lady Rachel

APL 2 45 XP

Meet with Lord Agnard

APL 2 45 XP

Meet with Duke Gellor’s representatives

APL 2 45 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 2 900 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 treasure.

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 (i.e., 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 treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the 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.

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

Encounter 1: Ambush

APL2: L: 134gp; C: 0gp; M: 0gp;

Encounter 4: The bullies

APL2: L: 4gp; C: 96gp; M: 0gp;

Encounter 8: The Nyronnese

APL2: L: 124gp; C: 0gp; M: 0gp;

Encounter 13: The Archbaron

APL2: L: 0gp; C: 300gp; M: 0gp;

Encounter 19: Back to the Underley Estate

APL2: L: 0gp; C: 400gp; M: 0gp;

Conclusion

Payment from Engbert (only if the heroes did NOT abandon him)

APL2: L: 0gp; C: 100gp; M: 0gp;

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Total: 900 gp

Special

Lady Melnie's Guest: You have spent 6 months (26TUs) in the Underley's dungeon for not having obeyed his commands. You do not have to pay upkeep for these TUs. However you may NEVER receive an influence point from Lady Melnie or join the Underley network. If you belong to the Network, your membership is immediately revoked. On top of this, this character cannot participate in any premiere or interactive set in the County of Urnst until the beginning of 597CY.

Death warrant: Lady Melnie Underley has a death warrant with your name on it. In the future either steer clear of the Underleys, or do their bidding. One day she might tear it up. She might.

Violent Target: You responded with deadly force against a band of spies. They make your name known as a dangerous criminal. You can never join the Grey Network. Whenever you face a non-lethal combat against Nyronnese agents in the County, they automatically switch to lethal damage against you.

Worked for the Blinding Light: You spent ___TUs working for the church of Pholtus to pay for *cure* spells. You have done charity work among the poor. For the next 52 TUs you get a +1 circumstance bonus to social rolls when dealing with refugee converts of Pholtus in the County.

Gratitude of Lord Agnard Gellor: This is an influence point with the Gellors. Cross off once used.

Gratitude of the Farvaren Merchant house: This is an influence point. Cross off once used.

Gratitude of Lady Melnie Underley: This is an Influence point. If you gain another influence point with a member of the Underley family, you can spend both to join the Underley Network. Cross off once used.

Best (wo)man for the job: Check the one you have recommended to Lady Melnie for the position of Count. This may have future repercussion.

- Lord Darius Alan Dane
- Lady Rachel Duncombe
- Lord Agnard Gellor
- Duke Gellor
- Other: _____

Worked for Clan Mithraldeath: You have worked for ____ TUs in Ventnor for Clan Mithraldeath. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Knowledge checks dealing with the Duergar or their dark god Laduguer. This bonus also applies to any Knowledge (Architecture & Engineering) and Profession (mining) checks.

Wanted in Ventnor! You attacked lawful representatives of Clan Mithraldeath. As such, you cannot claim free upkeep in any adventure set in the lands of the clan. Also, if you ever get caught by them, they condemn you to work for them for 4TUs before you can escape and invoke the “charity of friends” clause.

APPENDIX 1: APL 2

ENCOUNTER 1: AMBUSH

Gareth and Liemm: Male Oeridian War1; CR 1/2; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+3; hp 11; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3, Masterwork heavy mace) or +3 ranged(1d6, Shortbow); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8;

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +1, Intimidate +1, Jump +4, Ride +4. Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Flail, Heavy).

