

VEL5-01

# The Beast Within

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup>

Veluna Regional Adventure

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The former Plar of Veluna, Eldried Sarneth, assassinated by the cult of Marduk and subsequently raised, seeks revenge against his enemies. Are you the hammer of his justice or simple pawns in a larger game? A Veluna regional adventure for character levels 1 to 10. (APLs 2-8)

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

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This 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 Appendix 1.

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 up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1<sup>st</sup>-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 1-round Regional adventure, set in Veluna. Characters native to Veluna pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

## **Adventure Background**

The state of Grayington prior to spring 594 CY:

The diocese of Grayington is located in the north central part of Veluna. Its border stops just short of Veluna City though the city itself still falls under the protection of Grayington. It is ruled by the Plar of Veluna, Eldried Sarneth. He has ruled for the last 25 years and his father ruled for 42 years before him. The Plar believes that the worship of Rao is the only true religion, and that all who do not worship him just need some enlightenment to see the way. This makes Grayington the most religious and intolerant of the seven diocese. This intolerance does not mean witch-hunts and burning crosses though; this intolerance

shows through in a lack of churches of other faiths, total unwillingness of the population to listen to any priest not of Rao, and sometimes just downright rudeness towards those of other religions. There are very few other noble houses in Grayington as the Plar owns almost all the land in the diocese, making him the biggest owner of land in Veluna after the church of Rao. The diocese's representative to the Celestial Order of the Moon is Mathew Sarneth. He is the younger brother of Eldried and has a tendency to preach to the Order about Rao constantly, making him a tolerated annoyance at most gatherings.

The Plar of Veluna is a man of great passions. He believes that Rao and Veluna must be the ones to lead the other misguided countries to the light. The nobles of House Sarneth have shown in the past a tendency to step down when their sons are of the age to rule properly. Eldried's oldest son Redin reached that age last year and so far the Plar has shown no signs of wanting to step down.

Events of CY594:

Over the winter, the Church of Rao had redeployed troops from other diocese to Grayington. This is because they had expected the orc raids from the previous year to move to Grayington. It ends up that this information (provided to the church by adventurers) was false, and merely a ruse to deflect Veluna's attention from the invasion of Whitehale.

In the spring of 594, Plar Eldried Sarneth finally stepped down and turned over control of the diocese to his son Redin Sarneth. Shortly thereafter, the diocese of Whitehale was invaded and Canon Hazen was killed on the field of battle by the Lich Canon Herion. This required a new Canon be selected, and Redin lobbied for the position. He claimed to have been receiving visions from Rao saying that he had been chosen by Rao to save the true faithful from the depredations of Herion. These visions told him that Veluna had strayed from the one true path by allowing other religions to take a foothold in Veluna, endangering the way of life of the faithful.

Redin's uncle, Matthew Sarneth, was the Sarneth representative to the celestial order of the moons (COOTM). The COOTM is the noble's governing council, and the COOTM ratifies any selections of Canon. Matthew opposed his nephew's bid for Canon, thinking he was not ready for such responsibilities. This caused a rift between Redin and Matthew. However, during the summer Matthew was gruesomely murdered by cultists of Nerull who were executing a plan of terror against the COOTM nobility.

The murder was performed during the celebration of the ordainment of Archbishop Priffin Truft, former Archbishop of the Royal Colleges, as the new Canon.

After the announcement of the new Canon, Redin formally seceded Grayington from Veluna. He declared a new theocracy of Rao in Grayington and declared himself the "True Canon of the Faithful". Redin formally outlawed all religions other than Rao in Grayington and withdrew all his troops from Veluna city. The Church of Rao ordered the Bishop of Grayington, Velt Harkin, to return to Veluna City in order to show that they did not support the renegade Sarneth. However, Bishop Harkin refused to leave and publicly announced his support for Canon Sarneth.

Current state of affairs:

Grayington is now an independent state ruled by the True Canon of the Faithful Redin Sarneth. Bishop Velt Harkin supports True Canon Sarneth and is one of his key advisors, helping him to interpret his visions from Rao. All foreign troops were withdrawn when the invasion began and Grayington is solely defended by troops loyal to the True Canon. All religions other than Rao are outlawed, and those practicing other religions are expelled from the country or jailed.

A few months ago, the previous Plar, Eldried Sarneth, was murdered. It was discovered that the assassin was working for a group of demonic worshipping cultists worshipping a beast known as Marduk. The cult in Grayington was destroyed, and Eldried was returned to Veluna City and subsequently raised from the dead.

**Secret background:** The above is common information which can be related to the PCs during the course of the adventure. The information below is background info for the Dungeon Master (Referred to DM from now on) ONLY!

Marduk is a demonic figure from Veluna's past. Marduk once plagued the area around Sugarberg, and the local legends of Sancredia refer to this demon. Just over a century ago, Marduk was banished from the world for 101 years. The years have passed and Marduk is trying to make his way back into the world. There is a group of cultists working to aid Marduk's return. They chose as their base of operations the town of Shandalanar in the diocese of Kempton. The townsfolk were all killed and replaced with a combination of illusions and doppelgangers. Part of their ceremonies involved the summoning of the Leviathan (a large nasty worm) and the deception of the illusionary town itself. Once, the image of a

demon prince himself was spotted in the distance, but this was only another illusion.

After the deception was exposed, the Knights of Veluna cleansed the town. Shandalanar has been a ghost town for over a year now, and all has been quiet. Now that the combination of time and the war has taken the focus off of Shandalanar, the cultists have returned to use it for a base for their continuing struggle to bring Marduk fully back into the world. They are holding a man for sacrifice, a man who claims to be Bishop Velt Harkin from Grayington.

## Adventure Summary

Eldried Sarneth is angry that he was murdered. He suspects his murder is tied to whoever framed him to put his son in power. He was once the richest man in Veluna, and though that is no longer true, he still has vast resources.

Eldried has had some people do some investigations on this "Marduk" who seems to be the master of the cult that murdered him. He has discovered Marduk's link to Shandalanar. He has gathered some information that a local hunter in Kempton has reported seeing strangers traveling on the road to the ghost town. Eldried wants to check out Shandalanar and see if any information can be found there about the cult of Marduk.

Eldried recruits the adventurers to investigate Shandalanar for him.

The PCs can travel to Kempton to try to find the hunter. They can get directions to his hunting lodge near the road from Kempton to Shandalanar.

Arriving at the lodge, they find animals poking around and the hunter inside who has been gruesomely murdered.

They travel to Shandalanar and find it an abandoned ghost town. They eventually find a pair of horses and a wagon in the stables at the Bag of Nails Inn.

Within the Inn, they find that the pantry door had previously been boarded up, but the boards have now been ripped away from the opening.

In the pantry is a ladder to an underground complex beneath the Inn. At the bottom of the ladder is a storage room with undead guards.

After dealing with a pit trap in a hallway, the PCs find a group of Marduk cultists holding a prisoner. The

cultists try to kill their prisoner when they realize that they are going to lose.

If the PCs can save their prisoner, they discover it is Bishop Velt Harkin from Grayington. He can tell them a lot of information about the cult of Marduk and Redin Sarneth in Grayington.

Bishop Harkin eventually winds up at the Church of Rao. The church wants to hide the fact that they have him if they can, and ask the PCs to not mention his presence to anyone. The PCs need to decide if they comply with the church wishes or if they inform Eldried about the bishop.

**NOTE:** The tone of this adventure is “horror”. The DM should play up horror aspects, especially as they wander the empty streets of Shandalanar.

**VELUNA NOTE:** Any PC or NPC that attempts to cast *scry*, *divination*, or *commune* in this module will find their attempt blocked. They will feel great pressure on their minds and take 2d6 non-lethal damage. None of the NPC's will talk about this effect, and will dodge any questions asked regarding this effect.

## Introduction

It is assumed that the PCs are all in Veluna City for one reason or another. They are not necessarily all together at the beginning.

Eldried Sarneth is currently living at the Sarneth family estate in Veluna City. This is a large mansion where his brother, Matthew, lived while acting as the Sarneth rep to the Celestial Order of the Moons.

Any PC who has played Vel4-08 “*Shadow of the Serpent*” will have met Eldried. Eldried will send a note to them asking them to meet him at the Sarneth estate. Give them **Player Handout #1**.

Any PC who did not play Vel4-08 but is a member of the Church of Rao, Church of St Cuthbert, Church of Heironeous, Knights of Whitehale, Knights of Salvation, or Mitrik Temple Guard will be told that Eldried Sarneth has requested aid and their meta-org has asked them to respond. Give them **Player Handout #2**.

If any PC has a Mark of the Legendary Hero, they will receive an invitation from Eldried. Give this PC **Player Handout #3**.

