

Confrontation in the Timberway

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living
Greyhawk™
Regional Adventure set in Ratik
Version 1.2

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Who is responsible for what is happening in the Timberway? Strange events seem to be coming from House Keth land, can Lady Keth be ignorant of it all? Perhaps someone should find out. Intrigue, politics, a tourney and a final confrontation. A one-round Regional adventure set in Ratik for characters level 3-15 (APLs 4-12).

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include *Complete Arcane* [Richard Baker], *Libris Mortis* [Andy Collins and Bruce Cordell], *Magic Item Compendium* [Andy Collins, Eytan Bernstein, Frank Brunner, Owen K.C. Stephens, John Snead], *Monster Manual III* and *Races of Stone* [David Noonan, Jesse Decker and Michelle Lyons].

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

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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, 2008.

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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

3. 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.
4. 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:

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

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round regional adventure, set in Ratik. Characters from Ratik pay 12 gp per round, while all other characters pay 24 gp per round for Adventurer's Upkeep.

Rich and Luxury Upkeep cost 75 gp per round for characters from Ratik and 150 gp per round for all others. 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

In the middle of the Timberway lies the 'Heart of the Timberway', a massive conjunction of mystical energies drawn from the entire forest. To most mortal eyes, the 'Heart' appears as a great oak, however it is much more than just a tree. The 'Heart' is both figuratively and literally the heart of the Timberway, a concentration of the forest's energies, which is linked to the life of all flora within the forest.

This tree has been the center of both the seelie and unseelie courts of the fey from long before man ever trod within the forest. When man first came to the north-east of the Flanaess, the fey shared the 'Heart' and the forest with him. However, with the Great Migration that followed the Twin Cataclysms, the fey felt it best not to reveal the 'Heart' to the Oeridian and Suel migrants. As such, they hid the 'Heart' using the combined power of both courts. Now, the 'Heart' can only be found with the use of a 'key', a magical device attuned to the magic of the 'Heart' that can pierce the glamours and illusions that surround the 'Heart', or by the will or whim of the 'Heart' itself.

Throughout the past thousand years, both the seelie and unseelie courts have been fairly evenly matched. They have had dual control of the 'Heart', and the Timberway has remained in balance and harmony.

This has all changed recently though. The unseelie court has sent representatives to Lady Katharna Keth and, in exchange for various magics and favors, she has managed to tip the balance in favour of the unseelie court. Through the use of short-sighted, and often evil, hunting and logging practices, the power of the seelie court has been forced to wane.

Upon the advice of the unseelie court, Lady Katharna has encouraged mass over hunting, in particular of those creatures linked with the seelie court. She has also commissioned foresters to log out certain areas of the forest which include many of the ancient sites of power for the seelie court. In the process many fey have been killed, and the power of the unseelie court has grown to an unbalancing level.

As a consequence of what has been happening to the Timberway, the 'Heart' has been sorely tested. The 'Heart' has felt every death, every piece of wonton destruction, and it has suffered as the fey have suffered. Along with the 'Heart's' suffering, the 'Heart's' dryad, Nala, has also suffered.

Over the years, Nala has grown slowly more crazed from the constant pain and emotional turmoil. She is now completely insane, obsessed with self-harm and the pain of the 'Heart'. In the manner of many depressed creatures, Nala is inflicting pain on herself and her tree just to prove to herself that she is still alive. It has been so long since she has felt a positive emotion that pain is all she knows.

Nala's actions have led to a recent rash of strange incidents in the Timberway. These incidents are fuelled by the dominance of the Unseelie court, and by Nala's latest actions. A little over a year ago, Nala discovered that she could take directly from the life of the tree, and pass that power on to another.

This is a vile and horrid practice that corrupts all those that participate, but it also gives great power. Lady Katharna Keth is one of those partaking of the life of the tree in this manner, and her rewards have been great, although at the cost of her soul.

Lady Harrina Abonhoth has led the way in investigating the odd occurrences in the Timberway, and has discovered that Lady Katharna seems to be involved.

Once again, the Lady Harrina has called upon Ronaldor, the Flan druid she met last year, to help with some divinations, and some advice.

She has also accepted an invitation to the Keth tourney, and invited the PCs to join her as part of her entourage. This provides the perfect excuse for the PCs to look around and discover what is happening.

The Three 'Keys': there are three 'keys' currently in the court of Keth, although the Unseelie know of only two of these.

The first is Lady Katharna's cloak. Made from the hide of a pregnant unicorn and trimmed with the fur of a celestial polar bear, it was given to Lady Katharna as a gift by the unseelie fey. The cloak grants enhancements to a number of Lady Katharna's already considerable charms. However, Lady Katharna DOES NOT know that this is a 'key'. She just thinks it's a magic cloak.

The second 'key' is the helm worn by the Black Knight. The helm is also protected by Nystal's *magic aura*, so its ability is difficult to determine. However, the Black Knight DOES know that his helm is a 'key'.

The third 'key' is a horn, hanging from the statue of Kord, in the Keth family chapel. This was given to a former ruling lord of Keth by the seelie fey, centuries ago and, until this generation, has been an heirloom of the family, passed from one ruling lord to the next.

Few people use the chapel anymore, and most think the horn is part of the statue. The horn is also protected by a powerful charm, so taking it is not easy.

This 'key' can be discovered through Valdir, the boy who asks the PCs for a job in Encounter 3, or through exhaustive research of the Keth family library.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The **Introduction** is essentially the briefing from Lady Harrina stating what the PCs need to know and do in order to find out what is going on.

Encounter 1 occurs on the road at the border between Abonhoth and Keth. The PCs are faced by a young knight who warns them against entering the lands of Keth. When the PCs insist they must proceed, the young knight challenges the party's champion to a joust.

Encounter 2 occurs on the road while travelling through the lands of Keth. The PCs see the effects of Lady Katharna's policies upon the common people of Keth, and are attacked by mobs of starving peasants who have died and come back as ghouls.

Encounter 3 occurs at the gates of Keth where a young, small and annoying boy wishes to act as squire for one of the PCs. Later he may provide information on the 'keys' to the 'Heart' of the Timberway.

Encounter 4 is when the PCs meet the Lord and Lady of Keth, and have a chance to mingle with the tourney competitors.

Encounter 5 is the tourney where successful PCs encounter Lady Keth's champion. Other PCs can spend their time, in this encounter, gathering information.

Encounter 6 is for those who try to obtain a 'key' from Lady Keth or her champion.

Encounter 7 involves investigating Keth manor. PCs may encounter Finian, Lady Keth's assistant chamberlain and 'keeper' from the unseelie court. PCs can also visit the library and the chapel.

Encounter 8 happens when the PCs acquire one of the 'keys' and journey to the 'Heart'. Here they face the corruption of the 'Heart' and can try to heal it.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

It is recommended that players play RTK7-03 *Strange Days in the Timberway* followed by RTK7-06 *Horror in the Timberway* before playing this module. This order of play is by no means necessary to enjoy this module, but will provide the players with a greater sense of story and continuity if they do so.

The DM should check if any of the players have played RTK7-06 *Horror in the Timberway* previously with the character they are playing with this module and what conclusion was achieved. This will help determine that PC's relationship with the patron of the series, Lady Harrina.

INTRODUCTION

Lady Harrina Abonhoth has been investigating the strange events recently occurring in the Timberway and, while she isn't sure what is actually happening, she has uncovered enough information to know that Lord and Lady Keth require further investigation.

Given the resources that Harrina has at her disposal, she has paid for both a *divination* and a *commune* to be cast, in the hopes of getting some answers. With the information revealed in the casting of these spells (refer to Player Handout 1), Lady Harrina has been able to confirm that the next step in her investigation must be made at the court of Keth.

Thus, as she has before, Lady Harrina has turned toward adventurers to assist her investigations.

Keth hosts one of the first tourney's of the season in mid spring and while few of the major competitors bother to attend it, the second string jousters, those desperate for recognition and the prize money, do attend. However, it is well known that nobody has beaten the Keth champion in the last 4 years.

For those that have the **Invitation of Lady Harrina** from RTK7-06 *Horror in the Timberway*, read the following:

Finally, spring has arrived and, with it, the start of the tourney season. With this knowledge, it comes as little surprise when a summons arrives for you from Lady Harrina Abonhoth. As promised last year, you are to be a part of her entourage for the upcoming tourney in Keth. You are required by the summons to present yourself at the court of Abonhoth at noon next Moonday.

For those that do not have the **Invitation of Lady Harrina** from RTK7-06 *Horror in the Timberway*, read the following:

Finally, spring has arrived, and with it the start of the tourney season. With this knowledge, it comes as something of a surprise when a summons arrives for you from Lady Harrina Abonhoth. It seems she has asked for you to attend her as part of her entourage for the upcoming tourney in Keth. You are required by the summons to present yourself at the court of Abonhoth at noon next Moonday.

PCs that chose not to answer the summons end the adventure here.

A DC 10 for Ratikans (DC 12 for foreigners) Knowledge (local – NMR) or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) reveals that the PCs know they require appropriate attire to gain entrance to the Court, even with the invitation.

In this instance, appropriate attire requires a 'courtier's outfit' or better attire (see PH pg 131). If the PCs are not dressed appropriately, they will be turned away by the guards, and informed to put on some decent clothes before they return. PCs that refuse to dress appropriately for a formal audience with a Lady of the Realm end the adventure here.

In response to the summons, you put on your best attire and travel to the court of Abonhoth. At the gate, your letter of summons is inspected by the guards, [and assuming the PCs are dressed appropriately – see above] and then you are escorted to a small garden within the walls of the castle. A table has been set for luncheon, and there are places for a dozen people, each with a small name card. While you wait for the Lady, a servant offers you a drink.

If the PCs have not adventured together before, now is a good time for them to introduce themselves. Once introduced to each other, proceed with the Lady's arrival:

Lady Harrina sweeps into the garden, escorted by several maids-in-waiting, a half-dozen guards and a knight bearing the arms of House Abonhoth. Lady Harrina greets you all by name, introducing her maids and Sir Rias, a loyal knight of House Abonhoth.

If there is a PC knight in the party, Lady Harrina will consider naming the PC as her champion for the tourney. If not, Sir Rias is given that honour.

For a PC to be considered as Lady Harrina's champion, they must meet the following requirements:

- be of the nobility, i.e. either a lordship or a knighthood (preferably Ratikan);
- have the requisite equipment;
- have a BAB of at least +6;

- have the Mounted Combat feat (and preferably also the Ride-by-Attack and Spirited Charge feats);
- have successfully competed previously in a Ratikan tourney.

Once the introductions are complete, Lady Harrina asks you all to be seated. You can see that each of the place settings has a small name card on the plate. There are a few minutes of light and cheerful conversation as everybody finds their places. Once seated, the meal is blessed and served. Lady Harrina and her maids engage you all in polite conversation about your exploits over the last year.

This is a chance for the PCs to brag, and for Lady Harrina to gain more knowledge about what is going on in the world. Do not dwell too long, as this will have little or no bearing on the plot. The only exception is if there is a 'knight' character at the table. If such a PC exists, and they meet the requirements of Lady Harrina and the Keth Tourney, Lady Harrina invites the PC to be her champion in the upcoming Tourney.

Lunch has been finished and most people are enjoying a piece of fruit when a raven flies into the garden and lands near Lady Harrina's seat. In a moment the raven has transformed into a short, gaunt looking Flan man in rugged leathers that have seen better days. He has dark and his face is covered with traditional Flan tattoos. Some of you recognise him as Ronaldor, the druid whom you aided last autumn.

Lady Harrina turns towards the small man and says, "Ah, Ronaldor, thank you for joining us. Now that you are here, we can get to business."

Ronaldor is introduced to those of you he has not met before, then a place is made for him at the foot of the table.

Lady Harrina then addresses you all, "As you are undoubtedly aware, there has been a great deal of troubling news coming out of Keth in the last year. With the help of some truly fine young men and women [Lady Harrina acknowledges any PCs who have helped her previously], I have endeavoured to discover the source of these troubles in an effort to see it ended.

"Whilst I am troubled for the lands and people of Keth itself, I am also troubled that these incidents may soon begin to affect the rest of the Timberway and, in particular, our homes here in Abonhoth.

"Investigations from last year have revealed that there is some sort of confrontation occurring between the fey of the Timberway. This confrontation seems to revolve around something called the 'Heart' of the Timberway. Not knowing who or what this 'Heart' may be, I have asked Ronaldor to give us the benefit of his wisdom."

Ronaldor says, *"The 'Heart' of the Timberway is a closely guarded secret of the fey, concealed from all human knowledge since the time of the first Suel arrivals in this area, hundreds of years ago. The fey feared the damage that might be done to the 'Heart' and the forest, so they hid it."*

"Though I have never seen it, I understand that the 'Heart' is a giant oak, believed to be the oldest tree in the Timberway, both literally and figuratively the forest's heart. However, it is also much more than that. The 'Heart' is the centre of fey activities in the Timberway and the source of much of their power."

"The 'Heart' is hidden from all by a series of glamers, or illusions. These are tied directly to the power of the tree, so are almost impossible to penetrate. Those few that have succeeded, intentionally or accidentally, leave with very strange tales, if they leave at all."

Ronaldor pauses for a sip of his drink, giving you a moment to consider what he has said, then continues. *"To understand the importance of the 'Heart' to the fey, it is necessary to understand something of the fey. I apologize to those of you that already know this, but I feel the information important."*

"The fey are essentially separated in to two faction, the seelie and the unseelie. These two factions battle constantly for dominance, though they are usually very evenly matched. Within these struggles, there are sites and areas of influence tied to each side, like the circle of power near the village of Anvold."

"Yet, there are also neutral sites, places the fey could meet to talk and negotiate. I believe that the 'Heart' was one of these places, but it seems that the unseelie have gained control of it. With the power of the 'Heart' at their disposal, the unseelie fey could soon win the struggle for ever."

Lady Harrina interjects on this gloomy note. *"Yes, well I'm sure it won't come to that, and I am sure you would all like to prevent seeing the Timberway turn into a place that is full of nasty little fey full of spite and malice."*

"Which is part of the reason why I asked Ronaldor here. If the 'Heart' is hidden, how do we find it?"

Ronaldor responds, *"I am certain that the unseelie have ways of going to and fro from the 'Heart', and I suspect they will have passed this on to Lady Katharna if nobody else. However, the ruling family in Keth has always had a strong link to the fey of the Timberway, and I suspect they may have visited the 'Heart' in the past."*

A successful DC 15 (DC 25 for foreigners) Bardic Knowledge, Knowledge (local – NMR) or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check reveals that many Lords and Ladies Keth are rumored to have been close to the fey.

The court of Keth has, at times, been famous for 'hosting' the fey, knowingly and otherwise.

A DC 25 (DC 35 for foreigners) Bardic Knowledge, Knowledge (local-NMR) or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check will reveal that some Lords Keth had ways of 'finding' the fey at need.

