

SHE5-06

A Study in Contrasts

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™

Sheldomar Valley Metaregional Adventure

Version 1.4

by Steven Hess

Reviewer: Michael Moore, Sheldomar Valley Triads Circle Reviewer: Steven Conforti

In the borderlands of the great mountains that form the western limit of the Sheldomar Valley, the distance from the centers of power and the close proximity to all that is wild and free makes claims tenuous at best and irrelevant at worst. How will those who prize the wilderness react when the word rings out far and near: "Gold! Gold in the vale of Baransford, lying all about free for the taking!" A Sheldomar Valley metaregional adventure for APLs 4-10.

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

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For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your Metaregional point of contact (POC) at scon40@aol.com. For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

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

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

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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 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 the *Appendices*.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table 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.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round 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.

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

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 Metaregional adventure, set in the Sheldomar Valley. Characters native to the Sheldomar Valley pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character who 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 Survival check (DC 20), 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 CY 588, with giant and evil humanoid incursions threatening the stability of his western border, Count Ignaz Manz of Keoland's County of Cryllor dispatched an army of his personal guard backed by numerous mercenaries across the Javan River into territory on the Sterich-Yeomanry border. This move was largely unopposed except by a few locals due to the "giant problems" that occupied both realms. Cartographers all over the Sheldomar Valley shifted the borders of Keoland all the way west to the Jotens in that area, and larger issues forced this little land-grab out of the public eye.

Seven years have passed since the Keoish takeover, and not everyone has adjusted to the change. Farmers, herdsfolk, and fisher families who once paid only a nominal annual duty to either a local council or to a minor noble now turn over the tithe to the County of Cryllor. New settlers, Keoish citizens looking for opportunities along with refugees from Sterich and Geoff, have streamed to the west bank of the Javan River. In places where Count Ignaz has decided to concentrate his interests in trans-Javan Cryllor and fortify them against all threat, sleepy villages have become bustling frontier towns nearly overnight.

Welcome to Baransford, smudged and flawed jewel in the scepter of Cryllor. What was once a village of 500 souls, mostly fisher-folk on the Javan, is today a fast-growing town of 2500 with many problems both large and small. The Originals, as the human residents who recall the days before the coming of the Keoish are called, resent the tax burden and the privileges enjoyed by the recent immigrants. The Countymen ("Counties" is a derogatory term favored by many Originals) pretend to control the place, but their reach exceeds their grasp by far. The Smalls, as the halfling and gnome community is known, work for compromise but just as often must flex their considerable economic clout to maintain the peace. Refugees from the north and west enjoy little overt influence but are courted in all things by Originals and Countymen both.

The town of Baransford is on the west bank of the Javan River on a line between the city of Cryllor in Keoland and the Yeomanry city of Longspear. It's a bit closer to Cryllor than to Longspear, on the section of river that flows north-to-south. Baransford is just south of the dividing line between the Jotens and the Little Hills if that line were to be drawn to the river.

Baransford is part of Keoland insofar as the County Guard can enforce the law in broad daylight and in the better neighborhoods of Hilltop, Trader's Gate, and Stranger's Gate. In Downside (the Smalls neighborhood) or in Riverside down by the docks, Baransford is far less a

traditional Keoish town...and during the long dark watches of the night, beings of less civilized intent have been known to wander the darkened streets. All in all, Baransford is an interesting, dangerous place, a boom-town on the fringes of the wild with a world of opportunities for the adventuring classes.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

"There's GOLD in them thar hills!" Yes, it's true. The conversation on the road to Baransford has tipped off the PCs that someone has discovered gold in the Bound Brook, a swift stream that flows out of the Jotens northwest of town. The Lord Mayor, Sir Trellich Brym, dispatched a large prospecting party in secret a few weeks ago, but word has leaked out, and gold fever is running through the town. The PCs arrive in Baransford just in time to be caught up in the hysteria. They get a strong sense that the town is stretched to its limits by recent immigration: sanitation is poor, prices for most goods and services are double normal, and lawlessness seems to be on the rise.

A summons from one of the town's leaders spurs the PCs into action. Disaster has befallen the Lord Mayor's expedition, and tensions in the town may well explode into violence if the truth behind its loss is not discovered. The PCs are tasked to recover the expedition's leader, who is known to still be alive. They travel inland towards the Jotens through farms and fields recently overrun by greedy prospectors, and they meet an Original farm family with a rather poor opinion of those "fool city folk". It is hoped that no PC overreacts to that first poorly-aimed crossbow bolt...because if the PCs manage to deal with the farmers on peaceable terms, they'll learn of the goblinoids that lurk in the nearby hills.

Shortly after leaving the farm family, the PCs run into the aftermath of a battle between two war-parties of goblins led by bugbears in the sharp, steep foothills of the Jotens. The victorious party has just finished slaughtering the weaker party to a goblin. The goblinoids turn on the PCs with great enthusiasm.

Once the PCs deal with the goblinoids, they hear a pair of silly little voices. These are pixies, fey who are quite concerned with the recent incursions of "all those big stomping smelly hoomins" into their pristine homeland. The PCs have to endure pranks, riddles, insults, and the most atrocious puns imaginable as the pixies test their greed and their sense of humor. There are rewards, both in-game and AR-based, for anyone who passes these tests.

Perhaps aided by the pixies, the PCs now approach the headwaters of Bound Brook. A marshy lake fills the eastern end of this narrow valley stabbing into the snow-capped ranks of the Jotens; a crumbling glacier fills the western end perhaps two miles away. Hints have been dropped here and there to indicate that there may well be a white dragon waiting for our intrepid heroes, and the

glacier is a reasonable lair for such a monster. Imagine their surprise when a brace of *black* dragons explode out of the lake and attack! Mere youngsters, these drakes are neither clever nor subtle.

Once the battle with the dragons is over, clear signs indicate that at least a few members of the lost Baransford expedition entered the crooked crevasses of the glacier. The unstable glacier is home to an undead abomination, a brain in a jar, a thing without a body, just a mind full of malice and madness. There are prisoners to free and insidious mental assaults to defeat. A collapse of the glacier even as the PCs flee for their lives destroys all that remains of this pre-Cataclysms temple of Beltar and necromancer's lair.

PCs return to Baransford with crucial information and, hopefully, the survivors of the expedition. The punch line, which becomes apparent to the PCs late in the game, is this: There is no mother-lode of gold, at least not here at the headwaters of Bound Brook. The black dragons shredded gold coins and jewelry from their little hoard and seeded the creek-bed to attract an easy meal or two.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

You should be familiar with Keoland and the Yeomanry as realms at peace with each other and yet rivals; they should be up on the latest goings-on in the war against the giants in Sterich and Geoff. Record each PC's choice of lifestyle at the start of the adventure, as the actual costs vary widely depending on PC actions.

INTRODUCTION

There are metals more durable, more useful in both peace and war...but the discovery of gold has a way of bringing out a certain predictable enthusiasm in people of all races and creeds. The once-sleepy fishing town of Baransford had already grown significantly since it was seized by Keoland during the Greyhawk Wars; now, with a gold rush in full swing, the town is a hotbed of opportunists, dreamers, schemers, and those who seek to profit from the situation regardless of ethics or morality. Surely there will be ample demand for the spells, swords, and subtlety of adventurers in such a place!

ENCOUNTER 1: THE ROAD TO BARANSFORD

There are three possible approaches to the town for persons arriving via mundane means...and no PCs can teleport to get there since they do not know the place! Assign the PCs an arrival route based on the majority national origin of the table:

National Origin	Arrival Route
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The Yeomanry	Southern
Bissel, Gran March, Geoff	Northern
All Others	River

THE NORTHERN ARRIVAL ROUTE

The road to Baransford from the north has led through the Downlands, into which many displaced Gyruff are moving, and the continuing depredations of the giants in both Geoff and Sterich have dogged your steps. As you passed into territory claimed by Keoland, small settlements along the west bank of the Javan River have become larger and more numerous; always the sharp young peaks of the Jotens rose to your right, growing closer and closer. Finally the land became more settled, with meadows of heather and clumps of small evergreens giving way to tended fields of wheat and neat orchards. It is growing towards the warmth of mid-day when the smoke of a large town perched on and around a low hill becomes visible in the distance, seemingly lit as much by the sun's reflection off of the Javan as by the sun itself. Farm houses and barns are all around you, and the land shows signs of having been tamed by civilization for centuries.

A small figure sits upon a neatly-cut tree-stump at the side of the road and hails you as you approach. "Ye be adventurers by the look of ye." The elderly, weather-beaten halfling addresses you with a critical eye and then pauses for a moment to contemplate the pewter pipe clenched between his teeth. "Well, ain't gonna be no shortage o' work for yer kind 'round these parts, to be sure." He laughs abruptly and extends his hand. "The name's Mishandrius, Misha to friends and customers alike. This here's my land, and Cryllor's mark is on the paper." He winks as he says the name of the county; it's difficult to discern his attitude towards the Keoish. "All kinds o' big uglies what'll need slayin' now that they're all runnin' off lookin' fer that fool's gold."

☛ 'Misha' Mishandrius, male halfling Exp7: hp 31, Bluff +16.

Allow the PCs to react to this and roll Sense Motive checks if they desire. Mishandrius is a high-level Expert and as wealthy an NPC as one is likely to find in this area; he is not overly impressed by the adventuring classes, but he does enjoy telling a story to an appreciative audience. PCs can choose to roll Sense Motive checks (DC 36) can determine with a successful check that he enjoys keeping people guessing, but he's no troublemaker.

"Me, I heard 'bout it more'n a week ago, but I kept it to meself. My gold is the heart o' the wheat and the yolk o' the egg, if you receive my

meaning...and these new folk are bringing so much hard coin to town that I'm getting' double the goin' rate for my eggs down at Baransford's market square. Yep...I'll settle fer getting' my gold without so much fuss an' bother."

If the PCs inquire about the timeline of the gold rush, Misha answers:

"The word in town is, a couple o' prospectors tried to pay their bar-tab at the Inn of the Valley with a bag o' gold dust; this were maybe three weeks back. Now, ol' Eivers, he's as decent a biggun as you'll find, but he's a good friend to the Countymen, as we call the bigguns from Cryllor who took over seven year back...so right off he demands to see the Lord Mayor, Sir Trellich Brym hisself. Next thing ye know, the prospectors are taken right into the Lord Mayor's manor and they're not seen for days...and then they go off in the middle o' the night with a party of the County Guard and Brym's own gamekeeper, Orwin Tracker. Orwin, he's an Original...they're the bigguns what were here before the Keoish came; some of 'em don't care much for Keoland...he's an Original, as I said, but he's been the chief ranger in these parts for a decade, and I guess he's the best to lead the expedition."

If the PCs inquire as to the geography of the gold rush, the halfling points south towards the town and then sweeps his arm to the right, to the west and then the northwest, towards the swiftly-rising hills and jagged peaks in the distance.

"Baransford there...is surrounded by a marsh fed by the Bound Brook...which flows out o' the Jotens way up thataway. Been called 'Bound Brook' fer as long as anyone remembers, as it's dammed off into pools for the upland farms and flocks more'n a dozen times. Well, it's said that them prospectors were near the headwaters of the Bound Brook when they noticed that the stream-bed was all a-glitter with gold, dust, and nuggets too." The halfling rubs his chin in thought. "Come to think, the brook's flow's been mighty strong for a year or two; that mighta disturbed the mother-lode in the mountains. Anyway, now that the word's out, they're a-comin' into Baransford to buy supplies and a-goin' upstream as fast as they can. I've lost nigh half my tenants to the fever of it, all of 'em runnin' off full o' dreams. O'course, not a one of 'em knows precisely where the mother-lode might be...because the Bound Brook's got lots of little feeder-streams, and there's at least seven of 'em what reach deep into the Jotens."

If the PCs inquire as to the extent of Misha's property, Misha replies:

"Well...the family's been in this valley since Baransford was naught more than a dozen shacks on the riverside; my grand-dad served with the military

in Sterich, brought himself home a fair chunk of treasure, and bought out the interests of lots of older folk what had no heirs at the time. I figure that my holding works out t' around nine hundred acres and about a thousand chickens."

If the PCs have been polite and maybe even a bit deferential during the conversation, Misha offers:

"You folks hungry?" He gestures towards the low, large home about fifty yards off of the road. "Might as well get a decent meal in ye before those innkeepers gouge ye for every coin ye've got." Lunch is served amid a crowd of halfling relatives and hired hands and, it should be noted, exceeds all expectations in terms of quantity, quality, and pleasant conversation at the table.

Development: The PCs who speak with Misha will meet him again shortly; their attitude towards him will impact their lifestyle costs and other AR-related matters at the conclusion of the adventure.

THE SOUTHERN ARRIVAL ROUTE

The road up north to Baransford from the Yeomanry is neither long nor difficult; still, it has its odd moments. Half a day's ride out of the Yeoman town of Singleton you see in the distance a military patrol bearing the colors of the County of Cryllor in Keoland; by that night, you've seen naught but wild animals for hours. The land becomes more settled the next day. Meadows of heather and clumps of small evergreens give way to tended fields of wheat, neat orchards, and farm houses by the next afternoon. The shadows of the Little Hills to your left are growing long when the smoke of a large town perched on and around a low hill becomes visible in the distance, seemingly lit as much by the sun's reflection off of the Javan River as by the sun itself. Farm houses and barns are all around you, and the land shows signs of having been tamed by civilization for centuries.

At a wide, grassy spot apparently used often as a stopping point, a large and comfortable carriage is parked. Its horses stand hobbled, placidly contemplating their feed-bags a short distance away.

Four armored riders, two humans and two elves, with long lances surround the carriage; they nod attentively yet politely at you. The lone occupant in the carriage, a male human dressed in black and gray finery, steps out and calls to you as you pass, "You are adventurers by the look of you. Will you invest a moment in conversation to our mutual profit?"

He is of mostly Oeridian stock, no longer young, and was never physically imposing even at the peak of youth: He stands well short of six feet, is a bit thick around the middle, and possesses only the most abbreviated stubble of hair upon his balding head. His only adornment is a golden symbol on a

golden chain around his neck, fashioned with great artistry to resemble a tiny pair of hands clutching a tiny bag. When he speaks, you sense enormous self-confidence coupled with a seemingly-genuine interest in your well-being.

A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check indicates he is a cleric of Zilchus.

☛ **Fastau of Zilchus**, male human Clr9 of Zilchus: hp 57, Bluff +9.

Anyone who makes a successful Sense Motive check (DC 19) senses that this man is quite sincere...but he could sell 'ugly' to a troll and probably get the poor thing to pay extra for undercoating and the extended warranty.

"I am Fastau, of the faith of Zilchus. You are on your way to Baransford, yes? I have lived there for some years now, and am happy to see persons with skills such as yours going that way. The potential for greater prosperity is ever at odds with the mischief, both inside and outside the law, that prosperity inspires... and the fever for gold does bring out the worst in some people. It is all that I can do to counsel the town's leaders to treat fairly with the immigrants and prospectors and to offer aid to the innocents left without support by the unscrupulous and the foolish."

If the PCs inquire about the timeline of the gold rush, Fastau answers:

"Since it is all public knowledge now, it cannot hurt to tell you. A few weeks back some humans and dwarves who had been prospecting up the Bound Brook came back to town with bags of gold dust. The Lord Mayor, Sir Trellich Brym of Cryllor, took the men into his home and quickly organized an expedition to check out their story; they left Baransford almost two weeks ago along with Orwin Tracker, the Mayor's own gamekeeper. Orwin is what the locals call an 'Original', one of the residents that lived here before the Keoish came. There's no love lost between them and the 'Countymen', as the Keoish are known. Still, Orwin is a ranger concerned first and foremost with the safety of the town, so he was a natural choice to lead the party."