If none of the PCs satisfy the above conditions, then one of the PCs will be picked to receive an invitation from Eldried. This will be the Veluna resident with the highest Charisma. If there are no Veluna residents, then it will be the PC with the highest Charisma. Give this PC **Player Handout #3**.

Anyone who does not satisfy either of the two conditions stated above will not be involved in the initial meeting. Instead the PC(s) that were involved in the meeting will be expected to recruit additional party members (i.e. the remaining PCs).

It is assumed each invited PC will travel to Eldried's estate for the meeting. If a PC does not accept the invitation, they are done with this module.

*It is the end of winter in Veluna City. War rages in the north, and Mitrik is under siege by the forces of the returned lich Herion, former Canon of Veluna.*

*Veluna City is the last stop for westbound travelers on the Great Western Road, but it has remained untouched by war, and should remain so as long as Mitrik holds out against the enemy.*

*You have traveled to a large mansion in the heart of Veluna City. The estate is located on prime land near the Hall of Wisdom where the governing council of nobles meets.*

*The estate is heavily guarded. You have been escorted to a meeting room where several other adventurous types await.*

At this point the PCs can describe themselves and meet each other. After intros are done, continue:

*The door opens and a tall broad shouldered man wearing rich clothing enters flanked by two intimidating armed guards and another man wearing robes. The finely dressed man is older, probably around 50 years old. He has strong features, a hawkish nose, and wavy graying hair. He has a haughty look about him. He glances at your assembled group as he steps forward, and leans against the chair at the head of the table. The two armed guards stand to either side of him, the robed man behind.*

*“I am Eldried Sarneth of Grayington, former Plar.” He says the last with a note of contempt in his voice.*

*“I thank you for answering my summons. I have a task that needs to be performed, one that may involve some measure of danger. I am prepared to compensate you for this service, but that will mean that you are working directly for me in this matter.”*

*"A few months back I was murdered and subsequently raised..." His knuckles turn white as he squeezes the chair he is leaning against and the veins on his neck stand out in his anger. "I am not a man who takes such a thing lightly. I seek vengeance on the group behind my murder, a group of cultists who worship a demonic creature named 'Marduk'."*

*He stands up, releasing his death grip on the poor chair, and tugs on his expensive tunic. "I have had people checking on this cult of Marduk, and have found they were the ones behind the destruction of the town of Shandalanar in the Diocese of Kempton nearly 2 years ago. There are reports of illusionary townsfolk, giant worms, and demon princes all connected with that town. Very strange things indeed."*

*"Some of my agents have been asking around about Shandalanar. Recently I have received reports from them that a local hunter in the region had mentioned seeing strangers on the road near there. That road goes nowhere except to the ghost town of Shandalanar."*

*"Thus have I contacted you. I need you to investigate this report and possibly the town of Shandalanar itself to see if you can find any connections to this Marduk cult there. You may recruit any others whom you think may be needed for this task, that is up to you."*

*"I suggest you track down and speak to this hunter, a man named Felspar. I suggest you start in Kempton, that is where my report originated and supposedly where this hunter can often be found. You should investigate thoroughly and return to me with any information you should find. I am willing to pay you adequately for your time; half now, half upon completion with an adequate report of your findings."*

*"Now, if you are interested, let us discuss your fee..."*

Eldried will start out offering the following fees for their services (this is total), terms are half now, half upon completion. Note that the amount he offers is based on the number of PLAYERS at the table, not the number of PCs at the meeting.

**APL 2:** 100gp times number of players at the table.

**APL 4:** 150gp times number of players at the table.

**APL 6:** 200gp times number of players at the table.

**APL 8:** 300gp times number of players at the table.

One PC can handle negotiations if they wish. Make an opposed diplomacy roll between the PC and Eldried (Diplomacy modifier is APL+7). For every point by which they beat his roll, they get an extra 5% added on (i.e. beating Eldried by 4 is +20%). This is up to a maximum of double. If Eldried wins the opposed check, he stands firm on what he feels is a reasonable offer. The PCs cannot "aid another" on this opposed roll, Eldried will only negotiate with one representative. The PCs can split this up however they desire. It is assumed it will be split evenly in the treasure summary, so adjust accordingly.

Eldried will not have time to chit chat. He will answer any brief questions about the mission, but he will not have time to talk politics about Grayington and his son's secession.

After finishing with Eldried, the PCs should recruit any other PCs who were not involved in the meeting. Please have them roleplay the recruitment. Allow any PCs who were not involved in the meeting to change which PC they are playing at this point (to simulate the recruiting PCs picking who they think is needed).

**Note:** Changing PCs so that the APL increases will not raise the payment already determined (though the module will be played at that higher APL); and changing PCs so that the APL decreases will not lower it below that APL which was used to calculate the payment. (So, in other words, any switched PCs should be of about the same level.)

Once all PCs have been recruited into the mission (it is the DM's responsibility to make sure everyone gets involved somehow), it is expected the PCs will travel to Kempton.

#### **Treasure:**

**Note:** This treasure value is maximum assuming Eldried is haggled to the max! This is an unlikely occurrence, so be sure to calculate accordingly!

**APL 2** – loot (0 gp), coin- (200 gp), M – (0 gp).

**APL 4** – loot (0 gp), coin- (300 gp), M – (0 gp).

**APL 6** – loot (0 gp), coin- (400 gp), M – (0 gp).

**APL 8** – loot (0 gp), coin- (600 gp), M – (0 gp).

## Encounter One: The Road to Kempton

The journey to Kempton is 28 miles by road. It will take anywhere from part of a day (fast unencumbered horse) to just over 2 days (armored, walking halfling/gnome). See the *Players Handbook* pages 162-164 for distances covered per day based on the slowest mode of transportation available to the party.

*The capital of the diocese of Kempton is located in the center of the region. It primarily acts as a farmer's market and meeting place for the surrounding villages. Baroness Basalle's estate sits on a hill overlooking the town to the south. The town is a very nice looking and pleasant sort of place. Plenty of trees and parks and lots of open spaces. You can see some of the elvish influences from nearby Asnath in the architecture and parks.*

The PCs can spend as much time in Kempton as they need. They should be looking for information on how to contact the hunter Felspar.

The PCs can spend 1d4+1 hours gathering information. They can make as many checks as are needed (at 1d4+1 hours per check). A DC 20 Gather Information check will allow them to find someone who says the proprietor of Pappy's General Outfitters may know him, Pappy Gris paw.

### Pappy's General Outfitters

Pappy's is a medium sized store in Kempton that sells survival supplies and deals in furs and hides. The owner/operator is an old retired hunter/trapper named Pappy Gris paw.

*Pappy's General Outfitters has a wide front porch filled with barrels of goods like axe handles, shovels, and picks. Inside the place is a cluttered mess. There are all kinds of survival equipment here (tents, canvas, rope, rain gear, bedrolls, etc.) as well as stacks and stacks of furs, hides, and animal skins.*

*A thin stooped old man, with scrunched up cheeks, squinty eyes, and very few teeth comes tottering towards you.*

*"Well dip me and call me stinky! If you all ain't adventurers, then I ain't Pappy Jack Gris paw! Seein' y'all reminds me o' the time I caught a cockatrice in one o' my traps! Whoo-doggety did I have a 'hard' time getting' him outta there! Hee-*

*hee! 'Hard' time? Turnin' to stone? Hee-hee? Get it? Anyways, what can old Pappy get for you young 'uns today?"*

Role-play Pappy as your typical comical old man from any of a dozen old westerns. Complete with squeaky voice and tall tales, Pappy tends to talk more than conduct business. He will be glad to share tall tales about his adventures as a hunter/trapper back in "the good old days", whether invited to tell such tales or not.

If asked about Felspar:

*"Oh, yeah, good ol' Felspar. Yeah, he comes in here 3 or 4 times a year, good fella that Felspar! Don't know nuthin' about muskrats though... Can't tell the difference 'tween a muskrat and a beaver! Can ya believe that? Who don't know the difference between a muskrat and a beaver? It's simple, I tell ya, just look at the tail! Ain't no critter got a tail like a muskrat, it's long, naked, scaly, and black. Durn fool won't listen none to me when I tries to straighten him out..."*

**Do you know where Felspar is?**

*"Probably out in the hills somewhere settin' his spring traps. Ya know now's the time to start settin' that stuff, get all them little hungry varmints just wakin' up from their long winters nap! Your only chance of findin' him might be at the huntin' lodge he has down south of 'ere. It's about 18 miles along the old south road, off to the west side a ways..."*

**When did you last see him?**

*"Hmm, let me see now... Musta been about 2 weeks back I s'pose. Came in here to trade some furs and dried meat fer supplies. You know, sugar, coffee, dried fruits and such..."*

**Did he tell you anything about Shandalanar?**

*"Shandalanar? You mean that dead town down south o' heres? Nope, nuthin' specific that I can remember. He may 'ave mentioned that he stays away from there, gives 'im the creeps. Can't say that I blames 'im."*

The lodge is just off the old road that leads to Shandalanar, about 18 miles out of Kempton at the base of the Lortmils.