Ronaldor continues, *"In an effort to help in this matter, I have asked a friend to cast a divination and, based upon the results of that spell, to cast a commune also. Here are the answers we received."*

Ronaldor then hands you a transcript listing the results of the divinations cast.

Pass out **Player Handout 1**.

Note: If the players wish to comment on the information, allow them to do so. Feel free to ad lib here, drawing Lady Harrina's responses from the following text. Otherwise, read the following text and then allow the players to ask questions.

"After giving you a few moments to read the transcript, Lady Harrina continues, 'As you can see, if we are to have any real chance at finding the 'Heart', we must begin our investigation in Keth. The upcoming tourney gives us a perfect excuse to enter the Keth court, and to investigate further. I would like all of you, brave adventurers, to help me find one of these 'keys', and with it the 'Heart' of the Timberway. With luck, and the blessing of the gods, we may yet be able to stop these troubles from spreading beyond the border of Keth."

"To help you to discover these keys, I have some items that might help. Firstly, my dressmakers have found a source of shiftweave, a magic item that can replicate a number of outfits, making it perfect for disguising oneself."

"Secondly, I have acquired an artificer's monocle, an item that will allow you to identify magical objects and their properties. However, you do need to cast detect magic to activate the item, so I have also provided a wand of detect magic in the hope that you will not be caught short unable to activate the monocle."

"Lastly, and as a minor note, I have made all the arrangements for our travel, food and accommodations, so you will not have to worry about that and can focus on the investigations at hand."

Lady Harrina answers any questions to the best of her ability. She knows all the information that the PCs gathered from the first two parts of this series.

In RTK7-02 *Strange Days in the Timberway*, the PCs met a strange water fey called Fyodr, who told them of the Heart of the Timberway. He also told the tale of how the unseelie fey were actively recruiting and corrupting the seelie fey.

In RTK7-06 *Horror in the Timberway*, the PCs met the Greens, and discovered that humans could be corrupted. They also discovered that a corrupted satyr named Tyver was trying to corrupt the power of one of the ancient sites of power in the Timberway. On Tyver's body, the PCs found a note from Finian, Lady Katharna Keth's assistant chamberlain. This provides tenuous evidence to Lady Katharna's involvement and direct evidence that the unseelie fey have a presence in the court of Keth.

If asked about payment, Lady Harrina says something about 'an appropriate reward for your actions'. PCs that have worked for Lady Harrina previously will know that her idea of 'appropriate' is rather generous.

Treasure: Lady Harrina has a number of gifts to help the PCs that they will be able to keep after the adventure ends.

All APLs: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 197 gp; wand of detect magic (31 gp); shiftweave (41 gp); artificer's monocle (125 gp); Total 197 gp.

Development: PCs will also have their upkeep paid for by Lady Harrina. If the PC has the **Invitation of Lady Harrina** from RTK7-06 *Horror in the Timberway*, they receive free High Lifestyle for this adventure. If the PC does not have this favor, they can choose either free standard lifestyle, or half price High Lifestyle.

Ronaldor won't be travelling with the PCs, he has been unpopular with the court of Keth since helping the Knights of the Hart in sanctioning Keth.

1: THE KNIGHT AT THE CROSSROADS

The PCs have several days to prepare for the journey, and the journey itself will take four days (wagons on dirt roads are slow). PCs can use the time in Abonhoth to go shopping for anything they have access to. Once the PCs have made their preparations, they can proceed on the road to Keth. At the border, they encounter a knight 'at the crossroads'.

The party consists of: Lady Harrina; Sir Rias and his squire – Hubert (or a PC knight in his place); the PCs; 3 maids-in-waiting; 6 guards; 12 servants; 2 carriages; and three wagons.

After several days to shop, prepare and pack for the journey, you are finally on your way. The journey is far from fast paced, but it is very pleasant. You all have the choice of riding in sprung carriages, or by horseback (or more exotic means if you have them).

For those of you travelling in the carriages, you have an excellent chance to chat with Lady Harrina and her maids about current affairs, literature and fashion. There are games to be played to pass the time, excellent food, and even better wine.

The first day, you stop for lunch at an excellent inn and, in the evening, the servants erect a number of pavilions for the party to sleep in. It seems there is little for you to do but keep your eyes open for any potential threats, and enjoy the journey.

Spring is starting to bloom, and the snow is retreating from much of the ground. The forest is a mass of life, with plants and trees flowering, and huge numbers of birds and animals visible in the trees as you travel.

On your second day of travel you reach the border of Keth just as some storm clouds start to rumble ominously above you. In the last hour it has become noticeably cooler and darker. Preparing for the storm to break, it is with some surprise that you notice a small pavilion beside the road ahead.

This is a natural storm, here for atmospheric reasons. Successful Survival checks reveal very poor weather for the week ahead.

As your party approaches, a knight exits the pavilion, mounts his horse and moves into the middle of the road, blocking your path.

If Sir Rias is Lady Harrina's champion:

As the carriages and wagons draw to a halt, Sir Rias moves forward to speak to the knight.

If a PC is Lady Harrina's champion:

As the carriages and wagons draw to a halt, Lady Harrina asks you to find out what the knight wants.

As Lady Harrina's champion approaches, the knight blocking the road raises his visor and holds up his right hand. "Greetings" he calls out, "I am Sir Gamdon of Cormik. Please turn your wagons around, and return whence you came, the road ahead is too dangerous for gentle people."

If Lady Harrina's champion is a PC, allow them to answer as they will, adjusting the following text to suit the PC's questions and responses. If the Lady's champion is Sir Rias, read the following.

Sir Rias responds, "Good Sir, we travel to tourney, and I assure you we are more than capable of handling a few bandits and forest animals."

Sir Gamdon replies, "Brave knight of Abonhoth, I have no doubt of your claims, but the peasants are revolting. They have been starved to desperation. I, too, travelled to tourney but, two days ago, my companion and I were waylaid by a huge mob of starving peasants. The only reason I survived is because my horse panicked and carried me away. Alas my companion, Sir Mitral, was not so fortunate. The screams of that good knight, our squires and their horses still ring in my ears.

"So, I say again, you and your party must turn back. My honor has been taken by this incident, as

have the lives of my companions, and I will not allow any other to suffer the same fate."

Sir Rias responds, "Good Sir, while I grieve for your loss, and doubt not your good intentions in undertaking this honorable task you have appointed yourself, we are determined to continue. Is there no way you will allow us to pass with your warning in mind?"

Sir Gamdon replies, "Any man that would travel this road must first defeat me in joust for, if you cannot defeat me, it would be certain death if you were to proceed!"

Sir Rias instantly responds, "Very well, I would be honored to make a pass against you."

PCs may talk to Sir Gamdon as the knights prepare.

His tale is one of horror, telling of a huge mob of peasants bursting from the trees and falling on his party by surprise. His horse panicked, and before he could bring it under control he saw that his companions were already unhorsed, and the horses were being butchered on the spot. If pressed for details he says that these peasants stank worse than most. GMs may add other details as they wish, but are reminded to take the maturity of their players into consideration.

A PC champion may wish to avoid the joust. The only way they can do this, in accordance with the rules of chivalry, is by pointing out that Sir Gamdon has lost his honor, by running from the mob whilst his companion was slaughtered, and a knight is not required to accept challenges from a person in such a state of dishonor. However, this would be very bad form, and the PC will receive a cold response from Lady Harrina and her maids for the remainder of the adventure.

Any other efforts at avoiding a duel are met by an instruction from Lady Harrina to joust with Sir Gamdon.

☛ **Creature:** Sir Gamdon is a young knight, recently scarred by his experience with the mob. He can easily be defeated by Sir Rias, and by any PC that meets Lady Harrina's requirements to be her champion. Describe the joust, but don't bother with dice, as the outcome is a foregone conclusion (and would be very embarrassing and difficult to get around if the PC loses as a result of crits and fumbles).

Development: Once Sir Gamdon is defeated, he wishes the party good luck, and warns them again to be wary upon the road. He will not accept an invitation to travel with the party to tourney, but stays to warn other travellers.

2: THE RAVENOUS MOB

Winters in Keth have been getting progressively harsher over the past four years. This is a combined result of the growing influence of the unseelie court and the exhaustion of resources. The people are starving, and the

forest is yielding less and less in terms of both food and winter fuel.

In one village, the people turned to cannibalism in the depths of winter. However, when they ran out of fuel, even the cannibals froze to death. Yet their sins in life were to have an effect in death. With the combination of the unseelie influence in Keth, and the corruption to these peoples' souls, they rose from the dead as ghouls. More ravenous than ever, the mob of ghouls attacks anything it comes across in its constant hunt for food.

Your passage through the lands of Keth is remarkably different from travel in Abonhoth. The forest is much danker here, and there is a constant smell of rot in the air. There are few birds, and the only ones you see are ravens. Likewise, the only animals visible are small reptiles; there are none of the animals you saw on your first days of travel.

Rather than the invigorating, brisk, spring weather of Abonhoth, you seem to have run into a storm front that has broken over this part of the forest. The rain is constant, and the carriages and wagons require help to get through the mud, it seems every half hour.

As you travel north, you are surprised that you not to see a single person. There have been no mobs, nor even small groups of starving peasants begging for food.

See **Appendix 4** for a map of the trail.

Have the PCs make Spot checks (DC below) to notice the ghouls hidden in the forest ahead. Sir Rias (or the PC knight) is at the front of the party, followed by the carriages, then the wagons. There is 20 feet between each vehicle. The base DC to spot the ghouls is 14, +1 per 5 foot distance (storm visibility conditions). The ghouls attack as soon as the person in front is within 30 feet, so the knight at the front of the party requires a DC 20 spot check to notice the ghouls (which Sir Rias will fail).

Modify the following text if any of the PCs spot the ghouls before they attack.

The forward carriage has again bogged in the mud, and Sir Rias is turning to assist when a mob of ragged peasants charges out of the woods not far ahead to swarm all over him. Sir Rias's horse screams in panic as Sir Rias struggles to draw his sword.

Creatures: The mob is actually a mob of ghouls, though the PCs may not realise this until they can get a good look at them. Once within 30 feet of the mob, PCs can attempt a DC 15 reactionary Spot check to realise there is something very odd about these peasants. A successful spot check allows a DC 12 reactionary Knowledge (religion) check to realise the peasants are, in fact, ghouls. Any PC in melee combat with the mob is allowed the reactionary Knowledge (religion) check without the Spot check.

Unless a non-surprised PC does something to prevent it, assume that Sir Rias and his horse are paralysed in the surprise round. Keep track of the damage to Sir Rias and his mount, as the mob will retreat with the horse once it is dead. Note that Sir Rias is riding a regular horse, not his Paladin's Mount.

All APLs

- ☛ **Sir Rias of Abonhoth:** hp 55; Appendix 1.
- ☛ **Heavy Warhorse:** 36 hp; *Monster Manual* 273.

APL 4 (EL 7)

- ☛ **Ghouls (8):** hp 18 each; *Monster Manual* 119.
- ☛ **Mob Leader:** Advanced ghastr; 72 hp; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 9)

- ☛ **Ghoul Mob:** hp 180; Appendix 1.
- ☛ **Mob Leader:** Advanced ghastr barbarian 2; 90 hp; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

- ☛ **Ghoul Mob:** hp 180; Appendix 1.
- ☛ **Mob Leader:** Advanced ghastr barbarian 6; 126 hp; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 13)

- ☛ **Ghoul Mobs (2):** hp 180 each; Appendix 1.
- ☛ **Mob Leader:** Advanced ghastr barbarian 8; hp 144; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 15)

- ☛ **Ghoul Mobs (4):** hp 180 each; Appendix 1.
- ☛ **Mob Leader:** Advanced ghastr barbarian 10; 162 hp; Appendix 1.

Tactics: The mob simply attacks the nearest opponents. Once a mob has paralysed or killed one large, or four medium, creatures, it retreats, dragging the bodies of those creatures.

The mob leader attacks whoever is doing the most damage to the mob. It kills for fun as much as for food, and only retreats when all the other ghouls have retreated or been dispersed.

If the PCs are really struggling, **Lady Harrina** helps them. She has a *necklace of fireballs type III* (DMG pg 263), and she is happy to use up the 3d6 spheres on the mobs. She will not use the more powerful spheres unless the party is in danger of a TPK.

The guards stay by the wagons to protect the remaining members of the party. They do not attack the ghouls except in self defence.

Treasure: PCs can take the following treasure from the mob leader:

- ☛ **APL 4:** Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 548 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50

gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); Total 548 gp.

- ☛ **APL 6:** Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 806 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); Total 806 gp.

- ☛ **APL 8:** Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,139 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); *ring of counterspells* (333 gp); Total 1,139 gp.

- ☛ **APL 10:** Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,139 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); *ring of counterspells* (333 gp); *mantle of second chances* (1,000 gp); Total 2,139 gp.

- ☛ **APL 12:** Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 3,805 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); *ring of counterspells* (333 gp); *mantle of second chances* (1,000 gp); *stone of good luck* (1,666 gp); Total 3,805 gp.

Development: It is possible, and even likely in the case of Sir Rias, that one or more characters die in this encounter. If such an event occurs, Lady Harrina has funds to see the PCs (and Sir Rias) are *raised* once the party reaches Keth.

Also within the party is Lady Anise, Lady Harrina's spiritual advisor, a priestess of Atroa who looks much younger than her 28 years. Lady Anise is a 5th level cleric, who focuses on healing and defensive spells. Today she has prepared 2 x *remove disease* and 2 x *lesser restoration*. The rest of her spells can be converted to healing spells, but will otherwise have no effect on this encounter.

In the event that the PCs cannot stop the mob from taking away a character, the PCs will find the lost character's boot (with the remains of their foot inside). The PC can be *resurrected*, but will lose all the equipment that was on their person at the time.

3: THE GATES OF KETH

Following the battle with the ghouls, the PCs and party travel on to Keth. Here they are met at the gate by a young boy named Valdir. Valdir is looking to improve his chances in life by become a squire to a foreign knight. (He has already tried all the local ones.) Sir Rias (if alive) rejects the boy's request, so Valdir will then try each of the PCs, regardless of their profession. Failing squiredom, he is willing to try his hand as an apprentice, initiate or even servant. Anything that will get him out of Keth and into a better life.

If a PC takes Valdir in any of these roles, the boy can be of great use as a guide around Keth. He will also be available to that character as a potential cohort at the end of the adventure.

Once the ghouls are defeated, you make your way to the town of Keth. It takes another day of travel along mud-soaked roads and, by the end of the day, everybody is cold and weary.

Keth is one of the smaller capitals in Ratik, little more than an old keep and a small town. The town is tightly packed within the walls and the keep of the ruling lord is a large, dismal edifice of stone resting atop a small hill. The town gates seem a reflection of the territory. They are dark and foreboding, promising unknown threats to all who pass within. At the gates are a large number of guards, but upon seeing the arms of Abonhoth, the way is cleared for you.