If the PCs inquire as to the geography of the gold rush, the cleric points northeast towards the town and then sweeps his arm to the left, to the northwest and the swiftly-rising hills and jagged peaks in the distance:

"Baransford is surrounded by a marsh fed by the Bound Brook...which flows out of the Jotens up there. The locals long ago began damming the creek for irrigation and flood control; hence the name 'Bound Brook'. It's said that the prospectors were near its headwaters when they noticed gold in the streambed. Of course, anyone who looks at a map can see that the Bound Brook is fed by at least seven

small streams, so only those first prospectors know where to look for sure."

The man thinks for a moment. "Local farmers have mentioned that the brook's flow has been very strong for a year or two; that might have disturbed the mother lode in the mountains." He refocuses on the here and now with a sad shake of his head. "In any event, rumors started flying around town only a few days after the mayor's expedition left, and now folk from all over the Sheldomar are coming into Baransford, buying up supplies and leaving again as fast as they can. Businesses are showing tremendous profits but are also losing skilled workers to the rush; families are being abandoned by their bread-winners on the slim chance that one might find the wealth of the ages just lying there for the taking. We have a saying in the faith, meaning no disrespect, of course: 'Better Zilchus your boss than Norebo', meaning that business sense, and not just luck, should guide one's decisions."

If the PCs inquire as to Fastau's allegiance or personal history, he replies:

"I was born in what used to be called the Great Kingdom and came into my maturity when everything that my partners in faith had built up for generations was being destroyed by the insanity of that realm's rulers. I have fought all my life for the right to profit for all; a decent day's wage for a decent day's work at the very least, and the proper custodianship of capital by those whose wealth rules nations at the very most. It is true that Count Ignaz Manz of Cryllor is a devotee of Zilchus, but then, so are many honest, hard-working commoners, and I am here to minister to one and all."

If, and only if, the PCs have been polite and maybe even a bit deferential during the conversation, Fastau offers:

"We are still some hours from Baransford, and the day grows late. Will you join me in a bit of dinner and a comfortable camp in this pleasant country? You have heard my story, and I wish to hear each of yours." It turns out that clerics of Zilchus, or at least this cleric of Zilchus, travel with an amazing array of gourmet foods and fine wines, which explains why this one moderately-sized man needs such a very large carriage.

Development: The PCs who speak with Fastau will meet him again shortly; their attitude towards him will impact their lifestyle costs and other AR-related matters at the conclusion of the adventure.

THE RIVER ARRIVAL ROUTE

Overland across Keoland or from realms far distant, most routes to Baransford involve the Javan River. Boat traffic is very busy in the vicinity of the

town; many barges and small sailboats appear to be making their way upriver and downriver and across the mile-wide river towards the town, but relatively few are leaving. The town itself remains shrouded in the mist of hundreds of coal and wood fires, what many would call the inevitable result of growth and progress. As your vessel comes within a few hundred yards of the wharves that jut out all along Baransford's busy waterfront, you are hailed from a longboat that moves to come alongside.

"By the laws of the County of Cryllor and in accordance with the port regulations of the town of Baransford, you must be guided to dock by a licensed pilot at the boat captain's expense. Prepare to be boarded and accept your pilot." The voice, amplified by a bullhorn, sounds terribly bored and horribly inconvenienced by the whole process; the words are rife with contempt and are delivered as if the speaker thinks very little of his job or his audience.

One of your fellow passengers, a large blocky human man dressed in a large blocky workman's tunic and breeches, steps to the rail and shouts back to the approaching longboat with a booming voice that definitely needs no further amplification. "I've warned you about dat tone, Philmot...you keep dat up and I'll have you on chummin' duty for a month!" The shouting human is of typical Keoish stock, a mixture of Oeridian, Suel, Flan, and who knows what else. His absence of neck and broad shoulders suggest that there's more than a little orc in his ancestry.

The speaker in the longboat, a slight man (apparently with a slight attitude problem), blurts out "Um...Sorry, sir, but..." He then realizes that he should probably be using the bullhorn, but raises it without looking, bashes himself in the eye with the thing, loses his balance, and falls face-first with a resounding splash into the Javan River, which, this close to a large and fast-growing town, isn't exactly the cleanest body of water in the Flanaess. The large blocky human who had so badly scared this man claps his palm against his steeply-sloped forehead in disgust; you get the idea that he probably does this a lot.

The man shakes his head sadly and turns to you. "How you doin'? The name's Meklir Dockman; I'm head o'da Teamster's Guild over in Baransford." He shakes hands all around, taking care not to crush the hands of any females present and gestures with his oversized cranium towards the town, "Ya step away from da job for one day and things fall apart. Can't find no good help these last few weeks anyhow, what with everybody and their cousin runnin' off ta find that gold." He looks your group up and down, and you sense that there's a lot more smarts behind Meklir's tiny, piggy eyes than most

people give him credit for. "Course, you ain't here for no gold...not the kind ya gotta dig up, anyway. Nice ta see some adventurers, some real heavy hitters, comin' ta town. Bound to be troubles that the County Guard can't handle sooner or later."

🔱 Meklir Dockman, male human Ftr4/Rog2: hp 40, Bluff +5.

If anyone tries a Sense Motive check, it is found that this man is quite sincere. If the PCs inquire about the timeline of the gold rush, Meklir responds with the following:

"Two weeks ago dis stuff all goes down: Da Lord Mayor, Sir Trellish Brym, y'know, he's Count Ignaz's mouthpiece on the west bank? A couple a humans an' dwarves go to him an' say 'Hey, we's found gold up da Bound Brook, y'know? So da mayor, he sends Orwin Tracker, his personal gamekeeper, back wit 'em an' a buncha the County Guard to check things out all secret-like. Orwin's one o'dose Originals, humans dat was here before we Keoish moved in on Baransford, but he's a stand-up guy, a real good guy to have on your side in a scrape. Anyway, people with th' inside scoop, they talked, y'know, they said things...y'know, things...and whaddaya know, all of a sudden everybody's running out to get their share. Buncha stooges, if ya ask me, runnin' after a rumor and leavin' all the real work for the likes o' him." Meklir gestures towards the slight man being pulled out of the water into the longboat right next to your vessel.

If the PCs inquire as to the geography of the gold rush, Meklir nods in the direction of Baransford:

"You can't see the Jotens from here...too much haze lately...but they're out there, an' th' Bound Brook runs up into 'em to the northwest. Got to split into at least seven little creeks before it gets to the mountains, and only those original prospectors know for sure which one leads to th' gold. So all these numbskulls are runnin' off and they don't even know where they're goin'!" He raises his voice to a shout at the last, and the oarsmen in the longboat all find different directions in which to look. He returns to a more relaxed tone as he continues. "Ya got folk comin' from all over the Sheldomar Valley buyin' up supplies an' runnin' for th' hills fast as they can. They're bringin' coin in by the bushel, but they're not the most peaceful kind of people, know what I mean? Ya gotta like the money, though, I guess."

If the PCs inquire as to Meklir's allegiance or personal history, Meklir puffs up with obvious pride:

"I was born in the biggest city in Keoland, in Gradsul, an' I been on the docks one way or another all my life. I can usually get people ta do what I say when I say they should do it, and that's a valuable talent to the Lord Mayor. I came here to ferry troops

across the river on the Count's coin back in eighty-eight when Cryllor moved in, and I guess I've been lucky."

If, and only if, the PCs have been polite and maybe even a bit deferential during the conversation, Meklir offers:

"You're good people, you know that? Tell you what: I got this little place, the River Rest, got the best food and the cleanest beds in the whole Riverside district. You guys come stay at my place an' I'll take care o' you good."

It turns out that the River Rest is actually quite a large, pleasant establishment, with a surprisingly sophisticated menu and several large and very comfortable rooms: Who would have figured?

Development: The PCs who speak with Meklir will meet him again shortly; their attitude towards him will impact their lifestyle costs and other AR-related matters at the conclusion of the adventure.

ENCOUNTER 2: A COMMUNITY IN NEED

Baransford is as it was described, the best and the worst of it. All day and long into the night, scenes of hope and despair combine as transient and local both organize into prospecting parties at the Market Square by Trader's Gate in the north. Elderly parents bid their offspring a tearful farewell; young children look on in bewilderment as their parents leave them with relatives and prepare to find their fortune. Through it all, the vendors hawking every conceivable supply item scream out their prices, which seem to inflate by the hour. There is a desperate smell to the air, the adrenaline-charged perspiration of people and panicky pack-animals mingling with the sulfurous stench of improvised cook-fires. Parties of three or four mounted soldiers each, the Guard of the County of Cryllor, move through the crowds but do little to calm the situation; they seem mostly interested in keeping the mob away from the better residences on the hilltop.

👑 **Baransford** (Large Town): Nonstandard; AL LN, LG, CG; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 375,000 gp; Population 2,500; Mixed (human 37%, gnome 20%, halfling 18%, dwarf 10%, elf 7%, half-elf 5%, half-orc 3%). See DM Aid: Map #1.

Let the PCs spend some money if they want, subject to these restrictions: Prices for all mundane goods are currently double the *Player's Handbook* standard unless the PC succeeds at a DC 20 Appraise, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, in which case normal prices apply. Prices for all available magic items and cast spells are at +10% unless the PC succeeds at a check as described

above. With gold fever in the air, everyone in Baransford, the alchemists, the barbers, and even the dung-haulers, are out to get their share. Once the PCs have satisfied the urge to spend their coin, the party can meet at the Red Tower, a tavern and gambling establishment on the main road of Baransford.

The evening finds you together again at the Red Tower, a gambling establishment that stands on the River-walk, the main north-south road and the dividing line between the Riverside district and the rest of the town. The Red Tower boasts an impressive wine list and all manner of entertainments; the pair of halfling cousins that run the place seem to have struck a comfortable balance between 'classy' and 'tawdry'. Everyone's attention is on the minstrels, or to be more specific, the minstrel's dancers, when a well-dressed male dwarf with the tightly-braided beard of a metalsmith approaches your table.

"Your pardon, my lords? I am Balazar of the Stonerunner clan, late of Sterich but now relocated to this excellent land." He nods his chin to his chest and holds it there for a moment.

🔱 **Balazar**, male dwarf Rgr2/Ftr4: hp 49, Bluff +1, Diplomacy -1.

A DC 15 Diplomacy check indicates this is a gesture of genuine respect among his kind.

He lifts his head and continues. "If I may interrupt your revels for a short time, some learned associates of mine wish to speak with you. I am told that you have already met one of them on your journey here, an honorable person by the name of (insert NPC from Encounter 1 here). This way, if you please?" He gestures for you to follow and moves off, weaving through the tables that litter the main floor towards one of the broad stairways that climb to the gaming suites on the second and third levels.

If the PCs refuse to follow by the mention of the NPC with whom they passed a few pleasant hours the previous day, the adventure ends here. Do what you can to have the PCs follow, but, if the PCs refuse to follow the dwarf at any time, the adventure is over.

The dwarf leads your group to a closed door and knocks twice, and twice again. The door opens to reveal a dimly lit 10 ft. deep by 20 ft. wide chamber with a few comfortable chairs, a fireplace, and a round table at one end with five chairs. Four persons stand near the table. You recognize (NPC Fastau, Misha, or Meklir); the others are an elderly gnome and (either "two humans" or "another human and a halfling").

The gnome steps forward; he is dressed in clerical vestments. He extends a fist towards the dwarf, who touches it lightly with his own fist. The

dwarf then mumbles something softly and leaves the room, closing the door as he goes.

A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check indicates the gnome serves Garl Glittergold. If anyone in the room speaks Dwarven, they know that the mumbled salutation roughly translates into Common as "Races of stone, yo."

The gnome speaks; he seems unusually serious. "My name is Wizen Highmoor; I speak for the gnomes of Baransford in the tradition of my people. We elect speakers rather than waiting for them to be born from just the right bloodline; we're silly like that. I am led to understand by one of my friends here..." He gestures, and (insert known NPC here) nods his head knowingly. "...that you might just be persons capable of aiding us in our hour of need?" The gnome gives you an appraising look, his grey-tufted scalp tilting to the side in what might be honest curiosity, or just plain skepticism.

🔱 **Wizen Highmoor**, male gnome Clr7 of Garl Glittergold: hp 45, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +9.

Allow the PCs to chime in with five or six variations on "Yup, we're your guys" or "If we can't do it nobody can!" or "Up the Empire!" or "Lemme at 'em!" or "Freeeeedom!"

Wizen speaks again with a sad tone. "We've all seen Baransford at its worst these past few weeks, and tensions between the Originals and the Keoish have never been greater. The Lord Mayor has dispatched most of his troops to the Yeoman border to try to keep their people away from 'his' gold, and the Smalls have been hard-pressed to keep order in their streets after dark...and now we have a simmering crisis on our hands, one that might bring open war between Keoland and the Yeomanry if it comes to a boil." He gestures towards the far end of the room. "See the table? Five chairs, three man-size and two smaller? There's five of us that meet here once a week for a friendly game of cards; no big wagers, just pleasant conversation...and the five of us, each a leader in the community and each of us trusted by the Lord Mayor, have kept the bloody peace in this town for goin' on six bloody years. Nobody knows about this, naturally...we all have appearances to keep up. Now, though, we have a problem: You've probably noticed that there were only four of us here when you came in."

The gnome steps over to one of the large seats. As he pulls it out from the table, you can plainly see that the top of it is carved in a simple design, the three-pronged rune of 'pursuit'.

A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check indicates this is the symbol of Trithereon, CG god of retribution and a popular deity among the more independent-minded Yeomen.

"This is the seat of Orwin Tracker, who spoke ... who speaks for the Originals at our discussions. He went off with the Lord Mayor's expedition, and ... Fastau?" Wizen pauses, seemingly at a most unnatural loss for words.

If the PCs came to town by way of the Southern Arrival Route and have already met Fastau, skip the following read aloud text and continue with the next:

One of the humans, a portly man of middle age with long hair pulled back in a pony-tail, steps up to Wizen's side. "My name is Fastau; I am a cleric of Zilchus and a foreigner in these parts. The Lord Mayor trusts me as a neutral arbiter, and by meeting with these worthies I help to guide the town towards the profit of all."

Continue reading from here:

Fastau raises his arm to show his left hand; the least finger is adorned by a plain gold band. "This is a ring of friend shield. It is one of a pair; they allow one bearer to share the pains and injuries of the body with the bearer of the other."

A DC 17 Knowledge (arcana) check indicates that the bearer of one of a mated set of rings of friend shield can cast shield other on the other bearer at any time with no range limitation.

Fastau continues. "Orwin has the other ring and knows to use it only in dire peril. Earlier today I began to feel his pain; since the afternoon I have healed myself of easily twice the bodily harm it would take to kill him. I know he has potions of healing with him, but..." He suddenly stops and winces as if hit. The color fades from his face, and he breaks out in a cold sweat. "It has happened again." He sits heavily in the closest chair; luckily for his dignity it is one sized for humans.

"They're torturin' the poor guy, that's what they're doin'," the other human speaks up with a cold tone. "Every once in a while, maybe every few minutes or so, Fastau takes another hit, just a tiny twinge o' pain... somebody's torturin' Orwin, dammit!"

Fastau reaches out to grab hold of the man's arm. "It does us no good to rant, Meklir. That's why we're bringing in the experts."

The halfling has remained quiet until now, but he steps forward to address you as Meklir continues to mutter under his breath, "You know I've never been the adventurous kind meself... m' grand-dad got his share and more and lived to tell th' tale as well...but we need ye now. The town needs ye now. Hells, the peace of two realms needs ye now! If Orwin turns up dead, he'll have died surrounded by th' Count of Cryllor's guard and on the orders of the Lord Mayor...and the Originals'll tear this town apart. They'll step away from everything we've built

together an' call down their cousins 'n' folk from th' Little Hills, and the Lord Mayor will do his duty and call up th' militia, and it won't be the goblins 'r the giants 'r anything else unnatural destroyin' this place...it'll be ourselves."