If the PCs go to Felspars Hunting Lodge, go to **Encounter 2**.

If the PCs go straight to Shandalanar, go to **Encounter 3**.

## Encounter Two: The Lodge

See **DM Map #1**.

Felspars Hunting Lodge is a small log cabin in the wilderness. It lies about a mile off the old road to Shandalanar. From Kempton it is 18 miles along the road, then you turn right onto a dirt trail that winds about 1 mile into the hilly woodland.

Anybody doing a tracking check on the trail at DC 15 can tell that the trail has been used recently. DC 25 will tell that three humanoid creatures passed this way in the last 24 hours, going in both directions.

However, the PCs are too late. Agents of Marduk had heard Felspar talking about spotting strangers on the road, and have taken steps to silence him. He was ritually sacrificed the day before the PCs arrive. Some woodland animals, starving because of the harsh winter, have smelled the blood and are poking around the lodge looking for food.

As the PCs approach the lodge, have them make Move Silently and Hide in Shadows rolls. If they do not specifically state they are approaching quietly, these rolls take a -5 (assuming they are not moving slowly enough to avoid the penalty for speed listed in the skill descriptions). Compare the lowest roll to Spot and Listen checks for the animals. Apply the appropriate modifiers for the animals (taking forest terrain into account): -1 spot per 10 ft, -2 listen per 10 ft, -5 Spot/Listen because the animals are distracted. The PCs will automatically spot the animals at 60 ft (they are out in the open).

Also, don't forget the animals scent ability: they automatically smell the PCs at 30 ft (15 ft if the PCs are downwind, 60 ft if they are upwind). Roll the wind direction randomly using 1d8 for the 8 compass points. The lodge lies to the west of the path.

Once the PCs are within 60 ft (to spot the animals and the lodge) read the following:

*The dirt path meanders thru the rolling woods until it opens up into a clearing. Several stumps of felled trees litter the clearing, and in the middle is a simple log cabin. A stack of firewood and a chopping block sit just outside the door, and several skins are stretched drying on some wooden frames.*

*You see several gaunt beasts sniffing about the front door.*

The animals are starving from the long winter. They smell blood and are hungry. If they notice the PCs, they will see them as food. Their initial attitude is "hostile" for the purposes of Wild Empathy checks.

They will not immediately attack, instead they will approach menacingly - gathering the courage to attack such large prey. After two rounds their hunger will overcome their caution and they will attack. They will also attack immediately if attacked.

Note that it is possible for the PCs to overcome these animals in several ways. They could successfully sneak past them by approaching from the back of the cabin and going through a window. They could lead them off, befriend them, mislead them with magic, etc.

### APL 2 (EL 4)

🐾 **Wolf (5):** Medium animal; hp 15 each; See *Monster Manual*.

### APL 4 (EL 6)

🐾 **Brown Bear (mated pair) (2):** Large animal; hp 54 each; See *Monster Manual*.

### APL 6 (EL 8)

🐾 **Dire Wolf (6):** Large animal; hp 50 each; See *Monster Manual*.

### APL 8 (EL 10)

🐾 **Dire Bear (mated pair) (2):** Large animal; hp 110 each; See *Monster Manual*.

🐾 **Brown Bear (dire cubs) (3):** Large animal; hp 54 each; See *Monster Manual*.

## Encounter 2A: A Gruesome Scene

Once the PCs enter the cabin:

**Note:** Should there be young children at the table, the DM should consider toning down the description below.

*The interior of the simple cabin is one room. There is a crude bed, an old desk, a small table, two chairs and a large stone fireplace.*

*The table has been tipped over on its side, its contents scattered. In the middle of the floor are the remains of a human male. He is entirely naked and each of his hands and feet have been nailed to the floor with large spikes. The body lies there spread-eagled; his chest ripped wide open and his*

*heart removed. His lower jaw has also been cut from his head, the splintered remains of the jagged bone protruding from what remains.*

*The whole area is spattered with blood, especially the area around the body.*

The smell is awful. Fortunately the cool weather has preserved the body somewhat, and the flies have yet to find it.

A Heal check DC 15 will tell that he has been dead for just over a day. A DC 20 will also tell the examiner that he was alive when his heart was removed.

The cabin has been ransacked and anything of value removed. The body cannot be *raised* (it is definitely NOT intact) and the removal of the jaw means that *speak with dead* will not work either.

Anyone tracking at DC 15 can tell that there has been some traffic in the vicinity of the trail in the last 24 hours. A DC 25 will indicate that three humanoids entered and exited the cabin from the trail in that period.

If the PCs travel from here to Shandalanar, go to **Encounter 3**.

## Encounter Three: Ghost of Shandalanar

*As you travel deeper into the wooded foothills of the Lortmils, the road becomes more overgrown. As you crest the last hill, the town of Shandalanar spreads out before you.*

*It looks to have been a small town with a population of about 1500. The familiar spire of a Church of Rao is visible near the center of the town, as is the typical fortified structure of a Church of Heironeous.*

*There is no movement on the streets, the entire place is eerily still and silent.*

If anybody checks for tracks on the road, a DC 21 Tracking check will determine that something passed this way within the past several days (it rained here two days ago). A DC 31 will tell them that it was a small wagon pulled by two horses.

As they move into town:

*Shandalanar is a ghost town. Several of the buildings are in need of repair. Open doors creak*

*on their hinges and curtains flutter in broken windows as the wind moans through the empty streets. Weeds strangle the yards and gardens, and have begun to swallow the cobblestone streets.*

*The decaying corpse of the dead town lies all about you.*

Most of the buildings are empty. Some few possessions remain, but relatives and authorities have cleared out most of the possessions. This is especially true of the two churches (Rao and Heironeous). The DM is free to ad-lib any of the houses the PCs may enter. Just describe a building that has been abandoned for nearly two years (but was cleared of all valuables). Wild animals have taken up refuge in some of the buildings, but nothing dangerous. The DM should make the atmosphere as creepy as possible.

The PCs can poke around Shandalanar all they want. Have them roll Spot and Listen checks a few times just to keep them on edge. The DM is encouraged to play up the horror aspects of this scene. Feel free to ad-lib the players exploration of the empty town.

Anybody attempting to follow the tracks seen outside of town must make a DC 25 Tracking check to follow the trail to the vicinity of the Bag of Nails Inn. If the PCs search the town, they will eventually wind up at the Bag of Nails Inn (assume they look in the stables first).

Only the Bag of Nails Inn holds anything of interest for the PCs. Go to **Encounter 4**.

## Encounter Four: Bag of Nails

*The Bag of Nails Inn towers above its surroundings like a tombstone above the skeletal remains of Shandalanar. It is a three story wooden structure, with a wide front porch. The main doors hang crooked on their hinges and the broken windows of the upper floors stare ahead like the eyes of a dead man.*

The Bag of Nails Inn is a large structure near the middle of town. It has a small stable in the back. The tracks lead to the stable. Anyone who played the previous Shandalanar modules may remember that the cult of Marduk utilized a series of tunnels and underground rooms under the Inn in the past.

**Stables:** The stable is a small building behind the Inn. It has large double doors for horse and wagon, and a small door for people. Both doors are closed.

Inside the stable are a small covered wagon and two horses. There is hay and feed for the horses. The wagon is empty. Nothing else of interest can be found in the stable.

**Inn:** The Inn itself is a large two story structure. It is very rustic and made mostly of rough wood. The Inn sports a large common room with a wide hearth, many heavy tables and chairs, and a bar.

The Inn is completely empty. Many windows are broken and the elements have done some damage.

The only interesting thing in the Inn is the pantry door in the kitchen. It is obvious that the pantry door was once boarded shut, but the boards (with nails still protruding) lie in a haphazard pile on the floor, and the ragged nail holes in the door are clearly visible.

In the pantry is a pit with a ladder that leads down 40 feet into a store room. The pit is circular and 5 feet in diameter.

## Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails

See **DM map #2**. The ladder from the pantry in the Bag of Nails leads into the middle of Room 1.

Note: PCs who played VEL1-07 “*The Delivery*”, VEL2-07 “*Return to Shandalanar*”, or VEL3-08 “*Escape from Shandalanar*” have been here before. They may remember the general layout...