Adjust the following if the knight is a PC, or if Sir Rias is dead.

As you are passing through the gates, you see a boy of no more than thirteen summers approach Sir Rias. He says something to Sir Rias, who responds loudly with, "Push off, boy, I have no need of your services."

Without any sign of discouragement, the child approaches the rest of the party. "Hello, the valiant knight at the head of your party claims he doesn't need another squire at this time. However, I am sure you could use the services of an apprentice, or even servant?" He looks hopefully at you, awaiting your answer.

The boy seems healthy enough, and he has made some effort to present a reputable figure. However, can you really trust somebody from this town?

Allow the PCs to decide if they want a retainer. The boy will beg and plead until cuffed away, and if the PCs are not up to cuffing Valdir, the guards certainly are. Valdir will make any obvious and intelligent suggestions that present themselves as to the roles he could undertake. He will happily take any position in the hopes it will get him out of Keth.

Development: Valdir stays close to his new master or mistress, and listens carefully to what is going on. Once Valdir realises what the players are after, he can be of great help to them.

Valdir has a small amount of fey blood in his ancestry and, as a result, he can see fey magic in the same way that fey enchanters can. This effect is similar to a permanent *detect magic*, but only as it relates to fey magic. This means that Valdir can see the magic of the 'keys', even though he has no idea what it can do.

Valdir is bright, though, and if the PCs do not try to exclude him from their conversations, he soon realises (when, is at the GM's discretion, but don't be too hasty giving out this information) that the PCs are referring to Lady Katharna's cloak, which he has seen her wearing.

Valdir also knows that the Black Knight's helm has a similar effect. Valdir does not know about the horn in the

chapel (the third 'key'), having never been in there, but he will recognise the 'key' as soon as he sees it.

♣ **Valdir:** male human commoner; hp 3; Int 12

4: THE COURT OF THE COMMON BORN LADY

The PCs proceed with Lady Harrina, into the court of Keth. Here they meet the Lord and Lady Keth and their guests.

Divination magic reveals a large amount of magic items within the court, though many of them are not very powerful. Lady Katharna, in particular, is wearing eight enchanted items.

Detect evil reveals that almost all members of the local nobility are evil, as are many of the townsfolk.

With the business of the boy resolved, your party continues through the town to the keep. Never have you seen so miserable a place. Most of the buildings are dilapidated, and many appear abandoned. The people in the street are uniformly filthy, and appear to be dressed in rags. There is squalor everywhere, and there is not a smile in site.

The contrast at the keep is remarkable. While the keep itself is a dark and dismal building, there are banners of silk flying from every tower and window. The people are all dressed in magnificent furs and silks, and are beaming in anticipation of the upcoming tourney.

As you enter the courtyard servants rush forward to help with the wagons and the luggage. A castle steward greets Lady Harrina and offers to escort her to her rooms, but the Lady insists on sleeping in her pavilion. The matter of accommodation settled, you are all escorted inside by the steward to greet the Lord and Lady Keth.

As you enter the keep, Lady Harrina warns you to be careful what you say. Within the walls of this keep the Lord and Lady Keth rule, and breaches of etiquette may be treated quite harshly.

The hall is not a large one, although it does carry many banners. There are also the trophies of many great hunts, though none of those trophies look very new. In fact, the whole hall holds an air of age and rotten decay in spite of its finery.

At the end of the hall sit Lord Vartuel and Lady Katharna, greeting guests as they arrive. Beside the Lady Katharna stands a knight dressed in black armour, the visor on his helm closed.

Lord Vartuel is a shrunken figure, slumped in his chair and muffled in many layers of blankets and furs. He looks old and probably quite ill. By contrast, Lady Katharna is a vision of beauty.

Dark haired and bronze skinned, she stands out in this crowd of blond-haired, pale-skinned Suel nobility. She has a radiant beauty to her, one that

draws a response from all that see her. Yet there is more to her beauty than just appearances. She has a magnetizing presence that fills the court and, whenever she turns her attention upon an individual, that person seems to swell with pride.

Whilst most of the guests waiting to be greeted make way for Lady Harrina due to her rank, a young knight was in the process of being greeted as you arrived. You notice that Lady Katharna is doing most of the greeting, while Lord Vartuel is responding only when prompted.

Once the young knight has stepped aside, Lady Harrina steps forth and greets the Ruling Lord and Lady, "Greeting Lord Vartuel and Lady Katharna, it gives me great pleasure to see you both in such health. It is an honor to attend you celebrations, an honor I have not had the chance to experience in the past."

Lady Katharna responds, "We are grateful that you are able to attend, Lady Harrina, and we hope that these celebrations bring you nothing but joy. My husband is also deeply pleased by your presence".

Lord Vartuel mumbles incoherently.

Lady Harrina asks, "May I have the honor of presenting..." and names each of you in turn. Lady Katharna responds gracefully to you all, then dismisses you in order to continue greeting the other guests.

Having been introduced to the Lord and Lady of the court, the PCs have a chance to mingle. There are a number of local knights present, as well as several visiting from other freeholds. Also present is Beorngard, a grumpy old cleric of Telchur. Beorngard is a 9th level cleric, and can cast *raise dead* on any dead PCs. He has two prepared at any time during the tourney, in anticipation of 'accidents'.

Note: The PCs are in a noble court. Impertinence will be met with rebuff, then that person will be ignored by the entire court. Rudeness, making a scene, behaving inappropriately etc. results in expulsion from the keep. Repeated and any rudeness directly aimed at Lady Katharna will result in a challenge to a duel from the Black Knight.

After mingling for a time with the guests of the court, you notice servants are setting up tables. Shortly thereafter, everybody is seated at the long tables in the hall.

Lady Harrina is seated at the high table with her champion close to Lord and Lady Keth, while you are all seated according to rank. Dinner is a less than impressive affair. The food is questionable, and there is not quite enough to go all the way to the bottom of the table at every course [where most PCs are sitting due to their lack of noble rank].

However, the wine and ale are in plentiful supply, if of indifferent quality, and inebriation helps you to ignore the feelings of hunger.

Once dinner is completed, Lady Katharna gains the attention of the room.

"Once again we gather to watch our valiant knights compete for honor and glory. In recognition of their valour, I have gathered a number of prizes for those who prove the most worthy."

A number of servants then bring a table and, taking the covering cloth off, they reveal five prizes. The prizes are for the winner of the joust, and the runner up, the winner of the melee, the captain of the winning melee team, and the tourney champion.

Four of the prizes are exquisite statuettes of glamorous magical beasts, cast from gold with jewels for eyes. They are: a griffon; a chimera; a manticore; and a dragon. The fifth prize, for the runner-up in the joust, is a statuette of a horse, carved from ivory.

PCs can examine the prizes if they choose (as are many of the competing knights). All are hand crafted, of obvious value, and do not have any magical auras. All agree that the prizes are most generous.

Astute PCs may realize that one competing knight could theoretically win all the prizes bar one (nobody could be both winner and runner up in the tourney). Characters who have competed in tourneys previously also know that the prizes for winner of the melee and tournament champion are based upon the opinion of the judges, and those opinions are not always matched by the competitors or the audience.

Development: Some PCs may wish to begin their investigations immediately. If so, go to the relevant encounter. Otherwise, the PCs can sleep for the night.

5: THE 'GRAND' TOURNEY

The tourney will last only two days, due to the lack of competitors. During this time, PCs can compete, gather information, or use the tourney as a distraction while they try to find one of the 'keys' to the 'Heart'.

Those that wish to compete must satisfy the tourney rules. Most of these will be known to the players, however some players may be surprised to learn that nobility is a requirement to compete in Keth. This is non-negotiable, though foreign titles equivalent to knighthood or a higher station will be accepted. Centaurs are barred from competing regardless of noble titles.

THE TOURNEY – THE JOUST

The tourney will be won via direct elimination. The first day consists of the first round only, with all other bouts taking place on the second day. The Competitors are:

- The Black Knight
- Lady Harrina's champion
- 9 other visiting knights

- 3 Vassal Knights of Keth
- 16 Household Knights of Keth
- Any other PCs wishing to compete

All APLs

♣ **The Black Knight:** male half-fiend forest troll fighter 6/cavalier 4; hp 180; Appendix 1.

♣ **Sir Rias of Abonhoth:** male human marshal 1/paladin 6; hp 62; Appendix 1.

♣ **Vassal Knight:** male human aristocrat 1/ fighter 6; hp 62; Appendix 1.

♣ **Household Knight:** male human aristocrat 1/fighter 4; hp 44; Appendix 1.

♣ **Visiting Knight:** male human aristocrat 1/fighter 4; hp 44; Appendix 1.

It is suggested that the GM have the PCs facing each other in the tournament, with any odd PC facing a GM controlled NPC. This will help speed up the running of the tournament, which will be very important in a con slot.

In the first round, the PCs face each other, or household knights of Keth, and the field is reduced to 16.

In the second round the PCs face vassal knights of Keth. Harrina's champion faces The Black Knight (and Sir Rias loses to him), and the field is reduced to 8.

In the third round, if there are any remaining PCs, they face the Black Knight (if not already eliminated). If the Black Knight has been eliminated, PCs face each other, or vassal knights of Keth and the field is reduced to 4.

In the fourth round, the PC faces a household knight of Keth. By this stage, the only competitors remaining are: the Black Knight (unless eliminated by a PC); any PCs still in the competition; and knights of Keth. The knights of Keth are vassal knights, depending on how many the PCs have eliminated, and the field is reduced to 2.

In the fifth and final round, any PC still in the competition will have eliminated the Black Knight, and faces the remaining knight of Keth.

THE MELEE

The melee is a traditional part of a medieval tourney in which two teams fight a mock battle with blunt weapons and jousting lances. The goal is to defeat the opposition, and take as many prisoners as possible for 'ransom'.

Unless you have plenty of time, it is probably best to abstract this part. DO NOT attempt to run this segment during a con session.

The melee is an ancient and traditional part of tournament, currently being phased out in the more modern courts. In the melee, two teams are formed, usually the 'home' team and the 'visitors' team.

The two teams fight a mock battle using blunted weapons, and try to capture as many of the enemy as

possible. The mock battle is fought until: one team is forced to retreat off the field; one team is completely captured; or sunset arrives.

The knight who stands out the most in the mock battle is declared champion of the melee. If that is the same knight who won the joust, they are certain to be tourney champion.

After the final round of the joust is complete, the two teams form; one, consisting of twenty members, for Keth and another, consisting of ten members, for the visitors.

With such uneven odds, it is little surprise that the Keth team wins with ease. However, the manner in which Lady Harrina's champion is ganged up on is surprising.

In short order, more than half the visitors' team is captured, and the rest are forced to retreat from the field. With such a result, Keth is pronounced winner of the melee.

Unless a PC knight can defeat him, the Black Knight will sweep the field again this year, taking the four gold statuettes. The most likely contender for runner up in the joust is a vassal knight of Keth.

ASKING AROUND

PCs may wish also to try and gather information. Use the tables below as a guideline:

About the Tournament

DC Result

- 10 The prizes are impressive, but there aren't many competitors. Not a big surprise, the Black Knight has won the joust, the melee, captain of the melee and tourney champion for the last four years.
- 11 There are about thirty competitors. Most are from Keth, only about ten are visitors.
- 12 I guess the Keth team will win the melee again this year. Not many can win against odds of two to one, especially with the Black Knight leading Keth's team.
- 15 The Black Knight only ever competes at the Keth tourney. He has never been seen with his helm off. He wouldn't get through the helm show at any other tourney.
- 16 The Black Knight has been competing here for six years. He has never been beaten.
- 20 The Black Knight stands guard for Lady Katharna every night.
- 26 It is rumored that the Black Knight does more than guard Lady Katharna at nights.

About the Competition

DC Result

- 5 There are about thirty competitors. Most are from Keth, with only about ten visitors.
- 13 Most of the visitors are young knights, untried and desperate for glory and prize money.

- 14 Other than the Black Knight, there are three other knights of Keth with a reputation. Their names are Sirs Vinton, Claude, and Huegelmont.

About the Black Knight

DC Result

- 10 The Black Knight is Lady Katharna's champion and the tournament champion six years running.
- 11 The Black Knight appeared at court seven years ago. He has been here ever since.
- 15 The Black Knight only ever competes at the Keth tourney. He has never been seen with his helm off. He wouldn't get through the helm show at any other tourney.
- 16 The Black Knight has been competing for six years. He has never been beaten. He never leaves Keth, and Lady Katharna is never seen without him by her side, except when he competes in tourney.
- 20 The Black Knight stands guard for Lady Katharna every night.
- 24 There is something unnatural about the Black Knight. He never sleeps, eats or gets sick.
- 25 It is rumored that the Black Knight does more than guard Lady Katharna at nights.

The Lord and Lady Keth

DC Result

- 10 Katharna is Lady of Keth and mother of two young children. Vartuel is Ruling Lord of Keth for the last nine years.
- 11 The couple met and married nine years ago.
- 15 Katharna married Lord Vartuel after a courtship of only two months.
- 17 Lord Vartuel's father, Corvis, died a little over nine years ago. Vartuel returned from court in Marnar to assume his position as rightful ruler of Keth. Within the month he met Katharna; within the season they were married.
- 18 Lord Vartuel has been ill, off and on, for most of the last four years. In that time, Lady Katharna has been assuming his duties in court.
- 19 Lady Katharna has been the real power in Keth for more than just the last four years.
- 24 Lady Katharna has been the real power in Keth since marrying Vartuel. She was also the one responsible for the speed of the courtship and marriage.
- 28 It is rumored that Katharna was involved in the late Lord Corvis' death.

The 'keys'

Very few people in Keth know of the 'keys'. This is information that cannot be gained by a simple Gather Information check.

The 'Heart'

Again, the people in Keth that know about the 'Heart' are not talking to the PCs. Finding the 'Heart' will take more than a Gather Information check.

BEGINNING INVESTIGATIONS

PCs can use the distraction of the tourney to try and sneak into the keep and search for the 'key'. If so, go to the relevant encounter.

Development: The tournament ends after two days, with a prize ceremony and a banquet. If the PCs are having no luck in finding a 'key' by this stage, Lady Harrina will strongly suggest they investigate the Keth family history for hints as to how the late Lords Keth met the fey.

6: THE COMMON-BORN LADY AND HER BLACK KNIGHT

If the PCs decide to tackle Lady Katharna, or the Black Knight, head on, they are going to have some troubles. However, both possess one of the 'keys', and at the start of the adventure, Katharna's 'key' is the only obvious one for the PCs to go after. Lady Katharna's 'key' is her magnificent white cloak, the Black Knight's 'key' is his helm.

Direct assault against Lady Katharna results in the PCs being attacked by everybody in reach. Even if they do manage to succeed, or escape, they become wanted felons within the Archbarony. Any player that does not realise the gravity of attacking a noble of the realm without provocation should be warned by the GM at least once. If the player persists, use any means you feel are appropriate in the defence of Lady Katharna.