Meklir appears to have composed himself; he is enraged but icy cold now. "We know pretty much where deys went, dose poor guys. People on the inside gave us some info, and my friends here have done some mumbo-jumbo magic stuff. We can get you goin' in the right direction."

Fastau leans forward. "We've performed divinations that indicate that matters are at a very delicate stage, a turning point of sorts. We know that there are evils at work that seek to destroy the forces of civilization, and that there are also evils that seek to lure us out into their wilderness home...and we know that you will find hidden allies along the road, ones who can show you the true path if you are prepared to pay their price." He extends his ring-hand towards your group. "Who among you will take this? It will help you find him. The magic of it is special, different: You will know when you are within a few miles of the other bearer, know when you come closer, and know him on sight within some dozens of yards. It will mean taking on the burden of his pain, casting the shield other spell as soon as you put it on to keep Orwin alive...but you are heroes, are you not?"

If the PCs refuse, the adventure ends here. If the characters accept this mission, continue with the following:

Fastau passes the ring to the volunteer and closes his hand around that person's. "The laws of Keoland regarding the discoveries of adventurers rule here. Keep whatever you plunder from the hands of the unlawful, the aggressor, and the monstrous; you are obligated to return only whatever property can be proven to have been stolen from others. Bring Orwin back to us, alive or dead: A great tragedy and a greater disaster will be averted if you accomplish this. The Trader's Gate will know to let you pass regardless of the lateness of the hour."

ENCOUNTER 3: DOWN ON THE FARM

Hours have passed since you left the Traders Gate of Baransford in the dead of night. The rising dawn makes your travel easier, but also reveals some ugly truths. In the half-light out of the cloudy east you first see how the hysteria of the gold rush has damaged both the area around the town and its residents, and scenes of panic, greed, and looting grow more and more obvious as the day progresses.

Fields are trampled flat; animal pens, coops, and corrals are broken open, and livestock of all kinds wander free. Over the rolling hills to the west, columns of smoke rise here and there that are far too large to be just burning rubbish. A few farmers can be seen in the distance repairing or reinforcing fences and chasing after their animals; they all seem to avoid any kind of contact with strangers.

Once during this trek, about two hours after you set out, the person who volunteered to wear the ring of friend shield felt a twinge of pain from it. While not enough to actually cause you injury, it did deliver a message: Orwin Tracker is still alive.

Anyone who succeeds on a DC 17 Knowledge (arcana) check followed by a DC 15 Heal check realizes that the ring did not damage its bearer ... but it did transmit pain. This can only mean that Orwin was damaged only very slightly (in actuality, he took a single point of damage, which cannot be shared, so the PC only felt the pain of the damage – the same happens anytime throughout the adventure the PC feels pain from the ring but takes no damage).

If the PCs attempt to make contact with any of the farmers they've seen, the farmers make visual contact at 100 yards or more, then either duck back inside their houses or ride off into the distance on draft horses. If the PCs actually take the time to pursue one of these farmers, role-play a terrified Com1 facing what he is convinced is a party of bandits coming to rob and kill his family. These people have been inconvenienced by goblin raiders lately, but they now live in fear of unscrupulous folk searching for gold, and not a few of them have been burned out of house and home by persons convinced that the locals are hiding information.

♣ **Male Human Com1:** hp 4, see Appendix 5.

The road ahead curves to the north and enters a low spot between steep hills covered with apple trees. A smaller, less-traveled fork splits off of the main path to the left, leading steeply upward.

A DC 18 Spot check indicates that up above the PCs to the right, a well-concealed human figure crouches behind a tree-stump. Anyone who succeeds at the Spot check gets to roll for initiative and participate during the first round.

There is little warning as a crossbow bolt leaps out of the trees to your right and sticks quivering in a fence-post on the left side of the road.

A DC 20 Spot check (any PC currently carrying a crossbow gets a +6 circumstance bonus on this check) reveals that the bolt the human figure is now loading into his light crossbow is at least six inches too long for the weapon. It's a heavy bolt, and apparently you're looking at someone who is not terribly proficient with crossbows.

A voice from above you and to the right yells out, "Trespassers again, paw! Don't worry none, I got a bead on 'em!"

♣ **Male Human Com1 (2):** hp 4 each, see Appendix 5.

If the PCs overreact and harm any farmfolk, they go into the next encounter without any warning. If they show restraint, they'll gain valuable intelligence and valuable friends. If the PCs do lethal damage to the young man, then treat this as just another encounter with frightened farmers as described above. Skip the rest of this encounter and move on to Encounter 4, PCs Abused the Farmers section.

PCS SHOW RESTRAINT

If the PCs settle the kid down and talk him out of taking another pot-shot or deal with him in a non-lethal manner and then treat him with respect, he calls out again to his father, who emerges from the orchard on the other side of the road. The younger man appears to be around 15, the older at least 60.

The farmer is as old and gnarled as his apple trees; he spits bitterly and speaks with venom in his voice. "I'm glad t'see ye aren't ruffians like most of the lot through here the past few weeks. Durned near stripped m'trees bare and ran off with a couple of m'sheep, they done. The name's Wooler, Mart Wooler, and that's m'boy Kemble." Genuine affection manages to sneak through the farmer's anger as he speaks. "Managed to scare off the last set o'tramps comin' through day afore yesterday with that crossbow, and he figgers he's all tough now 'r somethin'." Mart fishes a small, flat ceramic bottle out of a pocket in his patched, oversized tunic and takes a sip from the contents. "Got my four boys watchin' th' bounds of m'land closest to the roads, tryin' t'protect what's ours. Where's m'manners? Any o' you gentlefolk like a touch? Dwarf-spirits, durned good fer them cold nights up here in the hills." He offers the bottle around.

"Dunno what's worse, th' durned goblins 'r the durned fool prospectors. Lost as many sheep 'n' goats to one as to the other, I reckon, not to mention fences torn down and cabbages trampled. Near two weeks this's been goin' on, an' it'll get worse afore it gets better."

There's very little that the PCs can do for the farmer except offer to compensate him for his damages, which amount to around 200 gp. Make a note if this is done, and in whose name such compensation is given. The locals will remember with kindness whatever authority helps them in their time of need.

As long as the farmer and his son appear to be having a civilized, polite conversation with the PCs, they are interrupted after a few minutes by another young man,

clearly another, older son of the family. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Listen check notices the arrival of this man before he can be seen, as he shouts from the distance.

A figure comes over the low hill from the northwest, shouting and running. He's carrying a longbow and wearing a handaxe tucked into his belt, but it looks like all of the arrows have bounced out of his quiver during his run. "Paw! Kemble! Goblins! I seen 'em! Goblins fightin' each other at Table Rock!"

The young man is unhurt but clearly winded after his run. He is somewhat taken aback by the presence of the PCs, but, if he senses that his father and brother are comfortable with the situation, he goes into greater detail.

"Afternoon, sirs...I'm Sagus Wooler, an' this many goblins is a bit out o' my scope. There's two groups of 'em what's fightin' up on Table Rock, that's about two miles northwest from here. I seen a couple of 'em throw others off o' the cliff, and...I know this sounds durned strange...but I swear that some of 'em had...wings!"

🔱 **Sagus Wooler**, male human War3: hp 13.

Proceed to Encounter 4, PCs Befriended the Farmers section.

ENCOUNTER 4: LEARNING TO FLY

See DM Aid: Map #2.

PCS BEFRIENDED THE FARMERS

Sagus Wooler leads the PCs to where he saw the goblins. The foothills of the Jotens begin to rise abruptly some ten miles from the actual border of the mountains; from the east, Table Rock is a jutting hill facing the Sheldomar Valley with a hundred-foot shale cliff. Sagus leads the PCs on a trail that winds under the shadow of the cliff and up a steep but sheltered slope to the south side. A DC 12 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check reveals that this path is quite hidden from view to anyone on top of the cliffs.

As the group nears the top, Sagus describes what he saw and takes his leave.

"There was a war-party o' goblins, maybe a dozen of 'em with ratty leathers and spiked clubs between 'em, an' I seen 'em setting up camp at the crest where the cliffs are highest." Sagus gestures to emphasize the location. "Then outta nowhere, a different bunch of goblins, these armed mostly with bows and led by one o' them big bugbears, they jumped the first bunch. Y'all might think I'm crazy, but I knows I seen a couple o' the little goblins sprout wings and

fly so's they could shoot the others from above. And another thing: All the new goblins, the ones as could fly? They were all wearin' white! White armor, chain shirts I think, and white rags tied 'round their heads an' arms...I even think they were puttin' white paint on their faces an' hair."

Sagus can offer no further information and resists any request to come further with the party. Sure, he's got a couple of warrior levels, but he knows that he's not the real fighting talent here. He leaves by the same path even as the party moves forward onto the crest of the hill.

The PCs may pre-cast spells at this point, but the hiding place of the goblins requires time to locate, and 'rounds per level' and 'minutes per level' spells would be wasted.

Call for Listen and Spot checks:

	Listen DC	Spot DC
APL 4	14	10
APL 6	16	12
APL 8	18	14
APL 10	20	16

If a PC succeeds at either check, that PC gets one round to cast spells, attack, or move into position before the monsters react. Place the appropriate minis for the goblins and bugbears in the center of the battle-map no more than 40 ft. from the cliff-edge, which faces east; allow the players to place their minis anywhere on the south side of the map no closer than 60 ft. from the goblinoids.

After the PCs enjoy the fruits of their surprise round, we can roll initiative and let the carnage begin! Proceed to The Fight below.

PCS ABUSED THE FARMERS

It is now mid-afternoon, and you have passed from farmlands into wilderness. Ahead of you is a series of steeply-rising hills, many of which face you, face the east, with steep cliff-faces; beyond them, the majestic Jotens rise in earnest. You find a trail that makes its way up the north side of the largest, widest, and most impressive of these hills.

A DC 13 Survival check by someone with the Track feat indicates that several parties of 4 to 6 human-sized creatures with pack animals passed this way around 24 to 48 hours ago.

Take out and draw the battle-map as described above and have the PCs place themselves anywhere in the center 1/3 of the map; the trail has climbed the hill and

turned to the southwest. Then call for Listen and Spot checks:

	Listen DC	Spot DC
APL 4	18	16
APL 6	20	18
APL 8	22	20
APL 10	24	22

Any PC who succeeds at either check may participate in the surprise round. Roll initiative and proceed to The Fight below.

THE FIGHT

These are no ordinary goblinoid raiders before you. The bugbear appears to have decorated itself with quicklime or whitewash, so that the tips of his copious body-hair are all frosted white, and his armor and even his face are similarly painted. The goblins are even more unusual: They share the same white markings, but they also have wings...reptilian, scaly blue-white wings that lift them easily into the sky and shine like fresh snow in the afternoon sunshine.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ Bugbear Bbn1: hp 33, see Appendix 1.

☛ Winged Goblins War1 (6): hp 7 each, see Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ Bugbear Bbn1/Ftr2: hp 51, see Appendix 2.

☛ Winged Goblins War3 (6): hp 21 each, see Appendix 2.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ Bugbear Bbn1/Ftr4: hp 69, see Appendix 3.

☛ Winged Goblins Rog2/Ftr2 (4): hp 30 each, see Appendix 3.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ Half Dragon (White) Bugbear Bbn1/Ftr4: hp 80, see Appendix 4.

☛ Winged Goblins Rog2/Ftr4 (4): hp 48 each, see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The bugbear rages at first opportunity and charges as often as he can, using Power Attack to the fullest when he has the advantage of charging and rage. The flying goblins use Flyby Attack to stay out of reach; they target spellcasters or obvious threats to the bugbear.

Half of them might hold their action to disrupt casting while the others soften up the bugbear's opponents.

AFTER THE FIGHT

Hopefully the PCs will have acquitted themselves nobly and rid the Oerth of these goblinoid nuisances. A search of the area and all the bodies reveals that Sagus was right. There are a dozen dead goblins scattered around the hilltop and at the bottom of the cliff, all of whom wear the filthy, ill-kept armor typical of their species. The goblinoids defeated by the PCs, however, are as previously described. (At APL 10, the bugbear's markings are actually part of its half-dragon body and not mere make-up or decoration.)

As the PCs are healing up and finishing their searches and the players are cleaning up from the encounter, erasing consumables, marking off used spells, and perhaps partaking of a salty snack, call for a Listen check (DC 10). If the checks are successful, read the following:

You hear two distinct voices, high-pitched and pleasant, almost the voices of children, light and tinkling with laughter, totally out of place in the aftermath of combat. One speaks a giggling question, and the other sings out an answer that both seem to find hilarious:

"Flail-wielding bugbears and goblins with wings?"

"These are a few of my favorite things!"

Both voices then guffaw uncontrollably and the sound of them grows more and more quiet, as if the unseen speakers had flown off to the west, deeper into the wild and growing hills. "Wheeeeeeeee!"

Allow a Spot check (DC 38, or DC 18 if the PC making the check can see invisible creatures) if anyone asks for it. If so, and the check is successful, that PC sees two small, brightly-clothed humanoid creatures with bright butterfly wings whizzing away to the west. A PC who cannot see invisible things but somehow makes the Spot check notes a disturbance in some branches to the west, as if a slight breeze had brushed them.

ENCOUNTER 5: SEEING THROUGH THE JOKES

You are being called upon to give voice to a pair of pixies, notorious pranksters and punsters and jokers extraordinaire: Sure, they're Neutral Good, almost achingly, palpably Neutral Good in alignment, but they have genuine concerns with which the PCs will have to deal. There are tests here, as there are in many seemingly ordinary situations for persons who wish to be proved of good heart and true ...

Put two otherwise-ordinary dice on the battle-mat close at hand with at least six squares on either side of 'em; do this unobtrusively, without fanfare. Each time a PC does or says something that might upset the pixies (makes unfounded accusations, demonstrates cruelty, mocks them without any redeeming humor, gross impoliteness in an unfunny way) move one of the dice one step to the right.

If the PCs manage to endure the pixies' sense of humor and demonstrate humor on their own part, then the dice should be very close together at the end of the encounter ... and the adventure may well have a happy ending. If the dice are 5 or more squares apart by the end of the encounter (as noted below) then the pixies will not help the PCs except to offer directions, and the end of the adventure will be far more complex and difficult.

✚ **Pixies** (2): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 236.

DETECTING EVIL

First off, the pixies use *detect evil* to determine if any of the PCs radiate evil. If any do, then the pixies first ask for explanations, as they've heard of curses and other things that can make a decent, moral person radiate a palpable aura of nastiness. They also use *detect thoughts* (DC 15 Will save) at the same time to determine the veracity of any PC's story.

Lying at this point, and then failing the Bluff check or the Will save, will get that die moved a square to the right.

Ask anyone whose PC detects as evil to raise his or her hand. If no one raises his or her hand, then skip to the next section. If any player raises his or her hand, their PC is lightly tapped on the shoulder.

"Excuse me, big stomping smelly person?" The voice seems polite enough, but it fades into the middle distance before the second word is spoken. You get the impression that it's a little afraid of you. "Why are you evil? You don't look evil, and you don't smell any more evil than your friends, and you're not dressed like an evil person: no black cloak, no big moustache to twirl as you laugh maniacally at the hero's feeble attempts to foil your plans or nothin' ... so why are you evil?" The voice drops to a shocked whisper. "Does your mommy know you're evil?" The voice grows loud again. "Do your friends over there know that you're evil? Oops, I guess they know now, if they didn't know before ... Sorry!"

Allow the player to tell his sad tale. These pixies have a Sense Motive +6; roll for both of them if a PC attempts to Bluff. They want to believe that the PCs are decent people, and if the truth is told, they'll believe it. Continue with the next section.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

The pixies have a serious concern, one that they'll bring up from the start in their typically non-serious way, addressing the largest person in the group, preferably a human.