### Room 1:

This is a storage room with a single stone door leading off to the north. The ceiling is 10 ft. high. The cultists of Marduk have left some undead here to guard the way. The undead are lined up evenly against the east and west walls. As soon as they spot a PC on the ladder, they move to attack.

**Climbing:** It requires a DC 0 climb check to climb the ladder (armor check penalty applies). Each move action allows you climb half your speed (15 ft. for an unencumbered human). The ladder is 40' long. You must make a climb check for each move action. Failure by 5 or more means you fall. Once the zombies attack, the PCs cannot take 10 on the climb check. Climbing requires both hands to be free and the climber loses any Dexterity bonus to their Armor Class.

### APL 2 (EL 3)

☛ **Human Commoner Zombie (6):** Medium undead; hp 20 each; See *Monster Manual*.

### APL 4 (EL 5)

☛ **Bugbear Zombie (4):** Medium undead; hp 56 each; See *Monster Manual*.

### APL 6 (EL 6)

☛ **Bugbear Zombie (6):** Medium undead; hp 56 each; See *Monster Manual*.

### APL 8 (EL 8)

☛ **Bugbear Zombie (9):** Medium undead; hp 56 each; See *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** The zombies will attempt to grapple anybody who is climbing on the ladder. It is quite likely that the climber will not be armed, and so cannot take an attack of opportunity against the grappler. The zombies will ONLY grapple those on the ladder, they have been instructed to do this so the target cannot get away up the ladder. All other targets, they attack normally. The zombies do not follow PCs up the ladder, but move away from the hole back to the edges of the room should no targets present themselves.

### Room 2:

This is a long hallway lined with recessed iron cell doors. Each cell holds an old skeleton (not animated) manacled to the wall. Each door is locked (DC 25 Open Lock check).

Five feet into the hallway is a pit trap. PCs who have been here before may be aware of the pit trap. It has been repaired and reset, though not terribly well.

#### Trap:

#### All APLs (EL 1):

☛ **Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; mechanical trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area; pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each); Search DC 15 Disable Device DC 15.

**Note:** If the pit trap is set off, the bad guys in **Room 3** get a DC 19 Listen check (all modifiers are already figured into this DC!) to hear it and start preparing for visitors.

### Room 3:

This room is where the cultists are hiding out and holding the frightened Bishop Harkin. They are living here, watching the Bishop, and waiting for the proper time for the Ceremony of Calling to be performed.

If the PCs have set off the pit trap, the bad guys also get a DC 19 Listen check (all modifiers are already figured into this DC!) to hear the trap going off and start preparing for visitors.

If the PCs are talking just outside the door, the DC will be 13 (all modifiers already figured in!).

If the PCs approach quietly, roll standard Listen checks for the bad guys vs. the Move Silently checks of the PCs, to see if they hear the PC's approach (remember the -1 per 10 ft, -5 for listening through a door, and -5 for being distracted).

In this room is Zarfan Margalplatz, the cleric of Marduk in charge of holding the Bishop, and his cronies. They will attack as soon as the PCs open the door.

*The door opens up into a wide room that has been converted into part living quarters, part shrine to some dark god, and part torture chamber.*

*There are two bunk beds, several bookcases, a pair of footlockers, and some barrels along the wall. In the middle of the room is a long crude table with three dirty chairs. Along the north wall is a bloody altar, adorned with skulls and candles, and flanked by two burning braziers.*

*In the northeast corner of the room is a pit filled with a bubbling green liquid. Poised over the pit is a cage hanging from a chain. In the cage is a portly man who has seen better days. The chain of the cage runs through a pulley in the ceiling to a winch mechanism next to the pool.*

*There is a rough tunnel leading out the northwest corner of the room.*

*Standing in the room are several inhabitants, one a strange looking heavily armed gnome. He orders the others to attack.*

The green liquid is acid, and the pool is 5 feet deep. It does 2d6 damage per round to anybody submersed in it. The fat man in the cage above the acid is Bishop Velt Harkin, bishop of Grayington. When he sees the PCs he cries for help in a weak voice.

The tunnel out of the northwest corner used to lead to a field outside of town but was collapsed by the Knights of Veluna quite some time ago. It currently travels for several hundred feet to the collapsed point.

The cage is set to be able to be lowered by the winch. There are several poles leaning against the wall that can be used to pull the cage to the dry area as it is lowered. Safely lowering or raising the cage with the winch requires the capability to lift 200 lbs off the ground (up to 2 people can work the winch at a time). Should the catch on the winch be released (a standard action that provokes an Attack of Opportunity), the cage will fall into the acid vat. Working the winch to lift the cage 5 feet (enough to get it out of the acid!) is a full round action.

The winch is protected with a *glyph of warding* spell (placed by Zarfan, from scroll at APL2/4, cast himself at APL6/8 thus is added into overall EL) that will go off if anybody other than a worshipper of the cult of Marduk touches the winch:

#### Trap:

##### APL 2

☞**Glyph of Warding:** 2d8 electricity; Reflex save half (DC 14); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

##### APL 4

☞**Glyph of Warding:** 2d8 electricity; Reflex save half (DC 14); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

##### APL 6

☞**Glyph of Warding:** 3d8 electricity; Reflex save half (DC 17); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

##### APL 8

☞**Glyph of Warding:** 4d8 electricity; Reflex save half (DC 17); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

If the PC who set off the glyph takes damage from the electricity they will notice it has branded a mark onto their body. This PC will have a "Mark of the Legendary Hero". Give that player **Player Handout #4**. Only one PC will get the mark, and only if they took damage from the electricity.

##### APL 2 (EL 4)

☞**Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirkneblin Clr2; hp 15; see Appendix 1.

☞**Quasit:** Tiny outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); hp 18; see *Monster Manual*.

☞**Cultists (3):** Male human War2; hp 18; see Appendix 1.

##### APL 4 (EL 6)

☞**Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirkneblin Clr3; hp 20; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Quasit:** Tiny outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); hp 18; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Daergus Paladin-Slayer:** Half-fiend/half-duergar; hp 13; War1; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Cultists (3):** Male human War2; hp 18; see Appendix 1.

#### APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirkneblin Clr6; hp 45; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Quasit:** Tiny outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); hp 18; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Daergus Paladin-Slayer:** Half-fiend/half-duergar; hp 38; Bbn3; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Cultists (3):** Male human War3; hp 25; see Appendix 1.

#### APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirkneblin Clr8; hp 60; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Quasit:** Tiny outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); hp 18; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Daergus Paladin-Slayer:** Half-fiend/half-duergar; hp 81; Bbn6; see Appendix 1.

☛ **Cultists (4):** Male human War4; hp 33; see Appendix 1.

#### All APLs

☛ **Bishop Velt Harkin:** Male Human Clr7; hp 26; see Appendix 1.

#### **Tactics:**

Daergus (if present) will go invisible as soon as he is aware of the PCs (if he hears them). He will *enlarge* himself and rage (at APLs 6 and 8) as soon as he sees them and will make full use of his 20 ft reach and combat reflexes while enlarged.

Zarfan will move towards the winch while casting spells. He does not want to kill the bishop if it looks like he can win, but as soon as defeat seems imminent, he will release the catch to drop the bishop into the acid (even provoking an Attack of Opportunity to do so if necessary).

The cultists will defend Zarfan, and the quasit will only attack while invisible, retreating to go invisible again after each attack. It will focus on spell casters and avoid nasty looking melee types. It will flee, using its *cause fear* ability to deter pursuit, should things go bad.

#### **Treasure:**

**APL 2** – loot (305 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *potion cure light wounds* x3 (4 gp per character each).

**APL 4** – loot (181 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *+1 full plate* (220 gp per character), *+1 heavy steel shield* (97 gp per character), *potion cure light wounds* x3 (4 gp per character each), *+1 breastplate* (112 gp per character). *Potion of resurgence* (4 gp per character)

**APL 6** – loot (336 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *+1 full plate* (220 gp per character), *+1 heavy steel shield* (97 gp per character), *potion cure light wounds* x4 (4 gp each), *rod of metamagic silent/lesser* (250 gp per character), *+1 breastplate* (112 gp per character), *+1 buckler* (97 gp per character), *+1 amulet natural armor* (166 gp per character).

**APL 8** – loot (223 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *+1 full plate* (220 gp per character), *+1 light fortification heavy steel shield* (347 gp per character), *potion cure moderate wounds* x4 (25 gp each per character), *rod of metamagic silent/lesser* (250 gp per character), *+1 mithral full plate* (970 gp per character), *+1 buckler* (97 gp per character).

#### **Troubleshooting:**

If the bishop dies in the acid, there will be no remains to recover (the acid completely dissolves his body when he reaches -10 hit points).