Open assault against the Black Knight results in similar results and charges. The PCs could challenge the Black Knight to a duel, however it should be apparent that this would be a difficult fight to win.

This leaves the PCs with guile, subterfuge and magic. One of the first problems the PCs will face is in determining what, of Lady Katharna's possessions, is the 'key'. Lady Katharna's outfit contains a number of pieces of jewellery that she wears each day, all of which are magical. There is also her magnificent white cloak, the cloak pin, and anything else that is not in sight, or is hidden in her chambers. The *artificer's monocle* will reveal the properties of each of Lady Katharna's possessions, but will require one full minute of study per item (see item description, *Appendix 2*).

Magical persuasion or interrogation will not work against Lady Katharna, as she does not know that her cloak is a 'key'. Other forms of divination might work, and Valdir can help them in this regard. However, then the PCs will still need to acquire the cloak, which the Lady wears whenever she leaves her chambers. PCs could

try to steal the cloak whilst Lady Katharna sleeps, but will need to get past guards and locks. They will also need to remain undetected by the Black Knight who guards Lady Katharna each night.

Likewise, the PCs have no clues that the Black Knight has a 'key', much less what it is, unless Valdir has revealed this information. Given his position in court, and his 'strangeness', PCs might choose to investigate him anyway.

Magical coercion and interrogation will be difficult given the Black Knight's high SR, but they are possibilities. Again, like Lady Katharna, other divinations might work, and the *artificer's monocle* will reveal the properties of the helm if they can acquire it. However, as the Black Knight never takes off his helm, the PCs will only acquire it through force.

Development: If the PCs do manage to acquire one of the two unseele 'keys', they will have to deal with the trap on each item.

Trap: The 'keys' are all protected by a fey enchantment. This is not meant as a trap, but is simply a part of how fey understand 'possession'. Each 'key' is bonded to one person and, until ownership of that item is willingly passed to another, the item always seeks to return to its owner.

The save DC for the *suggestion* traps is increased by 2 given the reasonableness of the *suggestion*. Note that the traps go off every round that the 'key' is in the PCs possession. However, like all enchantment-charm effects, this effect can be suppressed with a *protection from evil* or similar spell.

APL 4 (EL 4)

🔮 **Suggestion Trap:** CR 4; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (*suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 5th level wizard; DC 16 Will negates); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL 6 (EL 6)

🔮 **Heightened Suggestion Trap:** CR 6; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 5th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 9th level wizard; DC 18 Will negates); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 8 (EL 8)

🔮 **Heightened Suggestion Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 13th level wizard; DC 20 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 10 (EL 10)

🔮 **Heightened Mind Fog Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *mind fog*); 13th level wizard; DC 14 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

🔮 **Heightened Suggestion Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 13th level wizard; DC 20 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 12 (EL 12)

🔮 **Heightened Mind Fog Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *mind fog*); 13th level wizard; DC 14 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

🔮 **2 x Heightened Suggestion Traps:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 13th level wizard; DC 20 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Development: It is possible, though highly unlikely, that the PCs will gain a 'key' from either the Black Knight or Lady Katharna. The possible methods for this are going to be highly individual, so GMs are asked to use their discretion in judging the success of the players' ideas.

When the PC holding or wearing the 'key' concentrates on it, they feel a tugging towards the 'Heart'.

If the PCs do succeed, proceed to Encounter 8.

7: KETH KEEP

The PCs are likely to want to poke around inside the keep at some stage in their search for a 'key'. This may occur on more than one occasion, depending on when the players feel there is an opportunity, so it may be necessary to visit this encounter on more than one occasion.

The encounter has been broken up based upon 'spheres' of investigation. These include: Lady Katharna's chambers; Finian, Lady Katharna's assistant chamberlain and 'keeper'; the library; the artwork; the servants; and the chapel.

LADY KATHARNA'S CHAMBERS

PCs who wish to investigate Lady Katharna's personal chambers need to find a way inside. The chambers are locked and guarded at all times. However, magic can be used to gain entrance, as can guile. GMs are asked to use

their discretion as to the likely success of the players' ideas.

If the PCs do gain entrance, it is likely they encounter Finian, Lady Katharna's assistant chamberlain and her 'keeper' sent from the unseelie court. If they have ensured that Finian is not in the chambers, or somehow subdue her, then they can search the chambers.

Her Ladyship's chambers hold a lot that is of great interest, but nothing that can be used to find any of the 'keys'. Searches reveal all manner of valuable trinkets, which the PCs can try to steal if they so choose. Of course, the most rudimentary magical investigation will reveal that the PCs are responsible, and they will be up on charges of theft.

FINIAN

Finian is the unseelie court's representative to Lady Katharna Keth, and her 'keeper'. She is an excellent seamstress, a wonderful confidante and conversationalist, and an extremely malevolent pixie. Finian was one of the first fey to be corrupted by Nala, and has reveled in causing destruction and pain through Lady Katharna.

Finian will realise very quickly what the PCs are after, and will try to mislead them. GMs are encouraged to be creative, the more believable the lie the better.

Finian detects as evil. She tries to avoid a fight and, if one breaks out, she tries to escape, rather than fight it out.

Before you stands a young woman in a simple maid's outfit. She is cute, in an unremarkable way, and stands at just over five-feet tall. She has a ready smile and a bright sparkle in her eyes.

Creature: Finian is a *polymorphed* pixie appearing as a young human woman. She tries to act innocent, and will happily lie through her teeth. If pressed about the letter to Tyver, she admits she wrote it, but she was under great pressure from Lady Katharna to create a 'unique' cloak, at the time.

All APLs

◆ **Finian:** female half-fiend pixie rogue 7; hp 42 (+15 false life); Bluff +24.

Tactics: If forced into combat, Finian first turns invisible. She then turns back into a pixie and flies away, unless prevented. If restrained in any way, she uses her *cape of the mountebank* to escape.

THE LIBRARY

Getting access to the library during the tourney is quite easy. Even the most simple of tales will work, as most of the keeps' servants and guards are at the tourney, and the remaining ones don't care so long as the PCs don't make a mess.

The library contains a large number of books, including dozens of volumes on the family history, the

history of the freehold, financial and court records and personal journals of past Ruling Lords.

Searching through all these volumes for the relevant information requires about ten hours of research. This can be divided between multiple PCs. If the PCs have access to the spell *scholar's touch*, they can reduce the research time by one hour per minute of the spell's duration.

After the PCs have completed their research, they will have learnt the following:

- The third Lord Keth made a bargain with the fey to protect both their peoples. There was an exchange of gifts, but what the gifts were is not mentioned.
- The fey come and go from the court of Keth as they will, often in disguise.
- There are many anecdotes about the pranks fey have played in this court.
- The Lords' Keth would often go into the forest to meet with the fey. On these occasions they would always prepare themselves for a hunting trip, with 'horn and bow'.
- The Lords' Keth have called upon the aid of the fey several times in the history of the family.
- This is the first generation to act against the long term wellbeing and sustainability of the forest.
- Every will, written by a ruling lord Keth, mentions the expected inheritance items for the next ruling lord; such as lands, castle, etc, but they also all make specific mention of a hunting horn.

THE ARTWORK

PCs, who take the time to examine the portraits and tapestries in the keep, can learn a little about the history of the family.

While most of the artwork is suffering in a state of neglect, there is a large amount of it, dating back to the early days of Keth.

Most of the artwork shows the influence of nature. There are many landscapes, hunting scenes and tapestries full of the creatures of the Timberway. The fey of the Timberway also play a big part in many of the tapestry scenes.

There are also portraits of the former Lords Keth. Most are dressed as if for a hunt. While the style of clothing changes over the centuries, they all seem to be bearing the same horn.

The horn in the portraits is the 'key' given to House Keth by the fey of the Timberway centuries ago.

As you pass through the halls and passages of the keep, you can see that the style of artwork focuses strongly on a naturalist theme. There are many tapestries and statues of animals and hunting scenes, most of which appear to be set in the Timberway. Several also include depictions of fey creatures, generally casting them in a favourable light.

Upstairs, there is one hall that is lined with portraits. Each portrait is of a different Ruling Lord from the history of the family. Most have chosen to sit for their portraits garbed in hunting gear of the finest quality.

A DC 25 Spot check will reveal the similarity of the horn from portrait to portrait. PCs asking specifically for a repeating piece of equipment can have a +10 bonus on this roll.

THE SERVANTS

The servants cannot help the PCs with reference to any 'keys' or 'Hearts'. However, they do know a huge amount about the family, and can answer the PCs' questions in these regards.

If asked about the fey, many of the servants reveal that the fey have always been in the forest, and it was not unusual to have them pay visits to the court of Keth. Some would come in disguise, some openly, and the old Lord would always welcome them.

If asked if the old Lord ever went looking for the fey, the servants reveal that he did go riding and hunting quite often. While there are many rumours of the old Lord meeting with the fey (especially the dryads and nymphs), nobody knows of anybody who actually saw one of these meetings. It was always a friend of a friend who saw it!

If asked specifically about the old Lord's hunting horn, the servants can reveal that it now hangs in the chapel.

THE CHAPEL

Within the chapel are a number of shrines and statues dedicated to the Suel pantheon. Two large statues dominate the room, those of Kord and Llerg. Upon Kord's belt is the old Lord's horn, the third 'key' to the 'Heart'

Unlike the other 'keys', this one can simply be taken once the PCs find it. However, it is still protected by a powerful spell trap.

The chapel is old and dusty, and does not seem to have had much use in years. As you look around the room, you can see shrines to all of the Suel gods, though some are obviously more popular than others.

The most popular deities in Keth seem to be Kord and Llerg, both represented in larger than man-sized statues carved from marble.

Trap: The 'keys' are all protected by a fey enchantment. This is not meant as a trap, but is simply a part of how fey understand 'possession'. Each 'key' is bonded to one person, and until willing passed to another, it will always seek to return to its owner.

The save DC for the traps is increased by 2 given the reasonableness of the *suggestion*. Note that the traps go off every round that the 'key' is in the PCs possession.

APL 4 (EL 4)

✚ **Suggestion Trap:** CR 4; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (*suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 5th level wizard; DC 16 Will negates); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL 6 (EL 6)

✚ **Heightened Suggestion Trap:** CR 6; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 5th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 9th level wizard; DC 18 Will negates); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

APL 8 (EL 8)

✚ **Heightened Suggestion Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 13th level wizard; DC 20 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 10 (EL 10)

✚ **Heightened Mind Fog Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *mind fog*); 13th level wizard; DC 14 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

✚ **Heightened Suggestion Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 13th level wizard; DC 20 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 12 (EL 12)

✚ **Heightened Mind Fog Trap:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *mind fog*); 13th level wizard; DC 14 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

✚ **2 x Heightened Suggestion Traps:** CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; magical bypass (owner willingly gives the item to the person as a permanent gift); spell effect (heightened 7th level *suggestion* - return the object to its owner); 13th level wizard; DC 20 Will negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Development: The PCs now have a 'key', and can proceed to Encounter 8. Remember that the trap on the 'key' will continue to activate unless the key is placed in an extra-dimensional space, or the effect is suppressed (ie, protection from evil/good/etc. or magic circle of protection against evil/good/etc.).

When the PC holding or wearing the 'key' concentrates on it, they feel a tugging towards the 'Heart'.

8: AT THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

Before departing for the 'Heart', PCs may wish to report in to Lady Harrina. Lady Harrina listens to all they have to say, then encourages them to find and save the 'Heart'.

Once they have departed from Keth, PCs travel for about three hours, before they reach the 'Heart'. As they approach, the PCs pass through some of the worst damaged areas of the Timberway. Of particular note is the complete absence of wildlife.

You leave Keth, quickly moving to find the 'Heart' of the Timberway, and hopefully save the forest before it's too late. Each time you concentrate upon the 'key', you have a better idea of where the 'Heart' lies.

The path you travel to the 'Heart' is by no means straight. The 'key' leads you on a winding path, one that would be difficult to predict and even more difficult to repeat.

After travelling for a little over two hours, you notice that this part of the Timberway is very quiet. Most of the plant life is dead and rotting, with several trees having fallen, their roots exposed to the sky. Yet amid the rotting flora there are no birds, no animals, not even reptiles.

Adjust the following text if most or all of the party is protected from the effects of mind-affecting magics.

Over the next hour, your group seems to be constantly under attack from charms and compulsions. These magical attacks seem to be trying to send the party in a number of directions, confusing you and making you forget your purpose.

The bearer of the 'key' seems to be immune, and often has to help those who are not immune to keep to the path, and to remember why you're all here.

After an hour of difficult travel, the bearer of the 'key' gets their first glimpse of the 'Heart'. Nestled in a small valley that drops a hundred feet below the forest floor, the 'Heart' still towers a hundred and fifty feet above the canopy of the forest. The 'Heart' is a huge and magnificent oak, at least a thousand years old, and possibly much, much older.

However, for all its glory, the old oak is looking very sick. Many of its branches have no leaves, despite spring being in the air, and the tree itself looks blackened and twisted. The branches have

taken on the appearance of skeletal limbs and hands, while the trunk looks to be a hollow, lifeless husk.

Once you have reached the valley floor, the effects of the magical protections surrounding the 'Heart' seem to no longer be affecting the party. All of you can now see the ancient oak, and none of you seem affected by unwanted magical compulsions.

As the PCs approach the 'Heart', they are noticed by Nala. Nala's instinct is to play with the PCs, seeing how much she can get the PCs to debase themselves and hurt each other.

As you approach the 'Heart', you can see that the river that runs through this valley is now very slow moving, and full of stagnant, foul-smelling water. Around the base of the tree are small ponds of slime and scum.

You can also see that the bottom fifteen feet of the tree's trunk has been stripped of bark, and there are over a dozen taps in the tree, sucking out the tree-sap and delivering it to small, clay jars.

Whilst you absorb this scene, you notice a creature emerge from the tree. Like the tree, her skin is blackened and she looks overly thin and emaciated. Yet, for all her poor health, there is something incredibly compelling about her. Perhaps it is the elongated incisors, or maybe the glowing red eyes. Perhaps it is the fact that she can emerge from a tree, or maybe it is the fact that she is completely naked and standing in a very interesting pose.

PCs have the chance to talk to Nala if they wish. Nala is more than happy to talk and tries to get as much information from the PCs as possible.

If any PC makes a threatening move towards Nala, or even threatens her, she immediately moves to defend herself.

If asked about the clay pots, Nala offers the sap to the PCs. She even encourages them to try it, promising them great power and life immortal.

Drinking the Sap: The sap is a reflection of the wounds and corruption that the Forest and the 'Heart' have suffered. Any player that indicates a desire to have their character drink the sap should be asked if that is what they really want to do. The earlier parts of this series should provide enough of a warning as to the effects of the sap.