Possessions: Masterwork heavy flail, shortbow, 60 arrows, rations, token of Hextor (Gareth only), chain shirt

Anya: female Oeridian Rgr2; CR 2; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 15; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 18 (+4 armor, +4 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, Flail) or +7 ranged(1d8+2, Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str)) or +8 ranged Within 30' (1d8+3, Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str)); Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, Flail) or +7 ranged(1d8+2, Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str)) or +5/+5 ranged Rapid Shot (1d8+2, Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str)) or +8 ranged Within 30' (1d8+3, Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str)) or +6/+6 ranged Within 30', Rapid Shot (1d8+3, Masterwork longbow); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8;

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +4, Hide +8, Listen +5, Ride +11, Spot +5, Survival +5. Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track

Possessions: flail, masterwork composite longbow (Str +2), 60 arrows, rations, chain shirt, buckler

ENCOUNTER 4: THE BULLIES

Groushky: Male Rhenee War2; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+4; hp 20; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (+3 armor, +1 shield, +3 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+3, Sap) or +5 melee (1d6+3, Club); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8;

Skills and Feats: Jump +6, Swim +4. Toughness, Weapon Focus (Sap).

Possessions: sap, studded leather armor, club, buckler

Baldwin & Myrel: Male Oeridian Rog1; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 1d6+3; hp 12; Init +7; Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+3 armor, +3 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0/ Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, Sap) or +1 melee (1d6+1, Club); SA Sneak Attack (1d6); SQ Trapfinding(Ex); AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8;

Skills and Feats: Bluff +3, Escape Artist +6, Search +4, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +4, Swim +3, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +3. Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Possessions: sap, studded leather armor, club

ENCOUNTER 5: GOOD OL' BOYS

Bird of Prey Street Thug: Male and female Human Com1; CR 1/3; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 13 (+1 armor, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk/Grapple +0/+6; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d3+2, Unarmed Strike); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10;

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Listen +4, Spot +4. Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike

Possessions: Thick coats (padded armor), worthless trinkets

ENCOUNTER 8: THE NYRONDESE

Wilfred: Male Oeridian Rog1; CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, Masterwork sap), +3 melee (1d6+3, Rapier); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10;

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Decipher Script +5, Forgery +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +4, Tumble +6. Combat Expertise, Improved Feint.

Possessions: masterwork sap, masterwork studded leather, rapier

Filbert and Ox: Male Oeridian Ftr1; CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d10+2; hp 15; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 armor, +1 shield, +1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+3, Masterwork sap), +4 melee (1d6+3, Rapier); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10;

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +4, Jump +6, Ride +5, Swim +5. Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Sap).

Possessions: masterwork sap, masterwork studded leather, rapier, buckler

ENCOUNTER 9: A BLINDING PARADE

Cierreggh of the Tenha: Male Flan Pal3; CR 3; Medium Humanoid; HD 3d10+3; hp 28; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (+5 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+5;20/x2, +1 Quarterstaff); SA Smite evil; SQ Aura of courage, aura of good (moderate), code of conduct, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands (6); AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14;

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (religion) +2, Ride +6, Sense Motive +5. Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Quarterstaff).