The largest person among your group suddenly feels a breeze blow past their head. "Excuse me, mister big smelly stomping person?" The voice seems polite enough, as if the speaker truly believes that describing you in such a fashion is a simple statement of obvious fact. "Why are all you big stomping smelly people coming to our home? It's so much nicer without ALL of you visiting at once. I mean, a few hoomins or elfs or dwarfs or gnomies or halfsies...you know, half-elfs and half-orcs and half-lings...a few at a time is kinda FUN and all, 'cause we get to have fun and almost every single one of you survives and some of you even laugh along and we really really really like the ones who do, but ick! Every one of you in the whole wide world must be marching through our home all at the same time!"

Allow the PCs to answer, each in their own way. The specific answers given are not terribly important, as these pixies will probably forget this conversation as unimportant in a few hours, but the attitude of the PCs is paramount.

Note: Shift that die if anyone gets belligerent with the pixies. Do this each time the PCs get belligerent.

After each PC has had a chance to respond, call for Will saves (DC 15) from everyone. Anyone making a DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check already knows that these are pixies. Another Knowledge (nature) check (DC 21) reminds the PCs that pixies can cast *detect thoughts* as a spell-like ability ... and of course, any PC may choose to purposefully fail the save versus the *detect thoughts* ability in order to completely convince the pixies of their noble intentions.

FOLLOW US

Note: Remember to shift that die if anyone gets belligerent with the pixies. Do this each time the PCs get belligerent.

There are a few minutes of quiet after your explanations are completed ... a few minutes of sweet, blessed quiet ... and then, once again right in amongst you, the voices return. "I think we understand. We know that most hoomins and other big stomping smellies are all greedy and stuff, but we've talked about it, and we don't think you're here after all that pretty, shiny gold. Y'know, that's a funny thing, and I don't mean funny as in 'ha-ha', I mean WEIRD funny...we've lived up here for like years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years..." The voice gets weaker and weaker and then takes an

enormous inhalation. "...And years and years, and we've never ever seen gold in any of the creeks or brooks or rivers 'round here. Lucky for you, we're pretty sure we know how you can find your friends. Follow us!"

Regardless of the capacity of the PCs to see invisible creatures, the pixies fly off at top speed, becoming well and truly invisible after they fly past the first few trees.

Nothing happens. For a few more seconds, nothing happens. Then, in the distance, you hear the two voices quibbling and growing closer. "How can you forget that you're invisible?" "How could I forget? Hey, you forgot too!" Suddenly, hovering in the air just above your heads, two small forms appear: Each resembles a very small elf, around 2 1/2 feet tall and perhaps 30 pounds, with longer ears and gossamer wings. They're both dressed in bright clothing that includes a cap and shoes with long curled toes; each is armed with a small longbow and a tiny dagger. One is male, the other female.

If the PCs inquire as to their nature, even with as little as a 'Huh?' at the previous description:

"We're pixies, of course! Don't you big stomping smelly people know pixies when you don't see 'em? Wheeeeeee!" The male pixie executes a few loops in the air for emphasis as the female pixie chimes in. "I'm Windflower, and that's Nettle. I'm the smart one." Nettle appears to take umbrage at this statement. "No, you're not! I'M the ..." He flies into a tree-branch with a crash and wraps himself completely around it ... twice. Nettle's mood, however, seems none the worse for wear. "Oh, wait ... that's right, you're the smart one," he says with a lopsided smile. "I'm the cute one!" At this, Windflower laughs. "Cute? Like that matters. The big stomping smelly ones can't tell any of us apart, and besides, we're like all invisible!"

The trail on which they lead you winds uphill, deeper into the last foothills of the Jotens, and the pixies occasionally remind you of their presence...just in case you might have forgotten that you're being led around by gossamer-winged fairies. Nettle pipes up: "You guys really beat up those nasty goblins. Boy, were they ever dumb. Were they wearing white for protection because they heard that only dark colors bleed? Get it? Get it? BLEED! I made a laundry funny! Wheeeeeee!"

This goes on for what seems like an eternity, but the sun is not yet past noon when you approach a curious obstacle: A narrow stream, raging with icy-cold water from out of the mountains, blocks your path; right in front of you it is bridged by not one, not two, but three five foot wide, thirty foot long stone arches. Each has a set of runes carved into its foundation at your end; the runes are the same, but are in a different sequence on each bridge. As you

inspect the situation, you cannot help but notice the quiet that has descended on the area: Apparently the pixies have flown off.

Feel free to sketch out the situation for the PCs. If anyone in the party speaks Gnome, he or she knows automatically that the runes are the first three letters in the Dwarven alphabet as modified and used by the gnomes. A PC who speaks Dwarven is allowed a DC 12 Int or Knowledge (arcana) check to identify these as well. The bridges are labeled as follows:

Left	CAB
Center	BCA
Right	ABC

If no PC speaks any of the languages listed, a Knowledge (arcana) or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 20) reveals the information shown above. If this fails, then the PCs must choose a bridge at random or cross using separate bridges. This entire area radiates strong abjuration magic, and magical *flight* or *teleportation* of any kind from one side of the bridges to the other is completely prevented. The PCs must either risk the crossing of a rough cold stream or choose a bridge and walk.

Only one bridge, the one labeled "ABC", is safe to use. Anyone using one of the others finds that the center 20 feet of the span simply ceases to exist when they reach the center point. They fall into the 3-foot deep, fast-moving frigid water. A DC 15 Fort save is required for every round of immersion; the PC takes 1d6 nonlethal cold damage per failure and is fatigued until that damage is healed. A DC 15 Swim check as a full-round action allows a PC to exit the stream on the side of his or her choice; the DC drops by 3 each round until success is automatic. Once the creek has been crossed (with either dry or wet feet), the pixies return and pop into visibility again.

"I'm sorry...we should have warned you." Windflower smiles apologetically. "This place was built by the gnomes way way way way long ago, and wouldn't you figure that they'd include some pretty bad jokes in their defenses?"

Some players may have figured out the joke already. If so, the pixies' respect for the PCs climbs to unheard-of heights. You may feel free to move the die a bit to the left in this event. Otherwise, choose the appropriate explanation:

If one or more PCs fell into the water:

"I guess you couldn't read the signs. It says that those first two bridges there are 'out of order.' Get it? 'Out of order!' Wheeeeeeeeeee!"

If the PCs managed to get across without all the cold and the wet and the sniffles, the pixies exclaim:

"We were afraid that you big stomping smelly types would get wet here, but you guys are clever! You figured out that those other two bridges are 'out of order.' Get it? 'Out of order!' Wheeeeeeeee!"

The trail climbs a steep round hill in a spiral path. All around are stone blocks that are clearly not of natural origin; they show evidence of ancient stonework. At the top of the hill, a ring of paving-stones some twenty feet wide crowns the flattened peak. The stones are rough and uneven beneath your feet.

A DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (or automatically for anyone with Stonecunning) reveals that given the size and spacing of the stones, this is a gnome-hold ... but it's been out of business for longer than recorded history times two at the very least. Only thousands of years of weathering, of hot summers and brutal winters, could have caused this kind of decay.

WHERE IS THE DIE?

Have the PCs managed to keep the pixies amused, or at least, not too offended at their big stomping smelly manners, or did they mess up big-time?

Development: If the PCs managed to endure the humorous tortures of the pixies, they have a chance to rescue Orwin Tracker alive. If they did not gain the assistance of the pixies in traveling to the next encounter instantly, then Orwin will be dead by the time they find him. There are different endings in the Conclusion to cover either eventuality.

Alienated the Pixies

If the PCs alienated the pixies, Windflower becomes visible to you again; she seems as sad as you can imagine a pixie being:

"You can see the place from here." She points to the west, towards a sparkling waterfall that tumbles out of the mountains about three miles distant. "That's the place where those other big stomping smelly ones went and then left so quickly; that's where they came back to a couple of days ago with all their guards and such. We haven't seen any of them come out again. I'm really sorry that we couldn't help you more, but we have to leave if all you big stomping smelly people are gonna leave your footprints all over our homes looking for that gold, and...and that means we can't help you more." She vanishes from sight. You know in your hearts that you will never see her again.

The PCs have earned the Fey Foe effect on their Adventure Record. Go to Encounter 6, Arrival by Foot section.

Stayed on Good Terms

If the PCs have managed to stay on good terms with the pixies, Windflower becomes visible to you again; she has a mischievous smile on her ever-so-sweet little face:

"You can see the place from here." She points to the west, towards a sparkling waterfall that tumbles out of the mountains about three miles distant. "That's the place where those other big stomping smelly ones went and then left so quickly; that's where they came back to a couple of days ago with all their guards and such. We haven't seen any of them come out again." She waves her hand, and the stones on which you stand change and shift in subtle ways.

A DC 15 Spellcraft check reveals that she has just dismissed an illusion that was concealing the true nature of the paving-stones beneath your feet.

The twenty-foot wide ring of paving-stones on which you stand is revealed to have relief images carved all around its outside edge, and a large inscription in the center. Windflower reads the inscription, as can anyone who speaks Gnome. "It says, 'The doorway to the needful place is always open to those that know how they will walk through that door'. That's what it says. Now, I know that you big stomping smellies are in a hurry, but I must pay homage to the genius of this design: Can any of you, knowing how gnomes think, figure out how to activate the magic you need?"

Around the outside edge of the circle are relief images of...farm animals? Yup...there's a billy-goat, and a ram, and a rooster, and a stallion, and a cow, and a boar, and a bull. That's all there is, those images and the inscription in the circle's center.

Any use of detect magic reveals two separate auras; a DC 18 Spellcraft check reveals a moderate Divination aura, and a separate DC 22 Spellcraft check reveals a strong aura of Conjuraton.

Give the players Player Handout #1. Let the players sit on this one for a moment. After they've pondered the silliness of it all, let them get to the skill checks.

A DC 10 Knowledge (nature), Profession (farmer), or Bardic Knowledge check reveals that all of the animals shown are clearly male, except for the cow.

If anyone succeeds on the above check, a subsequent DC 16 Knowledge (nature), Profession (farmer), or Bardic Knowledge check indicates that the cow seems to need milking very badly.

By this time, Windflower is laughing so hard that she's flashing uncontrollably between visibility and invisibility. Songbirds by the dozens are joining her in twittering and flying about, and every flower within a fifty-foot radius is bending its bloom towards her merriment. "Do you get it? Oh,

the sheer genius of it...it absolutely outshines any silly little practical joke I ever thought of...it's so very brilliant it its simplicity! Do you get it?"

Nettle appears, pounding his palms on a standing stone at blinding speed and giggling like a lunatic. Suddenly other pixies, dozens and hundreds and who-knows-how-many more pixies, begin to become visible all around you, all of them laughing like mad and pounding the stones.

Above the din, Windflower screeches out, "How will you walk though that door?" She waves her hand, and the assembled pixies go instantly quiet: You are surrounded by an ocean of gossamer-winged fey, all grinning and quivering with intense, nigh-insane excitement, and all absolutely silent.

Choose a PC at this point. Preferably, it's the PC who was most pixie-like in their behavior during this encounter, the one who displayed a genuine sense of humor and played along and had a good time. You can also choose the most uptight one: That's always good for a laugh.

Windflower swoops down and delicately lands in front you. She smiles up and takes your hand and leads you to the cow. "How will you walk through that door? Just put one foot...in front of...the udder!" There is a collective "Wheeeeeeeee!" the likes of which you will most probably never hear again as the assembled pixies explode away from you in all directions, screeching with laughter.

As soon as a PC puts one foot in front of the cow relief with the intent of activating the doorway, the world spins and goes black, but only for an instant.

The PCs have earned the **Pixie Pal** effect on their Adventure Record. Proceed to Encounter 6, Arrival by Teleportation section

ENCOUNTER 6: SHARPER THAN A SERPENT'S TOOTH

ARRIVAL BY FOOT

The trip to the waterfall is uneventful but lengthy; it is late in the afternoon when you arrive. The sun is already gone behind the mountains to the west, and the deeper ravines and valleys are already as black as night. The waterfall itself is spectacular, at least a hundred feet wide and twice as high, a thundering violence of water coming down out of the Jotens, sometimes falling vertically and sometimes crashing down the steep slope.

Anyone succeeding at a DC 18 Search check as the PCs move up the last tributary of the Bound Brook notices shining flecks of gold scattered in the streambed.

The climb to the top is not as difficult as it looks. All the while as you climb, the bearer of the ring of friend shield has sensed that Orwin Tracker is getting closer. Clearly, you are on the right track.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or DC 20 Bardic Knowledge check indicates that the rocks in the center third of the steeply-angled flow are heavily eroded, but the rocks in the outer thirds are still jagged and barely affected by the water. This stream, as was intimated earlier, has indeed greatly increased its flow very recently.

The view from the top takes in a much larger view to both the east and the west. In the dying light you can actually make out the haze of Baransford in the distance to the east some fifteen miles off, up against the tiny ribbon of silver that is the Javan River. The view to the west is even more amazing, though. A long, narrow lake that feeds the waterfall fills much of the narrow valley floor before you, resembling from this angle a broad darkened dagger stabbing into the gap between the looming mountains. Boulders rise up out of the lake at irregular intervals. Some two miles distant from you, a ribbon of dirty white, almost glowing against the dark rocks, chokes the far end of the valley; those of you who have traveled in the mountains recognize this as the crumbling end of a glacier. Above it all, the peaks to the west push up against the sky with a palpable belligerence. It is no wonder that one of the most ancient Flan words for 'giant' names this range.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or DC 20 Bardic Knowledge check indicates that the boulders in the lake and on shore are smooth and almost polished in appearance; they are undoubtedly 'orphans', rocks carried down-slope by the glacier and left in place by its retreat. If the PCs made a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) or DC 23 Bardic Knowledge, they also learn that the lower slopes of the mountains that frame this valley are covered with thick stands of evergreen trees, but the last hundred feet or so down to the lake's edge support only meadow-grasses and the smallest of saplings. Apparently, the glacier once filled this entire valley to a significant depth, but very recently melted away. In a place like the Flanaess, who knows what treasures abandoned, sealed away for thousands of years beneath dead ice might be revealed by that ice's sudden retreat ... what treasures, and what horrors?

If anyone comes into contact with the lake-water, a DC 12 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check reveals that its temperature is significantly warmer than one would expect for a high-mountain, glacial-fed lake ... much, much warmer.

At this point, the black dragons that dwell in the lake become aware of the PCs' presence. They are using the orphans to hide themselves and are waiting for the party to come close. Using DM Aid: Map #3 as a guide, draw a

line on the battle-map dividing 1/4 of it from the rest; describe the smaller portion as the lake. Scatter ten dice or markers as shown to represent orphan rocks that fill the square in which they rest and rise to a rounded height of 10 feet. The lightly-shaded water area is only ankle-deep, and counts as difficult terrain; the darker-shaded water area drops to 5 ft. in depth.

Call for Spot checks (DC = 12 + APL). Anyone who succeeds gets to act during the surprise round as a brace of immature black dragons springs out of the water at the far edge of the battle-map and attacks.

ARRIVAL BY TELEPORTATION

In the blink of an eye, you are gone from the hilltop and reappear elsewhere. The bearer of the Ring of Friend Shield immediately senses that Orwin Tracker is close at hand. The party is standing alongside the top of a large waterfall, with spectacular views to both the east and west in the afternoon sunshine.

Anyone succeeding at a DC 18 Search check as the PCs stand here at the source of the Bound Brook notices shining flecks of gold scattered in the lake-bed.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or DC 20 Bardic Knowledge check indicates that the rocks in the center third of the steeply-angled flow are heavily eroded, but the rocks in the outer thirds are still jagged and barely affected by the water. This stream, as was intimated earlier, has indeed greatly increased its flow very recently.