Any PC that drinks the sap is instantly corrupted by its power. Their alignment immediately changes to evil, they enter a rage (as the barbarian class ability), and fall under the influence of the dryad Nala (as if under the effect of a dominate person spell). There are no saves for any of these effects as the PC has willingly drunk the substance (as drinking a potion). For the remainder of this adventure, the PC is under the control of Nala until

subdued by the remainder of the party, or until they save against Nala's control.

DMs should note that even dominated, evil PCs may not wish to be controlled by a crazy dryad and can thus choose to drink (or accept) *delay* or *neutralize poison* potions or spells – as well as making new saving throws when forced to take actions against their nature (such as attacking former allies that might be useful to them later). *Delay* or *neutralize poison* negate the effects of the sap for as long as the spell is in effect but PCs must still seek an atonement for their actions,

As an additional side effect, the PC has voluntarily committed an evil act, and the character has had their alignment magically changed to evil, and thus cannot be played again until their alignment is no longer evil (ie. While the effect of the sap is negated and the terms of the In Need of Atonement AR Award have been met).

PCs drinking the sap also earn the Unreliable AR Award, and may not gain any other rewards for this adventure. PCs choosing to accept the terms of the In Need of Atonement award, cannot atone until the remainder of the party has returned to Lady Harrina, who helps in organizing the *atonement* spell. PCs who choose not to atone are surrendered immediately to the GM and retired from the campaign.

Creatures: Nala is an experienced enchantress, who is used to getting others to fight her battles for her. She is totally insane, extremely depressed, and obsessed with harming herself and her tree. Her thralls fight to the death at her merest whim.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **Nala:** Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 1; 34 hp; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Nala:** Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 3; 44 hp; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Nala:** Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 5; 54 hp; Appendix 1.

☛ **Charmed Hill Giant:** Male hill giant; 120 hp; Monster Manual pg 123.

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **Nala:** Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 6; 59 hp; Appendix 1.

☛ **Charmed Hill Giants (2):** Male hill giants; 120 hp each; Monster Manual pg 123.

APL 12 (EL 15)

☛ **Nala:** Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 8; 82 hp; Appendix 1.

☛ **Charmed Hill Giants (3):** Male hill giants; 120 hp each; Monster Manual pg 123.

Tactics: At all APLs, Nala tries to *charm* or *dominate* PCs into fighting for her. However, she is more interested in pain than in death, so will happily have *charmed* or *dominated* PCs use subdual damage in the hope of taking some prisoners.

Nala moves each round, often moving in and out of her tree to avoid attacks. She also instructs any enchanted creatures (PC or NPC) to focus on whoever is causing her the most trouble.

At all APLs where the *charmed* hill giants are present, they attempt to 'club the PCs into submission' (i.e. use subdual damage) as Nala has instructed. They follow these instructions until reduced to 75% of their starting hit points, at which time they start attacking to kill.

At APL12 Nala starts with *blasphemy*, then attempts to *dominate* the most effective-looking fighter in the group.

Remember that the PCs can block many of Nala's effects with spells such as *protection from good/evil/etc.* and *magic circle against evil/good/etc.* Also remember that these effects can be *dispelled*.

Treasure: The PCs can gain no treasure from this encounter. Nala's magic rings belong to her and cannot be claimed by the PCs.

Development: Once Nala and her *charmed* giants are either dead or unconscious, the PCs can look at what might help heal Nala and the 'Heart'. A DC 19 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that taking Nala more than three hundred yards from the 'Heart' will cause her to weaken and die within twenty-four hours.

PCs that are ignorant of this fact should be warned of her worsening condition within an hour of taking Nala from the vicinity of the 'Heart'.

CONCLUSION

The PCs have a number of options now that they have found the 'Heart'. They can:

- ignore the problem and leave (unlikely);
- they can take Nala to help;
- they can try and fetch help for Nala and the 'Heart'; or
- they can try and heal Nala and the 'Heart' themselves.

Leaving and ignoring the problem: should not be an option. If the players insist on doing this, they lose the roleplaying and story awards for xp, and receive only the Unreliable AR award.

If the PCs try to take Nala to help: a DC 19 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that taking Nala more than three hundred yards from the 'Heart' will cause her to weaken and die within twenty-four hours. PCs that are ignorant of this fact should be warned of her worsening condition within an hour of taking Nala from the vicinity of the 'Heart'.

If the PCs fetch help to Nala and the 'Heart': then both can be treated and eventually healed by NPCs.

If the PCs try to heal Nala and the 'Heart' themselves: they need to cast several spells in combination, a combination that may take days to discover.

The 'Heart' can be treated with the following: *dispel evil*, followed by either *heal* or several *cure* spells, *neutralize poison* and *remove disease*. Due to the size of the tree, this combination needs to be cast many times (at least every day for a month), though the positive effects will be visible from the first casting.

Nala can only be treated after a *heal* spell has been cast upon her to temporarily heal her of her insanity. Once that has been done, she also requires an *atonement* to heal the taint to her soul, and a *dispel evil* and a *heal* to remove the taint to her body.

When the PCs have finished helping the Heart and Nala, they are free to return and report to Lady Harrina, who has been waiting for them in Keth. When they do, read, or paraphrase, the following:

Once you have reported to Lady Harrina, she congratulates you upon your success in finding the 'Heart'. Lady Harrina is able to summon the help of the Knights of the Hart, who quickly move into Keth to protect the 'Heart'.

You are all hailed as heroes by the Knights of the Hart, who are given possession of the old Lord Keth's horn by the seelie court, and take upon themselves the protection of the 'Heart' and the mending of the lands of Keth.

Lady Harrina returns you to the court of Abonhoth where you are publicly acknowledged as heroes of Abonhoth and of Ratik. At great expense, Lord Abonhoth commissions the crafting of magical tomes and manuals to show his appreciation of your efforts. Lady Harrina thanks you all personally, and invites you to return to the court of Abonhoth as her guests at any time.

If the PCs find the 'Heart' and are able to defeat Nala and return to Lady Harrina with the information so she can summon the Knights of the Hart, they receive: the **Public Appreciation of House Abonhoth** and the **Further Gratitude of Lady Harrina**.

If the PCs did not kill Nala, and manage to get help for her (or heal her themselves), they are named **Defenders of the Timberway** by the Order of the Hart and are granted **Nala's Blessing** by the dryad.

If the PCs refuse to help Lady Harrina, drink the Heart's sap, or leave Nala and the 'Heart' without attempting to summon help for them, they receive the **Unreliable** AR Award.

If the PCs drink the Heart's sap, they receive the **In Need of Atonement** AR award. They may not receive

any other awards (except for the **Unreliable** award, and the **Joust Score** award if they earned it). Willingly drinking the sap has cast their reputation under a pall.

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 2

Disperse the Ghoul mob

APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Encounter 6 or 7

Acquire a 'key'

APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP
APL 10	300 XP
APL 12	360 XP

Encounter 8

Defeat Nala

APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

Story Award

Free the 'Heart'

APL 4	90 XP
APL 6	120 XP
APL 8	150 XP
APL 10	180 XP
APL 12	210 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1125 XP
APL 10	1350 XP
APL 12	1575 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.

Introduction

All APLs: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 197 gp; *wand of detect magic* (31 gp); *shiftweave* (41 gp); *artificer's monocol* (125 gp); Total 197 gp.

Encounter 2:

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 548 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); Total 548 gp.

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 806 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); Total 806 gp.

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,139 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); *ring of counterspells* (333 gp); Total 1,139 gp.

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,139 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); *ring of counterspells* (333 gp) *mantle of second chances* (1,000 gp); Total 2,139 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 3,805 gp; *caduceus bracers* (166 gp); *pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (50 gp); *gloves of fortunate striking* (166 gp); *spellsink scarab* (166 gp); *rod of bodily restoration* (258 gp); *ring of counterspells* (333 gp) *mantle of second chances* (1,000 gp) *stone of good luck* (1,666 gp); Total 3,805 gp.

Total Possible Treasure

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 745 gp; Total 745 gp. (Max: 650 gp)

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,003 gp; Total 1,003 gp. (Max: 900 gp)

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,336 gp; Total 1,336 gp. (Max: 1,300 gp)

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,336 gp; Total 2,336 gp. (Max: 2,300 gp)

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 4,002 gp; Total 4,002 gp. (Max 3,300 gp)

Special

🏇 **Joust Score:** You've unhorsed (0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) opponents at the Keth Tourney of 598CY. You have won: _____. (Gold statuette = 200 gp, ivory statuette = 50 gp).

🛡️ **Defender of the Timberway:** For saving the 'Heart' of the Timberway, and its dryad, you are offered the rank of Knight in the Order of the Hart. If you accept, your affiliation score in this meta-org is high enough for knight rank regardless of its actual value.

👑 **Nala's Blessing:** For saving Nala, you receive the power of the 'Heart', a +2 bonus on Cha-based skill checks with fey. In addition, the next time your hit points fall below -9, you instead stabilize on -1 hit point. Cross off once used. Nala will teach any interested character her skills granting access to the Mindbender PRC (CAr).

🙏 **Further Gratitude of Lady Harrina:** In gratitude of your efforts Lady Harrina has offered to either: cover 30% of the cost of any ONE item from this Adventure Record OR to arrange for you to have any one weapon upgraded with the *holy* Special Ability from the DMG OR access to a single *luck blade* (0 wishes) for 15,000 gp. Mark off this favour when used.

🚫 **Unreliable:** You have proven to be unreliable. For one calendar year from the date this AR, all items purchased

in Ratik regional adventures cost you an extra 10%. This is cumulative with any other such penalties, and includes items purchased for you, by others.

🏠 **Public Appreciation of House Abonhoth:** For all you have done for Lady Harrina, the House provides free High Lifestyle for any adventure set in Abonhoth. In addition, it grants you access to ONE of the following at a 20% discount: *manual of bodily health*, *manual of gainful exercise*, *manual of quickness of action*, *tome of clear thought*, *tome of leadership and influence*, *tome of understanding*.

The maximum bonus the chosen book can offer is equal to the number of favors this character holds that are an Appreciation (including Further or Public) of House Abonhoth.

Write the book chosen and the AR it is bought below:

🔥 **In Need of Atonement:** for drinking the sap of the Heart, you must undertake a quest costing 5 TU immediately upon completion of this adventure. (Record TU cost on AR now). You must also pay the 450 gp cost to have the spell cast as well as 500 gp compensation to the caster for the loss of experience suffered. If you cannot pay the full amount now, you must allot this debt a minimum of 250 gp from each round of adventure earnings from this AR forward until the debt is paid in full.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

APL 4:

- *Wand of detect magic* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Artificer's monocle* (Adventure; MIC; 2,000 gp)
- *Shiftweave* (Adventure; MIC; 500 gp)
- *Caduceus bracers* (Adventure; MIC; 2,000 gp)
- *Pearl of speech – Cold Tongue* (Adventure; MIC; 600 gp)
- *Gloves of fortunate striking* (Adventure; MIC; 2,000 gp)
- *Spellsink scarab* (Adventure; MIC; 2,000 gp)

APL 6 (all of APL 4 plus the following):

- *Rod of bodily restoration* (Adventure; MIC; 3,100 gp)

APL 8 (all of APLs 4-6 plus the following):

- *Ring of counterspells* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 10 (all of APLs 4-8 plus the following):

- *Mantle of second chances* (Adventure; MIC; 12,000 gp)

APL 12 (all of APLs 4-10 plus the following):

- *Stone of good luck* (Adventure; DMG)

1: THE KNIGHT AT THE CROSSROADS

SIR CAMDON OF CORMIK **CR 5**

Male human aristocrat 1/fighter 4

NG Medium humanoid (human – various)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Dwarven, Flan or Ancient Suel

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, -2 charging)

hp 44 (5 HD);

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

Speed 20 ft. in full plate armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee jousting lance +11 (3d8+24/x3) or;
mw longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7

Attack Options Power attack, ride-by attack, spirited charge.

Combat Gear jousting lances, mw longsword, mw full plate, heavy wooden shield, barded heavy warhorse, tack and saddle

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13

Feats Power Attack, Cleave, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2, Knowledge (local - NMR) +2, Ride +11, Speak Language - Ancient Suel or Flan, Cold Tongue, Dwarven

Possessions combat gear

5: THE 'GRAND' TOURNEY

GM Note: The following stat blocks have been adjusted to allow for all relevant conditions for the joust, and include the modifiers for all relevant feats. Due to the adjusted Armour Class for all competitors, and the lack of magic, all competing knights are assumed to be using full Power Attack on every attack.

THE BLACK KNIGHT **CR 17**

Male half-fiend forest troll fighter 6/cavalier 4

CE Medium outsider (augmented giant) (native)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +8, Spot +8; darkvision 90ft; low-light vision, scent

Languages Ancient Suel, Common, Cold Tongue, Fey, Giant

AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 26

(+3 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, +6 natural, -2 charging)

hp 180 (15 HD); fast healing 5; DR 10/magic

Immune poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 25

APPENDIX 1: ALL APLS

Fort +22, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

Speed 20 ft. in full plate armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee jousting lance +17 (3d8+72/19-20 x3) or;
jousting lance (deadly charge) +17 (4d8+96/19-20 x3) or;
mw longsword +25/+20/+15 (1d8+11/17-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +22

Attack Options Power Attack, Ride-by-attack, Spirited charge, Deadly Charge 2/day, Smite Good 1/day (+15 damage)

Combat Gear jousting lances, mw longsword, mw mithral full plate, heavy wooden shield, barded heavy warhorse, tack and saddle

Abilities Str 28, Dex 18, Con 26, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Power Attack, Mounted Combat, Ride-by-Attack, Weapon Focus (lance), Spirited Charge, Weapon Specialization (lance), Weapon Focus (longsword), Improved Critical (lance), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Improved Critical (longsword)**Skills (need fixing)** Diplomacy +15, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Knowledge (local - NMR) +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Listen +3, Ride +18, Speak Language - Old Oeridian, Dwarven, Spot +3**Possessions** combat gear

Deadly Charge (Ex): When mounted and charging, may declare a deadly charge, dealing triple damage with a melee weapon or quadruple damage with a lance (does not stack with spirited charge).

Mounted Weapon Bonus - lance (Ex): +1 competence bonus to hit with a lance while mounted.

Mounted Weapon Bonus - sword (Ex): +1 competence bonus to hit with a sword while mounted.