Possessions: holy symbol of Pholtus, +1 *quarterstaff*, masterwork breastplate

PLAYER HANDOUT 0: THE HERALDIC CRESTS OF THE COUNTY OF URNST



Shield 1: County of Urnst



Shield 4: House Dane



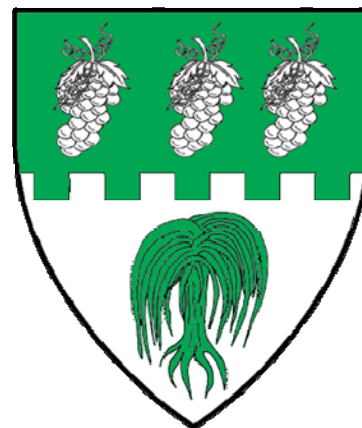
Shield 2: House Gellor



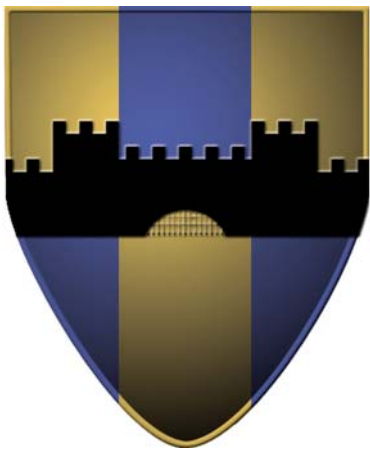
Shield 5: House Underley



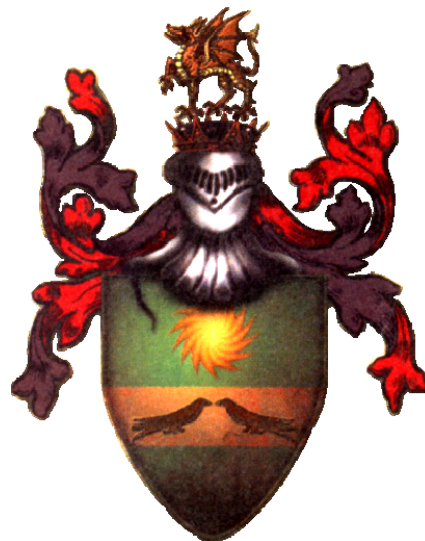
Shield 3 House Duncombe



Shield 6: House Torquann



Shield 7 Radigast City



Shield 10 United Kingdom of Ahlissa

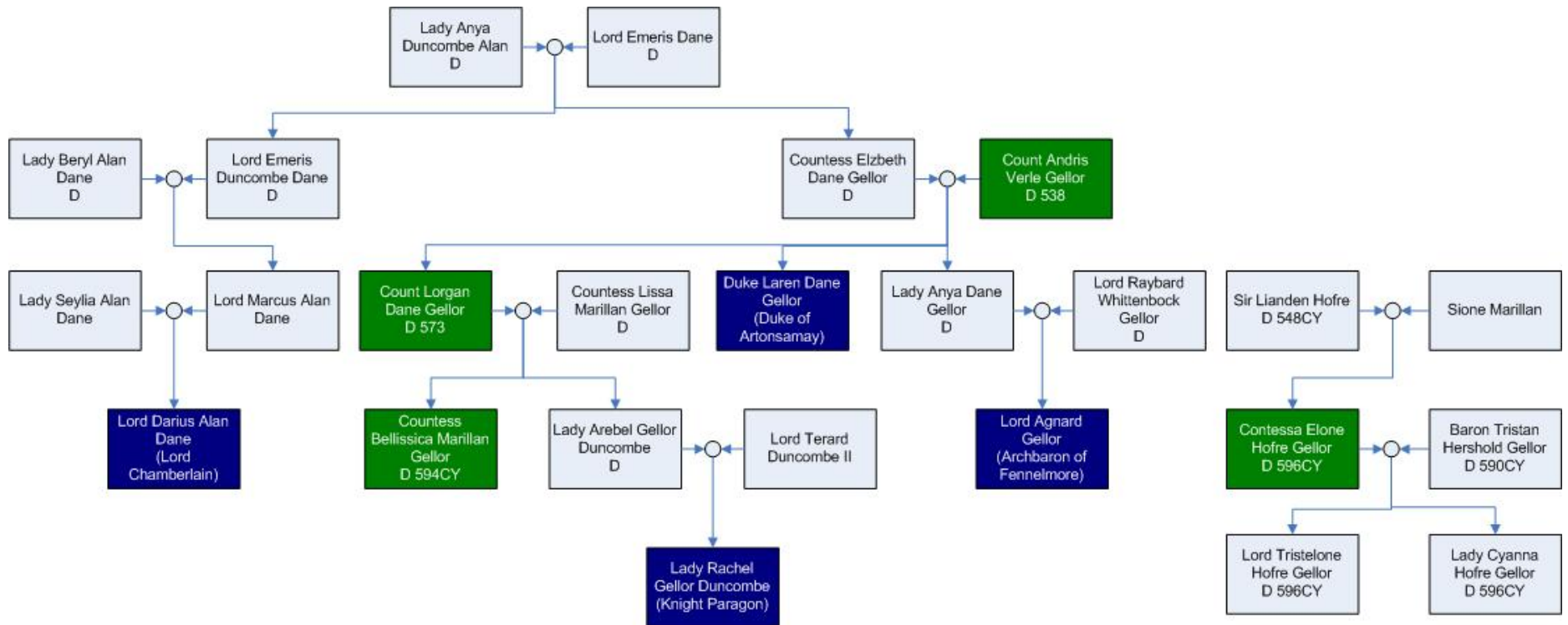


Shield 8 Farvaren Merchant House



Shield 9: Lady Rachel Duncombe

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: THE CONTENDERS



PLAYER HANDOUT 2: LORD UNDERLEY'S WRIT



By order of Lady Melnie Underley,

By presenting this writ, the following
adventurers [your names are written] are
acting as emissaries of mine.