You can actually make out the haze of Baransford in the distance to the east some fifteen miles off, up against the tiny ribbon of silver that is the Javan River. The view to the west is even more amazing, though. A long, narrow lake that feeds the waterfall fills much of the narrow valley floor before you, resembling from this angle a broad darkened dagger stabbing into the gap between the looming mountains. Smooth, rounded boulders rise up out of the lake and its shores at irregular intervals. Some two miles distant from you, a ribbon of dirty white, almost glowing against the dark rocks, chokes the far end of the valley; those of you who have traveled in the mountains recognize this as the crumbling end of a glacier. Above it all, the peaks to the west push up against the sky with a palpable belligerence. It is no wonder that one of the most ancient Flan words for 'giant' names this range.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or DC 20 Bardic Knowledge check indicates that the boulders in the lake and on shore are smooth and almost polished in appearance; they are undoubtedly 'orphans', rocks carried down-slope by the glacier and left in place by its retreat. If the PCs made a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) or DC 23 Bardic Knowledge, they also learn that the lower slopes of the mountains that frame this valley are covered with

thick stands of evergreen trees, but the last hundred feet or so down to the lake's edge support only meadow-grasses and the smallest of saplings. Apparently, the glacier once filled this entire valley to a significant depth, but very recently melted away. In a place like the Flanaess, who knows what treasures abandoned, sealed away for thousands of years beneath dead ice might be revealed by that ice's sudden retreat ... what treasures, and what horrors?

If anyone comes into contact with the lake-water, a DC 12 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check reveals that its temperature is significantly warmer than one would expect for a high-mountain, glacial-fed lake ... much, much warmer.

At this point, the black dragons that dwell in the lake become aware of the PCs' presence. They are using the orphans to hide themselves and are waiting for the party to come close. Using DM Aid: Map #3 as a guide, draw a line on the battle-map dividing 1/4 of it from the rest; describe the smaller portion as the lake. Scatter ten dice or markers as shown to represent orphan rocks that fill the square in which they rest and rise to a rounded height of 10 feet. The lightly-shaded water area is only ankle-deep, and counts as difficult terrain; the darker-shaded water area drops to 5 ft. in depth.

Call for Spot checks (DC = 10 + APL). Anyone who succeeds gets a free round to act as they notice movement in their direction under the water. After that round, call for initiative as a brace of immature black dragons springs out of the water at the far edge of the battle-map and attacks.

THE BATTLE

APL 4 (EL 6)

🐉 **Black Dragons, Very Young (2):** hp 69 each, see Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🐉 **Black Dragons, Very Young (4):** hp 69 each, see Appendix 2.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🐉 **Black Dragons, Elite Juvenile (2):** hp 156 each, see Appendix 3.

APL 10 (EL 12)

🐉 **Black Dragons, Elite Juvenile (4):** hp 156 each, see Appendix 4.

Tactics: These beasts aren't too bright, and they aren't too subtle. One or two will melee with a strong-looking opponent while the other one or two use their breath weapon on that same opponent, knowing that their sibling or siblings will think that the acid line tickles.

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the PCs feel a proper sense of urgency regarding the rescue of Orwin Tracker, they will skip the treasure-search process; fortunately for the party, they can come back to this area after the rescue and still find whatever treasure was here.

As you collect yourselves following the fray with the dragons, you notice that one of the boulders out perhaps a hundred feet into the lake has split in half, leaving a table-like surface some 3 feet above the water ... and the whole thing is curiously veined with glittering gold.

A DC 10 Craft (any kind of metalworking) check or a DC 10 Search check by a PC with Stonecunning reveals that those aren't natural veins of gold ... it's as if someone melted gold on the top of the rock, and it ran down the sides.

The lake is less than a foot deep all the way out to the rock from this shore; it grows suddenly deeper just past this odd boulder. A closer inspection shows that a small number of gold coins and broken bits of gold jewelry are scattered across the top of the rock; all have been damaged at the least or shredded completely at the worst. Both the gold and the rock's surface have been pitted and scorched. You are able to gather some small amount of gold from what remains.

A DC 12 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the damage to the gold was undoubtedly caused by a combination of black dragon teeth, black dragon claws, and black dragon acid. The end result, tiny flecks and lumps of gold, looks very much like what prospectors might hope to find in a stream. However, amongst the gold bits, the PCs will also find a few intact items of value (see the Treasure Summary for what quantity of gold and other valuables the PCs find).

ENCOUNTER 7: NOBODY TO FEAR

The ring of friend shield tugs at you; you know that the closer you come to the glacier at the far end of the lake, the closer you come to Orwin Tracker. As you approach, more details become visible. The glacier is shattered and rent, split by countless crevasses as if by the repeated blows of a gargantuan axe; its ice is filthy and pitted, and even as you watch, the face of it visibly shifts downward a foot or more as a huge slab calves off the front and collapses into splinters, shards, and yes, even cubes in the turbulent waters of the lake. Most interestingly, there is a very great volume of water rushing out from beneath the glacier, water that quickly melts whatever ice breaks free of the main body. Coming closer, you can actually feel the heat of the water surging out from beneath the ice. Somewhere up

the slope a hot spring is eating away at the glacier, and you don't imagine that it will remain at all stable for very much longer.

The PCs don't have to search for their path; the ring of friend shield indicates that the way to Orwin Tracker lies up the slope along the right, or northern edge, of the glacier. (Of course, the ring is only sensing the proximity of its companion band: Orwin may already be dead at this point in time.) Sure enough, after only a few minutes climbing, an unusual opening appears in the ice.

There is an arched stone entrance with a tunnel leading down into the body of the glacier before you. It looks like the opening was once crafted to resemble the gaping maw of some predatory creature, complete with huge canine fangs...but the mouth is now skewed and crooked, with a badly broken jaw. An unlit passage angles down and to the west past the entryway.

Since the entry is so badly distorted by the action of the ice over the ages, a DC 18 Knowledge (religion) check is needed to recognize the imagery as that of a gaping, fanged maw, the holy symbol of Beltar, Suel goddess of malice, pits, and caves.

The passage is difficult to maneuver through but passable: It was once an arched passage around 10 feet wide and 15 feet high, but it has been twisted by the action of the ice so that the PCs start out walking on the floor, spend some time walking on the walls, and then walk on the ceiling for a short while before it rights itself once more. The first fifty feet or so are fashioned from deep gray basalt blocks, but after that, the passage is formed from a rich white marble with black veins. The passage descends steeply and makes shallow turns to the right three times and then ends at a twisted and shattered set of stone doors, through which a pallid light shines weakly. The bearer of the ring of friend shield knows that Orwin Tracker is very, very close.

See DM Aid: Map #4 for a sketch of this encounter.

The room is a rectangle with three alcoves. Each alcove has a four-foot-high platform bearing a statue perhaps ten feet high: To the left of the entrance is a spherical creature with a large central eye and many smaller eyes on stalks; to the right, a dragon rearing up on its hind legs, and on the far side of the room, a woman with many arms and the lower body of a serpent. The statues are fashioned of the same black-veined white marble from which the entire room is crafted. A fourth platform sits in the center of the room, inscribed with large flowing script letters all around its base: A trio of humanoid forms lie unmoving on top of it.

- Left platform (C): A beholder (DC 11 Knowledge (dungeoneering) to identify).

- Right platform (A): Prominent neck frill, spiky osseous growths at the front and rear of the jaw ... a red dragon (DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) to identify).
- Far platform (B): A marilith demon (DC 19 Knowledge (the planes) to identify).

The inscription is in Ancient Suel: *"This is the womb of the Dark Mother, in which the true believer may find the path to true power."*

Allow a DC 16 Knowledge (religion) check if no one recognized the entrance as symbolic of Beltar. The three monster statues reflect the three forms in which Beltar is normally worshipped.

The humanoid forms lying on the center dais are Orwin Tracker and two of the County Guard from Baransford. They're alive and stable at -1 hp ONLY if the pixies brought the PCs to this valley via teleportation, and tragically dead otherwise; they are clad in their weapons and armor but appear to be frost-bitten. Spells that cause damage over a large area might cause these helpless persons to be killed before they can be rescued.

Anyone using *detect evil* is impacted by an overwhelming aura of evil: On the first round, the caster senses the presence of evil, and on the second round, if the caster is of good alignment and of 10th level or less, they are stunned for 1 round and the spell ends.

Anyone using *detect magic* senses an overwhelming magical aura on the platform in the center of the room. A DC 25 Spellcraft check is required to identify each aura; one is Necromancy, and the other Transmutation.

The corners of the room are heaped horribly with desiccated, mummified corpses, all naked or clad in only the merest rags. Many are orcs and goblinoids, but a few are human or smaller than human and several are large enough to be giants of some sort or another. At the walls they all merge into dust, fragments of bone, and clumps of hair.

Our prime mover in this adventure, a brain-in-a-jar, dwells in serene contemplation of the will of Beltar within this unholy space. Its "jar" is the beholder statue, in which it can fly around at will: This unusual container is already figured into the creature's AC, and the lack of an obvious target is also figured into the EL of the encounter. It will not converse to any useful end with the PCs, using its telepathy only to mock their feeble efforts by endlessly repeating the text of the inscription on the central dais.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🔪 **Brain in a Jar**: hp 27, see Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🔪 **Brain in a Jar, Elite Advanced**: hp 63, see Appendix 2.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🔪 **Brain in a Jar TombWarden², Advanced**: hp 84, see Appendix 3.

APL 10 (EL 12)

🔪 **Brain in a Jar TombWarden³, Advanced Spellstitched**: hp 93, see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The brain begins its assaults on the PCs subtly, trying to use *suggestion* to disarm dangerous-looking PCs. It might use *dominate person* to cause a fighter-type to assault his fellows, and its mental blast can cover most of the room. Only if its hiding place is in danger of being discovered will it reveal itself by flying to safety and using more overt powers. The brain is both confident and insane; it does nothing rash but it stays on the offensive until destroyed. It has no concept of the outside world, and neither knows nor cares that the mausoleum under its care and supervision is on the verge of being destroyed by the death of the glacier that has been its protection for uncounted millennia.

Note: This structure is very, very unstable. If anyone uses spells that cause fire damage (even our 'brainy' little monster), describe how the structure shifts and groans and blocks of ice fall in through suddenly-widening cracks in the ceiling. Upon the death of the brain-in-a-jar, ice-falls and quakes and the shrieks of shredding stone grows exponentially: Any PC who is still in the room five rounds after this starts is killed by the collapse of the glacier; irrevocably if the PCs don't possess magical means of recovering the body from under tons of glacial ice.

CONCLUSION

ORWIN IS ALIVE

With a shrieking, shattering roar, the unstable glacier collapses into itself and smashes downhill into the lake, carried on a stampede of watery violence. From your safe perch on the mountain slope above the chaos, the majesty of the scene is breathtaking. Nothing of the ancient, bone-white temple remains intact; its black-veined marble and its countless corpses alike are ground into so much insignificance beneath nature's uncaring onslaught.

Detect magic used at this point reveals the previous auras (overwhelming Necromancy and Transmutation) are fading quickly and dispersing over a wide area as fast-flowing ice tears the temple to meaningless, irregular blocks and shards. Likewise, *detect evil* no longer stuns most casters and shows a fast-fading aura.

If the PCs have not yet made an attempt to revive Orwin Tracker or any of his companions that they managed to evacuate, they notice now that he has a bandolier that holds a number of potions, each clearly labeled *cure light wounds*, equal to the number of

evacuated captives plus one. It is assumed that, for ease of transport, reviving the men will be the sensible course of action.

Orwin Tracker expresses his heartfelt thanks to the entire group of rescuers, but speaks most on the trip back towards Baransford to the bearer of the ring of friend shield that matches his. "I assume you fought those black dragons by the lake, eh? They took out most of my men and forced us to flee. They wouldn't come close to the glacier, though, so we went up the hill looking for a way out of and around this valley...and that's the last thing I remember."

The journey back to Baransford is uneventful, the precise opposite of your trip into the mountains. With Orwin by your side, the farm families of the uplands are much more friendly, and healthy, hearty meals and warm comfortable beds are offered to you for the night you must spend on the road. On your return to town, you are asked to make a report to the Lord Mayor's personal secretary and lorist, Plorin.

If time permits, allow one or more PCs to describe their own version of events, including theories as to the nature of the gold rush and their theories behind the glacier-temple. If time is short, then just keep reading.

Plorin promises to make a full report to the Lord Mayor; he thanks you for rescuing whomever you managed to bring back to Baransford and requests that you wait around town another day or two should "any other authorities" ask to speak to them. You stay at the River Rest as the guests of Meklir Dockman during this time; Fastau of Zilchus picks up every copper of your considerable expenses for a few very pleasant days. On the evening of the second day, you attend a sumptuous private party at the Red Tower, and the first citizens of the town toast your heroism over and over. You have earned the deep gratitude of these very influential persons and brought together a community on the brink of tearing itself apart. The contrasts remain, but the deeper truths that bind them all are stronger for your actions.

PCs that reach this conclusion gain the **Greater Gratitude of Baransford** AR effect. Cross out the **Lesser Gratitude of Baransford** and **Enmity of Baransford** AR effects.

ORWIN IS DEAD BUT RECOVERED

With a shrieking, shattering roar, the unstable glacier collapses into itself and smashes downhill into the lake, carried on a stampede of watery violence. From your safe perch on the mountain slope above the chaos, the majesty of the scene is breathtaking. Nothing of the ancient, bone-white temple remains intact; its black-veined marble and its countless corpses alike are ground into so much insignificance beneath nature's onslaught.

Detect magic used at this point reveals the previous auras (overwhelming **Necromancy** and **Transmutation**) are fading quickly and dispersing over a wide area as fast-flowing ice tears the temple to meaningless, irregular blocks and shards. Likewise, *detect evil* no longer stuns most casters and shows a fast-fading aura.

If the PCs managed to evacuate anyone but Orwin Tracker alive from the collapsing temple, that person is revealed as a Keolander, a native of the County of Cryllor and a member of the County Guard. He has no meaningful information to reveal and will not aid the party greatly on their return to town.

The journey back to Baransford is uneventful, the precise opposite of your trip into the mountains. Orwin's body is a burden, but the farm families of the uplands seem to have heard of your plight and they are willing to aid you...albeit without any great enthusiasm. A drafty barn is made available for the night you must spend on the road, and an offer of some bread and cheese as well. On your return to town, you are asked to make a report to the Lord Mayor's personal secretary and lorist, Plorin.

If time permits, allow one or more PCs to describe their own version of events, including theories as to the nature of the gold rush and their theories behind the glacier-temple. If time is short, then just keep reading.

Plorin promises to make a full report to the Lord Mayor; he requests that you wait around town another day or two should "any other authorities" ask to speak to them. You stay at whatever establishment will have you, as the town is still very crowded with immigrants. On the evening of the second day, you attend a small private party at the Red Tower, and the first citizens of the town salute you for your heroism; Orwin Tracker is in attendance, looking tired from the (quite literally) harrowing ordeal of having been raised from the dead. You have earned the gratitude of several influential persons, and you have managed to bring together a community on the brink of tearing itself apart. The contrasts remain, but the deeper truths that bind them all prevailed because of your actions.

PCs that reach this conclusion gain the **Lesser Gratitude of Baransford** AR effect. Cross out the **Greater Gratitude of Baransford** and **Enmity of Baransford** AR effects.

ORWIN IS DEAD AND UNRECOVERABLE

With a shrieking, shattering roar, the unstable glacier collapses into itself and smashes downhill into the lake, carried on a stampede of watery violence. From your safe perch on the mountain slope above the chaos, the majesty of the scene is breathtaking. Nothing of the ancient, bone-white temple remains intact; its black-veined marble and

its countless corpses alike are ground into so much insignificance beneath nature's onslaught.

Detect magic reveals the previous auras (overwhelming Necromancy and Transmutation) are fading quickly and dispersing over a wide area as fast-flowing ice tears the temple to meaningless, irregular blocks and shards. Likewise, detect evil no longer stuns most casters and shows a fast-fading aura.