SIR RIAS OF ABONHOTH **CR 7**

Male human marshal 1/paladin 6

LG Medium humanoid (human - Suel)

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

Aura Strong good, aura of courage

Languages Common, Ancient Suel, Cold Tongue

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 19

(-1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, -2 charging)

hp 55 (7 HD);

Immune Fear, disease

Fort +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +8

Speed 20 ft. in full plate armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee jousting lance +9 (3d8+27/x3) or;
mw longsword +9/+4 (1d8+2/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +6; Grp +8

Attack Options Power Attack, Ride-by-attack, Spirited charge, Smite Evil 2/day (+3 hit/+6 dam), Turn Undead (4th level), Spells

Special Actions Minor aura: Over the top., *detect evil*, lay on hands (18 hp/day), *remove disease* 1/week

Combat Gear jousting lances, mw longsword, mw full plate, heavy wooden shield, barded heavy warhorse, tack and saddle

Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):

1st—bless weapon, cure light wounds

Abilities Str 14, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16

Feats Mounted Combat, Ride by Attack, Skill Focus (diplomacy), Spirited Charge, Power Attack**Skills** Diplomacy +20, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +3, Ride +9, Sense Motive +6, Speak Language - Ancient Suel, Cold Tongue, Spot +3**Possessions** combat gear

Auras (Ex): The marshal exerts an effect on allies in his vicinity. He can learn to produce different effects, or auras, over the course of his career. The marshal may project one minor aura and (starting at 2nd level) one major aura at a time.

Projecting an aura is a swift action (see Chapter 2: Magic). The aura remains in effect until the marshal uses a free action to dismiss it or activates another aura of the same kind (major or minor). A marshal can have an aura active continually; thus, an aura can be in effect at the start of a combat encounter even before the marshal takes his first turn.

Activating an aura involves haranguing, ordering, directing, encouraging, cajoling, or calming allies. A marshal sizes up the enemy, allies, and the terrain, then gives allies the direction that they can use to do their best.

Unless otherwise noted, a marshal's aura affects all allies within 60 feet (including himself) who can hear the marshal. An ally must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher and be able to understand the marshal's language to gain the bonus. A marshal's aura is dismissed if he is dazed, unconscious, stunned, paralyzed, or otherwise unable to be heard or understood by his allies.

A marshal begins play knowing one minor aura of his choice. As his marshal level increases, he gains access to new auras, as indicated on Table 1-5: The Marshal.

All bonuses granted by a marshal's auras are circumstance bonuses that do not stack with each other.

Minor Aura: A minor aura lets allies add the marshal's Charisma bonus (if any) to certain rolls.

Over the Top: Bonus on damage rolls when charging.

VASSAL KNIGHT

CR 7

Male human aristocrat 1/fighter 6

NG Medium humanoid (human – various)

Init +1; Senses Listen -1, Spot -1

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Dwarven, Flan or Ancient Suel

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, -2 charging)

hp 62 (7 HD);

Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3

Speed 20 ft. in full plate armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee jousting lance +11 (3d8+36/x3) or; mw longsword +11/+6 (1d8+3/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +6; Grp +9

Attack Options Power attack, ride-by attack, spirited charge.

Combat Gear jousting lances, mw longsword, mw full plate, heavy wooden shield, barded heavy warhorse, tack and saddle

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13

Feats Power Attack, Cleave, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Specialization (lance), Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2, Knowledge (local - NMR) +2, Ride +13, Speak Language - Ancient Suel or Flan, Cold Tongue, Dwarven

Possessions combat gear

HOUSEHOLD KNIGHT

CR 5

Male human aristocrat 1/fighter 4

NG Medium humanoid (human – various)

Init +1; Senses Listen -1, Spot -1

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Dwarven, Flan or Ancient Suel

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, -2 charging)

hp 44 (5 HD);

Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2

Speed 20 ft. in full plate armor (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee jousting lance +11 (3d8+24/x3) or; mw longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +4; Grp +7

Attack Options Power attack, ride-by attack, spirited charge.

Combat Gear jousting lances, mw longsword, mw full plate, heavy wooden shield, barded heavy warhorse, tack and saddle

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13

Feats Power Attack, Cleave, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2, Knowledge

(local - NMR) +2, Ride +11, Speak Language -
Ancient Suel or Flan, Cold Tongue, Dwarven

Possessions combat gear

VISITING KNIGHT

CR 5

Male human aristocrat 1/fighter 4

NG Medium humanoid (human – various)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Dwarven, Flan
or Ancient Suel

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, -2
charging)

hp 44 (5 HD);

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

Speed 20 ft. in full plate armor (4 squares), base
movement 30 ft.;

Melee jousting lance +11 (3d8+24/x3) or;
mw longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7

Attack Options Power attack, ride-by attack, spirited
charge.

Combat Gear jousting lances, mw longsword, mw full
plate, heavy wooden shield, barded heavy
warhorse, tack and saddle

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha
13

Feats Power Attack, Cleave, Mounted Combat, Ride-
by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +9,
Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2, Knowledge
(local - NMR) +2, Ride +11, Speak Language -
Ancient Suel or Flan, Cold Tongue, Dwarven

Possessions combat gear

APL 4

2: THE RAVENOUS MOB

MOB LEADER

CR 4

Male advanced ghaſt

CE Medium undead

Init +3; Senses Listen +2, Spot +12

Languages Common, Cold Tongue

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14

(+3 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 72 (8 HD);

Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +8

Speed 30ft. in no armor (6 squares), base movement 30 ft.;

Melee Bite +8 (1d8+4 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +6 (1d6+2 plus paralysis)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +4; Grp +8

Attack Options Multi-attack.

Combat Gear *gloves of fortunate striking*, *spell sink scarab*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16

Feats Multi-attack, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Improved Turn Resistance

Skills Balance +12, Climb +13, Hide +12, Jump +13, Move Silently +12, Spot +12

Possessions combat gear plus rags

Ghoul Fever (Su): Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 17, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a ghaſt's bite or claws must ſucceed on a DC 17 Fortitude ſave or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds.

Stench (Ex): Living creatures within 10 feet must ſucceed on a DC 17 Fortitude ſave or be ſickened for 1d6+4 minutes.

8: AT THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

NALA

CR 7

Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 1

CE Medium outsider (augmented fey) (native)

Init +11; Senses Listen +11, Spot +11

Aura Evil

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Elven, Sylvan

AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 15

(+7 Dex, +1 deflection, +4 natural)

hp 34 (6 HD); DR 5/cold iron and magic

Immune Poison

Resist Acid/Cold/Electricity/Fire 10; SR 16

Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +12

Speed 30 ft. in no armor (6 squares); base movement 30 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1) and

2 x claws -2 (1d4)

Base Atk +2; Grp +3

Atk Options Smite Good 1/day (+6)

Combat Gear *ring of protection* +1

Bard Spells Known (CL 2nd):

1ſt (1/day)—charm person (DC 20), Tasha's hideous laughter (DC 20)

0 (3/day)—dancing lights, detect magic, ghosť ſound, message, preſtidigitation

† Already caſt

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

4th—tree ſtride 3/day, unholy blight (DC 18) 1/day

3rd—deeper ſlumber (DC 19) 3/day

2nd—tree ſhape – at will, ſuggestion (DC 18) 3/day, ſuggestion (DC18) 1/day

1ſt—entangle (DC 15) - at will, ſpeak with plants – at will, charm person (DC 16) 3/day, darkness 3/day, deſecrate 1/day

Abilities Str 12, Dex 24, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 25

SQ Fey Traits, Natural weapons treated as magic weapons, Summon Familiar, Telepathy, Tree Dependent, Wild Empathy, Bardic Music, Bardic Knowledge (1d20+5)

Feats Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +12, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +16, Escape Artist +14, Handle Animal +9, Hide +14, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Perform (oratory) +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +11, Survival +9(+11 natural environments)

Possessions combat gear

Telepathy (Su): Nala can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language within 100 ft.

2: THE RAVENOUS MOB**MOB LEADER****CR 6**

Male advanced ghastr barbarian 2

CE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +12; darkvision 60ft.**Languages** Common, Cold Tongue**AC** 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14

(+5 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 90 (10 HD);**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9**Speed** 40ft. in no armor (8 squares), base movement 40 ft.;**Melee** Bite +12 (1d8+6 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +10 (1d6+3 plus paralysis)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +12**Attack Options** Multi-attack, rage 1/day, power attack.**Combat Gear** *gloves of fortunate striking, spellsink scarab***Abilities** Str 22, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 19**SQ** Undead traits, +6 turn resistance, fast movement, uncanny dodge**Feats** Multi-attack, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Improved Turn Resistance, Power Attack**Skills** Balance +14, Climb +15, Hide +14, Jump +15, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Spot +13**Possessions** combat gear plus rags**Ghoul Fever (Su):** Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 17, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.**Paralysis (Ex):** Those hit by a ghastr's bite or claws must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. elves are not immune to this effect.**Stench (Ex):** Living creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes.**MOB LEADER (RAGING)****CR 6****AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 12

(+5 Dex, +4 natural, -2 raging)

hp 90 (10 HD);**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11**Speed** 40 ft. in no armour (8 squares), base movement 40 ft.;**Melee** Bite +14 (1d8+8 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +12 (1d6+4 plus paralysis)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +14**Attack Options** Multi-attack, rage 1/day, power attack.**Abilities** Str 26, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 19**MOB LEADER (RAGING)****CR 6****AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12

(+1 Dex, +4 deflection, -2 raging)

hp 24 (4 HD);**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4**Speed** 40 ft. in no armour (8 squares), base movement 40 ft.; fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** Incorporeal draining touch +5 vs non-ethereal OR +8 vs ethereal (1d4 points off selected target ability score; heals ghost 5 points)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +14**Attack Options** Cleave, Corrupting Gaze, Rage 2/day, Power Attack.**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 17, Con -, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12**GHOUL MOB****CR 8**

Ghoul mob

CE Gargantuan undead mob

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +7 darkvision 60ft.**Languages** Cold Tongue, Common**AC** 10, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-4 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 180 (30 HD);**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +19**Speed** 20 ft. in no armour (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.;**Melee** Swarm (5d6 plus paralysis)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +23**Atk Options** swarm, trample**Combat Gear** none**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12**SQ** Mob anatomy, undead traits, turn resistance +2**Feats** Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun **Skills** N/A**Possessions** none**Ghoul Fever (Su):** Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 26, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.**Paralysis (Ex):** Those hit by a ghoul must succeed on a DC 26 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Elves are immune to this effect.**Swarm (Ex):** A mob deals 5d6 points of bludgeoning damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move, with no attack roll needed. Mob attacks ignore concealment and cover. A mob's attacks are non-magical, unless the base creature's attacks are considered magical. Damage reduction applies to mob attacks.**Trample (Ex):** A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage to 2d6 points + 1 ½ times the mob's strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.**Mob Anatomy (Ex):** A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to

critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on the mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by non-lethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks assume that 30% of its number are slain and reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61-100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

8: AT THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

NALA

CR 9

Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 3

CE Medium outsider (augmented fey) (native)

Init +11; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Aura Evil

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Elven, Sylvan

AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 15

(+7 Dex, +1 deflection, +4 natural)

hp 44 (8 HD); DR 5/cold iron and magic

Immune Poison

Resist Acid/Cold/Electricity/Fire 10; **SR** 18

Fort +6, **Ref** +14, **Will** +13

Speed 30 ft. in no armor (6 squares); base movement 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d6+1) and

2 x claws -1 (1d4)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Atk Options Smite Good 1/day (+8), Push the weak Mind (DC 23) 1/day

Combat Gear *ring of protection* +1

Bard Spells Known (CL 3rd):

1st (2/day)—*charm person* (DC 21), *cure light wounds*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 21)

0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

‡ Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):

4th—*tree stride* 3/day, *unholy blight* (DC 22) 1/day, *poison* (DC 22) 3/day

3rd—*deeper slumber* (DC 19) 3/day

2nd—*tree shape* – at will, *suggestion* (DC 18)

3/day, *suggestion* (DC18) 1/day

1st—*entangle* (DC 15) - at will, *speak with plants* – at will, *charm person* (DC 16) 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day

Abilities Str 12, Dex 24, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 26

SQ Fey Traits, Natural weapons treated as magic weapons, Summon Familiar, Telepathy, Tree Dependent, Wild Empathy, Bardic Music, Bardic Knowledge (1d20+5), Skill Boost, Mind Read 2/day

Feats Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +20, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +19, Escape Artist +14, Handle Animal +10, Hide +14, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Perform (oratory) +11, Sense Motive +10, Spot +11, Survival +9(+11 natural environments)

Possessions combat gear

Telepathy (Su): Nala can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language within 100 ft.

Push the Weak Mind (Sp): Nala can influence the actions of a living creature of Large size or smaller. This functions like a *suggestion* spell, but the range is 100 ft. and the duration is 5 hours plus one hour per character level. Nala can communicate the *suggestion* telepathically if she wishes.

Mind Read (Sp): Nala can read the surface thoughts of a living creature within 100 ft. DC 20 Will negates.

2: THE RAVENOUS MOB**MOB LEADER****CR 10**

Male advanced ghastr barbarian 6

CE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +12; darkvision 60ft.**Languages** Common, Cold Tongue**AC** 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18

(+5 Dex, +4 armour, +4 natural)

hp 126 (14 HD);**Fort** +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11**Speed** 30ft. in chain shirt armor (6 squares), base movement 30 ft.;**Melee** Bite +16 (1d8+6 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +14 (1d6+3 plus paralysis)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +16**Attack Options** Multi-attack, rage 2/day, power attack.**Combat Gear** *gloves of fortunate striking, spellsink scarab, ring of counterspells (fireball), chain shirt***Abilities** Str 23, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 19**SQ** Undead traits, +6 turn resistance, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2**Feats** Multi-attack, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Improved Turn Resistance, Power Attack, Reckless Rage**Skills** Balance +14, Climb +15, Hide +14, Intimidate +14, Jump +15, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Spot +13, Survival +13**Possessions** combat gear plus rags**Ghoul Fever (Su):** Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 17, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.**Paralysis (Ex):** Those hit by a ghastr's bite or claws must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. elves are not immune to this effect.**Stench (Ex):** Living creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes.**MOB LEADER (RAGING)****CR 6****AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+5 Dex, +4 armour +4 natural, -4 raging)

hp 126 (14 HD);**Fort** +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13**Speed** 40 ft. in chain shirt armour (8 squares), base movement 40 ft.;**Melee** Bite +19 (1d8+9 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +17 (1d6+4 plus paralysis)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +19**Attack Options** Multi-attack, rage 2/day, power attack.**Abilities** Str 29, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 19**GHOUL MOB****CR 8**

Ghoul mob

CE Gargantuan undead mob

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +7 darkvision 60ft.**Languages** Cold Tongue, Common**AC** 10, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-4 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 180 (30 HD);**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +19**Speed** 20 ft. in no armour (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.;**Melee** Swarm (5d6 plus paralysis)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +23**Atk Options** swarm, trample**Combat Gear** none**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12**SQ** Mob anatomy, undead traits, turn resistance +2**Feats** Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun**Skills** N/A**Possessions** none**Ghoul Fever (Su):** Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 26, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.**Paralysis (Ex):** Those hit by a ghoul must succeed on a DC 26 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Elves are immune to this effect.**Swarm (Ex):** A mob deals 5d6 points of bludgeoning damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move, with no attack roll needed. Mob attacks ignore concealment and cover. A mob's attacks are non-magical, unless the base creature's attacks are considered magical. Damage reduction applies to mob attacks.**Trample (Ex):** A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage to 2d6 points + 1 ½ times the mob's strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.**Mob Anatomy (Ex):** A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on the mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage from

spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by non-lethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks assume that 30% of its number are slain and reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61-100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

8: AT THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

NALA

CR 11

Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 5
CE Medium outsider (augmented fey) (native)

Init +11; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Aura Evil

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Elven, Sylvan

AC 23, touch 19, flat-footed 16

(+7 Dex, +2 deflection, +4 natural)

hp 54 (10 HD); DR 5/cold iron and magic

Immune Poison

Resist Acid/Cold/Electricity/Fire 10; **SR** 20

Fort +7, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

Speed 30 ft. in no armor (6 squares); base movement 30 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+1) and
2 x claws +0 (1d4)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +5

Atk Options Smite Good 1/day (+10), Push the Weak Mind (DC 23) 2/day

Combat Gear *ring of protection* +2, *ring of evasion*

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th):

2nd (1/day)—*enthrall* (DC 22), *suggestion* (DC 22)

1st (3/day)—*charm person* (DC 21), *cure light wounds*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 21)

0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th):

4th—*tree stride* 3/day, *unholy blight* (DC 22) 1/day, *poison* (DC 22) 3/day

3rd—*deeper slumber* (DC 19) 3/day, *contagion* (DC 21) 1/day

2nd—*tree shape* – at will, *suggestion* (DC 18) 3/day, *suggestion* (DC 18) 1/day

1st—*entangle* (DC 15) – at will, *speak with plants* – at will, *charm person* (DC 16) 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day

Abilities Str 12, Dex 24, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 26

SQ Fey Traits, Natural weapons treated as magic weapons, Summon Familiar, Telepathy, Tree Dependent, Wild Empathy, Bardic Music, Bardic Knowledge (1d20+5), Mind Read 2/day, Eternal Charm (1)

Feats Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +23, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +24, Escape Artist +14, Handle Animal +10, Hide +14, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Perform (oratory) +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11, Survival +9(+11 natural environments)

Possessions combat gear

Telepathy (Su): Nala can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language within 100 ft.