If the PCs manage to save the bishop, he will be extremely grateful. He will be blubbering and sobbing, and will hug and cling to his savior(s).

Bishop Harkin is usually a red faced, fat, doddering, old fool of a bishop. He is not terribly strong of character, but was good at politics (that is how he got his position). Role play him as a sad, broken man. He is currently in bad shape; he has been locked up that cage for a long time and not been fed very well (he has take 7 Con damage).

He can tell the PCs his story if asked for details. Info for the DM is below, but the DM should role play any information exchange between the bishop and the PCs:

#### **Who are you and how did you get here?**

- He is Velt Harkin, the Bishop of Grayington. When Grayington seceded from Veluna early in CY594, the Church of Rao recalled him. He went, but his carriage was attacked on the road and he was kidnapped. He has been here, in this cage, for a long time (he does not know exactly how long).

### Who were these people that were holding you?

- I heard them talking a lot. They worship some being named “Marduk”. From the ceremonies I saw, I think he is some kind of demon prince or something. That one there, they called him Zarafan, was the leader. He was very cruel.
- I also heard them refer to Marduk as “Sancredia”. I remember that name, it is from about a hundred years ago in the Sugarburg area. There was a legend about a beast called Sancredia who terrorized the area back then. He supposedly had evil little men who served him. I think they might have been gnomes like Zarafan. Sancredia was supposedly banished from the world, but the legends said he would return some day. Do you think this Marduk is actually Sancredia returned?

### Why were they holding you?

- Zarafan gloated that I was to be a sacrifice to Marduk. Something about a “Ceremony of Returning”. He spoke about how the Leviathan heralded Marduk’s coming, and that when the conjunction occurred I would be sacrificed to Marduk’s glory in order to open the door for his triumphant return. I think they needed a Raoan for the ceremony, and Zarafan mentioned how suitable a bishop of Rao would be for the sacrifice.

### When is this “conjunction”?

- I don’t know, they never really said. I didn’t get the feeling it was anytime soon though. They seemed to be settled in here to wait for a while.

### Tell us about Redin Sarneth.

- Redin was a good boy. His father always tried to hold him down. Eldried claimed to follow the tenets of Rao, but he was always more interested in consolidating his power than in his faith. Redin was devoted to the teachings of Rao and often came to me for spiritual guidance.
- In CY593 Redin began having strange dreams. The dreams were vague but strong, and they kept returning. It seemed that the dreams were predicting the war to come and indicating that he alone could save the faithful. He came to me for advice and we concluded that Rao himself was sending

visions to Redin, trying to guide him to save the faithful. I helped him interpret these visions.

- When Canon Hazen was killed at the Battle of Whitehale, Redin concluded that these visions indicated that he was to be the next Canon and lead the faithful of Rao to salvation against the enemy. He lobbied the College of Bishops to select him as their nominee, but they refused. Even his uncle Matthew, the family representative to the Celestial Order of the Moons, did not support him.
- When the College of Bishops picked Archbishop Truft as the next Canon, Redin determined that the country was doomed. That was when he seceded from Veluna and declared himself the One True Canon of the Faithful in a new Veluna. He declared that the grace of Rao would protect his people from their enemy.
- It seemed he might have been right. Grayington was completely spared from the war. I don’t fully understand what Rao’s intentions are, but I do know that Redin believed he was doing what was right. I don’t know if he did the right thing by seceding or not. Only time will tell.

If the party should cast *Speak with dead* on Zarfan, and he fails his Will save, he can answer some questions:

### When will the ceremony of returning take place?

“When the 101 years of banishment has expired.”

### Where will the ceremony of banishment take place

“Upon the sacred ground where the Herald appeared”

### Who is Marduk?

“He is Sancredia, the destructor, the delusioner, and the prophesied lord of these lands.”

### Where are the rest of your cultists?

“We are everywhere, and we are nowhere. We hide around and below, awaiting the glorious return of Sancredia.”

### Why did you assassinate Eldried Sarneth?

“He meddled with the desires of Sancredia. He must go.”

### What is Marduks connection to the war in Veluna?

"He has strong allies who will grant him his domain on Oerth once the way is cleared."

## Encounter Six: Dealing with the Prize

Assuming the PCs rescued Bishop Harkin, they need to determine what to do with him. The DM should role-play out the situation, going into as much detail as time allows. Since there are so many ways this can go, it is up to the DM to handle the situation, some general guidelines are below.

The Bishop will insist on going directly to the Church of Rao in Veluna City. He will resist going anywhere else and will be greatly offended if the PCs attempt to force him to go elsewhere. You should role-play out what happens with the Bishop, but the PCs can't hold him forever, and he will eventually end up at the church.

### Church of Rao:

If the PCs are present at the church when the bishop is brought there, the priests there will be extremely surprised to see him. They will take him into custody and immediately rush him off into the depths of the church, acting like they don't want anybody to see him. They know that the Bishop is supposedly in Grayington advising Redin Sarneth after refusing his recall, so they know that Harkin's presence here is a big political deal and want to control the situation as quickly as possible. They will ask the PCs to not mention anything about the Bishop to anybody (including Eldried Sarneth), saying it could tip off the enemies of Veluna if they do. If they tell the church that they have already informed Eldried Sarneth, the priests will be very unhappy.

### Eldried Sarneth:

The PCs can return to Eldried (at least the ones who were directly hired by him). They can tell him all about the cultists of Marduk. If they tell him about the Bishop (or bring the bishop to him), he will be extremely surprised and happy (Sense Motive DC 20 tells that he is plotting how to use this information to his advantage). If they don't tell him any of the information the Bishop has (either because they don't want to, they never found out, or because the Bishop died), he will be mildly displeased that they did not learn much about the plans of the cult. However, he will be satisfied that he has had some measure of revenge if a cell of the cult has been destroyed and will

pay the rest of the agreed sum. If they try to hide the information about the bishop from Eldried, have him roll a Sense Motive (sense motive modifier is APL+4). If he makes the roll he will be suspicious that they are not telling him something and will question them further, but not press the matter. If he makes the roll by 10 or more, he will be sure they are double crossing him somehow, will grow angry and insist that they tell him whatever it is they are hiding. If they don't, he will eventually throw them out and refuse to pay the other half of the payment.

### Grayington:

If the PCs get a wild hair and think they should take matters into their own hands and return the Bishop to Grayington, he will steadfastly refuse. They will basically have to kidnap him, and he will try to escape at every opportunity. He will cry for help, saying he has been kidnapped. He is fearful of going back there and desperately wants the protection of the church.

Unless they find some way to silence and completely control him, they will be caught by authorities and the bishop will be rescued from his kidnappers. All PCs involved in the kidnapping will have to spend an extra 4 TU's wrapped up in legal issues for kidnapping a bishop.

Should they find some way to actually quietly force the bishop back to Grayington, tell them that this is the end and that will be dealt with in a future module or interactive (if the critical events indicate that this event occurred in a preponderance of the premier tables).

## Conclusion

Depending on what the PCs do with the information about the recovery of Bishop Harkin, they will get favors or disfavor with Eldried and the Church of Rao. It is important to note that these favors/disfavors should be awarded on a case by case basis to each individual PC.

If ANY of the PCs tell Eldried Sarneth about Bishop Harkin, NONE of the PCs get his disfavor, and ONLY those actually divulging the information get his favor.

The Church of Rao related "rewards" are also granted on an individual basis. Only individuals telling Eldried Sarneth about the Bishop will receive the Church's disfavor (The Church of Rao will not blame someone for somebody else's misdeeds - unless in the DM's opinion they allowed it to happen by intentional inaction). Assume the Church of Rao knows exactly

what transpired in the leaking of the information. Those that do not leak the information get the Church's favor.

NOBODY can get both favors, though it might be possible for somebody to get both disfavours!

**Official critical events results:** Any player interested in downloading an official summary of events of this mod that reflects the critical events of the first run of this event should be given the following password. The DM should give this password to the players at the conclusion of play. They can then download the critical summary and use the password to open the file:

**Password:** duplicity

## 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 story awards) to each character.

#### Encounter Two: The Lodge

Deal with the animals (defeat, drive off, or bypass).

APL 2	120 xp
APL 4	180 xp
APL 6	240 xp
APL 8	300 xp

#### Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails (Room 1)

Defeat the zombies

APL 2	90 xp
APL 4	150 xp
APL 6	180 xp
APL 8	240 xp

#### Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails (Room 2)

Set off or bypass the trap

APL 2	30 xp
APL 4	30 xp

APL 6	30 xp
APL 8	30 xp

#### Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails (Room 3)

Defeat the cultists.