If the PCs managed to evacuate anyone but Orwin Tracker alive from the collapsing temple, that person is revealed as a Keolander, a native of the County of Cryllor and a member of the County Guard. He has no meaningful information to reveal and will not aid the party greatly on their return to town.

The journey back to Baransford is uneventful, the precise opposite of your trip into the mountains. The farm families of the uplands all seem to have heard of your passing, and they avoid contact with you, even going so far as to flee their homes to avoid you. The night you must spend on the road is uncomfortable yet unremarkable. On your return to town, you are asked to make a report to the Lord Mayor's personal secretary and lorist, Plorin.

If time permits, allow one or more PCs to describe their own version of events, including theories as to the nature of the gold rush and their theories behind the glacier-temple. If time is short, then just keep reading.

Plorin promises to make a full report to the Lord Mayor; he requests that you wait around town another day or two should "any other authorities" ask to speak to them. You stay at whatever establishment will have you, as the town is still very crowded with immigrants. On the evening of the second day, you are visited at your inn by Fastau of Zilchus; he seems to compulsively finger and twirl the now-useless ring of friend shield around his finger. "I am sorry that things did not work out better, but we thank you for your efforts nevertheless," he says with a sad tone. "My friends and myself are now faced with a town on the brink of tearing itself apart, and only time and the gods know where the recriminations and mounting violence will end. I can only surmise that the contrasts between so many nations, so many races, and so many ideals were too great to bend to the deeper truth of community. It might be best if you avoided Baransford for the time being."

PCs that reach this conclusion gain the **Enmity of Baransford** AR effect. Cross out the **Greater Gratitude of Baransford** and **Lesser Gratitude of Baransford** AR effects.

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 4

Defeat the goblinoids or force them to flee.

APL 4: 180 xp.
APL 6: 240 xp.
APL 8: 300 xp.
APL 10: 360 xp.

Encounter 6

Defeat the dragons or force them to flee.

APL 4: 180 xp.
APL 6: 240 xp.
APL 8: 300 xp.
APL 10: 360 xp.

Encounter 7

Defeat the brain-in-a-jar.

APL 4: 180 xp.
APL 6: 240 xp.
APL 8: 300 xp.
APL 10: 360 xp.

Story Award

PCs are invited to dine with the NPC (Encounter 1).

APL 4: 35 xp.
APL 6: 45 xp.
APL 8: 55 xp.
APL 10: 65 xp.

PCs do not harm or use nonlethal methods on the farmers (Encounter 3).

APL 4: 35 xp.
APL 6: 45 xp.
APL 8: 55 xp.
APL 10: 65 xp.

PCs do not alienate the pixies (Encounter 5).

APL 4: 35 xp.
APL 6: 45 xp.
APL 8: 55 xp.
APL 10: 65 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

APL 4: 30 xp.
APL 6: 45 xp.

APL 8: 60 xp.
APL 10: 75 xp.

Total possible experience

APL 4: 675 xp.
APL 6: 900 xp.
APL 8: 1,125 xp.
APL 10: 1,350 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. Because this is a Regional adventure, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

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

Encounter 4:

APL 4: L: 365 gp, C: 0 gp, M: ring of jumping (208 gp), 6 potions of cat's grace (25 gp each).

APL 6: L: 93 gp, C: 0 gp, M: ring of jumping (208 gp), +1 chain shirt (104 gp), +1 heavy flail (193 gp), 6 potions of cat's grace (25 gp each), 6 +1 composite shortbows (+1 Str bonus) (204 gp each).

APL 8: L: 3 gp, C: 0 gp, M: ring of jumping (208 gp), +2 chain shirt (354 gp), +1 heavy flail (193 gp), gauntlets of ogre power (333 gp), 4 potions of cat's grace (25 gp each), 4 mithral chain shirts (92 gp each), 4 +1 composite shortbows (+1 Str bonus) (204 gp each).

APL 10: L: 3 gp, C: 0 gp, M: ring of jumping (208 gp), +2 chain shirt (354 gp), +1 heavy flail (693 gp), gauntlets of ogre power (333 gp), 4 potions of cat's grace (25 gp each), 4 potions of shield of faith +5 (75 gp each), 4 +1 mithral chain shirts (175 gp each), 4 +1 composite shortbows (+1 Str bonus) (204 gp each).

Encounter 6:

APL 4: L: 0 gp, C: 35 gp, M: pearl of power – 1st level spell (83 gp), brooch of shielding (125 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 50 gp, M: golembane scarab (208 gp), pearl of power – 2nd level spell (333 gp), pearl of power – 1st level spell (83 gp), brooch of shielding (125 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 65 gp, M: ioun stone – clear spindle (333 gp), ioun stone – dusty rose prism (417 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp), pearl of power – 2nd level spell (333 gp), pearl of power – 1st level spell (83 gp), brooch of shielding (125 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp, C: 80 gp, M: periapt of health (617 gp), pearl of power – 3rd level spell (750 gp), ioun stone – clear spindle (333 gp), ioun stone – dusty rose prism (417 gp), golembane scarab (208 gp), pearl of power – 2nd level spell (333 gp), pearl of power – 1st level spell (83 gp), brooch of shielding (125 gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 4: L: 365 gp, C: 35 gp, M: 566 gp – Total: 966 gp (650 gp).

APL 6: L: 93 gp, C: 50 gp, M: 2,628 gp – Total: 2,771 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 3 gp, C: 65 gp, M: 3,871 gp – Total: 3,939 gp (1,300 gp).

APL 10: L: 3 gp, C: 80 gp, M: 6,370 gp – Total: 6,453 gp (2,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

☛ **Greater Gratitude of Baransford:** You have performed a mighty service for the citizens of Baransford, who have arranged to reward you well. Your lifestyle costs for this adventure are zero for standard lifestyle and halved for rich or luxury lifestyle, since the first citizens of the town pick up most of your ordinary expenses.

In addition, you may expend this Gratitude to gain the same lifestyle cost reduction benefit on this PC's next two adventures in the Sheldomar Valley metaregion after the Gratitude is expended. Those two adventures also cost 1 less TU (minimum 1 TU cost), as contacts with local guilds speed your passage and provide for your needs. This Gratitude must be spent within 1 calendar year of the date on this AR. Mark this Gratitude as USED when it is expended.

☛ **Lesser Gratitude of Baransford:** You have performed a mighty service for the citizens of Baransford, who have arranged to reward you in kind. Your lifestyle costs for this adventure are normal, as donations from the locals offset the inflated prices found during the gold rush.

In addition, you may expend this Gratitude to gain free standard lifestyle on this PC's next adventure in the Sheldomar Valley metaregion after the Gratitude is expended. This next adventure also costs 1 less TU (minimum 1 TU cost), as contacts with local guilds speed your passage and provide for your needs. This Gratitude must be spent within 1 calendar year of the date on this AR. Mark this Gratitude as USED when it is expended.

☛ **Enmity of Baransford:** You have failed the first citizens of Baransford in their time of need, and this failure will not soon be forgotten. Your lifestyle costs for this adventure are doubled as you suffer the full effects of the town's inflated prices. In addition, your lifestyle costs for your next two adventures in the Sheldomar Valley metaregion are also doubled, and you must spend 1 additional TU on these adventures, as persons who know the real story behind the Baransford situation interfere with your travel.

☛ **Pixie Pal:** The pixies of the Joten foothills have taken a liking to you, and they pop up to 'help' you at the oddest times. At the beginning of any adventure set in the Sheldomar Valley metaregion your DM rolls a d20—on a roll of 1-2 or 19-20, a pixie has decided to visit you for the duration of the adventure (1-2 is a male, 19-20 is a female). The pixie has no practical effect on any combat situation in the adventure, but its presence will give this PC a +2 bonus (as if assisting) on Bluff and Sense Motive checks. It thinks you're ever so cute; it will make the occasional pun and giggle at odd moments, all at the whim of the DM. These visits will end 1 calendar year

after the date on this AR, as the pixies eventually become bored and move on.

In addition, a 7th level PC with the Leadership feat and a Leadership Score of 7 may choose to take a pixie (one without Otto's irresistible dance) as a cohort. This pixie cohort is created using the rules in the LGCS and the information for a pixie in the Monster Manual (page 236). It starts play at least as a standard pixie, can advance by HD or as a sorcerer only, and may enter play already advanced, as long as its Cohort Level/ECL (HD + sorcerer levels + 4) is within the limits in the Dungeon Master's Guide (page 106).

☛ **Fey Foe:** The pixies of the Joten foothills have decided that you're a poopie-head, and they show up to mock you at the oddest times. At the beginning of any adventure set in the Sheldomar Valley metaregion your DM rolls a d20—on a roll of 1-2 or 19-20, a pixie has decided to visit you for the duration of the adventure (1-2 is a male, 19-20 is a female). The pixie has no practical effect on any combat situation in the adventure, but its presence will result in a -2 penalty to your Bluff and Sense Motive checks. It will make an occasional pun and loud imitations of bodily noises at inappropriate times, all at the whim of the DM. These visits will end 1 calendar year after the date on this AR, as the pixies eventually become bored and move on.

Item Access

APL 4:

- *Brooch of Shielding* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Pearl of Power, 1st Level Spell* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Ring of Jumping* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Rings of Friend Shield* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)

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

- *Pearl of Power, 2nd Level Spell* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Scarab, Golembane* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)

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

- *+2 Chain Shirt* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Ioun Stone, Clear Spindle* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Ioun Stone, Dusty Rose Prism* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- *Mithral Chain Shirt* (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)

APL 10 (all of APLs 4, 6, 8 plus the following):

- +1 Mithral Chain Shirt (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- +2 Heavy Flail (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- Pearl of Power, 3rd Level Spell (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- Periapt of Health (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)
- Potion of Shield of Faith +5 (*Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide*)

ENCOUNTER 4

Bugbear Bbn1: CR 3; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+1d12+8; hp 33; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +4 armor, +3 natural); Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d10+7/19-20, masterwork heavy flail); Full Atk +10 melee (1d10+7/19-20, masterwork heavy flail); SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Jump +21, Listen +3, Move Silently +8; Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: masterwork chain shirt, masterwork heavy flail, ring of jumping.

Winged Goblin War1: CR 1, Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d8+1; hp 9; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +1 size, +3 armor); Base Atk +1; Grp -2; Atk +8 ranged (1d4+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow) or +3 melee (1d4+1, short sword); Full Atk +8 ranged (1d4+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow) or +3 melee (1d4+1, short sword); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., flight; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13, Move Silently +13; Flyby Attack.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: short sword, masterwork composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), masterwork studded leather armor, *potion of cat's grace*.

ENCOUNTER 6

Black Dragon, Very Young: Small Dragon (Water); CR 4; HD 7d12+7; hp 69; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 100 ft. (average), swim 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+1 size, +6 natural); Base Atk/Grp: +7/+4; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, bite) or +9 melee (1d4+1, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +7 melee (1d4, 2 claws); SA breath weapon; SQ immunity to acid, immunity to *sleep* and paralysis effects, blindsense, keen senses, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Hide +14, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Search +9, Spot +10; Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Wingover.

Breath Weapon (Su): 40 ft. line of acid, 4d4 acid damage, DC 14 Reflex half, save DC is Con-based.

Water Breathing (Ex): A black dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use its breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Languages: Draconic.

ENCOUNTER 7

Brain in a Jar: Tiny Undead; CR 5; HD 3d12; hp 27; Init +2; Spd fly 30 ft. (good); AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection, +2 size, +4 armor); Base Atk/Grp: —/—; Atk —; Full Atk —; SA mind thrust, psionics, rebuke undead 6/day (+5, 2d6+6, 3rd); SQ blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., madness, telepathy, undead traits, +4 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +6; Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 16. *Libris Mortis*, page 90.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +9, Spot +9; Alertness, Iron Will.

Mind Thrust (Su): A brain in a jar can spend a standard action to deliver a massive assault on the thought pathways of any one creature within 60 ft., undermining its intellect. This mind thrust deals 2d10 points of damage to any target creature that fails a DC 14 Will save. The save DC is Cha-based.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 16), *telekinesis* (DC 18); 1/day—*dominate person* (DC 18). Manifest level 10th. The save DCs are Cha-based.

Rebuke Undead (Su): A brain in a jar can rebuke or command undead as a cleric of the same level as the brain's HD.

Madness (Su): Anyone targeting a brain in a jar with a thought detection, mind control, or any sort of telepathic or psionic ability that makes direct contact with its tortured mind takes 1d4 points of Wis damage.

Telepathy (Su): A brain in a jar can speak telepathically to any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Description: *Something gray and shriveled sloshes within a grimy glass canister – a disembodied brain afloat in alchemical preservatives.* The brain in a jar is a masterpiece of preservation – but where alchemical preservatives leave off, necromancy picks up. An animate brain in a jar is, in truth, an undead creature. Additionally, possibly because it is free of the need to worry about controlling and animating an entire body, a brain in a jar possesses potent mental powers. Of course, merely removing the brain of a zombie or some other undead creature and storing it in alchemical preservatives is not enough to create an undead brain with psionic ability. The ritual of extraction, the spells of formulation, and the alchemical recipes of preservation are closely guarded secrets held by only a few master necromancers. The creation of a brain in a jar is difficult and fraught with danger, because once its mental powers are fully developed, this undead creature is adept at controlling the thoughts and minds of other creatures, especially living creatures. It is not unknown for a brain in a jar to take control over the necromancer who created it. A brain in a jar weighs about 25 pounds, which includes the weight of the glass

canister and the preservative fluids. **Combat:** A brain in a jar prefers control to direct combat, since brains in fragile glass jars can't stand too much jostling. However, when it can't stay completely clear of combat, it seeks to put off aggressors with its mind thrust ability.

ENCOUNTER 4

Bugbear Bbn1/Ftr2: CR 5; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+1d12+2d10+12; hp 51; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+4 Dex, +5 armor, +3 natural); Base Atk +5; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d10+8/19-20, +1 heavy flail); Full Atk +12 melee (1d10+8/19-20, +1 heavy flail); SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Jump +23, Listen +3, Move Silently +8; Combat Reflexes^B, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 heavy flail, ring of jumping.

Winged Goblin War3: CR 2, Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 21; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +1 size, +3 armor); Base Atk +3; Grp +0; Atk +10 ranged (1d4+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +5 melee (1d4+1, short sword); Full Atk +10 ranged (1d4+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +5 melee (1d4+1, short sword); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., flight; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15, Move Silently +15; Flyby Attack, Point Blank Shot.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: short sword, +1 composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), masterwork studded leather armor, *potion of cat's grace*.

ENCOUNTER 6

Black Dragon, Very Young: Small Dragon (Water); CR 4; HD 7d12+7; hp 69; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 100 ft. (average), swim 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+1 size, +6 natural); Base Atk/Grp: +7/+4; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, bite) or +9 melee (1d4+1, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +7 melee (1d4, 2 claws); SA breath weapon; SQ immunity to acid, immunity to sleep and paralysis effects, blindsense, keen senses, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Hide +14, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Search +9, Spot +10; Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Wingover.

Breath Weapon (Su): 40 ft. line of acid, 4d4 acid damage, DC 14 Reflex half, save DC is Con-based.

Water Breathing (Ex): A black dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use its breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Languages: Draconic.

ENCOUNTER 7

Brain in a Jar, Elite Advanced: Tiny Undead; CR 7; HD 7d12; hp 63; Init +3; Spd fly 30 ft. (good); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +1 deflection, +2 size, +4 armor); Base Atk/Grp: —/—; Atk —; Full Atk —; SA mind thrust, psionics, rebuke undead 9/day (+9, 2d6+13, 7th); SQ blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., madness, telepathy, undead traits, +8 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +8; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 23. *Libris Mortis*, page 90.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +16, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Hide +16, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +15, Spot +15; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Turn Resistance^{LM}. ^{LM}*Libris Mortis*.