Push the Weak Mind (Sp): Nala can influence the actions of a living creature of Large size or smaller. This functions like a *suggestion* spell, but the range is 100 ft. and the duration is 5 hours plus one hour per character level. Nala can communicate the *suggestion* telepathically if she wishes.

Mind Read (Sp): Nala can read the surface thoughts of a living creature within 100 ft. DC 20 Will negates.

Eternal Charm (Sp): Nala can *charm* any single living creature within 100 ft. permanently.

2: THE RAVENOUS MOB

Male advanced ghaſt barbarian 8

CE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +12; darkvision 60ft.

Languages Common, Cold Tongue

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18

(+5 Dex, +4 armour, +4 natural)

hp 144 (16 HD); DR 1/-

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11

Speed 30ft. in chain ſhirt armor (6 ſquares), baſe movement 30 ft.;

Melee Bite +19 (1d8+7 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +17 (1d6+3/19-20 plus paralysis)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +19

Attack Options Multi-attack, rage 3/day, power attack.

Combat Gear *gloves of fortunate ſtriking, ſpellſink ſcarab, ring of counterspells (fireball), mantle of ſecond chances, chain ſhirt*

Abilities Str 24, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wiſ 16, Cha 19

SQ Undead traits, +6 turn reſiſtance, improved uncanny dodge, trap ſenſe +2

Feats Multi-attack, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Improved Turn Reſiſtance, Power Attack , Reckleſs Rage, Improved Critical (claws)

Skills Balance +14, Climb +21, Hide +14, Intimidate +14, Jump +21, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Spot +13, Survival +13

Possessions combat gear plus rags

Ghoul Fever (Su): Diſeaſe – bite, Fortitude DC 17, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.

Paralysis (Ex): Thoſe hit by a ghaſt's bite or claws muſt ſucceed on a DC 17 Fortitude ſave or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. elves are not immune to thiſ effect.

Stench (Ex): Living creatureſ within 10 feet muſt ſucceed on a DC 17 Fortitude ſave or be ſickened for 1d6+4 minutes.

MOB LEADER (RAGING)

CR 6

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+5 Dex, +4 armour, +4 natural, -4 raging)

hp 144 (16 HD);

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

Speed 40 ft. in chain ſhirt armour (8 ſquares), baſe movement 40 ft.;

Melee Bite +22 (1d8+10 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +20 (1d6+5/19-20 plus paralysis)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +22

Attack Options Multi-attack, rage 3/day, power attack.

Abilities Str 30, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wiſ 16, Cha 19

GHOUL MOB

CR 8

Ghoul mob

CE Gargantuan undead mob

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +7 darkvision 60ft.

Languages Cold Tongue, Common

AC 10, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-4 ſize, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 180 (30 HD);

Fort +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +19

Speed 20 ft. in no armour (4 ſquares), baſe movement 20 ft.;

Melee Swarm (5d6 plus paralysis)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +23

Atk Options ſwarm, trample

Combat Gear none

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wiſ 14, Cha 12

SQ Mob anatomy, undead traits, turn reſiſtance +2

Feats Improved Bull Ruſh, Improved Overrun**Skills**
N/A

Possessions none

Ghoul Fever (Su): Diſeaſe – bite, Fortitude DC 26, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.

Paralysis (Ex): Thoſe hit by a ghoul muſt ſucceed on a DC 26 Fortitude ſave or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Elves are immune to thiſ effect.

Swarm (Ex): A mob dealſ 5d6 pointſ of bludgeoning damage to any creature whoſe ſpace it occupieſ at the end of iſ move, with no attack roll needed. Mob attackſ ignore concealment and cover. A mob's attackſ are non-magical, unleſſ the baſe creature's attackſ are conſidered magical. Damage reduction applieſ to mob attackſ.

Trample (Ex): A mob that ſimply moveſ over a creature and doeſn't end iſ movement with that creature in one of iſ occupied ſquareſ can trample the creature. A trampled creature takeſ damage to 2d6 pointſ + 1 ½ timeſ the mob's ſtrength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity againſt the mob or make a Reflex ſave (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob haſ no clear front or back and no diſcernible anatomy, ſo it iſ not ſubject to critical hitſ or ſneak attackſ. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull ruſhed.

Unlike ſtandard ſwarms, mobſ are made up of relatively ſmall numberſ of individual creatureſ, ſo ſpellſ or effectſ that target ſpecific numberſ of creatureſ can have an effect on the mob. Each ſpecific creature that iſ ſlain, diſabled, or otherwiſe incapacitated by ſpellſ or effectſ that target ſpecific creatureſ beſtowaſ two negative levelſ on the mob. A mob that gainſ negative

levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by non-lethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks assume that 30% of its number are slain and reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61-100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

8: AT THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

NALA

CR 13

Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 6
CE Medium outsider (augmented fey) (native)

Init +11; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Aura Evil

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Elven, Sylvan

AC 24, touch 20, flat-footed 17

(+7 Dex, +3 deflection, +4 natural)

hp 59 (11 HD); **DR** 5/cold iron and magic

Immune Poison

Resist Acid/Cold/Electricity/Fire 10; **SR** 21

Fort +8, **Ref** +15, **Will** +15

Speed 30 ft. in no armor (6 squares); base movement 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+1) and

2 x claws +1 (1d4)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Smite Good 1/day (+11), Push the Weak Mind (DC 23) 2/day

Combat Gear *ring of protection* +3, *ring of evasion*

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th):

2nd (1/day)—*enthrall* (DC 22), *suggestion* (DC 22)

1st (3/day)—*charm person* (DC 21), *cure light wounds*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 21)

0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th):

7th—*blasphemy* 1/day

4th—*tree stride* 3/day, *unholy blight* (DC 22) 1/day, *poison* (DC 22) 3/day

3rd—*deeper slumber* (DC 19) 3/day, *contagion* (DC 21) 1/day

2nd—*tree shape* – at will, *suggestion* (DC 18) 3/day, *suggestion* (DC 18) 1/day

1st—*entangle* (DC 15) – at will, *speak with plants* – at will, *charm person* (DC 16) 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day

Abilities Str 12, Dex 24, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 26

SQ Fey Traits, Natural weapons treated as magic weapons, Summon Familiar, Telepathy, Tree Dependent, Wild Empathy, Bardic Music, Bardic Knowledge (1d20+5), Mind Read 2/day, Eternal Charm (2), Enchantment Spell Power +2

Feats Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +25, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +29, Escape Artist +14, Handle Animal +10, Hide +14, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Perform (oratory) +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +11, Survival +9(+11 natural environments)

Possessions combat gear

Telepathy (Su): Nala can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language within 100 ft.

Push the Weak Mind (Sp): Nala can influence the actions of a living creature of Large size or smaller. This functions like a *suggestion* spell, but the range is 100 ft. and the duration is 5 hours plus one hour per character level. Nala can communicate the *suggestion* telepathically if she wishes.

Mind Read (Sp): Nala can read the surface thoughts of a living creature within 100 ft. DC 20 Will negates.

Eternal Charm (Sp): Nala can *charm* any single living creature within 100 ft. permanently.

2: THE RAVENOUS MOB**MOB LEADER****CR 14**

Male advanced ghastr barbarian 10

CE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +12; darkvision 60ft.**Languages** Common, Cold Tongue**AC** 24, touch 16, flat-footed 19

(+5 Dex, +4 armour, +4 natural, +1 deflection)

hp 162 (18 HD); **DR** 2/-**Fort** +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13**Speed** 30ft. in chain shirt armor (6 squares), base movement 30 ft.;**Melee** Bite +21 (1d8+7/19-20 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +19 (1d6+3/19-20 plus paralysis)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +14; **Grp** +21**Attack Options** Multi-attack, rage 3/day, power attack.**Combat Gear** *gloves of fortunate striking, spellsink scarab, ring of counterspells (fireball), mantle of second chances, stone of good luck, chain shirt***Abilities** Str 24, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 19**SQ** Undead traits, +6 turn resistance, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3**Feats** Multi-attack, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Improved Turn Resistance, Power Attack, Reckless Rage, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Critical (bite)**Skills** Balance +15, Climb +22, Hide +15, Intimidate +20, Jump +22, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Spot +14, Survival +19**Possessions** combat gear plus rags**Ghoul Fever (Su):** Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 17, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.**Paralysis (Ex):** Those hit by a ghastr's bite or claws must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. elves are not immune to this effect.**Stench (Ex):** Living creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6+4 minutes.**MOB LEADER (RAGING)****CR 6****AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+5 Dex, +4 armour, +4 natural, -4 raging)

hp 162 (18 HD);**Fort** +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +14**Speed** 40 ft. in chain shirt armour (8 squares), base movement 40 ft.;**Melee** Bite +24 (1d8+10/19-20 plus paralysis) and;
2 x claws +22 (1d6+5/19-20 plus paralysis)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +14; **Grp** +24**Attack Options** Multi-attack, rage 3/day, power attack.**Abilities** Str 30, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 19**GHOUL MOB****CR 8**

Ghoul mob

CE Gargantuan undead mob

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +7 darkvision 60ft.**Languages** Cold Tongue, Common**AC** 10, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-4 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 180 (30 HD);**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +19**Speed** 20 ft. in no armour (4 squares), base movement 20 ft.;**Melee** Swarm (5d6 plus paralysis)**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +23**Atk Options** swarm, trample**Combat Gear** none**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12**SQ** Mob anatomy, undead traits, turn resistance +2**Feats** Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun **Skills** N/A**Possessions** none**Ghoul Fever (Su):** Disease – bite, Fortitude DC 26, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.**Paralysis (Ex):** Those hit by a ghoule must succeed on a DC 26 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Elves are immune to this effect.**Swarm (Ex):** A mob deals 5d6 points of bludgeoning damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move, with no attack roll needed. Mob attacks ignore concealment and cover. A mob's attacks are non-magical, unless the base creature's attacks are considered magical. Damage reduction applies to mob attacks.**Trample (Ex):** A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage to 2d6 points + 1 ½ times the mob's strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.**Mob Anatomy (Ex):** A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on the mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or

otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by non-lethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks assume that 30% of its number are slain and reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61-100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

8: AT THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

NALA **CR 15**

Female half-fiend dryad bard 1/mindbender 8

CE Medium outsider (augmented fey) (native)

Init +11; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Aura Evil

Languages Common, Cold Tongue, Elven, Sylvan

AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 18

(+7 Dex, +4 deflection, +4 natural)

hp 82 (13 HD); **DR** 5/cold iron and DR 10/magic

Immune Poison

Resist Acid/Cold/Electricity/Fire 10; **SR** 23

Fort +10, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16

Speed 30 ft. in no armor (6 squares); base movement 30 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d6+1) and

2 x claws +2 (1d4)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +7

Atk Options Smite Good 1/day (+13), Push the Weak

Mind (DC 25) 3/day, Dominate (DC 31) 1/day

Combat Gear *ring of protection* +4, *ring of evasion*

Bard Spells Known (CL 5th):

2nd (2/day)—*eagle's splendor* †, *enthrall* (DC 24), *suggestion* (DC 24)

1st (4/day)—*charm person* (DC 23), *cure light wounds*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 23)

0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th):

8th—*unholy aura* 3/day

7th—*blasphemy* 1/day

5th—*unhallow* 1/day †

4th—*tree stride* 3/day, *unholy blight* (DC 24) 1/day, *poison* (DC 24) 3/day

3rd—*deeper slumber* (DC 19) 3/day, *contagion* (DC 23) 1/day

2nd—*tree shape* – at will, *suggestion* (DC18) 1/day

1st—*entangle* (DC 15) – at will, *speak with plants* – at will, *charm person* (DC 16) 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day

Abilities Str 12, Dex 24, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 26(30)

SQ Fey Traits, Natural weapons treated as magic weapons, Summon Familiar, Telepathy, Tree Dependent, Wild Empathy, Bardic Music, Bardic Knowledge (1d20+5), Mind Read 4/day, Eternal Charm (3), Enchantment Spell Power +2

Feats Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Improved Initiative, Eschew Materials

Skills Bluff +30, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +34, Escape Artist +14, Handle Animal +12, Hide +14, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Perform (oratory) +13, Sense Motive +13, Spot +11, Survival +9(+11 natural environments)

Possessions combat gear

Telepathy (Su): Nala can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language within 100 ft.

Push the Weak Mind (Sp): Nala can influence the actions of a living creature of Large size or smaller. This functions like a *suggestion* spell, but the range is 100 ft. and the duration is 5 hours plus one hour per character level. Nala can communicate the *suggestion* telepathically if she wishes.

Mind Read (Sp): Nala can read the surface thoughts of a living creature within 100 ft. DC 20 Will negates.

Eternal Charm (Sp): Nala can *charm* any single living creature within 100 ft. permanently.

Dominate (Sp): Nala can *dominate* any one single living creature of Large size or smaller within 100 ft.