Please give them the proper regards and respect.
They are running errands in my name to
gather a series of minor trinkets.

Melnie Underley
Obsidian Conclave

PLAYER HANDOUT 3: THE 4 LETTERS

Travel to Radigast City and do the following:

- Ascertain the local populace's loyalty
- Who do they support?
- How loyal to that cause are they?
- Meet with Lord Darius Alan Dane
- Ascertain his goals, ambition and interests for the throne.
- Make estimation as to his capabilities as a Count.

Travel to Ventnor Stockade and do the following:

- Ascertain the local populace's loyalty
- Who do they support?
- How loyal to that cause are they?
- Meet with Duke Gellor
- Ascertain his goals, ambition and interests for the throne.
- Make estimation as to his capabilities as a Count.

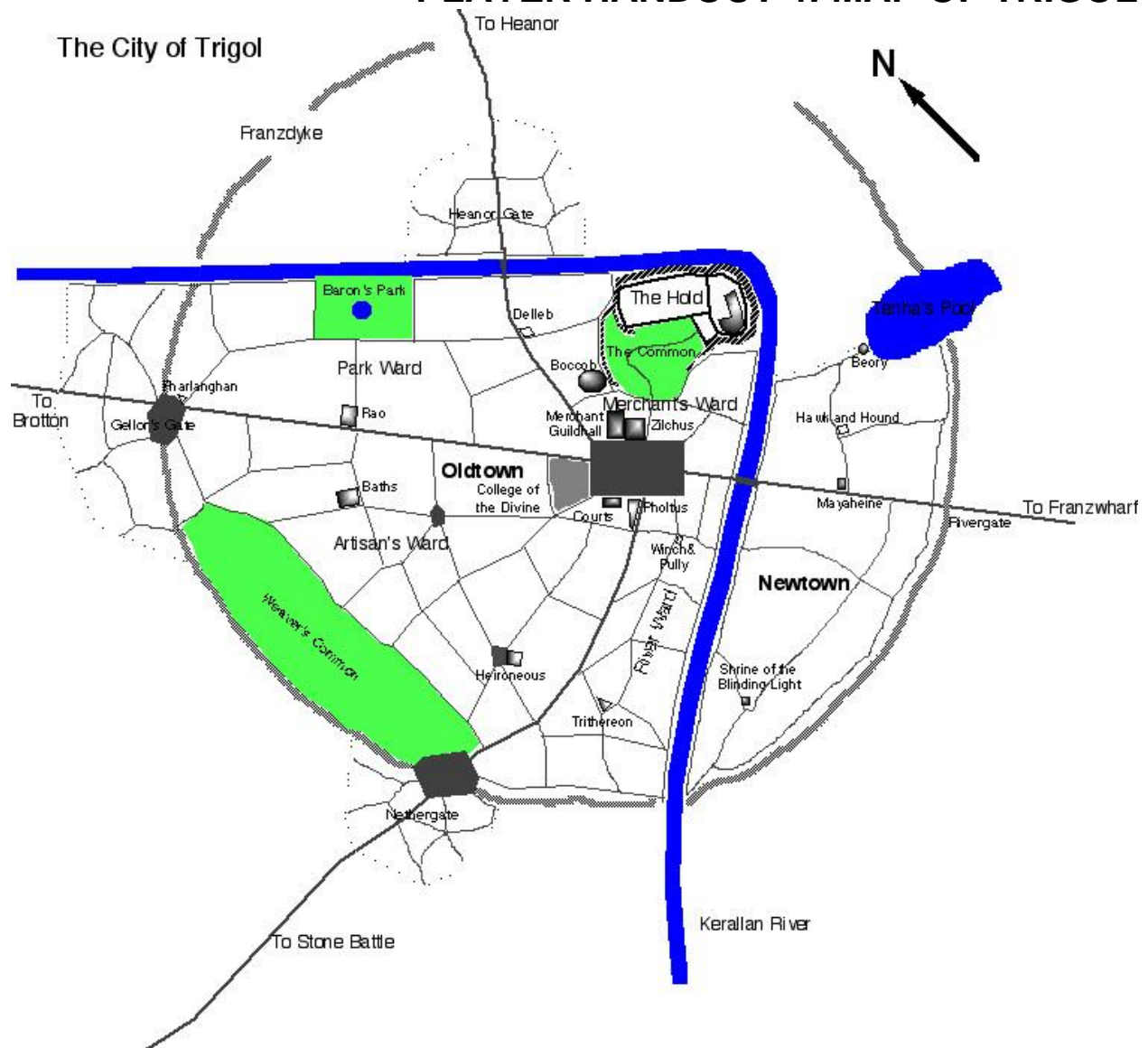
Travel to Trigol and do the following:

- Ascertain the local populace's loyalty
- Who do they support?
- How loyal to that cause are they?
- Meet with Lady Rachel Duncombe
- Ascertain her goals, ambition and interests for the throne.
- Make estimation as to her capabilities as a Countess.

Travel to Stone Battle and do the following:

- Ascertain the local populace's loyalty
- Who do they support?
- How loyal to that cause are they?
- Meet with Lord Agnard Gellor
- Ascertain his goals, ambition and interests for the throne.
- Make estimation as to his capabilities as a Count.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: MAP OF TRIGOL



PLAYER HANDOUT 5: TENETS OF THE FAITH OF PHOLTUS



- Display a “Perfect Knowledge of the Laws of Pholtus”.
- Uphold the teachings of the Church of the One True Path, for it is the Way to follow Pholtus into the Blinding Light.
- Teach the children.
- Neither tolerate disrespect to the Church nor allow any harm to come to its flock.
- Defend the clergy of Pholtus.
- Allow no person, beast or property to go without when you have plenty.
- Convert unbelievers to the tenets of the Church of the One True Path.
- Allow no person to proclaim the teachings of Chaos, Evil or false cults.

PLAYER HANDOUT 6: REPORT TO LADY MELNIE

Did you meet with Lord Darius Alan Dane?	Yes / No
Who supports him? _____ _____	
What are his goals as a Count? _____ _____	
Do you think he would make a good Count?	Yes / No

Did you meet with Lady Rachel Duncombe?	Yes / No
Who supports her? _____ _____	
What are her goals as Countess? _____ _____	
Do you think she would make a good Countess?	Yes / No

Did you meet with Lord Agnard Gellor?	Yes / No
Who supports him? _____ _____	
What are his goals as a Count? _____ _____	
Do you think he would make a good Count?	Yes / No

Did you meet with Duke Gellor?	Yes / No
Who supports him? _____ _____	
What are his goals as a Count? _____ _____	
Do you think he would make a good Count?	Yes / No

Who do you think would make the best Count(ess):

Lord Darius Dane / Lady Rachel Duncombe / Lord Agnard Gellor / Duke Gellor

Why?