APL 2	120 xp
APL 4	180 xp
APL 6	270 xp
APL 8	330 xp

#### Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails (Room 3)

Rescue Bishop Harkin

APL 2	90 xp
APL 4	135 xp
APL 6	180 xp
APL 8	225 xp

#### **Total possible experience:**

<b>APL 2</b>	450 xp
<b>APL 4</b>	675 xp
<b>APL 6</b>	900 xp
<b>APL 8</b>	1125 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 scenario, 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.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

### Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails

Note: This treasure value is maximum assuming Eldried is haggled to the max! This is an unlikely occurrence, so be sure to calculate accordingly!

**APL 2** – loot (0 gp), coin- (200 gp), M – (0 gp).

**APL 4** – loot (0 gp), coin- (300 gp), M – (0 gp).

**APL 6** – loot (0 gp), coin- (400 gp), M – (0 gp).

**APL 8** – loot (0 gp), coin- (600 gp), M – (0 gp).

### Encounter Five: Under the Bag of Nails

**APL 2** – loot (305 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *potion cure light wounds x3* (4 gp per character each).

**APL 4** – loot (181 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *+1 full plate* (220 gp per character), *+1 heavy steel shield* (97 gp per character), *potion cure light wounds x3* (4 gp per character each), *+1 breastplate* (112 gp per character), *Potion of resurgence* (4 gp per character).

**APL 6** – loot (336 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *+1 full plate* (220 gp per character), *+1 heavy steel shield* (97 gp per character), *potion cure light wounds x4* (4 gp each), *rod of metamagic silent/lesser* (250 gp per character), *+1 breastplate* (112 gp per character), *+1 buckler* (97 gp per character), *+1 amulet natural armor* (166 gp per character).

**APL 8** – loot (223 gp), coin- (0 gp), M – *+1 full plate* (220 gp per character), *+1 light fortification heavy steel shield* (347 gp per character), *potion cure moderate wounds x4* (25 gp each per character), *rod of metamagic silent/lesser* (250 gp per character), *+1 mithral full plate* (970 gp per character), *+1 buckler* (97 gp per character).

### Total Possible Treasure

**APL 2:** 400 gp

**APL 4:** 600 gp

**APL 6:** 800 gp

**APL 8:** 1250 gp

### Special

**Note:** These favors/disfavors on the AR should be awarded on a case by case basis to each individual PC. If ANY of the PCs tell Eldried Sarneth about Bishop Harkin, NONE of the PCs get his disfavor. The Church of Rao related ones are granted on an individual basis. The Church will not blame someone for somebody else's misdeeds (unless in the DM's opinion)

## Appendix 1: NPC's

### All APLs

**Bishop Velt Harkin:** Male Human Clr7; CR 7; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 7d8-21; hp 26; Init -1; Spd 30 ft; AC 9 (-1 dex), touch 9, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d3 non lethal, unarmed); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3 non lethal, unarmed); AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12(5), Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (Local VTF) +7, Knowledge (arcane) +4, Knowledge (history) +5, Diplomacy +9;

*Spells Prepared:* None.

*Possessions:* None.

### Encounter 5: Under the Bag of Nails

#### APL 2 (EL 4)

**Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirfneblin Clr2; CR 3; Small Humanoid (Gnome); HD 2d8+2; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 15 ft; AC 26 (+1 dex, +1 size, +4 dodge, +8 armor, +2 shield), touch 16, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +1; Grp -2; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); SA Spell-like abilities, +1 attack rolls vs goblinoids and kobolds; SQ Stonecunning, +4 dodge bonus to AC (already figured in above), darkvision 120 ft., low-Light vision, SR 13, +1 DC to all illusion spells, +2 bonus to all saves (already figured in), nondetection; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Craft (Alchemy) +2, Hide +1 (+3 underground), Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +6; Combat Casting.

*Spells Prepared* (4/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level, 15 + Spell Level illusions): 0<sup>th</sup> – *cure minor wounds, detect magic, resistance, virtue*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *bane, bless, cause fear, entropic shield*\*.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* [Destruction (smite 1/day +4 to hit, +lvl to damage); Luck (1/day reroll)].

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*blindness/deafness* (save DC 15), *blur, disguise self*. Caster level equals the svirfneblin's class levels. The save DC is Charisma-based and include a +4 racial modifier.

*Nondetection(Su)* – A Svirfneblin has a continuous nondetection ability as the spell (caster level equal to class levels).

*Possessions:* Masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork morningstar.

**Cultists (3):** Male Human War2; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+7; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 20 ft; AC 19 (+2 dex, +5 armor, +2 shield), touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +4 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +4 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +3, Climb +0, Jump +0; Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword).

*Possessions:* Chainmail, heavy steel shield, masterwork long sword, light crossbow, *potion cure light wounds*.

#### APL 4 (EL 6)

**Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirfneblin Clr3; CR 4; Small Humanoid (Gnome); HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +1; Spd 15 ft; AC 28 (+1 dex, +1 size, +4 dodge, +9 armor, +3 shield), touch 16, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +2; Grp -1; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); SA Spell-like abilities, +1 attack rolls vs goblinoids and kobolds; SQ Stonecunning, +4 dodge bonus to AC (already figured in above), darkvision 120 ft., low-Light vision, SR 14, +1 DC to all illusion spells, +2 bonus to all saves (already figured in), nondetection; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +7, Craft (Alchemy) +2, Hide +1 (+3 underground), Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +6; Combat Casting, Spell Focus (Necromancy).

*Spells Prepared* (4/4/3; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level, 15 + Spell Level illusions, 15 + spell level necromancy): 0<sup>th</sup> – *cure minor wounds, detect magic, resistance, virtue*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *bane, bless, cause fear, entropic shield*\*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *aid*\*; *hold person, silence*.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* [Destruction (smite 1/day +4 to hit, +lvl to damage); Luck (1/day reroll)].

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*blindness/deafness* (save DC 15), *blur*, *disguise self*. Caster level equals the svirfneblin's class levels. The save DC is Charisma-based and include a +4 racial modifier.

*Nondetection(Su)* – A Svirfneblin has a continuous nondetection ability as the spell (caster level equal to class levels).

*Possessions:* +1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, masterwork Morningstar, *potion of resurgence*

**Daergus Paladin-Slayer:** Male Half-fiend/Half-Duergar War1; CR 2; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 1d8+8; hp 13; Init +3; Spd 20 ft, fly 20 ft (average); AC 21 (+3 dex, +6 armor, +1 shield, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d10+7, masterwork glaive); Full Atk +6 melee (1d10+7, masterwork glaive) and +1 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA: spell-like abilities, smite good 1/day (+lvl damage), +1 attack rolls vs orcs (including half-orcs) and goblinoids; SQ: Stonecunning, darkvision 120 ft., SR 11, DR 5/magic, resist acid 10, fire 10, electricity 10, and cold 10, immune paralysis, phantasms, and poison, +2 save vs spells and spell-like abilities, stability, +4 dodge vs giants, light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +2, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silent +3, Spot +2; Toughness.

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day – *enlarge, invisibility* (caster level 3); 3/day – *darkness* (caster level 1).

*Possessions:* +1 Breastplate, masterwork glaive, buckler.

**Cultists (3):** Male Human War2; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+7; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 20 ft; AC 19 (+2 dex, +5 armor, +2 shield), touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +4 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +4 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +3, Climb +0, Jump +0; Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword).

*Possessions:* Chainmail, heavy steel shield, masterwork long sword, light crossbow, *potion cure light wounds*.

## **APL 6 (EL 9)**

**Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirfneblin Clr6; CR 7; Small Humanoid (Gnome); HD 6d8+12; hp 45; Init +1;

Spd 15 ft; AC 28 (+1 dex, +1 size, +4 dodge, +9 armor, +3 shield), touch 16, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +4; Grp +1; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); SA Spell-like abilities, +1 attack rolls vs goblinoids and kobolds; SQ Stonecunning, +4 dodge bonus to AC (already figured in above), darkvision 120 ft., low-Light vision, SR 17, +1 DC to all illusion spells, +2 bonus to all saves (already figured in), nondetection; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +11, Craft (Alchemy) +2, Hide +1 (+3 underground), Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +6; Combat Casting, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Greater Spell Focus (Necromancy).

*Spells Prepared* (5/5/5/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level; 15 + Spell Level illusions; 16 + spell level necromancy): 0<sup>th</sup> – *cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, resistance, virtue*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *bane, bless, cause fear, divine favor, entropic shield\**; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *aid\*, bears endurance, bulls strength, hold person, silence*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *contagion\*, dispel magic, wrack\*\**.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* [Destruction (smite 1/day +4 to hit, +level to damage); Luck (1/day reroll)].