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES ITEMS

FEATS

Improved Turn Resistance

You have a better than normal chance to resist turning.

Prerequisite: Undead type.

Benefit: When resolving a turn, rebuke, command or bolster attempt, add +4 to your character level (monster hit dice plus class levels) to determine your hit dice for these attempts.

Reckless Rage

You are considered extreme even among other barbaric warriors and you enter a deeper state of rage than others.

Prerequisite: Con 13, rage ability.

Benefit: Whenever you activate your rage ability, you take an additional –2 penalty to your armour class, but you also gain an additional +2 bonus to your Strength and Constitution. These bonuses and penalties stack with rage, greater rage and mighty rage.

MAGIC ITEMS

Artificer's Monocle

Putting on a monocle is a standard action. While wearing an *artificer's monocle* if you cast *detect magic* and have at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (arcana), you can spend 1 additional minute studying the item. If you do, you can identify the abilities of that item as if you had cast *identify* upon it.

Faint divination; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *identify*, Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks; Price: 1,500 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p72

Caduceus Bracers

Caduceus bracers allow you to convert your innate healing powers into other forms of restorative magic. By sacrificing 5 points of healing (derived from lay on hands, wholeness of body, or any similar ability), you can remove 1 point of ability damage or remove the dazed, fatigued or sickened condition from one creature.

Strong Conjunction; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *lesser restoration*; Price: 2,000 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p84

Gloves of Fortunate Striking

You can activate these gloves to re-roll an attack roll that you've made before you know whether the attack succeeded. You must use the second roll, even if it's lower. You can't use this ability if you have already re-rolled the attack for any reason.

Faint divination; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *true strike*; Price: 2,000 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p106

Mantle of Second Chances

Once per day you can re-roll one roll before the DM declares whether it results in success or failure. You must accept the result of the re-roll, even if it worse than the original. You can access the power of the mantle, even if you already have access to a similar ability (such as from the Luck domain).

Moderate divination; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, Luck domain; Price: 12,000 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p115

Pearl of Speech – Cold Tongue

When you place a *pearl of speech* onto your tongue, it is absorbed into your mouth until you speak the proper command word to release it. While absorbed, the pearl grants you the ability to speak and understand Cold Tongue.

In addition, while the pearl is active, it can be activated to produce a *command* effect once per day (Will DC 11 negates).

Moderate divination; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *command*, *tongues*; Price: 600 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p118

Rod of Bodily Restoration

A *rod of bodily restoration* allows you to heal physical ability damage. To use the rod, you must touch the target to be affected (or merely hold the rod if affecting yourself). The rod has 3 charges, which are renewed each day at dawn. Spending one or more charges heals damage to one or more of the target's physical ability scores.

1 charge: Heal 4 points of Str, Dex or Con damage (your choice), or 2 points to all three ability scores.

2 charges: Heal 6 points of Str, Dex or Con damage (your choice), or 3 points to all three ability scores.

3 charges: Heal 8 points of Str, Dex or Con damage (your choice), or 4 points to all three ability scores.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Rod, *lesser restoration*; Price: 3,100 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p173

Shiftweave

When you activate *shiftweave*, it changes your garb to resemble any five specific outfits designated during its creation. *Shiftweave* has no effect on any armour (nor can it mimic armour) and does not change the effect of any magical clothing you wear.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; Price: 500 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p133

Spellsink Scarab

You can activate a *spellsink scarab* whenever you would take damage from a spell or psionic power. A scarab has

3 charges, which are renewed each day at dawn. Spending one or more charges reduces the damage dealt to you by the spell.

1 charge: Reduce damage by 2d6 points.

2 charges: Reduce damage by 3d6 points.

3 charges: Reduce damage by 4d6 points.

Moderate abjuration; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *greater dispel magic*; Price: 2,000 gp.

Source: *Magic Item Compendium* p138

APPENDIX 3: FORMAL JOUSTING IN RATIK

For official competitions, no magic is to be used when fighting a joust. It is a matter of honour that knights compete on skill, not wealth. Masterwork and special materials are allowed, just no spells or magical equipment (with the easy availability of *Detect Magic* even the poorest knight can afford to check his opponent if they suspect cheating). Exceptions to this may occur but will be covered in the adventure text when appropriate.

There is an exception for the use of bardic music. The bard works the crowd, not the knight and rolls their Perform (and expend a bardic music attempt) against the “Influencing NPC Attitudes” table, PHB pg72. If they achieve a Friendly result, the knight may benefit from *Inspire Courage*; if they achieve a Helpful result, the knight may benefit from *Inspire Greatness* or *Inspire Heroics*. The bard must be able to use the appropriate Bardic Music ability to bestow it upon their knight.

JOUSTING RULES

Summarised from *Complete Warrior*, pg130-131.

In a traditional joust, two knights on horseback charge each other with blunted lances, separated by a rail that divides two parallel tracks. When they meet in the middle, they clash with great momentum and force, they continue down the track on their side of the rail. They repeat the process until one knight yields or is knocked from the saddle. A great deal of pageantry and ritual accompanies most jousts, and colourful heraldry, dress, or banners often identify knights.

Because the jousters are running full-tilt at one another with blunted weapons, jousts function differently from mounted combat. Initiative isn't necessary; during each pass, each knight simply makes a special attack with the blunted lance, and the results of both attacks are resolved simultaneously. Each knight can also attempt to unhorse the rider (treat as a trip attack) or make a sunder attempt against the enemy's weapon or shield. Neither the trip attempt nor the sunder attempt provokes an attack of opportunity. A successful blow deals lance damage (double because the knights are both charging), but its non-lethal damage. A knight with the Ride-By Attack feat gains a +4 bonus on attack rolls during a joust.

In some versions of the joust, a knight can continue with a blunted longsword or mace (ie strike for non-lethal damage at -4 attack penalty) if he loses his lance. Such a weapon deals non-lethal damage and can make the free sunder attempt described above, but not the trip attack.

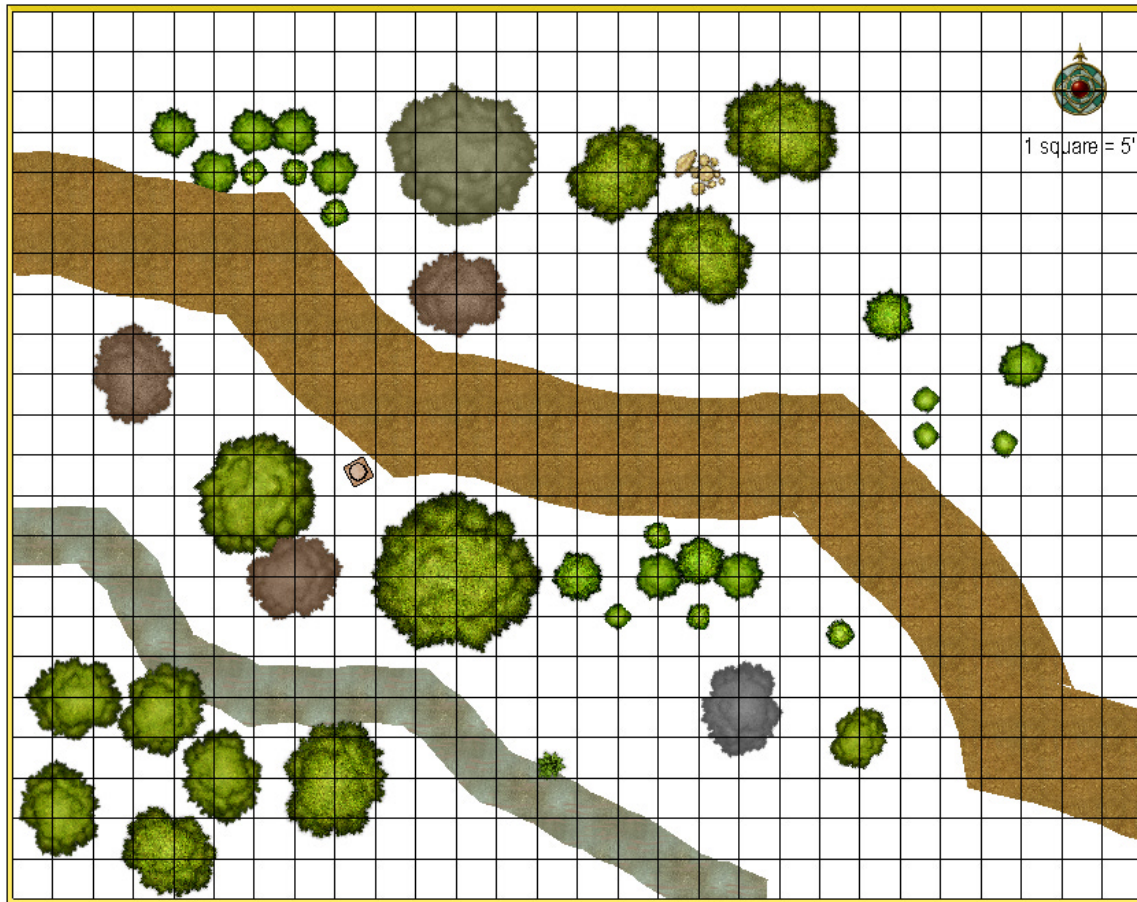
The most obvious variation on the traditional joust is simply to use real lances and attack with lethal force. This functions exactly as normal mounted combat, except that a knight can still make a free trip or sunder attempt if his attack hits (the momentum of two opposing charges makes these special attacks possible, not the prowess of the knights).

To summarise, for a formal tourney in Ratik:

1. Attack rolls are simultaneous. Knights cannot choose any special attack options (but may still use feats such as Combat Expertise or Power Attack).
2. A knight with the Ride-By Attack feat gains a +4 attack bonus.
3. A successful hit deals non-lethal damage (can be lethal damage for duels) and forces a DC5 Ride check for taking damage while mounted.
4. A successful hit also allows the knight a free trip attack (vs. Ride skill usually) or sunder attack (opposed check). The sunder still works even though lances are normally Piercing damage.
5. Resolve any special results (such as the Cavalry Charger “Unhorse” ability).
6. Knights are allowed 1 shield and 3 lances per joust. If all 3 lances are sundered, then their opponent wins by default. If both knights lose their third lance in the same pass, then the joust continues with longsword, mace or bastard sword (wielded in one hand only) until one knight is unhorsed (or unconscious). Draws are possible (and frequent).

If for religious reasons (such as clerics of Kelanan) a knight is unable to use a lance or sword, they may substitute their religious weapon, but will always strike *after* their opponent (due to the lance's reach). This requires dispensation by the Master of the Lists or the tourney's patron.

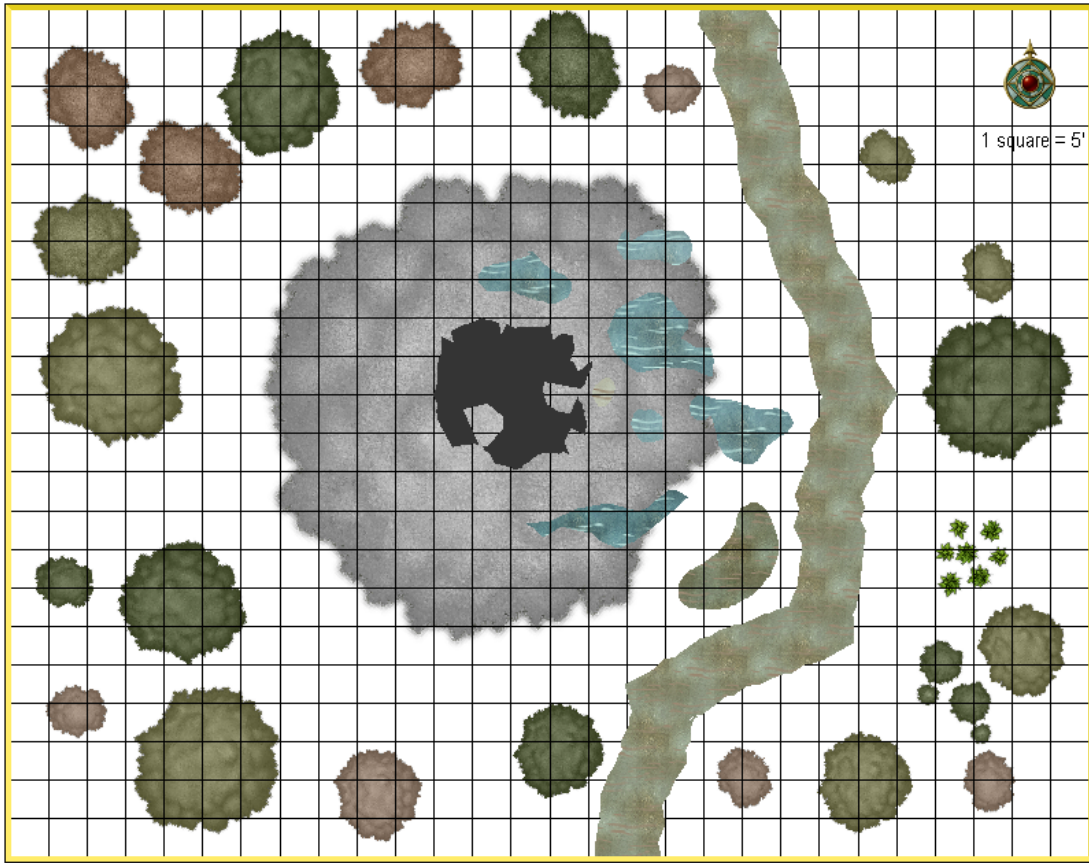
APPENDIX 4: MAP OF THE ROAD TO KETH



Map of the trail on which the mob attacks the party. The party starts out at the bottom right of the map, the carriages spread out along the road. They are travelling west (right to left). The mob will normally be on the trail 30 feet west from the lead person (PC or NPC) of the party.

Map by James Dempsey

APPENDIX 5: MAP OF THE HEART OF THE TIMBERWAY



Map by James Dempsey

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

As part of her investigation into the strange occurrences in the Timberway, Lady Harrina had a *divination* and a *commune* cast. These are the results:

THE DIVINATION

How do we find the 'Heart' of the Timberway?

The key to the 'Heart' can be found in the court of the common born Lady.

THE COMMUNE

1. Does the 'court of the common born Lady' refer to the court of Katharna Keth? **Yes.**
2. Is the 'key' a person? **No.**
3. Is the 'key' an object? **Yes.**
4. Is there more than one key in the court of Keth? **Yes.**
5. Does Lady Katharna have a 'key'? **Yes.**
6. Did the Lords Keth have a 'key'? **Yes.**
7. Is the Lords' Keth 'key' still in the court of Keth? **Yes.**
8. Are the 'keys' magically disguised? **Yes.**
9. If left unchecked, will the problems in Keth spread to the rest of the Timberway? **Yes.**
10. Can the 'Heart' of the Timberway fix the problems in Keth? **Yes, with help.**
11. Will removing Lady Katharna remove the problem? **No.**