Mind Thrust (Su): A brain in a jar can spend a standard action to deliver a massive assault on the thought pathways of any one creature within 60 ft., undermining its intellect. This mind thrust deals 2d10 points of damage to any target creature that fails a DC 19 Will save. The save DC is Cha-based.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 19), *telekinesis* (DC 21); 1/day—*dominate person* (DC 21). Manifestor level 10th. The save DCs are Cha-based.

Rebuke Undead (Su): A brain in a jar can rebuke or command undead as a cleric of the same level as the brain's HD.

Madness (Su): Anyone targeting a brain in a jar with a thought detection, mind control, or any sort of telepathic or psionic ability that makes direct contact with its tortured mind takes 1d4 points of Wis damage.

Telepathy (Su): A brain in a jar can speak telepathically to any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Description: *Something gray and shriveled sloshes within a grimy glass canister – a disembodied brain afloat in alchemical preservatives.* The brain in a jar is a masterpiece of preservation – but where alchemical preservatives leave off, necromancy picks up. An animate brain in a jar is, in truth, an undead creature. Additionally, possibly because it is free of the need to worry about controlling and animating an entire body, a brain in a jar possesses potent mental powers. Of course, merely removing the brain of a zombie or some other undead creature and storing it in alchemical preservatives is not enough to create an undead brain with psionic ability. The ritual of extraction, the spells of formulation, and the alchemical recipes of preservation are closely guarded secrets held by only a few master necromancers. The creation of a brain in a jar is difficult and fraught with danger, because once its mental powers are fully developed, this undead creature is adept at controlling the thoughts and minds of other creatures, especially living creatures. It is not unknown for a brain in a jar to take control over the

necromancer who created it. A brain in a jar weighs about 25 pounds, which includes the weight of the glass canister and the preservative fluids. **Combat:** A brain in a jar prefers control to direct combat, since brains in fragile glass jars can't stand too much jostling. However, when it can't stay completely clear of combat, it seeks to put off aggressors with its mind thrust ability.

APPENDIX 3 – APL 8

ENCOUNTER 4

Bugbear Bbn1/Ftr4: CR 7; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+1d12+4d10+16; hp 69; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+4 Dex, +6 armor, +3 natural); Base Atk +7; Grp +14; Atk +16 melee (1d10+13/19-20, +1 heavy flail); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d10+13/19-20, +1 heavy flail); SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 22 (24), Dex 18, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Jump +27, Listen +3, Move Silently +8; Combat Reflexes^B, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Weapon Specialization^B (heavy flail).

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: +2 chain shirt, +1 heavy flail, ring of jumping, gauntlets of ogre power.

Winged Goblin Rog2/Ftr2: CR 5, Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d6+2d10+8; hp 30; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 21, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+6 Dex, +1 size, +4 armor); Base Atk +3; Grp +0; Atk +11 ranged (1d4+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +5 melee (1d4+1, short sword); Full Atk +11 ranged (1d4+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +5 melee (1d4+1, short sword); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., flight, evasion, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 23, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +11, Hide +15, Listen +7, Move Silently +15, Search +5, Spot +7, Tumble +13; Flyby Attack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot^B, Weapon Focus^B (longbow).

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: short sword, +1 composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), mithral chain shirt, *potion of cat's grace*.

ENCOUNTER 6

Black Dragon, Elite Juvenile: Medium Dragon (Water); CR 7; HD 13d12+52; hp 156; Init +1; Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+12 natural, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +13/+19; Atk +19 melee (2d6+6, bite) or +19 melee (1d6+6, claw) or +19 (1d4+6, wing); Full Atk +19 melee (2d6+6, bite) and +17 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) and +17 (1d4+3, 2 wings); SA breath weapon, spell-like abilities; SQ immunity to acid, immunity to sleep and paralysis effects, blindsense, keen senses, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills & Feats: Hide +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +18, Search +17, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18; Ability Focus (breath weapon), Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Wingover.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—darkness. CL 4th; save DC is Cha-based.

Breath Weapon (Su): 60 ft. line of acid, 8d4 acid damage, DC 22 Reflex half, save DC is Con-based.

Water Breathing (Ex): A black dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use its breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Languages: Draconic.

ENCOUNTER 7

Brain in a Jar TombWarden2, Advanced: Tiny Undead; CR 9; HD 9d12+3; hp 84; Init +3; Spd fly 30 ft. (good); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +1 deflection, +2 size, +4 armor); Base Atk/Grp: —/—; Atk —; Full Atk —; SA mind thrust, psionics, rebuke undead 10/day (+11, 2d6+16, 9th); SQ blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., madness, telepathy, undead traits, +4 turn resistance, turn immunity, tomb sense; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +8; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 24. *Libris Mortis*, pages 57 and 90.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +19, Diplomacy +21, Disguise +7 (+9 acting), Hide +17, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (religion) +16, Listen +17, Spot +17; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Profane Lifeleech^{LM}, Toughness. ^{LM}*Libris Mortis*.

Turn Immunity (Ex): As long as it is within the tomb, graveyard, or similar resting place it protects, a tomb warden is immune to turning or rebuking attempts. It can still be bolstered as normal.

Tomb Sense (Su): While it is within its tomb, graveyard, or similar resting place it protects, a tomb warden of 2nd level or higher automatically knows the precise location of all intruders within that tomb. This ability is similar to blindsense, except that it functions without regard to line of effect and its effect extends to every portion of the tomb.

Mind Thrust (Su): A brain in a jar can spend a standard action to deliver a massive assault on the thought pathways of any one creature within 60 ft., undermining its intellect. This mind thrust deals 2d10 points of damage to any target creature that fails a DC 20 Will save. The save DC is Cha-based.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—suggestion (DC 20), telekinesis (DC 22); 1/day—dominate person (DC 22). Manifestor level 10th. The save DCs are Cha-based.

Rebuke Undead (Su): A brain in a jar can rebuke or command undead as a cleric of the same level as the brain's HD.

Madness (Su): Anyone targeting a brain in a jar with a thought detection, mind control, or any sort of telepathic or psionic ability that makes direct contact with its tortured mind takes 1d4 points of Wis damage.

Telepathy (Su): A brain in a jar can speak telepathically to any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Description: Something gray and shriveled sloshes within a grimy glass canister – a disembodied brain afloat in alchemical preservatives. The brain in a jar is a masterpiece of preservation – but where alchemical preservatives leave off, necromancy picks up. An animate brain in a jar is, in truth, an undead creature. Additionally, possibly because it is free of the need to worry about controlling and animating an entire body, a brain in a jar possesses potent mental powers. Of course, merely removing the brain of a zombie or some other undead creature and storing it in alchemical preservatives is not enough to create an undead brain with psionic ability. The ritual of extraction, the spells of formulation, and the alchemical recipes of preservation are closely guarded secrets held by only a few master necromancers. The creation of a brain in a jar is difficult and fraught with danger, because once its mental powers are fully developed, this undead creature is adept at controlling the thoughts and minds of other creatures, especially living creatures. It is not unknown for a brain in a jar to take control over the necromancer who created it. A brain in a jar weighs about 25 pounds, which includes the weight of the glass canister and the preservative fluids. **Combat:** A brain in a jar prefers control to direct combat, since brains in fragile glass jars can't stand too much jostling. However, when it can't stay completely clear of combat, it seeks to put off aggressors with its mind thrust ability.

APPENDIX 4 – APL 10

ENCOUNTER 4

Half Dragon (White) Bugbear Bbn1/Ftr4: CR 9; Medium dragon; HD 3d10+1d12+4d10+24; hp 80; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 27, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+4 Dex, +6 armor, +7 natural); Base Atk +7; Grp +18; Atk +21 melee (1d10+20/19-20, +2 heavy flail) or +18 melee (1d6+11, bite) or +18 melee (1d4+11, claw); Full Atk +21/+16 melee (1d10+20/19-20, +2 heavy flail) and +13 melee (1d6+5, bite) or +18 melee (1d4+11, 2 claws) and +13 melee (1d6+5, bite); SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, fast movement, immunity to sleep and paralysis effects, immunity to cold; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 30 (32), Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Hide +6, Jump +26, Listen +7, Move Silently +14, Search +6, Spot +7; Combat Reflexes^B, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Weapon Specialization^B (heavy flail).

Breath Weapon (Su): 30 ft. cone of cold, 6d8 cold damage, DC 14 Reflex half, DC is Con-based.

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: +2 chain shirt, +2 heavy flail, ring of jumping, gauntlets of ogre power.

Winged Goblin Rog2/Ftr4: CR 7, Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d6+4d10+12; hp 48; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+6 Dex, +1 size, +5 armor); Base Atk +5; Grp +1; Atk +13 ranged (1d4+4/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +6 melee (1d4+1, short sword); Full Atk +13 ranged (1d4+4/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +11/+11 ranged (1d4+4/x3, +1 composite shortbow) or +6 melee (1d4+1, short sword); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., flight, evasion, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 23, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +11, Hide +15, Listen +7, Move Silently +15, Search +5, Spot +7, Tumble +15; Flyby Attack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot^B, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus^B (longbow), Weapon Specialization^B (longbow).

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: short sword, +1 composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), +1 mithral chain shirt, *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of shield of faith* +5.

ENCOUNTER 6

Black Dragon, Elite Juvenile: Medium Dragon (Water); CR 7; HD 13d12+52; hp 156; Init +1; Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+12 natural, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +13/+19; Atk +19 melee (2d6+6, bite) or +19 melee (1d6+6, claw) or +19 (1d4+6, wing); Full Atk +19 melee (2d6+6, bite) and +17 melee

(1d6+3, 2 claws) and +17 (1d4+3, 2 wings); SA breath weapon, spell-like abilities; SQ immunity to acid, immunity to sleep and paralysis effects, blindsense, keen senses, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills & Feats: Hide +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +18, Search +17, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18; Ability Focus (breath weapon), Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Wingover.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—darkness. CL 4th; save DC is Cha-based.

Breath Weapon (Su): 60 ft. line of acid, 8d4 acid damage, DC 22 Reflex half, save DC is Con-based.

Water Breathing (Ex): A black dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use its breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Languages: Draconic.

ENCOUNTER 7

Brain in a Jar TombWarden3, Advanced Spellstitched: Tiny Undead; CR 11; HD 10d12+3; hp 93; Init +3; Spd fly 30 ft. (good); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +1 deflection, +2 size, +4 armor); Base Atk/Grp: —/—; Atk —; Full Atk —; SA mind thrust, psionics, rebuke undead 10/day (+12, 2d6+17, 10th), spell-like abilities; SQ blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., madness, telepathy, undead traits, +6 turn resistance, turn immunity, tomb sense, power of the dead, +2 profane bonus to saves, DR 5/magic silver, SR 22 (15 + Cha modifier); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +11; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 24. *Libris Mortis*, pages 57 and 90; *Monster Manual II*, page 215.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +20, Diplomacy +22, Disguise +7 (+9 acting), Hide +17, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Listen +18, Spot +18; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Profane Lifeleech^{LM}, Toughness. ^{LM}*Libris Mortis*.

Turn Immunity (Ex): As long as it is within the tomb, graveyard, or similar resting place it protects, a tomb warden is immune to turning or rebuking attempts. It can still be bolstered as normal.

Tomb Sense (Su): While it is within its tomb, graveyard, or similar resting place it protects, a tomb warden of 2nd level or higher automatically knows the precise location of all intruders within that tomb. This ability is similar to blindsense, except that it functions without regard to line of effect and its effect extends to every portion of the tomb.

Power of the Dead (Su): While it is within its tomb, graveyard, or similar resting place it protects, a tomb warden of 3rd level can call upon the spirits of the dead to gain insight from them. This ability requires only a free action to activate, and grants the tomb warden an insight bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws

equal to its Cha-modifier (minimum +1). A tomb warden can use this ability once per day, and its effects last for 10 minutes.

Mind Thrust (Su): A brain in a jar can spend a standard action to deliver a massive assault on the thought pathways of any one creature within 60 ft., undermining its intellect. This mind thrust deals 2d10 points of damage to any target creature that fails a DC 20 Will save. The save DC is Cha-based.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 20), *telekinesis* (DC 22); 1/day—*dominate person* (DC 22). Manifest level 10th. Save DCs are Cha-based.

Spell-like Abilities: 2/day—*magic missile*, *Melf's acid arrow* (+11 ranged touch attack), *ray of enfeeblement* (+11 ranged touch attack), *scorching ray* (+11 ranged touch attack); 1/day—*enervation* (+11 ranged touch attack), *fireball* (DC 20), *lightning bolt* (DC 20), *solid fog*. Caster level 10th. Save DCs are Cha-based.

Rebuke Undead (Su): A brain in a jar can rebuke or command undead as a cleric of the same level as the brain's HD.

Madness (Su): Anyone targeting a brain in a jar with a thought detection, mind control, or any sort of telepathic or psionic ability that makes direct contact with its tortured mind takes 1d4 points of Wis damage.

Telepathy (Su): A brain in a jar can speak telepathically to any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Description: Something gray and shriveled sloshes within a grimy glass canister – a disembodied brain afloat in alchemical preservatives. The brain in a jar is a masterpiece of preservation – but where alchemical preservatives leave off, necromancy picks up. An animate brain in a jar is, in truth, an undead creature. Additionally, possibly because it is free of the need to worry about controlling and animating an entire body, a brain in a jar possesses potent mental powers. Of course, merely removing the brain of a zombie or some other undead creature and storing it in alchemical preservatives is not enough to create an undead brain with psionic ability. The ritual of extraction, the spells of formulation, and the alchemical recipes of preservation are closely guarded secrets held by only a few master necromancers. The creation of a brain in a jar is difficult and fraught with danger, because once its mental powers are fully developed, this undead creature is adept at controlling the thoughts and minds of other creatures, especially living creatures. It is not unknown for a brain in a jar to take control over the necromancer who created it. A brain in a jar weighs about 25 pounds, which includes the weight of the glass canister and the preservative fluids. **Combat:** A brain in a jar prefers control to direct combat, since brains in fragile glass jars can't stand too much jostling. However, when it can't stay completely clear of combat, it seeks to put off aggressors with its mind thrust ability.