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*blindness/deafness* (typical save DC 15), *blur*, *disguise self*. Caster level equals the svirfneblin's class levels. The save DC is Charisma-based and include a +4 racial modifier.

*Nondetection(Su)* – A Svirfneblin has a continuous nondetection ability as the spell (caster level equal to class levels).

*Possessions:* +1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, masterwork morningstar, *rod of metamagic (silent/lesser)*.

\*\* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

**Daergus Paladin-Slayer:** Male Half-fiend/Half-Duergar Bbn3; CR 5; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 3d12+15; hp 38; Init +3; Spd 30 ft, fly 30 ft (average); AC 24 (+3 dex, +6 armor, +3 shield, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d10+7, masterwork glaive); Full Atk +8 melee (1d10+7, masterwork glaive) and +3 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA spell-like abilities, smite good 1/day (+lvl damage), +1 attack rolls vs orcs (including half-orcs) and goblinoids, rage 1/day; SQ Stonecunning, darkvision 120 ft., SR 13, DR 5/magic, resist acid 10, fire 10, electricity 10, and cold 10, immune paralysis, phantasms, and poison, +2 save vs spells and spell-like abilities, stability, +4 dodge vs giants, light sensitivity,

uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +4, Jump +9, Listen +8, Move Silent +5, Spot +2; Combat Reflexes, Improved Buckler Defense\*.

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day – *enlarge, invisibility* (caster level 6); 3/day – *darkness*, 1/day – *desecrate* (caster level 3).

*Possessions:* +1 *Breastplate*, masterwork glaive, +1 *buckler*, +1 *amulet natural armor*.

\* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

**Cultists (3):** Male Human War3; CR 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 3d8+9; hp 25; Init +2; Spd 20 ft; AC 19 (+2 dex, +5 armor, +2 shield), touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +5 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +5 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +5, Climb +0, Jump +0; Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword).

*Possessions:* Chainmail, heavy steel shield, masterwork long sword, light crossbow, *potion cure light wounds*.

## **APL 8 (EL 11)**

**Zarfan Margalplatz:** Male Svirkneblin Clr8; CR 9; Small Humanoid (Gnome); HD 8d8+16; hp 60; Init +1; Spd 15 ft; AC 28 (+1 dex, +1 size, +4 dodge, +9 armor, +3 shield), touch 16, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +6; Grp +3; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d6+1, small masterwork morningstar); SA Spell-like abilities, +1 attack rolls vs goblinoids and kobolds; SQ Stonecunning, +4 dodge bonus to AC (already figured in above), darkvision 120 ft., low-Light vision, SR 19, +1 DC to all illusion spells, +2 bonus to all saves (already figured in), nondetection; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +13, Craft (Alchemy) +2, Hide +1 (+3 underground), Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +6; Combat Casting, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Greater Spell Focus (Necromancy).

*Spells Prepared* (6/6/5/5/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level; 15 + Spell Level illusions; 16 + spell level necromancy): 0<sup>th</sup> – *cure minor wounds x2, detect magic, guidance, resistance, virtue*, 1<sup>st</sup> – *bane, bless, cause fear, cure light wounds, divine favor, entropic*

*shield*\*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *aid*\*, *bears endurance, bulls strength, hold person, silence*, 3<sup>rd</sup> – *contagion*\*, *dispel magic, protection from energy, wrack*\*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *cure critical wounds, divine power, freedom of movement*\*, *poison*.

\*Domain spell. *Domains:* [Destruction (smite 1/day +4 to hit, +lvl to damage); Luck (1/day reroll)].

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day—*blindness/deafness* (typical save DC 15), *blur, disguise self*. Caster level equals the svirkneblin's class levels. The save DC is Charisma-based and include a +4 racial modifier.

*Nondetection(Su)* – A Svirkneblin has a continuous nondetection ability as the spell (caster level equal to class levels).

*Possessions:* +1 *full plate*, +1 *light fortification heavy steel shield*, masterwork morningstar, *rod of metamagic (silent/lesser)*.

\*\* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

**Daergus Paladin-Slayer:** Male Half-fiend/Half-Duergar Bbn6; CR 8; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 6d12+36; hp 81; Init +3; Spd 30 ft, fly 30 ft (average); AC 26 (+3 dex, +9 armor, +3 shield, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +11 melee (1d10+7, masterwork glaive); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d10+7, masterwork glaive) and +5 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA spell-like abilities, smite good 1/day (+lvl damage), +1 attack rolls vs orcs (including half-orcs) and goblinoids, rage 2/day; SQ Stonecunning, darkvision 120 ft., SR 16, DR 5/magic, resist acid 10, fire 10, electricity 10, and cold 10, immune paralysis, phantasms, and poison, +2 save vs spells and spell-like abilities, stability, +4 dodge vs giants, light sensitivity, improved uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +4, Jump +9, Listen +8, Move Silent +5, Spot +2; Combat Reflexes, Improved Buckler Defense\*, Iron Will.

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day – *enlarge, invisibility* (caster level 12); 3/day – *darkness*, 1/day – *desecrate, unholy blight* (caster level 6).

*Possessions:* +1 *Mithral Full Plate*, masterwork glaive, +1 *buckler*.

\* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

**Cultists (4):** Male Human War4; CR 3; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 4d8+11; hp 33; Init +2; Spd 20 ft; AC 19 (+2 dex, +5 armor, +2 shield), touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long sword) or +6 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+2, masterwork long

sword) or +6 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Intimidate +5, Climb +2, Jump +2; Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Dodge.

*Possessions:* Chainmail, heavy steel shield, masterwork long sword, light crossbow, *potion cure moderate wounds*.

## Appendix 2: New Rules Items

### Improved Buckler Defense [General] as presented in *Complete Warrior*

You can attack with an off-hand weapon while retaining a buckler's shield bonus to your armor class.

**Prerequisite:** Shield Proficiency

**Benefit:** When you attack with a weapon in your off hand, you may still apply your buckler's shield bonus to your Armor Class.

**Normal:** Without this feat, a character wielding a buckler who attacks with a n off-hand weapon loses the buckler's shield bonus to AC until his or her next turn.

**Special:** A fighter may select Improved Buckler Defense as one of his fighter bonus feats.

### Wrack as presented in the *Book of Vile Darkness*

Necromancy[Evil]

Level: Cleric 3, sor/wiz 4

Components: V,S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: One humanoid