APPENDIX 5 – ALL APLS

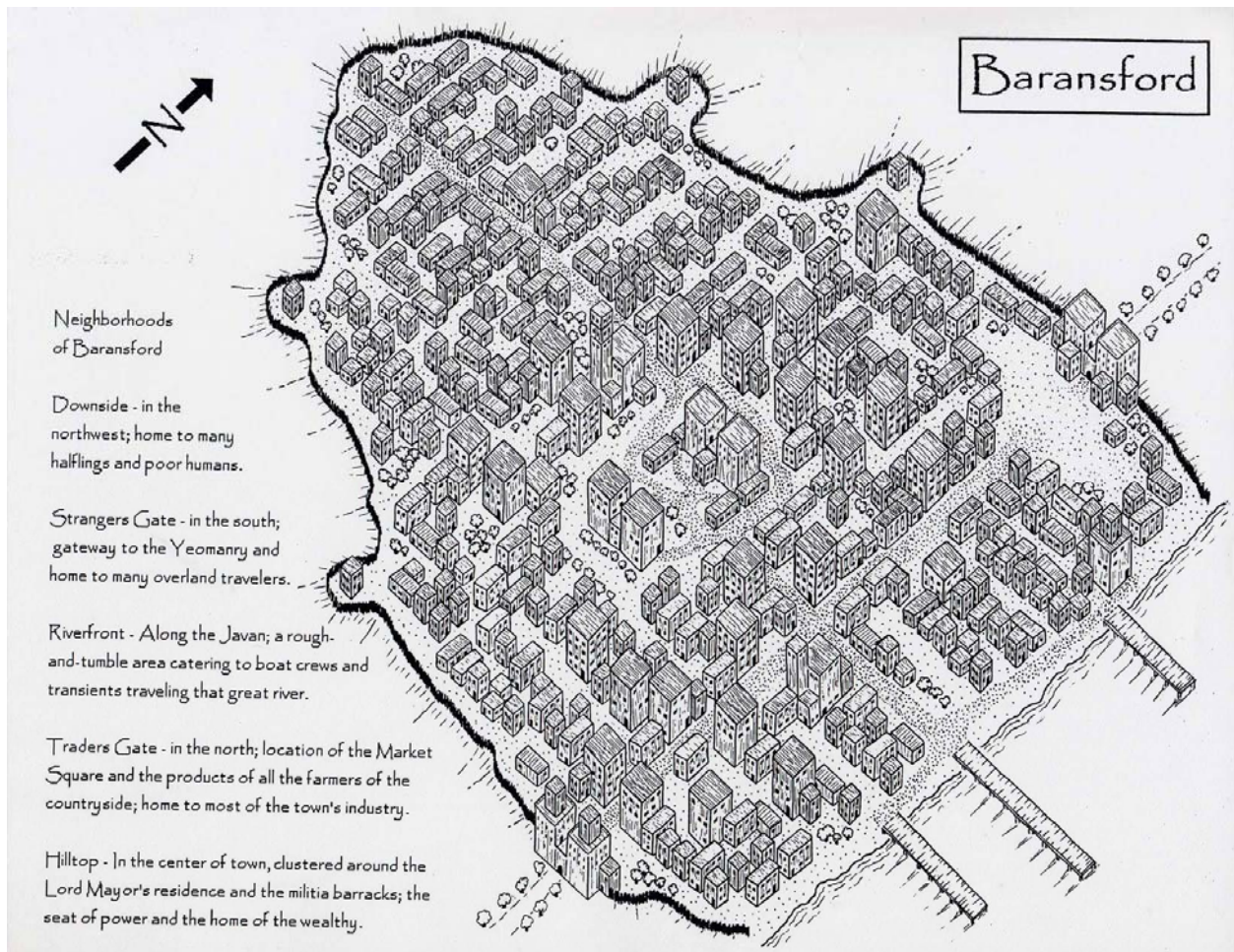
ENCOUNTER 3

Male Human Com1: CR ½; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d4+1; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +3 armor); BA/Grp +0/+0; Atk/Full Atk: +0 melee (1d4, dagger) or -3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA —; SQ —; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +6, Profession (farmer) +6, Ride +5; Skill Focus (Profession (farmer)), Skill Focus (Handle Animal).

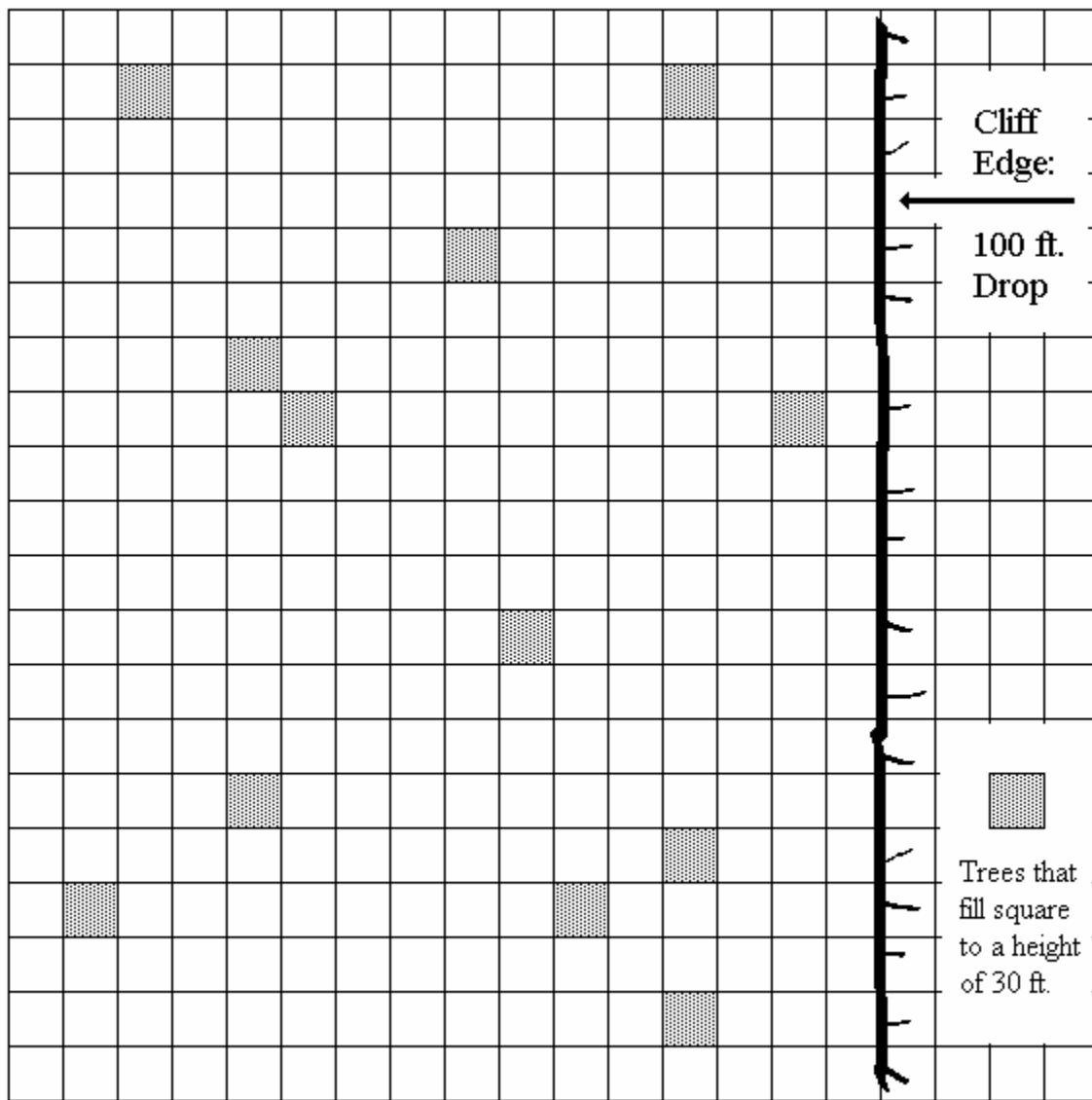
Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, studded leather armor.

DM AID: MAP #1 – BARANSFORD

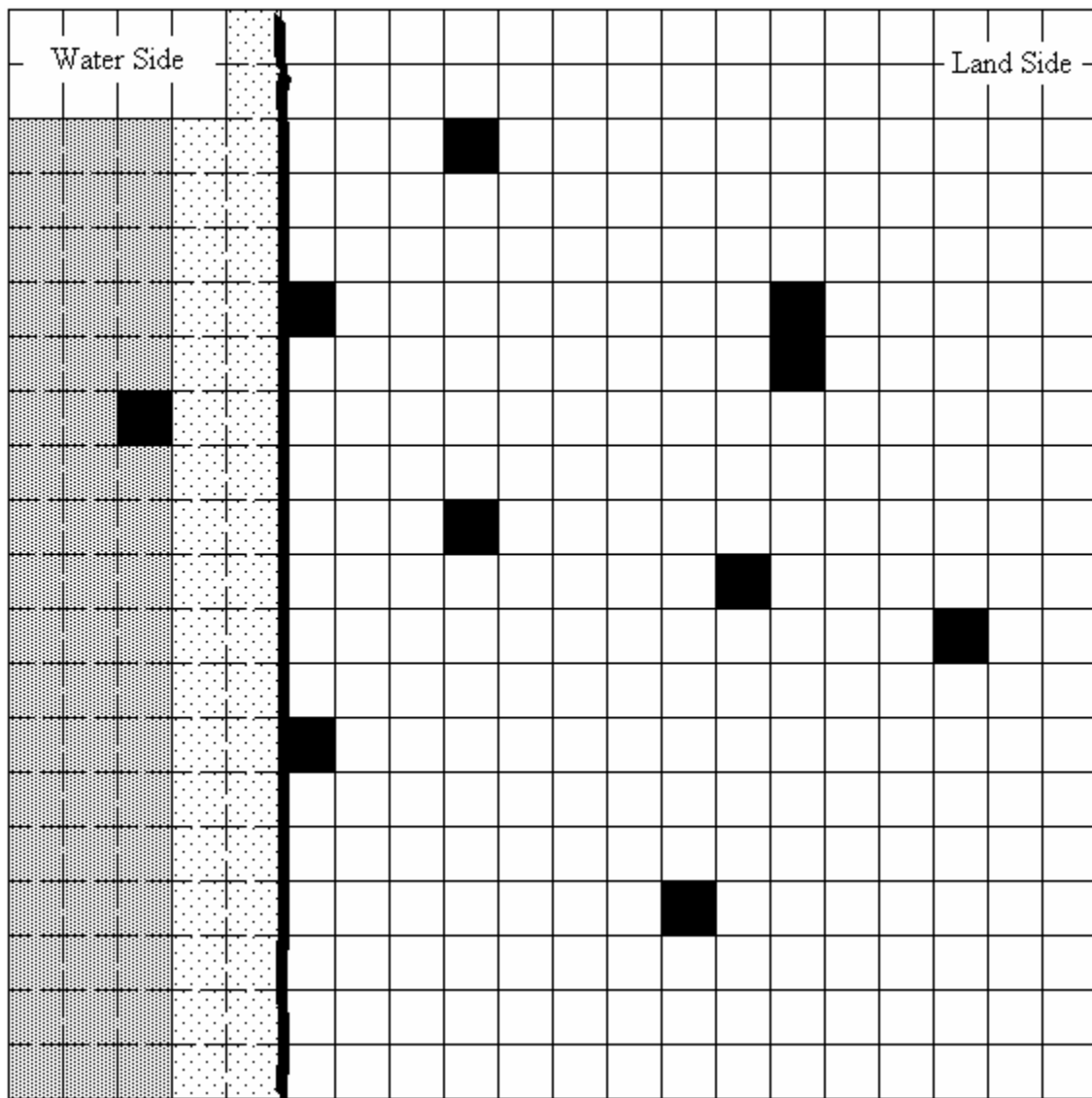


Map © 2005 Steven Hess; reprinted with permission.

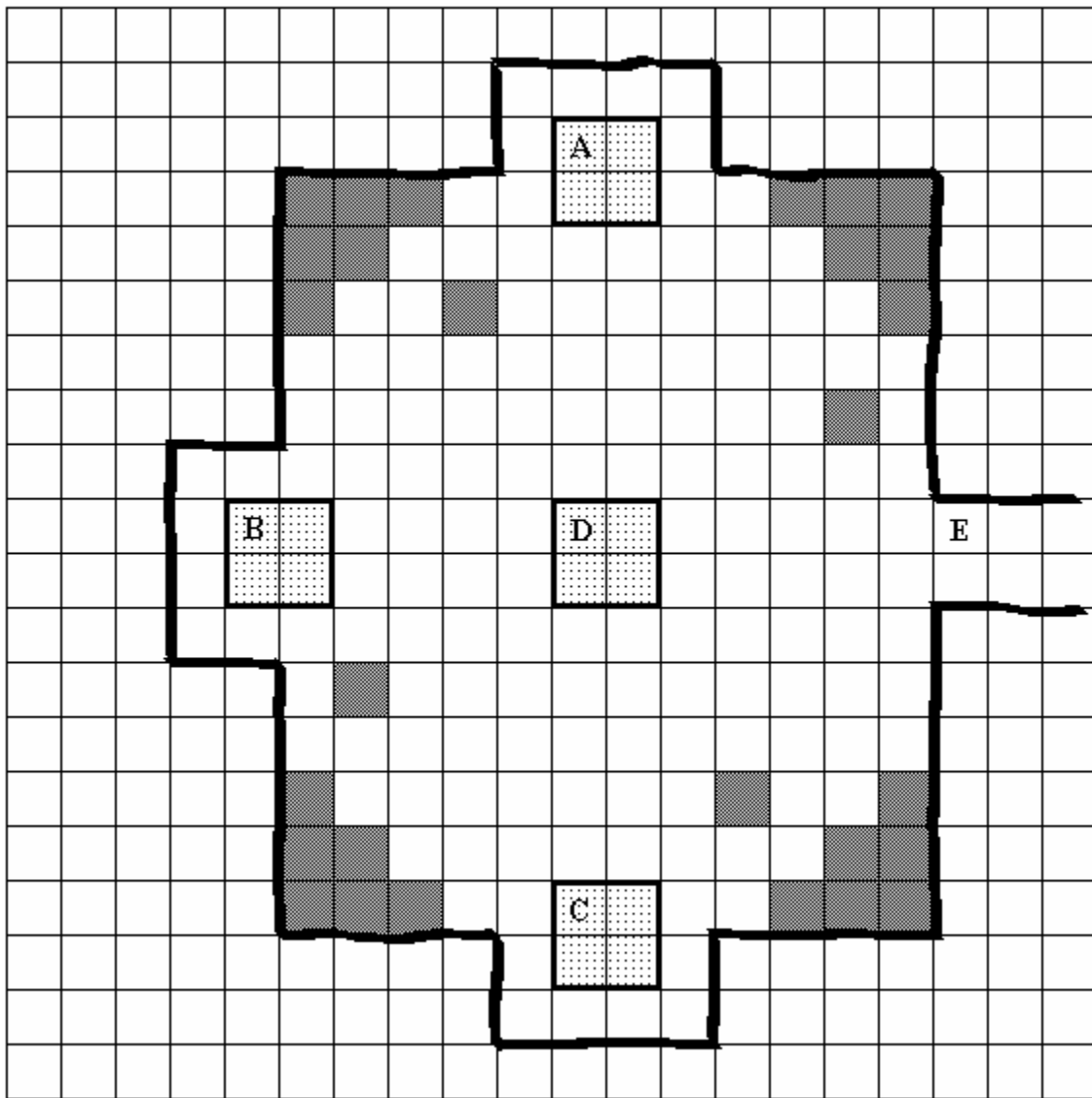
DM AID: MAP #2 – TABLE ROCK



DM AID: MAP #3 – THE DRAGON’S DEN



DM AID: MAP #4 – THE WOMB OF BELTAR



Key:

A – Statue of a red dragon rearing up.

B – Statue of a marilith demon brandishing weapons.

C – Statue of a beholder on a 5' high pedestal

D – Empty platform with an inscription in Ancient Suel: "This is the Womb of Beltar, in which the true believer may find the path to true power."

E – Entrance, with doors torn loose from their hinges

The four lettered 10 ft. x 10 ft. squares are platforms raised 4' off of the floor. The shaded spaces near the corners are difficult terrain filled with hundreds of heaped mummified corpses.

DM AID: NEW RULES

NEW FEATS

Improved Turn Resistance (*Libris Mortis*)

You have a better than normal chance to resist turning.

Prerequisite: Undead type.

Benefit: You are less easily affected by clerics or paladins than you normally would be (see Turn or Rebuke Undead, page 159 of the *Player's Handbook*). When resolving a turn, rebuke, command, or bolster attempt, add +4 to your character level (monster HD plus class levels) to determine your HD for turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts. For example, a 4 HD wight with this feat is treated as an 8 HD undead for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts, even though it is a 4 HD creature for any other purpose. A vampire that already has a +4 turn resistance adds an additional +4 with this feat, for a total of +8.

Profane Lifeleech (*Libris Mortis*)

You can channel negative energy to draw the life force from nearby living creatures.

Prerequisite: Ability to rebuke undead.

Benefit: As a standard action, you can spend two of your rebuke attempts to deal 1d6 points of damage to all living creatures within a 30-foot burst. This effect can't reduce any creature's current hp to less than 0. You are healed an amount of damage equal to the total amount of hp that you drain from affected creatures, but this healing does not allow you to exceed your full normal hp total.

Special: This feat deals no damage to constructs or undead.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1 – DOORWAY TO THE NEEDFUL PLACE