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

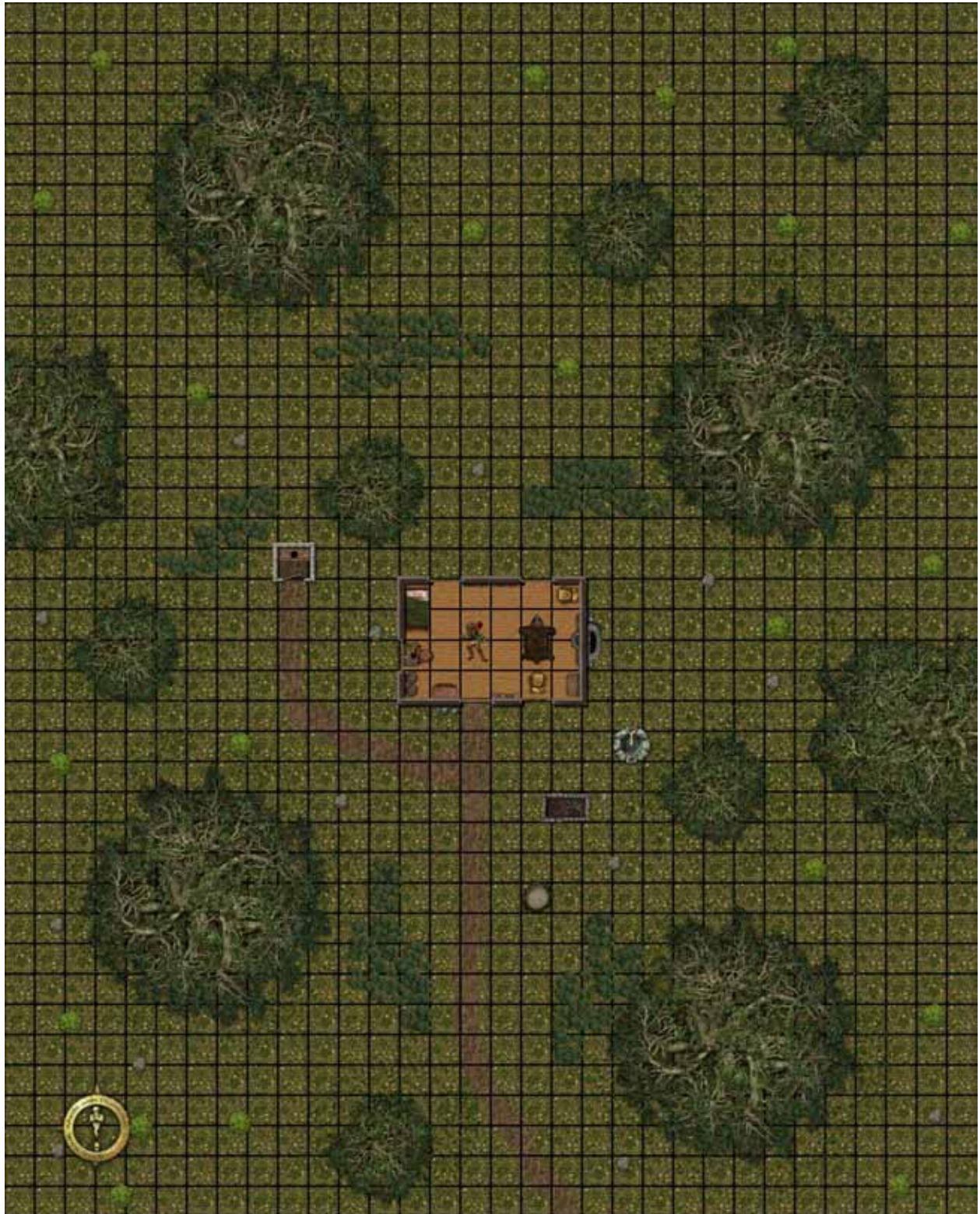
Spell Resistance: Yes

A humanoid subject of the spellcasters's choosing is wracked with such pain that he doubles over and collapses. His face and hands blister and drip fluid, and the eyes cloud with blood, rendering him blind. For the duration of the spell, The subject is considered helpless and cannot take actions.

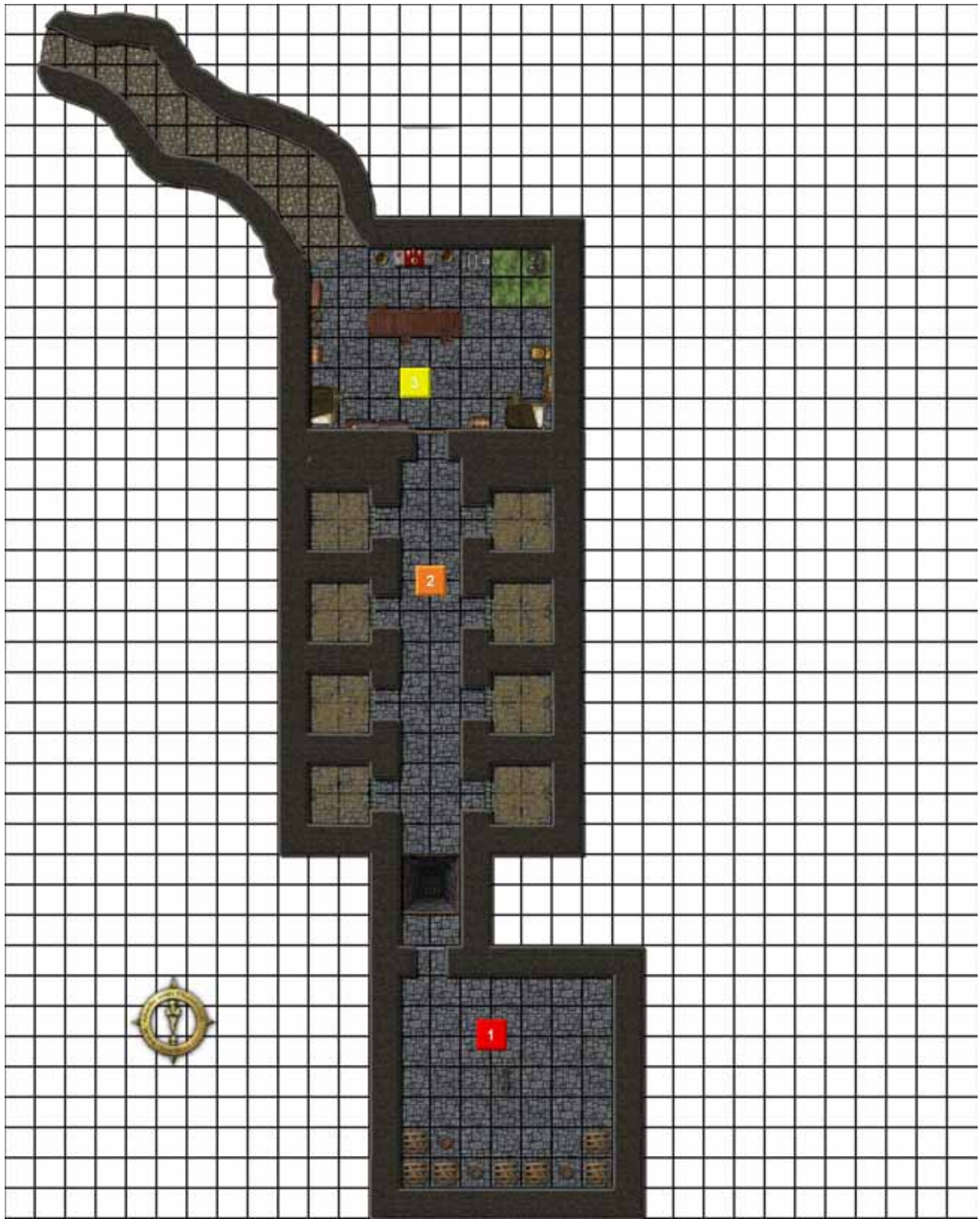
Even when the spell ends, the subject is till visibly shaken and suffers a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks for 3d10 minutes. The subject's sight returns at the end of the spell's duration.

## Appendix 3: Maps

### DM Map 1: The Lodge



## DM Map 2: Under the Bag of Nails



## Appendix 4: Player Handouts

### Player Handout #1

You are in Veluna City when a sealed envelope arrives via messenger service. You recognize the seal of the Sarneth family. Assuming you open the envelope, there is a letter written in a powerful flowing script:

I am in need of the services of a skilled individual who is not afraid of the unknown. I have come across some information and I need somebody to investigate further. I heard you were in town and immediately thought you might be interested. I am willing to pay handsomely for services rendered.

If you are available, please meet me at my family estate here in Veluna City at noon tomorrow.

Sincerely

Eldried Sarneth

### Player Handout #2

You find yourself in Veluna City. You have received the following message from your Veluna meta-organization:

We have received a special request for assistance from the former Plar of Veluna, Eldried Sarneth. It has been decided that we will honor his request, and you have been chosen to represent us to him.

Please go to the Sarneth estate in Veluna City tomorrow at noon and render what assistance possible.

### Player Handout #3

You are in Veluna City. You have made it known that you are possibly looking for work/adventure throughout the city. This evening a well dressed young man approached you and told you that he was a representative of one of the noble houses represented here in Veluna City. He indicated that his master was in need of a skilled adventurer and was willing to pay accordingly. If you are interested in his offer you are invited to the Sarneth estate here in Veluna City at noon tomorrow.

## Player Handout #4

**Mark of the Legendary Hero:** You have been marked as one of the current generation's Legendary Heroes. Bards will sing of the hero's exploits for centuries after his or her death. Certain supernatural creatures, and knowledgeable mortals (Knowledge: Arcane or Bardic Lore DC 45) also recognize the Mark's significance if it is shown to them.

If a single character has two Marks of the Legendary Hero he or she receives the following special benefit: The Knowledge: Arcane and Bardic Lore DC is reduced to 35. Further the hero is instantly recognized as a clear and present danger to any evil outsider with a Wisdom score 20+ or who can recognize the mark, and is considered the most immediate threat in any given situation.

Should a single character have three Marks of the Legendary Hero, he receives the following: the Knowledge: Arcane and Bardic Lore DC is reduced to 25. In addition, the common people are so awestruck to meet such a renowned person; they often refuse to take his money. This gives the hero free standard lifestyle in Veluna regional scenarios or meta-regional scenarios set in Veluna.

Should a single character have four Marks of the Legendary Hero, he receives the following: The Knowledge: Arcane and Bardic Lore DC is reduced to 20. In addition, evil outsiders only need 14+ Wisdom to recognize the mark and treat the character as the most immediate threat. Lastly, the characters free lifestyle is upgraded to rich.

Should a single character have five Marks of the Legendary Hero, he receives the following: The Knowledge: Arcane and Bardic Lore DC is reduced to 15. In addition, evil outsiders only need 10+ Wisdom to recognize the mark and treat the character as the most immediate threat. Lastly, the characters free lifestyle is upgraded to luxury.